New challenges for university language centres in a "flexilingual" world

Intercultural, linguistic and pedagogical challenges in the drive to equip both students and academics for an increasingly mobile future

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23rd September 2014, University of Copenhagen
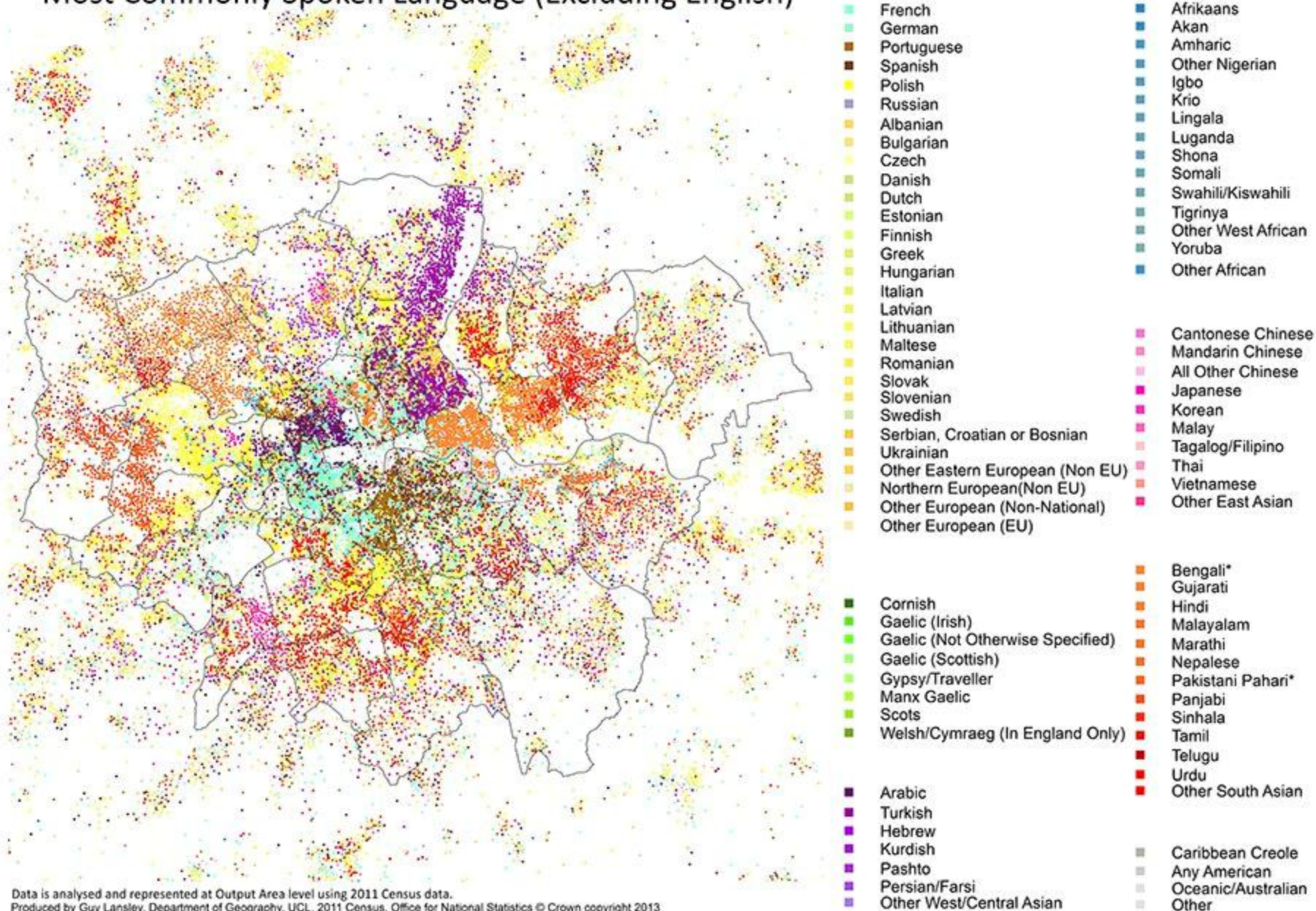
Languages are heard but not seen

Multilingual tweets http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/casa/news/2012-12-13-poster
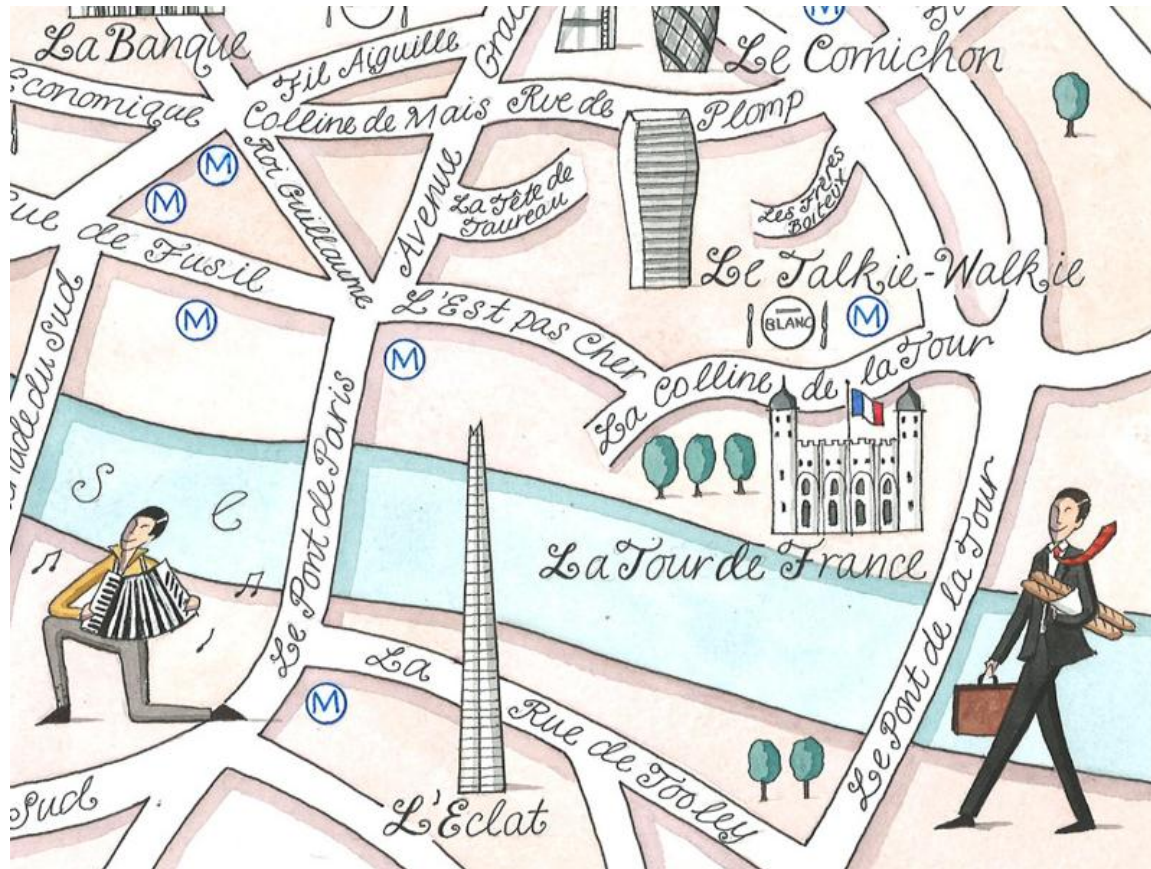
An image depicting London's multilingual Tweets produced by James Cheshire (UCL CASA) and Ed Manley (UCL CEGE) has been picked from over 350 entries to win UCL's prestigious "Research Images as Art" competition. An online version of the map can be found here: http://twitter.mappinglondon.co.uk/

Most Commonly Spoken Language (Excluding English)

Legend:

- French
- German
- Portuguese
- Spanish
- Polish
- Russian
- Albanian
- Bulgarian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- Estonian
- Finnish
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Swedish
- Serbian, Croatian or Bosnian
- Ukrainian
- Other Eastern European (Non EU)
- Northern European (Non EU)
- Other European (Non-National)
- Other European (EU)

- Cornish
- Gaelic (Irish)
- Gaelic (Not Otherwise Specified)
- Gaelic (Scottish)
- Gypsy/Traveller
- Manx Gaelic
- Scots
- Welsh/Cymraeg (In England Only)

- Arabic
- Turkish
- Hebrew
- Kurdish
- Pashto
- Persian/Farsi
- Other West/Central Asian

- Afrikaans
- Akan
- Amharic
- Other Nigerian
- Igbo
- Krio
- Lingala
- Luganda
- Shona
- Somali
- Swahili/Kiswahili
- Tigrinya
- Other West African
- Yoruba
- Other African

- Cantonese Chinese
- Mandarin Chinese
- All Other Chinese
- Japanese
- Korean
- Malay
- Tagalog/Filipino
- Thai
- Vietnamese
- Other East Asian

- Bengali*
- Gujarati
- Hindi
- Malayalam
- Marathi
- Nepalese
- Pakistani Pahari*
- Panjabi
- Sinhala
- Tamil
- Telugu
- Urdu
- Other South Asian

- Caribbean Creole
- Any American
- Oceanic/Australian
- Other

Data is analysed and represented at Output Area level using 2011 Census data.
Produced by Guy Lansley, Department of Geography, UCL. 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics © Crown copyright 2013

More language mapping London

http://mappinglondon.co.uk/2013/carte-blanc/

http://www.two-walks.co.uk/

LSE Cities

- http://lsecities.net/
- http://lsecities.net/media/objects/events/multilingual-streets-londons-litmus-strips-of-change
- http://files.lsecities.net/files/2013/06/UC_multilingual_streets.pdf

- Multilingual Streets: London's litmus strips of change
- Focusing on Peckham Rye Lane and the Walworth Road, the urban dimensions of spatial and social exchange was explored. Suzanne Hall leads the 'Ordinary Streets' research project at LSE Cities, and is author of City, Street and Citizen: The measure of the ordinary (Routledge, 2012).

LSE Cities is an international centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science that carries out research, education and outreach activities in London and abroad. Its mission is to study how people and cities interact in a rapidly urbanising world, focussing on how the design of cities impacts on society, culture and the environment.

Flexible values

Generally positive value to *multi…*

- racial

- national

http://www.theguardian.com/uk/interactive/2012/jun/22/london-map-nationalities-interactive

Mixed value to *multi…*

- cultural

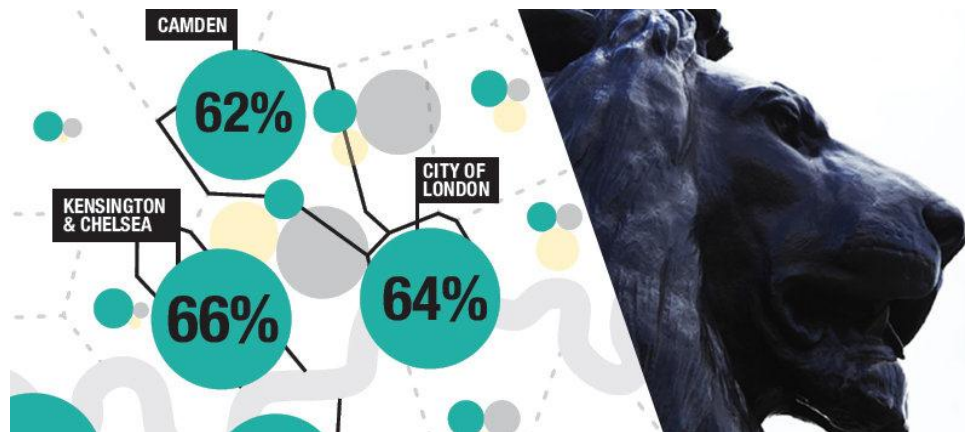http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/archives/9606

Shifting value to *multi…*

- lingual

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10384260/Revealed-the-schools-where-every-child-speaks-English-as-second-language.html

A.N.D A new direction for arts, culture and young london

- http://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/view/623.pdf

LUCIDE

- Education - language learning and language support
- The public sphere - how the city supports democratic engagement
- Economic life – the benefits of multilingualism and the requirements
- The private sphere – how people behave and interrelate and celebrate
- The urban space – the appearance and sounds of the city

LETPP

- We live in a period of unprecedented movement - of capital, of goods and of people. Contact between people and countries has never been easier or more frequent. In such a changing and volatile world, communication across cultures becomes very high stakes.

- Such communication is indispensable for international relations. It underpins wealth creation, enables individual mobility and grows employment. Communication is itself a major economic and cultural activity.

- Multilingualism has to play a key role in this world where English has greatly facilitated the global impact of the "communications revolution". However, English – even as a lingua franca - also poses key cultural, social and psychological challenges.

- In such a complex world, simple indicators of identity – national citizenship or national culture - are challenged. People share allegiances to an ever widening range of social groups and cultural icons – local, national, religious, sporting, artistic. In each case, language can be a major factor.

- www.letpp.eu
- http://www.letpp.eu/images/stories/docs/argument/letpp_manifesto.pdf
- http://blog.britishcouncil.org/appg-modernlanguages/2014/07/01/video-baroness-coussins-introduces-the-appg-on-modern-languages/
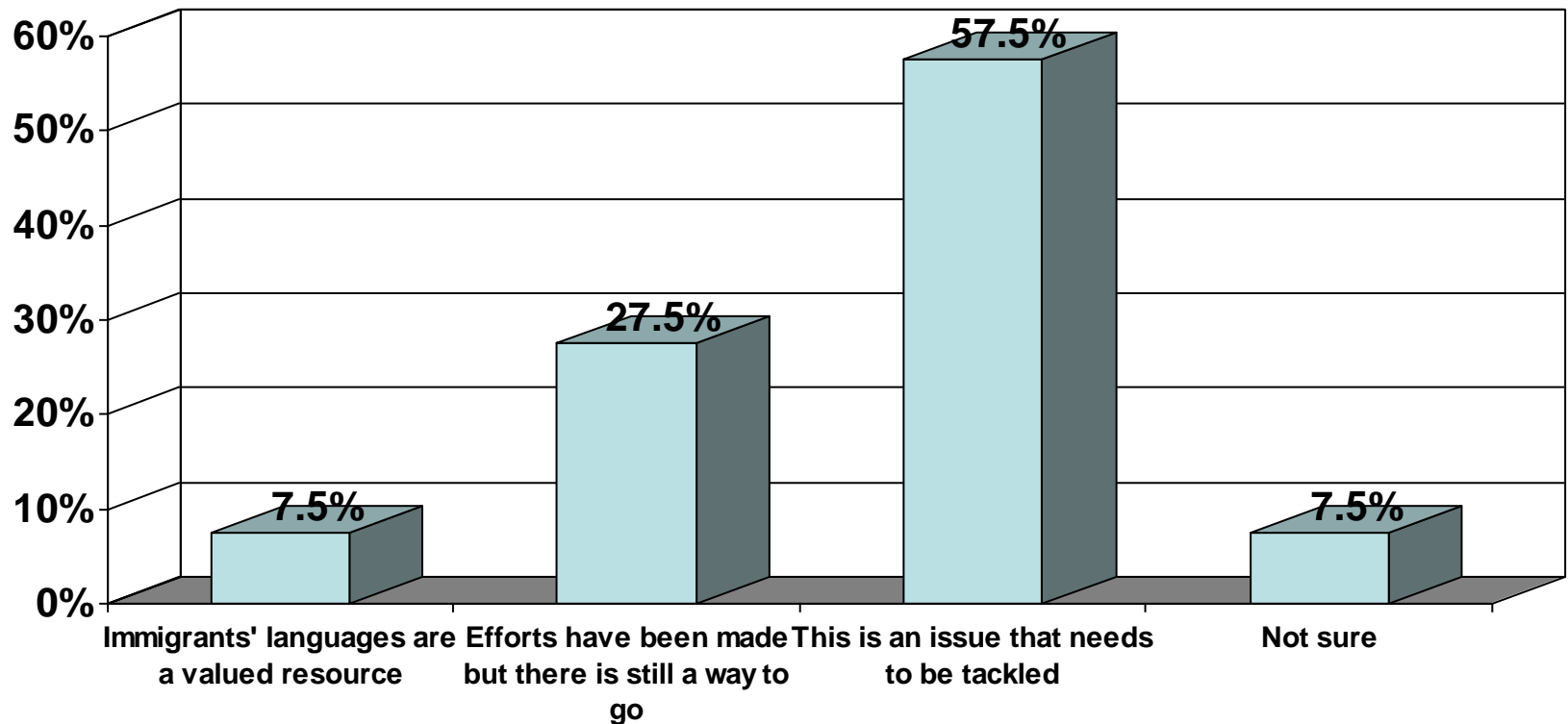
Language can define identity. Does multilingualism affect our notions of citizenship and the potential for social cohesion:
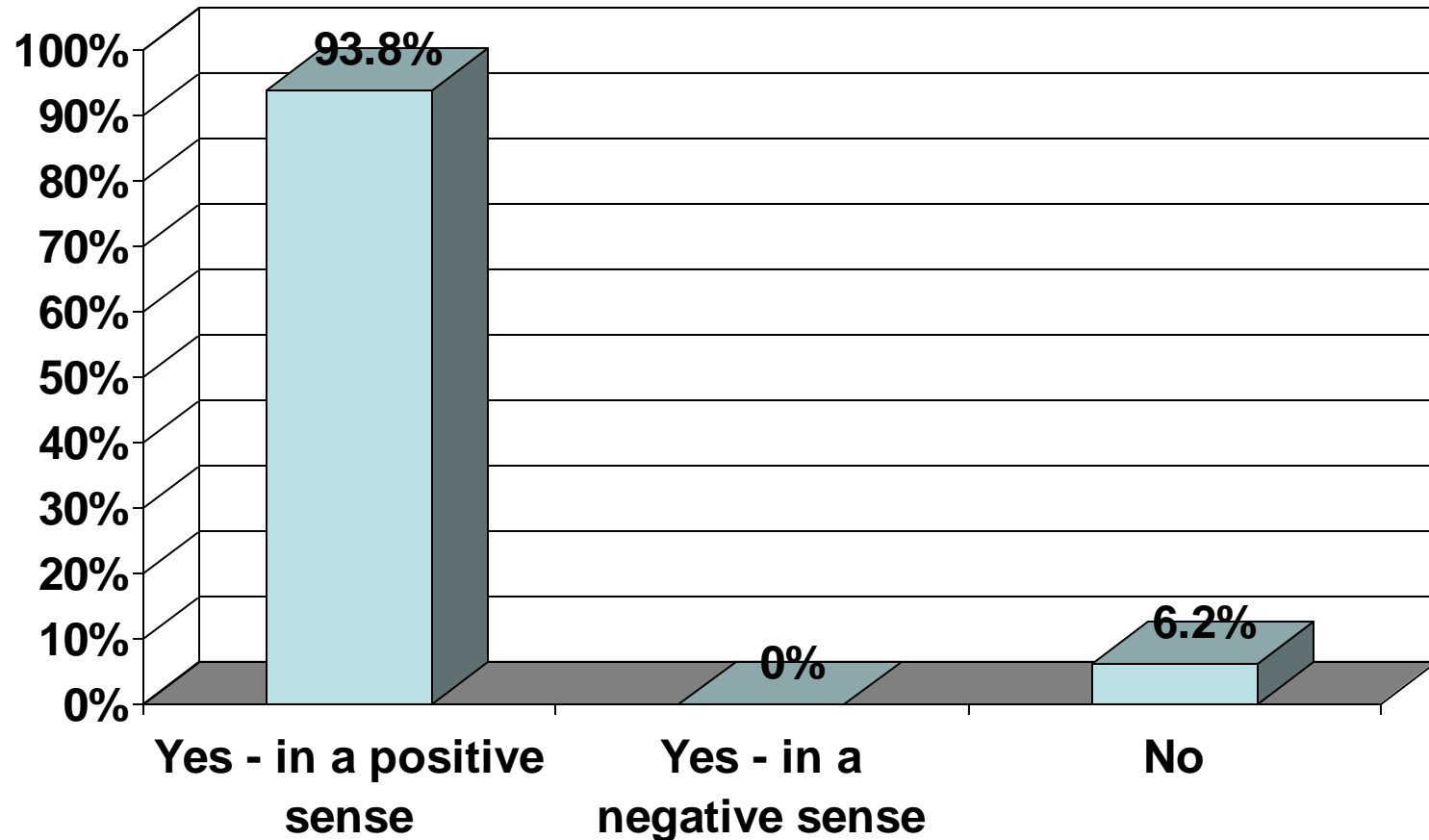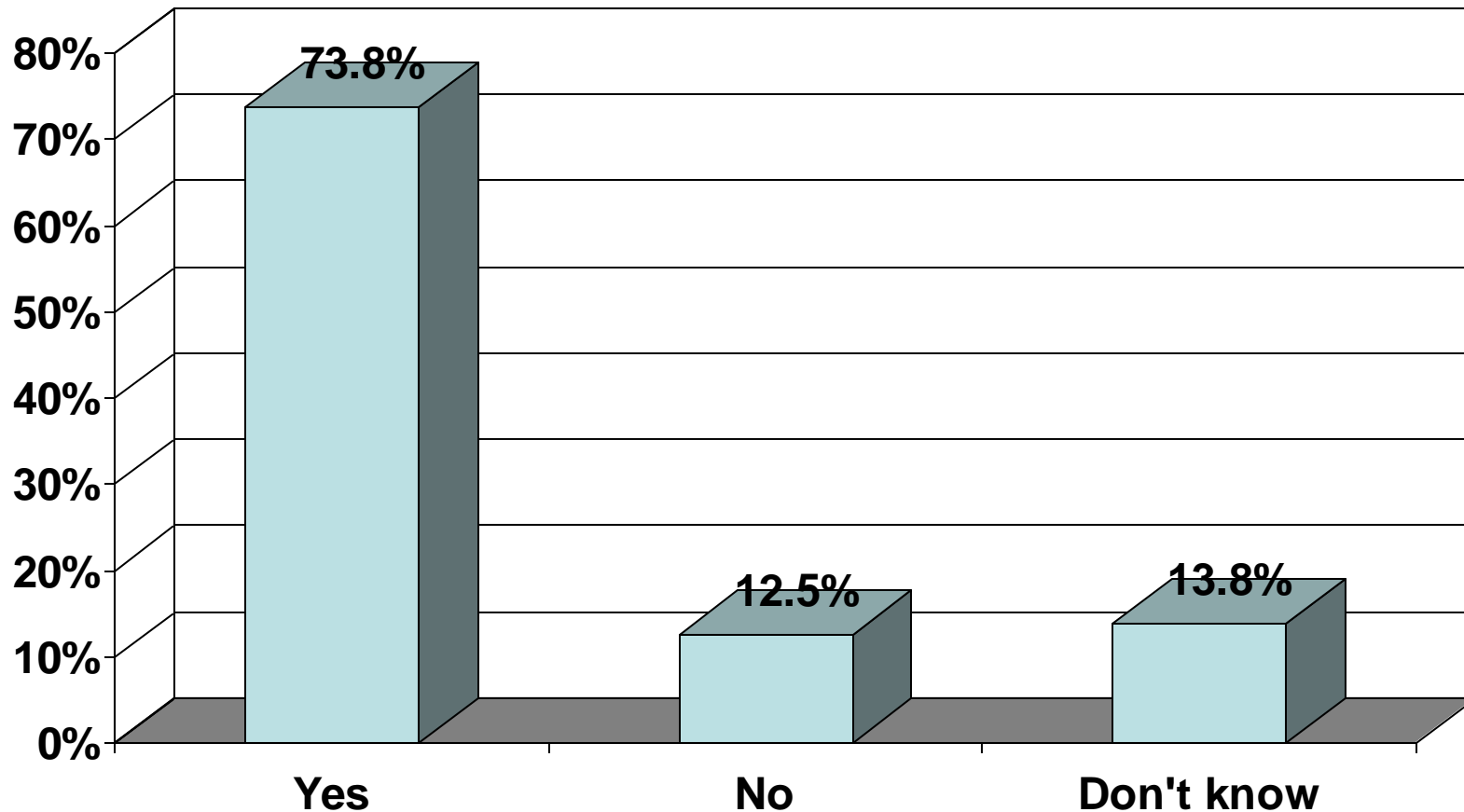
- 93.8% — Yes - in a positive sense
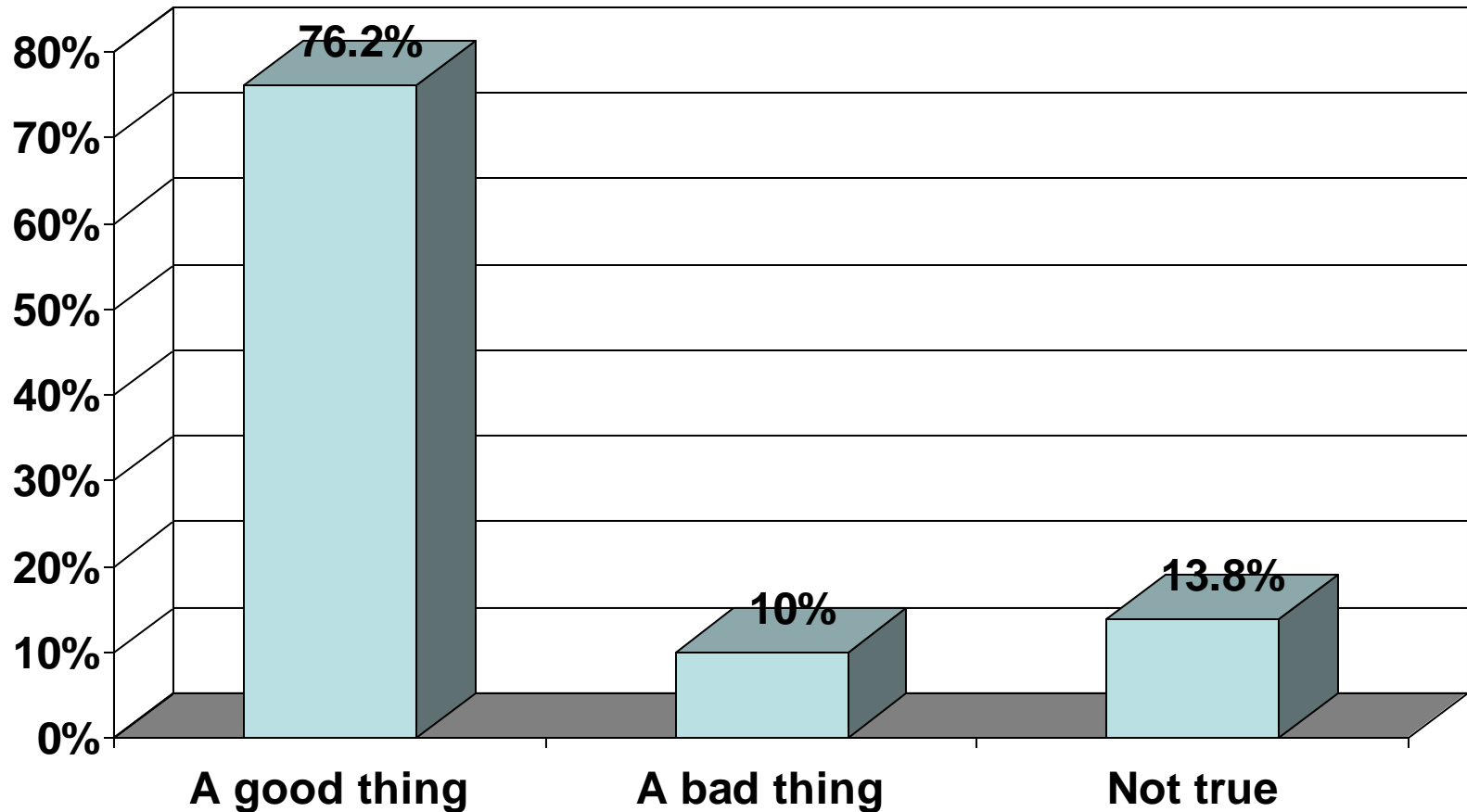- 0% — Yes - in a negative sense
- 6.2% — No
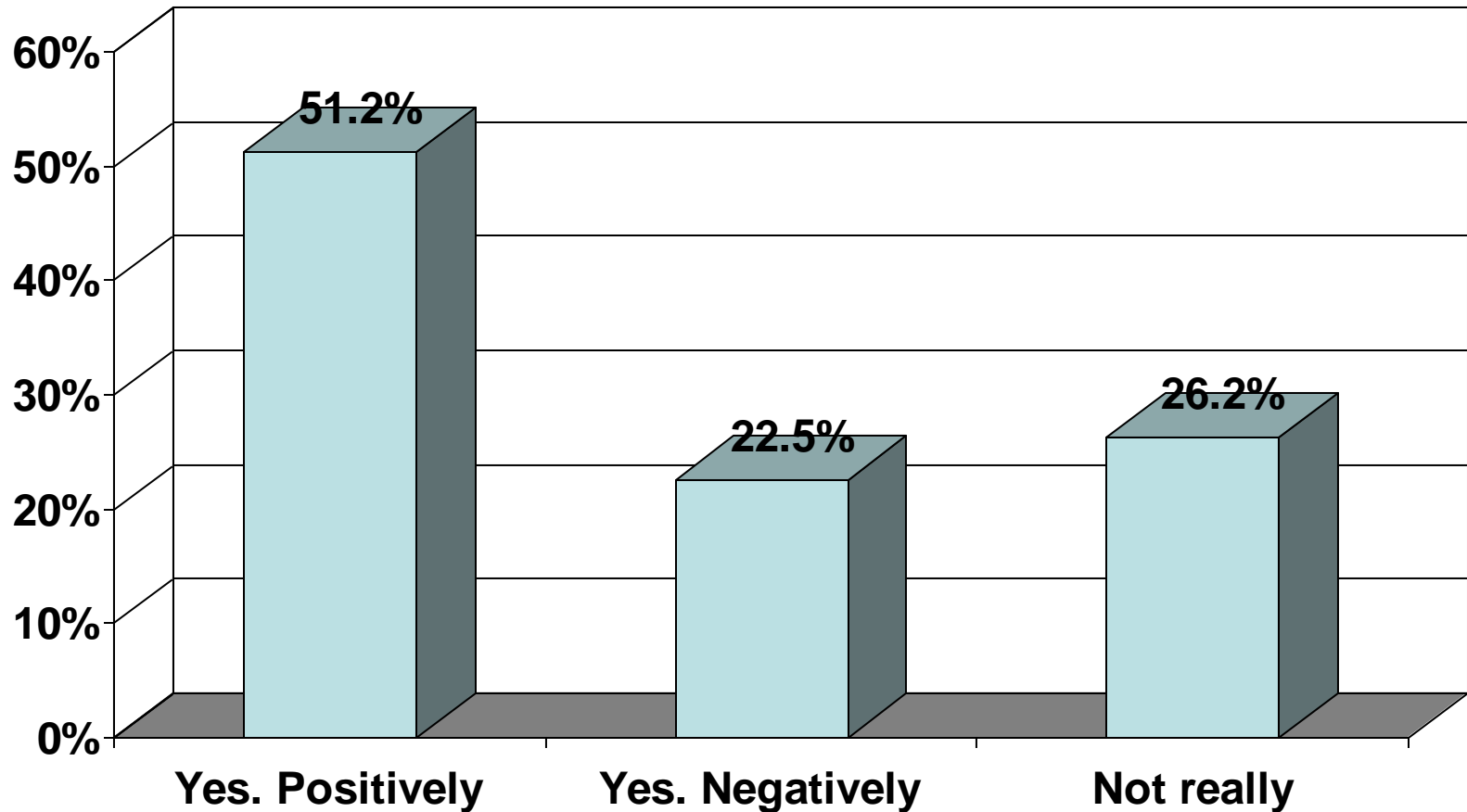
Thinking about the integration of immigrants and the value placed on their home language in relation to your city, would you say:
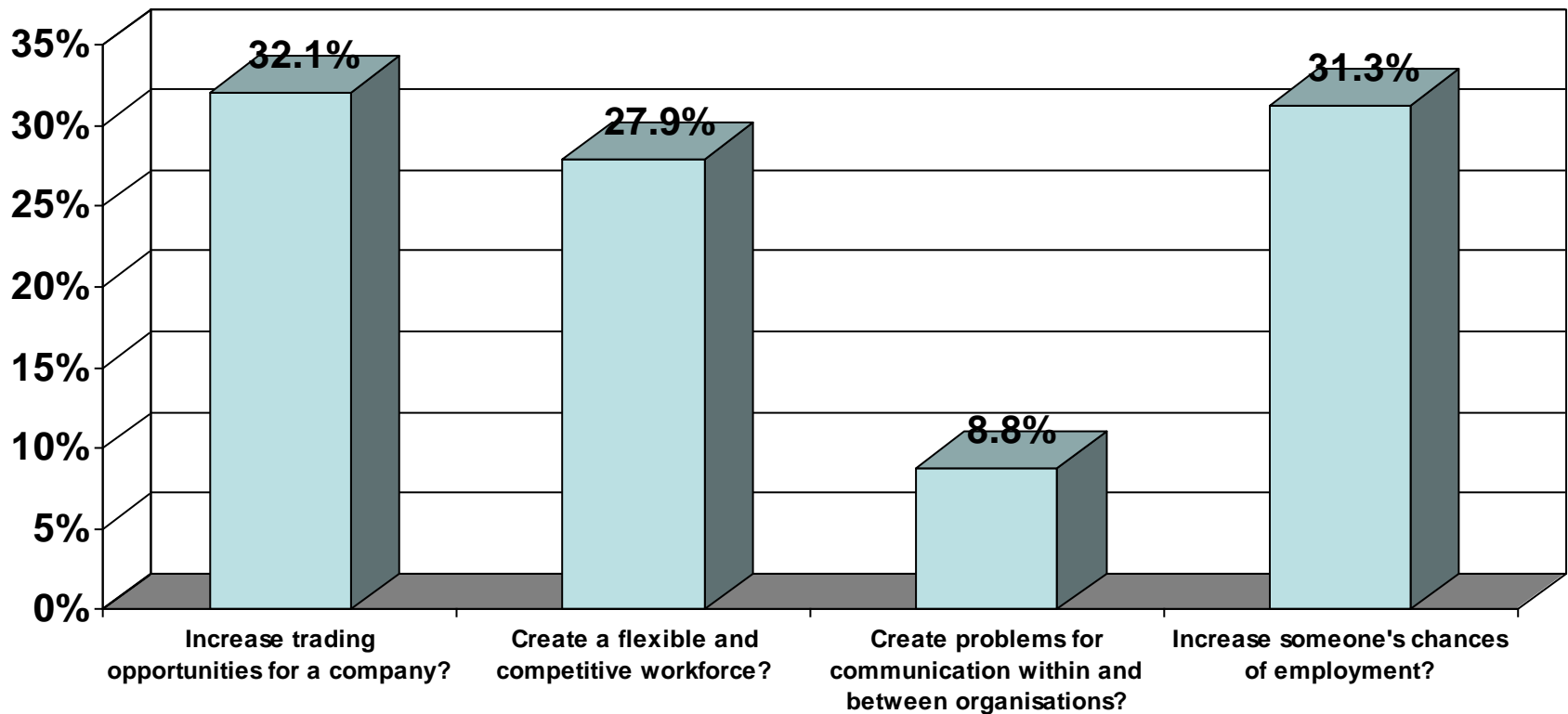
Should every major city have a language policy?

English is the global language of business & diplomacy. Is this:

Does multilingualism:

35% — 32.1% (Increase trading opportunities for a company?)
30% — 27.9% (Create a flexible and competitive workforce?)
— 8.8% (Create problems for communication within and between organisations?)
— 31.3% (Increase someone's chances of employment?)

Does the dominance of English:
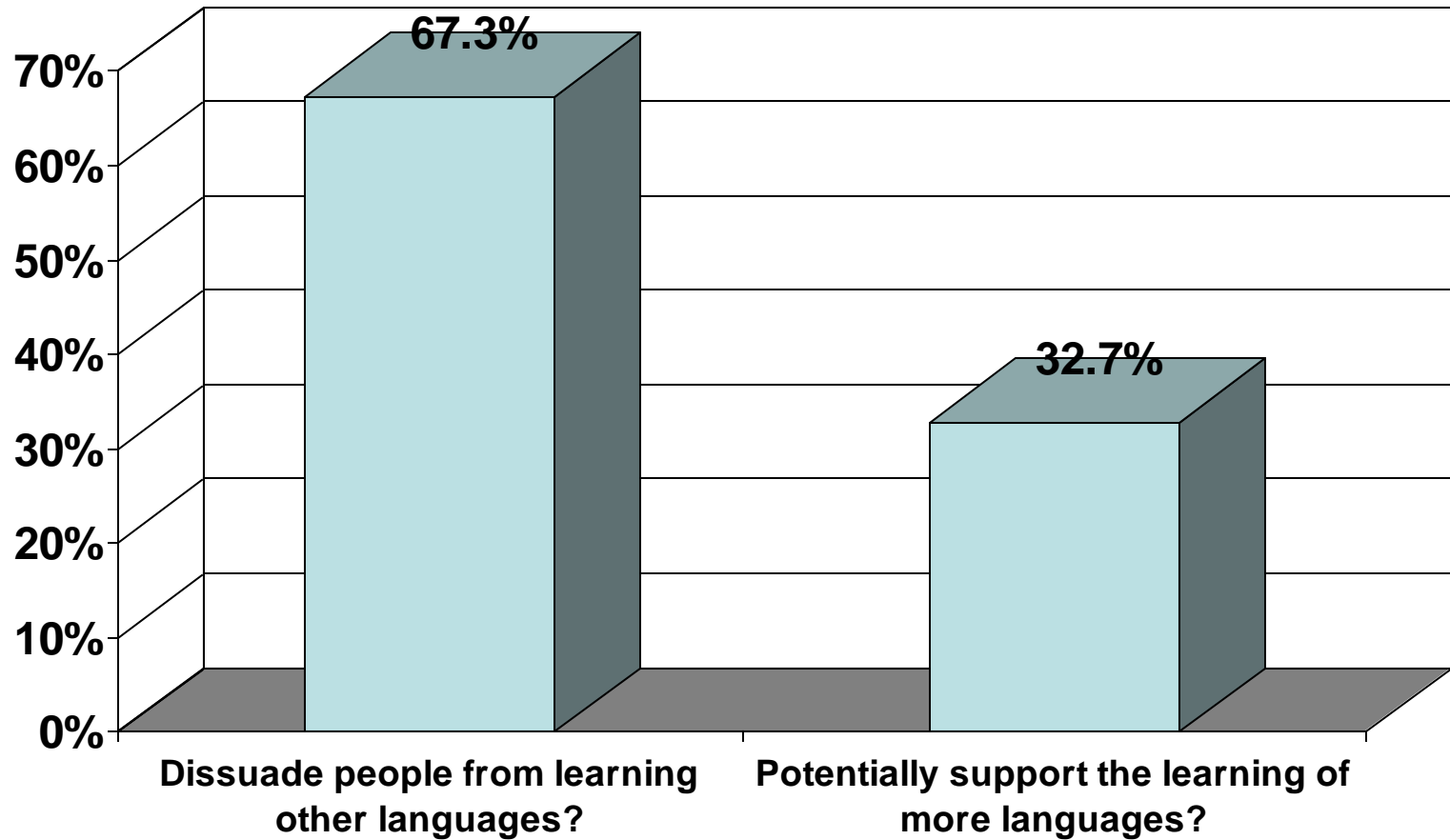
At what level do we need policy statements or strategies on multilingualism?

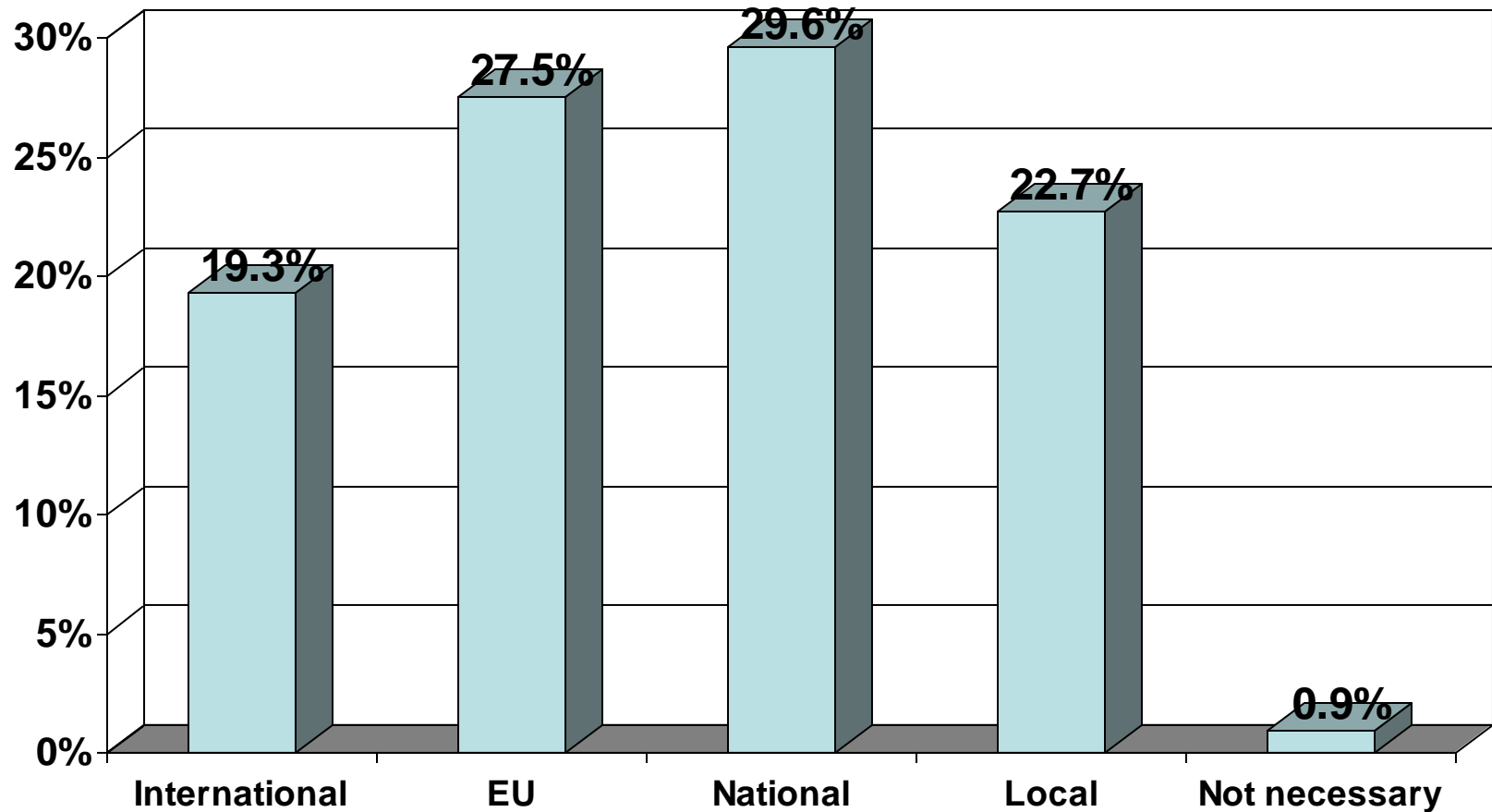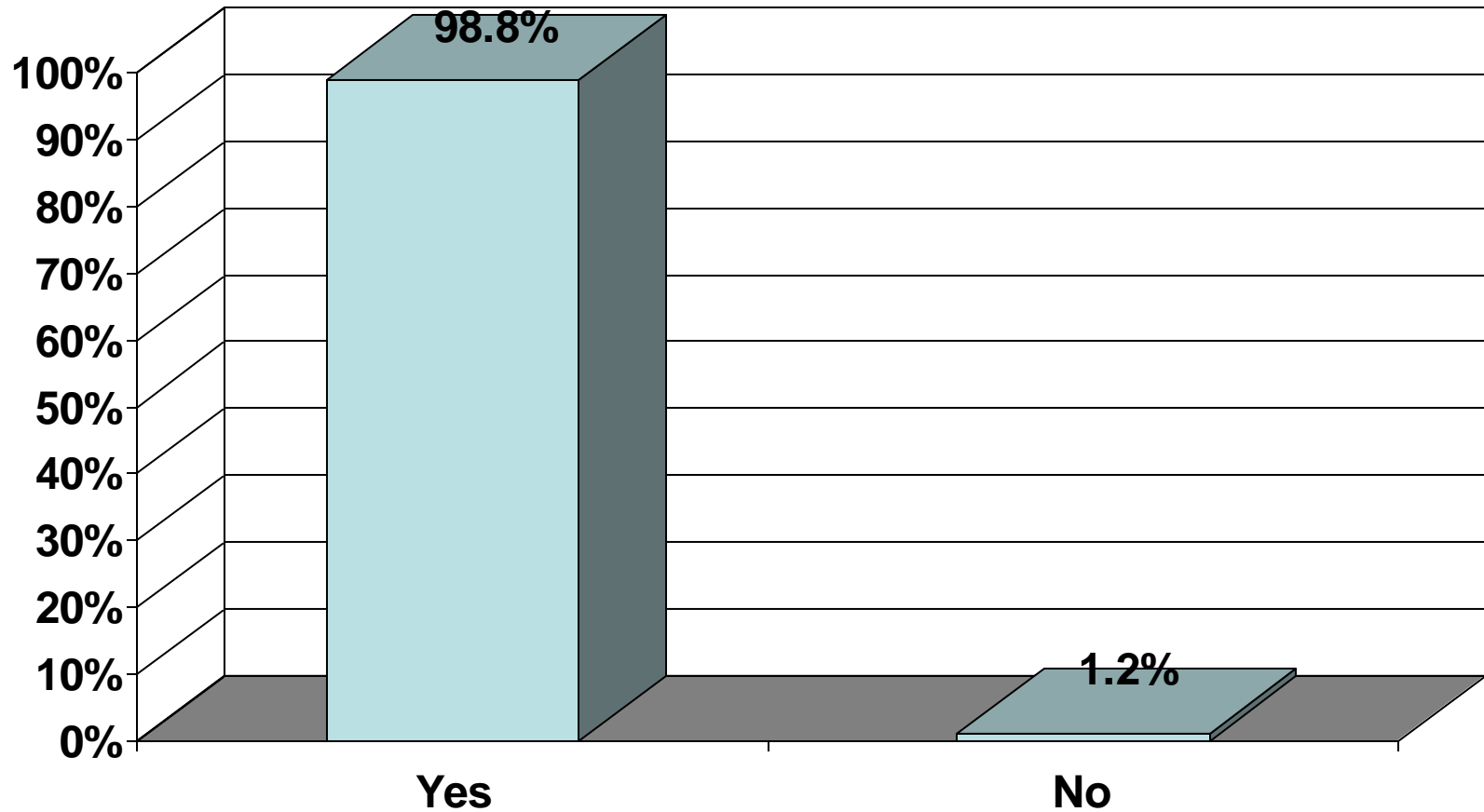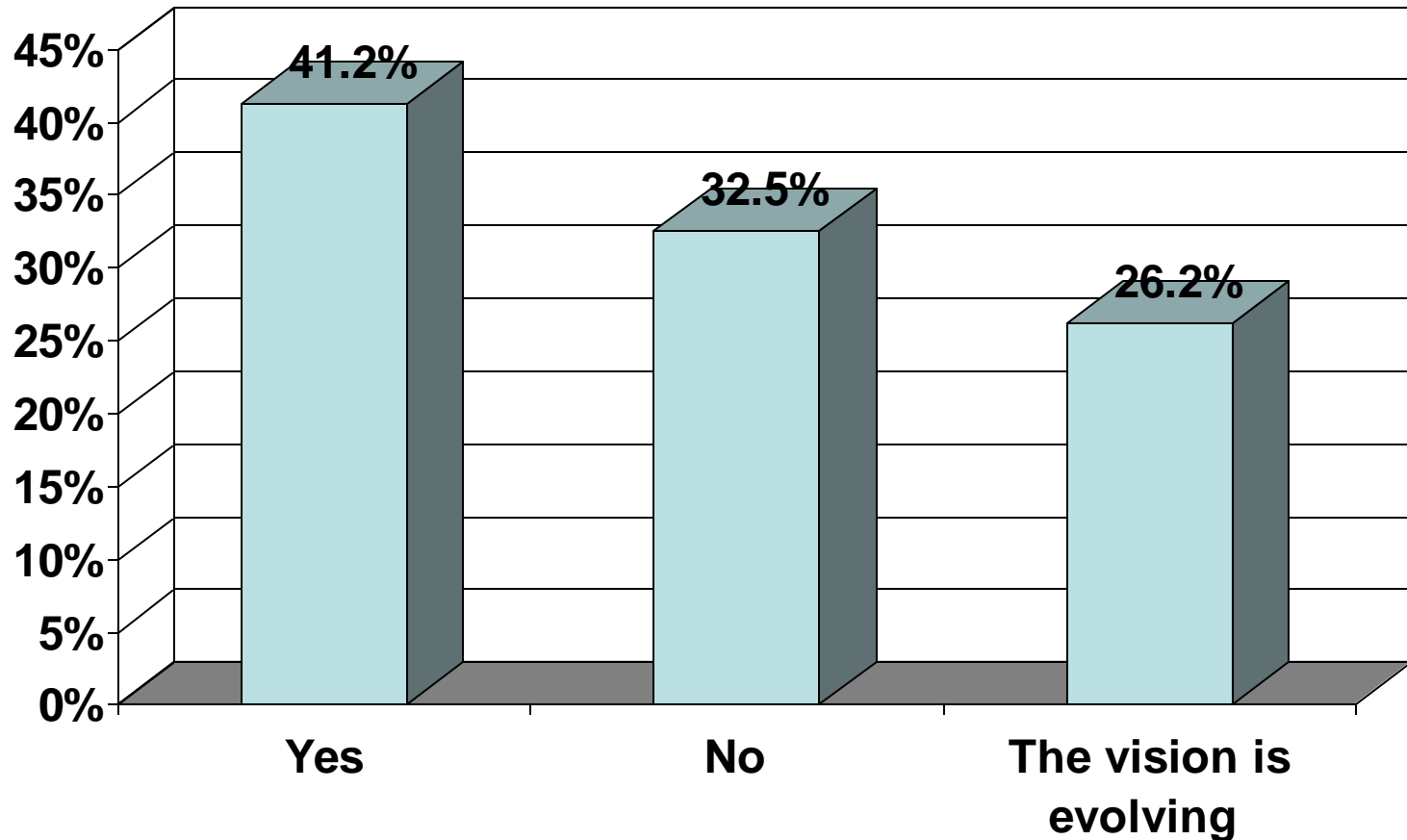# Should education systems adapt to promote multilingualism/plurilingualism?

In the current economic climate, has the EU dream of multilingualism for all citizens run out of steam?

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

The London–based financial sector as a maximiser of linguistic capital.

I asked eight global companies in the finance sector about

- how they saw the importance of languages in general terms
- how they saw languages in terms as being an important skill for their workforce, and
- how proactive their company should be in achieving a multilingual workforce.

I also asked questions

- about the role of English as a Lingua Franca
- about the advantages of native speakers versus good speakers of other languages
- the languages which should be taught or supplied
- about the economic benefits of language skills to these particular companies

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

• All companies agreed that language skills were important and should be a part of a normal secondary school education.

• In terms of language skills and their respective workforces, only two of the seven companies had a pro-active policy towards language learning and providing free or low-cost tuition.

• In terms of CPD, only one of the companies encouraged a wide range of languages (although there was an emphasis on those languages most needed for their own business), whilst the second company focused on Mandarin.

• All companies perceived English as a Lingua Franca as a business reality.

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

•	Language skills on their own would not be enough, they had to be accompanied with a close knowledge of the country and proof of experience that they had lived there for enough time to full understand the mind-set of the client.

•	All eight companies recognised the value of Mandarin as a key communicative soft skill, but there was variation as to the feasibility and/or desirability of training up British employees to a higher standard of language skills.

•	One company maintained an "old-school" approach to the choice of languages – German and French still playing both a commercial and traditional role, four companies, owing to the nature of their business needed particular language skills in Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Portuguese, and two others focused in particular on the Far East with Japanese and Korean having a role alongside Mandarin.

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

•	The final question was the most **difficult to quantify.** Although practice varied from company to company, all agreed that language issues **had to be dealt with**. It was accepted that business had to be conducted either in a lingua franca, or in two or more languages, and that communications had to be paid for either by hiring native speakers and/or interpreters, but also make use of any relevant and acceptable language skills.

•	However in terms of putting an exact figure on how much a company could lose or gain because of either a surfeit or lack of language skills, there seemed to be both an unwillingness to address this issue, precisely because all eight companies had developed their own **flexible work-around** which fitted their own ways of doing business.

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

•	Professional linguists should not over-obsess on the practical rationale for language acquisition.

•	They saw language skills as key to gaining a better understanding and mutual cooperation

•	British monoglots could lose out to others in a competitive globalised workforce, and should therefore exercise their native speaker advantage (if it really does exist) with great caution

•	Universities had to make sure they played "catch-up" with students who lost out linguistically, and provide a range of courses that facilitated this

•	Ways should be found to balance the "languages for" agenda with a way of feeding language study into a broader curriculum

London's international financial centre – monolingual, multilingual or *anglo*lingual?

- Mandarin in particular could act as an energiser to help young people re-gain an interest in languages

- Companies could pay a premium for a language skills in particular circumstances, but they are seen more of a key talent package

- Language skills are important just as much for what they could represent – tolerance, understanding, collaborative attitude – than just for simple language exchange.

- London does need to make more overt use of the linguistic talent and languages other than English should be more visible than they are.

Flexilingualism #1

- Multilingualism is the act of multiple languages.
- Multilingual speakers outnumber monolingual speakers in the world's population.
- Multilingualism is becoming a social phenomenon governed by the needs of globalization and cultural openness.

Flexilingualism #2

- Plurilingualism is a situation wherein a person who has competence in more than one language can switch between languages according to the circumstances at hand.

- There is a distinction between plurilingualism and multilingualism.

- A consequence of plurilingualism is pluricultural competence.

Flexilingualism #3

- *"Flexilingualism is a logical and desirable outcome of flexibility through-necessity in times of economic hardships. If mobility and a mobile workforce within Europe were previously seen as a desirable and worthwhile goal, then the economic climate since 2008 has turned this into a harsh and unavoidable reality."*

- *"Flexilingualism is the new multilingualism."*

- *"A flexible attitude and approach to which language we choose or have to learn, and indeed how we learn it."*

- *"The idea of mobility has shifted from a conceptual desire to a real economic necessity."*

Flexilingualism #4

- **Flexilingualism** is a pragmatic approach to learning languages. It implies a realistic attitude whereby language choices and levels are defined by need, situation and context. It is a flexible and fluid process which responds to the specific yet changing needs of an increasingly mobile workforce in a globalised economy.

Language Centre Survey

Which is your university?

Cambridge University	**162**	16%
Coventry University	**43**	4%
The London School of Economics	**142**	14%
The University of Birmingham	**117**	12%
The University of Leeds	**139**	14%
The University of Manchester	**179**	18%
The University of Sheffield	**176**	18%
The University of Warwick	**41**	4%

Language Centre Survey

Are you an undergraduate or a postgraduate?

Postgraduat [251]

Undergradua [742]

Undergraduate	**742**	75%
Postgraduate	**251**	25%

Language Centre Survey

Please select the term that best describes your field of study

Arts (e.g. Drama, Music, Art, Fashion)	**29**	3%
Biological Sciences	**53**	5%
Business and Management	**87**	9%
Computer Science	**19**	2%
Education	**17**	2%
Engineering	**157**	16%
Health (e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy)	**27**	3%
Humanities (e.g. English, History, Philosophy)	**109**	11%
Law	**31**	3%
Mathematics	**41**	4%
Media Studies, Journalism	**8**	1%
Modern Languages, Linguistics	**116**	12%
Physical Sciences (e.g. Chemistry, Geology, Physics)	**80**	8%
Psychological Sciences	**14**	1%
Social Sciences (e.g. Economics, Sociology, Anthropology)	**170**	17%
Sports Science	**7**	1%
Other	**32**	3%

Language Centre Survey

Which language have you chosen to study?

Arabic	**26**	3%
British Sign Language	**19**	2%
Chinese	**79**	8%
Dutch	**4**	0%
French	**234**	24%
German	**197**	20%
Greek	**2**	0%
Italian	**92**	9%
Japanese	**63**	6%
Korean	**5**	1%
Persian	**1**	0%
Polish	**3**	0%
Portuguese	**12**	1%
Russian	**21**	2%
Spanish	**219**	22%
Swedish	**0**	0%
Turkish	**0**	0%
Urdu	**0**	0%
Swahili	**0**	0%
Other	**16**	2%

Language Centre Survey

Will the marks you obtain for this language course count towards your degree (i.e. are you studying for academic credit)?

No [473]

Yes [524]

Yes	**524**	53%
No	**473**	47%
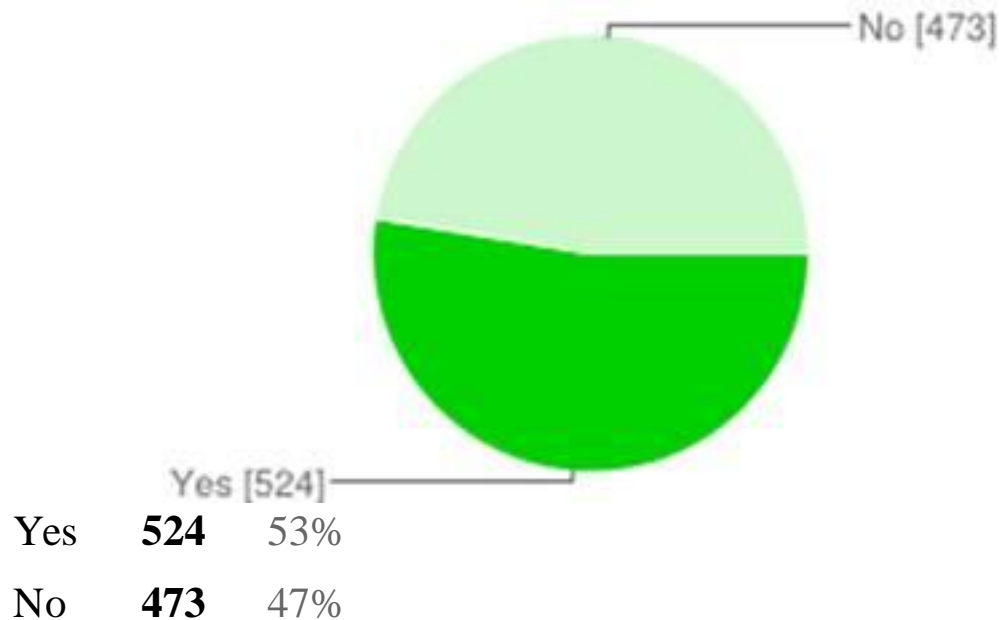
Language Centre Survey

For holiday purposes [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**292**	29%
Important	**468**	47%
Very important	**171**	17%
Extremely important	**69**	7%

For research purposes [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**616**	62%
Important	**226**	23%
Very important	**87**	9%
Extremely important	**65**	7%

To enhance my employment prospects [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**119**	12%
Important	**320**	32%
Very important	**299**	30%
Extremely important	**258**	26%

Language Centre Survey

Usefulness in my prospective career [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**170**	17%
Important	**309**	31%
Very important	**269**	27%
Extremely important	**250**	25%

To study abroad [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**404**	41%
Important	**276**	28%
Very important	**153**	15%
Extremely important	**157**	16%

To reconnect with my family background [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**877**	89%
Important	**44**	4%
Very important	**28**	3%
Extremely important	**41**	4%

Language Centre Survey

For cultural interest [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**133**	13%
Important	**382**	38%
Very important	**305**	31%
Extremely important	**175**	18%

To engage globally more effectively [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**142**	14%
Important	**329**	33%
Very important	**290**	29%
Extremely important	**234**	24%

To gain good marks [Can you indicate how important each of the following reasons are for studying your chosen language?]

Not important	**528**	53%
Important	**272**	27%
Very important	**121**	12%
Extremely important	**71**	7%

Language Centre Survey

Which description below best fits the level you are studying?

Beginner (A1)	**407**	41%
Elementary (A2) (Post-Beginner but pre-GCSE)	**140**	14%
Intermediate 1 (B1) (Post GCSE equivalent)	**151**	15%
Intermediate 2 (B2) (Post AS level equivalent)	**103**	10%
Advanced 1 (B2+/C1) (Post A level equivalent)	**127**	13%
Advanced 2 (C1+/C2) (Post A level + 1 or 2 years)	**71**	7%

Language Centre Survey

How important is it for you to be able to study a language whilst you are at university?
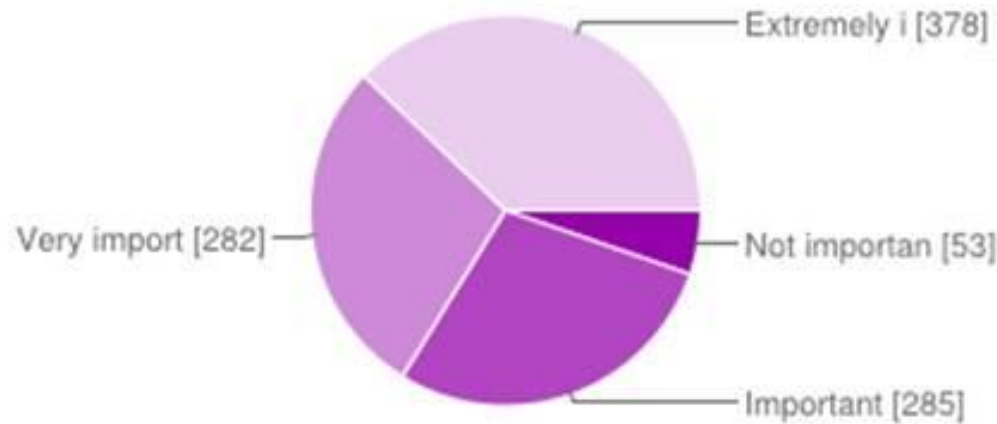
Not important	**53**	5%
Important	**285**	29%
Very important	**282**	28%
Extremely important	**378**	38%

Language Centre Survey

How important is it for you to have your language learning formally assessed?
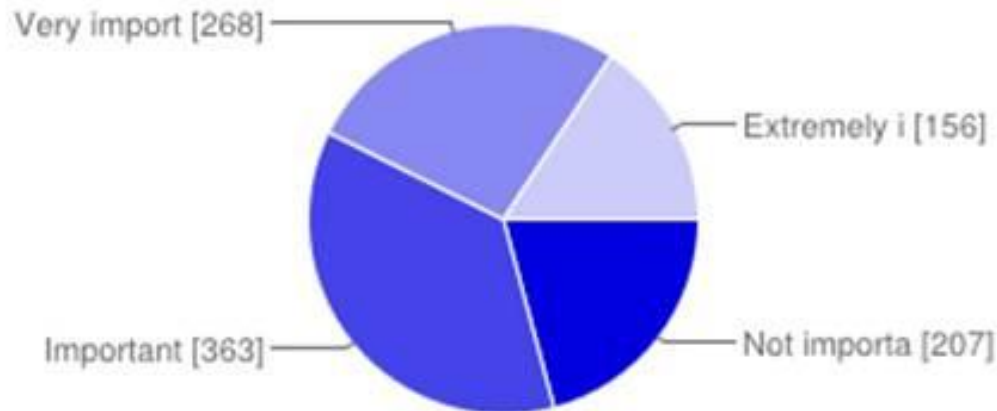
|		
Not important	**207**	21%
Important	**363**	37%
Very important	**268**	27%
Extremely important	**156**	16%

Language Centre Survey

How important is it for you to have your language learning formally recognised outside your university?

Not important	**140**	14%
Important	**285**	29%
Very important	**280**	28%
Extremely important	**295**	30%
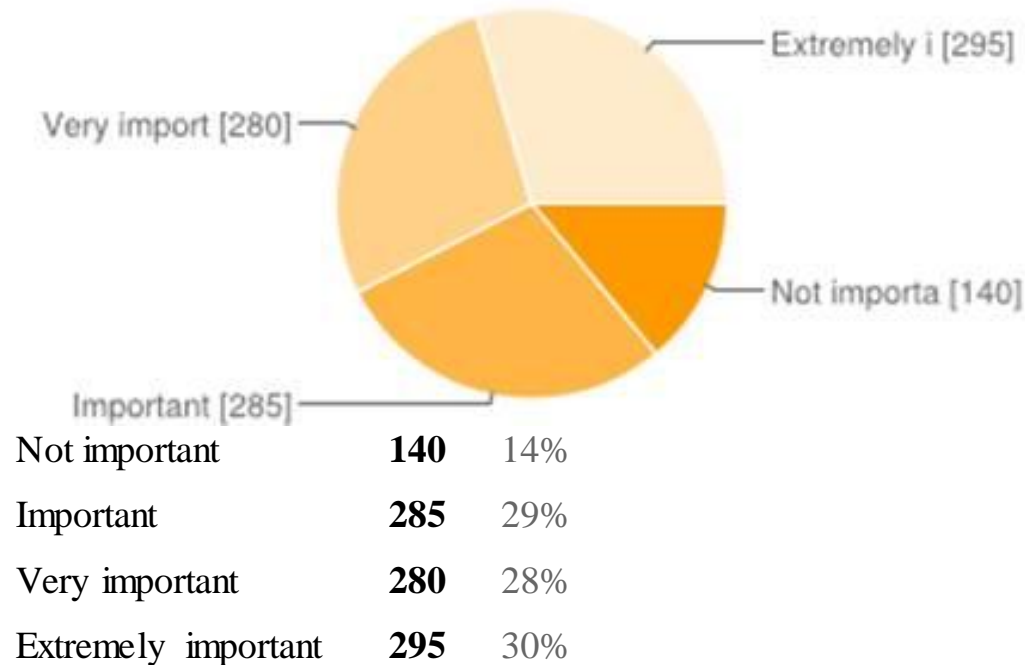
Language Centre Survey

Was the opportunity to learn a language a factor in your choice of university?
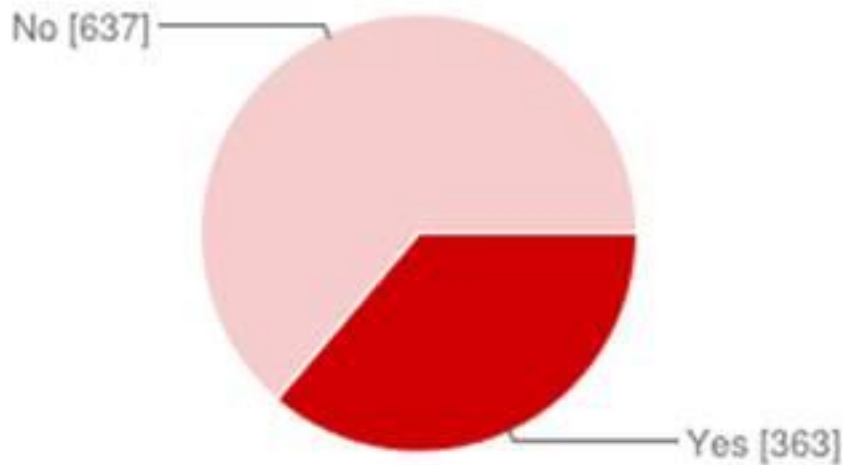
| Yes | **363** | 36% |
| No | **637** | 64% |

Language Centre Survey

Which of the categories below best describes your intended field of work?

Banking, Accounting, Finance	**91**	9%
Business, Management, Marketing	**90**	9%
Civil Service, Government agencies	**97**	10%
Computing	**18**	2%
Creative Industries	**35**	4%
Education, Academia	**139**	14%
Engineering	**142**	14%
Health Services	**46**	5%
Law	**31**	3%
Media, Journalism	**33**	3%
Science	**92**	9%
Travel, Leisure, Hospitality Industries	**10**	1%
Translating, Interpreting	**41**	4%
Other	**129**	13%

Language Centre Survey

What is your first language/mother language ?

Language	Count	%		Language	Count	%
Arabic	7	1%				
Bulgarian	8	1%		Norwegian	3	0%
Chinese	85	9%		Turkish	5	1%
Danish	2	0%		Persian	2	0%
Dutch	5	1%		Polish	14	1%
Finnish	5	1%		Portuguese	26	3%
French	35	4%		Romanian	15	2%
English	581	58%		Russian	9	1%
German	29	3%		Serbo-Croat	3	0%
Greek	16	2%		Spanish	31	3%
Hindi	7	1%		Swedish	3	0%
Italian	31	3%		Other	69	7%
Japanese	4	0%				
Korean	4	0%				

Do universities need a language policy?

- **Worton Review:** http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_41/
- **British Academy**
- Language Matters http://www.britac.ac.uk/reports/language-matters/index.cfm
- Language matters more and morehttp://www.britac.ac.uk/news/bulletin/Language_matters11.pdf
- Born Global: http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Born_Global.cfm
- Feeling that we should have a policy is **shared** by senior management and language centre

The quote of the year (2009)

- David Lammy MP, Minister of State for Higher Education and Intellectual Property:

- *"A university without languages is a university without universality."*

  Taken from David Lammy's introductory speech at British Academy, 3rd. June 2009

LSE – the international dimension

- 10000 students
- 30% UG
- 70% PG
- 40/60 UK and non-UK
- International
- Multinational
- Students
- Workforce
- Multi-lingual
- INVISIBILITY

The present situation for languages at LSE

- 300 students study a **Language & Society** option as an assessed part of their degree (25%): French, German, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish
- 100 students take a degree option in **Literature & Society**
- 1600 learn a language as an **extra-curricular course** (as above + Arabic, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese)
- http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/lanPol.pdf

Towards national policies?

- **Yes *and No…***
- Universities are developing policies which fit their own profile
- Momentum to get this done now
- Competitive edge
- Positive picture could emerge
- AULC will place all policies on their website

The Fiesole Group was founded in 2007 with the aim of improving teacher training for academics who work across Europe and beyond.

* making academics mobile

* employability, mobility, pedagogy

* maximising potential, enhancing quality, promoting mobility

- **Who are we?**

- The FIESOLE Group came into being hand in hand with the opening of the [Max Weber Programme](#) in September 2006. A group of applied linguists, educationalists and language professionals from various higher education institutions in Europe met to brainstorm ideas about how to give concrete support to the first cohort of Max Weber Fellows.
- [European University Institute](#) (Fiesole)
- [London School of Economics](#)
- [Humboldt University](#) (Berlin)
- [Collège d'Europe](#) (Bruges)
- [Pompeu Fabra University](#) (Barcelona)
- [Central European University](#) (Budapest)
- University of Sienna
- Institute of Education (University of London)
- University of Oxford

THE FIESOLE GROUP

- **What do we do as "the group" ?**

- The focus of the Group's activities has widened to include a concern with developing and disseminating best practices in the field of academic communication, with particular reference to the needs of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers and junior faculty in today's multilingual Europe.

- The group collaborates through face-to-face interaction, teaching exchanges and (in the pipeline) a virtual platform in order to share teaching and learning practices which have proved successful in the members' home institutions.

- Through its activities, the group is dedicated to developing teaching materials, methodologies, and curricular guidelines particularly suited to multilingual settings in which English functions as an academic lingua franca.

- Specific areas of expertise include teaching and learning in university classrooms (with particular attention to issues of cultural diversity), academic literacy, writing for publication, para-academic communication.

THE FIESOLE GROUP

- **Who inspires us? How do we measure the impact of what we do?**
- **The Max Weber Programme at EUI** – the source of the FIESOLE group and our "testing zone"
- http://www.eui.eu/ProgrammesAndFellowships/MaxWeberProgramme/Activities/programmedescription20142015.aspx
- **Times Higher article**: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/all-terrain-scholars-pursue-fluency-in-different-cultures/2003019.fullarticle

- University students on the move often required institutions "to manage [a] possible 'disconnect' between undergraduate education (mainly in national languages) and graduate education (increasingly in English)". Academics going to work in a new country wanted "publishing strategies geared to career advancement" within "a common European space" that still allowed them to "re-enter [their] national systems" at a later date, as many postdocs say they would like to do

Teaching practice and certification

- Fellows interested in obtaining the MWP Teaching Certificate will participate in all of the listed activities, including a Teaching Practice Week at one of the partner institutions (Pompeu Fabra, LSE, Humboldt) or equivalent teaching locally. Fellows interested in the Certificate who have already had documented training in teaching may be exempted on request from certain activities, but will be expected to in any case participate a Teaching Week: http://www.eui.eu/ProgrammesAndFellowships/MaxWeberProgramme/TeachingatEUIAndAbroad/TeachingAbroad2013.aspx

- - Preparatory meetings for the Humboldt, UPF and LSE Teaching Exchanges
- - Workshops on Course Design (EUI, LSE, Oxford)
- - Workshop, Seminar Teaching: Preparation for Micro-Teaching and Teaching Practice Weeks' (LSE)
- - Microteaching sessions (filmed)
- - Workshop, 'Effective Communication for Academics' and individual feedback on micro-teaching sessions, (Collège de Bruges)
- - Workshop, 'Developing reflective practice: approaches to classroom observation', (Siena/EUI)
- - Workshop, 'Teaching in the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classroom' (UPF), followed by tutorials for UPF teaching exchange fellows
- - Curriculum and Course development sessions with Faculty
- - Teaching Week at LSE, UPF or Humboldt (or equivalent teaching and observation locally)
- - Academic Communications Skills support (tutorials, classroom observation on request etc.)

The Wulkow Group – bringing European language centres together

Summary of our role and our greatest challenges

- Universities are vital to the economy of any size of city - language centres contribute

- Universities encourage integration and celebrate diversity – again a role for language centres

- Recognising language capital of existing speakers of other languages

- Maximising potential of "home" students learning other languages – and other members of community

- Increasing visibility – welcoming international students

- Shifting image – internationalism part of DNA

- Addressing wider audience – thinking outside immediate environment

- **Management buy-in to the principle of language provision and…resources**

Jeg takker for opmærksomheden!

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