Neo-Colonial Mentalities in Contemporary Europe?
Language and Discourse
in the Construction of Identities
Neo-Colonial Mentalities in Contemporary Europe?
Language and Discourse
in the Construction of Identities

Edited by

Guido Rings and Anne Ife

Cambridge Scholars Publishing
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ vii

**Chapter I: Key Concepts and Questions**

*Introduction*
Anne Ife and Guido Rings .......................................................................................... 2

*Can Euro English or English as a European lingua franca contribute to establishing a European identity?*
Claus Gnutzmann ................................................................................................. 19

*Debating Hybridity*
Shailja Sharma ....................................................................................................... 35

**Chapter II: The “Immigrant” Europeans—Migrants into Contemporary Europe**

*Liberalism, Discrimination and the Law: Language Testing for Citizenship in Britain*
Adrian Blackledge .................................................................................................. 50

*Asylum Stories: Constructing Zimbabwean Identities in the Diaspora*
Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo ....................................................................................... 67

*Diasporic Ethnic Identity: West African Migration and the Formation of Transcultural Memory in the European Union*
Guillermo G. Caliendo ......................................................................................... 84

*(Post-)Colonial Discourses and the Constitution of Identity in V.S. Naipaul’s Half a Life (2001)*
Heinz Antor ........................................................................................................... 102
Beyond the Roots, Beyond Orientalism: Innovative Conceptions of Personal and Cultural Identity in Leïla Sebbar's Shérazade, 17 ans, brune, frisée, les yeux verts
Frank Leinen ................................................................. 119

Chapter III: The “New Wave” Europeans

Nationalism and the Construction of Collective Identity in Central/Eastern European Discourse
Gabrielle Hogan-Brun .................................................. 138

“The White Turkish Man’s Burden”: Orientalism, Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey
Welat Zeydanlıoğlu ........................................................ 155

Outgrowing the Ausländer, Negotiating the German: Explorations in Identity Formation among Migrant Youth in Rural Germany
Jodi Scott Backes ......................................................... 175

Chapter IV: The Europeans of the Regions

Voices in Other Ears: “Accents” and Identities of the First- and Second-Generation Irish in England
Bronwen Walter .......................................................... 198

Postcolonisation of the Mind? Welsh Language and Identity
Eddie Williams ............................................................ 215

Neo-Colonialism and Values Related to Work: The Flexicurity Discourse in Andalusia
F. Manuel Montalbán Peregrín ........................................ 230

Contributors ................................................................. 246

Index ............................................................................ 252
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the various institutions and organisations that have supported the editors and contributors in their preparation of this book, particularly the British Academy and the Institute of Germanic & Romance Studies. We would also like to thank Cristina Blanca Sancho for her untiring and effective editorial work on the volume as a whole.
CHAPTER ONE

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTION

ANNE IFE AND GUIDO RINGS

The aim of this volume is to explore some of the major cultural groupings within the European Union by investigating the emergent discourse that reflects their own and others’ sense of their evolving identity. For this, a highly interdisciplinary group of contributors—including linguists, literary critics, social-geographers and political discourse analysts—will draw in particular, but not exclusively, on a combination of inter- and trans-cultural theory, and linguistic theory, to reveal reciprocal influences of different modes of cultural representation and offer alternatives to traditional notions of acculturation, deculturation and/or multiculturalism that have been used to describe sociocultural developments in reductive ways. The justification for this approach is above all its timeliness, with the EU having recently experienced a major expansion of membership, with new members waiting to join and with ever-growing trends of migration from both within and outside. Yet, major players within the EU are now adjusting to the newcomers, still without previously having really established a clear sense of their own European identities. In this context, we aim at exploring key issues in the negotiation of identities within the new socio-political, economic and cultural framework. Key questions will be:

1. What are the main characteristics, mechanisms and dissemination features of neo-colonial modes of representation in contemporary Europe?
2. How are they received by groups commonly associated with the former periphery, and how are they shaped by other groups?

The contributions in this volume are predominantly based on papers selected for an international and interdisciplinary conference in London, although some papers were invited subsequently in order to address perceived gaps in coverage and to produce a self-sufficient volume. Special thanks go in this context to the British Academy for generously supporting the original conference and workshops and the Institute for Germanic and Romance Studies for hosting it, but also, and in particular, to a group of distinguished scholars who travelled from all over Europe.
and from the US to join the discussions. Their papers will lead the reader to interpretations of a substantial variety of texts, ranging from mass media, political discourse, literature and film to individual testimonies within which traditional images of European superiority are re-constructed for the purpose of re-negotiating own identity constructs. The case for considering neo-colonialism in Europe will be justified and explained from the perspective of postcolonial theory, while the context will be examined from the perspective of EU discourse that reflects its stance on national, regional and ethnic identity and the policies aimed at encouraging a harmonious bonding of Europe’s postcolonial, diasporic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and mobile communities. All this includes an investigation of aspects that might be directly linkable to patterns of European colonialism and/or to related issues of globalization and diaspora, which still represent a rather marginal area in postcolonial research.

Already in the 1960s, Kwame Nkrumah criticised the fact that ex-colonial powers and superpowers such as the United States continue to play a major role through multinational corporations, cartels, international monetary bodies and limited military action.\(^1\) In his well known work *Translation and Empire*, Robinson stresses that this “continuing force of authority” shapes “self concept, values, political systems and personalities” (1997: 22). In this sense, drawing on Hofstede’s popular notion of culture as a system of patterns that results from a “collective programming of the mind” (2001: 4, 18f.),\(^2\) it might not be wrong to talk about a “colonisation of the mind”, which leads us to approach mentalities understood as collective dispositions of behaviour. As Shankar puts it: “Economic subordination, cultural imperialism, and psychological anxiety survive (…) independence” (2001: 137).\(^3\) Similarly, Bhabha has criticised an “ongoing colonial present” (1994: 128). On a representational level, this might imply the continuity of binary constructs within which former colonisers and/or succeeding national elites relate to formerly colonized people as rational to instinctive, civilised to barbarian, and male to

---


\(^2\) See also Antor’s comments on human beings as “pattern building animals” with a need for orientation, “The ethics of criticism”, 79ff.

\(^3\) We define colonialism here as “the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the last 400 years” and that is linked to post-renaissance practices of imperialism and to the development of a “modern capitalist system of economic exchange” (Ashcroft et al., *Key Concepts*, 45f.).
female. Within the image of “the west and the rest” Said has stressed the continuity of such dichotomies for decades (1995: 20), and the superficial inversion of colonial structures applied by some African dictatorships does certainly neither break with these binary patterns of thought nor is it very likely to improve the situation for the ex-colonised. On the other hand, any intent to reduce the complex contemporary condition to a homogenic “neo-colonial” phenomenon, within which political independence appears as scarcely more than a “trivial detail”, would not only be wrong but would serve the binary agenda of colonialism. Rather, we will have to imagine that world in its complexity: “successfully decolonized in some respects and still subject to updated colonial mechanisms in others”, while the local nature of colonialism, decolonization and/or neo-colonialism might be significantly different in each case under analysis and ought to be explored in its specificity.

---

4 See already Chateaubriand (Génie du christianisme, 159) for a romantic perception of such binaries. For a detailed analysis of hierarchical polar images in colonial and neo-colonial encounters see Todorov, La conquête de l’Amérique. Hölz’s recent interpretation of leading French literature of the 19th century (including works by François-René de Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier and Prosper Mérimée) provides further evidence of the exposure of contemporary readers to these kinds of dichotomous images (Zigeuner, Wilde und Exoten, 37ff.).

5 The violent expropriation of white-owned farmers by the Mugabe-regime in Zimbabwe is an example for this, which has filled the headlines in recent years. See Wade (“Sanctions”, 8).

6 Shankar summarises here a rather pessimistic perspective on decolonization (“Decolonization”, 137).

7 Shankar (“Decolonization”, 139). However, according to her narrow definition of postcolonial, Shankar treats postcolonial as a synonym for decolonised in opposition to a neo-colonial position, which will not be adapted here.

8 Not by coincidence, the neo-Marxist Aijaz Ahmad (In Theory) has vehemently criticised a tendency to globalised discussions of colonial patterns of thought within which the local dimensions are easily overlooked. We will have to take on that challenge and consider both global and local dimensions as stressed within concepts such as “glocalisation” and/or “differentiating universalism”. See Robertson for the first concept (“Glocalisation”, 25), Bhabha for the comparable notion of “vernacular cosmopolitanism” (“Unsatisfied”, 191) and Antor (“Postcolonial Positions”, 15f.) for the term “differentiating and non-hegemonic universalism”. A radical focus on local material aspects as proposed by Ahmad does not seem to be the way forward either, as in this case key patterns of colonial discourse could be overlooked as desired by (neo-)colonialist “divide et impera” strategies.
Precisely because of this complexity, we have given space to a wide range of approaches in order to explore more fully a contemporary condition that despite numerous debates could still be understood as “postcolonial”, meaning here governed by the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. These certainly range from a focus on “the discursive and material effects of the historical fact of imperialism to an incorporation of cultural difference and marginality into a form of synchronic post-modernism” (Ashcroft et al. 1999: 2). We would like to further investigate this very rich range of perspectives with contributions that subscribe to the ongoing dynamics of “negotiation and progressive refinement” (ibid.) which characterise the field of postcolonial studies. With regard to the substantial literary and historiographical archive of colonialism, “the most influential traditional disciplines contributing to postcolonial theory […] have been literary criticism and history” (Shankar 2001: 361). However, in our contemporary framework, notions such as globalization and diaspora—that have traditionally been more the focus of sociologists, linguists and anthropologists—are of increasing importance for understanding textual accounts of postcolonial conditions. We are referring here to the difficulties of so-called Third World Nations to develop an independent socio-economic identity under the pressures of an “increasing interpenetration of regional economies in the wake of ‘free-market’ policies of ‘liberalization’ or ‘structural adjustment programs’” (ibid.). Globalization appears here as a “process whereby individual lives and local communities are affected by economic and cultural forces that operate worldwide” (Ashcroft et al. 2006: 461).

Postcolonial scholars have started to contribute to its analysis by introducing their notions of hybridity, transculturation and Third Space, but there is room for further research, in particular when it comes to the link between globalization and neo-colonialism. After all, it would be blatantly wrong to reduce the extreme variety of globalization processes to a form of Western neo-imperialism, and it might even be more misguided to regard hybridity and transculturation as omnipotent guiding principles out of such conflictive hierarchical relations. Precisely in the latter context, Kien Ngi Ha has stressed the need for a more differentiated discussion of mainstream commercial forms of hybridity in architecture, music and TV, which contribute to a stabilisation of late-capitalist power relations by an instrumentalisation of the Other as a “funky-fresh” or “exotic-erotic” object of consumption within the marketing patterns of a new American

---

9 The term remains highly debated; see Antor ("Postcolonial Pedagogy", 247f.) for details about the discussion.
Dream (Ha 2005: 75-81). Sharma (this volume) argues that while the discourse of hybridity was useful in resisting and re-writing nationalist xenophobia in the late 1970s and early 1980s, it has now outlived its usefulness. She proposes that its lack of utility is harmful inasmuch as it allows no discussion and work around the terms for what should succeed it. Similarly, identity debates are targeted upon and against immigrants and ethnic minorities without ever being inclusive of them. Sharma argues that perhaps it is time to find a discourse that bypasses “identity-speak” in favour of more structural discussions about equal access to power.

There are, however, parallels and resemblances to colonial patterns of domination if we start considering imperialism not simply as “a conscious and active ideology, but a combination of conscious ideological programmes and unconscious ‘rhizomic’ structures of unprogrammed connections and engagements” (Ashcroft 2001: 50). In this sense, a relatively obvious common denominator could be found in the ongoing processes of colonization of nature and their consequences, which despite major and increasing concern not only amongst environmentalists are still very far from being solved. Since the colonial process began, the expansion of the languages of the colonisers as well as the continuing mechanisms of language choice and use after political independence have also been regarded as defining characteristics of and threats to identity, and so it is not surprising that linguistic analysis and language policy have become key issues in postcolonial studies. Not by coincidence, Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin stress that “to name the world is to ‘understand’ it, to know it and to have control over it” (2006: 261), and this is by no means a new finding if we take into account Antonio Nebrija’s perspective of language as “compañera del imperio”, voiced in his famous Gramática castellana in the year in which the Spanish colonization of the so-called New World began with Columbus’ arrival ([1492]1992: 99). In this context, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s rejection of English as an imperial language probably does not need further elaboration (see his well-known Decolonising the mind from 1981). However, in recent decades many scholars have brought forward arguments for a subversion of English (e.g. “Indianizing” it) to suit the needs of formerly colonised people without losing the imperial language’s qualities, in particular its potential to give “access to […] desirable domains of power and knowledge” (Kachru 1990: 7). In this context, the steady flow of migrants from former colonies

---

10 For an English summary see Ha, “Crossing the Border?”
11 For a convincing discussion of parallels in mentalities between colonialism in the more narrow sense and colonization of nature see Plumwood, “Decolonizing relationships”.
into the EU and North America, which has resulted in a very significant and growing diaspora, has to be taken into account because it correlates increasingly with effects of globalisation and, overall, forms part of the postcolonial conditions that we wish to explore further.\footnote{The massive migration from a country like Equatorial Guinea that is fundamentally rich due to its oil exports to the United States but remains at the same time incredibly poor when it comes to general infrastructure, social welfare and human rights protection is a good example of that correlation between diaspora and globalisation in a postcolonial framework (for a journalistic introduction into oil politics in contemporary Equatorial Guinea see Smoltczyk, “Volltanken in Malabo”, 82ff.). The close links between diaspora and postcolonial conditions are obvious when discussing a writer like Salman Rushdie, whose origin from postcolonial India has to be taken as much into account as his present diasporic life in Britain.}

All this stresses the need for an enhancement of interdisciplinary work in the area while it simultaneously raises the awareness for a multitude of entirely justifiable approaches. The papers in this volume are examples of and responses to that variety and include explorations in the area of colonial discourse analysis, language and language policy, media studies and cultural studies with particular reference to diasporic conditions. In this context, our deliberate focus on neo-colonial mentalities in Europe should not be misunderstood as a step backwards to Eurocentric and/or ethnocentric perspectives. Rather, we share Shohat’s and Stam’s concern to resist the “vestigial [Eurocentric] thinking which permeates and structures contemporary practices and representations even after the formal end of colonialism” (1994: 2), and we confirm the need to “unthink” Eurocentrism (ibid.) precisely by further exploring the nature of Europe’s extremely mobile and diasporic, inter- and trans-cultural communities.

It would, however, be fair to say that in the 20th century Europe has been one of the prime sites for population change, with two world wars, the Cold War, the creation and dissolution of the Soviet Union, and recent conflicts in the Balkans. The European Union has also latterly been a major driving force and catalyst for change within the wider Europe and beyond, representing a level of prosperity and liberal democracy to which others aspire. The EU’s expanding frontiers have subsumed a sizeable group of newly autonomous nations who are now reassessing their identities within the European fold, while waiting in the wings is Turkey, with all the challenge represented by its Islamic profile. Furthermore, because of the colonial past of major EU players the influence of the European Union extends well beyond the geographical bounds of the
“old” Europe. We see this only too clearly as Europe in general, and some countries in particular—not least Britain and France, as we discuss below—endeavour rather uncertainly to accommodate and integrate with the millions of descendants from ex-colonial diasporas now residing on their shores.

Questions of European identity are much discussed and debated, both in relation to an over-arching EU identity and in relation to the groups that go to make up the EU (see inter alia Breakwell and Lyons 1996; Ehlich 1991; Gubbins and Holt 2002; Haarman 1991; Macdonald 1993). It seems clear that while a distinct European identity is some way off for many Europeans, within Europe there is nonetheless a constant quest and a need by many people to re-position themselves, either consciously or unconsciously, in relation to the changing environment. In this quest to re-position, the role of language is fundamental on a number of dimensions. Language is often cited as an essential element in our identity, albeit one among many. On one level it is crucial as the medium through which groups express their own aspirations and concerns, as their means to self-expression and self-image: “Language allows us to identify our own place in the world and our own subjectivity (...) a language is the product of the collective attitudes and values of a particular group” (Pittaway 2003: 151). At the same time, language is also the medium through which people’s perceptions of others are reflected and is thus a mirror for the biases and prejudices that they may hold.

On another level, language can be a vital factor in its own right, becoming another actor in identity construction within debates over language status, language policy and language form. The EU has of course long appreciated the importance of language in the future success or otherwise of the EU and has embodied in its own treaties the inviolability of national languages and the importance of guaranteeing individual language rights within Europe (Coulmas 1991; Phillipson 2003). It has also increasingly supported Europe’s minority languages, at least in its own discourse and in its funding initiatives and both of these positions are reinforced in the Framework Strategy for Multilingualism (Commission of the European Communities 2005) currently under discussion. EU philosophy is enshrined in the new Framework Strategy which promotes linguistic and cultural diversity, stating that:

It is this diversity that makes the European Union what it is: not a “melting pot” in which differences are rendered down, but a common home in which diversity is celebrated, and where our many mother tongues are a source of wealth and a bridge to greater solidarity and mutual understanding.
Language is the most direct expression of culture; it is what makes us human and what gives each of us a sense of identity. (ibid.: 2)

However, in spite of the lip-service paid in this document to the “scores of non-indigenous languages spoken by migrant communities” (ibid.: 2), when it comes to the populations who speak non-European languages, this philosophy presents some uncomfortable challenges and some lurking dangers that have yet to be resolved. The EU has yet really to acknowledge or come to terms with language issues relating to the ex-colonial groups of non-European origin. And, as regards individual nations, both France and Britain have in recent years come up with some rather clumsy attempts to get to grips with language differences among their non-indigenous populations—often identifying language as a cause for social ills. A good example of this was the controversial Bénisti report for a bill on the prevention of delinquency in France (Commission Prévention du GESI 2004), which provoked uproar by appearing to identify inability to speak French with problems of social unrest and in its early stages proposed that mothers should be obliged to speak to their children in French in the home. And Blackledge (this volume) shows that in the debate in Britain surrounding the strengthening of legislation relating to language testing for citizenship the apparently liberal discourse of politicians and policy-makers links languages other than English, and therefore speakers of these languages, with civil disorder, school underachievement, social segregation, societal burden, isolation, unhappy marriage, poor employment prospects, mental health difficulties, lack of social mobility, and threat to democracy, citizenship and nationhood. Furthermore, these ideologies gain force as they are debated in increasingly legitimate settings, and are ultimately enshrined in the least negotiable domain of all, the law.

Language rights and language status issues can easily become a channel for the expression of wider group grievances or aspirations, especially when a language has been long suppressed and subjugated to that of a dominating force, whether intra-nationally, as in the case of regional languages, for example, or cross-nationally, as with the Baltic states (see Hogan-Brun, this volume). Although sometimes debates over language can be a diversionary tactic, either conscious or unconscious, to mask other underlying concerns, because of its identity function,  

13 Watts (“Linguistic Minorities”, 94ff.) for instance, suggests that this has been the case in Switzerland where discontent over language policies among the minority language groups is down to the fact “that the minority ethnolinguistic
language can become imbued with immense symbolic potential among groups wanting to reassert their separateness and the right to control over their own affairs. Our language lets us set our boundaries, lets us differentiate ourselves from others and, we imagine, has the power to unify. As a result, language can be endowed with a kind of idealistic potential as a unifying force that will overcome former divisions—an approach used with both benign and less benign intent according to context. Such a unifying role, although counter to the stated aims of the European Commission, is often proposed for English within Europe where increasingly it functions *de facto* as a lingua franca. However, Gnutzmann (this volume) is more circumspect in his assessment of the potential for English becoming such a unifying force. In his examination of the sociocultural and linguistic status of “Euro-English”, and its applicability to concepts such as linguistic determinism and relativism, he views the prospect of its contributing to a unified European identity as idealistic at best, at least in the short-term.

Crucial in discussing linguistic issues in relation to Europe, whether it be from the perspective of own and others’ discourse, or in relation to language as actor in identity negotiation, is the disparity in power between dominant and less dominant groups. While this may derive from the legacy of what is traditionally understood as colonialism, similar power disparities also remain as the legacy of over-powerful neighbours, or an overweening state apparatus in relation to the regions. For the purposes of this volume we have identified three groups within Europe where power disparities of the kind mentioned above are evident, and where a neo-colonial mentality might be anticipated.

---

14 One of the most discussed cases in recent times is that of Catalan, which has been a key player in the resurgence of Catalan identity under increased autonomy within Spain after decades of suppression by the Spanish state (see for instance Hoffman, “Language Planning” and “Monolingualism”; Mar-Molinero, “The politics of language” and May, *Language and Minority Rights*, 239-251).

15 Franco’s suppression of regional languages in Spain was part of a quest for unity which was, in Gilmour’s words (*The Transformation of Spain*, 105) a “franquista obsession”, which declared it the “sacred duty and collective task of all Spaniards” to work for “the unity, greatness and freedom of the fatherland” (ibid.). In such a scenario diversity of language could play no role. A similar unifying role was seen for standard French, in revolutionary France, when linguistic diversity was seen as “an obstacle to the diffusion of revolutionary ideals. It also appeared to be an obstacle to equality and so the principle of linguistic uniformity became a matter for legislation” (Judge, “French”, 12f.).
The first, and most obvious category, are the ex-colonial “migrant” or diasporic groups originating from Africa or Asia or Latin America but now living and working in Europe, the legacy of the colonial past of western European countries. We have mentioned above Blackledge’s contribution in this respect, which approaches public discourse from a sociolinguistic perspective; a number of other contributors focus rather on literary, media or other forms of representation. Dodgson-Katiyo, for instance, examines the social and cultural experiences of Zimbabweans in the UK, as represented in a variety of cultural forms, including writing, performance and electronic communication. She analyses counter-narratives in which Zimbabweans challenge dominant representations of them as a problem group by both the Zimbabwean and British governments, looking at the cultural construction of “home” and “exile” and asking how Zimbabweans in the diaspora, who do not know whether their UK residence is permanent or temporary, can negotiate the space between Africa and Europe. Caliendo analyzes the recent surge of illegal Sub-Saharan migrant workers in the Canary Islands, examining the role of news media in the formation of diasporic ethnicity. He argues that hegemonic media (narratives and photo-images) play a significant role in the transcultural and collective memory formation of West African migrant workers in the European Union. Pivotal in this recollection process is how, through the process of interpretation and representation, institutional media constructs a prototypical memory text that can influence societal every day cultural practices. Antor analyzes V.S. Naipaul’s 2001 novel Half a Life and places it within the context of the Nobel laureate’s life-long exploration of the thorny issues of identity constitution in the postcolonial world. He shows that the novel probes the fault-lines of existence in an environment characterized by imperial disruption and its consequences for the individual, including migration and diaspora, alienation and disorientation. His analysis uses these factors for a critical investigation into the difficulties of how to impose a stable orientational system on the constant flux of events in the age of transculturality. Leinen looks at the representation of the “banlieue” and the search for a lifestyle that corresponds to the individual needs of second generation Maghrebian immigrants through Leïla Sebbar’s novel Shérazade. 17 ans, brune, frisée, les yeux verts (1982). Leinen aims to show, on the basis of notions of culture, gender and class, that Shérazade seeks deracination in order to find the human being inside her. She develops a multiple identity which can be regarded as expression of an entre-deux, a positioning in the space of existential Otherness. Leinen suggests that here Sebbar stands up for a new ethic of life governed by
alterity and multiple identity as alternatives to conventional concepts of identity, culture and nation.

The second group comprises those we have loosely termed “new wave Europeans”. These include citizens of countries which have “re-emerged” in recent times into the European context, requiring a widening of western European horizons to a point where pan-European activities (such as football competitions and song contests) now centre far to the east of Paris and Berlin. Clear examples here are the ex Eastern-bloc states, admitted as members of the EU since 2004, the two most recent, Romania and Bulgaria (in January 2007). These former satellites of the USSR have over the last decade emerged from a form of colonial domination to re-assert themselves as independent European nations in control of their own destinies and in joining the EU they are essentially further confirming their new-found status. Yet to assume that such nations necessarily have a clear sense of a national identity may be premature, since their newly asserted nationhood may disguise a range of underlying issues which are a legacy of their former colonial status, as in the Baltic states. Hogan-Brun points out that the politics of belonging features prominently on Eastern European agendas, and discourses on identity, citizenship and nationhood abound. Essentially, discussions on public fronts tend to be embedded in an essentialist, fixed view of identity, thus countering western approaches that have shifted toward a multiple and intersecting understanding of belonging. With a specific focus on Latvia, and against the background of the diverse settings in the Baltic, Hogan-Brun here explores how identity is (re-)claimed in the consolidation of positions at both the “periphery” and the “centre” in Central/Eastern European discourse. Still outside the European Union, but an active player now in contemporary Europe, is Turkey, uncomfortably straddling the two major ideologies of our time, and still engaged in its own inner battles around its identity and its attempt to present an acceptable face to the rest of Europe. Zeydanlioğlu explores Turkey’s inner tensions, examining the intimate relationship between Orientalism and Kemalism, Turkey’s founding ideology, and its role in the Kemalist nation-building project. He shows that the Kemalist elite’s “will to civilise” assimilated the Orientalist division of the world into a superior “West” and an inferior “East”. This found its articulation in the will to create a “civilised” Turkish state and then a nation that urgently needed to rid itself of its “Oriental” characteristics, such as Islam, its Ottoman heritage, and the multi-ethnic diversity of Turkey. This in turn has given way to the construction of an exalted official Turkish national identity and state discourse that persistently perceives Islam and the ethnic diversity of the society as a potential threat to its homogenising project. Also included
in this section is a paper by Scott-Backes which explores identity construction among young people in Germany, who are there precisely as a result of the widening of western European horizons to the East. Germany’s successful democracy inevitably attracts migrants from beyond the former Iron Curtain, including people of German ethnic origin, the returning descendants of settlers who decades before went to Kazakhstan and the Volga region. Several of Scott-Backes’ interviewees have such a migration background, often including German as well as non-German origins, and now find themselves having to negotiate between discourses of Germanness and Otherness to find a sense of their own identity. Her paper offers a micro-analysis of their experiences and the ways in which they attempt to traverse and resolve the conflicting discourses in their everyday lives.

Finally, we have included the Europeans of the regions, emerging within the European Union with strong claims for their own identity after living for many years with of varying degrees of “subjugation” to a dominant central state. In the regional context, language often emerges as a strong player, the regional language providing a clear focus for a symbolic identity to distance the regional group from the state. In this regard, Williams explores how the legacy of domination by the English, as reflected in the near-loss of the Welsh language or, at best, the development of diglossic language communities with English imposed as the “high” language of “conquest”, affects attitudes and discourse in one particular Welsh region of a more autonomous Wales. Although he suggests things may be different in other parts of Wales, he finds in this instance no evidence for a neo-colonial mentality on the part of the Welsh population where this would be reflected in acceptance of Welsh being relegated to the “low” domains in relation to English. Walter also explores the linguistic dimension, exploring the changing ways in which the Irish diaspora in England—including the migrant generation and their descendants who continue to recognise their Irish heritage—is identified and labelled by voices and use of language. While in the European context only Northern Ireland can properly be referred to as a region, the issues raised by Walter, in her paper, remain as a legacy from the point when Ireland was undivided. Using original data she examines the social consequences of the “lack” of an Irish accent for the second-generation. She argues that one of the most profound ways in which the English cemented their colonisation of Ireland in the nineteenth century was through the displacement of the Irish language by written and spoken English. However remnants of the language have persisted in highly audible ways and Irish people continue to be defined by their distinctive
ways of speaking, which stand out in contrast to “standard English”. In England itself, the colonial “centre”, these markers are used to identify Irish people and to “place” them socially. Finally, Montalbán’s paper looks to a region of Europe which in recent years has benefited greatly from a readjustment of status in relation both to the central authority of the Spanish state and to Europe itself, namely Andalusia. Using material from Andalusian institutional websites relating to employment and industrial relations, Montalbán examines the impact of business organizations on social life as businesses strive to maintain their interests in managing relations of power and solidarity. He employs discourse analysis from a neo-colonial perspective to examine “flexicurity discourse”, a rhetorical frame in which the potentially quite contradictory notions of job flexibility and job security are brought together in an ambiguous way. He then discusses the major implications for promotion of quality of employment, balance between flexibility and security, and the changing definition of reality in the region.

It goes without saying that no volume of this length, especially one uniting such a variety of disciplinary perspectives, can hope to provide a definitive answer to the questions we raised earlier. Indeed it is likely that these papers raise as many questions as they answer, but that in a sense was part of our original aim. As indicated above, we do not wish simply to perpetuate Eurocentric and/or ethnocentric perspectives, but rather to use the European arena as a convenient laboratory for the observation of issues that have particular relevance for us today. What unites the papers presented here is an interest in the consequences for current mentalities of previous colonial or neo-colonial relations between social groups. We hope the volume will prove a beginning, rather than an end, in stimulating further research from the neo-colonial perspective on some of the major issues of our time in what is the rapidly evolving scenario of population mobility and demographic change.

Works Cited


CAN EURO ENGLISH OR ENGLISH AS A EUROPEAN LINGUA FRANCA CONTRIBUTE TO ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN IDENTITY?

CLAUS GNUTZMANN

1. Introduction

Although the concepts of Euro English (EE) and English as a European lingua franca (EELF) have been part of the discourse of applied (socio-)linguistics and language teaching for more than a decade, it seems quite safe to say that a common understanding of these expressions has not been reached as yet. A similarly pessimistic statement can probably be made with regard to the idea of European identity, which, after all, one would assume to be central to the process of Europeanization within the context of the European Union (EU) although it was not even explicitly referred to in the final—though by now obsolete—version of the European Constitution. Obviously, we are dealing with three ideologically loaded concepts which in order to become manageable in our discussion, would really need some in-depth historical and systematic clarification. Since, given the time-frame of this paper, such an endeavour is not realistic the article will mainly concentrate on a discussion of EE and EELF from an applied sociolinguistic and

---

1 Other abbreviations used in this paper include: English as a Native Language (ENL); English as a Foreign Language (EFL); English as a Second Language (ESL); English Language Teaching (ELT).

2 Borneman and Fowler view Europeanization as the result of a new kind and intensity of European integration brought about as a reaction to the two world wars and the subsequent cold-war division of East and West (“Europeanization”, 487). In accordance with these authors, the process of Europeanization, in spite of its being instigated and driven by the EU administrations and organisations, must be distinguished from the political body of the EU, neither of which is in a position to replace the nation-states of Europe at present. Nonetheless, the nations “are now being brought into new relations with each other” (487).
pedagogical perspective, also making reference to their possible contribution to European identity, although no detailed discussion of this concept can be given. The paper will proceed as follows: following the introduction, section 2 offers some thoughts on plurilingualism in Europe, which in the Common European Framework (CEF) (Council of Europe 2001) is put forward as the Council of Europe’s official language policy statement and favoured approach to language learning, not least because plurilingualism is seen as a viable alternative, if not an antidote to compensate for the widespread use of English in Europe. Since English is extensively used as a de facto lingua franca in Europe, at least in Continental Europe (and London), the concept of lingua franca and its definition will be dealt with in section 3. Although the term EE in this paper is employed more or less synonymously with EELF, EE seems to suggest that there exists some kind of English with its own characteristic structures and functions; a kind of English that is specifically European in flavour—the phenomenon of linguistic transference from the various European languages has also been identified by some researchers as a marker of Euro-English.3 The term Euro English also implies, more perhaps than EELF does, that EE could be considered as a linguistic variety in its own right, similar perhaps to English as a Second Language (ESL) varieties such as Singapore or Indian English. Drawing on the general, reciprocal relationship between language and culture the question that is pursued in section 4 is whether EELF is possibly reflective of (a) European culture and whether EELF can contribute to establishing a European identity. If the latter should turn out to be the case one might want to ask whether the potential identity creating function of EELF could lead to questioning the European Council’s policy on plurilingualism and the concomitant principle of cultural diversity although, at present, plurilingualism and cultural diversity are seen as the main pillars of official European language policy and of European identity viewed from a linguacultural perspective.

3 Modiano (“Euro-English”) discusses examples of Swedish English grammar and lexis, which native speakers of English may interpret as “incorrect language”, but which non-native speakers could find quite acceptable, such as the reply to the question of a person’s country of origin (“Where do you come from?”), which very often comes out as “I am coming from Sweden”, where a native speaker would expect the simple present tense. For additional examples of “the trend toward Euro-English” see Alexander (“Caught”, 27-29).
2. Plurilingualism in Europe: uniting cultural diversity and reducing the dominance of English?

Undoubtedly, the English language serves as the main medium of communication in and across Europe, among native speakers, between native and non-native speakers of English, but above all among non-native speakers of different first languages and varying cultural backgrounds. Although English is now used widely and for many purposes the status of the language with regard to its function as a European lingua franca still remains unclear. It is a well-known fact that, from a language policy perspective, English is not recognised as an official European lingua franca. In the Common European Framework (CEF) for example, plurilingualism, characterised as aiming at “reducing the dominant position of English in international communication” (Council of Europe 2001: 4), is advocated instead. From a communicative as well as from a political perspective, proficiency in several languages is considered to be a highly desirable aim because this ability increases a person’s communicative range in an international context, it confers prestige and it can be a most decisive criterion for a successful job application. In addition, multilingual competence is assumed to overcome the limits of the mother tongue as well as to emphasise and value diversity in language and culture (cf. Gnutzmann 2005: 18). Not surprisingly, one of the main principles underlying the propagation of plurilingualism by the Council of Europe is “that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed” (Council of Europe 2001: 2). For this reason the major aim of the Council of Europe is “to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding” (ibid.). However, advocating diversity unreservedly can also be seen as a debilitating factor with regard to EU language policy and practice. It is sometimes just not very practical, because its advantages are not properly weighed up against its disadvantages. This has led critics to question the idea “that the great diversity of languages and cultures as such is a good thing and that,
consequently, its present manifestation in the EU represents a great richness, a treasure that should be defended at all costs” (van Els 2000: 31). Despite this criticism, the ability to understand other cultures and to communicate across cultures is to be regarded as a key feature of European citizenship and European identity. In order to achieve such intercultural understanding, i.e. being able to communicate in a foreign language and to appreciate the culture represented by this other language, requires more than just developing linguistic knowledge in that language. For this reason the Council of Europe’s CEF recommends that a strong emphasis should be put on the cultural dimension of the European languages.

By its proponents, the idea of plurilingualism is viewed as a historically “natural” and politically balanced response to the question of how to come to grips with linguistic diversity in Europe. However, in reality this concept turns out to be a very idealistic one and poses questions with regard to its practical implementation in language teaching and learning. It is precisely for this reason that English in its lingua franca function has become so popular within the European Union. On the other hand, due to its ubiquitous use, English has also been very much felt as a culturally biased and ideologically loaded medium that has possibly come into being as a result of Anglo-American neo-colonial policies.

3. English as a lingua franca: definition, assumptions and its status as a linguistic variety

The concept of lingua franca usually denotes a medium of communication between people each speaking different mother tongues, which means that it is used as an auxiliary or a third language. According to the defining criterion of “third language”, native speakers of English could not be part of lingua franca communication in English, simply because English would not be a third language in their case. This position is in line with traditional definitions of lingua franca (cf. Samarin 1987) and is reiterated by House, who defines EELF interactions “as interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue” (House 1999: 74). Thus, failing to meet the criterion of third language for the use of the English language, e.g. between an Australian and a Bulgarian at an international meeting, would not fall within the scope of the above-mentioned,

---

5 A critical summary of lingua franca communication also including the historical dimension is given by Meierkord, “Lingua franca communication”. 