LENGUAS DESIGUALES: LOCAL STRUGGLES FOR LINGUISTIC JUSTICE

Franziska Peschel
Redes_Ling

The public roundtable titled *Lenguas desiguales: Local Struggles for Linguistic Justice* brings together indigenous rights advocates, sociolinguists, and multilingual broadcasters from Argentina and Luxembourg to exchange concrete experiences of language-based exclusion and strategies of resistance.

At the heart of the discussion lies a shared concern: speakers of different languages are not treated equally. Around the world, linguistic hierarchies shape access to education, services, legal systems, and public voice. Whether in rural Argentina or institutional Luxembourg, many people are forced to adapt to dominant language norms—or remain unheard.

In Argentina's Chaco region, home to more than 30 indigenous languages, speakers of Wichí, Qom, and other languages often find that public services are only available in Spanish. Legal documents, school curricula, and healthcare communication fail to reflect linguistic diversity. In this context, organisations like Wichi Lhomet and the Consejo Nativo de la Mujer Indígena del Chaco (CONAMICH) play a critical role. They train young people in bilingual education, produce indigenous-language content, and use audio-visual media to raise awareness of the cultural and political value of their languages. Their work challenges both institutional neglect and deep-rooted discrimination.

In Luxembourg, linguistic inequality takes a different form. While the country officially promotes multilingualism, the reality is often shaped by strict hierarchies between Luxembourgish, French, German, and the migrant languages such as Portuguese, Arabic, or Tigrinya. For example, Portuguese-speaking children—who belong to the largest language community in Luxembourg—are disproportionately tracked into vocational streams at school, largely due to linguistic profiling and lack of support in their home language. This creates long-term effects on access to university and social mobility.

This roundtable forms part of the Luxembourg phase of the *Redes_Ling* project, a four-year EU-funded research initiative investigating how language inequality is produced, experienced, and resisted across diverse settings. The project brings together partners from Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Spain, Denmark, and Luxembourg—including sociolinguists, Indigenous activists, and community media practitioners. While the contexts vary, the shared questions remain urgent: What happens when people are

FRANZISKA PESCHEL is a journalist and editor-in-chief at Radio ARA in Luxembourg. With a career focused on social justice, human rights, and equality, she leads the program *Local Matters,* where she addresses socially relevant topics for local communities. In addition to her journalistic work, Franziska is a spoken word artist, trainer, and facilitator, committed to promoting inclusion and giving voice to underrepresented groups in Luxembourgish society.

RADIO ARA is Luxembourg's independent community radio, promoting inclusion through multilingual programming in over 15 languages, including Arabic, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, and Mandarin.
Franziska Peschel, Iryna Skrypak

CELES-UNSAM is a research centre in Buenos Aires focusing on language, rights, and migration in urban Argentina. Its members explore how everyday literacy practices serve as tools for social recognition and political presence.
Mónica Baretta, Florencia Sartori

WICHI LHOMET is a civil association led by Wichí educators and artists in El Impenetrable, Chaco, Argentina. They promote bilingual education, produce Wichí-language cultural content, and campaign for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in national curricula.
Josefa Ballena, Daniel Palacios

CONAMICH (CONSEJO NATIVO DE LA MUJER INDÍGENA DEL CHACO) is a grassroots organisation that supports Indigenous women's rights and language justice across Argentina's Chaco region. Its members work on education, communication and community-building to strengthen Indigenous women's and girls' public and political voice.
Julio Viyen Leiva, Aldana Martin, Ayelén Gabriel

CULTURES OF ASSEMBLY
Chair of the City of Esch
Prof. Dr. Markus Miessen
University of Luxembourg
www.culturesofassembly.org

24, Rue du Brill
L–4041 Esch-sur-Alzette

Team:
Markus Miessen, César Reyes,
Gustav Nielsen, Kristina Shatokhina

Associated with the
Master in Architecture Programme
Department of Geography and
Spatial Planning
University of Luxembourg
www.masterarchitecture.lu

denied access, recognition, or participation because their language does not match institutional norms? And what solutions can we develop together, across borders and experiences?

In Luxembourg, the one-month focus examines how communication tools—such as multilingual radio, translation apps, social media, and community newsletters—can be used to resist exclusion and improve access to information and representation. The emphasis is on practical strategies: how to strengthen local schooling initiatives, amplify marginalised voices, and support networks that work toward more inclusive and participatory communication landscapes.

The Luxembourg phase includes collaborative fieldwork with local and international partners, multilingual broadcasts produced jointly at Radio ARA, and a concluding public workshop at Radio ARA on 28 June at 14:00. The roundtable at Esch Clinics sets the stage for these activities, offering a space for critical dialogue between people who live and work across linguistic borders.



Redes_Ling. Wichi Lhomet and CONAMICH team at RadioARA, 2025