

Call for Book Chapters

The Politics of Language-in-Education Policy Change: Comparative Perspectives on Multilingual Education Reform

Edited by TJ D'Agostino & Erina Iwasaki

Despite growing international recognition of the educational, social, and economic benefits of first language-based multilingual education (L1-based MLE), the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of language-in-education reforms remain uneven across contexts. While some countries have or are institutionalizing multilingual education policies, others have experienced stalled reforms, limited implementation, or policy reversals. Understanding why these different trajectories emerge remains a central question for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners alike.

This edited volume seeks to advance the study of language-in-education policy change by bringing together scholars who examine multilingual education reforms through a common comparative framework. We invite scholars to engage with an emerging comparative framework for understanding language-in-education policy change. This framework draws on cross-case analysis of six multilingual education reforms conducted through the USAID-funded Language of Instruction Transitions in Education Systems (LITES) study (see D'Agostino et al., 2025; Iwasaki et al., 2026; Metila et al., 2025).

Existing scholarship has generated important insights into language ideologies, political actors, advocacy coalitions, implementation challenges, and policy entrepreneurship, yet a comparative framework for explaining variation in policy trajectories remains underdeveloped. This volume aims to add to this discourse by identifying the factors, mechanisms, and pathways that contribute to policy emergence, adoption, sustainability, and reversal. In particular, we invite papers responding to one or more of the following research questions:

1. Why do language-in-education reforms gain political traction in some contexts or at particular moments, while stalling or reversing in others?
2. Why do some reforms endure while others reverse?
3. What mechanisms explain variation in language-in-education policy trajectories in a given context or across contexts?

The editors' recent work proposes a model in which political mobilization, demonstrated feasibility, and agenda salience interact—often sequentially—to generate political prioritization for L1-based MLE. Contributors are invited to examine whether, how, and under what conditions these dynamics appear to explain political and policy outcomes in their cases, as well as to identify alternative pathways, mechanisms, or explanations.

While process tracing is of particular interest to the editors because of its ability to illuminate causal processes and mechanisms, we welcome a range of qualitative and mixed-method approaches that can contribute to understanding how and why language-in-education policies change over time.

We plan to invite interested collaborators to a series of online workshops, focused on emergent methods and theories of relevance to this project, as well as to an in-person workshop at the University of Notre Dame on **October 1st and 2nd** for contributors to present and discuss draft chapters.

Submission Process

Interested authors are invited to submit an abstract of approximately 500–750 words to adagosti@nd.edu and eiwasaki@nd.edu outlining:

- Research question
- Case(s) examined
- Methodology
- Data sources
- Relevance to the volume's conceptual framework

Tentative Timeline

- Abstract submission: August 15, 2026
- Notification of acceptance: September 1, 2026
- Symposium at Notre Dame: October 1-2, 2026
- Full chapter draft submission: January 15, 2027
- Full chapter final submission: February 15, 2027
- Peer review feedback: March 15, 2027
- Revised chapter submission: May 15, 2027

Suggested bibliography

For process tracing methods:

- [Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. \(2011\). What is Process Tracing actually tracing?: The three variants of process tracing methods and their uses and limitations. In *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting 2011*.](#)
 - This conference proceeding is publicly available and provides an overview of process tracing. It is suggested as a first read for those who want to familiarize themselves with process tracing.
- Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. (2016). *Causal case study methods: Foundations and guidelines for comparing, matching, and tracing*. University of Michigan Press. Link to [Amazon](#).

- This book, by the same authors as the conference proceeding paper, is for those who want to go deeper into process tracing.

Our within-case studies:

For those curious about how we applied process tracing in some of our within-case studies:

- D'Agostino, T. J., Iwasaki, E., Oduor, J., Trudell, B., & Inyega, H. (2025). Policy in name only: explaining the failure to generate political priority for L1-based multilingual education in Kenya. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2025.2499715>
- Iwasaki, E., D'Agostino, T., Teel, M., DaffC*, M., Gassama Mbaye, M., Ngoné Seck, A., & Ka, F. S. (2026). Proving what's possible: tracing the generation of political priority for bilingual education in Senegal. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2026.2647066>
- Metila, R. A., D'Agostino, T. J., & Iwasaki, E. (2025). Why the Philippines reversed its mother-tongue instruction policy: Tracing the erosion of political priority for first language-based education in the Philippines. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 118, 103408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2025.103408>

Our embargoed copy related to our emerging framework of language-in-education policy change can be shared upon request.