

Editorial

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As this editorial was being written, a news story came about an attack on civilians enjoying a holiday on Bondi Beach in Sydney, Australia. Constant updates repeatedly interrupted the writing flow, bringing alarming news of a mounting death count and early information that this was a racially motivated attack. Such random acts of violence can powerfully challenge one's belief in the value of academic work, like editing an academic journal about languages and language learning. Cutting through the inevitable self-doubt, what emerges is a renewed conviction that language education matters precisely because the world is fractured, unequal, and at times violently unjust. If language is one means through which fear is amplified, difference is essentialized, and hatred is legitimized, then education about language is central to preserving the conditions for democratic coexistence, where disagreement can be articulated without dehumanization and difference does not become a pretext for violence.

The European Journal of Education and Language Review (EJELR), which we are proud to launch with this issue, is committed to being a venue for such thinking. Our perspective is premised on a set of interrelated beliefs that reflect this commitment. The first one is that language is more than just communication; it is social action that does things in the world, and therefore language education aims at developing participants' ability to engage in social acts such as negotiating their social role, developing hybrid identities, legitimizing or questioning authority, recognizing manipulative, exclusionary, and extremist discourse, and making resistance possible. A second belief is that language users, language teachers, and language learners are people with plurilingual and multicultural identities, vulnerabilities, and aspirations, operating in a space where language learning intersects with class, race, gender, migration status, and —occasionally— trauma. A third belief is that language education always takes a position, even when it disavows any positioning; and that —just as it is possible to align with views of education that promote decontextualized measurement and efficiency— it is equally possible and, arguably more desirable, to position ethical responsibility, alongside with care about wellbeing, safety and social justice, as core educational concerns.

The publishing priorities of EJELR reflects this commitment. As a journal, we actively seek work that views language and language learning as socially consequential. This means that we are keen to publish contributions that situate language work within social, political, and ethical discourses, and scholarship highlights how language intersects with questions of power, (in)equality, belonging, wellbeing, and social cohesion. Equally, we welcome articles that critically interrogate the 'known' (Rivers, 2015) in language education and bring dominant narratives into question. Additionally, we affirm linguistic and epistemic diversity by encouraging work that amplifies marginalized perspectives, under-researched contexts, under-resourced languages and language varieties, and non-traditional methodological outlooks.

In the first article of this inaugural issue, *Gjini & Hernandez-Gantes* raise questions of how language, citizenship, and discipline might intersect in shaping international students' access to opportunity. Using a quantitative analysis of survey data about internship programmes, the authors challenge perceptions of equity in participation and provide unsettling insights into how academic disciplines and visa regimes provide structural filtering across institutionalized pathways to employment.

In the article that follows, *Dogut* compares the educational policies for children with a migration background in the United States of America and Türkiye. Her analysis shows how inequality is normalized by institutional practices, such as the expectation that immigrants comply with documentation requirements or deploy their own resources to compensate for missing educational provision. Such practices, which outwardly present as neutral or supportive, avoid signaling exclusion overtly, but they nevertheless reproduce social inequality. The study also questions the limitations of formally inclusive but structurally evasive technocratic solutions that serve to contain, rather than integrate, linguistic and cultural diversity.

The experience of international students is also the topic of *Acar's* article, which discusses the 'precarious reality' in which they are often embedded. *Acar* notes that international students are often subjected to a regime of hyper-visibility, where they are celebrated as diversity symbols. However, their lived experience (especially in the case of students from the Global South or people with racialized accents) is also typified by intense monitoring regimes, emotional labor, and pressures to self-censor. The findings of this article are particularly timely and relevant, as they reposition visa status and language, not as adjustment problems with which international students have to contend, but as sites of injustice.

Next, *Clarisse Halpern, Hasan Aydin, and Bruno Halpern* report on a longitudinal case study that examined how pre-service teachers of English to speakers of other languages engaged with the humanistic and social-justice-oriented content of their academic program of studies. They note that, while awareness is a requisite for transformative practice, its effect is often limited to the development of positive dispositions towards marginalized others and surface inclusivity. The study raises the sobering concern that transformative practice cannot develop simply through exposure to concepts (cf. Kostoulas, 2024); rather, it requires structured discomfort, reflexivity, and commitment to challenging established ways of thinking and acting as a language educator.

The contribution by *Natsi and Vitsou*, raises questions about the inclusion of minorities by bringing into focus an under-researched cultural group, children with Japanese heritage in Greek schools. This qualitative study synthesizes established research traditions (interviews) and less traditional ones (language portraits) to show how these children negotiate belonging, identity, and linguistic positioning in a largely monolingual education system, and how they manage the tension between high linguistic competence and positioning as perpetual outsiders. In doing so, *Natsi and Vitsou* challenge assimilationist assumptions in educational discourse, and foreground belonging as an ethical, rather than a purely affective, issue.

The final article in this issue by *Deiri and Burkhard* shifts the focus from access and participation to the lived experiences of people whose daily lives unfold within language regimes shaped by renewed securitization, anti-immigrant policy, and linguistic nationalism. The article, a multilingual duo-ethnography of fear in the lives of two immigrant female scholars in the United States and their research participants, reframes fear not as an individual emotion but as an emergent outgrowth of structural violence sedimented in official signage, executive orders, and even seemingly innocuous discourses (e.g., the affirmation that one speaks English "well enough"). The study also shows how multilingual intimate spaces provide scope for survival, healing, and resistance.

None of the articles in this inaugural issue claims that language education can prevent violence or undo injustice on its own. What they do succeed in doing, however, is raise awareness that language education is never just about language, and it's never just about education. It extends into questions of positioning, recognition, inclusion, and vulnerability in social life, questions that need to be asked if we are committed to talking about social injustice. The topics raised in these articles - questions about fear and belonging, access and exclusion, care and responsibility - are neither settled nor confined to the contexts examined in the pages that follow. They invite sustained inquiry, disagreement, and – eventually - understanding of different positions. The *European Journal of Education and Language Review* seek to be a space for such work and views itself not as a neutral observer of language education, but as a space for scholarship that takes its social consequences seriously.

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