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In this article, we argue that within multilingual polities, whether national or transnational, multilingual parties are all-things-considered more desirable than monolingual parties operating via a lingua franca. First, we develop a taxonomy of what we believe are the main ideal-type models of "linguistic democracy," that is, of the relationship between language and democracy in multilingual polities. Second, we argue that multilingual parties are in a better position than monolingual parties to formulate conceptions of the common good that take into account diverse linguistic and epistemic perspectives. Third, we claim that such parties can perform an educational role for their members and for citizens in general, by making them aware of the implications of linguistic diversity for democratic life. Fourth, we argue that multilingual parties can offer a linkage between citizens and government via forms of intraparty deliberation that are rendered more inclusive and democratic by the use of multiple languages.

Over the past 20 years, a number of political theorists have begun to explore the normative issues surrounding linguistic diversity in liberal democratic societies. Under the broad umbrella of what is now known as the "linguistic justice" literature, these authors have been providing different answers to the question of how states should respond to the fact of linguistic diversity, by mainly focusing on such issues as minority language rights and the role of English as a lingua franca within the international sphere (De Schutter and Robichaud 2015; Kymlicka and Patten 2003; Van Parijs 2011). In this article we address a critical aspect of that debate, that is, the relationship between language and democracy, which we aim to analyze through the lens of political parties. Our main argument is that within multilingual polities, whether national or transnational, multilingual parties are all-things-considered more desirable than parties operating via a lingua franca. We define multilingual parties as parties that operate via different languages, for example, through (at least a passive) knowledge of a second language and/or interpreting and translation.

On the one hand, theorists of linguistic justice are ambiguous with regard to the nexus between democracy and language, for example, the question of whether or not a single language is normatively desirable for a democratic regime (e.g., Kymlicka 2001b; Patten 2009; Van Parijs 2011; see the next section). On the other hand, democratic theorists (e.g., Christiano 1996; Dahl 1961; Landemore 2012; Saward 1998) have often remained silent regarding the implications of linguistic diversity for their approaches and conclusions (see also Peled and Bonotti 2019; Schmidt 2014). This is especially surprising if, within the literature on democratic theory, we focus on theorists of deliberative democracy, given the centrality of language to that democratic model.[1] For example, does the adoption of a lingua franca provide the best vehicle for democratic deliberation in linguistically diverse societies? Or is some degree of multilingual deliberation (e.g., using translation and interpreting) more desirable? These questions have not been addressed systematically, and there seems to be a high level of ambiguity in the often cursory responses that deliberative theorists have provided to them.

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1. A telling example is *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy* (Bächtiger et al. 2018), the state of the art volume on deliberative democracy, in whose index neither "language" nor "multilingualism" nor "linguistic diversity" appear. Indeed, in none of the chapters of the *Handbook* is there a substantive or even marginal treatment of the challenges or, perhaps (as we claim), opportunities that linguistic diversity presents for democratic deliberation.

In this article, we embrace a model of multilingual democracy that we call "the enthusiastic multilingual model." We argue that this model is normatively desirable for democratic theory and practice and preferable to monolingual models that aim to overcome linguistic diversity in democratic life via a lingua franca (see Stojanović 2021). Yet in the present study we cannot offer a full-fledged defense of multilingual democracy. Given the breadth of the topic, we focus more specifically on political parties, since these are key elements of a democratic system (Rosenblum 2008; White and Ypi 2016). We argue that multilingual parties are all-things-considered more desirable than their monolingual alternatives. While our argument is predominantly theoretical and normative, we try to connect it as much as possible to real-world debates. In particular, we focus more specifically, though not solely, on transnational Europarties. This is for two reasons. First, such parties are more likely to operate across linguistic barriers than national ones. Second, there is a well-established body of empirical work on such parties (Bressanelli 2014; Gaffney 2002; Hanley 2007; Hix 1995; Hix and Lord 1997; Priestly 2010; Van Hecke 2010). Yet none of these works considers, let alone carefully examines, the implications of linguistic diversity for political parties and party politics.

As well as addressing the broader question of what the relationship between language and democracy should be in multilingual polities, by focusing on multilingual parties we also intend to address a significant gap in the current normative literature on parties and partisanship in political theory (Bonotti 2017; Muirhead 2014; Rosenblum 2008; White and Ypi 2016; Wolkenstein 2019). Indeed, that literature has largely neglected the question of whether and how language and linguistic diversity may affect political parties. Even those authors who have examined parties and partisanship from a normative perspective have failed to consider the potential barriers that linguistic diversity may pose to the formation and flourishing of parties and, especially, of transnational parties in the European context (e.g., White 2014; Wolkenstein 2018). When those barriers are considered, it is cursorily argued that resorting to a lingua franca may be sufficient to overcome them (White 2014, 382). We question this solution and argue that multilingual parties are better than their monolingual counterparts at realizing three key normative goals of parties and partisanship: (a) formulating conceptions of the common good, (b) performing educational functions, and (c) providing a linkage between civil society and the state via intraparty deliberation. We contend that all three dimensions are fostered by multilingualism and hindered by monolingualism, that is, that multilingual parties are all-things-considered (rather than pro tanto) more desirable than monolingual parties operating via a lingua franca.

Our analysis proceeds as follows. First, we elaborate a conceptual road map and present a taxonomy of what we believe are the main ideal-type models of "linguistic democracy," that is, ideal-type models of the relationship between language and democracy in multilingual polities. Second, we argue that multilingual parties can contribute to formulating conceptions of the common good that take into account the diverse linguistic and epistemic perspectives present within contemporary societies. Third, we claim that such parties can perform an educational role for their members and for citizens in general, by making them aware of the implications of linguistic diversity for democratic life. Fourth, we argue that multilingual parties can offer a linkage between citizens and government via forms of intraparty deliberation that are rendered more inclusive and democratic by the use of multiple languages.

Before proceeding with our analysis, a clarification is necessary. Since many of our real-world examples in the article are from transnational parties, one might point out that our argument relies on strong normative assumptions regarding the desirability of transnational politics and political agency per se and, for this reason, will not be persuasive for those who do not already embrace these transnational positions. These may include, for example, liberal nationalists (e.g., Miller 1995), republicans (e.g., Bellamy 2019), and "demoicrats" who deny the possibility of a pan-European demos (e.g., Cheneval and Nicolaïdis 2017). However, in this article we do not intend to defend, against these critics, transnational politics per se. Instead, we use the example of transnational parties to show that multilingual parties, whether at the transnational or national level, are all-things-considered more desirable than their monolingual counterparts.

A key advantage of looking at transnational parties, and especially Europarties, is that within the EU there has not been yet a process of linguistic assimilation and homogenization analogous to that which has characterized most nation-states (see, e.g., Gellner 1983). Therefore we can observe more clearly what multilingual deliberation looks like in practice (e.g., within the European Parliament) and what it would have looked like at the national level had processes of top-down linguistic assimilation and homogenization not been carried out to the extent that they have. Furthermore, increasing levels of immigration, combined with the presence of autochthonous/national minorities, are likely to gradually reduce the level of linguistic homogeneity that currently characterizes many Western liberal democracies, thus rendering our analysis also more relevant to parties operating within national boundaries. As White (2014, 394) points out, "partisanship at the national level in some respects increasingly resembles its transnational variant. It too has to contend with . . . increasing levels of cultural diversity. . . . Thinking about transnational

partisanship is one way to think about the future of national partisanship."

MODELS OF LINGUISTIC DEMOCRACY: A CONCEPTUAL ROAD MAP

Given the lack of systematicity, in the linguistic justice and democratic theory literatures, with regard to issues pertaining to linguistic diversity, and in order to set the stage for our analysis of multilingual parties, in this section we elaborate a conceptual road map of what we believe are the main ideal-type models of "linguistic democracy," that is, ideal-type models of the relationship between language and democracy in multilingual polities. Our conceptual road map is presented in the form of a taxonomy whose goal is twofold. First, we aim to throw clarity on the often confused and ambiguous analysis of that relationship in the linguistic justice and democratic theory literatures. Second, and more importantly, we intend to show that one particular model, that is, what we call "enthusiastic multilingual democracy," has been relatively neglected, even though in our view it is the most desirable model. We then analyze the benefits and normative desirability of that model through the lens of multilingual political parties in the remainder of the article.

There are two, broad ideal-type models of linguistic democracy: monolingual and multilingual. Let us start with the former. The monolingual model is centred around the view that democracy in linguistically diverse societies works best via a single language. There are two variations of this model. The first requires that only one language be used at all vertical levels (national, regional, local, etc.) of democratic life. We call it the "congruent monolingual model." The language of democratic life used under this model is usually the language of the majority. Its adoption is often (though not always) linked to nation-building processes (e.g., Mill [1861] 1991; Miller 1995, 22; see also Gellner 1983). According to Kymlicka, "historically, virtually all liberal democracies have, at one point or another, attempted to diffuse a single societal culture [defined in particular by a common language] throughout all of . . . [their] territory" (Kymlicka 2001a, 23).[2] One real-world example that approximates this ideal-type model is France, where French is de jure and de facto the language of democratic life at all levels and has been historically imposed upon speakers of various minority languages (e.g., the Breton, the Basque, the Corsican, the German) and of a large variety of local patois (Weber 1976,

chap. 6).[3] Notice that the common language can sometimes also be an external lingua franca, for example, the language of a former colonial power (mostly English or French) in many African countries (Leung 2019, 49–60).

A common assumption that underlies the congruent monolingual model is perhaps best captured, in the recent literature, by Alan Patten's following statement:[4]

> It can be argued . . . that a common language facilitates the deliberative dimension of democracy. Democratic decision-making is not just a formal process of voting on the basis of antecedently given preferences. It also presupposes an ongoing activity of deliberation and discussion, mainly taking place in civil society, in which free and equal citizens exchange reasons and are sometimes moved by them to change their opinions and preferences. Too much linguistic diversity may be a barrier to the full flourishing of this informal practice of democracy. If citizens cannot understand one another, or if they seek to deliberate with co-linguists only, then democratic politics is likely to be compromised. State monolingualism works against this challenge by encouraging the formation of a common language of democratic dialogue. (Patten 2009, 105)

Alongside the congruent model we find another variation of the monolingual model, which we call the "noncongruent monolingual model." In this model, the use of a common language for democratic life at the polity (e.g., national or federal) level is accompanied by the use of that and/or other languages at the subpolity (e.g., regional or local) level, but (crucially) keeping each subpolity unit monolingual. This is the model defended, among others, by Philippe Van Parijs, who endorses English as a lingua franca for Belgium at the federal level, while also defending a regime of monolingual territoriality to ensure that other languages (Dutch, French, German) remain dominant at the regional and/or local level (Van Parijs 2011, 2018, chap. 3). While apparently multilingual, this model is in fact monolingual at both polity and subpolity levels when it comes

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2. Switzerland is "perhaps the only exception [because] it never made any serious attempt to pressure its French and Italian[-speaking] minorities to integrate into the German[-speaking] majority" (Kymlicka 2001a, 35, n. 9).

3. For example, the 1792 Convention decreed that throughout the Republic children must learn "to speak, read and write in the French language" and that everywhere "the instruction should take place only in French" (Weber 1976, 72). Nonetheless, until the First World War French was not the maternal tongue of most French citizens (Weber 1976, 73).

4. We focus on the recent contributions while acknowledging the standard and often-quoted passage from John Stuart Mill: "Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government, cannot exist. . . . The same books, newspapers, pamphlets, speeches, do not reach them" (Mill [1861] 1991, 291).

to the relationship between language and democracy. It does not involve, and actually openly rejects, the view that multilingualism is beneficial to democratic life. Indeed, Van Parijs maintains that "the emergence of . . . a demos is facilitated, indeed made possible, by the availability of a common language" (2011, 28) and that there can be "no viable democracy without a linguistically unified demos" (2000, 236). Hence, the main rationale for the adoption of a common language at the polity level remains the same one that we found in the congruent multilingual model and which is summarized by Patten.

The promotion and protection of subpolity languages of democratic life under this model is famously justified by Will Kymlicka through his claim that "democratic politics is politics in the vernacular. The average citizen feels at ease only when he discusses political questions *in his own* [native] language" (Kymlicka 2001b, 214, emphasis added).[5] It is unclear, from this and other works, whether Kymlicka also endorses the idea of a common language or lingua franca at the polity level or whether he thinks that most or all democratic decision-making should be kept at the subpolity level, where politics in the vernacular is more achievable. However if, as Kymlicka argues, people can only participate in democratic life in their own native language, then it seems implausible that democratic participation in a language or lingua franca other than one's native language(s) would be a suitable option within his model.

The main alternative to the (both congruent and incongruent) monolingual model is the multilingual model. In this model, democracy is considered compatible with the use of two or more languages rather than being viewed as dependent on a lingua franca. As in the case of the monolingual model, also under this model we can find two variations. The first is the "congruent multilingual model," in which multilingualism is adopted for democratic life at all vertical levels throughout the polity. Apart from Luxembourg (Horner and Weber 2008) and (arguably) Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is hard to find it in the real world.[6] (Notice that we are interested in the de facto

use of languages in democratic life, at all levels, not merely in knowing what languages are de jure official.) However, we can find examples of countries in which this model applies partially—that is, only if we zoom in on certain portions of their territories. For example, politicians from the town of Biel/Bienne, in the Canton of Berne, Switzerland, typically use either French or German, or both, for deliberations at the local, cantonal, and federal levels (see Meune 2011, 125).

The second, more realistic variant of the multilingual model is the "noncongruent multilingual model," in which the adoption of multilingual democratic deliberation at the polity level is accompanied by monolingual deliberation at the regional and/or local level. In Switzerland, for example, deliberation at the federal level tends to be carried out in at least two languages (German and French), sometimes three (when Italian is also used) and on solemn occasions even four (the first three plus Romansh), whereas at the subpolity level it is conducted in whichever language is dominant within each canton or, in multilingual cantons, within each municipality (Grin 1999). Another prominent example is the European Union, in which the European Parliament operates via the 24 EU official languages, whereas democratic deliberation within each EU member state is generally conducted via a common national language. In the European Parliament, multilingual deliberation is facilitated by interpreting and translation, whereas in Switzerland these services are provided only in the first chamber but not in the second chamber of the Federal Assembly, nor during the committee meetings of both chambers. Multilingual deliberation at the federal level in Switzerland is also rendered possible by the individual bilingualism or multilingualism of elected politicians, that is, their ability to speak, or at least passively understand, the language(s) spoken by their interlocutors (Bühlmann, Heidelberger, and Schaub 2019; Steiner et al. 2004), something that is less common within the context of the EU (Gazzola 2016).

In spite of his aforementioned endorsement of the monolingual model, elsewhere Patten seems to defend the noncongruent multilingual model. He argues that where the adoption of a common language at the polity level has not been possible for various reasons (including issues concerning second-language learning and the inability of an internal majority to impose its language upon the entire population), various forms of multilingual deliberation may be necessary. However, he also argues that this can coexist with "a significant devolution of power to political units in which a common language community is present or could be brought about" (Patten 2003, 313).

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5. Van Parijs's main argument for granting regional and/or local languages priority within a certain territory is based on the idea of "parity of esteem": "in a situation in which people's collective identities are closely linked to their native language, there arises a major threat to the recognition of an equal status to all as soon as the native language of some is given what is unquestionably a superior function" (Van Parijs 2011, 3–4). However, unlike Kymlicka's politics in the vernacular argument, Van Parijs's parity of esteem argument is not directly relevant to the analysis of the relationship between language and democracy that is central to our article.

6. In Luxembourg, a majority of citizens speak all three official languages: French, German, and Luxembourgish. Debates in the Parliament are usually held in Luxembourgish, but laws and documents are typically drafted in French or German. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, too, probably everyone speaks and/or understands each of the three official languages (Bosnian, Croatian, and

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Serbian). But, in contrast to Luxembourg, these are de facto only variations of a single, polycentric language (Clyne 1992). Hence, it is questionable to what extent Bosnia and Herzegovina is truly an example of the congruent multilingual model.

It is important to note that Patten's approach also helps us to draw a further, important distinction within the multilingual model. This is the distinction between what we call the "reluctant multilingual model" and the "enthusiastic multilingual model." Both models can be variations of either the congruent or the noncongruent multilingual model, even though, as previously pointed out, the latter is the more realistic variant. Under the reluctant multilingual model, multilingual democratic deliberation is considered practically feasible but not desirable per se. It is mostly viewed as a second-best solution, which we only should adopt when the monolingual model is not feasible. Under the enthusiastic multilingual model, instead, multilingual democratic deliberation is considered desirable for its own sake. This approach, however, is very rare in the debate on language and democracy. In our survey of the literature, we have only found one author, Nicole Doerr (2009, 2012, 2018), who substantially defends a model of this kind and for whom multilingual deliberation, aided by political translation, is a resource for democracy, rather than a hindrance to it (as defenders of the monolingual model argue) or a second-best option that we should only adopt half-heartedly (as defenders of the reluctant multilingual model maintain or imply). However, Doerr is a sociologist rather than a political theorist. Even though her empirical insights are enlightening, and we draw on some of them in our article, our account of the enthusiastic multilingual model is more explicitly normative than hers and, as the foregoing taxonomy has shown, more clearly situated within the existing linguistic justice and democratic theory debates.

Before proceeding, some clarifications are required. First, notice that our claim is not that there are very few arguments in favor of promoting multilingual diversity tout court. Various authors have defended this view by appealing, for example, to individual autonomy (Kymlicka 1995), parity of esteem (Van Parijs 2011), recognition (Taylor [1992] 1994), and the intrinsic value of linguistic diversity (e.g., Musschenga 1998; Réaume 2000). However, when it comes more specifically to the relationship between language and democracy, we struggle to find equally enthusiastic celebrations of linguistic diversity, as the aforementioned statements by Patten, Kymlicka, and Van Parijs show.

Second, we are aware that there are many empirical factors that may qualify our analysis insofar as they facilitate or hinder multilingual democratic deliberation. The most important are (*a*) the number of languages (e.g., with only two or three languages multilingual deliberation may be easier and less costly than when too many languages are involved),[7] (*b*) linguistic proximity (e.g., high proximity, e.g., between Spanish and Catalan, renders multilingual deliberation easier), and (*c*) territoriality (e.g., higher levels of territorial separation between languages are more likely to result in separate public spheres and life-worlds, and therefore fewer opportunities for multilingual interaction and exposure to other languages; e.g., see Laponce 1984).

MULTILINGUAL PARTIES, THE COMMON GOOD, AND PUBLIC JUSTIFICATION

One of the key normative ideals often associated with parties and partisanship in the recent literature in political theory is the view that partisanship involves the pursuit of political projects that aim to advance the common good rather than the partial interests of specific individuals or groups of people (Bonotti 2017; White and Ypi 2016). Parties are not simply parts, they are "parts-of-a-whole" (Sartori 1976, 26), that is, they ought to advance "particular conception *of the public good*" (White 2014, 378, emphasis added). This aspect is normally traced back to Edmund Burke's influential definition of party as "a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours *the national interest*, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" (Burke [1770] 1998, 271, emphasis added). Partisanship's commitment to the common good is often illustrated through the long-standing distinction between "parties" and "factions," where the latter, unlike the former, only advance the sectarian interests and values of a specific part of the population (Bonotti 2017; Rosenblum 2008; White and Ypi 2016).

Parties' normative commitment to the common good and to the public interest is also often conceptualized in terms of public justification. According to some authors, that is, a key way in which parties and partisans ought to contribute to advancing the common good is by defending their proposed policies and manifestoes by appealing to "generalizable principles" (White and Ypi 2016, 22) or "public reasons" (Bonotti 2017; see also Rawls [1993] 2005), that is, by providing reasons and arguments that could be understood and in principle endorsed by all citizens rather than only by a specific section of the population.

We embrace this tendency to conceive partisans' commitment to the common good as a commitment to public justification. In societies that are becoming increasingly diverse,

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7. However, the costs of translation and interpreting should not be overestimated, especially once we consider the benefits of multilingualism. In 2017, for instance, the Swiss Social-Democratic Party spent 56,000 Swiss francs for translation and interpreting services. This constitutes only 3.5% of its annual budget. Likewise, only roughly 1% of the EU's budget is devoted to translation and interpreting services (Gravier and Lundquist 2011, 81).

and in which party pluralism is already an established fact, it would be unrealistic to argue that parties could agree on the same conception of the common good. It is instead more plausible to argue that in view of that very pluralism (rather than as a way of denying it), parties and partisans ought to display their commitment to the common good (of a diverse society) by reformulating the arguments in support of their policy proposals in terms that citizens generally (including their opponents) could understand and potentially agree with. This is not a particularly utopian or unrealistic demand. It is, in fact, a tendency already found in many real-world parties, especially so-called catch-all parties (Kirchheimer 1966; see also White and Ypi 2011, 384).

Multilingual parties (unlike parties that operate across linguistic boundaries by using a lingua franca) can play a key role in this process of public justification in multilingual polities. To understand why, we should note that the process of public reasoning and democratic deliberation during which partisans ought to display their commitment to the common good and to publicly justified arguments is inherently linguistic. But is the use of only one language, that is, a lingua franca, sufficient for this purpose? This is doubtful. Different languages incorporate different linguistically codified understandings of key moral and political concepts that are central to public reasoning and democratic deliberation. Each language's epistemic universe is tightly linked to its vocabulary and grammar, and it may often be difficult and time consuming (though not impossible) to translate its linguistically codified concepts into other languages (Sapir [1949] 1985; Whorf 1956; Wierzbicka 2014). At first sight, this might appear to render partisanship across linguistic boundaries difficult, since partisans who speak different native languages may often not share the same epistemic background. This may especially apply to ethical and political debate, since linguistically codified political and ethical concepts are among those that most often resist clear and exhaustive translation between different languages (Collin 2013; Peled and Bonotti 2016). Therefore partisans attempting to operate across linguistic boundaries might often (consciously or unconsciously) encounter obstacles to their ability to deliberate about ideas and concepts concerning political ethics in a way that reflects a genuine shared understanding of the meaning of those ideas and concepts.

Take, for example, the term "liberal," which is central to much contemporary political theory and practice. As Richard Collin (2013, 290) points out, given how the term is understood differently in the United States, Britain, and Australia, "if we are trying to translate *liberal* into some target language . . . we need to decide whether to translate the meaning or the word, and accept that the results will be unsatisfactory in either case." His observation signals a twofold kind of epistemic discrepancy that may arise during processes of partisan mobilization across linguistic boundaries. The first, intralinguistic, concerns the different meanings that the same political term (in this case, "liberal") may have for members of the same linguistic community, for example, native English speakers. Even more challenging, however, are the issues that arise when we try to translate this epistemically ambiguous term into other languages, which may not present a literal translation of any of the meanings normally associated with it in English. Under these conditions, for example, aiming to create a "transnational *liberal* party" or, more simply, agreeing on a platform of liberal policies within existing transnational parties, might therefore be a significant challenge. Similar points can be made with regard to other key concepts in democratic theory, such as "fairness" (an English term often translated as "justice" in Romance languages) or "equality" (*égalité*) (Collin 2013, 290; see also Peled and Bonotti 2016). Some might observe that these and similar differences are not merely linguistic but reflect instead, more broadly, different political cultures, with their distinctive political concepts. We do not deny this. Instead, we simply stress the fact that such differences often become linguistically codified.

Adopting a lingua franca (Van Parijs 2011; White and Ypi 2016), one might argue, would offer a solution to this problem. After all, if all the members of a party operating across linguistic boundaries share the same language of deliberation, they may also share the epistemic universe that accompanies it. However, the adoption of a lingua franca may often increase, rather than reduce, the epistemic discrepancy between speakers of different languages. Indeed when speakers of different languages try to communicate through a lingua franca, those who use the lingua franca as nonnative speakers may mistakenly assume that certain key political and ethical terms in the lingua franca correspond to certain terms in their native language. The more diverse the linguistic background of the interlocutors is, the greater this problem will be. This could easily lead to a situation in which all the interlocutors use the same words (e.g., "liberal," "democracy," etc.) but often mean very different things. And this problem could become more significant the more numerous and complex the political terms used are (Collin 2013; Peled and Bonotti 2016).

Perhaps this problem could be overcome if everyone in a party (and in society in general) spoke the lingua franca as a (near-) native speaker, a situation that could be achieved through the intensive promotion of the lingua franca among nonnative speakers, especially children. However, contemporary liberal societies are highly mobile, and no form of linguistic engineering, including the widespread adoption of a lingua franca, could contribute to eliminating epistemic discrepancies between native speakers of different languages (Peled and Bonotti 2016). In

other words, we should recognize that linguistic diversity is a permanent feature of contemporary liberal democratic societies.

This, however, should not be considered an unfortunate occurrence but rather an opportunity for parties and partisanship. In other words, our claim is not that multilingual partisanship is a second-best option that we should only pursue when and because monolingual partisanship is unattainable (as in the reluctant multilingual model). And neither are we claiming that multilingual partisanship is only pro tanto desirable, without considering and critically assessing its monolingual alternative. Instead, our argument is precisely that multilingual partisanship is preferable to that alternative, and therefore all-things-considered desirable, when it comes to the formulation of conceptions of the common good and to public justification. Let us explain.

Resorting to a lingua franca, rather than engaging in a process of multilingual deliberation (e.g., involving interpreters and translators), would risk overlooking the diverse ways in which key political concepts such as freedom, democracy, and fairness, to name just a few, are linguistically codified and understood in different languages. And this would inevitably reduce the scope of the notions of the common good advanced by partisans, transnational or otherwise, during public deliberation, by rendering them less inclusive and more biased toward particular linguistic and cultural (e.g., Anglophone) traditions. Indeed, linguistic diversity can be considered a resource for deliberation about the common good, rather than an obstacle to it. As Ronald Schmidt (2014, 405) observes, "the search for the 'common good' is an ongoing process of deliberation, debate, and discussion, a project that is never complete but always ongoing. . . . Diverse language communities, along with diverse cultural communities, can enrich and enliven this search for mutual advantage in multiple ways." Multilingual parties that do not resort to a lingua franca in order to overcome linguistic barriers are better equipped than their monolingual counterparts to carry out this process of deliberation in which all perspectives are taken into account. They can be key platforms in which partisan speakers of different languages can present their linguistically codified worldviews and engage in a process of mutual understanding aimed at formulating a shared view of the common good, both within and between parties.

But how would this work in practice? Switzerland is a case in point. All major Swiss parties are multilingual (Stojanović and Bonotti 2020). At the cantonal level, they typically operate in only one language given that most cantons are officially monolingual. But at the national level they operate in all three official languages (German/French/Italian), or at least in two (German/French), and none of them, nor a non-official language (e.g., English), has the role of lingua franca. This means, for example, that cantonal delegates of each major

Swiss party gather three to four times each year at "delegate assemblies" and debate on current political issues by using their own language. Simultaneous translation is provided. Could something similar work at the European level? Fishkin (2018, 111–26), who in 2009 carried out an experiment called "Europolis," claims that it could and that a citizens' assembly at the European level would be a "viable democratic tool" (Fishkin 2018, 124). Moreover, 348 citizens from all 27 EU countries were involved in Europolis, and they all used their native languages to discuss two key policy issues (immigration and climate change). Language obstacles were overcome by employing simultaneous translation and did not hinder deliberation (Fishkin 2018, 119).

Furthermore, the construction of the common good which, we stressed earlier, involves a commitment to publicly justifying partisan claims and policy proposal to the broader society, is an ongoing enterprise, which cannot be accomplished once and for all and become crystallized in any specific contingent set of values, norms, and terms of public justification. Partisanship can play a key role in this process because it is transformative and creative. It can contribute to radically changing political institutions through revolution (White and Ypi 2016) or, less radically, to changing the terms of political justification that constitute the vocabulary of public reasoning (Bonotti 2017, 135; see also Flanders 2012; White and Ypi 2011). This task is important in order to ensure that the demands of new and existing groups, and the values that underlie them, are heard and allowed to shape a society's understanding of the common good and its justificatory practices (Rawls 2005, 452). But, once again, how can this process be accomplished without an awareness and understanding of what the demands of different linguistic groups might be? And how can this awareness and understanding be acquired if not through multilingual partisanship, rather than by resorting to the instrumentally convenient but epistemically reductive shortcut provided by a lingua franca?

An interesting example of the transformative power of linguistically diverse (and linguistically aware) partisanship can be found in Latin America, where "'twenty-first-century socialists' . . . have sought to resituate nationally-formed understandings of community, solidarity and exploitation within a larger framework by drawing on ideas of a shared pre-Spanish indigenous culture" (White 2014, 390). This transformation, which has been "described among Bolivia's Aymara as 'walking ahead while looking back', incorporates historically marginalized voices and creates a sense of empowerment among those contemporary forces engaged in the process of social change" (Ellner 2012, 107). Interestingly, the Aymara language presents an almost unique understanding of time, in which the spatial conceptual metaphor normally

used to indicate the past and the future in other languages is reverted, with speakers referring to the future as being behind them while the past is in front of them. As Jose Antonio Lucero points out, "Andean (and Latin American) notions of time are notoriously tricky. Conceptions of history in both Quechua (the past, *ñawpa pacha*, literally 'time ahead') and Aymara (*quip nayr uñtasis sartañani*, 'to walk ahead while looking back') put the past squarely in front of us" (Lucero 2008, 175).

The transformative use of the distinctive linguistic and epistemic resources of the Aymara language made by twenty-first-century socialists is just one example of how linguistic diversity need not be a burden but can offer instead useful epistemic resources for the transformational mission of political parties, including but not limited to transnational ones. Within the EU context, for example, thanks to Europe's rich linguistic heritage multilingual transnational parties could contribute to transforming the political vocabulary of EU integration, and the EU's vision of the common good, by drawing on the linguistic and epistemic resources offered by national and regional languages. None of these resources could be drawn upon if parties operated monolingually. Monolingual parties, that is, would be not only linguistically but also epistemically poorer than their multilingual counterparts and, therefore, all-things-considered less desirable.

At this point one might observe that, based on our argument, there are no principled reasons for limiting the multilingualism of political parties to the languages spoken within the demoi that these parties represent. If, as we have argued, multilingual parties and partisanship can contribute to the formulation of epistemically richer views of the common good, then it seems that it would be beneficial to include as many languages as possible in this process, including languages not spoken within the relevant demoi—for example, within the EU context, these might include languages spoken among Indigenous Australian communities. However, what we have defended in this section is not the importance of linguistically mediated epistemic diversity per se but rather its contribution to the process of public justification. And public justification only concerns the relationship between a polity and those who are subject to its political rules (Vallier 2018). Therefore it is only necessary for multilingual parties to include in their deliberations the linguistic and epistemic perspectives of those who belong to the demoi they represent, because it is to them that the political rules such parties contribute to making will apply.

THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF MULTILINGUAL PARTIES

The linguistic dimension of the justificatory and common-good-building role of parties and partisanship, we saw in the previous section, presents a strong epistemic component, which can also have a broader educational function. In order to understand why this is important, we should note that some authors have duly highlighted the epistemic and educational role of parties and partisanship in the recent normative literature (Ebeling 2016; White and Ypi 2016, 91–93). As White and Ypi argue, for example, "through partisan practice, sophisticated judgments and the sometimes esoteric terms of political justification cease to be available only to minority elites and may become part of a joint intellectual stock, available to other citizens and in turn reworked by them" (White and Ypi 2016, 92).

But the terms of political justification can be esoteric not only because they belong to the technical jargon of disciplines and policy debates one is not familiar with. They can be esoteric, more simply, also because they belong to different languages many partisans and citizens cannot speak or understand. Parties, including but not limited to transnational ones, can help citizens to understand and critically reflect on these terms, and on the implications of linguistic diversity for moral and political debate and, more broadly, for democratic life. They can be sites where citizens can acquire the time and expertise to deliberate with each other across linguistic boundaries, through the use of interpreting and translation, during branch meetings and national and transnational conferences. By doing so, they can help citizens to acquire "metalinguistic awareness" (Peled and Bonotti 2016), that is, awareness of the epistemic implications of linguistic diversity; of how language shapes the way we think about morality and politics; and of how any supposed links between one's language (variety) and traits such as intelligence, credibility, or trustworthiness are totally unfounded (an issue to which we will return in the next section).

The space that parties occupy, and their organizational features, renders them especially suited for this task. Learning about and understanding the implications of linguistic diversity for moral and political debate is not a task that be carried out within major decision-making fora (e.g., parliaments), where time is often limited and there are no opportunities for detailed linguistic analysis and translation of key political terms (Collin 2013, 298). Likewise, ordinary citizens in their everyday lives cannot be expected to have the time and expertise to engage in complex reflection concerning the implications of linguistic diversity for political life. Placed halfway between the key sites of decision-making, where time for deliberation is often scarce, and the realm normally occupied by ordinary citizens, with their pressing everyday commitments, parties possess the resources and infrastructure for reflecting on the linguistic dimensions of democratic life. They can accommodate the "*procedural slowness*" (Doerr 2009, 154, original

emphasis) that is necessary to guarantee an inclusive multilingual debate.[8]

A final objection might be that our analysis only shows that multilingual parties are pro tanto but not all-things-considered desirable, compared to their monolingual counterparts, when it comes to educating their members, and citizens more generally, to metalinguistic awareness, and especially to acquire a better understanding of the relationship between multilingualism and democratic life. But this seems both normatively and empirically implausible. Normatively, how could monolingual parties educate citizens to metalinguistic awareness and to a better understanding of the relationship between multilingualism and democratic life, if they are grounded in the idea that it is more desirable to overcome linguistic differences via a lingua franca than via multilingual deliberation? And, empirically, how could they perform this educational function if not by introducing other languages in their operations and in their teachings, therefore de facto becoming multilingual?

An example of how monolingualism may hinder the kind of metalinguistic awareness that we think parties should be promoting is provided by sociolinguist Sue Wright. In her study of multilingualism in the European Parliament, Wright found that "a multilingual who moves between systems will be better at negotiating meaning in ELF [English as a lingua franca] communication than a monolingual whose education has not alerted them to the arbitrary nature of the sign nor to the fact that language is essentially action in context" (Wright 2015, 121). Wright highlights how multilingual speakers of ELF (regardless of whether their first language is English or a different one) are more capable than their monolingual counterparts of engaging in processes of "accommodation, recalibration and negotiation in their interactions" (Wright 2015, 121), that is, of displaying the kind of metalinguistic awareness central to the educational role of parties that we en-

dorse. Analyses of multilingual deliberative processes in the Swiss Federal Assembly (Steiner et al. 2004), as well as in large deliberative polls conducted in Belgium and in the European Union (Gerber et al. 2018), also point in this direction.[9] This shows that parties that operate multilingually, and whose members are committed to multilingualism, are not only pro tanto but all-things-considered more desirable than their monolingual counterparts when it comes to their educational role.

MULTILINGUAL PARTIES AND INTRAPARTY DELIBERATION

As well as contributing to public justification, partisan deliberation also has another function. More specifically, some authors have argued that reforming political parties by introducing more intraparty deliberative practices and forums within them could help them to provide a better linkage between citizens and government, and prevent them from being dominated by elites (Wolkenstein 2016), thus responding to the crisis of parties and party democracy in Western liberal democracies (Invernizzi-Accetti and Wolkenstein 2017). Intraparty deliberation has the aim of "providing [partisans] . . . with inclusive channels to participate . . . as a way of recognising their democratic political equality" (Wolkenstein 2016, 317). Yet inclusiveness and democratic equality may be undermined by various forms of "epistemic injustice" (Fricker 2007), for example, if certain partisans are not taken seriously because of the way they speak, and therefore are overtly or covertly excluded from the process of deliberation. These kinds of injustices, it should be noted, may also arise within monolingual parties or social movements, for example, when people speak the same native language but do so with different regional or class-based accents. These differences can often result in various forms of prejudice (Doerr 2012, 377; Lippi-Green 1997; Peled and Bonotti 2019).

However, these issues are likely to be exacerbated when communication is conducted across linguistic boundaries via a lingua franca. In these cases, intralinguistic differences involve, for example, not only diverse regional or class-based accents and registers but also differences resulting from the presence of those who are nonnative speakers of the language adopted for deliberation and who speak that language with a foreign accent (Moyer 2013). When deliberation is conducted in a lingua franca of which many partisans are

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8. At this point one might object that parties are not unique in this sense and that multilingual trade unions, civil society associations, and other nonpartisan organizations could also play a similar educational role. However, many social movements and other nonpartisan associations tend to be more transient than political parties (White and Ypi 2016, 26). Furthermore, they tend to focus on discrete issues (e.g., workers' rights, religion, the environment, animal welfare, etc.) whereas parties combine diverse policy issues into overarching platforms (Bonotti 2017, 136). Moreover, parties' unique "linkage" position and function, halfway between civil society and the state (Wolkenstein 2016), means that they can play a key role in educating their members, and citizens more generally, to be decision-makers, either as voters or as elected representatives. Due to these distinctive features, therefore, parties' educational function has a more enduring, broad-ranging and politically impactful educational role than that of other associations. That said, we also accept, in fact actively support, the view that those other associations should also play a key educational role in the enthusiastic multilingual model of linguistic democracy that we defend.

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9. Caluwaerts and Deschouwer (2014, 447), for example, note that in a number of experiments with bilingual (French/Dutch) deliberative polls conducted in Belgium, "knowledge of the other's group language [was] an asset in multilingual deliberation" and, even most importantly, that "facing the outgroup led to higher rather than lower deliberative quality."

not native speakers, the asymmetry between those who are considered "good" and "bad" speakers is likely to increase and to complexify, resulting in various forms of epistemic injustice (Doerr 2012, 377–78; Fricker 2007; Peled and Bonotti 2019).[10]

Furthermore, the use of a lingua franca—which is typically English, in Europe and beyond—may overly empower its native speakers by allowing them to manipulate nonnative speakers. In Doerr's (2012) study of the European Social Forum (ESF), for example, one of the interviewees states that "[in] one European meeting before the London ESF [2004] . . . some of the English participants tried to trick the French and Italians by playing on subtle linguistic differences within decision-making. But as I speak French and English, I told the French and the Italians what was going on and made sure that they knew that they were going to be manipulated" (Doerr 2012, 379).

In summary, the adoption of a lingua franca may have two negative effects. First, it may prevent parties from acting as linkage bodies between citizens and government, as many partisans will not be given equal political voice within parties, thus defying the very purpose of intraparty deliberation. Second, and for reasons different from those examined in our earlier discussion of public justification, it may hinder the search for a shared conception of the common good. This is because it may exclude some partisans from the process of deliberation that should precede the formulation of visions of the common good and of public justification, regardless of the content of their speech. The exclusion of certain partisans from intraparty deliberation, due to forms of linguistic epistemic injustice, means that they will be excluded from the process of forging partisan platforms and manifestoes, and of formulating a shared conception of the common good. Indeed if it is true that intraparty deliberation "could make tasks like drafting a party or election manifesto a more collaborative and interactive exercise, and [make] its results . . . enjoy more legitimacy than if such tasks are left to a small elite" (Wolkenstein 2016, 313), excluding some partisans from this process due to language-based prejudices would inevitably undermine its success.

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10. Of course, one way of reducing or eliminating intralinguistic differences and injustices might be to adopt an external lingua franca, i.e., one that is not spoken as a native language by any of the participants in deliberation. This is, for example, the scenario that Van Parijs (2018) has proposed for Belgium or the one that we may partially witness if English will continue to be used as a lingua franca in a post-Brexit EU, although, of course, even after the UK's departure there are still many English native speakers among Irish and Maltese EU citizens and MEPs (cf. Mac Giolla Chríost and Bonotti 2018; Modiano 2017). However, this solution would also have the side effect of eliminating the advantages of multilingual deliberation for the public justification and educational roles of parties examined in the previous sections and therefore would not be consistent with our defence of multilingual democracy and partisanship.

At this point one might observe that the kinds of epistemic injustices just highlighted could be addressed by compensating nonnative speakers of the lingua franca, whatever the latter might be. However, this objection misses the point. While, of course, compensating nonnative speakers of the lingua franca would be just (a claim that here we simply take for granted, without further arguing for it),[11] that would not eliminate the kinds of injustices that we are focusing on here. Even if they were fully compensated for all the language learning costs they have incurred, nonnative speakers would still often find themselves in a disadvantaged position when participating in intraparty deliberation. Many, perhaps most of them, for example, would not be able to lose their nonnative accent. There are indeed neurobiological factors that make it very difficult, if not impossible, for new speakers of a language (especially older new speakers) to master it with native-like capacity (Moyer 2013, 21–48). More generally, native speakers of the lingua franca will always be more likely to be "more understood, more persuasive, more impressive, more often intentionally witty and less often unintentionally funny than their non-native counterparts" (Van Parijs 2011, 94). No compensation in terms of resources, however generous, could fill this gap.

The adoption of multilingualism within parties can therefore prevent more powerful speakers from dominating deliberation and manipulating their interlocutors. More generally, multilingualism enhances, rather than weakens, democratic deliberation. This is not despite but because of linguistic diversity. Indeed, when communication is more difficult due to language barriers, and is conducted through translation and interpreting rather than via a lingua franca, it is necessary for all participants to pay special attention to what is being said. This results in a more listening-oriented and dialogical form of deliberation which is more inclusive and respectful of democratic equality. As Doerr points out, based on her empirical analysis of the ESF, "multilingual debates, due to what participants perceived as an increased risk of conflict caused by misunderstandings, strongly induce participants to listen attentively to statements made" (Doerr 2012, 373; see also Caluwaerts and Deschouwer 2014; Peled and Bonotti 2019).

In summary, the argument that we have defended in this section is that multilingual parties are all-things-considered, rather than pro tanto, more desirable than monolingual parties that operate via a lingua franca. The latter, we have shown, are likely to be exclusionary, characterized by hierarchies of speaking, and therefore in tension with the intraparty

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11. The idea that nonnative English speakers should be compensated by native speakers for the contribution they make to the creation of English as a lingua franca is central to Van Parijs's (2011) theory of linguistic justice.

deliberative ideal that aims to restore the bottom-up linkage function of parties. The former, instead, promise to foster the realization of that ideal via a more inclusive and egalitarian type of linguistic communication.

CONCLUSION

Language and linguistic diversity are central to democratic life. Yet democratic theorists and theorists of linguistic justice have surprisingly remained silent, or very ambiguous, regarding the relationship between language and democracy. In this article we have defended what we call an "enthusiastic multilingual model" of linguistic democracy, that is, an ideal-type model in which multilingualism is viewed as a key resource for democratic life, rather than a hindrance to it. We have done so by focusing more specifically on political parties as key agents of public justification, political education, and linkage between civil society and the state. In each of these areas, we have argued, multilingual parties are all-things-considered more desirable than their monolingual counterparts.

We are aware that the realization of this ideal is very much context dependent. Historical trajectories, institutional set-ups, and linguistic constellations are of course very different from polity to polity. For example, a multilingual polity like Belgium used to have multilingual parties—or, rather, bilingual (Dutch/French) parties, given the tiny demographic share of German speakers—at the national level. But since the 1970s its main parties have been exclusively monolingual (Dandoy and De Decker 2009). In Switzerland, instead, all major parties are still multilingual (Stojanović and Bonotti 2020). Institutional choices, such as direct democracy and centripetal electoral systems (Lacey 2017; Stojanović 2011, 2021), may contribute to explaining such divergent trajectories and could serve as an inspiration for institutional reforms. Discussing them in detail would go beyond the scope of this article.

Yet we also view the empirical complexity that surrounds the real-world realization of multilingual parties and partisanship as an opportunity. In our survey of the literature on multilingualism and political parties, as well as by the lack of normative reflections we were also struck by the relative lack of empirical research on the linguistic dimensions of party life. Through which languages do real-world parties actually operate in linguistically diverse contexts, both in local branches and at higher levels? On what grounds are either a lingua franca or more multilingual forms of deliberation chosen? We know, for example, that Australia (and especially the Australian Labour Party) has a tradition of ethnic party branches, that is, "branches predominantly made up of specific ethnic or language groups" (Healy 1995, 49), and ethnic intermediaries, that is, "individuals from particular ethnic communities who by virtue of their relationship to the MP have come to be seen by other members of their respective community as a conduit to access the MP and his or her office" (Zappalà 1998, 391). Ethnic intermediaries have traditionally played a key role as translators and interpreters within parties, since "poor English language fluency on the part of many ethnic constituents creates a role for people who are from the same cultural and ethnic background as the constituent but who are fluent in English" (Zappalà 1998, 391). And yet little is known, from a scholarly perspective, regarding whether and in what ways these (admittedly modest) manifestations of multilingualism within Australian parties are successful at integrating linguistic minorities into the mainstream party system and whether similar forms of multilingual partisanship exist elsewhere. This suggests that alongside more normative work on the relationship between language and democratic life, more empirical work is also required, especially when it comes specifically to political parties. We hope that our theoretical and normative framework will inspire this kind of work in the near future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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