

## **Multilingualism and cognitive flexibility in Singapore**

In the last 50 years, researchers have tried to show that rather than a hindrance to an individual's development, bi/multilingualism can be an asset. The claim was first tested in a modern scientific manner by Peal and Lambert in 1962, and has since generated over 400 publications on the subject, mainly involving IQ or executive functions (EFs).

Many of the studies have taken place in the Global North, in which multilingualism is still a bit of an exception to the rule. Findings have been contradictory at best. More recent studies have argued for different approaches to the question, and in particular to also study the phenomenon wider afield, where multilingualism is more likely norm than exception.

Today, I will present some work from a country that is, by law, multilingual (Singapore). I will present the language situation in Singapore in some detail, helped by the CILD-Q, a newly developed questionnaire by Wigdorowitz et al (2023), that measures contextual and individual linguistic diversity. I will then report on some of our findings regarding the link between multilingualism and one of the executive functions in particular, namely cognitive flexibility.

I will finish with a look at some of the future studies we are currently running and how they may elucidate the problem further, but also report on the relationship between multilingualism and other social variables.