Multilingual Europe
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INTRODUCTION

JANE WARREN
AND HEATHER MERLE BENBOW

As Europe continues to expand and integrate through the European Union, it faces the challenge of ever increasing multilingual and multicultural contact, within and across its borders. This volume presents recent research on European language policy, language contact and multiculturalism that explores how Europe is meeting this challenge. It considers the relationships between language and cultural identity in Europe at a time of increasing multicultural complexity, with contributions on Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Ukraine and the linguistic and imaginative spaces between and beyond.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I focuses on language policy, and opens with an analysis by Michael Clyne of contradictions in language policy in present-day Germany. The increasing use of English in academic fields of research and teaching and as a/the language of major multinational companies of German origin is detracting from the status of German internationally, especially in central eastern European countries in which the German language has enjoyed a long tradition. Within education, the diversity of language teaching is giving way to such a strong emphasis on English at both primary and secondary levels that programs in other languages are becoming quite subordinate. In order to develop Germany’s language potential and ensure the continued status of German, Clyne argues, an explicit, coherent language policy is essential.

Chapter Two, by Guus Extra and Massimiliano Spotti, takes as its departure point the concepts of language, nation, and citizenship in a European context of migration and minorization, and the European discourse on foreigners, integration, and citizenship. It explores the Dutch discourse on newcomers and Dutch testing regimes for admission (toelating), integration (inburgering), and citizenship (naturalisatie). The chapter investigates the development of each of these testing regimes, the
content of the closely related *Nationale Inburgeringstest* and the attitudes of Dutch citizens to the cultural content of this test.

In Chapter Three, Oksana King examines the changing status of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine. Since Ukraine has become an independent state, the place of languages has acquired new meaning in Ukrainian society. Current government policy is to pursue integration into the European Union, away from the more traditional orientation towards Russia. This new situation provides increasing incentives for foreign language learning. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian language has been strengthening its position in education, media and commerce. The Russian language, which for a long time enjoyed the status of *lingua franca* under the Soviet regime, has rather abruptly attained the status of a “foreign language”, despite the fact that Russian is still widely spoken in most of Ukraine’s regions.

Chapter Four, by Catrin Norrby, gives an overview of Sweden’s recently adopted language policy, and discusses the rationale behind its goals. One of the core issues in the debate—whether to give Swedish legal status as the official majority language of Sweden—should be seen in light of the growing fears of Swedish losing domains to English. The policy aims to ensure that official Swedish is “refined, but simple and easy to understand”, and to safeguard everybody’s right to languages. This latter aim can be viewed as an attempt at implementing the EU goal of mastery of three languages, while at the same time paying attention to the fact that Sweden is a multicultural society with some 200 languages spoken within its borders.

Part II contains three chapters on the relationship between language and cultural identity as represented in contemporary European cinema. In Chapter Five, Heather Merle Benbow examines the German film *Happy Birthday, Türke!* (1991) by Doris Dörrie, which depicts a Turkish-German hero negotiating the rigid stereotypes of self and other, German and “foreigner”, that pervade 1990s Germany. The question of identity and belonging is central to the film’s meaning and was prominent in its reception. The implausibility of Kayankaya’s identity as the son of Turkish migrants who himself speaks no Turkish but who is fluent in German is the film’s challenge to Germany’s relationship with its Turkish population.

Chapter Six, by Andrew McGregor, analyses the role and use of language in the representation of cultural identity in Tony Gatlif’s 1998 film *Gadjo Dilo (The Crazy Stranger)*. The film offers a rare cinematographic representation of the language and culture of the Roma—a people who have long challenged notions of the cultural integrity of
nation states within the European Union. The chapter discusses Gatlif’s use of language as a marker of cultural delineation and assimilation, with particular reference to the role of music and singing as a means of defining and also transcending perceived cultural boundaries. Critical responses to the film are examined, as well as Gatlif’s claim to have authored a film that reveals a “truthful” representation of a largely misunderstood and often resented cultural and linguistic minority.

In Chapter Seven, Jane Warren examines contemporary cinematic portraits of multilingual Europe. The films selected—Cédric Klapisch’s *L’Auberge espagnole* (*The Spanish Apartment*; 2000) and its sequel *Les Poupées russes* (*Russian Dolls*; 2005) on the one hand, and Michael Haneke’s *Code inconnu: Récit incomplet de divers voyages* (*Code Unknown: Incomplete tales of various journeys*; 2000) on the other—offer two radically different representations. Klapisch’s *The Spanish Apartment* gives voice to a “congenial” Europe of consensus, peopled by members of the EU inner circle, all represented by national archetypes, and for whom bilingualism—or trilingualism—is a natural state of affairs. The only jarring presence is William, a young Englishman whose monolingualism confines him to a grossly stereotyped view of other nationalities, and who undergoes a metamorphosis in *Russian Dolls* through language. Bilingualism in the second film is the key to producing intercultural understanding, extending beyond the boundaries of the EU. In *Code Unknown*, in contrast, language cannot be said to produce intercultural understanding; indeed, the film itself focuses on “dissensus” and the difficulty of connection and communication among its protagonists, whatever their mother tongue.

Part III presents three portraits of language contact and multilingualism. Chapter Eight, by Claudia Riehl, examines three German-speaking minority groups in Romance-speaking countries: the German-speaking communities in South Tyrol (Italy), East Belgium, and Alsace (France). Each group has a different history and faces different conditions concerning its minority status. The Tyrolians and part of the East Belgian community enjoy specific minority rights such as schooling in the mother tongue and public representation, whereas the Alsatians and the other part of the Belgian community are conceded only some “facilitations”. The chapter discusses the impact of these different conditions on the intensity of language contact (language contact phenomena at different levels) on the one hand, and the sociolinguistic background on the other, focusing on language conflict and linguistic identity.

In Chapter Nine, Doris Schüpbach provides an overview of sociolinguistic research on the Franco-German language border in
Switzerland, with particular emphasis on one “bilingual” town—Biel-Bienne—where French and German have co-existed as de facto official languages for over 150 years. The chapter traces the historical and demographic development and outlines the relevant language policies at national, cantonal, and local levels. In outlining language practices and language attitudes in Biel-Bienne, particular attention is given to the complicating fact that two varieties of German—Swiss Standard German and a local dialect—are used concurrently but for clearly separated functions.

Chapter Ten by John Hajek completes the volume by investigating language use and attitudes within the European Union. Official EU policy actively promotes the spread of multilingualism amongst its citizens. A key part of this initiative is close monitoring—as part of its regular Eurobarometer surveys—of language knowledge, practice and attitudes. The most recent results seem overwhelmingly positive, with high levels of reported multilingualism, and a generally positive view towards languages. They also confirm the spread of English as the preferred European lingua franca. However, Eurobarometer results appear in some cases to give a picture that differs somewhat from current reality, such that some caution is needed in interpreting results. There is significant regional variation in responses, with glaring omissions in some cases and overstatements in others. Hajek highlights some of these issues and sets about providing explanations for them.

Most of the chapters in this volume are drawn from papers given at an international workshop at the University of Melbourne in October 2006, entitled “European Multilingualism and Multiculturalism Today”. We are very grateful to the contributors for agreeing to have their papers published here, and to the other authors who accepted the invitation to contribute a chapter. We must also thank John Hajek for organizing the workshop and for providing invaluable advice and unstinting support throughout the editing process.

In this International Year of Languages, this volume highlights the ongoing significance of language and identity for an expanding Europe, and the ways in which situations of linguistic hybridity, interlocution and language contact continue to define Europe and its others.

July, 2008
PART I

LANGUAGE POLICY
CHAPTER ONE

WHY GERMANY NEEDS A COORDINATED, PLURALISTIC LANGUAGE POLICY

MICHAEL CLYNE

Introduction

This chapter is based on a study of the role of multilingualism in present-day Germany. The data were gathered from the literature, websites (education, business), interviews and field work in schools, universities and businesses, and small-scale surveys with state education departments, universities, business, and foreign post-doctoral fellows of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Four foci of the project are dealt with in the following order: foreign languages in primary and secondary schools; migrant languages; German, English and other languages as mediums of instruction and academic exchange in German universities; and German, English and other languages as languages of multinational companies that are German-based or that originated in Germany. There is a brief discussion on EU policy and its possible impact on German. I endeavor to show that because different aspects of German language policy are being addressed independently and quite differently, they are in conflict and are undermining one another’s intentions. I argue that German, English as an international lingua franca and immigrant languages need to function in a complementary way within a consistent and coherent policy to manage and enhance Germany’s language potential and satisfy its language needs.

Language policy

In their introduction to language planning and language policy, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, xi) define language policy as a “body of ideas, laws,
regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned change in the society, group or system”. Language planning is the formulation and implementation of policies on language use by official and unofficial institutions. The following considerations concern status planning, the position of languages in relation to one another (Kloss 1969) and acquisition planning, and the formulation and implementation of languages in the education system (Kaplan and Baldauf 1997, 122–139). A language policy can be developed cohesively, with different components harmonizing with one other, or in a piecemeal, ad hoc or implicit way. It may thus not come into people’s consciousness and the components may contradict or conflict with one another. I argue that this is what is occurring in Germany, as a result of the economic and sociopolitical responses to globalization and due to responses in different domains and institutions being in conflict.

It is important to see the status and acquisition planning issues as different from the question of linguistic purism. Spitzmüller (2007) discusses how purism has reemerged in the German public discourse since German unification as part of the “normalization” of German national identity, which is seen as threatened by anglicisms. The debate on linguistic purism is part of the ideology of “protecting” the Leitkultur (“dominant culture”) from globalization and unintegrated migrants. The issues that I discuss here are different. They concern the partial displacement of German in some domains, both externally and internally (in Germany), at a time when migrant languages, which could be seen as part of a wider multilingualism in Germany and beyond, are positioned as a threat to the national language.

Migrant languages

In January 2006, a school in a multilingual suburb of Berlin, on consultation with parents, banned the use of languages other than German in school grounds and on excursions in the interests of integration. During a public controversy, this course of action was endorsed by Berlin’s center-left and center-right political parties, the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats (Berliner Morgenpost, January 21 and 23 2006). The federal Minister for Integration, Maria Böhmer, applauded it as a model for all German schools (Deutschlandfunk, January 25 2006), and the school was subsequently rewarded with a special prize. Although “integration”, often used synonymously with assimilation, is currently the dominant goal of immigration policy in most countries of Western Europe, there are also
models proposed which transcend what Gogolin (1994) terms the “monolingual habitus” of the German school. For instance, the German National Integration Plan (BMAS 2006) proposed by a working group and a consultative process, recommends the promotion of multilingualism as well as specifically the acquisition of German and classes in the heritage language leading to certification (2006, 12). The Hamburg Model (BSFGU 2007) argues for two-way integration (not only migrants but also the host society should adapt).

Far from utilizing its own multilingual resources, Germany (like numerous other European countries) does not even have ways of recognizing these resources (cf. Extra and Gorter 2001, 17). It keeps records by citizenship and to some extent by birthplace but not on language use or on first language. The 2005 Mikrozensus (cited in BMAF 2006, 13) shows that 44.8% of all children in Germany aged 6 to 18 have a migrant background (first and second generation). From citizenship statistics (BMAF 2005), we can surmise that Germany has substantial resources in Turkish, Italian, Serbian, Greek, Polish, Croatian, English, Russian, Spanish, French, and varieties of Chinese. It will be seen that this includes some international languages of significance for economics and diplomacy. Since 2000, the number of Polish nationals in Germany has increased by 13.13%, Russian and Kazakhi nationals by 13.76%, and Turkish nationals by 6.21%.

However, citizenship statistics are not a useful guide to language resources for a number of reasons:

- they include minority language speakers, such as Kurdish speakers under Turks and Iranians, and speakers of various Chinese regional languages under Vietnamese;
- they exclude naturalized “foreigners” still speaking the migrant language;
- they also exclude the second and third generation from immigrant backgrounds who have a German passport but still speak their family’s heritage language;
- they exclude ethnic Germans from Poland and Russia (the Aussiedler, who have German citizenship but speak Polish or Russian respectively);
- they exclude the categories “stateless” and aus übrigen Gebieten (“from other areas”), who speak a range of languages other than German.
By way of illustration, in addition to 117,000 people with Turkish citizenship, Berlin alone could, in 2005, boast 57,000 Turkish-born who were naturalized between 1988 and 2005. In addition to 18,000 Russian nationals, Berlin had 11,500 Russian-born Aussiedler (ethnic Germans).

The main migrant languages are sometimes employed in service encounters, such as with municipal bureaucracies and integration agencies. There are limited programs in migrant languages in the German electronic media. State and public radio stations transmit about 170 hours weekly in 27 languages other than German, the largest number in Turkish, Italian and Greek. This is a relatively small number compared to Sydney, which in 2001 had 584 hours per week in over 80 languages. The German radio station with the largest range of languages, Radio MultiKulti, while described as “the voice of migrants and cultural diversity in Berlin”, has a predominance of programs in German. Newspapers in migrant languages are generally imported from the country of origin, and some have German editions. On the whole, migrant languages are employed in the home domain and within the respective ethnic community.

Languages other than German in schools

The institution that promotes multilingualism most is school, foreign languages being part of the traditional German concept of education. The push for languages at school over at least the past two decades has been very much dominated by one language, English, and there has been a concomitant drop in the programs in other languages. Not only is the sole or main foreign language in Grade 3 now English in all states other than the Saarland which adjoins France, even in Grades 1 and 2, where a foreign language is compulsory in five states (Bundesländer) and available in the eleven others, English is taking over. However, it is at that level that some states still offer schools some leeway as to which language they teach—including languages of neighboring countries and migrant languages. Comparisons indicate the following:

- electives in immigrant languages or languages of neighboring countries are being phased out (e.g. Preparatory grade in North Rhine-Westphalia) and replaced by compulsory English (e.g. Sachsen-Anhalt, Baden-Württemberg);
- compulsory language programs available in a range of languages have been, or are being, replaced by English (e.g. in Bavaria) (Fremdsprachen 2001, 2004).
The need for articulation from primary into secondary level is invoked as the reason why Hauptschulen (nine-grade schools leading to trades) offer only one foreign language, English. As 32% of 15 year olds of migrant background end up in the Hauptschule (as opposed to 17% of the entire population the same age—BMAS 2006, 11), they are not able to study their heritage language academically. These may be available to their ethnic German peers at the more academic Gymnasium or Realschule, which requires students to take two foreign languages.

The most widely taught foreign languages other than English in Germany are French, Spanish and Italian, followed by Russian and Portuguese (especially in cities). There is a modest number of Turkish programs with to a lesser extent but increasingly Chinese and Japanese also represented. There are community resources in all these languages, in terms of communities of speakers, and the languages are employed in the media and business domains. These resources are utilized a little or not at all and recognized differentially according to state and language. It has been reported to me (personal communication, Sabine Reich, Kultusministerkonferenz) that students of Russian receive some stimulus from L1 speakers employing the language among themselves. However, Spanish classes generally do not take into account the presence of the language as a heritage language. As in many other countries, Spanish is constantly gaining in importance as a school language: for instance, in 2005 (the year of the most recent survey) the numbers taking Spanish in Year 13 (the final year of secondary schooling) slightly exceeded those in French (22.1% as against 21.7%) (personal communication, Henny Rönneper).

North Rhine-Westphalia offers 19 migrant languages in 100 schools to students with or without a home background in them, in place of the traditional second or third language (French or Latin). They are introduced as a “second foreign language” in the middle school (usually Year 7) for students with a home background in them, but can be taken only as a third language (Year 9) by second language learners (those without a home background) (personal communication, Jagoda Koeditz). It is unclear to me how L2 learners starting the language much later than L1 acquirers, who start with an advantage to begin with, can be expected to catch up. My discussions with the bureaucracy do not seem to indicate that this is perceived as a problem.

At the time of the discussion on enforcing monolingualism in school grounds, Berlin alone had 71 state schools with bilingual programs, 53 at secondary and 18 at primary level. The language other than German taught at most of them was English, but there were also bilingual programs in
French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, (Modern) Greek, Portuguese, Polish, and Turkish. *Europaschulen*, which are bilingual streams, run in schools in places such as Berlin and Hamburg from Year 1 to either Year 10 or Year 13, on the principle of 50% of all classes comprising L1 speakers of German and 50% L1 speakers of the other language. The teachers modeling the language are all L1 speakers of the respective language. Students will usually also take an additional language. The enthusiasm of the school principal and staff is an important factor in the success of such programs. However, the numbers in such programs tend to be very small (about 50 to 100 in schools of more than 1,000 students). The participation rate among ethnic Germans is low and declining, particularly in Turkish: many German children leave the Turkish program in Year 5 to attend a *Gymnasium* and are replaced by recently arrived Turkish children. The 50% of children with German as L1 will usually include those of Turkish background whose L1 is German. Other bilingual streams tend to be immersion programs at junior secondary level, where Geography, History and Politics or Biology are taught in the L2 (personal communication, Wolfgang Zydatiß)—usually English or French but sometimes Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Danish, Dutch, Greek, Russian or Turkish (Flohr 2006).

Some languages, including French, Polish and Czech, have benefited from bilateral exchange agreements. Polish is offered in parts of Germany, especially in Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia, as a first, second and third foreign language of the “mainstream” pupils and as a “mother tongue” for migrant children.

The availability of migrant language programs is not generally in accordance with the demolinguistic profile of a neighborhood. The relatively high number of Portuguese programs in relation to the Portuguese population can be attributed to the greater preparedness of German parents to choose the language for their children in preference to Turkish (personal communication, Anne Buhr). And yet there is evidence that ethnic German children are learning Turkish on the street (Auer and Dirim 2003; Deppermann in press; Dirim and Auer 2004). My impression on school visits was that bilingual programs were more likely to utilize exchanges with the other country than community resources in Germany.

There has been a longstanding controversy concerning the pervasive position of English in the German education system. Within language teaching circles, two solutions have been proposed:

1. the introduction of a language other than English as the first foreign language: the children will still learn English later because of its
importance and because of their instrumental and intrinsic motivation. Children will thus have learned at least one more language, and more will continue with it because they will have started earlier (Weinrich 1990);

2. the teaching of English not only in its own right but particularly as a basis for multilingualism, in Hawkins’s (1981) sense as an apprenticeship in second language learning. This position is advocated by Edmondson (2004), Gnutzmann (2004), Quetz (2004) and Rück (2004).

My own observation and research has suggested that English programs do not tend to be taught explicitly as a basis for multilingualism but as an end in themselves, often linked strongly with the cultures of the big English-speaking countries, the United States and the United Kingdom. Another initiative is the EuroCom project whose objective is to develop receptive skills in a whole family of languages (e.g. Germanic, Romance) via the active acquisition of one language (e.g. English, French/Spanish). Materials are being produced and experimental programs are being conducted at secondary and university level (Hufeisen and Marx 2007; Klien and Stegmann 2004).

Academic language

According to the web page of the German University Presidents Committee (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2008), 390 postgraduate/Master’s courses and 86 undergraduate/Bachelor’s courses were conducted in English in the Winter Semester 2007-2008. This is only a small proportion of the total number of 3,542 Master’s postgraduate/courses and 8,813 Bachelor’s/undergraduate courses listed. However, with the Bologna Agreements, the number of English-medium courses is constantly increasing and will no doubt continue to do so. Initially, such programs were strategically planned by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in collaboration with universities. Their intention was to enable Germany to regain its high status as a magnet for outstanding students and scholars. However, there were clearly defined language policies. Students would be able to join such courses without a knowledge of German but would acquire this during their period of study in Germany, as some later year courses and examinations would take place in German (DAAD 2004). In fact, most programs intended to be bilingual are now delivered in English. Some of the purely English-medium programs explored teach cultural content closely linked with German, such as an M.A. in European
Studies. The Bologna Agreements have increased the need for programs to include students visiting in the short term and for local students to gain practice in classes delivered in English.

This should be seen in relation to the diminution of German as a language of scholarship, first in the natural sciences and subsequently in the social sciences and humanities (Ammon 1991, 1998; Skudlik 1990). Many view this as an impoverishment of whole fields of knowledge in Germany and the ability to talk and write about them. Ehlich (2004, 173), for instance, sees the Monolingualisierung des wissenschaftlichen Betriebs (“monolingualization of the academic enterprise”) as a consequence of the discourse of globalization and the cause of harm to the humanities (see also Ehlich 2002). He draws attention to the ensuing difficulty in knowledge transfer. Three leading natural scientists, Ralph Mocikat, Wolfgang Haße and Hermann H. Dieter (2005), developed seven theses on language and scholarship. They argued, among other things, that the emphasis on English at the expense of German was stifling the continuing development of German as a language of scholarship, lowering standards, creating a dissonance between scholarship and the public, and making Germany a less attractive venue for teaching, research, and scholarship. Mocikat (2006) himself, in his description of the language situation of the Medical Faculty of the University of Munich, depicts English as the research language and the medium of communication in the laboratory, even when no non-German speakers are present, to the point where German colleagues will even habitually employ English for small talk. On the other hand, cultural differences in patterns of academic discourse in German and English (Clyne 1987; Galtung 1985) are reflected in practices of article refereeing and book reviewing discriminating against those writing in “non-Anglo” styles (Ammon 2000; Clyne 1987).

According to a survey conducted by Ammon and McConnell (2002, 168) at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen and Aachen, 78% of academics teaching on English-medium programs believe that such courses will damage the status of German as an academic language. However, Ammon (2005) expresses the view that bilingual university programs offer an opportunity for the German language since all students will acquire some knowledge of German, although it remains to be seen whether German acquired in everyday situations will suffice to empower the students to communicate in German in the academic domain. Motz (2005b, 140) rejects the position that students will acquire German en passant and also refers to students’ disappointment about losing English skills, as there is generally no formal tuition in the language.
Apart from the ideological issue, there are also logistic problems with the way in which English-medium programs have been/are being delivered. This was identified by a web search of comparable English-medium and bilingual courses at five tertiary institutions, universities and Fachhochschulen (“universities of applied science”) in Bonn, Berlin and Hamburg. In addition, 12 vice-presidents and heads of programs were interviewed. Nearly all the courses are intended for both German and international students; there are on average about 66.5% international students enrolled in them. All 25 courses examined require evidence of English tests; only seven necessitate entry tests of German proficiency. Students require only an IELTS score of 6.0 to enter an English-medium Master’s course at most German universities (6.5 at some), as opposed to 7.0 at the University of Melbourne, for example. Although students are not in a native English-speaking country, and between 60% and 100% of the staff teaching on the sampled programs are non-native speakers of English who have studied or worked in an English-speaking country, there is little or no support for the English language. There is nothing comparable to the language and learning support provided for international students by Australian universities, such as 1,895 hours of individual support, including essay correction, and 867 hours of workshops at Melbourne, as an example of a university in an English-speaking country. Four of the sampled programs offer no English support at all because English is a prerequisite, while five English-medium programs and one bilingual one refer students to existing English courses at the university’s language center. According to Erling and Hilgendorf (2006, 282), “the reality is many students find it difficult to communicate in English at the high level of proficiency required in academic settings”. On the other hand, English-speaking lecturers are not given any German-language support. This is in contrast with the situation in the Netherlands and Denmark, where foreign staff are required to take courses in the national language.

Reference should be made to a few genuine “bilingual” programs, such as some courses at the University of Hamburg (Liebold 2006; also Dunst 2005; Soltau and Thelen 2005; Voegeli 2005) into which German and English language for special purposes and integration programs have been incorporated. I would also like to refer to the quadrilingual Viadrina University in Frankfurt an der Oder on the border between Germany and Poland. This university has developed a multicultural, multilingual concept around four languages of instruction, German, Polish, English and French. Internationalization is believed to entail multilingualism, which the President, Professor Gesine Schwan, describes as einen europäischen Trumpf (“a European trump-card”).
Humboldt fellows

A survey was undertaken at the 2005 annual conference of postdoctoral fellows of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The questionnaire, which was completed by 128 junior academics from all continents, elicited information on their self-rated German proficiency, their use of German, and attitudes to and reasons for their level of German proficiency.

The main reasons given for not mastering the German language were:

- lack of opportunities, as everyone in their department spoke, wrote and emailed in English;
- lack of time;
- the limited usefulness and the relatively low prestige of German in the country of origin as compared to English.

About three quarters of those using English did so in communication with colleagues, either in writing (email) or orally (discussions of their area of study). About 70% read academic literature in German but only 20% wrote publications in German themselves. Again, about three quarters of those surveyed employed the language in the transactional domain (such as shopping, asking for directions, public transport). Almost that many used German in the social domain, e.g. with friends, and nearly half with the bureaucracy.

Most of the informants regretted that their German proficiency was limited, and thus restricted social interaction in the student cafeteria, with friends, and at parties, as well as the possibility of becoming more acquainted with German culture. The question whether future postdoctoral fellows should acquire basic knowledge of German before their arrival was almost unanimously answered in the affirmative and sometimes affirmed by supplementary comments.

The responses to the questionnaire thus concur with Mocikat et al.’s (2005) plea for foreign academics and students to be given more support to integrate linguistically into the German academic scene. This is not to underestimate the importance of English as an international academic lingua franca to German academics and students. On the contrary, support (both tuition and correction) in English ought to be increased. However, this should not be done at the expense of German as an academic language. As in other domains, I would argue for a multilingual model which also allows academics and students to develop their skills in their second and third foreign languages in disciplinary contexts.
Language and business

Previous studies (such as Erling and Walton 2002; Vollstedt 2002) have drawn attention to the dominance of English in companies with their headquarters in Germany, although German is still important for the local market. According to Erling and Walton, few companies have developed a language policy, perhaps because they want to save the costs of interpreting and translating. The higher the status of employees, the more English they use. The dominance of English is confirmed in Vollstedt’s (2005) longitudinal study comparing middle-level firms in 1996 and 2000. The proportion of companies with English as their main language of correspondence increased from 70.8% to 82.8%, while there was a corresponding fall in the demand for German and also for French, Spanish, Italian and Swedish but not for Russian, Chinese and Japanese as additional languages of correspondence. Business seems intent on effective communication but impervious to the symbolic function of language. In her study of Swedish-German business communication, Bleich (2005, 282) reports that while about half the communication from the Swedish to the German companies is in German, 80% of the communication from the German to the Swedish companies is in English.

As the first part of our project, web sites of the ten largest German companies and of two others recommended to us as interesting were consulted for descriptions of their language use. A range of secondary and tertiary industries are represented. Questionnaires on company oral and written language use at the headquarters (among the top management and among employees) and international communication were completed by representatives of the companies. The author also observed communication in one of the firms.

Of the 12 companies, four have amalgamated with non-German ones and were at the time of the research in the process of restructuring. The amalgamation of companies entails a fusion of company sub-cultures, including sometimes linguistic accommodation. Three of the firms are multinational but with a strong German basis—they use English for marketing, communication with investors and for professional work contexts (chemistry, engineering). One of them had German as their international work language for many years, so that their Australian engineers for instance had to learn German, and they transferred German words in their English work register (e.g. Clyne 1976, 119–120). Then there are four purely German companies that have taken on English for international communication and especially interaction with investors, and
one that uses German as the main language and employs a number of languages for reports (e.g. Chinese, Italian, as well as English).

Despite substantial variation among the companies, what is uniform is the pragmatic basis for language choice. Generally, German and English are co-dominant languages. General meetings are usually held in German with interpretation into English. International staff, international investors and amalgamations have led to the continual increase in the use of English, which the companies regard as the language of international business. During 2006, there were staff protests in one of the companies about the overuse of English by the chief executive officer, who had lived and worked in the U.S. for many years. One bone of contention was the order of the two languages in the CEO’s bilingual letter to staff and about the language of the headlines in the company magazine.

English is usually automatically employed with non-Germans, even with people in subsidiaries and colleagues in central European countries with a longstanding German-language tradition. Language choice often occurs in an ad hoc manner so that a code-switch to English takes place when there is a person in a group (including a work group) who does not speak or understand German or is not expected to do so. There are few attempts in the business sector to contribute to the spread of German or to promote multilingualism (unless motivated by short-term pragmatic goals). Company-based language instruction is now predominantly English and, in some cases, German as a second language. Earlier programs in other languages (such as French, Spanish, Italian) have been severely cut.

It needs to be considered whether the emphasis on English as a lingua franca plus German as the “local” language is in the long-term interests of German international business. In a report commissioned by the British Council and based on needs projections over several decades, English linguist David Graddol (2006, 14) predicted that, within 10 to 15 years, English would be a basic skill for educated people worldwide and those with additional languages (especially Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic) would have the economic advantage. The dangers of English replacing other European languages in important domains are explored by Phillipson (2003).

**German language policy and the European Union**

German needs to be viewed as one of the major languages of the multilingual continent of Europe. In fact, with about 100 million speakers, it is the language with the most native speakers in the EU. German support
for the teaching of German as a Foreign Language through institutions such as the Goethe Institute, especially in Eastern Europe, continues to be strong. Germany is vigilant about what it considers limited use of German in the structures of the European Union, which is not commensurate with the size of the population employing German as an L1. There is a committee of the Bundesrat, the upper house of federal parliament, which deals with such threats to the status of German. In January 2007, Chancellor Angela Merkel gave her inaugural speech as President of the EU in German and, much to the disgust of British and French delegates, the translations into those languages, the dominant working languages, were not available for several hours. Ironically Austria—the other EU country with German as its national language—tends to support the wider use of English for financial reasons (Pöll 2007). However, according to Central European germanists such as Földes (2002), the status of German, which motivates the learning of the language in Central and Eastern Europe, is undermined by the use of English by German business and tourists abroad.

There has been a 27% drop in the number of people studying German in the five years 2001-2005, especially in Europe and in English-speaking countries. While the reasons for this are not uniform, the widespread adoption of English as an international lingua franca has inevitably detracted from the study of German as a first foreign language. At the same time, there have been huge increases in China, Malaysia and other Asian countries, where German is studied as an additional language (von Ruckteschel and Peters 2006).

The European Union has a multilingual language policy in which the languages of all European nation-states are equal in principle. The EU’s language-in-education policy supports multilingualism but in the sense of equating it with the acquisition of foreign language skills. According to the EU’s Action Plan, 2004-2006 (EU 2003), two foreign languages are to be part of the curriculum of all children from kindergarten and primary school. Model programs of innovative practice are to be supported and continued at secondary and tertiary levels and through study abroad schemes. This should be facilitated by teacher training schemes. Major and minor European languages and also regional and minority and migrant languages should be taught, all as part of a program of life-long language learning under the motto “unified in diversity”. Member nations are to provide adequate information to parents to assist them in the choice of their children’s first foreign language. A review of the implementation of this Action Plan was underway at the time of writing (February 2008).
It is ironic that, despite the good intentions mentioned above, European integration has contributed to the dominance of English and the marginalization of other languages. Examples of this are the academic mobility programs (Erasmus and Socrates) which have led to many courses being conducted in English to cater for foreign students. It is also very difficult to force member states to observe their obligations under the Action Plan as they themselves have sole jurisdiction over schooling and curriculum issues (personal communication, Paul Holdsworth).

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, developed by the Council of Europe (1992) and ratified by around half of member states, gives speakers of established ethnolinguistic minorities—as in the case of Germany, speakers of Danish, (North) Frisian and Sorbian—language rights such as education, media, aged care and border communication in L1. However, such rights are not extended to the much larger numbers of people using migrant languages. The EU does not have the prerogative to recommend such language rights to them.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of the free market economy in the fields of business and scholarship/university education in determining language use, leading to a privileging of English and generating an indifference to both the mother tongue and Languages Other Than English (LOTEs). This contrasts and conflicts with foreign affairs and integration policies, which promote the status of German. The paradoxes suggest a need for a more consistent, coordinated national policy on languages to be negotiated—one like Australia adopted in 1987 which encompassed English, indigenous, immigrant and sign languages, second language teaching, interpreting and translating, and other language issues (Lo Bianco 1987). It is important for diverse institutions of German society to collaborate in implementing such a policy. One problem is German federalism, with its clearly defined roles for state and federal governments and limits to shared policy development.

Notes

1 This article partly overlaps in content with the keynote address “Braucht Deutschland eine bewusstere, kohäsive Sprachenpolitik?” given at the conference of the same title, Bonn, September/October 2006 (Diskussionspapier 11/2006) and the paper “Why Germany needs a coordinated pluralistic language policy” delivered at the International Symposium on Bilingualism, Hamburg, April-May, 2007. The project was made possible by an Alexander von Humboldt Research
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It should be noted that the information in this database is administered directly by the individual universities and may therefore not be exhaustive or completely up to date. The database includes courses in English Studies, where English is often the language of instruction.

One had embarked on a policy of multilingualism; the other was an internal German company that widely used English as the company language.

References


