The EU Language Policies: Between Multilingualism, Minority Language Protection and English as the New Lingua Franca

DIPLOMARBEIT

zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades einer Magistra der

Philosophie

eingereicht bei Herrn

Hon. Univ.-Prof.

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der Universität Innsbruck

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Innsbruck, November 2009

Vorwort

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit wurde von April bis November 2009 am Institut für Politikwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck unter der Leitung von Hon. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Raoul Kneucker angefertigt. Da ich zusätzlich zu meinem Studium der Politikwissenschaft auch Anglistik und Amerikanistik studiere, war es mir ein Anliegen, die Verbindung und große gegenseitige Relevanz dieser beiden Wissenschaften auch in meinem Thema wiederzuspiegeln. Den Ausschlag zur Themenwahl gab ein Vortrag über Lesser-Used Languages in einem Anglistik-Seminar, was den engen Zusammenhang zwischen Sprache und Sprachpolitik zusätzlich verdeutlicht.

Das Anliegen meiner Arbeit ist es, die Sprachenpolitik der Europäischen Union von mehreren Blickpunkten her zu beleuchten. Die Sprachenvielfalt und der Multilingualismus in der EU stellen einen großen Reichtum dar, der aber auch als Herausforderung angesehen werden kann, und große Divergenzen zwischen Theorie und auf Effizienz ausgerichteter Praxis aufweist.Ein wichtiges Element des weitläufigen kulturellen Erbes Europas, welches aber oft vernachlässigt wird, sind auch Minderheitensprachen: Als Angehörige der deutschen Sprachminderheit in Italien (Südtirol) sind diese von besonderem Interesse für mich; es war mir allerdings auch wichtig, dieses Phänomen nicht lokal konzentriert sondern auf europäischer Ebene zu betrachten. Englisch als erste und verbreitetste Fremdsprache steht auf den ersten Blick im Konkurrenz zum Schutz von kleineren Sprachen und dem europäischen Multilingualismus; dennoch könnte es gerade die Möglichkeit einer von Vielen gesprochenen „Einheitssprache" sein, die den europäischen Integrationsprozess vorantreibt.

Abschließend möchte ich noch vor Allem Prof. Kneucker meinen herzlichen Dank für seine sehr gute und kontinuierliche Betreuung und das viele konstruktive Feedback aussprechen. Danken möchte ich zudem meinen Interviewpartnern, Dr. Martha Stocker (Präsidiumsmitglied der FUEN – *Federal Union of European Nationalities*), Dr. Roland Verra (Leiter des Ladinischen Schulamtes – Autonome Provinz Bozen) sowie Riwanon Kervella von der Bretonischen Dachorganisation *Kuzul Ar Brezhoneg*.

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Bibliography

Appendices to Chapter II:
- Appendix A - Interview with Dr. Martha Stocker, FUEN Presidium Member, conducted in Bozen/Bolzano on 5 May 2009
- Appendix B - Interview with Dr. Roland Verra, Director of the Ladin School Agency, Autonomous Province of Bozen/Bolzano, conducted in Brixen on 30 April 2009
- Appendix C - Interview with Riwanon Kervella (from the Breton Organization *Kuzul Ar Brezhoneg*) via e-mail – answers received on 12 May 2009
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Introduction

Picturing Europe in our minds, we usually think of a very heterogenous unit currently undergoing an integration process. Heterogenity and the endeavor of uniting Europe is what characterizes the project "EU"; it offers a unique source of cultural heritage and wealth in diversity, but at the same time, it may lead to conflict between promoting diversity and the quest for unity.

The present thesis aims to analyze this antagonism in the area of language policies, a very controversial sector, as language functions as identity portrayal, and nation states, therefore, do everything possible to keep it under their control. At the same time, language policy will be a priority to the EU, as it could contribute further to the integration process.

The first chapter takes a look at multilingualism, which the EU claims to preserve as one of its "basic principles", and what is being done to promote and sustain it. At all official levels, multilingualism is maintained, and the EU does represent the colorful, multilingual picture that we might expect. However, this picture changes when we look at the way the languages are used internally. To facilitate discussion and negotiation, the EU institutions often reduce their working languages to three (English, German, French) or even rely solely on English. This practice reveals a significant discrepancy between theoretical standards and their actual application, creating a credibility gap and not solving the underlying principle discussion. The EU Commissioner for Multilingualism, Leonard Orban, takes on a pragmatic approach by pointing out the individual advantages if people learn foreign languages. Unlike Mr. Orban, other groups rely strictly on the multilingualism principle in promoting linguistic diversity and do not take individual or professional realities and pragmatism into account. As language (directly or indirectly) means power, no nation state is likely to subordinate to reductionist policies if their national language would then be exluded

from inter- and intra-institutional use, so the status quo – multilingual theory and tri-, bi-, or even monolingual practice - is likely to remain unchanged until the Union has gained competence on the matter.

Lack of EU competences is also the main problem presented in the second chapter, where the status of Regional or Minority Languages and Lesser Used Languages in the EU is dealt with. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, put forward by the Council of Europe in 1992, is an important first step towards minority language protection. However, it does not grant recognition as a minority group, and allows the nation states an "opting-out" possibility by giving them the chance to specify for which languages the Charter should apply. Traditionalist centralist states, such as France or Greece, make use of this possibility to deny their linguistic minorities the desperately needed protection. The charter can therefore be considered a first step in the right direction, but does not suffice as an instrument to ensure minority language survival.

To show how minority language protection still lies exclusively in the hands of the member states, two examples of Lesser Used Languages will serve as case studies: Ladin in Italy and Breton in France. While the Ladin minority in Italy is relatively well-protected, especially in South Tyrol, where it holds special status due to the Autonomy Statute, the Bretons have a daily struggle to help their language to survive. Language shift towards French is very strong, especially in the younger generations, as proficient knowledge of French is considered to be important for their career, while Breton tends to be only spoken among the elderly and rural population nowadays. The European Parliament recognizes situations like this, and has, since its direct election, always been a champion for language rights in the EU. The Parliament has made many important proposals, and demands that linguistic minorities become a priority issue for the EU; however, as the Union lacks competences on that matter and the member states are not willing to share their power, all action

taken is limited to theoretical frameworks or project funding.

Chapter 3 deals with a phenomenon which developed outside as well as inside the EU, namely English becoming a lingua franca. This development can be noticed in the EU institutions, where most of the working process is done in English, and among the EU citizens as well. First, the reasons for the rise of English as a lingua franca, e.g. the dominance of the British Empire and, later on, of the American economy, will be given. Second, the status of English as a lingua franca in Europe today will be analyzed, concluding that English has become the most widely known foreign language throughout the Union. In applying Kachru's model of concentric circles of world English and its European Adaptation by Berns[1] to the present situation in the EU, I try to show that the rise of English has already progressed very far, although in some states more than in others. Nowadays, the majority of EU citizens (77%) considers it to be important for their children to learn English. This poses the question how the Union could use its citizens' knowledge of English for its own purposes. A "European English" variety could foster integration, as it would do away with the allegedly imperialist roots of the spread of English as a lingua franca. If such nativization processes occurred, the EU citizens could make the language their "own", by providing it with distinct characteristics, instead of always aiming for a mostly unreachable native speaker status. However, Europeans want to use language not only for intra-European communication, but also for interaction with people from other parts of the world: intelligibility of a future "Euro English" variety with other Englishes must be maintained. Still, the argument that the dominance of English will destroy Europe's multilingual heritage remains a valid concern. However, English will provide European citizens with an instrument to get to know each other better, to draw closer together. As the first small steps towards the creation of a European *δεmos* are taken, people will prefer to interact in English, but could eventually become interested in other cultures and languages, and take up

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[1]   Both models will be thoroughly explained in Chapter III of the present thesis.

learning EU languages. Also, as more and more people speak English, additional languages will become a valuable asset when looking for a job. English as a lingua franca could bring Europeans closer together, and give them the possibility to interact, thus fostering the building of a European identity and being beneficial for the integration process. National languages would of course still be used in their own domain, and regional or minority language representatives could easily communicate and look for best practices in other countries, creating public awareness for their situation and exempting pressure on their national governments.

In conclusion, we can say that multilingualism and English do not necessarily create conflicts. Preserving Europe as a multilingual entity and yet providing it with a tool to facilitate communication does not represent a caveat; actually, both are needed for the integration process. By reducing the EU translation machinery and reducing the number of working languages, ressources could be freed for the promotion of languages other than English, and especially for the protection of regional or minority languages. Using "European English" for intra-European communication would make it possible to interact with each other, and to get to know our European cultures and heritages. If Multilingualism is promoted, it must first be extended to the weakest members of the EU language family, the regional and minority languages. The EU must aim to gain regulatory competence of the language policy sector, even if nation states will oppose any such notion, just as in the case of reducing the number of working languages.

I. Between Promoting Multilingualism and Wielding Power: The EU

Language Policy

This chapter examines the role of multilingualism, both its importance in the EU-internal language regime as well as its impact on the EU shaping language policy for its member states. The EU likes to distinguish itself from countries such as the United States by pointing out that multilingualism is one of its founding principles, and that it does not consider itself a melting pot, but instead a secure home for all cultures and languages on its territory enabling them to to prosper alongside each other. From the very beginnings of the EU, the EEC Treaty, multilingualism has always been mentioned as a very objective goal for the Union. Many steps have followed this theoretical goal in practice, namely setting nearly all member states' official languages also as official languages on an EU level, and giving the right to speak and listen in their own mother tongue to all Members of the European Parliament. EU Legislation has also been translated into all its official languages, an important step, as it prevails over national language and therefore must be accessible in a understandable form to every EU citizen.

However, theory and practice do not always correspond. Many committees and EU officials work in three main working languages, namely English, French, and German. This practice stands in open opposition to the concept of multilingualism, but it is tolerated, because adhering strictly to the language procedures set in the treaties would slow down the decision-making process remarkably. The large number of official languages in the EU (23 at the time of writing)[2] calls for an efficient solution, but denying some languages this status would cause an uproar across the affected member states – and in fact, this step is highly unlikely if ever to be taken, as decisions on language procedures are to be made unanimously by the Council. Possible solutions to the dilemma between

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[2]   The 23 official languages in the EU are Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish.

efficiency and multilingualism will be discussed after an initial inventory of what the legal basis for the language regime inside the EU is. As a final step, the power political implications of the Union's language regime will be examined, and we will see that it is not only the often quoted ideal of multilingualism that hinders a reduction of working languages, but also the member states' oppposition, as having an international forum for one's national language also means higher status and more political power.

The EU is not only concerned with multilingualism inside its institutions, it would also like to spread this highly valued concept to the member states and to its citizens. By installing the position of Commissioner for Multilingualism in 2007, the Union created a new mandate dedicated to the promotion and protection of multilingualism in the member states. Commissioner Leonard Orban has a rather pragmatic approach to the matter, as his speeches show, and he tries to highlight the advantages of multilingualism to EU citizens by giving them concrete examples of how mastering more languages might have a positive impact on their career or their business. Other expert groups, such as the High Level Group for Multilingualism, concentrate too much on the theoretical value of languages for the multilingual character of the Union – a scientific field of studies that many citizens cannot relate to. If practical measures are offered, they are often very difficult to implement and the goals aimed at are highly unlikely to be realized anytime in the near future. The EU needs to find a strategy to show of which immediate personal value languages can be to citizens – this has clearly worked with English, as a vast majority of EU citizens are studying it as their first foreign language. If the EU can manage to prove to its citizens that the acquirement of additional languages may be the key to making a difference in the future, multilingualism and cultural understanding in Europe will surely be fostered.

1. Language Regime inside the EU:[3]

a) Legal Premises

The EU has set Multilingualism as one of its basic principles; however, it does not always act according to this principle in its own internal policy making processes. The foundation for the EU's language regime was laid in Article 217 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC Treaty) which made the language regime of the Community the affair of the Council "acting unanimously". Under this article, the Council adopted Regulation No. 1 on 15 April 1958, making the official languages of the member states the official languages of the European Economic Community, resulting in four official languages (French, Dutch, German and Italian). This marked a step away from the European Coal and Steel Community's monolingual way of action, where French had been used for the treaty as well as for most internal deliberations and

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[3] When referring to the EU's internal language regime, we must note that the term "internal" refers to the language regime inside of the EU institutions (such as the European Parliament or the Commission) as well as to the provisions made for the whole EU, including all of its institutions. This explains the remarkable discrepancies between the language regimes of the various institutions, despite having been founded on the same rules valid for the whole EU.

administration. The Preamble to Regulation No.1 establishes the criteria for determining if a language can be adopted as treaty language and thus also as an official language of the Community: "Whereas each of the four languages in which the Treaty is drafted is recognised as an official language in one or more of the member states of the Community". This provided the legal basis to subsequently alter the language regime along with the Community's enlargement (quoted in Wright 2000: 162). Regulation No. 1 (sometimes also referred to as "The European Union's language charter") also provides for documents of general application to be drafted in all official languages, for the Official Journal of the EU to be published in all languages, and for the use of all languages before the European Court of Justice (quoted in Phillipson 2003: 119).

Article 6 of Regulation No. 1 allows the institutions of the Community to "stipulate in their rules of procedure which of the languages are to be used in specific cases", while Article 1 declares official and working languages to be identical (quoted in Wright 2000: 163). These articles constitute some of the reasons for the EU's divergent internal language policy still obvious today.

In its Rules of Procedure, the European Parliament (EP) commits itself to providing documentation and interpreting in all languages: rule 15 states that all documents of Parliament "shall be drawn up in all the official languages" and that speeches delivered in one of the official languages shall be simultaneously interpreted into the other official languages (quoted in Wright 2000: 163). However, the strict rule may be waived when working in a committee, which again gives room to a differentiation between official languages and actual working languages actually not intended in the EEC Treaty.

While the EP stands by its multilingual approach, in the bureaucratic organs Council and Commission it has become custom to hold discussions in one of the major working languages (English or French) and to translate documents into all official languages only at a certain point in

the process. When preparing e.g. a Directive, only the Green or White Paper made for public consultation and the final Directive to be put before the European Parliament and the Council (together with all amendments to be incorporated) will be in all official languages. Input from the member states, independent studies, public speeches explaining the policy, draft stages of the legislation, records of advisory committee debates and speech notes for Commission members defending the proposal will simply be in the language of the person carrying out the work with translation as necessary into one, two or three vehicular languages (Wright 2000: 164).

Up until today, various attempts of simplifying the EU language regime have been made, but without any success. In 1979-1982, heated debates about the matter were held in the European Parliament, and the Nyborg Report (1982) was one of their results. It argued that Europe should preserve its cultural diversity, but also aim to be "politically articulate", which would require expressing itself in a "linguistically comprehensive manner" and avoiding a "Tower of Babel". The Nyborg Report committee suggested French and English as working languages with Spanish, if and when Spain joined the Community. The argument presented was that these are the major languages in Europe which are also of value in communication with the wider world. The Education, Information and Sports Committee replied to this proposal by warning that it would make some MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) second class citizens and stating that "each member must have, potentially, the same opportunities to speak, to persuade, to be reported in the media and so on" (quoted in Wright 2000: 165). The Nyborg Report also addressed the connection between Community legislation and language: since Community legislation takes precedence over national laws, it is vital to make it available at both draft and final stage in all the official languages of the Community. Additionally, European citizens who wish to run for an EP seat would be required to know a second or foreign language if their language had lost its official status; this would result in

an educationally or class restricted access to the EP, standing in clear contradiction to basic democratic principles (Wright 2000: 167).

Renée van Hoof (1978) said that it was easier to understand a foreign language than to speak it at the level of proficiency necessary for holding a political debate, and therefore argued to give each MEP the possibility to speak in their own language, but offer interpretation only into the most widely understood languages. Needless to say, this solution did not meet positive reactions either. In 1994, the French presidency announced that it would try to limit the number of working languages in the EU institutions to five; this idea especially enraged the Greeks, who threatened to take the French government to the European Court of Justice if the proposal was not dropped (Wright 2000: 164).

In the preamble to the Treaty on the European Union (1992) the commitment to preserve cultural heritage and thus also the member states' different languages was expressed: "DESIRING to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions" (Treaty on European Union 1992). However, despite all legal measures and documents mentioned above, the theoretical commitment to multilingualism does not always find its way into practical use, as a look at the EU's working languages will show.

<u>b) Working Languages of the EU:</u>

Contrary to popular belief, there is no EU document that sets English, French, and German, as the EU's working languages; they are merely the languages which have most often been used for this purpose. In fact, all 23 languages present in the EU today are working languages. Of course, this constitutes a problem, and as working efficiently and staying multilingual are very difficult if not impossible to reconcile, MEPs and EU officials usually rely on only one or two languages in their daily work (Wright 2000: 168). To reflect this practical usage, a distinction has been made in the literature between official and working languages: official languages are defined as those used in communication between institutions and the outside world, and working languages as those used between institutions, within institutions and during internal meetings convened by the institutions (Gazzola 2006: 396).

Studies carried out in the 1990s showed a definite increase in the use of French and English in the EU. French seems to be the preferred language in EU institutions (a fact closely connected to their geographical siting in francophone areas and decades of tradition), while English is used for dealing with contacts outside the EU; however, these preferences are eroding in favor of English.

In the formal sessions of the EP, translation and interpretation are provided for, and, as it has established in its Rules, each MEP is able to use their mother tongue. However, when reporting in unofficial settings, most MEPs use English as a lingua franca. Schlossmacher (1994) carried out a study on 119 MEPs and 373 high level officials from various EU institutions, finding out that a majority of both MEPs and officials was in favor of limiting the number of working languages, even though such proposals were continually rejected in the EP, as mentioned above. This means that while MEPs are voting for multilingualism, they acknowledge that it is not working pragmatically

(Wright 2000: 167-168). At all levels before formal plenary debate, there is hardly any plurilingual discussion. Negotiations before plenary sessions, unscheduled meetings, lobbying from pressure groups and individuals, unstructured input through networks – all these steps usually occur in a monolingual manner. Communication is task-driven and organized in the most effective, and not in the most multilingual, way. MEPs use, depending on the purpose, French or English, and those not fluent in one of these languages have to rely on assistants with language skills for communication (Wright 2000: 169). MEPs and EU officials from Southern European countries (speakers of Romance languages) tend to prefer French, while people from Central and Northern Europe (Germanic languages) prefer English. However, this split is not solely related to languages, but also to other cultural differences and different ways of working. As English has nowadays replaced French as the second language in most education systems, a shift from French to English as a lingua franca is noticeable in Southern European MEPs and officials as well (Wright 2000: 170).

Unlike the EP, the Commission openly admits that it has to restrict its own multilingualism due to efficiency reasons: "Due to time and budgetary constraints, relatively few working documents are translated into all languages. The European Commission employs English, French and German in general as procedural languages, whereas the European Parliament provides translation into different languages according to the needs of its Members" (Commission 2009). Out of these three languages, French was surely dominant in the Community's early years, due to the role of France as a promoter of the European idea and also due to the fact that three of six founding countries had French as an official language. With the accession of more countries, the situation has changed in favor of English. German is used, but not very frequently; French and especially English are more dominant. With the enlargements of 2004 and 2007, Middle-Eastern-European Commissioners and their staff joined the Commission, and their number one choice for a lingua franca to communicate

with their colleagues is English. Of course, this restriction to three or often even one language is only possible when drafting a working document and discussing it in the different panels; once a document becomes EU law, it must be translated into all 23 official languages, as it is now a binding legal act for all member states and even prevails over national law.

German is the language with the largest number of mother tongue speakers in the EU, but it has been treated rather neglectfully in its working language use. After World War II, German lost its status of international and scientific language and it has since not been able to gain it back, though some progress was made in the 1990s. Power-political implications in post-WWII Europe made it impossible for German to even be considered as a lingua franca, and the Germans were not in the position to make any demands regarding an eventual hegemony of their mother tongue (Wright 2000: 169). According to Ammon, there are further disadvantages of German in comparison to English and French: both English and French are official languages of considerably more countries than German, and both are official and working languages in the UN, where German only has the subordinate status of a language of documentation (Amonn 1991: 246-247). Nowadays, people in Central Eastern European states usually learn English instead of German as their second language, which also impacts the outcome-oriented processes in the EU: the most widely understood and thus also the most practical and efficient language is the one that will be chosen. German may have gained back some of its prestige, but constituting the largest native speaker group in the EU is not automatically connected to becoming the lingua franca, and it will therefore not be able to shake at the foundations of the hegemony of English or, to a lesser extent, French.

Translation and loss of meaning constitute another problem. There are enough interpreters available, but in the very short time span that remains for translation during a parliamentary debate, it becomes difficult to find the exact equivalent of a word in the other language. Also, political

concepts might have different connotations in one cultural sphere than in another, and misunderstandings or misinterpretations could be the consequence. These factors cause delays in the policy making process, render the European Parliament inefficient at times, and cost a significant amount of money (Wright 2000: 173).

According to Nick Roche, one of the main reasons why the working languages problem is so significant is the constant comparison to other entities, like the U.S. or Japan, who do not have Europe's multilingual "problem". The advantages that Europe enjoys due to its rich and diverse linguistic heritage are hardly noticed, despite the definite economic benefits they bring. Languages open the way to career opportunities all over Europe, if not all over the world, and acquiring a language also brings social and cultural skills with it. As Europe constitutes a multilingual territory, it is not a requirement for any of the official EU organs to limit its linguistic diversity, and although the need for simplification is there, it is not a vitally threatening problem for the Community. However, pragmatic solutions to the issue may be available, and are most likely to run along as an efficiency enhancement without being promoted by EU officials (Roche 1991: 139-146).

Podestà (2001) suggests a variety of models to make the 2004 Enlargement and the 9 newly added languages less of a challenge for the EP. Among these models are:

− Monolingualism: use of a single official and working language

− Nationalisation: maintenance of the pre-enlargement structure and transfer of the complete workload to the member states

− Reduced Multilingualism: use of only six official and working languages

− Asymmetric systems: MEPs may speak/write in all 20 official languages, but listen/read in only a limited number of languages

- Controlled multilingualism: every MEP has the right to speak/write and listen/read in the language they prefer, but different internal linguistic mediation processes will be used (e.g. Bi-active interpretation, more use of pivot languages)[4]

- Full multilingualism with management correctives: extension to all languages of the former system for 11 languages; however, how the existing management correctives would have to be adapted is not specified

- Pure full multilingualism with 20 languages (Gazzola 2006: 402).

Nowadays, due to the Enlargement with Romania and Bulgaria and the adoption of Irish as an official language (both in 2007), the number of official languages has risen to 23, and the Union seems to still adhere to the pure full multilingualism model, on paper at least. None of the reductory approaches would find political majorities, especially as the language regime decisions lie with the Council and are to be taken unanimously. However, practical demands must be met, and therefore a certain reductionism (following a subtle model of unspoken consensus) has to be present in the EP and other EU institutions.

While the Commission (probably due to its "3 languages" procedure) and especially the EP are in the center of multilingualism discussion regarding the EU organs, the Council rarely appears in research and literature on the topic. However, it has a relatively detailed document on its language procedures on its website, especially when compared to the very meagre statement the Commission made on its language regime (see above). "During Council discussions the representatives of the Member States (Ministers at Council level and Heads of State or Government at European Council

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[4] Bi-active interpretation involves the interpreter working from and into two languages, e.g. a Finn working from English into Finnish and vice versa. Pivot interpretation involves two steps: interpretation from several languages into a single pivot language (in one booth) and from the pivot language into another language (in a separate booth), e.g. Finnish into English and from that into Greek. Typically each active language is covered by two interpreters.

level) speak in their own languages and interpreters from the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service ensure smooth multilingual oral communication. […] When communicating with members of the public, the Council is always at pains to apply the principle of multilingualism as widely as possible. Under the Treaty, every citizen is entitled to write to the Council – or indeed any of the Union's institutions and bodies – in one of the official languages and receive a reply in that language. However, for practical reasons, there have always been limits on multilingualism at the Council. For communication within the institution, all of whose officials and other staff are expected to know two Union languages in addition to their mother tongue, the most widely understood languages are used; the same goes for work involving civil servants and experts from the Member States, who, in general, also use at least one foreign language. These limits are dictated by both practical considerations and budgetary constraints, in the interests of keeping operating expenditure down." (Council website, "Application of the language rules at the Council").

Just like the Commission and, to a certain extent, also the EP, the Council too limits its internal multilingualism in the interest of efficiency. While multilingualism is maintained at the official level, when heads of state or government and ministers deliver their speeches, and when in contact with the citizens, this multilingual practice does not reach all the lower organisational levels. The Council states that it is the "most widely understood languages" that are used for communication, but it does not explicitly name those languages: however, it is likely that English again plays the dominant role, followed by French, and, to a lesser extent, by German. We also see that EU officials and civil servants from member states working for the Council are expected to have a knowledge of foreign languages, which is also the case in the Commission. This practice is not considered discriminatory, as people aiming for a job at the EU institutions know that without language skills such a career cannot be attained, and therefore engage in foreign language learning

accordingly. However, transferring this model to the EP would be undemocratic, as it would make foreign language skills a prerequisite for being a people's representative at European level.

In 2001, the German and French foreign ministers Joschka Fischer and Hubert Védrine wrote a joint letter to the Commission, warning against 'unilingualism", e.g. the reduction to one working language in all Community institutions. The then President of the Commission, Romano Prodi, replied referring several times to official languages and multilingualism, but did not touch upon de-facto in-house procedures; another piece of evidence showing that multilingual claim and pragmatic, often monolingual reality, do diverge significantly (Phillipson 2003: 121).

To conclude, we can say that regarding their legal status, all official EU languages are equal, and all are to be used as working languages. Reality, however, looks differently: English, French, and German are the most widely used EU working languages; this development has spread so far that many citizens even believe that these are the *only* official working languages. The EU's ideal of being a multilingual organisation is therefore only present on paper, while practice demands a less complex solution for the policy making process. Reducing the number of official working languages would only officialize what has been practiced for years anyway, but it would also be a step towards reducing the so preciously held concept of multilingualism and cultural diversity within the Union. Additionally, the member states would probably not accept such a reduction out of fear that their national language might be neglected, and that this could lead to a general loss of significance for the state. The EU is torn in a struggle between multilingualism and efficiency, and an easy way out is not in sight.

c) The Role of Translation and Interpretation in the EU

The EU institutions may be able to reduce their number of working languages on an internal basis, but when communicating with the public or with member states, all documents have to be available in all 23 official EU languages. In the EP, each MEP must have the opportunity to speak and hear discourses and speeches in their own language to avoid discrimination. This is why a vast translation and interpretation service is needed in the EU.

For the Commission, this Service is offered by the Directorate General for Translation. It employs 1,750 people directly involved in translating and 600 in administrative posts supporting translation work, which amounts to a total staff of 2,350. When we hear about EU translation services in the media, it is often their seemingly overwhelming costs that are discussed; however, they are not as costly as often perceived. According to the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT) website, translation and interpretation cost 300 million euros each year, 0.60 euros per EU citizen; but "the overall cost of all the language services provided by all the EU institutions – translation and interpretation combined - is less than 1% of the total annual EU budget" (Directorate General for Translation 2009a). The Directorate General for Translation (DGT) also admits that full multilingualism is not maintained within the Commission: "Of course, not everything is translated into every official language — far from it. At the Commission, the only documents produced in all 23 official languages are pieces of legislation and policy documents of major public importance — accounting for about a third of our work. [...] Internal documents are all written in (and sometimes translated into) English, French and German. Similarly, incoming documents — which may be drafted in any language — are translated into one of these three languages so they can be generally understood within the Commission" (DGT 2009b).

According to its website, the DGT translates the following types of documents:

- "proposed laws, policy papers ("communications") and Commission consultation documents

- consultation documents to or from national parliaments and correspondence with national authorities, companies and individuals

- websites and press releases".

Most translations are produced as in-house translations, while some (26%) are also sent to freelance translators. The DGT argues that some information is too sensitive or too urgent to be given to freelance translators; this is why a complete privatisation of translation services is not intended. In-house translations are produced following various methods:

- **"traditional method** — translation by translator *into their main language*, often with the help of electronic translation tools (translation memories, IATE, voice recognition, etc.).

- **'two-way' method** — translation by translator *out of their main language*.

- **relay** — one translator translates a document into a "relay language" (usually English or French) and a second translator then puts it into the target language requested. Used *for uncommon language combinations*, e.g. Estonian into Greek.

- **'three-way' method** — neither the source language nor the target language is the main language of the translator, e.g. when an Italian translator puts an Arabic text into English" (DGT 2009a).

To ensure quality, all documents are revised by translators whose main language is the target language. Before a new country joins the EU, it sets up a Translation and Coordination Unit (TCU) under one of its ministries to translate the *acquis communautaire* into its national language. The DGT helps by providing technical assistance, training, and support for the TCU and advising

universities on setting up courses for future translators.

The pendant to the DGT in interpretation at the Commission is the Directorate General for Interpretation (DG SCIC). "DG Interpretation manages the allocation of Commission meeting rooms and provides support for the smooth running of meetings in many languages that are held there. It also organises conferences for Directorates-General and departments of the Commission, typically in the range of over 40 main events per year. Its mission is therefore to enable multilingual communication at the core of Community decision-making by:

- providing quality interpretation services;

- providing an effective service of conference organisation including technical support and design management of modern conference facilities;

- helping to put the Commission's new multilingualism strategy into practice" (DG SCIC 2009).

The DG SCIC provides interpretation not only for the Commission, but also for the Council, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank and the agencies and offices in the member states. At present, the Council accounts for about 46% of the intepreting services provided, followed by the Commission with about 40%. It has 500 staff interpreters, and additionally employs 300 – 400 freelance interpreters per day.

The DG SCIC does also not stand for pure multilingualism, but cuts down the number of languages interpreted into when possible and appropriate: "Different institutions have widely different needs. As a rule of thumb, elected representatives (i.e., ministers in formal meetings, plenary meetings of the Committee of the Regions or of the Economic and Social Committee) receive full, symmetric language coverage, while officials and experts receive a whole range of

different arrangements, depending on their real needs and the resources available. Catering for such language arrangements requires the use of all the various simultaneous interpreting techniques we regularly apply: direct interpreting, relay (interpreting via a bridging language: language A is first put into language B, then into C by interpreters working from B), two-way interpreting or retour (the same interpreter who works from A into B also works from B into A), and asymmetric language coverage (participants can speak a large number of languages but interpretation is provided only into a few)" (DG SCIC 2009).

The European Parliament has its own Directorate General for Interpretation and Conferences. It employs 430 staff interpreters and has a reserve of about 2500 freelance interpreters (auxiliary conference interpreters) at its disposal. Between 800 and 1000 interpreters are needed for plenary sittings of the EP, as simultaneous interpretation is provided to and from all official EU languages. For other meetings, interpretation is provided as required, which also hints at the above mentioned fact that not all EP meetings and discussions are fully multilingual and that it is common practice to rely on a lingua franca. The EP also uses relay interpreting: "In principle, each interpreter works into his/her mother tongue out of the original language of the speaker. But with 506 possible language combinations (23 x 22 languages), it is not always easy to find someone who can interpret from a given language into another and in such cases a relay system is used, whereby the interpretation from one language to another passes through a third, the 'pivot' or relay language" (EP 2009).

When looking for information about translation services at the EP online, one only finds job vacancies, but no numbers and figures about the translating work done in the Parliament. This could be due to the fact that the Parliament works and comes together orally rather than through written documents, which makes a large translation staff obsolete. Also, the Parliament's resolutions are not

binding, but a call for the legislator, the Commission, to act, so it is up to the Commission to draft legal documents and to translate them into all official languages.

The Council also has an own translation department, but it fulfils a different function: "Its main task is to provide all the translations necessary, so that the documents which the Council has to discuss are available to it in all the official and working languages. Those translations must be of suitable quality and available to their users in time. The Translation Department plays no part in multilingual oral communication at meetings, which is a matter for the European Commission's Directorate General for Interpretation." The Translation Department of the Council's General Secretariat employs 700 translators and a support staff of 400 officials (Council of the European Union 2009b). As already mentioned above, the Council does have an own interpreting service at its disposal, but is the biggest user of the interpretations provided by the Directorate General for Interpretation at the Commission.

Judging by these numbers, it is logical that the translation and interpretation services cost the EU a large amount of money. However, this would be justifiable with the basic principle of multilingualism, which denotes that one should not be avaricious in trying to preserve the Union's diverse cultural heritage. However, the Finnish MEP Alex Stubb claims that many MEPs call for an interpreter in a meeting, and then simply do not present themselves when the meeting is to be held – this costs the EU 1500 € a day for nothing. Stubb has made a proposal to advocate a more responsible handling of the European taxpayers' money, in which he also suggested reducing the number of languages used in meetings, if all MEPs present are able to speak more than one language. However, he had to withdraw his proposal; this shows that language is still a very touchy subject in the Union. "Language is [about] communication and not identity. But for many MEPs it is a question of identity and culture. Therefore we have to be very sensitive", Stubb said (Watt 2006).

This case shows that a reduction in official languages and therefore also a reduction in the costs of translation and interpretation services are not in sight. While many MEPs have a knowledge of foreign languages, they are not willing to move away from the right to use their mother tongue, also in smaller meetings and discussion. This makes for a paradox situation: in everyday practice, MEPs are used to communicating in a lingua franca or to adapting to a foreign language, because working efficiently would otherwise not be possible. But when it comes to officializing this practice through a report or a resolution, they try to block the whole procedure, referring to their right to multilingualism. Judging from this behavior, it is highly unlikely that the EU institutions' language theory and practical use will become more congruent in the future.

d) Power-Political Implications

The principle of multilingualism alone cannot be the reason for the furore that proposals to reduce the number of official languages usually cause. For each member state, having its language present on an international floor also means national prestige and a way of showing its importance for the community and its power. Language does not come as a neutral entity, it reflects its speakers' culture and values, and therefore also functions as a medium to spread political ideas. In the EU, all member state languages should be equal – but in fact, they are not. This is why smaller countries see a multilingual Europe as the only possibility of giving their national language an international forum and therefore also more value, while the bigger states might opt for a reduction in official languages

– so long as their language was not to be omitted, of course.

The EU has claimed to be a multilingual organization since its beginnings, but in the early years, the dominance of French was evident. In three of the six member states (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg) French was an official language, and France supplied the Community with the best and most highly educated bureaucrats. The French tradition of centralized government had elevated bureaucracy into a respected position, and graduates of the prestigious École Nationale d'Aministration were willing to be the bureaucratic elite of the European project. Moreover, the EC institutions were located in francophone settings (Brussels, Strasbourg), which additionally demanded that its employees were native speakers of French or had very good command of the French language (Mackay 2002: 2).

The predominance of French prevailed until 1973, when Britain and Ireland joined the Community. Within the same decade, the use of English in the primary texts increased from less than a quarter to almost a half of the total. With the admission of Denmark (1973), Sweden and Finland (1995), where English is the most dominant and well-mastered second language, the English language's position within the Union grew stronger and stronger (Mackey 2002: 3). The enlargements in 2004 and 2007 have further strengthened the power of English, as it is the prevailing foreign language spoken in the Baltic States, an official language in Malta, and Cyprus has a history of British colonisation. In the middle-eastern European states, English is taking German's place as the most widely spoken second language; a development surely also related to the states becoming first NATO and then EU members, and to their affection towards Western culture, represented by the US via English media.

Nowadays, English is by far the most widely spoken foreign language in the EU: only 13% of the EU's population are English native speakers, while 34% speak it as a foreign language.

German is spokem by the largest percentage of native speakers (18%), and 12% foreign language speakers, while French's predominance has clearly been broken with 12% native speakers and 11% foreign language speakers (Commission 2005: 16).

German has now surpassed French in the number of foreign language speakers; a surprising development, considering the role the language played in post-war Europe. German had been the language of science (a position nowadays also occupied by English) until World War I: many countries had science journals published in German, and it was commonly used as a lingua franca among scientists from all over Europe. World War I brought about economic ruin for German-speaking countries, rendering scientific publications impossible, and the scientist organisations from other countries boycotted the language because of political reasons. World War II further deteriorated Germany's reputation in the world, and made it seemingly impossible for the language to claim any hegemonial status ever again. Even though Germany constitutes, along with France, one of the engines of the Union, its language has not been as important as English or French, mostly due to historical reasons and the fact that Southern Europeans rarely speak German as foreign language, making it less usable as a lingua franca in meetings etc. (Ammon 2002: 34-36, 39-40).

English is on the rise, French's importance is declining, while German remains relatively stable in its position and might gain a little in importance – these are the predictions for the future of the EU's three predominant working languages. However, the French government will surely not stand by and watch French, the tongue reflecting its nation's glory, being surpassed by English. France remains one of the engines of the EU, and therefore its national language will always be of a certain importance. Due to its tradition as the language of diplomacy, French still retains international prestige, and it is useful for economic and political negotiations with neighboring countries, e.g. the Maghreb states. Additionally, the EU institutions are in a francophone

environment, which makes an at least rudimentary command of French useful for every Member of Parliament or official working at the EU; if not in a job context, then for interacting with the population of the country one works in. France sees French as one of the nation's biggest assets, and any degrading of French would lead to immediate consequences.

As for German, it has held its stable position over the years without actively promoting the use of German in meetings or conferences. Being the language with the largest amount of native speakers (93 million in 2001) in the Union, some might feel that it should have more international importance; however, the German and Austrian governments remain hesistant to advocate an extended use of German, obviously for historical reasons. Its position as language of the sciences is lost, but as Germany still is one of Europe's leading powers and one of the greatest promoters of European Integration, future multilingualism policies will surely not neglect German. Already, more Europeans are able to hold a conversation in German than in French – this leaves hope not for a leading, but a regardlessly prosperous future.

English is the world language, and the UK does not need to take much action to defend or enhance this position in Europe – communication technologies along with the demands of the international business market foster this development by themselves. All European countries invest in learning English, as job success seems to depend on a good command of the language, and popular music and culture (movies, etc.) further rouse interest in the language and the culture connected to it. Even though the UK is not really taking action to promote English, many countries perceive the language as a threat; especially France, who did not like seeing French lose its hegemonial status to English. English is seen as the medium that will bring Anglo-American culture imperialism to European households, levelling out all differences and swallowing the cultural diversity Europe is built on. Also, many EU documents (especially in the Commission) are

nowadays drafted and then officialized in English, making it the original language of a significant part of EU legislation. As all legally binding documents issued by the Commission have to be translated into all official languages, this will not constitute a big disadvantage for the other EU languages. However, it might cause problems in translation, as the English legal terminology stems from a different law system than the one most commonly used in Europe, which could lead to a confusing wording when being translated into other EU languages.

Whether these concerns transpire to be legitimate remains to be seen in the future, but the predominance of English as a lingua franca is also a fact that may bring the population of Europe closer together, as will be argued in chapter 3 of this thesis. English native speakers will surely profit from such a development, while mother tongue speakers of other languages might initially face disadvantages; however, the independent Euro-English which would evolve over time could represent a realistic possibility for more common understanding. Ideally, a multilingual solution to the problem will be found, but this will depend on how much every nation state is willing to step beyond power political reasoning and think about what might work best for the Union in terms of cohesion, connecting citizens and internal efficiency. Even if national languages feel endangered or receive little notice at EU level, they still have their relative member country as a stronghold, and the probability of a language disappearing when it has a country full of native speakers is highly unlikely. What the EU needs is a concept that incorporates smaller as well as bigger languages, but at the same time gives way to a Union where efficiency and mutual understanding go hand in hand. Every state has the right to defend its own language, but it should not go as far as obstructing the integration process because of power struggles between member states. In a multilingual Europe, all languages are valuable, and different usages in the EU will not invalidate their position as sources of cultural diversity and common understanding at the same time. However, the way to acquiring

understanding for this prospect among the member states is still a long way in the future, and it would require each nation state to step down from its nationalistic pride, which is unlikely to happen at the moment.

2. The EU shaping Language Policy

After having discussed the internal language use of the EU organs and the internal language regime in the whole EU, we will now turn to analyze how the EU shapes language policy for its member states. Of course, the EU's internal language regime also has influence on its member states, as it advocates the basic principle of multilingualism and demands that officials from all countries respect this principle. But the EU mainly communicates its language policy to its citizens via direct interaction, projects to support multilingualism and the newly-installed Commissioner for Multilingualism as the main ambassador for a culturally diverse Union.

a) The EU Commissioner for Multilingualism

The EU is the only international union to date that can draw from a very rich and diverse cultural heritage, but this richness and diversity often turns out to be a threat to efficiency and a

subject of power struggles between the member states. No member state wants to see its language neglected, and negotiating on the sector of language policy therefore is a very touchy and difficult matter. In order not to incite tension between member states and to preserve the Union's cultural heritage, the EU has set a number of measures to promote multilingualism on its territory.

First of all, the work carried out by the EU Commissioner for Multilingualism; at present the Romanian engineer Leonard Orban, is strictly dedicated to enhancing and promoting multilingualism in the member states. According to the Commissioner's website, the EU Commission's multilingualism policies aim to "encourage language learning and promote linguistic diversity in society; promote a healthy multilingual economy; and give citizens access to European Union legislation in their own languages"[5]. When two new Commissioners were added for Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, the position of the European Commissioner for Multilingualism was installed as a separate portfolio (Commission 2005). The mandate's main objectives are:

- economic competitiveness and better jobs

- lifelong learning and intercultural dialogue

- nurturing a space for European political dialogue through multilingual communication with the citizens (Europa Press Releases RAPID 2007).

To promote these goals and raise awareness about multilingualism among citizens, Commissioner Orban travels the EU, giving speeches about his vision of a multilingual Europe in Universities and other instititutions of higher education all over the EU. I will to quote three of his most recent speeches, all held in 2009, to illustrate what the Commissioner's main priorities are and how he wants to achieve them. Also, these examples show that Commissioner Orban has a more practical

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[5] The EU Commissioner for Multilingualism's website offers an overview of the Commissioner's priorities as well as some key documents (e.g. Transcripts of speeches) outlining his policies. Moreover, there is a discussion forum on multilingualism in which citizens can share their vision of a multilingual Europe and discuss it with the Commissioner and his staff. The website can be reached at http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/orban/index_en.htm.

approach to multilingualism than other EU institutions or expert groups concerned with the matter.

The first speech, entitled "Multilingualism – a bridge to mutual understanding", was held at the Conference on Multilingualism in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, on May 15th, 2009. Orban spoke about language being the "most direct expression of culture; it is what makes us human", pointing out that "Europe is not a melting pot where differences are blotted out. Europe is a common home where diversity is celebrated". However, language skills are necessary for taking part in this celebration, and there clearly still is some work to be done on this sector: "Language skills are unevenly spread across countries and social groups in Europe. Only if multilingualism is an aim and – to a certain degree – becomes a reality for every citizen, will it become what it has to be: a bridge to mutual understanding". What Orban refers to here is the goal that every EU citizen should be able to speak their mother tongue plus two foreign languages. Unlike other groups concerned with the topic of multilingualism, which will be mentioned later on, the Commissioner retains a relatively realistic look on the matter, realizing that it is surely not for every EU citizen to become a dedicated foreign language learner. Not all citizens are interested in the matter, and they would probably only be willing to take up language learning if they derived a direct personal benefit from it for themselves. Orban, of course, knows this, and tries to advertise language learning by focusing on its advantages for small and medium enterprises: "Languages are key competences to protect and support our firms and economies. Moreover there is enormous potential for small businesses in Europe to increase their total exports if they invest more in languages. And I'm not only speaking of English. In a global economy, English alone is not enough. Other languages, one of Europe's most precious wealth, can help conquer new markets".

By referring to languages as a possible catalyst for economic development and as a way out of the crisis, Orban could succeed in getting people who would not normally take up a foreign

language, interested in further developing their language skills. In his speech "Multilingualism: a policy for uniting Europeans", held at the London School of Economics on May 19th, 2009, Orban talks about the roots of multilingualism and its importance for the EU: "Multilingualism has shaped the European project from the very start. Just over 50 years ago, old enemies came together to build the Union on the ashes of their former conflicts. The fact that they put the languages of the founding states on an equal footing was not empty symbolism. It was a real commitment to the dialogue which underpins Europe". For Orban, multilingualism is an opportunity that must be seized, and not a hindrance to European Integration, as many make it out to be.

Speaking at a university, Orban takes up the subject of languages at the level of higher education, stating that "we should aim for a situation where all graduates in Europe:

− are able to communicate in at least two languages other than their mother tongue,

− know how to learn new languages effectively,

− have the confidence to learn a new language when the need or opportunity arises,

− have first-hand experience of working and learning in other countries and in collaborating with other countries, and

− are familiar with other cultures and intercultural skills".

The sphere of university education is of course, where language skill-related goals will be easiest to achieve, and with this in mind Orban is relying on students to form a kind of language elite, thus setting a good example to other citizens on how learning languages can benefit personal development as well as job opportunities. If the mother tongue plus two goal can be attained by university graduates, it may spread from there to the rest of the population and to future generations in particular. However, if it fails even in a highly educated environment, the chances of success with the broader population are slim to none.

Orban again refers to the dominance of English, and warns that speaking the world language will not be enough for a distinct profile on the job market: "[...] knowledge of English, as a foreign language, is not enough. From a jobs perspective, as more people master English, it will be the second or third language that will make the difference for employers". The Commissioner again points out the practical value of learning languages, instead of focusing merely on theoretical concepts that will only rouse interest in people already open to the matter of language learning anyway. Orban tries to appeal to people's instrumental motivation, meaning that they will be motivated to learn a language because they expect an immediate benefit from it.[6]

To improve policies on multilingualism and to foster public participation in the policy-making process, Orban announces the installation of two platforms in 2009: "The platform with civil society stakeholders will share ideas and experiences for promoting multilingualism and intercultural dialogue. The permanent platform for the Business community will focus on how to address the mismatch between business needs and education provision". This represents a step away from expert group reports which most often only touch upon utopic ideals that can hardly be put into practice, towards a more practical approach to multilingualism policy. By getting into contact with stakeholders, the Commissioner will see what the practical problems and demands in multilingualism policy are, and then be able to react directly and immediately to these issues. Multilingualism will be transformed from a mere vague ideal into concrete policy measures.

In his last speech, held on July 10th, 2009, at Ponta Delgada (Azores Islands), Orban again starts out by underlining the value of multilingualism in Europe: it consists of "a large number of languages with equal dignity within an overarching political entity, constantly interacting and influencing each other".

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6   The distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation was coined by the linguists Gardner & Lambert in 1972. Integrative motivation refers to a sincere interest in the language and culture of the target group, while instrumental motivation refers to the practical value and advantages of learning a new language.

After having touched upon the concept of multilingualism as one of the EU's most defining features, Orban turns to the more practice-related part of his speech. He again takes up the idea that language learning should be open to everyone: "Language learning should extent way beyond the school-gate, into vocational training and adult education. Nearly half of all Europeans speak just one language, or have only a little knowledge of a first foreign language. Language teaching has to reach these people, who will mostly no longer be in education. We need new learning solutions: for example, the media, and new technologies". Orban says that people who have already left education also need to be motivated to learn new languages, but he remains vague in his ideas on how this goal could be reached. The media are often mentioned by EU officials, one concrete measure would be using subtitling instead of dubbing, as is already being done in smaller European countries. It is doubtful that the population of bigger countries, such as Germany, France, or Italy, who have had all their movies and TV series dubbed until now, would respond positively to this approach. In addition, one might argue that airing all programs in their original language (which will in most cases be English) only enhances the already powerful position of English in the EU. For people still in vocational education, Orban mentions the Eurodyssée program, which "allows students to spend up to 7 months in one of the European regions where they can take part in practical training, for example in tourism".

Overall, we can say that Commissioner Orban has a relatively practical approach in his speeches: he mentions the value of multilingualism as one of the EU's founding principles, but he also refers to its practical importance in the citizens' everyday lives. By hinting at job opportunities or a better market position for small businesses, he tackles the need for multilingualism and good language learning in the workplace, thus also reaching people who are not willing to take up learning a new language if they do not see an immediate advantage from it.

In contrast to the Commissioner, other EU institutions and expert groups working on multilingualism take on a much more theoretical approach. Their work is surely important for setting the basic principles of multilingualism and raising awareness about its importance for Europe, but it lacks concrete measures that can easily be put into practice and which the ordinary citizen can relate to.

b) Other EU Institutions and Expert Groups working on Multilingualism

Before the establishment of the Commissioner for Multilingualism, the Commission also published strategies on the matter, starting with the document *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* in 2005. The EU clearly distances itself from the USA who function as a melting pot, by saying that it will not render down differences, but provide a common home in which diversity is celebrated. The Commission's multiligualism policy aims for a healthy multilingual economy, for the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity in society, and for giving EU citizens access to EU legislation in their mother tongue; objectives that the later established Commissioner for Multilingualism agenda also took up. The document constituted that many Europeans know at least one language other than their mother tongue (99% of Luxemburgers, 93% of Latvians and Maltese, 90% of Lithuanians), but at the same time there are many countries in Europe where the majority of the population is monolingual (Hungary 71%, UK 70%, Spain, Italy, and Portugal 64%). Most member states interpret foreign language learning to simply mean learning English; however, the Commission has made clear that "English is not enough" (Commission 2005).

The Commission suggests relatively simple measures, such as fostering subtitles instead of dubbing in the movie industry, to enhance foreign language skills; however, not even these small steps might be possible if the general public in countries with a big enough population for dubbing (Germany, Italy, Spain) opts against it.

In September 2006, the High Level Group of Multilingualism (HLGM) was set up by the Commission, as announced in the Framework Strategy. The Group centers around three objectives, namely lifelong learning, economic competitiveness and the creation of space for European political dialogue and communication with the citizens. The HLGM again points to medial measures (multilingual websites, dubbing) to enhance language competence, and stands up against the claims that EU translation services are too costly, stating that "quality has its price". Also, the HLGM not only feels the need for EU legislation to be translated into all official languages, but for a further review of legal and other texts regarding their understandability for the common EU citizen. The EU must speak a language its citizens can understand, instead of drifting into highly bureaucratic jargon. European media should help to create a European public sphere, in which policy evaluation and opinion shaping can occur at a supranational level (Commission 2007). Rendering EU legislation more easily understandable for all citizens is a laudable idea, but in practice, some difficulties will arise. EU documents need to be as alike in their wording as possible in all languages, so that legislation is comparable and that the rules it sets are absolutely the same in every country. Trying to improve these accurately translated versions linguistically might render them more different from one another, and therefore could give way to legal imperfections and slight differences between regulations in member states, which would not be acceptable at all.

In 2007, the Group of Intellectuals for Intercultural Dialogue set up at the initiative of the European Commission, published the report "A Rewarding Challenge: How the Multiplicity of

Languages Could Strengthen Europe"[7].

The Group of Intellectuals was formed to provide new input in the discussion about multilingualism inside the EU; however, its proposals may be valuable in theory, but that they do lack the pratical aspect. In the document, the Group of Intellectuals argues against an EU in which English is the dominant working language, two or three other languages still have a marginal official status, while all other member state tongues are neglected and barely ever used in a public context. According to the Group of Intellectuals, such a development would be "contrary to the whole ethos of the European project", for the following reasons:

Respect for linguistic diversity has emerged as an ideal from the 19th and 20th century's conflicts, and a common sense of linguistic diversity could serve as an "antidote against the various types of fanaticism" that have brought about discrimination and wars. Also, as a Union based on free will, the EU does not have the ability nor the intention to obliterate diversity; on the contrary, it should be "a model for an identity based on diversity". Secondly, the concept of European Identity is subject to constant change, but we can still be proud of our shared common heritage, using this knowledge to shape the EU's future. Thirdly, the EU adheres to certain values, which have been set in the aftermath of WWII: one of these values is to reject all discriminations based on any specific cultural feature. We have shared values, a shared cultural heritage, and both these principles are what allow us to express ourselves freely in our cultural diversity nowadays (Commission 2007).

Based on the basic principles mentioned above, the Group of Intellectuals tried to draw up a

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[7] The Group of Intellectuals for Intercultural Dialogue was set up at the initiative of Commission President José Manuel Durao Barroso and Commissioner for Multilingualism Leonard Orban. They wanted a group of personalities active in the area of culture to advise them on the role multilingualism could play in regard to the intercultural dialogue and the mutual comprehension of the citizens of the EU. The group was chaired by Amin Maalouf (writer) and included: Jutta Limbach (President of the Goethe Institut), Sandra Pralong (communication expert), Simonetta Agnello Hornby (writer), David Green (President of the European Network of National Cultural Institutes, former director general of the British Council), Eduardo Lorenco (philosopher), Jacques de Decker (writer), Jan Sokol (philosopher, former Minister for Education in the Czech Republic), Jens Christian Grondahl (writer) and Tahar Ben Jelloun (writer). The group met 3 times in 2007 and published its results in 2008.

concept of "the way forward as we see it". Bilateral relations between the peoples of Europe should become a priority; this should lead to every European language having a sufficient quantity of speakers, as people in neighbouring countries would aim to learn each other's language. Additionally, instead of just adhering to a lingua franca, each EU citizen should choose a personal adoptive language, e.g. a second mother tongue, which could be useful in overcoming the rivalry between English and other languages, and constitute an individual advantage on the job market. Also, doing business would be easier if people could express themselves in the language of their partner, instead of being conditioned to opt for one language because of utilitarian reasons.

To further support the personal adoptive language, each pair of countries should establish a bilateral and bilingual organisation, with the aim of arousing interest among national authorities, schools and universities and the business sector, encouraging them to join and rendering the idea more powerfully. Ideally, every EU member state would have such a network with each of its neighboring states as well as with all other EU countries (Group of Intellectuals Report). Theoretically, this is a good idea, but its practical implications make the whole project a financially and logistically undesirable one: setting up such organisations would make up a significant part of the member states' budget, and even if Community funding would be added, the project would still amount to a very costly matter. Secondly, trade between neighbouring countries is already up and working without such an organisation, and training business professionals in many different languages instead of just providing them with a relatively fluent command of English would not only add to costs, but also create a workforce with a limited employability (i.e. only in business relations with the country they speak the respective language of).

In its latest document on multilingualism, (*Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment*) the Commission focuses on the right to access to language learning for every

EU citizen. Despite all the positive talk about the Barcelona goal (that each citizen should speak their mother tongue plus two foreign languages), the Commission realized that some groups were bound to be excluded from this goal. The Commission describes the advantages of speaking more languages (ability to work abroad, edge on the job market, etc.) but stresses the problem of the Barcelona objective not working in vocational education; it still does not, however, provide any concrete measures against it (Commission 2008). Stating that employers should give their employees the possibility to attend language courses may be good advice, but the gap between theory and practice again surfaces. If we take for example an ordinary employee in a large plant or a small family business which is not situated in a border region, why should he or she take up language learning, except out of personal interest, when there are no job benefits to be expected from it? There may be a minority of the EU workforce who would dedicate their freetime to language education, but many people prefer other leisure activities, and if no clear benefit for their job is given, the necessary incentive to learn another language is clearly lacking.

In general, the EU has surely taken action to improve its policy on multilingualism; sadly, not all groups installed and programmes designed have also brought about valuable ideas for what the future of this policy might evolve into. While some ideas sound great in theory, their cost and minor additional value for businesses render them unattractive for implementation. Other ideas, like replacing dubbing with subtitles, might conflict with what a country's inhabitants are used to and will be difficult to put into practice. The same problem arises in the Barcelona goal of mother tongue plus two foreign languages: if significant education reforms are carried out (which to date also remains doubtful), the objective could be reached with students completing secondary education. All those leaving school earlier to complete vocational training will fall out of the measure, but the question is do they actionally need two foreign languages in their daily job routine, if they are not

working in a border region or plan to go abroad; in these cases, personal motivation would render language learning effective and necessary anyway. The EU and its instititutions should aim to provide all necessary facilities to enable each citizen to learn one or more foreign languages; however, the decision should be left to the population as to whether they want to take up this offer or not. Successful language learning is necessarily intertwined with a thorough interest in foreign cultures and new experiences; if citizens do not feel the need for such encounters, they will not take up language learning with the necessary passion. The only relatively secure way to make sure all citizens learn foreign languages is to refer to the job and business opportunities they bring, but in cases where this does not apply, there is very little that can be done. The EU may be able to foster the process with funding, information campaigns, etc. but ultimately the motivation to explore the realm of a new language must stem from within each human being.

We have now thoroughly examined the struggles in multilingualism and language policy formation, where the EU tries to settle its internal language regime as well as when it wants to impact its member states' way of behaving on the matter. However, the languages that have been discussed so far are national languages; meaning that even if they protest against supposed or actual neglect on an EU-level, they still have a very powerful position in their home states and are therefore by no means endangered in their survival. Regional and Minority Languages lack this kind of basis, but they are also of vital importance to Europe's rich cultural heritage and should be preserved. Still, member states tend to treat these languages neglectfully, and Minority language representatives turn to the EU-level for help. If the Union really sees linguistic diversity as its "genetic code" (Orban), one would think that the preservation of all languages spoken on its territory should be a priority on its agenda. However, financial limitations and the lack of competences sometimes render it difficult for the EU to fulfill its task as multiligualism champion.

The saying goes that a society should be judged by how it treats its weakest members, and therefore a look at the status quo and future prospects for Europe's Regional and Minority Languages is an essential element in analyzing the EU language policies.

Figure 1: Eurominority – Map of the European Languages (http://www.eurominority.eu/version/maps/map-european-languages.asp)

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Excursion: What is a Language?

Language or Dialect

Language policy is often discussed, but the terminology issue rarely surfaces. Despite this neglectful treatment in the public sphere, the debate about what is and what is not a language constitutes a vital issue, especially in minority language protection. France ignores the Language D'Oc and the Language D'Oil by declaring that they both constitute a case of *patois*, not of language as such. By denying these languages the term *language*, they are removed from a certain in-group protection and left in the confusing jungle of dialects, accents, and other more or less recognised varieties. If you deny a language the right of being called a language, its speakers cannot claim any rights connected to language use, and, in addition, have to put up with being looked down on as users of a mere dialectal variety.

The Power of Definition

Another question that comes up is the power of definition: who decides what is a language and what is not? The most natural answer would be scientists and especially linguists, but even these experts can probably not completely free themselves from their environments' attitudes when doing research on such a touchy subject. In fact, it is mostly the governments that decide what they consider to be a language, and what is just some other form of variety. In the case of the EU, this leads to the member states gaining the sovereignty of definition, as they also possess the political sovereignty in the field of language policy. This is why we are still very far from a complementary and fair system

of considering what is a language and what is not, even though steps into the right direction have been made.

<p style="text-align:center">Language and Prestige & Language and Identity</p>

This leads to the next point that the term language brings along: prestige. A way of speaking called a language is immediately more prestigious than the less positively connotated terms *patoi*s or *dialect*. It has its own culture, its own identity – and therefore, in the public's eyes, also more right to be protected than varieties not considered to be a language. Looking back in history, the Pidgins and Creoles spoken were denied having an own cultural heritage and value, which considerably contributed to them being replaced by official state languages in many parts of the world.

II. The Role of Regional or Minority Languages (RMLs) and Lesser Used Languages (LULs) in the EU

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the EU's Regional or Minority Language and Lesser Used Language Policy. First, the *Charter for Regional and Minority Languages* (ECRML) as the Council of Europe's instrument in RML protection will be analyzed, and the problems with its ratification and implementation will be shown. As the Charter was drawn up by the Council of Europe, its other activities on the language policy sector will also shortly be looked at. The Charter does not offer a sufficient protection regime, and while it can be seen as a positive first step into the right direction, the EU should try to coin its own instruments and protective measures.

Following the general considerations on RML (Regional or Minority Languages) and LUL (Lesser Used Languages) protection and its struggles in Europe, I will give two specific examples of the status quo of LULs in the EU, namely Breton in France and Ladin in Italy. These examples are to be seen as case studies. Both languages are LULs, but Ladin is much better protected than Breton; this part of my thesis will explore the reasons for this difference, analyzing language policy via the Euromosaic Study[8] results

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[8]   The Euromosaic Study is a comprehensive examination of the potential for expanding regional or minority language use, and the barriers they face in this respect, initiated by the European Commission in 1992. It identified the social and institutional variables that provide the context for the continuing use of a language, finding out that family, education and community as well as the legal and institutional frameworks in which languages are used constitute the most important determinants. The second task was research on the status quo of RMLs in Europe; the team compiled reports assessing the situation and condition of over 50 languages. Further studies using the same framework were carried out in 1995 (when Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU) and in 2004 (in the new member states Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia). Further information about the Euromosaic Study can be found on the Euromosaic website http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/.

and interviews with minority representatives. The comparison shows that language policy remains in the member states' hands, and if the nation state is not willing to protect its autochthonous minorities and their languages, there is not much that the EU or the Council of Europe can do about it.

The final part of this chapter will investigate what has and can be done to give the EU more political importance on the matter of RMLs and LULs. The Council of Europe's other work on the language policy sector will also be mentioned briefly. While the Commission remained reluctant in its proposals for fear of the Council rejecting them if they interfered too much in an area that is still member state competence, the European Parliament acted as the main champion for minority language protection. However, because of the lack of legal basis, progress on the matter has been very slow. The EBLUL (European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages), functioning as the only direct LUL protection agency, has also suffered from this lack of legal basis and the subsequent European Court of Justice's decision that also brought about a lack of financial means. From my perspective, the Commission seems reluctant to intervene, the Parliament is willing but powerless, and an under-financed EBLUL is on the verge of no longer being able to finance its activities; therefore it comes as no surprise that minority associations urge the EU to act. However, their influence on policy making remains minor, and the dominance of the member states again emerges. The conclusion is that as long as the EU lacks competence in the language policy sector, it cannot step up to its supposed role as an effective protective entity. The final outlook considers how the EU could try to exempt influence without legal powers, but these measures should be only temporary, since the transfer of language policy competence from the member states to the Union must be the

goal.

1. Contents of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

<u>a) History and Development Process of the Charter (ECRML)</u>

The *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML) is a document provided by the Council of Europe in 1992, which has been signed and ratified by many EU-members and other European nation states until today. The ECRML proposes a first step in the right direction and puts regional or minority language policy on the European agenda; its mechanisms for protection are, however, not sufficient. Various bodies within the Council of Europe had expressed concern over the situation of regional and minority languages; article 14 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms lays down the principle of non-discrimination, outlawing in particular any discrimination based on language or association within a national minority. However, it does not create a system of positive protection for minority languages and the communities using them – a point made by the Consultative Assembly already in 1957 in its Resolution 136. In 1961, the Parliamentary Assembly (Recommendation 285) called for a protection measure to supplement the European

Convention, in order to safeguard the rights of minorities to enjoy their own culture, use their own language, establish their own schools etc.

In 1981, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation 928 on the educational and cultural problems of minority languages and dialects in Europe, and the European Parliament passed a resolution on these questions. Both documents found that a charter of regional or minority languages and cultures was necessary. Acting on these recommendations and resolutions, the CLRAE (*Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe*) decided to undertake the preparation of a European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The preliminary work involved a survey of the actual situation of RMLs (regional and minority languages) in Europe, and, in 1984, a public hearing attended by 250 people representing over 40 languages. The initial drafting was carried out with support from a group of experts, and contact was made with the Parliamentary Assembly and competent members of the European Parliament. Finally, in its resolution 192 (1988), the CLRAE proposed the text of a charter which was designed to have the status of a convention. The Committee of Ministers then established an ad hoc committee of experts on regional and minority languages (CAHLR), responsible to draft a charter with CLRAE's convention in mind. Before submitting the final text of the charter to the Committee of Ministers in 1992, the CAHLR consulted a number of specialised committees in the Council of Europe (culture, education, human rights, legal co-operation, crime problems, local and regional authorities, media) and the European Commission for Democracy through Law, taking their opinions into account and incorporating them into the charter. The charter was adopted as a convention by the Committee of Ministers at the 478th meeting of the

Ministers' Deputies on 25 June 1992 and opened for signature on 5 November 1992 in Strasbourg. It entered into force on March 1, 1998 (Council of Europe 1992b).

b) Most Important Articles and their Implications

The ECRMLs articles aim to provide for a sufficient RML protection system within the signing states, but they leave room for a number of backdoors and opting-out possibilities. However, most states would probably not have signed a charter containing more strictly formulated regulations. Article 1 defines the term regional or minority languages (RLMs) as "languages traditionally used within a given territory of a State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population, and different from the official languages of the State" (Council of Europe 1992a). Article 2 states that each party must apply at least 35 paragraphs or sub-paragraphs chosen from Part III of the Charter (the part that specifies measures to be taken for RML protection), including at least 3 chosen from Article 8 and 12 and one from Article 9, 10, 11 and 13 (Council of Europe 1992a). This is the first of many problematic articles in the Charter, as it gives the nation states the right to refuse certain measures or to treat one linguistic minority more favorably than the other. Of course, one might argue that the same protective measures cannot be applied to lesser used language (LUL) minorities and to minorities bigger in number; however, the points mentioned in Articles 8, 12, 9, 10, 11 and 13 are not offering outstanding rights, but just rather basic measures that should be valid for all RML

speakers.

Article 3 talks about the practical arrangements to be made: "each contracting state shall specify, in its instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, each regional or minority language, or official language which is less widely used on the whole or part of its territory, to which the paragraphs chosen in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 2, shall apply" (Council of Europe 1992a). Article 3 therefore gives the nation state another possibility to undermine RML protection: not only can they choose the paragraphs that apply, but they are additionally also allowed to specify the languages to which these paragraphs appeal. If the nation state chooses not to specify any RML, like France, it can basically deny that these language are existent and spoken on its territory, because it does not have to apply any protective measures to any RML – the protection granted by the Charter is no longer satisfactory.

Article 4 goes in the opposite direction by stating that nothing in the Charter should limit the rights guaranteed by the European Convention of Human Rights, and that more favourable provisions concerning the status of RLMs shall not be affected by the Charter (Council of Europe 1992a). Article 5 refers to the limitations of the Charter by existing obligations: "nothing in this Charter may be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or perform any action in contravention to the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations or other obligations under international law, including the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of states" (Council of Europe 1992a). The strong connection to the principle of sovereignty reminds us that the competences on the language policy sector depend on the nation states, and that the Council of Europe cannot offer the speakers of regional or minority languages any chance to be successfully

protected unless the nation state also wishes to do so.

Article 6 attempts to make sure that the authorities, organisations and persons concerned are informed of the rights and duties established by the Charter (Council of Europe 1992a). Article 7 defines the objectives and principles of the Charter: the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth, no new administrative divisions in the geographical area where RMLs are spoken, the need to promote RMLs, the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of RMLs in speech and writing and in public and private life, the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the state, the provision of appropriate forms and means for teaching and study of RMLs, the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a RML to learn it if they desire, the promotion of study and research on RMLs at universities, transnational exchange between RML speakers, the abolition of all unjustified distinctions and discrimination on the use of a RML intended to endanger the maintenance or development of it, the promotion of mutual understanding between all linguistic groups of the country and tolerance in relation to RMLs, the consideration in policy-making of the wishes expressed by the RML speakers, the application of these rules to non-territorial languages as well (Council of Europe 1992a).

Part 3 of the Charter defines the "measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life". Article 8 refers to education, leaving the signing states many options for their RML educational policy: make pre-school education available in RMLs, or make a part of pre-school education available in RMLs, or make pre-school education available in RMLs to those pupils whose parents so request and whose number is considered sufficient. The same scheme continues when referring to primary education:

make available primary education in the RML, or make available a substantial part of primary education in the RML, or to provide for the teaching of the RML as an integral part of the primary education curriculum, or to apply one of these measures at least to pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient (Council of Europe 1992a). All following stages of education (secondary education, technical and vocational education, university and other higher education, adult and continuing education) follow the same pattern, allowing the state to shape its language policy on its own. School can be considered one of the most important fields of language preservation, and the options given in the charter provide the state with the right to treat its RML communities neglectfully, if it wishes to do so. The sentence "whose number is considered sufficient" can also become a problem, as the Charter does not specify which number could be considered sufficient, leaving it again up to the nation state to decide on the sufficiency of interest for language education.

Article 9 talks about Judicial authorities: to provide that the courts, at the request of one of the parties, shall conduct the proceedings in a RML, or to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her RML, or to provide that requests and evidence shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a RML, or to produce documents connected with legal proceedings in the RML. These provisions apply to criminal, civil and administrative proceedings. Furthermore, no legal documents shall be denied validity solely because their are in a RML, and the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to users of RMLs shall be made available in the RML (Council of Europe 1992a).

Article 10 touches upon administrative authorities and public services: to ensure

that the authorities use RMLS, or that they respond in a RML if people apply to them in a RML (for oral and written applications), to ensure that documents submitted in a RML are valid and to make available bilingual versions for widely used administrative texts. Moreover, RMLs can be used in the local authorities' assemblies, and the use of RMLs for traditional and correct place-names should be encouraged, if necessary in conjunction with the official state language. Article 11 aims to provide independent media broadcasting in the RML: radio and TV channels as well as newspapers in the RML should be encouraged, and regular broadcasting in RML should be fostered. Additionally, the reception of programmes from neighbouring states using the same or a similar language should be guaranteed. Article 12 covers cultural activities and facilities: the production and access of works produced in RMLs should be fostered, translation services financed and cultural organisations equipped with sufficient RML-speaking staff. Article 13 specifies that in economic and social life, RML use should not be prevented but encouraged, consumer rights should be translated into RMLs, and social care facilities (hospitals, retirement homes, hostels) should offer the possibility of receiving treatment in their own language, by using RMLs (Council of Europe 1992a).

Part IV of the Charter talks about its application: Article 15 establishes periodical policy reports on behalf of the signing states to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe; the first report is to be presented within a year following in the entry into force of the Charter in the state, the following reports are to be presented in three-yearly intervals. The reports are to be made public (Council of Europe 1992a). Again, the Council of Europe has no means to clarify what the status quo of an RML is if the signing state is not willing to give it this insight. If the state has signed the Charter, but it never came into

force (as it is the case with France), no reports are expected and no justification for a neglectful RML policy is needed. The signing state can save face by signing the Charter and then opt-out by simply delaying its entry into force for an indefinite period of time.

Article 16 is concerned with the examination of the reports by a committee of experts: organisations present in a signing state may draw the committees attention to matters relating to RML policy, and submit statements concerning the reports. The committee of experts will provide the Committee of Ministers with a report (based on the report handed in by the state and the statements made by other concerned parties), which should also offer recommendations for future policy decisions. The Secretary General will make a two-yearly detailed report on the application of the Charter to the Parliamentary Assembly (Council of Europe 1992a).

Article 17 specifies that the committee of experts shall be composed of one member per party, appointed by the Committee of Ministers from a list of people offering "the highest integrity and recognised competence in the matters dealt with in the Charter, who shall be nominated by the party concerned" (Council of Europe 1992a). This article grants the signing states the right to appoint a person of their choice to the committee of experts; as no specific job profile is given, "integrity and competence" are vague concepts and remain in the eye of the beholder, in this case the nation state. To ensure a critical evaluation of the reports, the committee should be (at least partly) composed of RML-speaker representatives, but Article 17 offers the nation states the possibility to appoint members that may be experts on the matter, but also distinct followers of the nation state's RML policy.

Articles 18 – 20 talk about the Charter's entry into force, and the accession periods

for new states wishing to sign the Charter. Article 21, however, deals with a far more interesting matter: it gives the nation states the possibility to make reservations to paragraph 2 – 5 of Article 7 ECRML; as mentioned above, this is the article specifying the core principles and aims of the Charter (Council of Europe 1992a). Very important practical steps (elimination of discrimination based on language, promotion of equality between RML and national language speakers, mutural understanding and tolerance regarding RMLs, establishment of advisory RML-speaker bodies who play a role in policy-making, etc.) are no longer compulsory, but remain in the state's own arbitrariness – the Charter does not fully fulfill its duties as a protecting entity, because the nation state is yet again offered an "opting-out" possibility. However, it must be noted that expressing reservations is always licit according to international law, and therefore the Charter gives room to a consolidated right that the signing states would have also been able to claim had it not been recorded in the ECRML text.

As the "List of Declarations Made" to the ECRML shows, many states make use of these reservations – some, like Germany, only specify which linguistic minorities are present on its territory, while others, like France, are more concerned about the equality of all citizens than about RML protection, as will now be illustrated.

c) France's Reservations to the Charter and their Impact on the Breton Language's Situation

In the "List of Declarations made with Respect to Treaty No. 148" (the ECRML), France makes use of the possibility granted by the Charter to express reservations. It declares that because "the aim of the Charter is not to recognize or protect minorities but to promote the European language heritage and the use of the term 'groups' of speakers does not grant collective rights to speakers of regional or minority languages" it is compatible with the French constitution, according to which the French people is only one, without distinctions according to origin, race or religion (Council of Europe 1996). This paragraph can be seen as a clear refusal to acknowledge the linguistic minorities present on the French territory, an impression that is underlined by France's decision (unlike most other states signing the Charter) not to specify which RMLs are spoken on its territory. There may not be distinct action being taken against linguistic minorities, but their neglectful treatment by the government is equally harmful.

France reveals its Jacobean language policy (which will be discussed in detail later on), as a model that considers language and state to be an indivisible unity, by stating that "the use of the French language is mandatory on all public-law corporations and private individuals in the exercise of a public service function, as well as on individuals in their relations with public administrations and services", degrading articles 7, 9, and 10 to mere "general principles". (Council of Europe 1996). The Charter is precise in its wording, but France waters its contents down by classifying "general principles" as the points intended to shape the national RML policy; a "general principle"

seems to be something you agree on without actually allowing for the implications it offers to be put into practice.

France interprets Article 7-1, paragraph f and Article 8 to mean that they intend to "preserve the optional nature of the teaching and study of regional and minority languages, as well as of the history and culture which is reflected in them" and Article 9-3 as not opposing the "possible use of only the French version, which is legally authoritative, of statutory texts made available in the regional or minority languages, by public law corporations and private individuals in the exercise of a public service function, as well as by individuals in their relations with public administrations and services" (Council of Europe 1996). Just as in the case above, the Charter's message is clear, but France manages to detour its contents via interpretation. The Charter offers legal validity for RML documents, France states that it is still possible to use the French "legally authoritative" version only; the measures of protection agreed upon in the Charter are in fact struck down by the reservations made, rendering it much harder if not almost impossible for the linguistic minorities in France to come to enjoy the fruits of the Charter.

d) Other Initiatives by the Council of Europe on the Field of Language Policy

This thesis focuses on what the EU can and should do on the language policy sector. However, as the most important document for the protection of RMLs, the

Charter, is a document by the Council of Europe, its other work in the field should also be briefly mentioned.

The Council of Europe carries out intergovernmental cooperation programmes via the Language Policy Division, located in Strasbourg, and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz. The Language Policy Division is responsible for "designing and implementing initiatives for the development and analysis of language education policies aimed at promoting linguistic diversity and plurilingualism" (Council of Europe 2009c). The Division also wants to help states in developing coherent and transparent language policies, and its programmes include national as well as second and minority languages. It also provides a forum for language policy debate. The European Centre for Modern Languages has "the implementation of language policies and the promotion of innovative approaches to the learning and teaching of modern languages" as its mission (Council of Europe 2009c). The Centre organizes international language education projects targeting teacher trainers, researchers and key multipliers in the field. It also offers educational facilities at its premises in Graz, including a resource center housing a collection of works on language policy.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe has initiated the European Language Portfolio (ELP), in which language learners can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. The Council also introduced the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), a new system to make language examinations and the certificates obtained from them comparable throughout Europe. Six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) between beginner and native speaker-like competence allow for an internationally recognized description of one's achievement in a language.

2. Is the Charter a sufficient Instrument of Protection?

The *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* represents a clear step in the right direction, as it is the outcome of a long struggle for a European instrument for RML protection. The "List of Declarations made with Respect to Treaty No. 148" shows that most contracting states have adapted all or most of the measures given to the languages present on their territory – these are states that already had a relatively minority-friendly language policy before signing the Charter. Nation states that have the same concept for nationality and citizenship like France, however, have proven to be much less willing to adapt to RML speakers' needs. By not specifying the languages spoken on its territory, France almost denies their existence, and by signing but not ratifying the ECRML until today, the country saves itself from a "shaming-in" process, but also from control by the supervisory committee of experts.

The committee of experts also represents a rather problematic concept, as no RML speakers have to be included and its statements are not obligatory, but only advisory. A government hostile to minorities might choose an expert that conforms to its already existing language policy, and since the Council of Europe does not have any influence on the recruitment of the committee but leaves it completely up to the nation states, it is highly unlikely that a mind critical of a neglectful language policy will ever be elected into the supervisory body.

The ECRML provides the member states with a problematic "opting-out" possibility, and by claiming national sovereignty as one of its basic principles, it does not

leave room for international intrusion into internal state affairs. However, an internationalization of the problem might be the only way endangered minorities can draw attention to their situation if the national government is not willing to install protective measures. As the ECRML can only partly fulfil the task of internationalization, when the sovereign state has the responsibility of making the final decision regarding minority language protection; international organizations (such as the *Federal Union of European Nationalities* - FUEN) and EU bodies (such as EBLUL) in combination with other human rights documents (Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) are needed to fill the gap left by the ECRML.

3. Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is an important document for RML protection, as it explicitely forbids language-based discrimination and therefore reaches out further than the ECRML. The Protocol contains the general prohibition of discrimination in its article 1: "The enjoyment of any right set forth by law shall be secured without discrimination on any

ground such as sex, race, colour, **language**, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or status" (Council of Europe 2000: 1, emphasis mine). It continues: "No one shall be discriminated against by any public authority on any ground such as those mentioned in paragraph 1" (Council of Europe 2000: 1). Protocol No. 12 was opened for signature in Rome on the 4th of November, 2000 and entered into force (the condition was ten ratifications) on April 1st, 2005. Italy signed the Protocol on the first day, but never ratified it; this might be due to the measures being taken against EU and non-EU foreigners that have recently also been the cause for protest by EU officials and other member states. France did not sign the protocol, a non-surprising fact, considering its policy towards regional and minority languages.

Protocol No. 12 takes the prohibition of discrimination further than the original convention did, and therefore represents a perhaps stronger instrument in the struggle for minority language protection than the ECRML. However, the dilemma remains the same: if a state chooses not to adhere to the Protocol or to sign but not ratify it, the international community has little or no possibility of sanctioning behavior considered to be inappropriate or unjust. This fact will also be clarified by the comparison of Ladin in Italy and Breton in France, two LULs who find themselves at very different levels of protection, due to the relative nation states' willingness or unwillingness to engage in minority language protection.

4. Breton in France and Ladin in Italy – Two LULs, two Levels of Protection[9]

a) France's Jacobean Language Policy and its Impact on Breton:

Figure 2: The Breton Language (http://www.geobreizh.com/breizh/images/cartes/carte-bretagne-langue-fr.jpg)

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[9]   The two languages taken up here are to be seen as case studies, which aim to provide the reader with an insight on how important the nation states' policies are for the status of Lesser Used Languages, and how little the EU can do to better this situation.

The Breton language is one of the oldest languages in Europe, but France's centralist language policy and the subsequent language shift severely threaten its existence. Breton stems from the Celtic Languages spoken in Great Britain. In the middle of the 5th century, Germanic tribes took over the Southern and Eastern parts of the British Isles, and the Celtic populations who had previously settled there were driven to North and West. Some of them sailed over to France and gave birth to Breton, which is more akin to Welsh and Cornish than Irish. It must be noted that Breton was never spoken in the whole province of Brittany, the frontier nowadays runs from Paimpol in the North to Vannes in the South. Native speakers of Breton have become less and less numerous, and are nowadays mostly found among the elderly population, often living on isolated farms. Their number has been estimated at 400,000 – 500,000, but no systematic censuses have been held and all figures remain hypothetical; according to the 1990 census, Brittany as a whole had a population of 3,847,663 (Walter 1999: 18).

The Euromosaic Study describes the Breton speaking population of Brittany as 79% active as small farmers or agricultural workers, while only 6% work in the tertiary sector; it shows that there are comparatively few Breton-speaking professionals in higher income categories of the labour market. The survey also shows an alarming trend away from Breton: 21% of the participants came from a family where their parents spoke both Breton and French, 43% used Breton with their brothers and sisters; but only 12% exclusively use Breton with their children. This development is even stronger in the younger generation, where only 1% uses exclusively Breton when talking to their siblings. The survey was conducted among fluent Breton speakers, and few respondents were found in the younger age categories. The picture provided by the data clearly shows

that the family is not acting as an effective agency of language production, and no external support is coming from the education system or from broader society; language change from monolingual Breton to monolingual French speakers has been almost totally completed within two generations (Euromosaic Study 1992a: 1-3).

Most Bretons agree that their identity is dependant on the language, and that children should therefore be taught the language. All institutions (Church, banks, national government, private companies), with the exception of local government, are singled out as culprits for the precarious state of Breton. However, a surprising fact surfaces: most Breton-speakers also say that they are French, and do not present the typical minority conflict between nationality and citizenship; "the majority of the population simply accept their Frenchness as a result of, or as an integral part of the fact of their citizenship" (Euromosaic Study 1992a: 4).

In its conclusion, the Euromosaic Study defines the Breton language group as "approaching a state of crisis, […] as the relatively large number of speakers is virtually disappearing over a period of two generations. This largely derives from the negative identity associated with a prolonged period not only of neglect, but of hostility on the part of a state which has been constructed on the basis of a normativity that systematically fails to accommodate any sense of bilingualism that draws upon its internal cultural diversity. […] As a consequence, the agencies of reproduction within civil society are constantly weakening, leaving little hope for the continued promotion of the language group" (Euromosaic Study 1992a: 4).

France's Jacobean language policy is surely one of the factors that have led to this development in Brittany; I will, therefore, now proceed by describing this model and its

impact on the Breton language, as well as giving a short perspective on the language's indeed rather bleak-looking future.

According to Dennis Ager, French language policy is still based on three areas and their underlying myths: Identity (France combines ethnicity and powerful centralised government, French functions as one of its most important unifying symbols), Insecurity (the Republic and its language may one day disintegrate), and Image (France is destined to be a great country that can give leadership to the world) (Ager 2008: 87). The French concept of identity is based on a hexagon with natural frontiers, and a social construct (defined as "Frenchness"), established by the Revolution as a social pact between reasoning individuals, and as an ethnic entity with a long history and shared traditions. For the Revolutionaries, the French language represented democracy and reason, but also an important showroom for the nation's characteristics, such as its homogeneity. Since all citizens constitute the state as reasoning individuals, there is no possibility of "opting-out"; any deviation from the concept that all are equal as citizens (such as granting minority rights) is suspicious and seen as a danger to the nation's unity. From the 16th Century onwards, France has deemed defending its language to be synonymous with defending the Republic itself. Regional languages were seen as counter-revolutionary, as opposed to French as the language of democracy, and in the 20th century a growing fear of English (Britain and the United States being demonised as "barbarians at the gate") took hold of the country. Last but not least, French should also display France's grandeur abroad and in its colonies, again making it the language of reason and "civilization" (Ager 2008: 94-96).

In 1992, an addition to the constitution stated that "the language of the nation is

French"; this is also the article which has prevented France's government from ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. In 1994, the "Toubon-Law"[10] was passed and established that French was the language of teaching, commerce, and public service, rendering the use of French mandatory in commerce, publicity, public notices, contracts including employment contracts in the workplace, in science, and in education except for the teaching of regional or foreign languages ("Toubon-Law" 1994). If we look at the areas described by the "Toubon-Law", it is clear to see that it prevents many of the measures described in the ECRML from being put into place, e.g. it makes schools that do not use French as the medium of instruction ineligible for government funding.

Due to its centralist language policy, France also follows a very particular regional language regime, and sees them "more as tools of artistic creation than as means of communication" (definition by the Délégation Générale à la Language Francaise et aux Languages de France / DGLF, quoted in Ager 2008: 104). This definition is quite explanatory, as a language is naturally defined as a means of communication; if it is no longer actively used for this purpose, a language will become an artefact without any practical value for the average citizen.

This Jacobean model of language policy does not leave room for any other languages to be used next to French in public contexts. Regional or minority languages are used only in private settings, becoming exclusively oral languages which eventually suffer from impoverished vocabulary and grammatical irregularities. Due to this process,

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[10]   The "Toubon Law" (full name: law 94-665 of 4 August 1994 relating to the usage of the French language) mandates the use of French in official government publications and other official areas. It was named after Jacques Toubon, a conservative, who proposed the law to Parliament and was Minister of Culture when it was passed. The creation of the law was said to be a reaction to the growing influence of English and English terms in France, but it also severely influenced all other languages spoken on French territory, including RMLs.

the language loses its prestige and social efficacy, and language shift can occur within one generation. The *Club des Jacobines*, after which this language policy model was named, was one of the most influential centers of revolutionary thought in France and acted quite violently against its (supposed) exterior and interior enemies (Breton 1999: 82-84). The Jacobean leader abbé Grégoire claimed in 1973 that he wanted to "extinguish the diversity of idioms that prolong the infancy of reason and the age of prejudices" and that "the language of a free people must be one and the same for all" (quoted in Breton 1999: 86-87, my translation). Following this doctrine, the minister of public education A. De Monzie proclaimed in 1925 that "the Breton language must disappear to ensure France's linguistic unity" (quoted in Breton 1999: 88, my translation). In 1951, the "loi Deixonne"[11] was passed, a legal text intended to foster the teaching of regional languages, including Breton, Basque, Catalan and Occitan; however, instruction remained facultative, marginal and without sanctions if it was not continued until the official end of studies ("Loi-Deixonne" 1951). All French political parties have followed this Jacobean model, leaving minority organisations without real partners in the governmental sphere. Speakers of regional languages grow up perceiving their mother tongue as a handicap, and wishing to adapt to French to ensure their own professional future. This marks the victory of the Jacobean *linguicide*: persuade RML speakers to stop employing their first language (Breton 1999: 88-90). France does not seem to be willing to depart from this path, as revealed by its denial to recognize any kind of minority present in France (declaration made by a French government representative to the UN Human Rights

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[11]   The "loi Deixonne" allows for the regional languages to be taught one hour per week, but they are not an examination subject. French officials boycotted its implementation for 16 years, and it remains France's only concrete effort regarding minority language protection up to this day. In 1992, a new article was introduced into the Constitution, defining French as the only language of public life in France, thus making it very difficult to expand the "loi Deixonne" or to create an appropriate successor for it.

Commissioner in 1976), or to make any kind of step towards regional autonomies or federalism (1990) (Breton 93-94). France also did not contribute to the brochure *The Situation of Regional and Minority Languages in Europe*, published by the Council of Europe in 1996 (Tabouret-Keller 1999:, 109).

To ensure the Breton language's survival, the teaching of it in schools will be of special importance. All children should, according to Jean Le Dû, receive an initiation into Breton, its diversity and richness, and thus become interested in their own cultural heritage. Nowadays, good Breton speakers who could pass their knowledge on to younger generations can still be found, but the French central government is most likely to continue its silence and inactivity towards this language group (Le Dû 1999: 31).

Since no help can be expected from the government, Riwanon Kervella from the Breton organisation *Kuzul Ar Brezhoneg* paints a rather dim picture for the language's future: only 12,000 pupils were enrolled in Breton language courses in the academic year 2008 / 2009, and even though there are recommendations and incentives from the EU to protect LULs in France, the Breton local government does not have competences on the educational sector and also lacks the financial means to provide a sufficient promotion of language studies. The biggest problem remains the French government's insensibility towards cultural differences and minorities: "In France everyone is (said to be) equal: you are not a man or a woman, you are not Breton or Basque, you are not white or black: you are French speaking French" (Kervella 2009). Seeing the French government's neglectful treatment, the EU should take action, beginning with basic things such as establishing media in the Breton language: a public Breton television or a radio channel covering all the territory would already be a step in the right direction (Kervella 2009). Media in

RMLs are a subject the ECRML specifically addresses, but if France chooses not to specify its RMLs and continues to deny ratification to the document, there is probably not much that will be done on the field.

According to *Kuzul Ar Brezhoneg*, the EU should work directly with stateless nations such as the Bretons, leaving out the nation state unwilling to cooperate; one way of establishing such a cooperation could be the donation of funding to the Breton regional government to provide all children with Breton classes and to take up other projects to ensure the language's survival. Also, the EU and the Council of Europe should put pressure on France to ratify the ECRML, by asking for financial compensation if the standards are not met. This has proven to be a successful method in other areas, such as the nitrate score permitted in water, as Kervella points out.

To sum up, we can say that France's Jacobean language policy has had a thorough effect on Breton, rendering a language shift from Breton to France possible in less than two generations. As the national government is unlikely to take action on the RML sector, international organisations like the Council of Europe are the only bodies able to help the Bretons in their quest for language teaching, minority language media and the raising of a new cultural awareness; all vital factors against allowing one of Europe's oldest languages and therefore also cultures die out.

Overview – Comparison between Breton and Ladin

	Breton	**Ladin**
Speakers	400,000 – 500,000 (approximation, as no census	18,124 speakers in South Tyrol (according to the 2001

	data exists – from 1992, likely to have diminished until now due to language shift)	census); no clear data for the other provinces, as language group is not asked; approximately 30,000 speakers total.
Language Education	Optional	Compulsory in the Ladin areas; bilingual German – Italian in South Tyrol for Secondary Education
Language Status	precarious	well-protected

Figure 3: Overview – Comparison between Breton and Ladin

Figure 4: Ladin in Italy (http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/30/Ladin.png)

The Ladin language group is significantly smaller than the Breton one, but it finds itself in a much stronger position nowadays. In South Tyrol, Ladin holds a special status due to its position as a "minority inside a minority" (the German-speaking population), granting it a better level of protection. The Ladin-speaking community lives in an area of Northern Italy, specifically in the valleys of Badia, Gardena, Avisio, Livinallongo and Ampezzo. According to the 1991 census, the area had a population of 440,508, and Ladin is used in everyday speech by the following number of inhabitants: Val Badia 98%, Gardena 60 %, Avisio 70%, Livinallongo 95% and Ampezzo 30%. In South Tyrol, Ladin

is spoken by 18,124 inhabitants according to the 2001 census (ASTAT – Landesinstitut für Statistik 2002); there are no clear numbers for the other areas, because they do not ask for language group in the census. The approximate total number of speakers is about 30,000. Ladin belongs to the Rhaeto-Romanic subgroup of Romance languages. The language spoken presents slight differences in every valley (the main varieties are Mareo, Badiot, Gherdeina, Fascian, Fodomi and Anpezan), and while in Graubünden (Switzerland) Romantsch Grischun was established as a lingua franca, the task is still a very controversial matter in Italy. The Val Badia and Gardena belong to the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, and therefore enjoy more rights than the communities in Trentino (Avisio) and Belluno (Livinallongo and Cortina d'Ampezzo). In Cortina d'Ampezzo and Gardena there is a deterioration in the Ladin language's situation, related to tourism and strong Italian migration. The area's population originally lived off agriculture, but nowadays, 70% of small businesses are in the hotel and catering trade. In Gardena, wood-carving provides another source of income.

The Ladin area became part of the Roman Empire in the year 15 BC; the Romans introduced Latin, which then evolved into Ladin. The Ladin communities remained (with exceptions, due to Napoleon and Bavarian rule) part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy until the end of World War I, when they fell to Italy. The Italian government divided the community into the above-mentioned three provinces to weaken the national groups, and Ladin was officially classified as an Italian dialect, not as a language of its own. In 1939, the Ladins were offered to emigrate to the Reich via the "Option"[12], but in 1943 the

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[12] The "Option" refers to the possibility offered to South Tyroleans to migrate to the German Reich, as their homeland was under Italian fascist rule and they were no longer allowed to speak their mother tongues and celebrate their traditions. Hitler promised new farms and a closed area of settlement, so many South Tyroleans voted for going to the German Reich, but these promises were not maintained. People who chose to stay in their native land were considered to be traitors siding with the Italians, making the pressure to leave very strong.

German invasion terminated this process. In 1948 the Ladins in Bolzano and Trentino were given a Special Statute, but the community in Belluno was left out. In 1972, the New Autonomous Statute also strengthened the Ladin position in the Autonomous Region Trentino – Alto Adige (Euromosaic Study 1992b: 1-2).

The Statute of 1948 promised the Ladins the teaching of Ladin in primary school, Ladin place names and the enhancement of the language in general. However, it could not produce satisfying results for either the German-speaking or the Ladin minorities, and therefore in 1972 the New Autonomous Statute came into force. The measures described in the Statute were only valid for the Ladins in Bolzano, the communities in Trentino received less privileges and the ones in Belluno came away empty-handed. The New Statute included the following promises: "creation of a cultural institute for the preservation and promotion of the Ladin language and culture, the preservation of tradition and customs, and the broadcasting of radio and television programmes in Ladin. Following their recognition as a minority in the Autonomous Statute, the Ladin speakers of the Province of Bolzano also enjoy proportional representation under Article 61, as a result of which Ladins are entitled to occupy 4.2% of government posts in South Tyrol. This percentage is not, however, a fixed quota: it is revised according to the percentage of the total population for which the Ladin community accounts in any census. Under this Statute, the Ladin minority has one representative on the Regional Council and one in the South Tyrol Parliament." (Euromosaic Study 1992b: 3). Despite this status, Ladins are still excluded from the Autonomous Bolzano Section of the Administrative Court, from the Committee of the Six[13], from the Budget Committees in the Provincial Parliament and

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[13] The Committee of the Six is the organ concerned with further developing the Autonomy granted by the 1972 Statute. Three members (two German- and one Italian-speaking) are nominated by the local government, three (two Italian- and one German-speaking) by the national government in Rome.

the Regional Council, from the Committees for Bilingual Testing and from the Examining Panels for government competitions.

In Bolzano, Ladin is supported by financial contributions in school and the public media, and by paying a trilingualism allowance to public servants, while in Trentino they receive less support and in Belluno they are not even recognized as a language community. Due to this different treatment, the Ladin communities in Belluno want to split with the neglectful Veneto region and become part of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. On October 28, 2007 a referendum was held in the communes of Cortina d'Ampezzo, Livinallongo and Colle Santa Lucia, with the result of over 80% "yes" votes for adherence to South Tyrol ("Referendum Cortina" 2007). However, becoming part of a different administrative entity is not that easy, and to this day no concrete steps towards separation have been taken.

In contrast to Breton, Ladin plays an important part in the local school system as well. Adults have the possibility to take Ladin courses, offered by the Ladin Cultural Institute – a possibility that enjoys growing interest and participation. In South Tyrol, parents elect whether their children start the Italian-Ladin or German-Ladin class when they enter primary school and Ladin is used as a language of instruction and communication in a play context in the first year. From the second year onwards, teaching is carried out in German and Italian (12.5 hours respectively), and Ladin is taught for 2 hours a week. In Trentino, one hour of Ladin per week is taught, with all other classes in Italian; in Belluno, school education is exclusively Italian. Ladin is taught for 2 hours in middle schools in Bolzano and has become an optional subject in most high school types (Euromosaic Study 1992b: 4-5). Providing pupils with a Ladin education in public school

surely presents one of the language's foundations, and the South Tyrolean model offers basic language teaching while also promoting the major languages Italian and German indispensable for a professional career. Again, the difference between the Ladin-speaking areas is notable: the protection system installed for the German-speaking minority also provides protection for the Ladins, while other regional governments treat the communities rather neglectfully.

The usage of Ladin when dealing with authorities (except the police) is permitted and encouraged in Gardena and Val Badia, and the Ladin-speaker has the right to court proceedings in his mother tongue; this right does not apply in Trentino and Belluno. There are a large number of private radio stations broadcasting in Ladin, while the state-owned RAI broadcasts 4.5 hours per week in Ladin. There is a daily 5-minute Ladin news show on TV (RAI3), and every third week a 30-minute program in Ladin is shown (Euromosaic Study 1992b: 6).

Dr. Roland Verra, head of the South Tyrolean Ladin School Agency (*Ladinisches Schulamt – Intendënza Ladina*) sees Ladin in Bolzano as relatively well-protected, but also denotes a worrying development over the last few years: in touristically very developed areas language shift is taking place in Kindergarten and inside families. In the long run, the measures now taken by the regional government might not be enough to effectively act against this process. The language suffers from its numeric inferiority and hence the resulting lack of presence in the South Tyrolean public sphere. There is no common vision for the future which all forces working in the Ladin area should be creating together. The problem of being outnumbered is also seen in the relationship between Ladins and the German-speaking minority, which in fact constitutes the majority

in South Tyrol. Dr. Verra sees that an understanding for minority problems is present in German-speakers, but he also states that these principles become undermined in the daily fight for resources. The Ladins, as the smallest group in South Tyrolean society, have benefited from the Autonomy Statute, but in terms of representation and resources they usually do not stand a chance against the numeric German-speaking superiority (Verra 2009).

When asked about the Breton problem and possible reasons for two LULs being so differently protected, Dr. Verra refers to personal encounters with Breton representatives who denounced the lack of sensibility on behalf of the national government. The Bretons show a high degree of activism, but if France is not willing to take action, there is not much that can be done. The nation states are free to do as they wish with the language sector, while no EU law is able to actually exempt any power in this field. Also, as a LUL representative, he is clearly disappointed with the EU's work on the regional and minority language sector; because of EU enlargement, many new minorities were brought into the Union, and this led to the controversial topic disappearing from the political arena. Due to its lack of competences and interest in this field, the EU has not yet become the primary contact person for RML issues; the entities in charge remain important, but Dr. Verra does not see the future of minority languages within the nation states, but within the EU – though at the moment, economic issues remain the Union's priority (Verra 2009).

Coming from the political to financial and practical support, Dr. Verra denotes a bureaucracy problem in obtaining EU funds for RML projects; the overly bureaucratic process of presenting a project and rendering the accounts deter many teachers and

schools from participating in a fruitful cooperation with minority institutions in other member states. In addition, there is no budget reserved specifically for LUL projects, therefore competing with state languages and institutions like the *British Council* or the *Goethe Institut*, which have almost unlimited financial means, is virtually impossible (Verra).

To summarize, it must be noted that Ladin in South Tyrol has already achieved many privileges Bretons can only dream of: mandatory Ladin classes in schools, trilingualism allowances, the possibility to use Ladin in court and with provincial authorities, language prestige via accession strategies to the job market, etc. However, even though it is institutionally protected, Ladin remains endangered by its small number of speakers, by it not being a state language anywhere and the subsequent resulting language shift towards major languages like Italian and German. For both Breton and Ladin, the EU could become an important partner if it decides to take action, if not through legal procedures then through qualified research and funding. However, it appears that the EU has not made a decision yet as to whether or not regional or minority languages are on its priorities list, and if so, which steps should be taken to ensure a long-term preservation of LULs.

5. Regional and Minority Languages: A Core Issue for the EU?

a) The European Parliament and its Role as RML Rights Champion

Up until today, RML issues lack a legal base in the EU, as all efforts to try and incorporate them into the education and/or cultural legal framework have been in vain. However, even though no legislative base was given, the European Parliament (EP) has been one of the most important actors in the field of RML protection since it was first directly elected in 1979. It managed to bypass the legal obstacles and succeeded in creating a supranational RML policy network; this was possible because of the EU's multi-level and multi-actor governance structure, where access to the policy making process is granted to a wider panel of actors than in a traditional system of government. The EP's lobbying activities on the RML sector can be divided into two main periods: between 1983 and 1998, and since (Adrey 2009: 83).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the regionalist movement flourished and the EP emerged as a new supranational forum for regional representation. RML groups found that their interests could be better defended collectively, and that minority communities, usually demographically small and thus of limited political weight, had better chances at achieving their aims when they acted together. On the RML policy sector, the EP benefited from a legal void: the legal weight of Resolutions had not been clearly defined, and, although they were non-binding, some Resolutions of the 1980s constituted the basis for legitimising funding for RMLs. A Resolution can be initiated by a parliamentary

Committee drawing a Report on its own initiative, or in response to an MEP or a group of MEPs tabling a Motion for a Resolution. The Report is then discussed at Committee level and then in the plenary, and if enough support can be found, a Resolution is voted which calls for new legislative proposals from the Commission. By issuing Resolutions, the EP can therefore force the Commission to clarify its position on certain matters (Adrey 2009: 85-86).

The 1981 *Resolution on a Community Charter of Regional Languages and Cultures and on a Charter of Rights of Ethnic Minorities* (October 16, 1981; Rapporteur: Arfè) anticipated the creation of the ECRML in 1992 and led to the instalment of EBLUL (European Parliament 1981) The 1987 *Resolution on the languages and cultures of regional and ethnic minorities in the European Community* (October 30, 1987; Rapporteur: Kuijpers) further developed the principles of RML protection and regretted that "so far the Commission has not put forward any proposals to implement the above-mentioned resolutions" (European Parliament 1987). The 1994 *Resolution on linguistic minorities in the European Community* (February 9, 1994; Rapporteur: Killilea) underlined the Community's duty "to draw attention to the rights of minorities and […] to condemn any deliberate denial of these rights" and recalled that "many lesser used languages [were] endangered" (European Parliament 1994). However, no action was taken and so the Motion for a Resolution on Minority Languages (O'Toole & Morgan, 11 December 2001) recognized the "the good work the European Commission has done since 1982 for regional and minority languages, despite this being limited due to the lack of a legal basis", but demanded a "a direct legal basis for the use of regional or minority languages, with a view, in the long term, to securing a multi-annual programme for

regional or minority languages" and "that the European Union supplement and initiate action in Member States, wherever the protection of autochthonous regional or minority languages is inadequate or non-existent" (European Parliament 2001).

Besides issuing Resolutions, the budget lines voted by the EP led the Commission to create and fund supranational organisations for RMLs (EBLUL and the Mercator centres); Resolutions legitimized and de-facto legalised the granting of increasing budgets for RML protection between 1983 and 1998, rising from 100,000 to 4 million Euros, a still relatively modest number. Through budget line B3-1006 and the Commission's *Action for the Promotion and Safeguarding of Regional and Minority Languages* the EP could initiate and sustain a RML policy by annually negotiating it.

However, the Commission did not take up on Resolutions calling for a multi-annual programme for RMLs, as it was not a domain of EU competence, and could not sign the ECRML as it did not have legal personality; also, it refused to develop legal action on points which the Council would not agree on. In the 1998 Budget Crisis, Resolutions were deemed invalid as sole legal bases for RML budgets and funding, and budget line B3-1006 was suppressed. However, budgets could still be appropriated for pilot schemes and preparatory actions without a basic act, and it was from this hard-fought resource vessel that funds for RML protection were taken. (Adrey 2009: 88-90).

The Intergroup for RMLs represents one of the most important lobbying groups inside the EP; it is constituted of 40 MEPs sitting on various Committees, EBLUL representatives, Commission Officials and sometimes members of the Council of Europe or speakers from RML communities. The Intergroup tried to pursue a legal basis for RML protection but failed, resulting in RMLs being excluded from the action LINGUA, whose

aim it was to promote linguistic diversity and raise cultural awareness, as well as to provide learning support materials for the classroom (Commission 2006). The Intergroup assessed the actual outcomes of the Resolutions by addressing 42 written questions to the Commission and/or the Council; mostly consisting of questions relating to general RML defence. Actions like this additionally emphasized the EP's character as an attentive public for RML issues and reminded RML communities of the support to be found on the supranational level (Adrey 2009: 93-95).

In 2000, a "solid legal basis for a specific programme at European level in favour of lesser-used languages" was requested in a collective question to the Commission. The Commission answered, indicating its incapacity and political reluctance to yield to pressures: it said that it would "be looking at the possibility of presenting a draft programme for safeguarding and promoting regional and lesser used languages as a follow-up to the European Year of Languages 2001". "[...]The Commission always carefully avoided committing itself to announcing the future tabling of a specific proposal for RML-based actions, let alone for a specific RML legal basis" (Adrey 2009: 96). *The Action Plan on Linguistic Diversity and Language Learning* for 2004-2006 (2003) can be interpreted as a positive response to the Intergroup's pressure, and the inclusion of RMLs in the mainstream education and vocational training programme LLP for 2007-2013 has also been a success (Adrey 2009: 96).

The EP's latest actions on the sector have been the 2003 Report by the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport (Rapporteur: Michl Ebner), which called for "the setting up of a European Agency on Linguistic Diversity and Language Learning" and "a multi-annual programme on linguistic diversity and language learning

[including RMLs], building on the success of the European Year of Languages 2001" (European Parliament 2003). The Commission launched a feasibility study on such an Agency's possible creation, and tabled a proposal through which EBLUL and MERCATOR funding was secured from 2004-2006. The Resolution *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* (2006) followed a Report by the Committee of Culture and Education (Rapporteur: Bernat Joan I Mari), in which it strongly criticized the Commission's approach to linguistic diversity as largely excluding RMLs from key proposals, and called for "an EU language act to give a legal basis to language rights both collectively and individually" (European Parliament 2006). The explanatory statement consisted of a manifesto for an EU language policy to promote and protect RML, calling for the following: "direct funding, to avoid that minoritised languages should have to compete on the 'open market' with the major languages; an Endangered European language list to be established; a European Language Ombudsman [...] to follow the Canadian Language Commissioner Model; all European languages [...] to be made official in the EU [...] by reducing the number of working languages [...]" (European Parliament 2006). However, in the final EP Resolution, the calls for an EU language act were discarded and substituted by vague and generic measures to promote multilingualism.

Overall, the EU wants to support RMLs, but the Commission, and supported by the Council as sole legislator on language issues, will not grant RML communities any symbolic recognition on a supranational level, which they may not even have at domestic level. Judging from its Resolutions, the EP acknowledges this and does not want to fight for such a status. RMLs will continue to receive support within a number of programmes,

but anything that would lead to specific recognition at EU level which goes against the member states' wishes (such as granting them symbolic recognition from their inclusion in primary legislation) remains out of the question. It is unthinkable that the EU could stop promoting RMLs, but in the absence of a genuine legal basis based on primary legislation, RML policy making remains a domain of national sovereignty (Adrey 2009: 105).

b) The EBLUL and its Field of Activities – between Lack of Financial Means and limited EU Competences

The *European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages* (EBLUL), installed in 1982, is a democratically governed non-governmental organisation (NGO) established to promote languages and linguistic diversity. It is based on a network of Member State Committees (MSCs) present in all 15 "old" EU states and also in most of the new member states. About 46 million speakers of lesser-used and RML languages live in today's EU (EBLUL website, "About Us"). The EBLUL constituted an important step towards recognizing the smaller RML's importance in the Union, but due to lack of financial means, its range of action and its role in EU-policy-making remain very limited.

A Member State Committee should be representative of all lesser-used language communities, and should have representatives of the main governmental agencies (at national, regional and local level) working in favor of LULs. Each MSC chooses two people to represent it on the Council of the Bureau; these official members of EBLUL

normally meet two or three times per year and every three years elect a president, two vice-presidents and a board of directors. On election, another member replaces the president as MSC representative, in order to ensure the president's independence in fulfilling his duties. The Bureau has offices in Dublin and Brussels; for a two-year period (1993 until 1995) a small education secretariat in Luxembourg was part of EBLUL as well, but it had to be closed due to funds being withdrawn. Approximately 90% of the Bureau's income stems from subventions from the EU, which are granted in respect of specific projects. Some members felt from the onset that the EBLUL was too dependent on EU funding, an evaluation that proved to be right: in 1998, the budget line B3 − 1006 for regional and minority languages and a few other budget lines were suspended and ultimately suppressed because of a judgement of the European Court of Justice. The Court ruled that funding could not be granted in areas where the legislative basis was missing; a problem that has still not been resolved (Ó Riagáin 2001: 26 − 27).

The Bureau has followed six strategies in advancing its work: to provide a European forum for people working for the conservation and advancement of LULs; to seek political and legal support for them, to facilitate an exchange of information and experiences among language activists; to support the establishment of ancillary support structures; and to provide a back-up advice and support service for many small linguistic communities. EBLUL's main function now seems to be a kind of European lesser-used language forum, as joint pan-European proposals have been formulated and common positions taken on critical issues. To obtain legal and political support, lobbying is used: this includes persuading governments to sign the ECRML, enact language legislation, officially recognize linguistic minorities or make provision for the teaching of or teaching

through the medium of LULs. The Bureau also provides different LUL groups with common experiences and possible solutions to problems, as most struggles are shared by various lesser-used language communities (Ó Riagáin 2001: 29 – 31). EBLUL has observer status at the Council of Europe, UNESCO and the UN. EBLUL's objectives are as follows: promotion of active EU policy-making in favor of RMLs, defence of linguistic rights of RML speakers; representation of RMLs in dealings with EU institutions and other international organisations; maintenance of permanent communication between communities and facilitation of contacts and exchanges; identification of legal and political instruments in favour of the promotion of lesser-used languages of EU member states (Adrey 2009: 99-100).

Other tasks of EBLUL are in the field of LUL publications: *Contact Bulletin*, the Bureau's bilingual English / French newsletter, appears three times a year and its 9000 copies reach readers on all five continents. The bulletin carries information on EBLUL's activities as well as on developments in LUL circles in general, including book reviews and reports on conferences. EBLUL also publishes two series of booklets: the *European Languages*' series and the *Living Languages'* Series., produced in French and English and intended for the general reader. A Vade-Mecum, a guide to legal, political and other international documents regarding LULs is also published. To enhance connections and research among people working in the lesser-used language sector, the Bureau offers 80 bursaries each year to language activists, in order to enable them to visit another region. It also organizes conferences at European, national and regional level. Since the budget line for LULs was suspended, the Bureau suffers from a lack of funding, but some money is still available for projects on a provisional basis. To put language promotion on a firm

footing, EBLUL is pressing for necessary legal acts to be introduced, so that EU funding can be re-installed. A secure stream of financial means is also vital for the upkeep of the information and documentation centres for lesser-used language activists, Mercator-Media (Abersystwyth, Wales), Mercator-Law and Legislation (Barcelona) and Mercator-Education (Leeuwarden, Fryslân) (Ó Riagáin 2001: 31-33). In 2000, EBLUL launched the Eurolang news agency, online daily news on RML issues, which then eventually became an autonomous agency (Adrey 2009: 101).

On the whole, EBLUL has functioned as a catalyst for forces of change in the LUL sector, and coordinated them in a well-focused and effective manner, providing leadership and vision at a critical juncture (Ó Riagáin 2001: 38). However, the funding problem represents a severe drawback in EBLUL's development, as it no longer has sufficient financial means to fulfil all its duties and pursue all activities on the political agenda. If a legislative base for EBLUL is not established soon, and recent political developments do not point in this direction, the Bureau's efficacy and its persistence in the future remain doubtful.

c) Cooperation between the EU and Minority Organizations: Impact on Policy-Making?

The EU does communicate and interact with NGOs and Minority Organizations, but they do not appear to have much impact on the actual policy decisions. To illustrate

the relationship between the EU and Language Minority Organisation, I decided to use the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN)[14] as an example, taking my information from an interview with FUEN presidium member Dr. Martha Stocker. The FUEN's main goal is the preservation of the autochthonous minorities in Europe. Stronger, more protected and more well-developed minorities solidarily help out weaker communities, providing them with political support and best practices. On European level, the FUEN is concerned with the formulation and the implementation of guidelines and laws regarding minority protection. Over the last few decades, the understanding for minorities has grown, but some countries remain neglectful in their protection policy, especially Greece and France. FUEN is acknowledged as a vocal organization for minorities at the OECD, the UN, the Council of Europe and the EU; but the real influence on policy making differs greatly between topics. Additionally, FUEN also has participating status in the Council of Europe and cooperative status at the UN, which sadly does not always mean a bigger impact on decision-making.

According to Dr. Stocker, one of the FUEN's biggest accomplishments recently was the instalment of the dialogue forum for minorities at the EU, which is made up from FUEN representatives and members of the Intergroup for Minorities. The forum represents a possibility of staying in contact, and maybe obtaining more influence on the decisions in policy-making. It provides minorities with a base for their concerns and wishes, and grants them an important tool for lobbying in the EU. For the future, Dr. Stocker hopes that the forum will get advisory capacity for the commissioner concerned with minority

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[14]   The FUEN is a pool and umbrella organisation for national minorities founded in 1949. In 2007, it included 84 member organisations from 32 states. Its Secretary General is located in Flensburg, Germany and its presidium includes six minority representatives. In 2008, a Dialogue Forum was established at the European Parliament. The Forum will meet twice a year and provides autochthonous minority leaders with the possibility to directly influence the policy making process in the EU.

issues. Lobbying in Brussels is a difficult task, as many member organisations of the FUEN lack sufficient funding, and the EU institutions do not provide for additional financial means. Due to the rather explosive political connotation of getting involved in an area that lies in the member states' responsibility, the EU has been rather reluctant to engage in minority support; if any action has been taken, it would have been for language conservation, and not for minority protection as such. This concept is also reflected in the ECRML, which explicitly states that regional or minority language protection does not grant their speakers any rights to be recognized as part of a minority, or for the minority to be recognized at all.

The FUEN was also not satisfied with the procedures involved during the instalment of the new Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in Vienna. FUEN intervened saying that fundamental rights must also involve minority rights; the passage was adopted, but then deleted because some nation states had expressed their disagreement. In general, Dr. Stocker sees the intervention by the nation states as one of the biggest hindrances for a coherent EU minority policy: "The problem is that it is always the nation states who have to transform EU targets into national legislation. Italy's government has adapted many measures issued by the EU regarding minority protection, but if the government wants to cut support for minorities, as the one in charge now is planning to do, there is not much the EU can do against it. All nation states do not have a great interest in minority policies, it is considered a topic that must be dealt with, but is not given priority status. The EU sets targets, but the nation state can implement them in one way, or in another, without fear of any sanctioning possibility from the union" (Stocker 2009, my translation).

Actors of Civil Society working on RMLs: Overview

	FUEN	*Kuzul Ar Brezhoneg*	*Intendënza Ladina*	**EBLUL**
Aims	Protection of autochthonous minorities in Europe	Gathering Breton Language Organizations; Promotion of Breton Culture through its Language	Promotion of Ladin in South Tyrolean schools; Support and funding for Ladin artists and cooperations; Initiatives for language-promotion	Provide political and legal support for people working on LULs; Facilitation and maintenance of communication between LUL groups
How Aims Should be Reached	More well-protected minorities help out weaker ones; Dialogue Forum for Minorities at the EU (with Intergroup for Minorities); Vocal organization at OECD, Council of Europe, UN, EU participating status in CoE & cooperative status at UN	Publication of books and learning materials in Breton; three-monthly magazine about culture, politics & literature; Translation service; Breton grammar books & dictionaries	Funding for projects dealing with Ladin; Ladin as a mandatory school subject to prevent language shift; Promoting Trilingualism as an advantage	Observer status at the Council of Europe, UNESCO, UN; Organization of conferences, publications to raise awareness
Problems	Nation-states are not interested in RML protection, EU cannot do much to change this situation; Topic not a priority for the EU right now; lacks competences	French government is unwilling to grant RML groups recognition; Bretons hope for EU intervention, but it lacks competences	Language shift is noticeable in some areas; struggle for resources especially difficult for smallest language group; not all Ladin speakers in Italy equally well-protected	Suspending of Budget Line due to European Court of Justice decision; lack of financial means; not enough political power

Figure 5: Actors of Civil Society Working on RMLs: Overview

6. Outlook – a Call for an efficient RML Protection System Within the EU

The *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* represented a first landmark in the process of establishing a solid RML protection regime in Europe, but its opting-out notions and inefficient sanctioning system do not make for a sufficiently binding instrument for protection. The European Parliament and its use of Resolutions to provide a de-facto legal basis for important funding programs and institutions such as EBLUL have also been of great value for political development. However, since the European Court of Justice's decisions that without a legislative base no additional funds could be granted, the situation has worsened, and RML projects can no longer be carried out as efficiently.

A possible solution to the problem is not in sight, as the Commission is, in my opinion, not willing and unable to come up with a legislative base that would constitute the foundation for necessary policy action to be taken. The power in the field of RML protection is still in the nation states' hands, and they have no intention of renouncing power anytime soon. As of now, the Commission as the EU's legislator, remains trapped between the European Parliament pushing for legal action on RML protection, and the Council, who would definitely not vote for any EU-wide recognition of RML-communities, seeing that this recognition process has not yet fully taken place in many member states (e.g. Greece, France). Unless a further communitization process occurs –

which is a highly unlikely prospect at the moment, witnessing the struggles of the new member states – and the field falls under EU competences, there is not much room for improvement within the current state of affairs.

Because of these problems, giving advice on which steps the EU should now be taking on the matter is quite difficult. To obtain minority protection as such in all member states is too far-fetched, but one could adopt the ECRML's approach and take sole minority *language* protection as a starting point. Member states could then be provided with incentives if they effectively promote their country's cultural diversity, and RML areas could be granted some sort of protected status; a variation of the UNESCO's world heritage sites, conferred to languages and cultural heritage. What remains problematic is the financing system; if the necessary funds cannot be granted, no efficient action can be taken, and if the member states still refuse to agree on at least a small common denominator approach to a legal base, there will be no sufficient funding for incentives and protection initiatives – a vicious circle, in which all decision-making capabilities fall in the member states' hands.

As the cases of Ladin in Italy and Breton in France clearly demonstrate, it is left completely up to the member state to decide whether its minorities should be granted special legal status and protection or not. Ladin in South Tyrol is additionally privileged by its status as a minority inside another (German-speaking) minority, but even in this relatively well-protected cocoon, the rather precarious overall LUL situation is starting to take its toll on the language's development. The Bretons suffer from France's Jacobean language policy model which has not been revised since the Revolution, and continues to deny the mere existence of linguistic minorities on French territory. All are one, and one

is all, but as Dr. Stocker so accurately put it, "there's nothing more unjust than trying to make things equal that are not" (Stocker 2009, my translation). EBLUL still manages to function as a connecting and strengthening factor, but the financial problems also have a bad impact on its efficiency and the vastness of projects it is able to support.

The whole matter discussed in this chapter can be rephrased in a single sentence: if the nation state does not want RML protection, there will be no RML protection. Ultimately, the EU does not have any competences within the sector, and it is not likely to acquire them anytime soon, so all it can therefore do is try and exert persuasive pressure on the nation states and aim for a change of mindset. If we cannot make way for a shift in thinking, and if nationalism still overcomes all valuation of cultural diversity, the future of RMLs in the EU will continue to stand on insecure ground.

III. English and its Status as a Lingua Franca in the EU – a Threat for Multilingualism or a possible Catalyst for the Integration Process?

1. The Emergence of English as a Lingua Franca

a) Reasons for the Rise of English as a Lingua Franca

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, a lingua franca can be defined as "any of various languages used as common or commercial tongues among peoples of diverse speech; something resembling a common language" (Merriam-Webster 2008). Firth (1996: 240) gives an English related definition: "a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen *foreign* language of communication".

If we look at our globalized world, the English language first comes to mind when thinking of a language fulfilling this function. English is used in everyday encounters, as well as in business contacts, when two people do not speak each other's respective mother tongue and have to rely on a third language to be able to communicate with each other.

When travelling to a foreign country whose language we are not capable of speaking, we usually opt for English as a means of intercultural exchange. However, as House (2008: 66) points out, a lingua franca denoted a "stable variety with little room for individual variation"; this certainly does not apply to English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), "whose major feature is its enormous functional flexibility and spread across many different linguistic, geographic and cultural areas, as well as its openness to foreign forms".

Looking back in history, we can identify Greek and especially Latin as the first languages to fulfill the function of a lingua franca. However, the first variety explicitly referred to as "lingua franca" was spoken between the 15th and 19th century and used along the South-Eastern coast of the Mediterranean. It was a pidgin (a simplified form of language used when speakers of different mother tongues communicate, e.g. when doing business; an elaborate definition of the term will be given later in this section) based on some Italian dialects, combined with elements from various other languages, such as Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and Greek. This lingua franca did not have any native speakers (like Latin) and was used merely as a means of communication in trade (Meierkord & Knapp 2002: 9, quoted in Lichtkoppler 2007: 58). When France became a Central-European power and especially when it started its colonial enterprises, French became the dominant European language and thus also occupied the role of international lingua franca. However, language learning was a priviledge reserved for the elites, and therefore knowledge of French remained restricted to Europe's upper classes. French kept its role as lingua franca and especially as the language of diplomacy until the mid- or the end of the 20th century, when it was surpassed by English. In the EU, French used to be the most important language as well, as most diplomats were French and the

Community's institutions are located in francophone countries.

While English is not the first lingua franca, it is the first that can truly claim to be a "world language". According to David Crystal, "a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. […] To achieve such a status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the globe. They must decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother tongue speakers. There are two main ways in which this can be done. First, the language can be made the official (or semi-official) language of a country, to be used as a medium of communication in such domains as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system. […] Second, the language can be made a priority in the country's foreign language teaching. […] Over 100 countries treat English as just a foreign language; but in most of these, it is now recognized as the chief foreign language to be taught in schools" (Crystal 2003: 14-15).

Crystal attributes the rise of English to "the power of the people who speak it", identifying different types of powers that contributed to the language achieving the position it holds today:

- First of all, there was political power, exempted by British Colonialism, which spread the language to various parts of the world; by the 19th century, it had become a language on which "the sun never sets". However, the issue of political power goes beyond colonialism. The League of Nations allocated a special place to English in its proceedings, making it one of two official languages (the other being French) and many other international organisations followed its example: 85% of international organisations (about 12,000) use English as an official

language. English is also used in political protest, as it is known to grant the issue more international attention.

− Secondly, economics also played an important role in the promotion of English. Britain had become the world's leading trading and industrial nation by the beginning of the 19th century, and it was home to most inventions made in the course of the Industrial Revolution. Engineers who wanted to get information about the new technologies had to do so in English, the stock markets in London and New York became the centre of the financial world, and both Britain and the USA made significant investments abroad (amounting to a total of over $10 billion around 1914).

− The press has to be mentioned as the third factor. While on the European continent censorship reigned over freedom of speech, the USA had already seen the development of a truly independent press, where over 400 daily newspapers were published as early as 1850. The news agencies, Reuters (launched in London) and Associated Press (New York) provided for the majority of information being transmitted in English.

− As a fourth point, Crystal mentions advertising. American publishers realized that income from advertising would enable them to lower the prices for their newspapers, and thus hugely increase circulation. Trade names (such as Coca Cola, Kellogg, Ford) became popular, and even nowadays some of the most noticeable advertisements, even in countries where English holds no special status, are in English.

− Broadcasting also helped to install English as the number one world language.

The first commercial radio station was opened in the USA, and it was also the leading provider of television channels about 20 years later. International news channels (BBC World Service, or CNN International) spread the English language to other countries, and English-speaking radio programmes were installed.

– Motion pictures also were (and are) predominantely American, so English-language movies clearly dominated the medium and still do so nowadays: about 80% of all feature films given a theatrical release are in English.

– Another medium that fostered the spread of English all over the world is popular music. All the major recording companies had English-language origins, and many people made their first contact with English in this way. Modern pop music has remained an almost entirely English scene up to this day, and it is probably the source that has spread English most rapidly.

– In international travel and safety, English is also used as a auxiliary language. Safety instructions on international flights and sailings, information about emergency procedures in hotels and directions to major locations are now also frequently given in English in addition to local languages. Essential English for International Maritime Use (often referred to as "Seaspeak") helps to regulate and control transport operations in water, while the International Civil Aviation Organisation agreed after World War II that the language of international aircraft control should be English ("Airspeak").

– English has also become the primary language of science, and it is now the medium of instruction for higher education in countries where it does not hold any official status.

– Finally, the new communication technologies have also played an important part in in promoting English. About 80% of usage on the Internet is thought to be in English; this is because ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects agency network, its predecessor) was devised for the English alphabet, and so English has been the language of online communication right from the start. Also, the internet provides a forum for people from all over the world, and if one wishes to reach as many people as possible, using English is probably the safest language option (Crystal 2003: 17-23).

Viereck (1996: 19) also mentions the importance of English in the job market as being a main contributor to its lingua franca position. An analysis of newspaper job advertisements carried out in 1991 shows that the demand for English is the highest by far in every country: in 71% of the advertisements published in France, 69% of those appearing in Italy and in 60% of the Spanish job offers, English was mentioned as a job requirement. As 18 years have passed and English seems to have gained even more importance since the analysis was undertaken, one can only speculate as to what the numbers would be if the survey were to be carried out again today. Viereck also notes the special position English occupies in the scientific sector, concluding that "English is the lingua franca of modern scholarship in any discipline" (Viereck 1996: 21). In 1990, Skudlik did research on the reasons why scholars publish in English rather than in their native tongue; the most frequently named answers were "English is de facto the working language of our discipline" and "to ensure the international information flow" (Skudlik 1990, quoted in Viereck 1996: 21-22). The first answer is especially interesting, as it shows that non-English speaking scientists have opted for working not in their mother

tongue but in English, and that this process has become the norm for them. Again, Skudlik's data stems from 1990, so it is likely that this development has been enforced over virtually the last 20 years. University courses currently being taught entirely in English, and many students writing their theses also in this language underline this hypothesis.

Dollerup (1996: 26) emphasizes the importance for subtitled instead of dubbed films in raising awareness for the English language in Europe; this contributed to English becoming the lingua franca, especially in the smaller and Nordic European countries (e.g. the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Norway). She also mentions the presence of British and American troops in Europe after World War II as a decisive factor, as English was the Allied Forces' main language of command and many Europeans tried to get on the "winners'" side by commencing to learn their language. However, the pop culture and the global youth movement resulting from it are described as the most important reasons why English could become the new European lingua franca: the songs were in English, and therefore had to be related to in their original language by millions of young people all over Europe (Dollerup 1996: 26-27).

These reasons show why English has become today's lingua franca. But what would happen if a shift of power occurred in international politics, leading to the US losing its status as the world's only "superpower"? Would English lose its role as a lingua franca? This could be the case, but it is highly unlikely, since "English may have gained so much ground outside circles associated with or dominated by its native speakers, that it may be rooted as a lingua franca no matter what actually happens to the native speaker society" (Wright 2004: 155f). However, Crystal notes that "the future status of English

must be bound up to some extent with the future of that country [the United States]"
(2003: 127).

Phillipson (2003: 169-170) sees several points in favor of English as a lingua franca for
international communication:

- all kinds of speakers can interact effectively in English by using their own
  personal level of competence in the language

- the capacity to reach mutual understanding interactively is more important than
  correctness in all linguistic details

- limited teaching time should not be wasted on "abstruse points of pronunciation
  and grammar"

- the term "non-native" is discriminatory, as it defines users of English as a foreign
  language negatively; this would not be possible under a lingua franca approach.

b) English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in Europe today

English has nowadays become the most widely learned foreign language
throughout the EU: according to the 2006 Eurobarometer survey: only 13% of the
European population speak English as a mother tongue, but nearly 40% speak it as a
second or foreign language, and over 50% claim they are able to speak and understand
English. It is the most widely known language after the respective mother tongues in 19

out of 29 countries included in the poll. The penetration of English is highest in the Scandinavian countries and in the Netherlands, where just below 90% of the population say they know English. Furthermore, 77% of Europeans believe that their children should learn English and that it is the uncontested number one language in Europe. However, some geographical differences are apparent: in the Northern and Western member states of the EU English is more widely known than in Eastern and Southern Europe (House 2008: 64-65). This could be due to the fact that Southern European countries traditionally used to learn French as their first foreign language, and that in the Eastern countries German and especially Russian were studied rather than English.

Dollerup tries to account for the different positions English holds in the various European countries: while it has almost become a second language in the Nordic countries and in the Netherlands (English as a Second Language – ESL), it yet only holds foreign language status in many Middle and Southern European countries (English as a Foreign Language EFL), e.g. in Germany, Austria, Italy, and Spain. However, it must be noted that Germany and Austria occupy a middle position, as in their countries English knowledge among the population is generally wider than in Italy or Spain. Stating one of the reasons for this, Dollerup mentions that the smaller Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands tend to subtitle American films, as dubbing would be too costly in regard to the minor amount of inhabitants. She argues that being exposed to the original English language initiates an awareness raising process, and if one decides to take up learning English, exposure to the language will automatically occur without the need for their daily habits having to change. The second reason for this disparity in English knowledge throughout Europe is that English replaced German as the main language being taught in

Nordic schools immediately after the first world war, while French remained the primary foreign language in Southern Europe until the 1970s (Dollerup 1996: 26-27).

Despite these differences, it is clear to see that English has reached a hegemonial status in Europe. As more and more citizens speak English (and their number is most likely to increase and not diminish in the near future), the development towards English as a lingua franca in Europe can no longer be denied, and strategies on how to deal with this issue are needed. We need to find out how English affects our linguistic and cultural realities, both for the better and for the worse. When using ELF in Europe today, it signifies the bringing together of together two people from different cultural backgrounds, who would otherwise not have any possibility of exchanging their thoughts and ideas with each other. This exchange is not limited to the context transported in speech, it also has effects on the languages themselves: English incorporates words from other European languages, and some English words and speech patterns have also found their way into other European languages – so this exchange is by no means one-sided, as it is often perceived to be the case. English is seen as beneficial for their personal future by European citizens, and it should also be seen as being beneficial for the EU and the integration process as a whole, as will be shown later on in this section.

English in Europe occupies a unique and unprecedented position nowadays, and it is up to European citizens and to the policy makers to decide how to deal with this fact. The possible threat for cultural diversity and multilingualism should not be trivialized, but at the same time we should not immerse ourselves in imperialist worst case scenarios. The rise of English as a lingua franca is a process that will probably continue or even increase in the near future, so the EU and its citizens need to analyze what kind of impact

it is having on their Community and embrace these new developments open-mindedly, in order to prevent negative aspects developing and reap the benefits from all the possible positive elements that EFL brings.

c) Kachru's Model of World Englishes and its Adaptation to Europe

Kachru (1992: 356) coined the most influential model to describe the spread of English all over the world. Kachru divides World Englishes into three concentric circles, the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The circles represent the "patterns of spread, the patterns of acquisition and functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts": the language spread from Britain, where it is used as a native language (ENL), to the countries where it has second language (ESL) status, and more recently to countries where it is taught as a foreign language (EFL). Thus, the Inner Circle is said to be "norm-providing", the Outer Circle to be "norm-developing" and the Expanding Circle to be "norm-dependent". This means that English standards have been set by native speakers, but that today other institutionalized varieties are developing their own standards, while EFL varieties do not have any official status and are therefore dependent on the norms set by ENL countries. Kachru's model needs to be incorporated here, as it was the inspiration for Margie Berns' model of Concentric Circles of European

Englishes (1995), which will be shown later on.

Three Concentric Circles of Englishes

The Expanding Circle e.g.,

China   Caribean Countries   Egypt
Indonesia   Israel   Japan
Korea   Nepal   Saudi Arabia
South Africa   South America   Taiwan
CIS   Zimbabwe

The Outer Circle e.g.,

Bangladesh   Ghana   India
Kenya   Malaysia   Nigeria
Pakistan   Philippines Singapore
Sri Lanka   Tanzania   Zambia

The Inner Circle

USA   UK   Canada
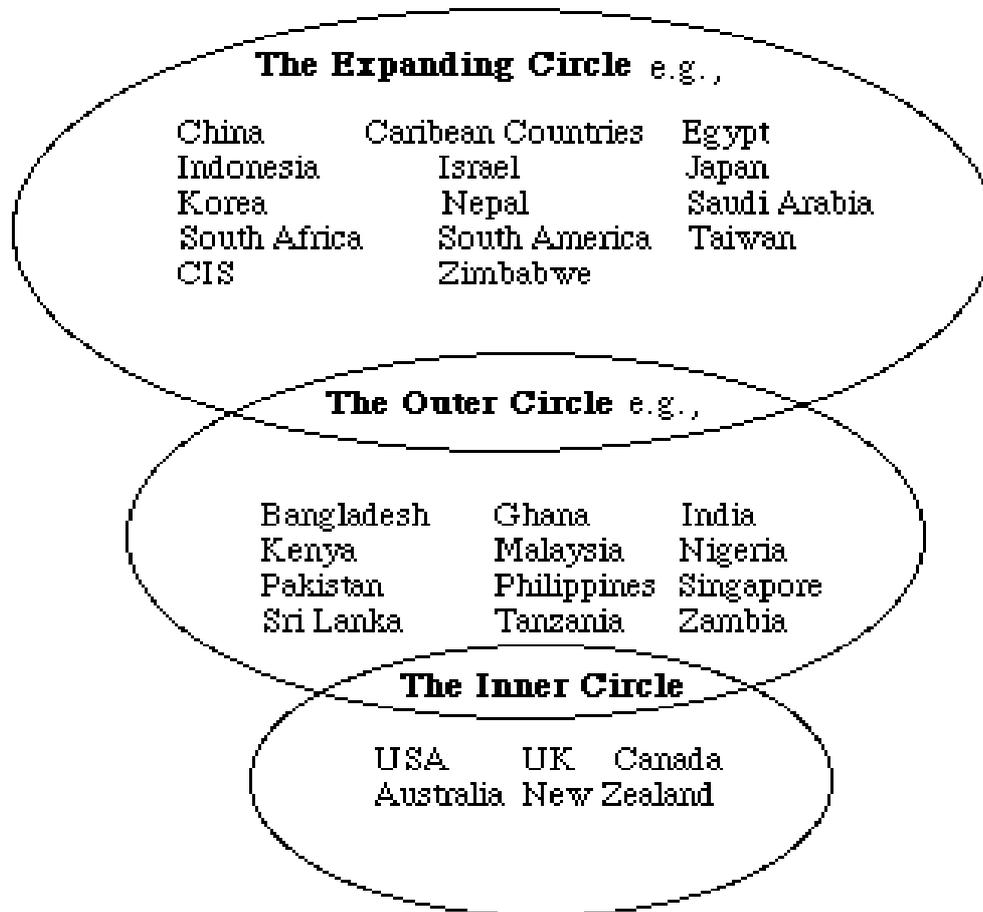Australia New Zealand

Figure 6: The Concentric Circles of Englishes (adapted from Kachru 1992: 356).

Kachru also identifies six fallacies about the users present in his concentric circles model:

– Fallacy 1: "That in the Outer and Expanding Circles, English is essentially learned to interact with native speakers of the language" (Kachru 1992: 357). English is mainly being used as a lingua franca to allow communication between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In such encounters, the Received Pronunciation or General American conventions of language use are

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often irrelevant, if not even inappropriate, and culture-bound local strategies for e.g. politeness or persuasion are "transcreated" in English.

– Fallacy 2: "That English is necessarily learnt as a tool to understand and teach American or British cultural values, or what is generally termed the Judeo-Christian traditions" (Kachru 1992: 357). In the Outer Circle, English is, on the contrary, used to transport local culture and traditions; this process is reflected by linguistic innovations. English is taken up as a neutral language over conflicting local languages, and in its role as a lingua franca, it is the only language that can cut across cultural and national boundaries.

– Fallacy 3: "That the goal of learning and teaching English is to adopt the native models of English (e.g. the Received Pronunciation, or General American)" (Kachru 1992: 358). In the Outer Circle, the local model has been institutionalized, and its educated varieties are used in the classroom. However, there is a certain degree of schizophrenia about the perceived model and actual linguistic behavior, as the native speaker model is still seen as the standard to aim for.

– Fallacy 4: "That the international non-native varieties of English are essentially 'interlanguages' striving to achieve 'native-like' character" (Kachru 1992: 358). According to Kachru, this hypothesis needs to be re-evaluated concerning Outer Circle Englishes, but he does not specify if it could still be valid within an EFL context.

– Fallacy 5: "That the native speakers of English as teachers, academic administrators, and material developers provide a serious input in the global

teaching of English, in policy formation, and in determining the channels for the spread of the language" (Kachru 1992: 358). In reality, native speakers play an insignificant role in the global spread and teaching of English; this is also due to the fact that native speaker teachers are a minority compared to non-native speakers working in language education.

– Fallacy 6: "That the diversity and variation in English is necessarily an indicator of linguistic decay; that restricting the decay is the responsibility of the native scholars of English and ESL programs" (Kachru 1992: 358). This means that any type of "deviation" is seen as an "error", ignoring the functional appropriateness of languages in sociolinguistic contexts significantly different from the Inner Circle.

Kachru's model and especially the terms coined (Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle) are still used when describing the spread of English at present, but they are also rather controversial. The most often cited points of criticism are the following:

– The model is based on geography instead of how users identify with English. Nowadays, some users in the Outer Circle speak it as their first language (e.g. Singapore), and EFL learners use it for a variety of purposes, including cross-cultural communication and communication with native speakers.

– There is often a grey area between Inner and Outer Circle, as English is often the first language learnt for many Outer Circle speakers as well. This grey area also surfaces between Outer and Expanding Circle: according to Graddol (1997: 11) approximately twenty countries are in transition from EFL to ESL status, e.g.

Argentina, Belgium, Costa Rica, Switzerland.

− The model does not account for English for Special Purposes (ESP) use (e.g. English for Science and Technology); within such special domains, native speakers and users from Outer or Expanding Circle countries often achieve similar levels of proficiency.

− Also, Kachru's model implies that all countries in one Circle have the same level of proficiency and linguistic diversity, which is clearly not the case (e.g. the US is more diverse than the UK, but both belong to the Inner Circle) (Routledge 2005).

Kachru's model was developed in 1992, so it does not take into account the ever-growing number of English speakers. Nowadays, ESL and EFL speakers outnumber native speakers by large, so expecting all these people to conform to Inner Circle norms is probably no longer up-to-date. What must also be noticed is that Kachru's model aims for a general approach, and does not provide us with a specific insight into European EFL developments. This could, of course, also be due to the fact that as early as 1992, "Euro-English" was not yet on the linguistic agenda.

In 1995, Margie Berns adapted Kachru's model to a Europe-specific version:

The Concentric Circles of European Englishes

EXPANDING CIRCLE

Belgium
Denmark
France
Greece
Italy
Portugal
Spain

EXPANDING/OUTER CIRCLE
Germany
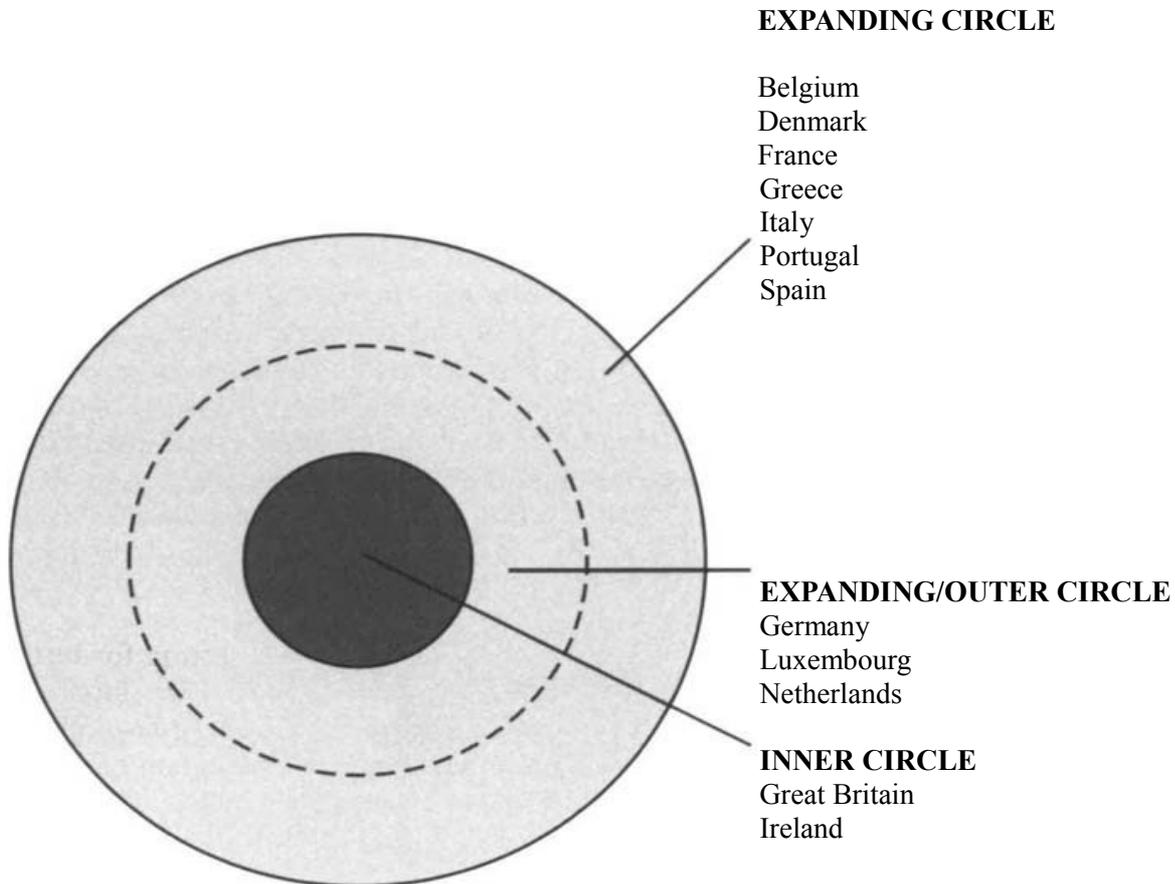Luxembourg
Netherlands

INNER CIRCLE
Great Britain
Ireland

Figure 7: The Concentric Circles of European Englishes (adapted from Berns 1995: 9).

According to Berns, Europe (i.e. the 12 countries present in the Union in late 1994) has a unique sociolinguistic situation, which is created by the combination of Expanding Circle English use and the unification process. English plays multiple roles for various citizens of the EU; it can be a native, foreign, and international language. In Luxembourg, English is regarded as a primary language, along with French and German. English is so widely understood in the Netherlands that it can be considered one of the languages (alongside German) of this normally Dutch-speaking country. In Germany,

English is used in situations that resemble those found in second language settings. English is currently undergoing a nativization process in Europe, as Europeans make adaptations and introduce innovations that de-Americanize and de-Anglicize English. This "Europeanization" involves a variety of linguistic processes at formal, contextual and discoursal level, e.g. functional allocation, lexicalization, or semantic extension or restriction. The use of the English words "eventual" in the sense of "probably, perhaps" and "actual" to mean "current, topical" (cf. French or German eventuel; actuel/aktuell) are typical examples of lexical borrowing. English being used as a medium of instruction for higher education in the fields of science and technology shows its functional allocation. Discoursal nativization can be noticed in written texts which use English lexis and syntax, but maintain conventions of the native language and culture (e.g. rhetorical patterns, argument structure, coherence markers). Europeans also have shared patterns of acquisition and use of English, as well as similar opportunities for exposure to the language and interaction with both native and non-native speakers. Unlike previous lingua francas, English is used by people from all social classes with varying levels of education. (Berns 1995: 6-7).

In a uniting Europe, a European English-using speech community must be recognized. This community represents speakers of a non-native English, sometimes referred to as European English or "Euro-English"; this variety is distinctly European and can thus be distinguished from other English varieties. However, local standards as norms for European English (comparable to the nativized Outer Circle varieties in Kachru's model) are not available (yet). English does play a role in job postings, visual and sound media and interpersonal uses like social interaction, but this role is not yet as extended as

it is for example in Singapore or Malaysia. Thus, Berns concludes that Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain match the criteria for Expanding Circle countries (English being taught as a foreign language, learners are encouraged to acquire the norms deemed appropriate by the Inner Circle countries). The Netherlands, Germany, and Luxembourg represent a different case, as they "share characteristics which make it difficult to exclusively identify them with the expanding circle" (Berns 1995: 8). The Netherlands and Luxembourg are small countries and heavily dependent upon commerce with their neighbors, so knowing and using English (and other languages) is vital for their economies. "Germans use English for interpersonal as well as professional purposes, and do not have to wait to go abroad or become employed in international firms to use English and interact with English speakers. Germany's post-war history with English, and American and British speakers […] saw an influx of military personnel, business interests and American products and culture which exposed Germans across social groups, not just the elite, to English" (Berns 1995: 8). English in these three countries is therefore between Outer and Expanding Circle use, and they cannot clearly be put into one of the categories. Kachru also suggested that Outer and Expanding Circles cannot always be viewed as clearly demarcated from each other. To solve this problem, Berns creates an area for the overlap of the two circles, as illustrated by the dotted line in Figure 7 (Berns 1995: 9).

For the future, Berns sees English in Europe as gaining more and more Outer Circle characteristics, as it is likely that it will become the primary language of the EU citizens. "The competence that individuals and groups develop in English will be appropriate to the broader European context, not one identical with that of the inner

circle" (Berns 1995: 10). British English might come to be considered one of the sub-varieties of English in the EU, alongside French English, Danish English, or Dutch English. The process of English-nativization in continental Europe has already begun, and as contact with speakers of English and language use increase, nativized varieties will develop; when blended with British English, they could have the capacity to develop into a distinct variety. This European English would have the potential to become institutionalized, and may even lead to an "EU-literature" in English being produced, which would then contribute to the establishment of a new standard (second language) to serve as a norm and pedagogical model (Berns 1995: 10).

The comments I made above about Kachru's model are also true for Berns' adaptation of the model to Europe: Berns outlined the model in late 1994, when the situation in Europe and in the EU was remarkably different from today. The EU now has 27 member states instead of the 12 described in Berns' model, so it would be interesting to know where these new members would be positioned according to Berns. However, I could not find an updated version of Berns' model, so I assigned the 15 "new" members to the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle according to my own research and the Eurobarometer surveys quoted in the above "ELF in Europe today" section.
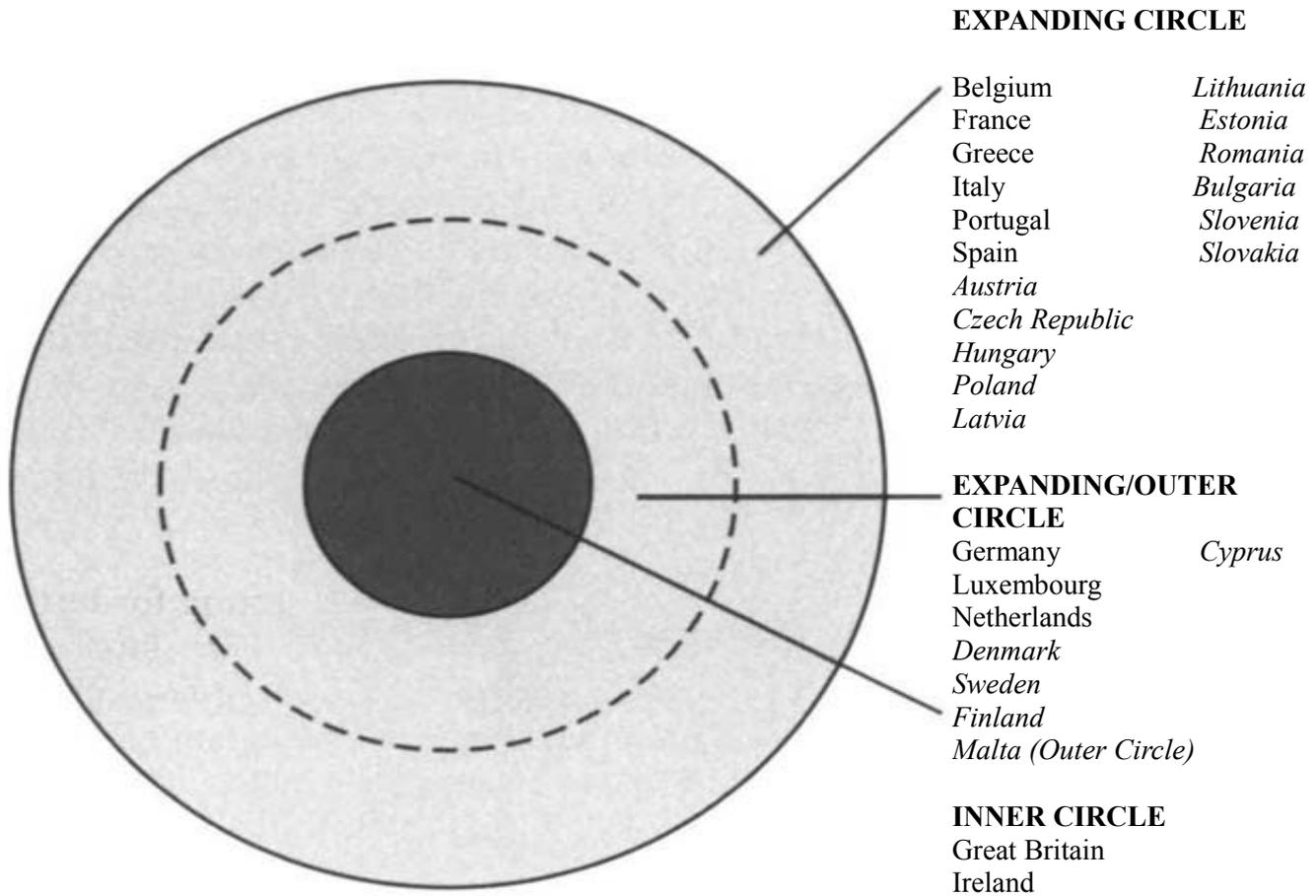
The Concentric Circles of European Englishes

EXPANDING CIRCLE

Belgium	*Lithuania*
France	*Estonia*
Greece	*Romania*
Italy	*Bulgaria*
Portugal	*Slovenia*
Spain	*Slovakia*
Austria	
Czech Republic	
Hungary	
Poland	
Latvia	

EXPANDING/OUTER CIRCLE

Germany	*Cyprus*
Luxembourg	
Netherlands	
Denmark	
Sweden	
Finland	
Malta (Outer Circle)	

INNER CIRCLE
Great Britain
Ireland

Figure 8: The Concentric Circles of European Englishes (adapted from Berns 1995: 9; my additions marked in italics).

Austria and the former Eastern Bloc countries are to be positioned in the Expanding Circle, as English is being learned as a foreign language, but does not fulfill any institutionalized functions and is not yet mastered by vast majorities of the population. According to the Eurobarometer Survey 2006[15], English is the most widely known foreign language in Austria (58% claim to be able to hold a conversation in English), Poland (29%), and Romania (29%). Austria has clearly progressed further

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15   Eurobarometer Survey *Europeans and their Languages* 2006.

towards the Outer Circle than other Expanding Circle countries, but compared to other European countries (e.g. the Scandinavian countries), it still lags behind. In Slovakia, German and English are the most widely known foreign languages, both at 32%, while German still leads in the Czech Republic (28%) and Hungary (25%) - but English is already close behind, at 24 and 23% respectively. The former Eastern countries also lack the history of cultural affiliation with the Allied Forces (that Berns cites as very important for the development of English in Germany), but as most of them have good relations with the USA, are now members of NATO and have been subjected to Western culture (TV, music, etc.) for almost two decades, this is bound to change.

In the Expanding/Outer Circle, Germany is one of the countries that show a less widespread knowledge of English (56%); but its past contact with British and American armed forces, and its known commitment to English as a language of the sciences, still grant it a special role. However, compared with other countries in this category, Germany might today belong more to the Expanding than to the Outer Circle. I decided to include Denmark, an Expanding Circle country in Berns' model, in the "dual circle", as English is clearly the dominant foreign language (86%) and it has almost reached second language status in business communications and in the sciences, as well as in universities, where many undergraduate and graduate programmes are nowadays offered exclusively in English. The same goes for Sweden (89%), and Finland (63%). Malta and Cyprus (88% and 76% respectively) represent special cases, as both countries have a colonial past and a traditionally strong affiliation with the British. In fact, Malta is the only true Outer Circle country present in the European Union, as English has official language status (along with Maltese) and a distinct nativized variety has evolved, namely Maltese

English. As for the Inner Circle countries, no changes have taken place.

The adaptation of Berns' 1995 model to the status quo of the EU 2009 shows that the shift towards Outer Circle circumstances that Berns predicted is slowly but surely taking place. In the Scandinavian countries and in the Netherlands, English is so widespread that its role cannot merely be seen as the one of a foreign language. Only minor proportions of the population have not come into contact with English yet, and as the popularity of English as first foreign language is not likely to diminish, their number will decrease further. The shift towards English from other present-day still dominant foreign languages (e.g. German) is already noticeable in the Expanding Circle, and as learners are highly motivated, the number of English-speakers is likely to increase significantly over the next few years and decades. However, it will probably take some time before the Expanding Circle countries reach a similarly widespread proficiency as the Nordic countries, and some might not even aim for this degree of "Englishization": states with strong national languages, such as Austria (lacking Germany's special prerequisites, but speaking the language with the most native speakers in the EU), France (who strongly opposes the dominance of English in Europe), Spain and Italy might not be willing to submit to the demand that their whole population must be able to speak English.

As for the predicted nativization processes, these are taking place more slowly than expected by Berns. An "EU-literature" has not yet materialized, and the native-speaker model is still what most learners of English aim for, while no new institutionalized European English variety has developed to date. This is partly due to the influence the native speaker countries like Britain and especially the USA still exert on

EU citizens who want to learn English, and partly due to the lack of a detailed description of a European English variety. In addition, according to the principle of a lingua franca, intelligibility must be preserved, which might prevent nativized European varieties from developing further. The future of "Euro-English" is not clear yet, and neither is the shape it will eventually take. Will it become an English variety, can it be classified as a pidgin because of its lingua franca features and their impact on the language, or will it differ so much from Standard English to be classified as a new tongue of its own? The next section aims to investigate the future of European English by analyzing how English and other European languages influence each other and which new developments could arise from this process, as well as the direction in which "Euro-English" could be moving.

2. English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) Use in Europe

a) Is ELF a Pidgin?

A Pidgin is a means of communication which evolves in "circumstances where there are limited relations between the speakers of different languages" (Spolsky 1998, quoted in Hollander 2002: 3). What is so unique about pidgins is that they are nobody's native language; the people who speak a pidgin usually do not give up their native

language within their community, and the use of pidgin is restricted to the contact situation. When a pidgin is attributed more functions in the speech community, its power and complexity grow. A pidgin is made up of elements of two or more languages; sometimes, the grammar can be traced back to one language while the vocabulary is mainly taken from another (Hollander 2002: 3-4). However, in all pidgins the grammar is simplified, which means that "certain features of the base language are dropped" (Spolsky 1998, quoted in Hollander 2002: 4). Among the most commonly known pidgins are Papuan Pidgin English (also called Tok Pisin), Vietnamese Pidgin French, and Nigerian Pidgin English. [16]

Etymologically, the term "pidgin" is related to the English word "business", as trading situations were the occasions in which pidgins were originally used. The Chinese substrate influenced the etymology of the word gradually, from /'biznis/ to /'piznin/, /'pizin/ and finally to /'pidgin/. Pidgins usually developed when European traders, conquerors, scientists or travellers came into contact with the indigenous people and felt the need for a means of communication in order to be able to develop trade. To make mutual understanding easier, both the Europeans and the indigenous people reduced their first language lexically and grammatically. However, when the contact is no longer based on purely economic reasons, the less powerful group (the colonialized) adapts to the more powerful group (the colonialists) language-wise. If a pidgin becomes the mother tongue of a next generation of speakers, a creole language develops (Hollander 2002: 7). Pidgins characteristically lack inflectional morphology, e.g. the plural marker -s (apple – apples) and the vowel change to indicate past tense (throw – threw). The vocabulary is

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[16]   The naming of Pidgins usually follows the model of 'X-Pidgin-Y'. Y refers to the dominant factor on which the pidgin is based, while X represents the second-most important factor in the contact, e.g. Chinese Pidgin English (Hollander 2005: 4).

generally small and offers only a very reduced inventory of prepositions and postpositions, but it can easily be expanded if necessary, as pidgins are highly dynamic languages. Grammatical categories such as number, case, gender, declination and conjugation are usually absent, but grammatical regularity is still observable, due to the underlying Indo-European languages. The word order of pidgins is identical to that of at least one of the languages involved in the contact. The sentence structure tends to be quite simple, and relative clauses rarely appear; instead, sentences are just conjoined. As a consequence, real conjunctions are rarely found in pidgin languages (Hollander 2002: 8 ff). What needs to be pointed out is that pidgins usually do not last any length of time: either the contact situation for which they were created vanishes and the pidgin becomes extinct, or the language is transferred to future generations as their native language, thus becoming a creole (Hollander 2002: 24).

The characteristics of pidgins have now briefly been discussed, and as a next step we should see if these traits apply to ELF. Just like a pidgin, ELF is nobody's mother tongue, but it is used in contact situations to establish mutual intelligibility. Hollander (2002) set out to analyze to what extent ELF can be described as a pidgin, using a corpus-based approach with about 16000 words from three different occasions: a Scouts meeting in Austria, a human genetics conference in Vienna, and a EFL classroom in Vienna (all recorded in 2001).

When comparing noun use, Hollander found out that nearly all speakers marked plural nouns by adding -s, so the plural formation did not correspond to pidgin features. The genitive 's data matches with pidgin to a certain extent, as more of-genitives (e.g. the house of my family) than 's genitives (e.g. my family's house) were employed. Articles

are generally used according to Standard English rules and present no variation, the same goes for adjectives and adverbs. Personal pronouns are often left out, and some speakers do not use them even though they would be appropriate in order to avoid the repretition of a word. Possessive and reflexive pronouns, however, do not seem to cause serious problems to ELF speakers. Relative pronouns and thus also relative clauses occur frequently, another aspect in which ELF clearly differs from pidgins. The number of speakers leaving out the third person -s as a means of simplification is relatively small, which would again not support the thesis that ELF can be classified as a pidgin. ELF also does not correspond to pidgin grammar in past tense formation, as few irregularities appear in the data. Modal verbs are featured in both the ELF data and pidgins; however, the use of modals seems to be related to proficiency, as they occur more frequently in the human genetics conference and the higher language classroom data than in the recordings made of the Scouts. Co-ordinate clauses and complex sentences can be found frequently in the data, which also hints at ELF not being a pidgin (Hollander 2002: 68ff).

Of course, the results cannot be seen as legitimate for every kind of ELF use, as they only represent a small fraction of the people using ELF and the background of the conversations recorded is rather limited. "In conclusion, when comparing the results of the corpus analysis with grammatical structures of pidgin languages, one observes that the kind of English as a lingua franca used by the recorded speakers and the pidgin data hardly share any grammatical features […] Instances for which one could claim simplification methods on a big scale are not found. Thus the speakers' mistakes, i.e. the differences between the recorded English as a lingua franca and Standard English which emerge , appear to be related to their interlanguage stages and not to any formation of

pidgin English." (Hollander 2002: 98).

Pidgins and a lingua franca are used for the same purpose, to enable people of different mother tongues to communicate. However, the spheres were ELF is used are numerous, and one can clearly say that it is not only used on limited occasions (e.g. trade) like a pidgin. Also, ELF can structurally be nearly as complex as Standard English, and is not limited in its functions. "Pidgins are not by their structure, but by their functions by definition lingua francas. A lingua franca, however, such as English, is not necessarily a pidgin. […] The speakers' competence and knowledge of English seems so settled that no pidginisation is necessary in order to have successful communication" (Hollander 2002: 105; 107).

It can therefore be concluded that English as a Lingua Franca and therefore also European English is not a pidgin, but a variety of English which is in the process of developing distinct characteristics. As of yet, there has not been much research done on what these features may be, as scholars focused on native speaker use and on analyzing other, already nativized, English varieties. VOICE, the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English, aims to provide conversational data from ELF settings, from which conclusions about language use and maybe specific variety patterns can be drawn. Scholars are now making use of this corpus to enable further ELF and European English research, and the topic seems to have come to the attention of linguistic scientific journals like *English Today*, which focuses on different English varieties and their characteristics all over the world. However, if European English does develop into an independent variety, or is one day so full of distinct terminology (e.g. borrowed from other European languages) that it might even be considered a different language altogether, the question of intelligibility

arises. ELF serves as a tool enabling communication between speakers of different mother tongues; if "Euro-English" was no longer intelligible for speakers of other varieties, this purpose would be lost. It must therefore be investigated to which extent nativization processes and distinct language features may threaten the intelligibility of ELF and European English.

b) Nativization Processes, ELF Features, and the Question of Intelligibility

Looking back at Kachru's Concentric Circle model cited above, we see that the Outer Circle countries are characterized as having already developed their own English varieties, while the Expanding Circle states still follow the norms created by the Inner Circle (native speaker) members. As many European countries can be seen as occupying a position in- between the Outer and Expanding Circles, it is likely that nativization processes are also taking place concerning ELF and the evolvement of European English. As Seidlhofer (2009: 238) points out, "in sociolinguistic thinking it is primarily identification with a particular community that makes a variety a variety. […] At a time of pervasive and widespread global communication, the old notion of community based purely on frequent face-to-face contact among people living in close proximity to each other clearly does not hold any more. A much more appropriate concept is that of *communities of practice* [Wenger 1998: 72ff] characterized by 'mutual engagement' in

shared practices, taking part in some jointly negotiated 'enterprise', and making use of members' 'shared repertoire'". Seidlhofer thus proposes a new concept of community, making it possible for the widespread family of ELF users to be appropriately referred to by this term as well. ELF users constitute a community, and are therefore entitled to have their specific variety attributed to them. This is also due to a paradigm shift in ELF users' attitudes, who are now claiming ownership of the English language: "The sense of ownership of the language that is gaining ground among speakers, as ELF expands into yet more regions and domains, is bound to be reflected in the way the language is used and moulded according to interlocutors' specific needs in various contexts" (Seidlhofer 2009: 239). ELF users are therefore no longer blindly following the Inner Circle's norms, but instead they use the language "creatively and 'subversively'" (Seidlhofer 2009: 239), adapting it to the specific contexts, types of communications and interlocutors they need it for. However, Ferguson (2009:121) argues that "ELF appears, in Europe at least, to operate over a relatively constrained range of domains" and does not fulfill the Outer Circle requirements, where English is used in "a wide range of intranational functions". He also does not see ELF users as a stable community, but as a heterogenous unit: "users move in and out of ELF, constituting themselves as transient 'communities of communication' that continually dissolve or re-form. Consequently there is, as yet, no identity driven process of 'nativization' or 'endonormative stabilization'" (Ferguson 2009: 121).

To account for these contested nativization processes, empirical corpus-based research needs to be done. Seidlhofer (2001: 141) refers to a "conceptual gap" in ELF research, noting that not much descriptive analyses of the features of ELF have been

made. However, these descriptions are necessary for determining its status quo and the direction it might follow in the future. Bilingual users must be seen as self-competent and authoritative speakers of their own variety, and not as deficient users of British or American English. The notion of a "simultaneous activation" of speakers' native tongue and ELF in the cognitive structures of bilingual and multilingual subjects is widely accepted today (Grosjean 2001, quoted in House 2008: 67). However, a drastic change of attitudes must occur before ELF is seen as a variety with distinctive features instead of mere errors made by foreign language learners. Breiteneder (2009) analyzed data from the VOICE corpus regarding the occurrence of 3rd-person-s in spoken informal ELF interaction. In English, only the 3rd person singular among the present tense verb forms is morphologically marked; it is therefore highly idiosyncratic and represents a typological oddity. Accordingly, the -s assumes the function as a marker of in-group membership, but is communicatively superfluous; out of 46 English varieties looked at by Breitenender, 23 have done away with 3rd-person-s. However, in the ELF data taken from the VOICE corpus, only 25 out of 151 verbs with 3rd person singular subjects remained unmarked – to claim that leaving out the -s is a distinctive feature of ELF would therefore be far-fetched (Breiteneder 2009: 257-259).

Also, ELF is not a stable concept. As Jenkins (2009: 201) suggests, "we all need to make adjustments to our local English variety for the benefit of our interlocutors when we take part in lingua franca English communication. ELF is thus a question, not of orientation to the norms of a particular group of English speakers, but of mutual negotiation involving efforts and adjustments from all parties". These adaptations to the people ELF communication is carried out with may manifest themselves through "code-

switching[17], repetition, echoing of items that would be considered errors in ENL, the avoidance of local idiomatic language, and paraphrasing". Jenkins also notes features of ELF like the above-mentioned lack of 3rd-person-s and countable use of nouns that would be considered uncountable in ENL (e.g. advices, informations), but states at the same time that "there is insufficient evidence for researchers to be able to predict the extent of common ELF ground" (Jenkins 2009: 201). Modiano (2009) pleads for an inclusive approach to ELF, i.e. including the native speakers, as they may also be the interlocutors that ELF speakers are confronted with. However, if native speakers are to be included in the community that ELF speakers want to reach, a certain balance between developing specific variety features (e.g. of European English) and intelligibility must be maintained.

In her work done on intelligibility and local diversity (2006) Jenkins argues that deviations from the native speaker norm that do not have a negative impact on intelligibility should not be considered erroneous. ELF pronunciation errors, like a German speaker pronouncing the word "worse" with an initial /v/ sound, could be regarded from a creative instead of a deficit perspective. Users would be appropriating the language to their own background and adapting it to their native language, both sociolinguistically (by developing a local standard) and socio-psychologically (through the capacity to express ther local identity); they would become speakers of German-English. However, if this development is carried too far, a stage may be reached where pronunciation represents an obstacle to ELF communication; which is why mutual intelligibility should be the most important criterion for correctness of pronunciation. Jenkins therefore identifies the Lingua Franca Core, e.g. features which are essential to

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17   Code-switching denotes the concurrent use of more than one language, or language variety, in conversation.

mutual intelligibility in ELF. These features are:

- Consonant sounds except for substitutions of 'th' and of dark /l/

- Aspiration after word-initial /p/, /t/ and /k/

- Avoidance of consonant deletion in consonant clusters

- Vowel length distinctions

- Nuclear stress production and placement within word groups

The features which emerged as not essential for mutual understanding and therefore considered to be "non-core" features include:

- Certain consonants

- Vowel quality

- Weak forms

- Features of connected speech such as elision and assimilation

- Word stress

- Pitch movement on the nuclear syllable

- Stress-timed rhythm (Jenkins 2006: 32-39).

If intelligibility is maintained (as it would be in non-core pronunciation deviation), it should be considered as a variety, not as an error. But what about ELF teaching? Should these local varieties and simplifications be drawn upon for making a new English language teaching paradigm?

In my opinion, native-speaker-based teaching norms do not represent as important a problem as they are often made out to be. Grammar is usually not the area of English that foreign learners have the biggest difficulties in; in fact, it is what ELF speakers usually master best. As the above-mentioned data shows, grammatical variations such as

the omission of 3rd – person-s do not occur very frequently, and it remains unclear if they can be considered a feature of ELF. Furthermore, when teaching English to students in school, it can not be assumed that they will use it for ELF contacts only, which is why they should be provided with internationally recognized standard language. However, in different situations, such as an adult group learning English to travel, ELF-specific teaching could make for greater progress and reduce the level of frustration. Pronunciation is a different subject, as native-like pronunciation is rarely ever achieved even by highly proficient ELF users; raising awareness of the various English varieties and their (all thoroughly legitimate!) distinctive pronunciations would help students to become self-confident speakers. However, language input is most easily obtained through native-speaker controlled media (e.g. tv, movies), and learners will not stop aiming for the most prestigious pronunciation standards soon.

On the whole, we can say that each ELF communication represents a different situation, as people from various cultural backgrounds interact and adjustments to each others' level of proficiency are made ad-hoc. The general rules underlying these types of conversation must be negotiated separately each time, but a common "core" must be kept, in order to ensure intelligibility in all possible situations. ELF users should appropriate English, as it belongs equally as much to them as it does to native speakers; they should step up and promote the reflection of their cultural heritage and personal situation in the language, but at the same time aim for mutual understanding. A self-confident ELF user will have enough discoursive sensitivity to be aware of different contexts and the different varieties they require, and adapt his or her own speech accordingly. Native speaker norms are necessary, especially as long as a condified set of rules for ELF has not

been developed, and as long as they are considered to be prestigious, they will continue to be the standard in the near future. Deviation and variation from these norms comes with self-confident and nativized language use and is perfectly legitimate, as long as mutual intelligibility is not affected – to create a tool for communication is, after all, the core purpose of a lingua franca.

3. English as a Threat to Multilingualism in the EU?

Despite its qualities as a means for people from different linguistic backgrounds to interact, English is seen by some as a "lingua frankensteinia" (Phillipson 2008), a "killer language" promoted by US and UK capitalist interests that seeks to eradicate all of its competitors. Robert Phillipson summarizes these traits under the term *linguistic imperialism*: "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (1992: 47). *Structural* refers to material properties (e.g. financial allocations, institutions), while *cultural* denotes immaterial and pedagogical properties (e.g. attitudes, pegagogic principles). Linguistic imperalism is an example of *linguicism*, which is defined as "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and

immaterial)" (Phillipson 1992: 47). The above mentioned points may be true for English as a colonial language, but do they also apply to English as a Lingua Franca?

According to Phillipson, "labelling English as a *lingua franca*, if this is understood to be a culturally neutral medium that puts everyone on an equal footing, does not merely entain ideological dangers – it is simply false" (Phillipson 2008: 250). He especially refers to the Nordic countries, who are often quoted as a perfect example of native language and English bilingualism, noting the domain loss occurring in Swedish academic settings: students can no longer use scholarly terminology in their mother tongue, because their university enviroment has become exclusively anglophone (251). Regarding the EU's foreign policy, Phillipson criticizes its monolinguality: "In EU-US negotiations, English is the sole language involved. This is in conflict with the declared policy that in the EU's international relations, the multilingualism that characterizes its internal affairs should also apply. This is a clear case of English as the *lingua cucula*. Externally the EU has become monolingual" (Phillipson 2008: 257). He furthermore even asserts that "European integration was imposed on Europe by the Americans", thus completing his hypothesis of English as an indirect means to ensure American world domination.While Philipson does offer some interesting concepts, his ideas sometimes come close to conspiracy theories. As Esseili (2008: 274) notes in a comment to Philippson's article, while there may be underlying agendas on part of the US, this does not imply that speakers using ELF are not aware of these agendas. On the contrary, they are making self-determined and informed choices, and are learning English of their own free will, and not because somebody imposes it on them. Phillipson argues that learning English has become a structural constraint, leaving those who do not speak it in the out-

group; however, such out-groups quite often occur today if someone does not conform to a broad societal development. Take for instance the older generation who are not familiar with computers, or the Amish in America refusing all modern technology; as far as I am concerned, the problem is not the creation of the out-group as such, but ensuring that everyone can join the in-group if they decide to do so. This is why broad ranging English courses should also be an offer for the adult population, maybe with a specific ELF focus as suggested above. Of course, if one chooses to remain in the out-group, this is acceptable as well; the important point being made here is that nobody is *constrained* to stay there.

House (2003) pleads for distinguishing between "language for communication" and "language for identification". A "language for communication" is "a useful instrument for making oneself understood in international encounters" (2003: 559), a definition that would thus also apply to ELF. When using ELF, speakers must constantly negotiate common ground in order to ensure intelligibility, but when talking in their native language, these negotiations no longer need to take place. It is local languages therefore which are likely to be the main determinants of identity. "Because ELF is not a national language, but a mere tool bereft of collective cultural capital, it is a language usable neither for identity marking, nor for a positive ('integrative') disposition toward an L2 group, nor for a desire to become similar to valued members of this L2 group – simply because there is no definable group of ELF speakers" (House 2003: 560). House denies ELF any integrative function, and sees it as being disconnected from all social factors, in other words as a mere tool for communication. While Phillipson goes too far in attributing various identity-carrying functions to English, House does not develop this

thought far enough. Also, she argues for a nativization of ELF, but if ELF speakers are not to constitute a language community, this goal will probably be difficult to reach.

We have now seen two very different ideas about the status of English as a Lingua Franca, the underlying reasons for its spread and the threat it may pose to other languages. Let us now look at the situation in the EU, which traditionally proposes a full multilingualism policy in theory, but often does not stick to this principle in practice.

Phillipson (2003: 4) notes that "the endorsement of diversity is enshrined in many key EU texts […] nevertheless, the forces of globalization and americanization may be moving language policy in the direction of monolingualism". He also criticizes that language policy is, according to the principle of subsidiarity, in the hands of the member states, and therefore a coherent way of proceeding on the European level cannot be reached. Phillipson fosters the opinion that no deductions are to be made to the full multilingualism policy by quoting the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas: "The official multilingualism of EU institutions is necessary for the mutual recognition of the equal worth and integrity of all national cultures" (2003: 51). Note how Habermas talks about the *official*, not the *actual* multilingualism of EU institutions; the most important factor here is the awareness of a multilingual Europe being raised, not the application of this principle in all daily interactions.

House (2003: 561) agrees with Phillipson in stating that "the EU's supposedly humane multilingualism is but an illusion. Firstly, the EU recognizes one and only one official language for every member state, a position at variance with the EU's official display of respect for the language rights of each and every minority language group in Europe. Secondly, some languages in the EU are (and have always been) more equal than

others". The spread of ELF might stimulate members of minority language groups to insist on their local language for emotional binding to their own culture, history, and tradition. House sees a diglossia situation developing in Europe: "English for various 'pockets of expertise' and non-private communication on the one hand, and national and local varieties for affective, identificatory purposes on the other hand" (2003: 261). She also argues that if the only in theory present concept of multilingualism were to be abandoned and the number of working languages reduced, these resources would be free for the promotion of other European languages. Interestingly, House also uses Habermas in promoting her idea of reducing the EU working languages for oral and in particular informal consultations to English, noting that he propagated a de-nationalization of Europe and suggested using English as a de-nationalized, unifying language for Europe (2008: 64). Oppositions to this proposal would not come from citizens fearing that multilingualism as such is endangered, but from nation states such as France, who are afraid that ELF being used officially in the EU will diminish the importance of their national languages. "The indigenous languages and ELF are NOT in competition, rather they supplement each other, there is never a stark either-or situation" (House 2008: 68).

The numbers present in the Eurobarometer 2006 survey show that English is the most widely used foreign language in Europe, and this development is likely to increase over the next few years. International communication is no longer conceivable without English, and the growing dominance of the language may foster fear of a monolingual "melting pot" in EU citizens. This vision is unlikely to come into reality; the languages used as local and national languages have grown over centuries, and they are what speakers identify with. Notions of culture and traditions are transported via these

languages, and the most personal, immediate conversation will always take place in one's own mother tongue. However, Europeans nowadays have the possibility not only to interact with their closest community, but with their fellow EU citizens and people from other parts of the world. As the EU's objective of mastering mother tongue plus two other European languages is far from being reached, another means of communication is needed: English as a Lingua Franca. English may have a dark history of being imposed on peoples all over the world by colonizers, but this does not apply to Europe. Europeans choose to learn the language of their own free will, because they are aware of the advantages that speaking it may bring, both for personal enrichment (ability to communicate with other cultures) as well as for life and career prospects (possibilities to work in foreign countries). Europeans will continue to learn English, and increasingly so in the future, which is why English is the only real candidate to function as the EU's lingua franca. Looking at the principle of multi-level governance, local and national languages are used for policy-making at regional and member state levels, while English could be used for this purpose on a European level. Multilingualism would, of course, have to maintained in communicating with citizens, but when politicians and ordinary people from different states interact with each other, they would certainly benefit from speaking a common language, namely English. As will be explained in the next section, this may even foster the integration process.

4. How ELF could function as a Catalyst for the Integration Process

ELF has not yet evolved into an entirely distinct variety, although some features have already been identified. As Kachru's model of Concentric Circles and its adaptations to Europe by Berns show, some European countries are already on their way towards the Outer Circle, while some remain relatively firmly rooted in the Expanding Circle for the time being. However, English-knowledge in Europe is likely to increase over the following years and decades, providing the EU with the possibility to speak one language. Multilingualism is necessary, but it has also led to the concept of Europe functioning like the Tower of Babel, where many different mother tongues make understanding impossible. Our mother tongues reflect our values, our culture and therefore also our identity – but they cannot function as a means of conveying who we are in other contexts and engage in communication with people from different countries. We are living next to, but not with each other. English as a common tongue spoken by the vast majority of European citizens could change this status quo.

According to the Eurobarometer (2006), 77% of European citizens believe that their children should learn English. This means that there is a high demand to learn the language throughout Europe, and that national governments will have to respond to this demand by providing sufficient English language teaching facilities. Language policy remains in the hands of the member states, who will do what they think is in their citizens' best interest – but they would certainly not go as far as promoting English over their national language, meaning that ELF does not pose a threat to the traditional

continental European languages. Member states act in their national interest when providing their citizens with English language skills, but the EU could make use of this development, by trying to use the new common language as a promotional tool for integration.

As more and more children grow up studying English, ELF communication will become a natural way of interaction for them, and with English shifting from foreign to second language status, the development of European variety norms and variations is very likely to ensue. The development of these varieties would mean that identity cannot only be transported through national or local languages, but also through English, as culturally defining elements (e.g. in lexis) will have found their way into ELF communication. European English, the newly-coined variety, would allow ELF speakers to shape their own tool for interaction, and thus distance English from the colonial or imperalist background that has negative influence on its acceptance throughout the population. Europeans would appropriate English, to make it their own language. This also means that the often claimed advantage that native speakers have over EFL users would be evened out to a certain extent; as European English would display influences from different European languages, it will differ from Standard English, and British or Irish speakers would have to take up new words or phrases if they want to identify with the new common language.

If all EU citizens had at least some knowledge of English, new initiatives to foster integration could be initiated. European TV stations would not remain the multilingual, but only elite-compatible networks they are now; instead, pan-European versions of popular programmes could be launched, e.g. an EU-wide version of "Who Wants To Be a

Millionaire". Travelling magazines could transport the images of Europe's most beautiful landscapes into the citizens' living rooms, at a relatively low cost, as only one language would be used and no dubbing or adaptation would be required. The internet, which is already largely used in English nowadays, could also provide new platforms for discussion about EU policy, enabling citizens to gain an insight into how Europeans from other member states view certain topics. Also, EU-launched projects are not the only ones that could profit from English as a common language. Citizens are already aware that some English knowledge is very useful when travelling to other countries and interacting with the locals, and this increased amount of communication could also lead to the forging of a European identity.

If we go back to the nationalist policies of the 19ᵗʰ century, the idea that a people requires a language to find its collective identity is omnipresent. I believe that it would be truly in the spirit of the EU to exemplify how Europe is coming together by taking these policies, and turning them around: instead of confining one's interests to nation states, a common European *δεmos* could be established, and English could represent a very helpful force in this process. Language enables communication, and if a language can serve as such a widespread tool for European interaction, we as EU citizens should profit from this position. As Europe grows closer together and citizens begin to feel European next to their national identities, a common language could be truly beneficial in fostering mutual interest and the willingness to forge friendships and leave past prejudices behind. Once this closer contact has been established, interest in the language and culture of our interlocutors will rise, and the other European languages will not be threatened by English. By using ELF, Europeans citizens can communicate with each other without

giving up their personal identities, and the often proclaimed EU goal of "unity in diversity" may finally be reached.

Conclusion

The EU represents a unique construct; it is a hybrid between an international organization and a federal state, and its linguistic situation is as unique as its political shape. In contrast to the USA, the EU does not want to be a "melting pot", but aims to be a common home for various people and various cultures and languages, according to the principle of "unity in diversity".

The EU has set multilingualism as one of its founding features, and follows its linguistic principles when interacting with its citizens. But when it comes to the EU's internal workings, principle and practice often differ significantly. Strict multilingualism would make an efficient working process impossible, and, in addition, the EU's member states are not yet willing to accept a reduction of the official languages.

As protective and defensive as the member states are about their own language, they often treat their own regional and minority languages neglectfully. The EU lacks regulatory competences to put an end to this practice. An efficient sanctioning regime can not be established, and as long as no consequences or sanctions are to follow for

neglectful behavior, the member states are not likely to change their ways. The *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages* may be considered a first step in the right direction, but it does not provide a regime for sufficient protection of minority languages. The treatment of RMLs is another example of the EU's multilingualism not being fully realized.

English has established itself firmly as the world's leading lingua franca, but many citizens and EU officials remain sceptical of this development. They fear that an English dominance might "devour" multilingualism in the Union. Lingua franca English could be seen as an instrument to get European citizens in contact with each other instead of being viewed as a threat. Eventually, the establishment of a special "Euro-English" variety through nativization processes could contribute to the shaping of a European identity and a European *δεmos*. National identities and national languages would be preserved alongside this new identity, and the concept of multiple identities would also leave room for RMLs to be promoted.

Multilingualism and English do not have to be in conflict with each other, and providing Europe with an instrument to facilitate communication would be beneficial for the integration process. If the number of working languages was cut down, ressources now needed for the translation services could be donated to the promotion of other European languages, especially of RMLs. In order to be able to act efficiently, the EU must aim to gain regulatory competence on the language policy sector – a very difficult goal that will need to be persevered over the next few years or even decades.

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Abstract

The thesis aims to analyze the EU language policies on three different levels: Europe's multilingualism, minority and lesser used languages, and the advantages and threats of English as a Lingua Franca for the integration process. In theory, the EU is strictly multilingual, but the practice cannot always be maintained due to efficiency reasons. The divergence between theory and practice could be minimized by a reduction of working languages, but nation states refuse any such attempt because of power-political reasons. The nation states seal the smaller and minority languages' fate: as the EU lacks the competences to function as a protective entity, it is up to each member state to decide on how to treat its minorities. If the state's policy is mere neglect, there is not much that the EU can do, as no efficient sanctioning system has been installed. However, minorities could make their voice heard by connecting on a civil society level, and English as a Lingua Franca could be the common language for this purpose. As all member states invest in their citizens learning English, the EU should make use of this investment and use the common language as a tool for fostering the integration process. However, it is vital that the Union's rich and diverse cultural heritage is maintained – each citizen should value his or her mother tongue and culture, while also taking the chance to connect with fellow Europeans and contribute to the formation of a European people "united in diversity". In order to exert influence on these important developments, the EU should aim to gain competence in the field of language policy – a difficult venture, as national identity and language are often still seen to be inseperable concepts.

Ziel der Arbeit ist eine Analyse der EU-Sprachenpolitiken auf drei verschiedenen Ebenen: Europas Multilingualismus, Minderheiten- und Weniger Verwendete Sprachen (Lesser Used Languages), sowie die Vorteile und Gefahren von Englisch als Lingua Franca für den Integrationsprozess. Theoretisch hält die EU am strikten Multilingualismus fest, welcher aber aus Gründen der Effizienz in der Praxis nicht umsetzbar ist. Die Divergenz zwischen Theorie und Praxis könnte durch eine Reduzierung der Arbeitssprachen minimiert werden, die Nationalstaaten lehnen aber jegliche Schritte in diese Richtung auf Grund von machtpolitischen Interessen ab. Die Nationalstaaten bestimmen auch das Schicksal der kleineren und regionalen Sprachen: Die EU hat auf diesem Gebiet keine Kompetenzen, weshalb jeder Nationalstaat selbst über die Behandlung seiner Minderheiten entscheiden kann, ohne dafür Konsequenzen fürchten zu müssen. Um sich Gehör zu verschaffen, könnten sich die Minderheiten auf zivilgesellschaftlicher Ebene vernetzen und dafür Englisch als Lingua Franca als Gemeinschaftssprache nutzen. Alle Mitgliedstaaten investieren in die Förderung der Englischkenntnisse ihrer Staatsbürger; auch die EU könnte von dieser Investition profitieren und eine gemeinsame Sprache als Katalysator für den Integrationprozess nutzen. Eine solche Entwicklung darf aber nicht zu Lasten des reichen und vielfältigen kulturellen Erbes der Union gehen; jeder Staatsbürger sollte in seiner bzw. Ihrer Muttersprache und Kultur verwurzelt bleiben und gleichzeitig die Chance zur Interaktion mit seinen / ihren europäischen Mitbürgern nutzen, um so ein "in Vielfalt vereintes" europäisches Volk zu schaffen. Um mehr Einfluss auf diese wichtigen Entwicklungen ausüben zu können, sollte die EU nach mehr Kompetenzen in der Sprachenpolitik streben – ein schwieriges Unterfangen, da nationale Identität und Sprache häufig immer noch als zwei untrennbare Konzepte verstanden werden.

L'oggettivo della tesi è l'analisi delle politiche linguistiche dell'Unione Europea su tre livelli: multilinguismo europeo, minoranze linguistiche e Lingue Meno Usate (Lesser Used Languages) e vantaggi e pericoli della lingua Inglese come lingua franca per l'integrazione europea. L'UE in teoria è esclusivamente multilingue, ma questo principio non può sempre essere mantenuto in pratica, per ragioni di efficienza. La divergenza tra teoria e prassi potrebbe essere minimizzata da una reduzione delle lingue di lavoro, ma gli stati nazionali rifiutano questa proposta per motivi di potere politico-culturale. Sono anche gli stati nazionali a decidere il destino delle lingue piu' piccole e delle minoranze: l'UE non ha competenze nella politica linguistica, quindi ogni stato decide come trattare le sue minoranze, senza dover temere delle conseguenze. Le minoranze potrebbero connettersi sul livello della società civile, usando Inglese come lingua franca comune. Tutti i membri dell' UE investono nell' insegnamento di Inglese ai loro cittadini; l'UE potrebbe usufruire di questa investizione per sostenere il processo di integrazione. L'eredità culturale deve però essere mantenuta, ogni cittadino deve preservare la sua lingua e la sua cultura, ma anche cogliere l'occasione di communicare con concittadini europei, formando così un popolo europeo "unito in diversità". Per poter influenzare queste evoluzioni importanti, l'UE dovrebbe acquisire competenze sulle politiche linguistiche – un' impresa difficile, perchè identità nazionale e lingua vengono spesso ancora visti come due concetti inseparabili.

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