

# UA Repository

## The multilingual mind, linguistic marginalization and mental health

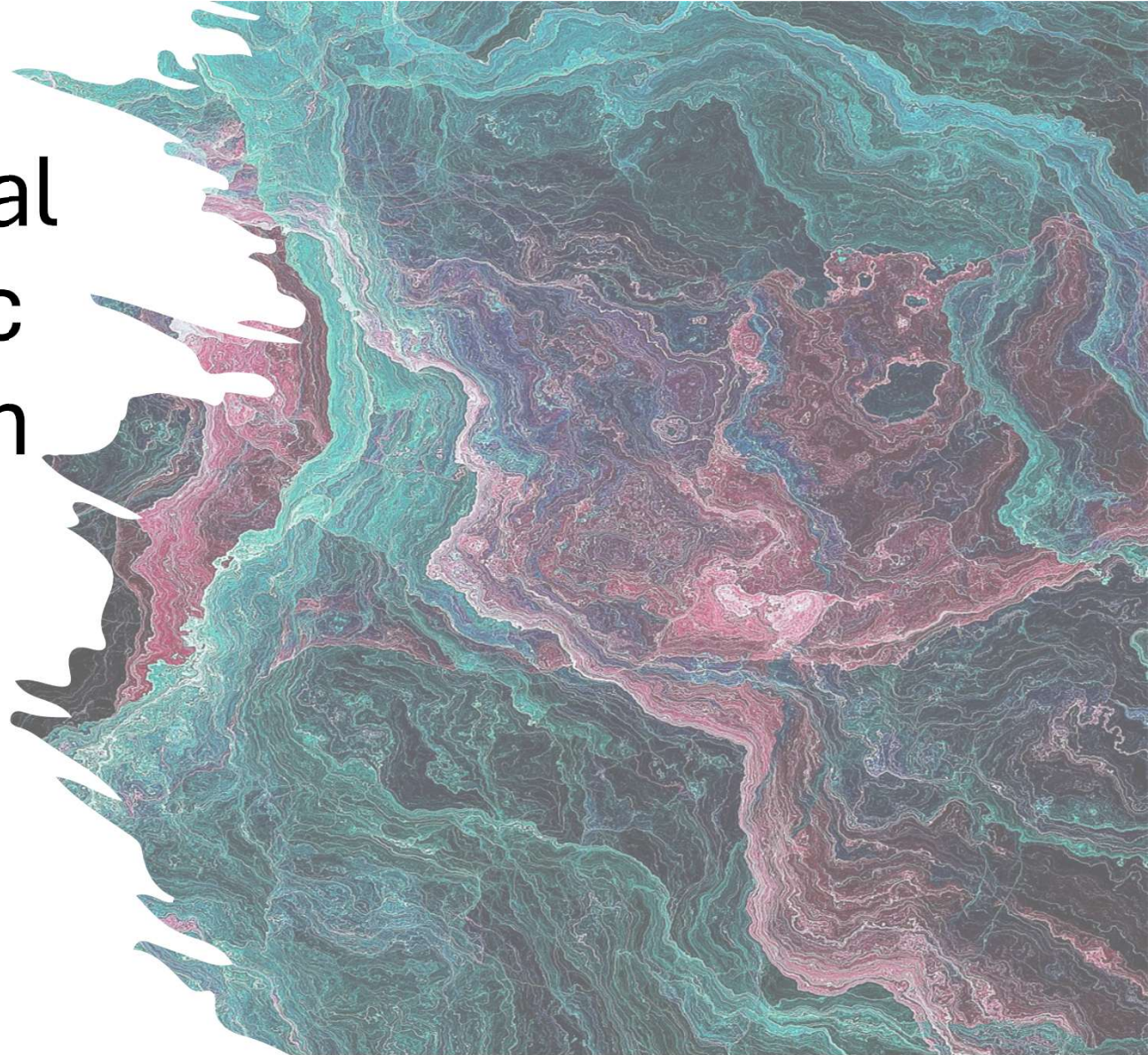
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# The multilingual mind, linguistic marginalization and mental health

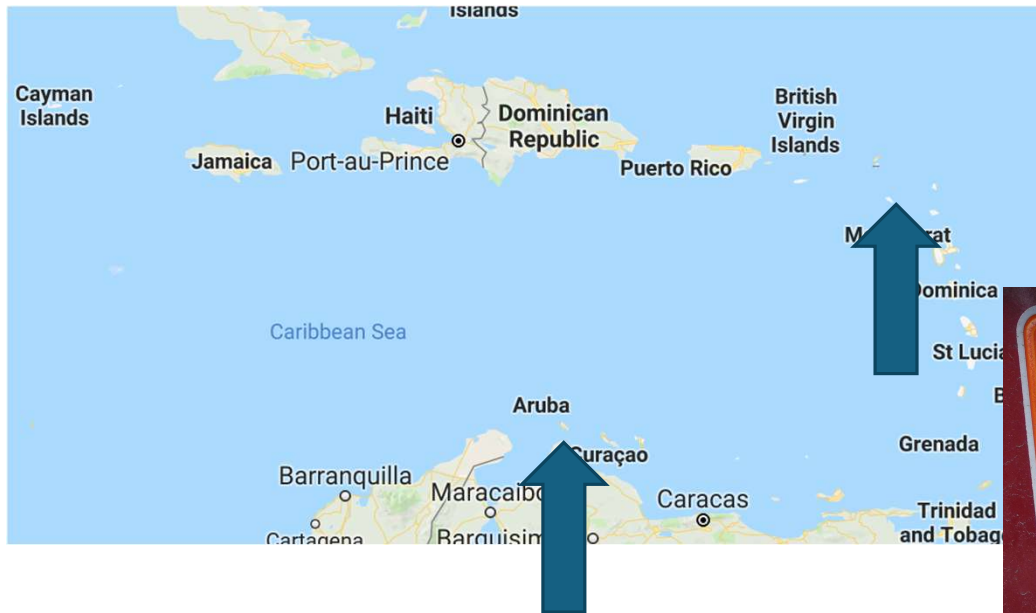
Eric Mijts

University of Aruba

Dec. 2, 2025



# One happy island, Aruba

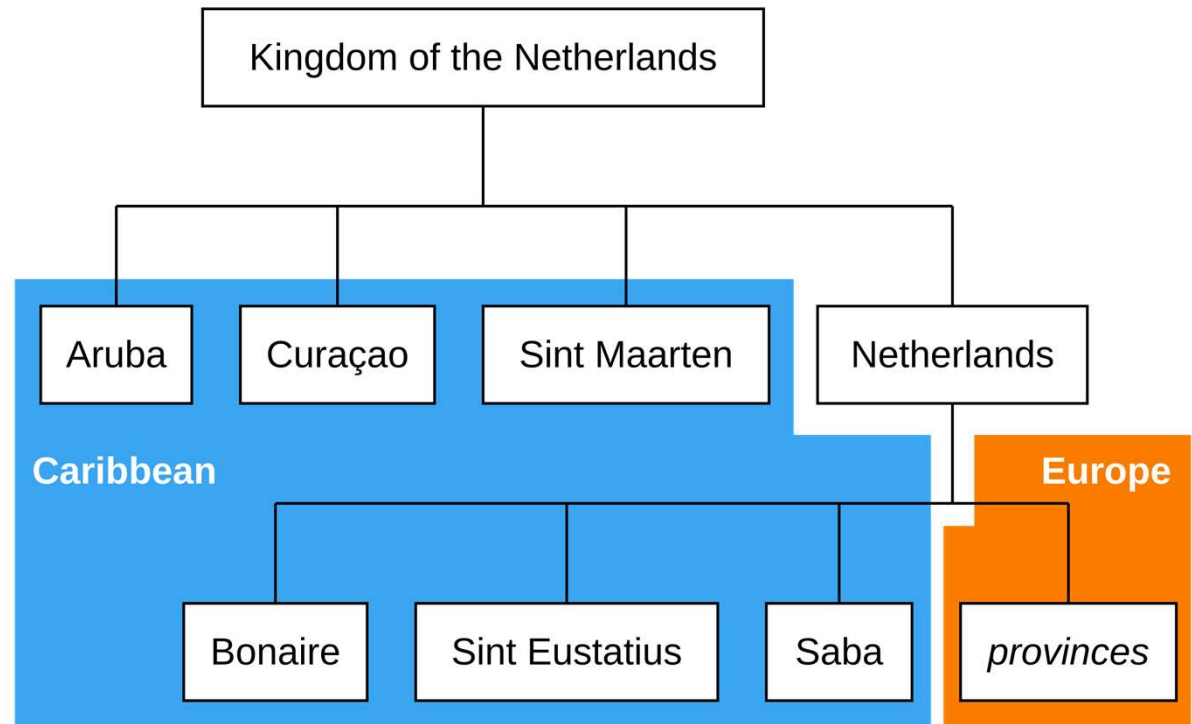


178 square kilometers  
30 kilometers North of Venezuela  
120.000 documented residents  
Undocumented residents  
>2 million tourists per year  
Part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



# Any idea how this works?

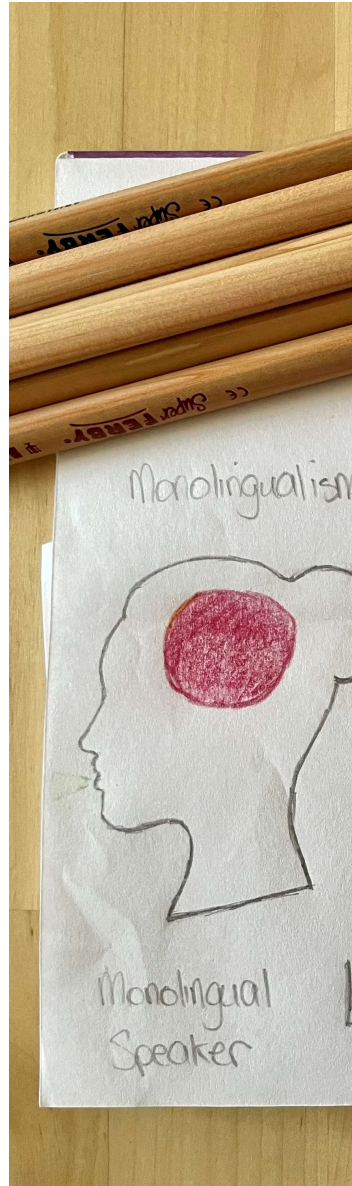
- And any idea how this has come about?
- < 1954
- 1954
- 1975
- 1986
- 10/10/10





# Monolingual approaches – and monolingual ideologies

- Visual by Laura Wright  
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## Dual multilingualism: silos

- Languages as separately stored codes, code switching as impure practice.
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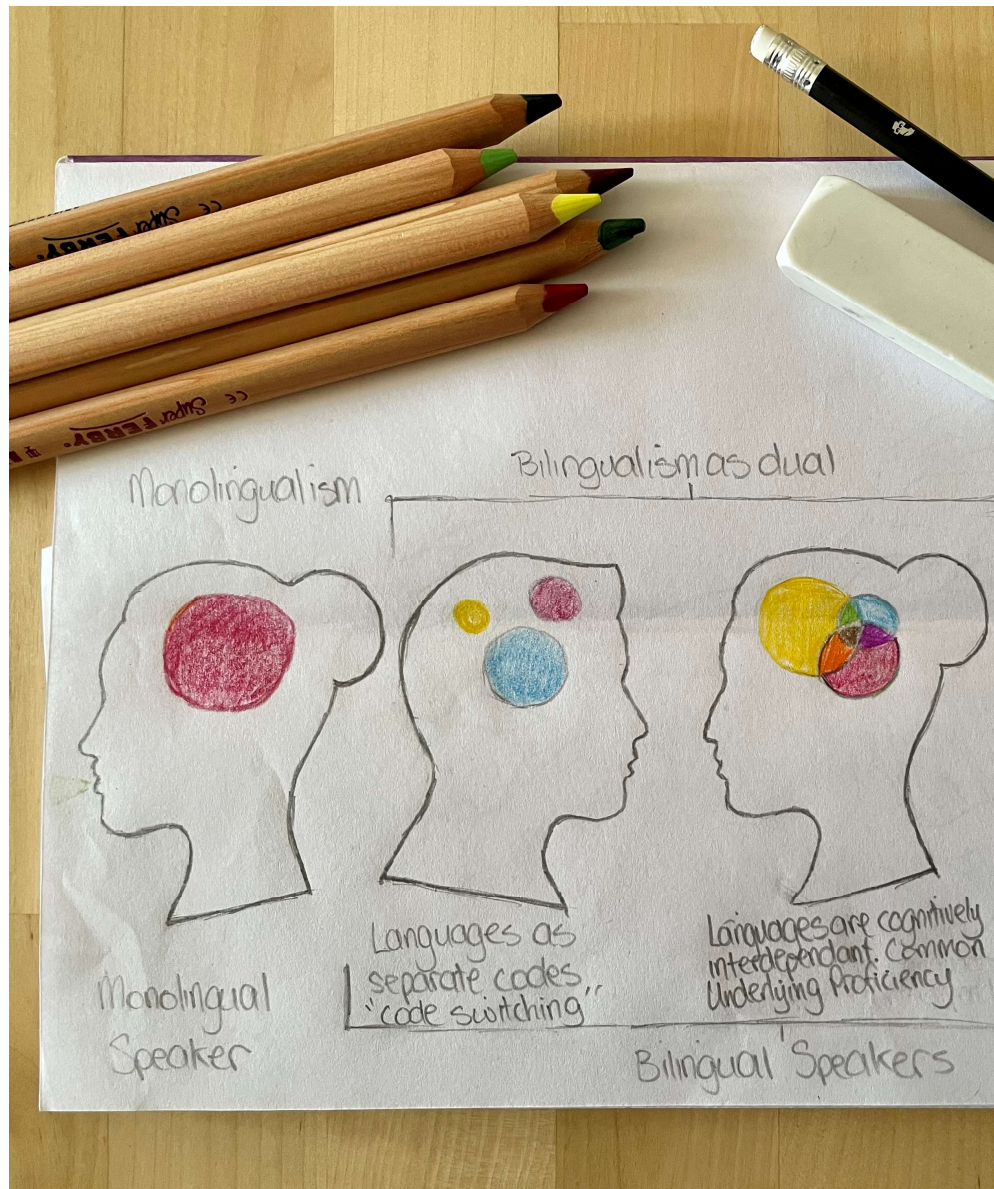
# Dual multilingualism: silos

- Languages as separately stored codes, code switching as impure practice.
- Subtractive language policies and practices
- Visual by Laura Wright  
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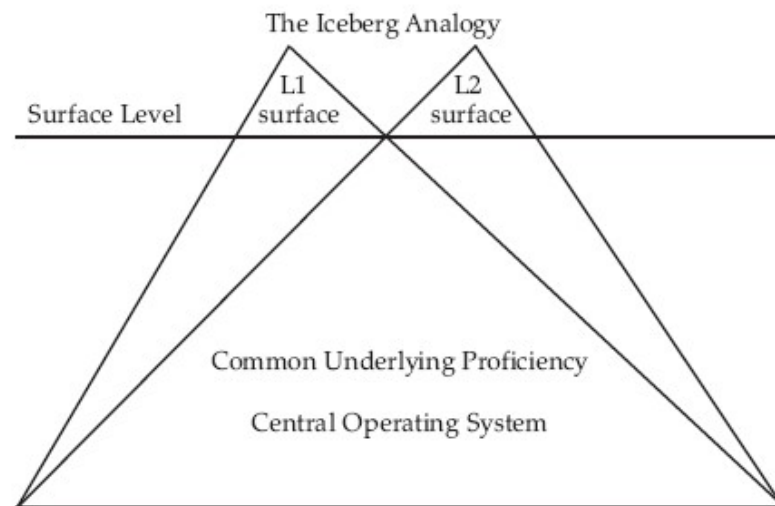
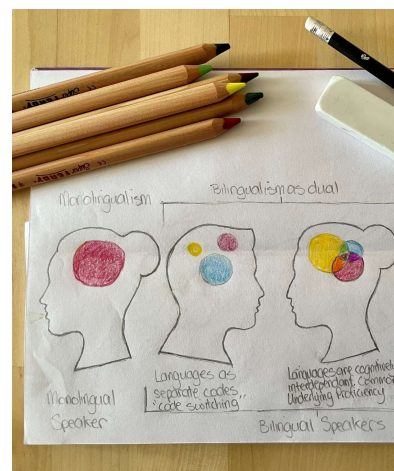
## Dual multilingualism: Common Underlying Proficiency

- Languages as cognitive separate units, Common Underlying Proficiency
- Visual by Laura Wright  
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# Dual multilingualism: Common Underlying Proficiency

- Languages as cognitive separate units, Common Underlying Proficiency (Cummins 1981)
- Visual by Laura Wright  
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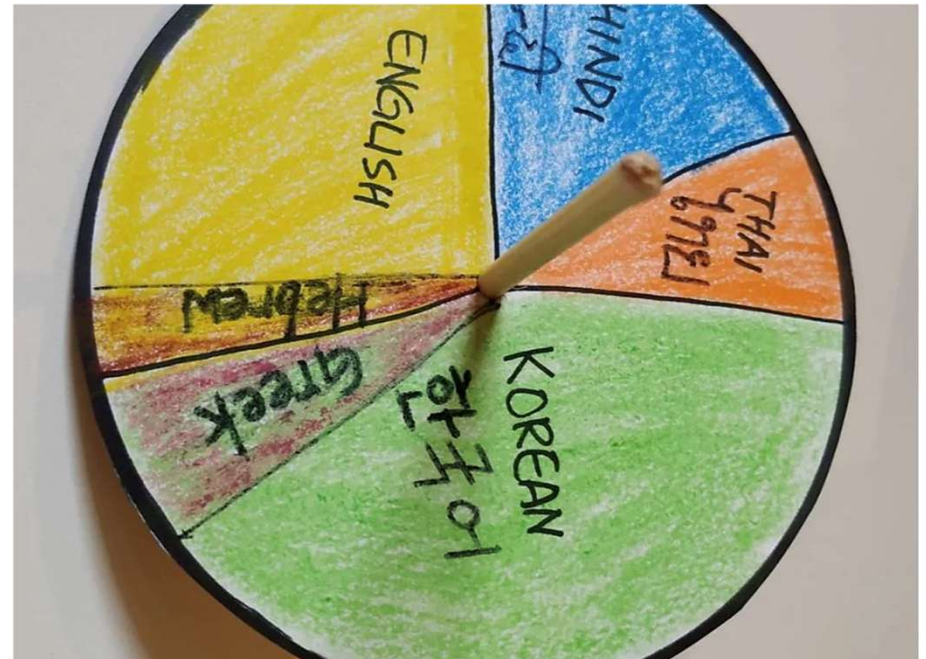


# Multilingualism as dynamic competence

- Questioning the constructs of languages; positioning languaging, borderless as a dynamic system.
- Visual by Laura Wright  
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And the multilingual state



And the multilingual  
state



# Multilingual competence

- Translanguaging
- Linguaging
- Language Making
- Multilingual Language Society Making

DE GRUYTER MOUTON

IJSL 2022; 274: 51–82

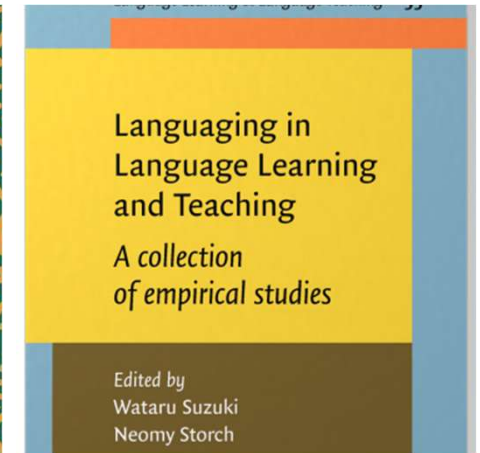
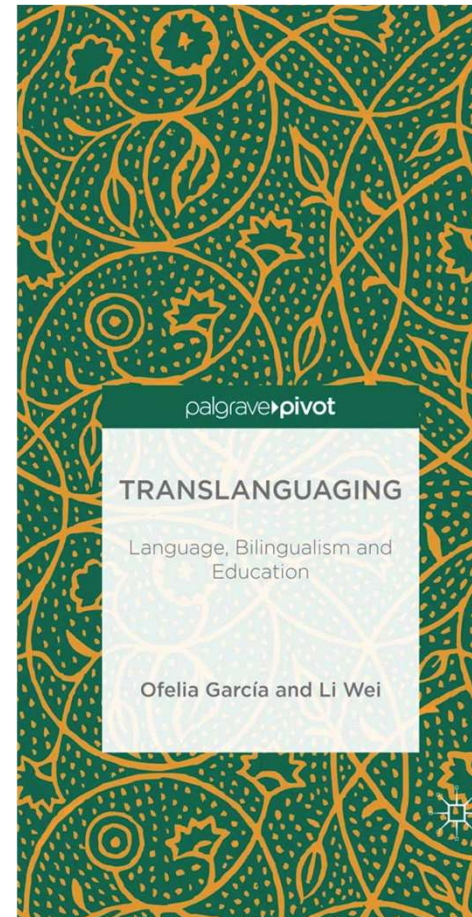


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## Language Making of Creoles in multilingual postcolonial societies

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# Literacy and functional literacy in multilingual settings

- Education in multilingual societies
- Literacy in the official language(s)
- Literacy in the 'home language'
- Translation as a burden
- Assimilation versus integration

# Language policy and access to services

- Legal provisions, policy and practice
- International minimal provisions versus true inclusive practice
- The complexity of formal translation – human resources (quantity and quality) and the quality of translations
- Community scale and resources/facilities

# Creole languages

- Language contact: migration and coloniality
- Examples
  - Papiamentu/u as an Iberian Lexifier Creole (?)
  - Créole Haïtien
  - and so many more...
  - English as a creole language?
- Creole language and social hierarchies,
- Creole language and socio-economic/socio-cultural acceptance.

# Framing of home languages as burden

- Juvenile linguistic competence versus the needs of the school systems
- Linguistic competence in the decolonizing world
- Linguistic deficiency and remedial programs
- Linguistic marginalization in the 21st C: the case of Bonaire
- "Language Friendly Schools"

# Framing and the wellbeing of people



# Fundamental questions that deserve an answer

- What speech recognition mental health care functionalities have been developed for “less marginalized” languages?
- What are the key linguistic features of these technologies?
- What are the linguistic obstacles for making these functionalities available for other, less favored languages and less favored speech communities? (Language variation; creole languages; multilingual individuals and multilingual communities)
- What are the predominant contextual (linguistic) limitations of psychological health care in the multilingual global Southern communities that can be addressed by further inclusive development of speech technology?

# Fundamental questions that deserve an answer

- What are the human rights focus points that advocacy for the development of these facilities can target?
- What are the human wellbeing focus points that advocacy for the development of these facilities can target?
- What are the data gaps that need to be addressed to make these technologies available for marginalized languages?
- What are the logistical bottlenecks that need to be addressed before these technologies can become available for marginalized languages?