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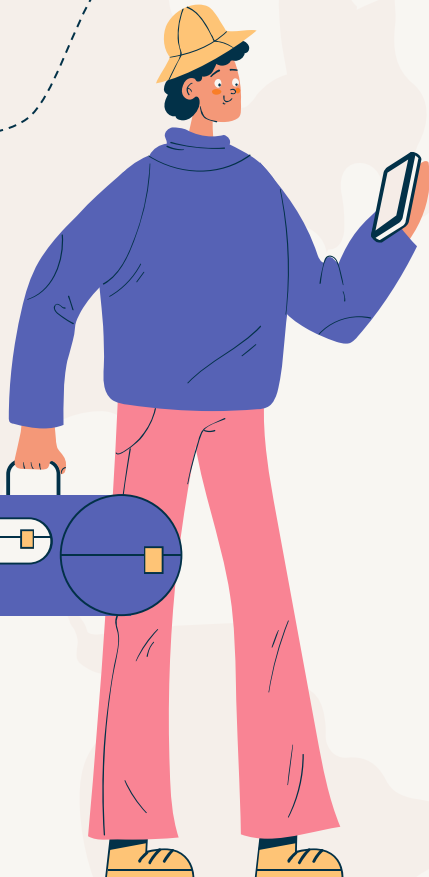


Language at Home and Achievement at School: Insights from IEA's PIRLS 2021 Study

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the European Union





The Purpose of This Study



To identify the main classroom, student and family factors
that **differentiate** students who
speak the language of the test at home
from
those who do not.



Countries of comparison:
PIRLS 2021 EU Countries,
Norway and Serbia

01

PIRLS

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study



Progress in International Reading Literacy Study



- **Frequency** – every 5 years since 2001
- **Countries** – ~50 countries in every cycle
- **Participants** – ~4000 4th grade students from every country
- **Goals:**
 - to measure and compare reading literacy internationally
 - to describe school, home, student background factors influencing literacy

An illustration of six hands of different skin tones (light pink, orange, brown, dark brown, red, and light pink) reaching towards a central globe. The globe is blue and green. The background is a light beige map of the world with dashed lines and paper airplane icons.

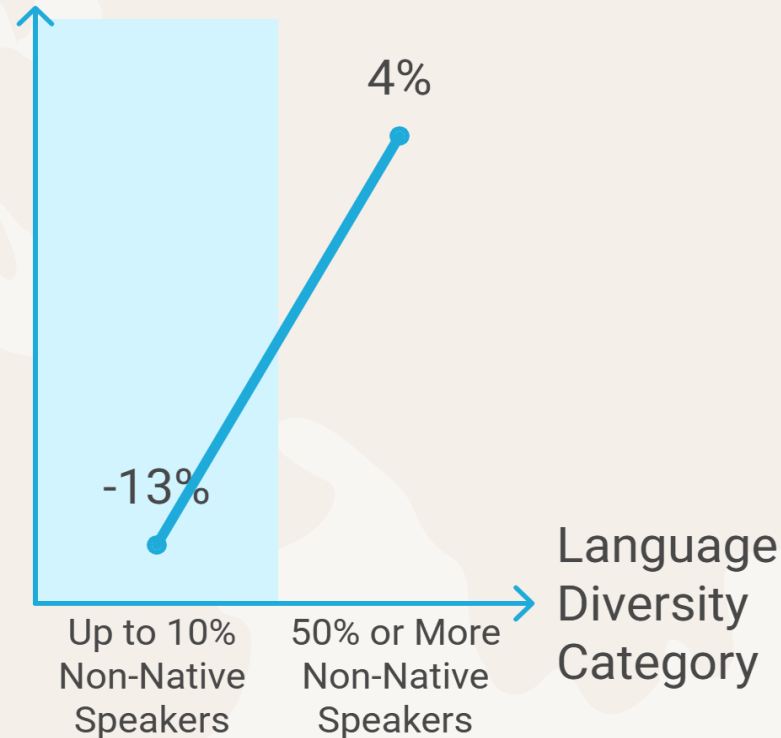
02

Background

The background of this study

In PIRLS 2021
home language
diversity in EU
classrooms
have increased
compared to
PIRLS 2016

Percentage Change



Other Studies Have Found



Volante et al., 2019

Underperformance due to home and school language differences.

Chang, 2024

Underperformance due to migration background.

Alieva et al., 2018

The achievement gap becomes minimal in adolescence.

Martin et al., 201

The age of school entry in the destination country determines achievement.



Van Ewijk & Sleegers, 2010

Minority students have negligible effects on local student achievement.

Dronkers et al., 2013

Ethnic diversity negatively impacts both non-native and native students' performance.



The background features a light beige world map. Scattered across the map are several pink location pins, each containing a yellow smiley face. Three blue paper airplanes are shown in flight, with dashed lines indicating their paths. One airplane is on the left, one is on the right, and one is at the bottom center.

03

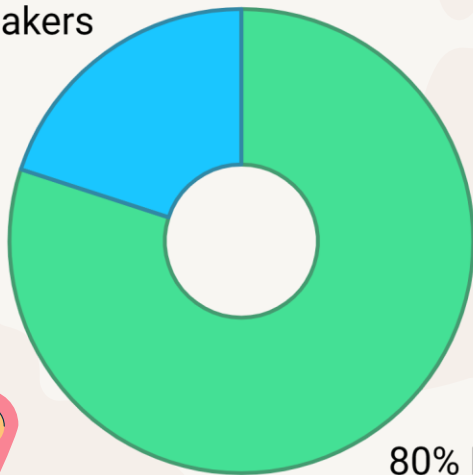
Findings

The Results from This Study

Methodology

In countries of comparison of this study

20% Non-Native Language
Speakers

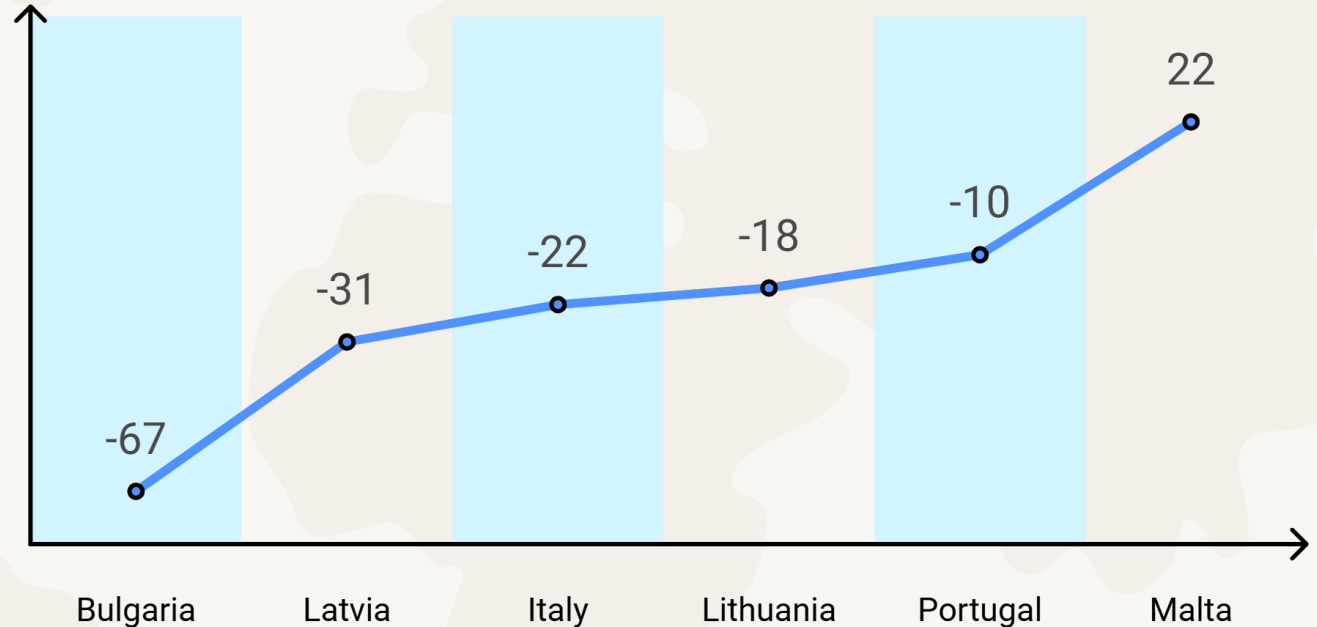


80% Native Language
Speakers

- Native vs non-native language speaker detection from student's and parent's questionnaire
- Classroom composition:
 - up to 10% non-native speakers
 - 10% to 30% non-native speakers
 - 30% or more non-native speakers
- High-achieving (above countries average) non-native speakers vs low-achieving (below countries average) non-native speakers

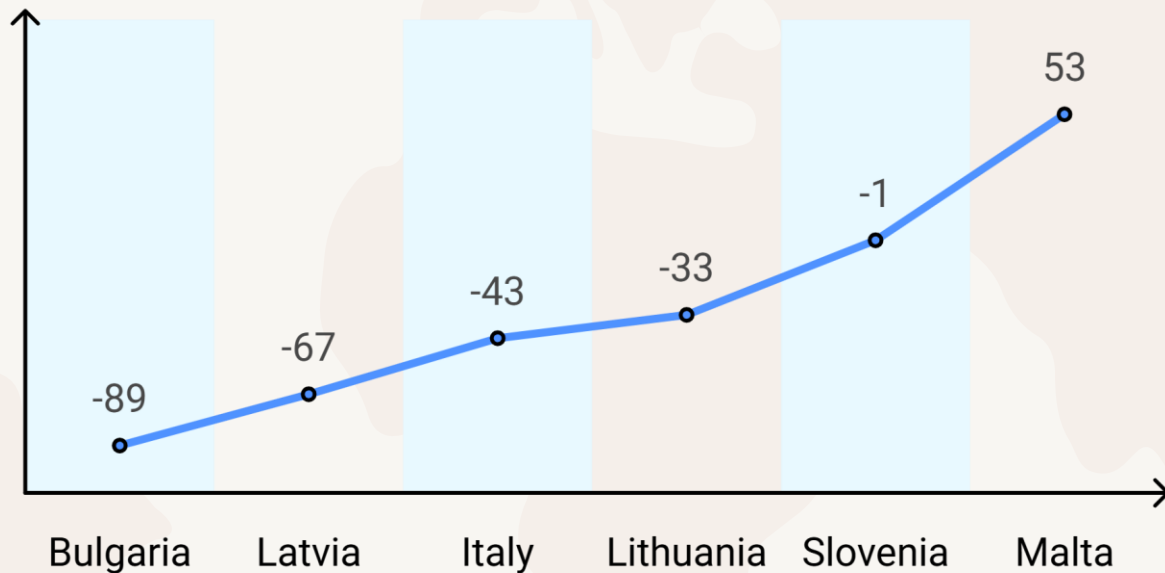
Average non-native speakers' achievement gap compared with native language speakers in reading achievement

Difference in PIRLS'21
achievement score



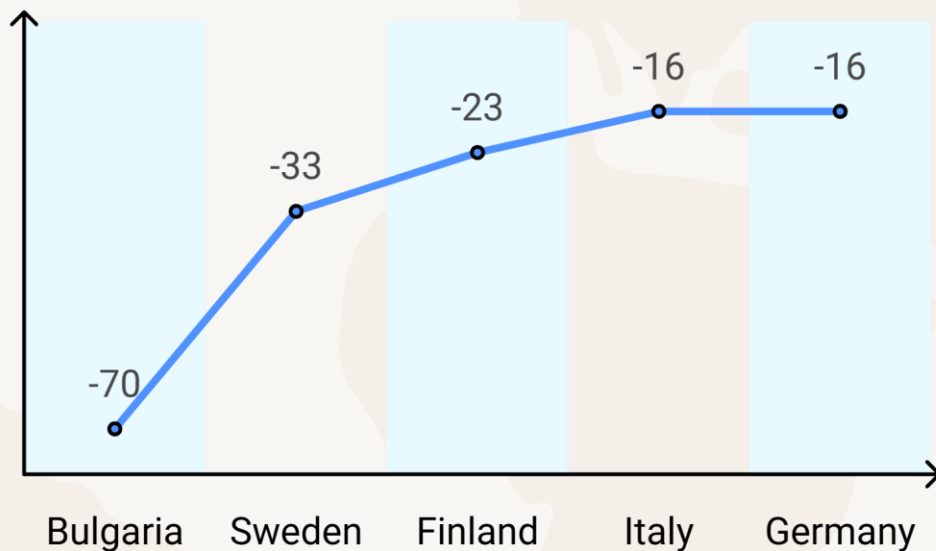
Non-native language speakers' achievement gap comparing classrooms with up to 10% non-native speakers and more than 30% non-native speakers.

Difference in PIRLS'21
achievement score



Native language speakers' achievement gap comparing classrooms with up to 10% non-native speakers and more than 30% non-native speakers.

Difference in PIRLS'21
achievement score



Achievement differences in Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, etc. were not statistically significant





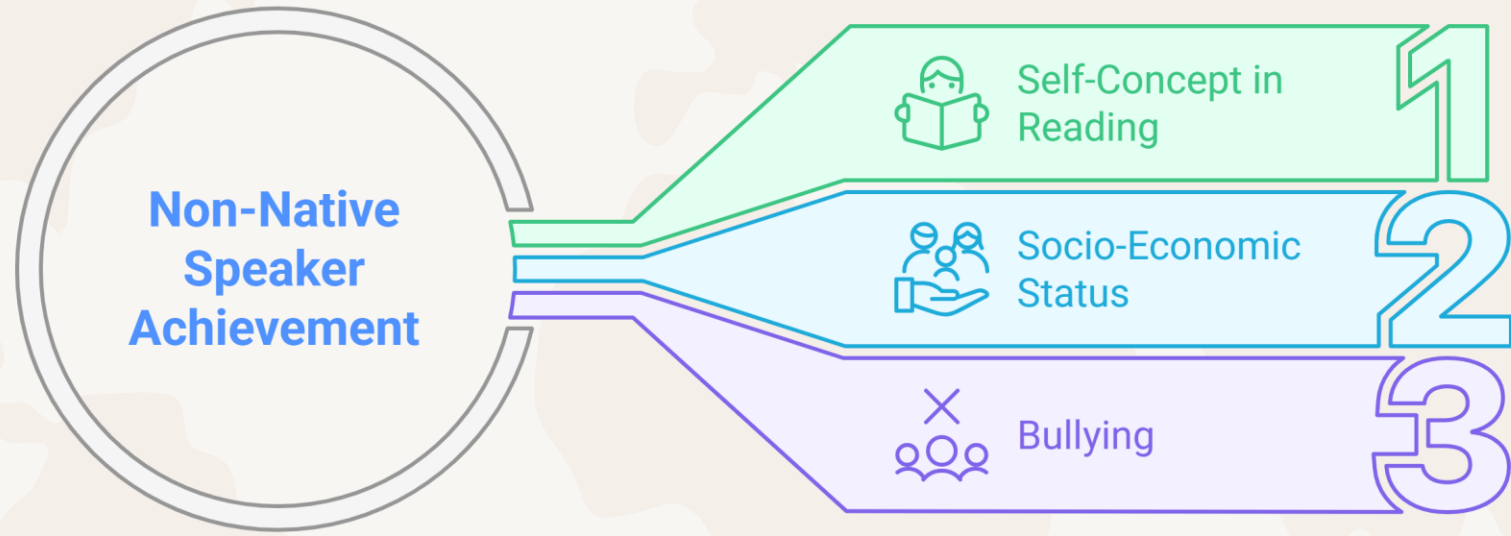
Non-native Speaker's Profile*



- * In Malta non-native speakers had:
- higher SES
 - fewer absenteeism
 - higher reading self-confidence

Classification accuracy ranged from 61% in Malta to 94% in Serbia

Most influential predictors for a low-achieving non-native speaker to become high-achieving



Classification accuracy ranged from 60% in Bulgaria to 73% in Lithuania

Main Conclusions

The number of non-native speakers in the classroom influence achievement for both – natives and non-natives

The most influential predictors were the same as for reading achievement in general; confidence in reading being the most influential for low-achievers

Malta showed unique patterns for non-native speakers being with higher SES and higher confidence



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