

# **Handbook of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism**



# Handbook of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism

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## FOREWORD

The three coordinators of the present volume, Claire Kramersch, Danielle Levy and Geneviève Zarate have worked in close collaboration throughout the whole project. All three have solicited contributions from doctoral students and colleagues and are grateful for the financial support given by their respective institutions.

Claire Kramersch drew on the resources of the Berkeley Language Center to organize an interdisciplinary seminar at UC Berkeley in February 2005. Danielle Levy engaged the Italian University Association for the Teaching of French, DoRiF-Universita, and the Center for Research and Documentation in the Teaching of French at Italian universities in the organization of a research seminar in Macerata, Italy in July 2006. Other colleagues have also contributed their scientific contacts for this project, in particular Aline Gohard-Radenkovic, who hosted a working group meeting of our research team at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, and Marie Christine Kok-Escalle who rallied the members of the International Society for the History of French as a Second Language (SHIFLES) for this project. While Claire Kramersch, Danielle Levy and Geneviève Zarate were principal investigators of the research project, Geneviève Zarate was editor-in-chief of the present volume.

The authors' multilingual and multicultural biographies are available at the following address: <http://precis.berkeley.edu>



# General introduction

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## A DEFINITION OF PLURALITY

This handbook is organized around linguistic and cultural plurality<sup>1</sup>. Following Bourdieu (1977), it defines language as an “instrument of action (or of power)” and aims to reconstruct the complexity of social and linguistic practices that constitute our relationship to the foreign. Plurality here is not defined as the mere coexistence of various languages, but rather as a specific social activity characterized by the circulation of values across borders, the negotiation of identities, and the inversions—indeed, the inventions—of meaning that are often masked by the shared illusion of successful communication.

Plurality is approached in this book:

—as a complex aggregate, rather than as the simplified object of a communicatively oriented language pedagogy primarily concerned with intelligibility

—as a coherent system of relationships whose description cannot be reduced to a series of mechanical operations

—as a socio-historical construct, observable from many simultaneous, spatio-temporal points of view, such as that of everyday interactions or that of institutions whose symbolic force cannot be accounted for from one point of view alone

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<sup>1</sup> The French concept of ‘plurality’ has different political connotations than the Angloamerican term ‘diversity’. While ‘diversity’ is the ideal of a neo-liberal democracy, ‘plurality’ is the ideal of a republican society committed to the tenets of the French Revolution.

## AN INTERNATIONALIZED SPACE

The field of language didactics (LD) is undergoing transformation<sup>2</sup>. For more than ten years, Europe has constituted a specific geopolitical entity, less and less reducible to the sum of the countries that compose it. The role played by languages in the political, economic and social architecture of this conglomeration can be inferred from a number of texts that call for a common vision of linguistic and cultural diversity. The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (Council of Europe, 1992), the definition of European citizens' linguistic competence based on the mastery of three European languages (Livre blanc. Enseigner et apprendre. Vers la société cognitive. European Commission, 1995), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) all attest to the role of languages as an official component of European identity. Even if European countries have not all participated in this common project at the same pace, a new model of LD has nevertheless been put in place—the European model. This model has modified the relations between languages and the linguistic, cultural and geographic landscapes with which they are associated, and has directly affected the perception of international space held by each nation-state.

While the fall of the Berlin Wall has modified the geopolitical nature of relationships between European states, their languages and citizens, a new international economic order has ushered in a globalized vision of economic exchanges that is imposing new social and linguistic imperatives. These new imperatives are calling for new ways of conceptualizing the learning of foreign languages. In the future, as the French economist Jacques Attali stated recently, “travel will become a major part of a university education and professional development: one will constantly have to exhibit the qualities of a traveler in order to remain “employable” (...) In total, twenty-five years from now, around fifty million people will live outside of their country of origin or their parents' country of origin” (Attali 2006). This vision of the future invites a concomitant reconsideration of the history of linguistic exchanges in the countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Many of these countries did not wait for today's globalization to become multilingual and multicultural. Military conquests, religious or ideological proselytism, slavery, colonialism, cultural and commercial exchanges and their own multilingual tribal practices have long diversified their societies. But language teachers trained in metropolitan centers are not necessarily

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<sup>2</sup> Some French terms, untranslatable into English, have been left in their literal translations. In particular, the term *didactique des langues*, translated by Gisele Holtzer (2000 :174) as « language didactics » (LD) and defined as « foreign language teaching » overlaps but is not quite equivalent to terms like foreign language (FL) education, methodology, pedagogy, second language acquisition (SLA) or applied linguistics. The research field of language didactics is epistemologically and culturally linked to the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (Fle), in the same manner as SLA and applied linguistics are closely linked to the teaching of English as a Second Language, and *Fremdsprachendidaktik* is associated with the teaching of German as a Second Language (DaF). LD focuses on the teaching of foreign languages in instructional settings and in that respect it overlaps with FL education, FL methodology and FL pedagogy. But it is also concerned with the acquisition of foreign languages in non-instructional settings, e.g., work, travel, leisure, study and any venue in which issues of language, power and identity come into play. In that respect its concerns are close to those of Anglo-Saxon applied linguistics.



prepared for the globalized space of tomorrow. Teacher trainers themselves need to adjust to the rapid and radical changes brought about by globalization and train young teachers accordingly.

Efforts in Europe to put into place a translingual and transcultural awareness common to all languages are headed in precisely this direction. They advocate making connections between L1 and L2 pedagogies (Roulet 1980), sensitizing learners to metalinguistic activity or language awareness (Hawkins 1987; James & Garrett 1991), and raising the interest of children in early language instruction (Candelier 2003; Perregaux 1994; Moore 2006). All these initiatives strive to make the public conscious of the discourses and social representations linked to language use in multilingual contexts. The concepts of methodological competencies (Écouter pour comprendre, CRAPEL, Université de Nancy 2) and intercomprehension between related languages, focused on the development of reading and listening comprehension in linguistically related languages, have shown their instructional efficiency in the intercomprehension of Romance languages (the EuRom4 method, the Galatea and Galanet programs, the Euromania methods), and between Romance and Germanic languages (the ICE, InterCompréhension Européenne and EuroCom programs).

The Handbook deals with various facets of the debate on multilingualism and multiculturalism<sup>3</sup>, and discusses observable situations both within and outside Europe, but it does not prescribe any solutions. Rather, as a collection of current points of view, it makes every effort to leave reflection open. Every featured reflection, divided into chapters, is extended by a “Counterpoint” that, through the intervention of an author from outside the chapter, seeks to initiate dialogue, echo back the positions of the chapter coordinators, put into perspective the possibilities proposed, or introduce a new geographical anchoring.

## **A CONCEPTUAL MATRIX: 8 MACRO-ENTRIES AND 51 MICRO-ENTRIES**

In the spirit of these new developments the Handbook of multilingualism and multiculturalism focuses on second language learning and teaching. It is not a textbook or a prescriptive manual, nor a catalog of simplified, useful practices. It is, rather, a tool that encourages reflection and articulates practices, field observations and analyses in an innovative conceptual framework, adapted to an international environment marked by plurality. It is a generic matrix, designed to engender new ways of looking at language learning as a relation to alterity. It is intended to inform the setting of educational goals, the development of curricula and the training of teachers. This new configuration should also be of interest to politicians who are currently in need of conceptual tools to structure their decisions and are more likely to

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<sup>3</sup> In the U.S. multilingualism and multiculturalism are both individual and societal phenomena, whereas in Europe plurilingualism applies to individuals, multilingualism applies to societies. We have chosen to translate *Precis du plurilinguisme et du pluriculturalisme* with *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism* because of the more widespread use of the latter two terms in Angloamerican literature.

be open to new ideas in our era of social and cultural change than in a period of geopolitical stability and ideological immobility.

The Handbook invites its reader to travel to different continents—Europe, North American, Australia, Asia—and to take two detours to Africa. Nevertheless, it does not claim to be a world tour of education and linguistic diffusion, nor an encyclopedia of world languages. The globalized vision that underlies it rests on the dynamic changes that are occurring in various countries at various levels and on the corresponding need to continuously recalibrate our approach to language didactics.

The Handbook is organized on two levels. The first level is that of the eight chapters, which function as macro-entries and present a new way of looking at familiar reference points in LD. Each chapter features one conceptual focus chosen for its capacity to generate an interdisciplinary approach to various languages and for its connections with various linguistic and cultural domains: 1) From the learner to the speaker/actor; 2) The self and languages; 3) Mobility and itineraries; 4) Social affiliation and relations; 5) Images, discourse and cultural representations; 6) Institutions and power; 7) History, practices and models. The second level consists of micro-entries that function successively as glosses, expansions, case studies and contextualizations of one or more notions within the macro-entry. The Handbook thus contains 51 micro-entries that allow the reader to locate familiar points of reference in LD. They represent either disciplinary fields (for example, psycholinguistics, conversation analysis...), or historical, geographical, national or transnational points of reference, or easily identifiable pedagogical categories (e.g., learner, evaluation, advertising, translation). Each micro-entry is itself organized in three parts: the presentation of one or several notions, a corpus of data which anchor the concept within a field or in practical experience, and a commentary that clarifies the relationship between the notions and the data. The data themselves, clearly set off in a box, are readily accessible to the reader who prefers to enter the work by way of concrete examples.

## **AN INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK**

The Handbook focuses on the translingual and transcultural processes at work in language learning and language use. These processes usually tend to elude the academic classifications imposed by school subjects vying with one another for students' attention, e.g., language, history, geography, civics. The book does not aim to offer reassuring models of cross-cultural tolerance or a peaceful vision of social relations such as those offered by school textbooks. Embracing conflict is the price to pay for liberating language pedagogy from its exclusively school-centered institutional base and opening it up to the real-world. In this Handbook, research on education is drawn upon to analyze learning trajectories that are not limited to schooling, but rather extend over a lifetime.

The observation and identification of the complexity of relationships among languages, cultures and identities are only possible on condition that an interdisciplinary conceptual framework is put forth. By interdisciplinary we mean a

framework that draws inspiration from various disciplines, or constructs hybrid disciplines, or borrows and modifies concepts traditionally used in other disciplines. During the seminar in which this Handbook was conceived (2003) and at the subsequent conferences that marked its development (2004, 2005, 2006), relevant domains of previous research in language didactics were identified, and the project's internal coherence and innovative nature were defined. Researchers from different disciplines were invited to discuss from their point of view the very questions and areas that the Handbook would focus on: the relationships between the individual and the collective in an increasingly fast-paced world, the contacts and conflicts that result from it, their impact on language education and teacher training. Thus, anthropologists, psychologists, historians and geographers, even mathematicians, drew on their own methods to interrogate a common ground, opening up the way, throughout the gestation of the Handbook, to disciplines (e.g., cognitive science, human and social sciences...) from which notions such as actors, spaces, stories and History were interrogated and then translated into headings of chapters and micro-entries. A list of transverse concepts was generated, which cut across the various chapters: theoretical notions such as complexity, plurality, capital or resources, representation of actions or postures, and pedagogic notions such as imitation, negotiation, interpretation, translation, appropriation, borrowing, rejection. These transverse concepts make it possible to redraw the social, cultural and historical boundaries of language didactics and to redefine its research categories.

## **THE PRODUCT OF AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF INSTRUCTOR-RESEARCHERS AND INSTRUCTORS**

A project like this one constitutes of course a challenge. Such a redrawing of the boundaries of language didactics could not be constructed without bringing together an international team of researchers. A fresh perspective was first created at a seminar held in March 2003 at the INALCO and jointly organized with the Berkeley Language Center at the University of California at Berkeley (United States) and the doctoral program/formation doctorale Politica, educazione, formazione linguistic-culturali at the University of Macerata (Italy). The seminar continued in March 2004 with public workshops held at the Sorbonne Nouvelle through support from the France/Berkeley fund (2004-2005). The initial partners (Berkeley Language Center, INALCO, the University of Macerata) met again, this time in Berkeley, to continue their collaboration for the second phase of the France-Berkeley program through the international conference Teaching Languages in Multilingual, Multicultural Environments. It was there that the overall architecture of the Handbook was definitively adopted. In May 2005, the Société Internationale pour l'Histoire du Français Langue Étrangère ou Seconde (SIHFLES) joined the project for a workshop held at INALCO. Following the international conference "Large" and "small" languages and plurilingual and pluricultural language didactics: models and experiments, held at the Sorbonne (July 3-5, 2006), an expanded group, comprised of all the chapter coordinators, met in July 2006 under the auspices of the University of Macerata and adopted the definitive editorial framework. A final seminar, organized

by the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) and its Centre d'Enseignement et de Recherches en Langues Étrangères in February 2007, enabled a collective evaluation of the proposals received. During the meeting, the research team *Pluralité des Langues et des Identités en Didactique: Acquisition, Médiations* (PLIDAM, JE 2052) was created and reaffiliated with INALCO. Until 2005, Monica Heller of the University of Toronto took part in our collective reflections. May she find here our gratitude for her contribution.

Moreover, the project benefited from discrete funding from the Canadian Embassy in France (Programme France-Canada 2004), from the research team of ERADLEC (subsequently DILTEC) at the University of Paris III, the Plan Pluriannuel “*Mise en réseau des universités parisiennes*” jointly sponsored by INALCO and Paris III, the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie and the Délégation Générale à la Langue Française et aux Langues de France (DGLFLF), and from partner universities through the individual contribution of researcher-writers. Without having the sound financial logistics of international projects that are federated around a centralized institution, but benefiting from loyal support and gradually accumulating contributions, the Handbook was developed according to a financial logic that conformed to its scholarly intentions: a network of competencies that emerged progressively around a project that itself was in the process of being constructed. The Agence universitaire de la francophonie’s financial support at the time of publication will ensure a primary and important diffusion among the agency’s network.

Based on this support, 90 instructor-researchers, representing 68 institutions, joined the project.

## **THE MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL POLICY OF THE HANDBOOK**

How to organize an international team of researchers who don’t all share the same language without detracting from the quality of the exchanges? While French and English were the dominant languages of the discussions and the circulation of texts, the composition of the Handbook did not escape its own object of study and was itself multilingual and multicultural.

Little by little the Handbook constructed a language policy commensurate with its object of study. English and French became the languages of scientific exchange. But texts written in English, Italian and German were translated into French due to the constraints of the editorial market. The reader will find the trace of these texts in the translator’s name which doubles the author’s. The framed texts, where the data appear in all their authenticity, echo back the languages in which they were produced and the sociolinguistic variations that do not necessarily align with a standard language. The multilingual dimension is thus found operating at this level as well.

While internationally valid research is predicated on international recognition, our international teamwork revealed divergent concepts of research among different team members due to different academic traditions, which we had to clarify and transcend.

Indeed, scientific legitimacy itself is the outcome of specific conditions of possibility. For example, Anglo-Saxon research is financed by private or public sources on the basis of competition between researchers or teams of researchers on subjects proposed by private foundations or governmental organizations. Researchers or directors of research teams send detailed project proposals to these sources of financing that outline the objectives, methods of research, anticipated results, methods of evaluation and means of disseminating the results, including a detailed budget and a timeline. Projects are chosen by these funding agencies on the basis of scientific criteria; of course, the prestige of the researchers plays a large role as well. Every year the researchers must submit a review of progress made and, on that basis, ask for a renewal of funds for a maximum length of 2 or 3 years. Research in Europe is approximating these criteria and modalities more and more when it draws from multinational sources of funding. But it is also complemented by national structures that approve laboratories for a period of four years in France and three years in Italy, bringing together senior and junior researchers on collaborative projects established through the initiatives of these members and validated by internal (University) and national authorities. The Handbook draws from this latter structure.

The Handbook was initially constructed as a research project that was not only oriented towards publication but was, as well, an intellectual adventure that left as much time for debates as it did for the production of texts. As such it could have caused misunderstandings and seemed too loosely structured for an Anglo-Saxon culture used to the format of specific calls for proposals. The time spent in discussion enabled us to reveal the reasoning that is often blurred in more tightly formatted scientific exchanges. In debates, the tacit rules of the international circulation of ideas where “texts circulate without their context” (Bourdieu 2002) became clearly visible when a concept was extracted from the immediate historical and social context of which it was the product, and when, in its “host” context, it was subject to distortions that made it difficult to locate the initial argument. We discovered the pitfalls of cross-cultural communication among researchers from different scientific traditions: the deep misunderstandings masked by linguistic false-friends, the wrongly assumed sharing of implicit ideas and the fallacy of common codes of scientific communication. We discovered that the disciplinary fields of “applied linguistics” and “linguistique appliquée” do not coincide; that terms like “multilingualism” and “plurilinguisme” are not equivalent (see note 3). The boundaries between notions such as foreign language education, methodology, pedagogy, second language acquisition intersect with those of *didactique des langues* without the possibility of establishing a rigorous cartography between the two languages. The American or Canadian term “multiculturalism” rests on models of societies that are often stripped of their historicity when glossed under the French term *multiculturalisme*. The Council of Europe has attempted to deal with these terminological ambiguities by distinguishing “plurilingualism” (plurilinguisme), an individual phenomenon, from “multilingualism” (multilinguisme), a societal phenomenon (Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues/The Common European Framework, Council of Europe, 2001, 1.3 Qu’entend-on par “plurilinguisme”?/What is “plurilingualism”?). But there are many others.

## WHY A “HANDBOOK”?

Throughout the gestation of this work, different formats were envisioned. It is clear to everyone that the result is neither a method nor an encyclopedia, but rather more similar to a treatise or a dictionary. The work was eventually conferred the title “Handbook”, first modified by the adjective “bricolé” in homage to the disciplinary bricolage of anthropologists, then “critical” out of its authors’ desires to distance it from all dogmatism or universalism, to take responsibility for it entirely and to claim a specific point of view. It was subsequently deprived of these adjectives in its final denomination. By definition, a Handbook demands of its author(s) a methodic construction, a clear and rigorous identification of its thought, contents and objectives, a conciseness of argumentation and a relationship to the concrete through the empirical. The reader alone will be able to say if these intentions have been respected. Nevertheless, we dissociate ourselves from Littré who defines “Handbook” as a “small manual, a didactic work that explains in a clear and succinct fashion the essence of a subject”. If one indeed finds an essence here, it will be in the debates in language didactics that the Handbook seeks to expand.

## TO THE READER

The layers of writing have shown that parts of the work echo one another. From the introduction to the conclusion, that echo is amplified, consolidating the notions, the themes, the positions, the pedagogical categories, the transverse concepts and the disciplines used and interpellated throughout the work. A linear reading of the Handbook’s contents includes:

—the introduction, which at once situates the book within language didactics and goes beyond it, and which also foregrounds the intellectual, ethical and ideological choices made —a body of macro-entries or chapters, in which general themes and approaches can be read —an explicit conclusion that introduces the website where the discussion is to be prolonged.

But if one approaches a particular macro-entry in the body of the Handbook—through the need for information, because of thematic interest, or by chance—one will find the same choices:

—a selected point of view in the introduction to the chapter, outlining its possible unfolding in the field of language didactics

—one or more contextualized examples, followed by

—a “counterpoint” that opens onto an alternative, thematic or disciplinary perspective.

The intent, as well as the design, is meant to be clear, and one will not be surprised to find the same tripartite schema in the construction of the work as a whole as well as in all the micro-entries. There, the conceptual framework introduces the theme of the

chapter, which the examples (or data) reinforce, and the commentary expands the discussion to the potential plurality of specific situations.

While this nested construction is the product of authorial design, it is meant to facilitate reading by a certain built-in redundancy of themes and disciplinary approaches. It is also meant to engage the active reader, who, as a student, researcher or practitioner, is ready to decenter himself from his own experience and to move towards other disciplinary and professional sites in order to participate in the ongoing construction of this project.

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Chapter 1

# From the learner to the speaker/actor

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# NOTES ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 1

**Richard KERN, Anthony J. LIDDICOAT**

Even though this chapter appeared in French in the original *Précis* and now displays a uniform English interface in the current edition, it has always been a multilingual endeavor. Three of the entries were originally written in English and translated into French for the original edition (Morita, Kinginger, Sercu); English was a second language for two of these authors. The introduction (Kern/Liddicoat) was originally written in the authors' second language (French) and has now been translated into their mother tongue. Ziegler, whose native language is German, wrote her entry first in French and now in English. Kramersch and Gentil originally wrote in their first language (French) and now in English.

What is at stake in all these entries is not mere shifts in the surface language but the relocation of one academic discourse into another, with attendant shifts in relationships among terms, concepts, and disciplinary discourses. For example, starting with the Introduction, “locuteur/acteur” and “speaker/actor” resonate very differently. In French, “locuteur” is a term used in *la théorie de l'énonciation*, a pragmatic framework that is very specific to the French language, to designate the producer of a speech act. On the other hand, “speaker” in English is used in a very wide range of everyday contexts, including the ability to speak a particular language (for example, a roomful of French-speakers; which would be described as *francophones* in French). “Acteur” and “actor” by themselves are both ambiguous in their respective languages, but when “acteur” is juxtaposed with “locuteur” it clearly conveys the notion of a social actor. However, putting speaker and actor together does not have this effect and could well be interpreted as referring to the use of theater improvisation techniques in the language classroom (hence the inclusion in the English title of “social actor” to make the intended meaning clearer). “Didactique des langues” has been rendered at times in the English translation as “SLA [second language acquisition] theory.” These are not commensurate fields, although in this case the English translation more accurately corresponds to the particular research tradition the authors had in mind when composing the original French text (but had to find a term that French readers could relate to). On the other hand, David Divita, the translator, expressed his wish that there be a term in English that encompassed both language learning and teaching as “didactique des langues” seems to do. The French term also conveniently designates both a field of research and the actual practice of teaching languages—something that neither “applied linguistics” nor “SLA” nor “foreign language teaching” accomplishes.

Similar issues arise with terms such as “savoirs et savoirs-faire,” which echo the *Common European Framework of Reference*, versus “factual and procedural knowledge,” which comes from cognitive psychology; “apprentissage,” which includes the notion of apprenticeship, which the English “learning” leaves out; “langue-en-action” and “language in use,” which have different emphases. The English term *use* emphasizes language as a tool for communication, while the French term *action* has a wider focus on language as a meaning-making system and so overlaps with English terms such as “language in context.”

## INTRODUCTION:

# FROM THE LEARNER TO THE SPEAKER/SOCIAL ACTOR

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**Translated from the original French by David DIVITA**

Considering the foreign language learner as a speaker/actor constitutes a fitting point of departure for a Handbook on multilingualism and multiculturalism, because these phenomena can only exist through individuals who speak, communicate and act in many languages and in many cultural contexts. This chapter addresses the psycho- and sociolinguistic nature of multilingual and multicultural subjects. What is their status in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and in the social sciences? How do subjects position themselves in relation to their respective languages and cultures, and how does their ability to act vary according to the social contexts in which they find themselves? What strategies do they use to integrate themselves into, and to act within, groups and institutions (or to circumvent groups and institutions altogether)? How do they assert their complex linguistic competencies in spite of a sometimes imperfect mastery of each individual language? To what extent are they capable of inventing new perspectives on themselves—and thereby in a sense redefining themselves—out of the linguistic and cultural resources at their disposal? This introduction serves as a general frame to situate the notion of speaker/actor within SLA; the micro-entries that follow it explore various aspects of the speaking subject vis-à-vis multilingualism and multiculturalism.

In an institutional-pedagogical context, learners, instructors, administrators, examiners, politicians, parents, and friends can all claim the status of “speaker/actor.” Nevertheless, because of the language learner’s primary role in the process of acquisition, we concentrate in this chapter on the learner as both an apprentice-speaker and a

social actor. How do methods of instruction relate to this notion of speaker/actor apprentice?

## PERSPECTIVES ON THE LEARNER IN METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Until the 1950s, the traditional methodology of foreign language instruction approximated the model for Greek and Latin, emphasizing grammar, reading and writing (and, more specifically, literature). Students were receptive above all, expected to memorize grammatical and lexical structures; whenever classroom exercises demanded more productive work, it generally entailed word-for-word translation according to strict, predetermined norms. The learner was not a “speaker” of the language, but rather a “student” of it. In order to promote a more “natural” acquisition of foreign language through immersion and dialogue, the direct method began to attribute a more active role to the learner, who thus became a “speaker” (literally, because the method emphasized oral practice), but only within very delimited contexts. Learners conversed mostly with the instructor about the here-and-now of the classroom, and although they responded to his or her questions, they lacked autonomy and remained virtually unexposed to the phenomenon of linguistic variation.

The audio-oral method of the 1950s and 1960s, founded on the principles of behaviorism and structural linguistics, emphasized memorization once again, but within an oral context. Comprehension came secondary to production, and the accuracy of pronunciation was fundamental. Language learning was considered a more or less mechanical process that entailed the formation of automatic linguistic functions; its primary goal became the reproduction of complete and correct sentences. From then on, the language learner was regarded as a “speaker,” but only within the domain of memorized exchanges—the words uttered came from dialogues in the textbook, not the student’s original and spontaneous productions.

When Chomsky published his critique of B. F. Skinner’s *Verbal Behavior* in 1959, he shook the foundations of the audio-oral method. According to Chomsky, children do not acquire their native language through imitation or behaviorist reinforcement, but through their creative and intuitive construction of the linguistic code. This cognitivist perspective, adopted in particular by Stephen Krashen (1982), emphasized comprehension rather than automatic production, and it ushered in a series of methods during the 1970s and 1980s (Total Physical Response by James Asher and the Natural Approach by Tracy Terrell, for example) that were based on the notion of comprehensible input, considered by Krashen to be the primary condition of language acquisition. In 1972, Selinker established a theory of language acquisition that focused on the learner him- or herself, introducing the notion of interlanguage to describe the learner’s approximated linguistic system—a transitory system that, mining the resources of both the L1 and the L2, exhibits diverse strategies that form part of a latent psychological structure, distinct from the one employed by children learning their mother tongue. Since then, the learner has been conceived from a psycholin-

guistic perspective as someone playing an active role in the process of language acquisition, but his or her participation is understood to be mental and not directly observable.

For the past thirty years, the communicative approach has dominated theories of language pedagogy. Emerging from a confluence of sociopolitical conditions (globalization, the expansion of Europe, mobility...) and new theoretical approaches (in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis), the communicative approach differs from previous methods insofar as it is based on a functional, rather than a structural, conception of language and communication. As Hymes states: “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (1971, p. 10). His notion of communicative competence, along with Austin’s and Searle’s concept of the speech-act, according to which utterances perform acts that modify the context in which they are produced, opened the field of analysis (and of instruction) to an entire range of contextual factors classified by Hymes in his SPEAKING schema to describe situations of communication. His recognition of sociolinguistic variation complicated the notion of interlanguage, because it rendered heterogeneous a linguistic system that until then had been perceived as homogeneous. He highlighted the interdependence of the speaker and the context of interaction, especially in multilingual settings. Gumperz, for his part, underscored the importance of analyzing the speaking situation itself in the study of communication among multilingual individuals, specifically as a means of understanding practices of code-switching. Speakers were thus seen as social actors, but not necessary homogeneous individuals; they inhabited different roles, and they adopted voices that were not necessarily their own.

## THE GENESIS OF THE “SPEAKER/ACTOR” IN SLA THEORY

The juxtaposition of the terms “speaker” and “actor” accentuates the social dynamic of communication. But what do these terms mean within SLA theory? From the cognitivist point of view that has traditionally dominated theories of language acquisition, the learner has generally been considered to be a font of factual and procedural knowledge that is acquired through an internal learning process over the course of years. The knowledge of multiple languages and multiple cultures has been seen as an intrapersonal phenomenon that resides within the mind of the speaker. By contrast, the collocation “speaker/actor” demands a new perspective that transforms multilingualism and multiculturalism into *interpersonal* phenomena. The speaker is no longer someone who speaks, but someone who acts—that is, someone who acts *through* speaking and thus becomes a social actor. The juxtaposition speaker/actor highlights the various positions assumed by the speaker, who, as an actor, combines multiple modalities of learning, speaking and action. For example, while learning multiple languages at once within and outside a classroom, s/he is likely to experience both dominant and dominated, native and non-native interactive positions at different moments in his or her life. Multilingual and multicultural communicative competence

constitutes, and is constituted by, interpersonal exchanges in which individuals negotiate their identities and their linguistic and cultural practices in the context of social interaction.

The term “learner,” so frequently used in language acquisition theory, is a widely accepted concept that evokes an established trajectory—essentially the evolution from beginning learner to native speaker (Firth & Wagner, 1997). This process and its target goal—the acquisition of the native speaker’s grammatical competence—can be categorized, evaluated, tested and described from a quantitative point of view along a linear scale of development. To be sure, the notion of speaker/actor upsets these assumptions insofar as it emphasizes the contingencies, subjectivity and flexibility of the speaking subject.

The notion of speaker/actor reflects the often observed fact that a solid understanding of grammar does not always go hand in hand with communicative success. There are speaker/actors who lack grammar skills but nevertheless function well in terms of communication and socialization, while still others may have solid grammar skills but are less adept at social interaction. We thus move from a conception of language as a fixed, autonomous system to a conception of language as a dynamic, semiotic resource that the individual combines with other resources to act within the social world.

If, within traditional perspectives on the “learner,” one considered communicative strategies to be ways of filling gaps or repairing misunderstandings, the strategies employed by speaker/actors would be more positively evaluated:

*Strategies* are a means the language user exploits to mobilise and balance his or her resources, to activate skills and procedures, in order to fulfil the demands of communication in context and successfully complete the task in question in the most comprehensive or most economical way feasible depending on his or her precise purpose. Communication strategies should therefore *not* be viewed simply with a disability model—as a way of making up for a language deficit or a miscommunication. Native speakers regularly employ communication strategies of all kinds.... (Council of Europe, p. 57).

Such a perspective throws into question an instrumental approach to language acquisition that, drawing on a restrictive definition of the speaker founded on his or her level of performance in the four basic competencies (speaking, listening, reading and writing), reduces the speaking subject to the status of a simple learner who has not yet reached the stage of actor. The juxtaposition speaker/actor emphasizes the individual’s power to participate wholly in the creation or modification of contexts in which he or she acquires and uses language. The speaker is an actor not only in the classroom, but also in the social and cultural milieu that surrounds him or her.



## FROM AN ACADEMIC CONTEXT TO VARIOUS CONTEXTS OF THE SOCIAL WORLD

Theories of language pedagogy and research on language acquisition have often separated what one learns in school from what one learns outside it in order to understand the process by which one becomes multilingual. These traditions have emphasized an individual's gap in competencies rather than what the learner does, or is capable of doing, in daily life. In reality, the multilingual and multicultural individual is a speaker/actor both in the classroom and in his/her everyday cultural experiences.

The notion of speaker/actor reframes the individual in such a way that it takes into account his/her capacities, voices, identities, affiliations and roles in social action. This individual is considered from the point of view of what s/he is (multilingual speaker/actor) rather than what s/he isn't (for example, a native speaker). The conception of multilingual speaker/actor nullifies the native speaker/non-native speaker dichotomy. The "native speaker," who has always been the model against which learners have been measured, is a monolingual and monocultural speaker/actor: s/he only communicates in his or her own social context, and his or her identity and affiliations are created, understood and communicated in this context alone. On the other hand, the multilingual and multicultural speaker/actor is an intercultural individual: s/he experiences his or her daily life in two or more languages, and each language might be used in different domains. Not only must s/he speak these different languages and live these different cultures, but s/he must articulate them through different personae and affiliations, and s/he must integrate them into his own identity. The knowledge and competencies of an intercultural speaker/actor are thus different than those of a native speaker. Moreover, the intercultural speaker/actor can orchestrate his or her languages, affiliations and identities in order to realize personal objectives (Kramsch, 1999).

In order to construct and communicate these affiliations and identities, the multilingual speaker/actor must create a personal voice for him- or herself within and across his or her languages, drawing on the whole of his or her multilingual repertory. This personal voice constitutes the expression of a persona—that is, an identity and a perspective on the world that enables him or her to act as a multilingual and multicultural individual. Language learning, far from being the simple acquisition of a linguistic code, thus becomes a search for new possibilities of expression to create a personal style in each language. The learner-turned-speaker/actor draws on his or her linguistic repertory to communicate meanings relevant to all situations in which s/he has cause to communicate as well as the different cultural contexts in which s/he lives. The goal of multilingual and multicultural language instruction is thus to transform and widen the collection of linguistic and cultural practices that each individual possesses and that s/he can exploit as a social speaker/actor. In the case of the multilingual individual, these practices are not constrained to one particular language but include all of the linguistic practices available to him or her. Lam's (2000) ethnographic case study illustrates this idea. Almon, a Chinese immigrant adolescent in San Francisco, lacked confidence in his English in spite of the fact that he had lived in the United States for

five years. An instant message enthusiast, Almon decided to create a website about a Japanese pop music star. Through his online interactions, Almon discovered a new way of expressing himself in English as well as a newfound solidarity with other Internet users. Lam, in her conclusion, proposes that Almon, through appropriating and rearticulating the discourses and narrative roles available to him in this virtual community, created a new identity in English that he had not been able to create in his high school or in his “real” local community. This study shows not only how social contexts affect the use of languages in virtual contexts, but also (and this is the most important point) how virtual communication itself can affect participants’ real-world social contexts and their formation of identities.

A multilingual and multicultural speaker/actor such as Almon acts and speaks in multiple communities (scholarly, social, virtual, etc.), and he experiences the intercultural through his affiliations with various communities that often straddle different languages and cultures. These affiliations provide resources that enable him to create a multilingual and multicultural identity founded on his linguistic use and practices. In certain communities, intrapersonal competencies and skills can transform into social action, and the learner becomes a social actor integrated into multiple social groups. In other communities—either imagined or virtual—the learner can experience things by proxy, so to speak. Affiliation, however, does not depend solely on the individual, but on the communities themselves. Because a community can admit or exclude non-members, the act of joining a community throws into relief both the uncertain possibility of entry and an individual’s ability to integrate into it. This entails not only speaking or interacting in the dominant language and culture, but also capitalizing on the diversity of languages and cultures present in a society or accessible on the Internet, and sometimes creating a community outside of traditional social structures. Electronic connectivity, in particular, which facilitates not only one-to-one and one-to-many communication, but also many-to-many communication, enables the creation of virtual communities that transcend borders and offer new possibilities of multilingual and multicultural affiliation.

## **HOW DOES ONE EVALUATE A SPEAKER/ACTOR LEARNER?**

Many speaker/actors become multilingual through academic means, but nobody enters a language classroom without already being a speaker/actor. Learning additional languages is thus not a constitutive, but a *re*constitutive, process. And yet, language learning is not necessarily an intercultural phenomenon; intercultural language instruction must go beyond teaching the linguistic code itself and provide more than factual information that is designed to represent the culture as a monolithic entity.

While in traditional SLA the learner is held responsible for the acquisition of linguistic competence, which can be evaluated according to a standardized, objective and impersonal process, the transformation of the learner into a speaker/actor makes the relationship between the individual and language more reflexive: the speaker/actor acts

on language, and language acts on the speaker/actor. Learning a new language becomes a subjective process in which personal, individual, social, cultural and linguistic phenomena are always at stake, informing a student's processes of acquisition and his or her actions. The evaluation of such learners adds to the objective measurement of their skills an appreciation of the subjective aspects of their language use, as well as their reflection on that use.

The existence of the "speaker/actor," along with his or her various roles and behaviors, are better understood in the social sciences than in the theory and practice of language acquisition. The latter has rarely taken into account the personal and interpersonal nature of the speaker/actor, reducing him or her instead to a cognitive entity who learns a language, but who does not learn to perceive, feel and express him- or herself in that language. Underscoring the importance of imagination and creativity in the process of becoming a fully-fledged social actor, this chapter expands perspectives on language acquisition through its description of various modalities of learning and various ways of evaluating skills. In so doing, it illustrates the necessity of using an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the multilingual and multicultural subject.



# VOICE IN L2 ACQUISITION: SPEAKING THE SELF THROUGH THE LANGUAGE OF THE OTHER

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Learning a foreign language is not just acquiring an autonomous linguistic system but developing a mode of expression that is shared by members of a speech community. Speaking another language is speaking the language of an Other through words that have a social, historical and cultural existence and “shared cultural loads” (Galisson 1991). These cultural loads reflect and give shape to their speakers’ sensibilities, memories, and representations of self and others; they have shaped the linguistic imagination of social actors living in the same geographic or historic space and speaking the same language.

How can learners of a foreign language express themselves through cultural loads that belong to others? Which speech community do they aspire to belong to? These questions confront the learner with the paradox of the individual and the group and the relativity of Self and Other. They call for a post-structuralist approach in the study of language learning and teaching, in particular the problematics of voice. Voice can be discussed as a sociolinguistic, a cultural and a literary notion.

## **A SOCIOLINGUISTIC NOTION**

In its social sense, to ‘have a voice’ is to have the discourse skills necessary to communicate, to be heard, and above all listened to. As Bourdieu (1991) writes, grammaticality alone does not ensure social acceptability. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) teaches learners the strategies for taking the floor, managing turns at talk and discourse topics that will be necessary to communicate with native and other non-native speakers in the context of verbal exchanges. These strategies will enable them to participate, to make their views heard among interlocutors from different cultures (Kramersch 2003).

## A CULTURAL AND POLITICAL NOTION

There are, however, learners who despite CLT never manage to have a voice, either because they are native speakers of a non-standard dialect and their voice is discredited when they seek to learn their heritage language, or because it is not politically correct to speak a language other than the official language in monolingual contexts, or because their discourse is different from the dominant discourse, or simply because of xenophobic prejudice that prevents from hearing what one does not want to hear. The notion of voice is here a cultural and political one; it is the object of identity and community claims (Norton 2000). The structural aspects of foreign language use become targets of discriminatory practices, whether they be grammatical deficiencies, a regional or foreign accent, a non-conventional conversational style, taboo or censured topics of conversations, or the use of linguistic codes and registers censored by a monolingual language policy.

## A STYLISTIC AND LITERARY NOTION

In literary studies, voice has been studied extensively by literary critics interested in the writings of those who write in a language other than their native language. These bi- or multilingual individuals experience the paradox of having to find their own voice, i.e., their own style, through the speech of others without letting their subjectivity become either the fixed identity given to them by the media or the official discourse of any speech community. They struggle against the colonialist and orientalist discourses that can still be found sometimes in language teaching. The challenge is to gain ownership of the language, but with one's own style. As Edouard Glissant, the poet from the Antilles, said: "I speak to you in your speech, but I understand you in my language" (Glissant 1981:322).

### Case 1

"The first time I was very nervous and afraid to talk on the phone. When the phone rang, everybody in my family was busy, and my daughter had to answer it. After ESL course when we moved and our landlord tried to persuade me that we have to pay for the whole year, I got upset and I talked with him on the phone over one hour and I didn't think about the tenses rules. I had known that I couldn't give up. My children were very surprised when they heard me." (p.96)

Source : Norton, Bonny. *Identity and Language learning*. London: Longman, 2000.

### Case 2

"One always writes from an absence, the choice of a language automatically signifying the postponement of another. What at first would seem an imposition - why does one have to choose - quickly turns into an advantage. The absence of what is postponed continues to work, obscurely, on the chosen language, suffusing it, even better, contaminating it, with an *autrement dit* that brings it unexpected eloquence. That alterity, or alteration, also disturbs the reading habits of the bilingual subject. . . .

I wrote the word "alterity" which brings to my mind the French for satisfying one's third, *désaltérer*. The writing of a bilingual writer, I would venture, is of need always altered, never "disaltered"; always thirsty, always wanting, never satisfied. And it is also, in another sense, *alterada*, in the way I used to hear the Spanish term used by my mother, my aunts, when referring to somebody who was slightly off, who could not control her thoughts, her voice." (Molloy 2003:74)

Source : Molloy, Sylvia. Bilingualism, writing and the feeling of not quite being there. In: Isabelle de Courtivron (Ed.) *Lives in Translation. Bilingual Writers on Identity and Creativity*. New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 74

## APPROPRIATION OF IDENTITY AND POLYVOCALITY

The first case is an extract from the diary that Martina, an immigrant from the Czech Republic to Canada, wrote in the course of a six-month research project after completing an ESL course taught by Bonny Norton (2000). She describes how she suddenly found a voice to resist her landlord and to claim her rights as a tenant. Not only does she use the linguistics resources of the other, since she manages to make herself perfectly understood in English, but, drawing on her identity as a mother rather than as an immigrant, she manages to establish herself as a subject to be listened to and taken seriously. Norton explains this turn of events through the very nature of subjectivity, defined as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions, one's sense of self and way of understanding one's relation to the world" (p.124). The case of Martina can serve to illustrate the post-structuralist insight that the speaking subject, constructed through symbolic systems like language, is multiple, conflictual, i.e., the object of symbolic power struggles, and always becoming, always 'in process' (Kramsch 2009).

As in the example of Martina, we can see how the bilingual subject constructs itself in and through the written language. Sylvia Molloy, of Argentinian father and American mother and long-time francophone, publishes in English and in Spanish. In this essay written in English, she gives insights into the writing process of a plurilingual writer who writes in one language but with traces of other languages, and who develops her own writing style. Under the English sentences other voices are audible – the Spanish voices of her mother and her aunt talking about a somewhat crazy member of the family, the voice of La Fontaine's lamb who comes to a brook to quench its thirst. These various voices constitute what Bakhtin called the polyvocality or intertextuality of the speech act (Bakhtin 1978). This polyvocality is particularly applicable to the language productions of plurilingual individuals. Like Martine, Molloy constructs with words from elsewhere a plurilingual subjectivity of her own.





# FROM THE LEARNER TO THE ACTOR: CATEGORIZATIONS AS LOCI OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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## FROM THE LEARNER-ACTOR TO THE ACTOR-LEARNER

In the history of linguistic research, and of applied linguistics and language pedagogy, the individual learning a foreign language was firstly perceived as the one who learns elements of a language-system, then as a learner-actor who's assigned different levels of communicative competence—beginner, intermediate or advanced (cf. Lantolf & Genug, 2000). Interaction analysis however, teaches us that the learner, disregarding her level of competence, is already an actor—it teaches us that she learns by being an actor, in the interaction and in the situation, in the moments when different interactional resources are at work: the functional use of code mixing, frequent repetitions, topic shift, for example. Therefore, if the use of resources other than the target language have until now been analyzed as strategies meant either as substitutes for (still) missing elements in the target language or to avoid potential errors as identified by the learner herself, research now evolves towards a perspective of the learner as actor accomplishing a specific role, not only in a classroom setting, but also outside of the classroom (for example as *a client in sales encounter, an expert in a given domain*, cf. Gardner & Wagner, 2004; Py, 1993). Herein, the interactional dimension, which the learner-actor is confronted with as a social being, is tangible (going beyond her only categorization as a learner of the language in focus or a specific role relevant in an encounter). In fact, the actor-learner interacts and unavoidably positions herself in relation to the topic-at-talk and to the present interlocutors in dynamic and changing ways throughout the interaction. While doing so, she's not only (re-)acting in the one role that initially has been ascribed to her, for example, the role of the language-learner. On the contrary, she constructs and deploys methods of categorization which conversation analysis describes as being essential in and for every interaction. The actor-learner uses these methods, which have been identified according to their linguistic, discursive and above all sequential features, as she participates in the interaction. As illustrated by the following example, the dimension of language acquisition therefore changes accordingly: the learner interacts by deploying and by developing

the resources that are available to her, in and through the interactional setting of which competences in the language are part (involving, however, multilingual and multimodal resources amongst others).

## ACCOMPLISHING CATEGORIZATION IN INTERACTION

One of the methods for organizing interaction will be presented as illustration in the following, based on systematic descriptions of the phenomenon (Sacks, 1979). Interactants use the method called “categorization” in order to manage mutual positioning with regard to the topics at talk, to orient themselves towards their interlocutors, to achieve changes in orientation and in taking position or marking stance. Indeed, every situation of communication requires the interlocutors to take part in the group that is interacting, to organize their participation within the situation in constituting or developing groupings throughout the interaction—on a more or less temporary basis and with regard to other available group delimitations. Therefore, a general task which all interactants (learners or not) are constantly facing when in interaction is the simple fact of being present in an interaction as regards the co-participants, the jointly raised topics and the very configuration of the interactional setting. However, the sequential techniques, which are enacted by the interlocutors for categorizing themselves and others throughout the interaction, vary from one turn-taking to the next. Methods of categorizations are particularly rich and have been documented in interactions, which involve “a second language,” taking place inside or outside institutional teaching settings.

Techniques of self-categorization of an interactant who identifies herself in interaction as a “learner,” a “non-native” or as “an-individual-not-belonging-to-a-certain-socio-cultural-community” are frequent. The learner displays her identity in the way she exhibits her discursive repertoire in the sequential organization of the conversation. Moreover, various ways of managing and changing positioning in relation to the available interlocutors or the topic-at-talk allow for categorization in interaction, including techniques for establishing specific links within the interaction. The following corpus extract (see transcript) transcribes a stretch of a radio phone-in from a radio show in French-speaking Switzerland. It shows the implementation of a self-categorization accomplished by the person, Tamara, who is making the phone call. The observable self-categorization allows for not only displaying distance to the linguistic community primarily addressed by the radio program (Russia vs. Switzerland: lines 60-1). Moreover, she is categorizing herself as a linguistically aware language learner (lines 65-7). Tamara succeeds in making her interlocutor Etienne (lines 70-2) return to the topic (“les romans”) which was initially introduced by herself (52) and taken up by the interlocutor (54) on the basis of an ex-post evaluation (“malheureusement”). She proceeds with the self-categorization by aligning available categorizing dimensions (*pas vs. plus, toujours vs. jamais, romans vs. politique*) (65-8) and by identifying herself as being linguistically ill positioned (“quelque chose qui n’est correspond pas,” 65-7). In doing so, she manages to get by after a relevant incident in the interaction, which is marked by the

introduction (“pourquoi malheureusement”, 54) of a different topic from the one that she had introduced (“les romans”). The richness of Tamara’s repertoires is tangible as the actor-learner displays sequential skillfulness in accomplishing the self-categorizing methods. These correspond to the characteristic traits, which experienced social actors display as they avoid direct categorizations (in this case, the categorization as non-competent-in-French-Russian-immigrant).

A call in a radio phone-in show (lines in italics: translating gloss in English)

- 51    éti:    quelles sont vos lectures en ce moment ?  
*what are you reading at the moment ?*
- 52    Tai :    ah (.) vous savez (.) j’ai toujours les  
*ah (.) you know (.) I still like*
- 53            ~~les~~ romans (..) ~~malheureusement~~ romans  
*NOVELS (..) UNFORTUNATELY*
- 54    éti:    pourquoi= malheureusement ?  
*why=unfortunately ?*
- 55    Tai :    parce que (..) eh c’est pas LA politique (.)  
*because (..) it’s not POLITICS (.)*
- 56            politique (.) je n’aime pas et les romans  
*politics (.) I do NOT like it and novels*
- 57            (.) j’ai toujours aimé  
*(.) i’ve always liked them*
- 58    éti:    la politique (..) vous n’aimez pas, ou vous n’aimez  
*politics (..) you do NOT like it, or you do not like it*
- 59            plus ?  
*anymore ?*
- 60    Tai :    hi je ne m’en suis jamais intéressé (.) ni en  
*hm I have NEVER TAKEN INTEREST in it (.) neither hm in*
- 61            Russie (.) ni pendant mes études (.) rien (.)  
*Russia (.) nor during my studies (.) NOTHING (.)*
- 62            JE suis neutre hi, je vois que ça fait mal (.)  
*I AM neutral hm, I can see that this is bad*
- 63            vu que je ne peux pas aider dans quoi que  
*considering that I can not help with anything*
- 64            ce soit (.) ~~quelque~~ JE n’ai rien et si j’ai le  
*whatsoever (.) I don’t have anything and if I have the*
- 65            malheur de dire quelque chose qui n’est (..) ~~rien~~  
*misfortune to say something that is not (..) nothing*
- 66            ne correspond pas (.) vous savez (.) j’ai (.)  
*is not appropriate (.) you know (.) I have*
- 67            souvent en langue je des fois je dis trop de  
*often in language I sometimes say too many*
- 68            vérités et j’ai payé trop cher (.) ~~elles~~ j’ai  
*truths and I have paid a high price (.) they I have*
- 69            essayé de le dire (3.0)

		tried to (3.0)
70	éti:	tai ara (.) je vous coi prends (3.0) dites-nous (.) tai ara (.) i understand you (3.0) tell us (.)
71		tai ara (.) est-ce que vous aii ez la littérature tai ara (.) do you like literature
72		vous aii ez les roi ans (..) do you like novels(..)

The exploitation of the different dimensions of self-categorization as well as other-categorization constitutes an efficient resource with regard to all levels of language teaching (cf. Ziegler, 2006a, 2006b). These methods are an essential part of the language acquisition process as they allow the actor-learner, in co-managing with other actors, to mobilize and to support the sequential deployment of the interaction.

## FROM TALK-IN-INTERACTION TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Drawing from conversation analysis, interactional and praxeological linguistics as well as research focusing on activity-theory and learning, the perspective on the actor-learner as developed in this paper allows for envisaging the language learner as a social actor in her own right. Taking up the tasks, which all participants face in interaction, the actor-learner takes part in the organizing of the activity as regards the positioning of herself in line with the development of the interaction (including silences and other interactional events). Therefore, the learner of a language (especially the beginner) can't be simply pictured in terms of linguistic elements used in the target language or with regard to her potential deficits in this language which are handled by using other linguistic, interactional or thematic means in an interaction.

The linguistic system of the interactant is, indeed, part of the resources which she deploys in an interaction setting. However, this linguistic capacity is neither the sole, nor the first dimension to be considered when conceptualizing acquisition in terms of social practices. Therefore, the concept of the actor-learner, inside and outside of the classroom, marks an important moment in the development of the research in language pedagogy and acquisition in plurilingual and multicultural contexts. In sum, three research axes can be outlined as follows:

- Raising awareness for plurilingual repertoires and their multiple situated configurations;
- Acknowledging an (inter)actional perspective on learning as situated accomplishment;
- Developing epistemologically valid descriptions of the methods (here, of categorizations) as enacted by the actor-learner in interaction.

# DISCOURSE COMMUNITIES: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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## CHALLENGES FOR LEARNERS AS ACTORS

Recent sociocultural perspectives view language learning as developing the ability to participate in new discourse communities as a competent member (Duff & Hornberger, 2008). In this view, language learners, hereafter referred to as “actors,” need to become socialized into the values and practices of a target community by participating in its activities and interacting with its members. For example, international graduate students must learn the values, conventions, expectations, power structures, and practices of their new academic communities by participating in various academic activities and interacting with their peers and instructors, while simultaneously learning and using their second language (L2). To participate in the target community’s discursive practices, it is therefore critical for actors to gain competence and be recognized as legitimate members.

However, developing competence and membership in a new community as a language learner can be complex and challenging for two primary reasons. First, as contemporary communities including academic and classroom communities have become increasingly multilingual, multicultural, multimodal, and interdisciplinary, it is becoming more difficult to define what is considered as “competence” within target communities. We can no longer assume that communities function under stable and monolithic sets of norms and practices; rather, they may be characterized by their pluralistic discourses and practices, conflicts and contradictions, and constant changes. This, in turn, suggests that target cultures and practices can be less transparent to actors than one might assume. It may also mean that all members need to develop multiple competencies that are continually negotiated within a given community.

Second, as many studies have documented, actors may face various challenges in their attempt to participate as “legitimate” members of their target communities. In addition to linguistic problems, actors may encounter issues related to educational/professional culture and practice, race/ethnicity, gender, institutional roles and representations, power-relations, identity, and so on. For example, relatively powerful members of a target community may prevent newcomers from participating in its

activities to their full potential (Leki, 2001). Actors' limited interest in or resistance to their target cultures may also work against their full integration into their new communities.

While these challenges can be significant, research also shows that actors nevertheless attempt to gain membership by exercising their personal agency and using various strategies. Morita (2004) illustrated that graduate students from Japan created and used a variety of strategies to participate in classroom activities (class discussions in particular) and to gain recognition as legitimate members of their new Canadian classroom communities. The following section presents a series of students' narratives from this study that comment on their challenges regarding class participation as well as their coping strategies. All of the seven students who participated in this study were born and raised in Japan, spoke Japanese as their first language, and therefore were speakers of English as an L2 in the Canadian classroom. One student (Rie) was a third-generation Korean citizen born and raised in Japan. Two students (Nanako and Shiho) had received some education at an elementary school level in an English-speaking country (1-4 years), while the others had been educated in Japan all their lives.

### *Learners' voices about their participation*

Strategies to participate in discussions

#### **Excerpt 1:**

I wrote down what I was going to say and practiced saying it several times before I went to class... But I couldn't say what I had prepared. When my classmate forced me to speak, I panicked and my English became terrible. (Lisa: September 30, 1999)<sup>4</sup>

#### ***Peer support***

##### **Excerpt 2:**

My position in the class has clearly changed from an animal to a human being ((laughs)). The start of that change was when I talked to J [a Canadian classmate]... We talked about the class and different members in the class and that made a big difference. (Kota: December 21, 1999)

#### ***Instructors' support***

##### **Excerpt 3:**

What [my instructor] told me was, I may be disadvantaged by things like English abilities ... but there is an advantage to being an outsider in a given culture. She said that there should be things that only I can see from an outsider's perspective. (Nanako: December 15, 1999)

<sup>4</sup> All the excerpts came from either interviews with the students or weekly reports they provided about their ongoing class participation and other related issues (see Morita, 2004, for more detail). Pseudonyms are used for the students' names.

***Selective accommodation*****Excerpt 4:**

[In the Canadian classroom,] students don't seem to care much about the flow of the discussion and say whatever they want to say.... But I myself want to be sensitive about where the discussion is going and what kinds of comments are expected at a given point in time. (Jun: October 6, 1999)

**Power and resistance****Excerpt 5:**

[In class] I said many times that I didn't understand what [the instructor] was talking about. I think I have the right to say that because I have the right to learn. (Rie: December 11, 1999)

***Role and identity*****Excerpt 6:**

I think that a newcomer has a role to play.... A brand-new member can bring interesting ideas and fresh perspectives. In that sense, I think I can contribute something to the class. (Shiho: April 26, 2000)

**STRATEGIES FOR LEARNERS AS ACTORS**

The first excerpt illustrates that actors can use various strategies to participate in oral discussions that include: speaking in less face-threatening situations (e.g., small group discussions), preparing things to say beforehand (Excerpt 1), introducing topics of which one has personal knowledge and interest, and taking certain risks. It is also helpful to seek support from peers and instructors. A common strategy used by the students in Morita (2004) was to talk to their classmates one-on-one outside of regular class time. As Excerpt 2 indicates, this strategy can help actors to gain some recognition and understanding among class members, especially when they find it difficult to express themselves orally during class activities. Instructors or other "experts" (e.g., native speakers) can also provide significant guidance (Excerpt 3), although it is problematic to assume that all so-called experts can or will accommodate L2 actors fully and help them to gain access and legitimacy.

When L2 actors encounter new sets of norms and expectations in their new communities, they may not necessarily accept them blindly. The students in Morita (2004) who brought their own personal and cultural values, remained critical of certain aspects of their new cultures and made selective adjustments (Excerpt 4). Actors may also respond to the power relations that develop within their new communities with resistance. In Excerpt 5, Rie resisted her perceived marginal status in one class by expressing her needs as a L2 speaker and asking the instructor to make some adjustments in her teaching. Finally, negotiating new roles and identities within new communities can be a significant challenge as well as an important strategy for actors. On one hand, actors may construct or be ascribed by others relatively powerless positions for various reasons such as their status as non-native speakers. On the other hand,

negotiating empowered identities can contribute greatly to their personally meaningful participation and transformation (Excerpts 6, 3).

## **BORDER-CROSSING AS A GENERATIVE PROCESS**

In crossing linguistic and cultural borders and participating in new discourse communities, actors may face multidimensional challenges. At the same time, such border-crossing is a generative process by which actors attempt to gain competence and membership by creating various strategies and negotiating new roles and identities (Kramsch, 2003). It is therefore important for communities and institutions to treat actors as active human agents with unique histories, values, goals, and resources. At the same time, communities must also recognize the socially constructed nature of participation and membership: that is, communities and relative old-timers—not just actors themselves—play a critical role in constructing actors' positionalities and in shaping their ongoing participation.



# REPERTOIRES: DECENTERING AND THE EXPRESSION OF IDENTITY

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How do second language users establish and communicate new cultural perspectives as the result of their multiple language repertoires, and what does this process have to do with the formation of identity? A key notion in this question is “repertoire,” implying an artful selection from among historically circumscribed possibilities. The word captures both the idea of interpretive choice by individual speakers and the sociocultural and the historical situation of symbolic resources from which language users construct their performances. The word evokes an artist’s stance: achievement of perfection in a given work may well be much desired, it may be pursued with ardent devotion and determination, but ultimately it can only be judged subjectively, as a matter of situational adequacy and personal satisfaction. Thus, in developing communicative repertoires, second language users discover the “privilege of the non-native speaker” (Kramsch, 1997) to imagine oneself anew, to explore novel semiotic resources and their contrast with the old, and to make of language learning a personal, creative performance.

« L’histoire de ma vie est celle d’une quête non pas d’*identité* mais d’*intensité*. » (Nancy Huston, *Désirs et réalités*, p. 177)

... dans une langue étrangère *aucun lieu n’est jamais commun*: tous sont exotiques. « can of worms » était une banalité jusqu’à ce que j’apprenne « panier de crabes »: ces deux façons de dire un grouillement déplaisant et inextricable me sont devenues intéressantes en raison de l’écart entre elles. Le bilinguisme est une stimulation intellectuelle de tous les instants. (Nancy Huston, *Nord perdu*, p. 46)

Je constate que chaque chose a deux noms pour moi, l’un grec, l’autre français. [...] Je réalise également que je ne vois pas exactement de la même façon les objets selon que je les nomme dans une langue ou dans l’autre. Formulé en français, le mot « marteau » me rappelle le coffre-lit que j’avais construit tout seul, par souci d’économie, lors de mon installation à Paris. Dit en grec (*sphyrn*), le même terme me fait plutôt songer à mon père qui aimait bricoler. Il prenait grand soin de ses outils, il les nettoyait avec un tissu imbibé d’huile de paraffine. Un jour je le surpris alors qu’il clouait un cercueil dans un hangar apparentant à la municipalité.

—Il y a quelqu'un dedans? Lui avais-je demandé.

Il y avait quelqu'un. Il tapait avec vigueur sur les clous, les enfonçait profondément, comme s'il croyait le défunt capable de s'évader.

[...]

Les souvenirs que j'associe au grec sont beaucoup plus anciens que ceux qu'évoque pour moi le français. Ma langue maternelle connaît mon âge. Le français me rajeunit de vingt-quatre ans. C'est appréciable. Il me semble que mes textes français sont plus légers que mes écrits grecs.

Je commence à penser que l'apprentissage d'une langue ressemble à une cure de jouvence. Le sango ne me rappelle rien, mes souvenirs lui sont étrangers, il me donne l'agréable illusion que je peux prendre un nouveau départ. Il m'invite à jouer, comme le faisait le français.

(Vassilis Alexakis, *Les mots étrangers*, pp. 53-54)

## ANALYSIS/COMMENTARY

For examples of ways in which multiple language repertoires help to shape desired new identities through novel perspectives, we have only to look to the ways in which successful second language writers represent their experiences. Here we find many cases in which the use of a second language helps to overcome the weight of personal experience and establish a break from the past. However, we also find stories, such as the case of the bilingual English/French writer Nancy Huston, where the learning of a second language is understood primarily as a key to inspiration and creativity. For Huston, a native speaker of North American English, the French language represents a source of unlimited exoticism, and the spaces between her languages a constant intellectual stimulation.

A second language may even become invested with such powers as multiplying memory restoring one's lost youth. In *Les mots étrangers* (2002) the Greek-French bilingual novelist Vassilis Alexakis recounts his decision to add a third language, Sango, to his repertoire. Alexakis had immigrated to Paris from his native Greece as a young adult, driven primarily by an instrumentalist motive to become a journalist. However, the process of learning French and a double life of bilingualism eventually inspired creative, autobiographical writing in which the author explores the meaning of his multiple communicative repertoires in relation to his history and sense of self. A word as mundane as “marteau/sphyrī” is rich in associative power, evoking specific concrete life circumstances and dramatic narratives.

For Alexakis, as for many other multilingual individuals, the lure of a new language is sufficient motivation in and of itself. For no reason other than to expand his repertoire, Alexakis seeks out a new language as unfamiliar as possible: Sango, a vehicular language spoken in the central Africa, a language with no *a priori* connection whatsoever to the author's personal or professional life. The search does not serve instrumental or integrative motives, but represents a new beginning: to develop a new linguistic repertoire is to return to youthful innocence, to receive an invitation to play.

The concept of multiple language repertoires offers a useful contrast to the notion that language ability is best represented as the universal, abstract, and idealized competence of monolingual “native speakers.” This now traditional view from linguistics, as Pavlenko (2006) notes, represents a “monolingual bias” and inevitably leads to a deficit model of multilingualism in which the bilingual person becomes the sum of two incomplete monolinguals in one body. When the consideration and description of multilingual experiences come into focus, however, it becomes clear that persons in command of more than one language, that is, those representing the majority of the world’s population, may instead be defined as specific speaker/hearers each with a complete set of linguistic repertoires. Unique to each individual, these repertoires are appropriated through concrete activity in particular, real-world settings, in response to the environment and to personal needs and desires.

The notion of repertoire, and the choice that accompanies it, also ties in with recognition that desire for competence in multiple languages is far more complex and linked to the “emotions and affective identifications of multilingual individuals” (Kramersch, 2004: 552) than has been commonly assumed. Case studies of second language writers—successful learners by definition—suggest that while the traditional categories used by social psychologists to study motivation may often be relevant, these categories capture only a small portion of the potential range of possibility and fail to acknowledge the sociohistorical contexts of language learning. Language learners may well display “instrumental” motivation related to economic or professional needs, or they may show an “integrative” orientation along with desire to join a particular community of speakers (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). However, they may also claim that the core of their motivation is desire for expansion, refinement, multiplicity or change in their communicative repertoires—and this for a wide variety of reasons.

For many years the monolingual bias in language teaching and research, supported by colonialist or assimilationist attitudes, has failed to appreciate the perspectives of successful multilingual speakers. In emphasizing only their deficits, this approach has confronted learners with the logical impossibility of becoming monolingual in a second language. The perspective of second language writers such as Alexakis and Huston suggests the value of an expressionist approach to language teaching, rooted in respect for multicompetence, where foreign language learning becomes a voyage of discovery of the self. In this process the learner, conceived as an intentional agent, plays a decisive role in his or her own learning, responding to personal needs and desires within particular, concrete situations (Kramersch, 1998).

For language teachers, to embrace such a view is to gain new appreciation both for the practical importance of multilingual repertoires and for the variety of emotional resonances associated with them. It is also an opportunity to grasp more fully the extent to which second language learning is a personal act of inspired creativity and an opportunity for enriched self-expression. It encourages us to focus less on the distance between learner performance and Native Speaker models, and more on the capabilities that learners discover as they encounter, explore and selectively appropriate communicative resources for their own practical or aesthetic purposes.



# LANGUAGE MODES: HOW SPEAKING AND WRITING HELP MEDIATE BETWEEN LANGUAGES AND COMMUNITIES

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It is common to distinguish two main modes of language use: spoken and written. Writing mediates a speaker's relationship to language by inscribing a message on a medium—stone, papyrus, parchment, paper, chalkboard, computer screen, and the like. Such inscription necessitates transcription from one communication system to another, and confers the message with materiality and permanence to the extent allowed by the medium of inscription. Oral communication, too, can be mediated, for instance by telecommunication technology, voice recording, and amplification, but in many cases including most conversational exchanges of everyday life, this mediation is neither necessary nor used.

## THE CHALLENGES OF WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION IN SCIENTIFIC CONTEXTS

The scientific community uses writing as the preferred means for the construction and circulation of knowledge worldwide. A scientific career is assessed through the medium of writing: the first gate-keeping genres are the honours, master's, and doctoral theses, and then publications in reputable journals are tallied in promotion dossiers. Writing thus plays a significant role in negotiating access to the scientific community. Oral communication matters too, but mostly in conjunction with writing. For example, a thesis is evaluated at the defense and reflects the quality of oral interaction between a student and supervisor. Moreover, a conference presentation and informal exchanges among colleagues may be a useful springboard for future publications, while providing networking opportunities.

## LANGUAGES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

English is progressively becoming the international language of science, and the knowledge of English is a *sine qua non* for all non-anglophones who strive for a career

in the sciences (Conseil de la langue française, 1996). The field of Languages for Specific Purposes has grown as a sub-area of language teaching in large part in response to the growing demand for English for Science (Swales, 2000). However, in countries like France and Canada where French is both official and commonly used, scientists must negotiate their membership in cultural and professional communities not only at an international level, using English as the *lingua franca*, but also at a national level, in the language of their governments and fellow citizens. Such multiple memberships require a multilingual verbal repertoire for participation in and across linguistic communities; they also compel francophone scientists to face choices of loyalty: should priority be given to dissemination in English for the international community or in French for the nation?

## **CASE STUDY: THE ROLE OF WRITING AND SPEAKING IN THE NEGOTIATION OF LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL, AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

The question thus arises as to how individuals in science use oral and written communication to negotiate their participation in local, national, and international communities of language, culture, and profession. This question will be examined by means of a three-year longitudinal case study (see Gentil, 2005 for a more detailed description). At the time of research, Philippe was a student in a Bachelor of Engineering program. Born in Québec to a francophone family, raised and educated in French, but aware of the value of linguistic capital that is placed on being well versed in English, he enrolled in an English-speaking university in Québec with three intentions: to become “perfectly bilingual,” to discover the anglophone world, and to obtain a career as a professor in engineering. However, his aspirations were quickly undermined as early as his first year of studies.

The major pitfall: the linguistic and cultural gap between his social background—as a Québec francophone—and his anglophone university surroundings. During the research interviews, Philippe described the linguistic segregation between anglophone and francophone students, and shared his difficulty with engaging in conversation with anglophone professors or peers. He attributed this difficulty to three reasons: a lack of common cultural references, a lack of fluency in spoken English, and feelings of linguistic insecurity in the presence of English related to the perceived imposition of English as a carrier of cultural imperialism. Reluctant to converse in English, his English practice was primarily receptive and confined to a specialized written academic register, i.e., reading discipline-specific texts and listening to lectures with little interaction and even, at times, read directly from notes. The only writing assignment required in the first year was a report on an electronic engineering project: the first paragraph is reproduced in Excerpt 1.

**Excerpt 1: Introductory paragraph of a first-year report**

Nowadays, many public events have “light show systems” to enhance the overall presentation; music shows are a great example. Light patterns are usually controlled by full computer systems that can provide great power and flexibility as well as simple user interfaces. Think about a Rolling Stone or U2 Show... However, for simple patterns like flashing road lights or lights on a product showcase, it might not be convenient and affordable to use a whole computer. Therefore, engineers must design a simpler system.

**Excerpt 2: Introductory paragraph of the end-of-study memoir (fourth year)**

Because of their rapidity and flexibility, photonics technologies are at the heart of tomorrow’s telecommunication networks. Developments in optical back-planes have lead [sic] to the implementation of space-efficient 2-D arrays of devices, such as VCSEL’s and MEMS. However, there is no compact solution to multiplex/demultiplex channels from/to those 2-D arrays. Actual optical mux/demux devices combine or separate light in a linear fashion, which might prove inefficient for such device arrays [1]. To solve this problem, a 2-D optical demultiplexer, based on multilevel diffractive optical elements (DOE), was designed [...] based on the scalar theory of diffraction.

The informal, conversational, and spoken nature of the first text, which diverges from the conventions of engineering writing (Hyland, 2000), is even more paradoxical since Philippe was essentially exposed to a formal, academic register in English with very few occasions to use English outside of large lecture classes.

Nonetheless, Philippe noted that his practice of English had changed in the second and third year of his program. In befriending English-French bilingual students, he managed to move into English-speaking circles. Another student, Vishu, originally from India, played an equally important mediating role. Though he did not speak French, the fact that he was not native to Canada and that English was not his first language appeared to have helped defuse the power dynamics and sense of mistrust that is part of the baggage of learning English for a Québec francophone, according to Philippe. He explained: Vishu “made me exorcise my bias against anglophones a bit.” In the presence of an English-Canadian speaker, Philippe further observed, English symbolized historical hierarchies and a threat of assimilation, whereas with a non-English speaker, it acquired a certain legitimacy as a means of inter-group communication. Thanks to these cultural mediators and language brokers, Philippe was able to access an anglophone social network, which in turn allowed him to practice and develop his spoken English in informal contexts. Further, the remarkable progress he reported in the oral mode parallels noticeable improvement in the written mode as well, as evidenced by his honours thesis (see text box). Contrary to the first sample, the text from the honours thesis respects the discipline-specific conventions

of the engineering register. It appears that, having practiced receptive and productive English skills in the oral and written mode in second and third year, Philippe became better equipped to differentiate formal and informal registers in English.

## **THE SYNERGISTIC INTERPLAY BETWEEN ORAL COMMUNICATION AND WRITING**

Hornberger (2003) hypothesizes that the development of biliteracy, namely the acquisition of bilingual reading and writing skills, presupposes and reinforces the development of oral bilingual competencies, specifically because the knowledge of a formal register facilitates the acquisition of an informal register and vice versa. The English language learning study with Philippe lends support to Hornberger's hypothesis of a synergetic relationship between reading and writing development in a second language. The study also illustrates how access to *near communities* (bilingual students and anglophone peers at the same campus, in Philippe's case) can facilitate access to *far communities* (for example, the international community of engineering researchers). Participation in near communities is mostly facilitated by the means of oral communication, but more frequently through writing as well, by the channel of new technologies like emailing and instant messaging. These near communities provide a context for exchanges that allow students to practice their linguistic competences while negotiating their affiliations to cultural, linguistic, and educational communities.



# THE ACQUISITION OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE. DOES LANGUAGE EDUCATION HELP OR HINDER?

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Since the 1980s, there has been a growing awareness in (foreign) language education that the overall aim of fostering communicative competence in learners had to be enlarged to include intercultural competence (Zarate, 1986). Sercu (2004) adds that

Seen from the intercultural perspective, it can be said that what a foreign language learner needs to learn in order to attain communicative competence is not how to adapt to any one of the foreign cultures present, and forget about his/her own cultural identity. Rather, the task of the participants in such an intercultural situation will be to negotiate, by means of implicit or explicit [verbal or non-verbal] cues, a situationally adequate system of (inter)cultural standards and linguistic and pragmatic rules of interaction. (p. 116)

Thus, the quintessence of intercultural education is to train people so that they can communicate and act adequately in a plurilingual and pluricultural world.

In this context, the question arises whether present-day second or foreign language education actually helps or hinders the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence across cultures, languages and modalities. Here, the main focus will be on the acquisition of intercultural competence in language education, not multilingual competence itself, though both are indispensable for coping with the demands of today's societies. In what follows, focusing on a renowned symbol of French culture, the *Eiffel Tower*, we demonstrate different approaches to (foreign) language education, clarifying what changes in approach to traditional language teaching (where cultural contents have often been used as vehicles for language acquisition) can be made in order to promote intercultural communicative competence, not just linguistic competence. In intercultural language education, learners create meaning while interacting (in the foreign language) with foreign cultures, the interpretations and associations of those living in an shaping those cultures, their own culture and their interpretations and views of their own and foreign cultures.

Taking the point of view that language education should observe the same educational principles as other school subjects, whilst at the same time making optimal use of the specific learning opportunities language education offers for developing learners' intercultural communicative competence, we suggest, via the intercultural learning tasks we propose, that language education, like other school subjects, should be competence- and learning skill-oriented, and take account of insights from cognitive psychology and social constructivism regarding human learning.

## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

One would be mistaken to believe that any language course directed towards the achievement of linguistic competence in a foreign language will also promote intercultural competence. Indeed, it is wise to study the basic tenets underlying intercultural language courses and compare them to those on which more traditional language courses are founded. To do so, we first present two texts focusing on different aspects of France and then comment on their potential for the promotion of intercultural communicative competence.

Text 1: Extract from <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/France#.C3.89conomie>, my translation.

“France is the world's 6th most important economic power”; “It is the world's first most popular tourist destination, welcoming over 80 million visitors a year.”; “Having been organised as a capitalist economy with considerable state intervention since the Second World War, it has been most successful at producing several international industrial champions. It is France that builds the world's fastest trains, possesses some of the world's most vital automobile plants (Peugeot-Citroën, Renault), founded the world's first international construction group for nuclear plants, participates in the aeronautic and aerospace groups Airbus, Eurocopter and Ariane, hosts the independent aeronautic military group Dassault, and also renowned pharmaceutical groups, such as Sanofi Aventis and Institut Pasteur, some of the world's first agronomic industries, which could build on France's excellent farming industry, gastronomy and industry for luxury goods. Furthermore, it possesses important building traders (Bouygues, Eiffage), is one of the world's finest tourist destination and owns a high quality cinematographic industry.”

Text 2: Extract from [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tour\\_Eiffel](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tour_Eiffel), my translation.

### **Representation of the Eiffel Tower in art**

#### **Literature**

At the time when the monument was built and first exploited, it primarily became an object of personal reflections, which often were published in the newspapers of that

time and often were negative, with artists approaching topics, such as the technical, industrial and commercial challenges represented by the Eiffel Tower at the time, its influence on France's aura abroad, its aesthetics as well as its ugliness, its scientific potential as well as its no more than futile contribution to science.

Without any doubt, Roland Barthes best described artists' feelings of attraction and aversion vis-à-vis the Eiffel Tower:

“Appearance, object, symbol, the Tower is everything that people put into it, and this everything is infinite. A looking spectacle and one looked upon, a useless but irreplaceable building, a familiar world and a heroic symbol, testifier of an era but also forever new, an object that cannot be counterfeited but is constantly reproduced, a pure sign, yet open to all times, images and senses, an unimpeded metaphor; through the Tower, men exercise the important imaginary function, which constitutes their freedom, since no story, how sad it may be, has been able ever to take this away from them.” Ronald Barthes, *La Tour Eiffel*, Delpire Editeur, 1964 (my translation).

### **Film - television**

From the first days cinematographic industry started to develop, the Eiffel Tower was filmed by the most distinguished movie makers, initially only to present it in documentaries (*Panorama pendant l'ascension de la Tour Eiffel*, Louis Lumière, 1897; *Images de l'exposition 1900*, Georges Méliès, 1900).

Later on, American film industry became more and more enraptured by the tower, because of the practical and symbolic effects it could create. Indeed, it allowed to make clear to the spectator in no more than one sequence or shoot that the action was taking place in France, or Paris.

In this same vogue, from 1953 onwards, Byron Haskin shows it in ruins in his adaptation of *La Guerre des mondes*. This kind of image (the devastated Eiffel Tower) then became very popular in American films as a reference to an imminent and huge danger to our planet, as in 1996 in *Independence Day* and *Mars Attacks!* or else in *Armageddon* (1998).

For a long time, teaching a nation's culture constituted a typical feature of so-called “intercultural” education, but such homogenising and objectifying images of cultures could only present part of the manifold internal and external interpretations, views and values lived by those shaping it.

As research has shown (Sercu *et al*, 2005), many language textbooks and teachers continue to teach Culture as it is represented in the first text above, providing a flattering image of a (foreign) country, talking about the highlights of its Culture, Economy, History or Politics from a territory-bound, static, mono-cultural point of view, denying and refraining from mentioning problematic sides of society. Culture is presented as a fixed collection of descriptions and facts, which together create and

maintain a stereotypical image of the target culture. When used in a second language learning classroom, such texts would be typically used for practising reading comprehension skills, including dictionary skills, and the enlargement of the learner's vocabulary. A teacher might also ask the learners to study the cultural contents because they might become part of a test. Thus, the cultural contents are a vehicle for linguistic training, even if the facts and figures may have to be remembered for assessment purposes.

## INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION

If teachers would consider the approach to presenting cultural information chosen in the second text, an important step forward could be taken towards intercultural and competence- and learning skills-oriented education. The crucial step is to focus not only on the territory-bound Culture traditionally linked to the language one is teaching, but also on relationships between this Culture and other Cultures—including the learner's own—from an historical (political, technological, sociological) and present-day perspective—or between the small-c cultural aspects touched upon in the materials and those aspects in other cultures, as they are present in daily life (e.g., in commodities, housing, holiday destinations).

Though the second text focuses on a national symbol of France, as does the first text, the way in which this symbol is described in the second text demonstrates meaning creation in intercultural interaction, not the passing on of a fixed body of knowledge about a most successful and amazing country. Focusing on a national symbol, the text refrains from presenting a static description of this aspect of France. Quite on the contrary, it centers on meaning creating interaction about culture, in intercultural dialogues among insiders, but also outsiders to that culture.

Indeed, the learner's intercultural competence could grow when considering how this symbol of France has been perceived in the literature in different countries and how different people in different countries have viewed and now view the Eiffel Tower. Alternatively, students could benefit from a discussion of how the marketing strategy of the *Eiffel Tower Company* takes account of human psychology and cultural values, which may be different but also alike in different countries. In this way, an important symbol of France would become much more than an impressive tourist highlight. It would become a symbol of modern times, of French people and French society and of intercultural relationships in and between France and other countries and cultures. This approach is not only relevant for those living in France and learning its language and culture, but also for those outside France, learning French as a foreign language. Via intercultural (e.g., comparing and contrasting, or information assessment) tasks, both second and foreign language learners learn to engage in intercultural dialogue, which requires them to apply culture learning skills and intercultural skills, and to communicate about the topics addressed in interculturally respectful and socio- and pragmalinguistically appropriate ways.

## CONCLUSION

The information and examples given above already provide part of the answer to the multifaceted question posed at the beginning of this entry. We believe the language teaching profession has not yet climbed the *Eiffel Tower* to its multilingual and multicultural top, both in terms of the learning materials and pedagogical tasks it chooses, and the real-life intercultural and multilingual (cross-curricular) situations it puts its learners in.

We want to underline that it would be unfair to expect language teachers, and them exclusively, to be responsible for triggering and supporting learners' development towards intercultural competence across modalities, languages and cultures. This is not to say, however, that language educators cannot contribute, like other subjects taught at school, to fostering learners' development towards being multilingual and multicultural agents in the different societal and cultural groups to which they belong. Nor can they be excused for not taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves in the language classroom, or for hindering learners' development of intercultural competence, e.g., through continued adherence to old precepts of language education and culture teaching, and unwillingness to opt for newer ones that better fit the multicultural and multilingual nature of present-day societies, and learner expectations towards their language teachers.



# COUNTERPOINT

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**Translated from the French by David DIVITA**

Called upon to draft preliminary texts for the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, I illustrated through a study of five biographical trajectories under the heading *Multicultural competence: descriptive principles* (Zarate in Coste, Moore, Zarate, 1998: 26-27 and 51-63) the ways in which multilingual individuals are distinguished through their biographical complexity, their particular familial and generational ascriptions, and the complex identitary strategies that they articulate in transnational contexts. These dimensions were not taken up in the *Framework*, however, as they were judged too heterodox at the time by an institution concerned primarily with “politics” (as understood by Max Weber (1919, 1963)), unwilling to take into account the kind of results that come from research on language acquisition. I am merely recalling here the facts and the endeavors undertaken, as I intend to underscore the importance of placing the concept of “social actor” at the heart of the European debate.

A few proposals in the *Framework* opened up a space for reflection conducive to articulating important points related to language teaching. In fact, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* placed at the core of its development a *perspective actionnelle*, translated in the English version of the Framework as an “action-oriented approach”:

The approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in so far as it views users and learners of a language primarily as ‘social agents’, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. (Council of Europe, Chapter 2, p. 9).

The term “social agent” was briefly glossed a second time in reference to multilingual and multicultural competence, helping to flesh out the concept even more:

*Plurilingual and pluricultural competence* refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. (Council of Europe, 2001, Chapter 8, p. 168).

The Framework sketches a definition of “social agent” more than it proposes how the concept might be operationalized, seeming to eschew the epistemological ruptures that such a proposal would implicate. Current debates focus on the diffusion of pedagogical models conceived in Western Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall throughout Central and Eastern European countries, which has entailed a reductive standardization, primarily on the level of evaluation. But one must also acknowledge the fact that European education systems have become increasingly uniform, including those whose ideological missions were at odds for more than fifty years. The communicative approach, divided into six levels of proficiency, has been made official in European texts, inspiring an unexpected return to vocabulary lists according to level (*The Level B2. A reference*, 2004) and a revival of ossified pedagogical models created in accordance with societal concerns that date from the 1970s. The current diffusion of the communicative approach could be attributed to simple theoretical reproduction, multiplied by the number of officially recognized languages. Nevertheless, there is a significant benefit for languages that, due to such measures, have had their status recognized, their description codified on transnational scales, and their diffusion expanded in markets beyond their national or communal borders—languages that have benefited from a position of solidarity with other minority languages, which had once been unthinkable. For these reasons, no doubt, European language policy seems hesitant to produce a more global and complex model that reflects current social changes now taking place. Through the essays they have gathered, Richard Kern and Anthony Liddicoat show that scientific production within and outside Europe is nevertheless ready to respond to this need.

As the coordinators of this chapter point out, the notion of “actor” brings together under one signifier “learners, teachers, administrators, parents, friends...,” thus breaking with an educational tradition that distinguishes student practices from those of teachers and decision-makers, blindly applying the principle of professorial authority to the categories of educational exchange. A single category of classification forcefully underscores the fact that these actors share a common social space, that instructors along with other social actors have educational pasts that sometimes inform their everyday professional decisions, and that teachers and students, for example, may find themselves participating in a shared social network when they are classified as speakers of “small” or “big” languages.

Extracted from a social context, the debate over practices linked to language is all too often placed under the umbrella of ecumenicalism, respect and civility— notions that index a virtuous and idealized societal horizon, thereby excluding the conceptual tools and their operational by-products adapted for the analysis and for the anticipation and



resolution of tensions belonging to a social space inscribed within a dynamic of action. Although these notions implicate a morally acceptable horizon, they are nevertheless only faintly operational in the field of language acquisition, as they run counter to history and contemporary phenomena. Resulting from major geopolitical transformations, the 1989 fall of the Wall between Eastern and Western Europe, thereafter reconfigured into a Central and Eastern Europe, triggered successive spurts of expansion that have culminated today in a Europe that is composed of 27 member countries. This newly institutionalized Europe witnessed from across its border the genocide in the Balkans. It has seen xenophobia towards certain segments of society, confronted with competition in a liberal economy in which the foreigner serves as a scapegoat. It has officially questioned the impact of the cultural dimension of the economy of social relations within Europe, most notably between Christian and Muslim worlds. It has championed solidarity with emerging non-European countries. And yet, although it places linguistic and cultural plurality at the heart of its official policy (beginning in the 1990s for the Council of Europe and the 2000s for the European Union), theoretical models that address language teaching have been slow to identify, recognize and, indeed, institutionalize, this political, historical and social plurality.

This chapter of the *Précis* takes a step forward in detailing and explicating this necessary shift: it proposes a polyphonic approach that intertwines voices and counter-voices; it articulates an expanded conceptual field, integrating contributions from across disciplines. The notions of multicultural capital (Zarate, 1997: 25-34) and the capital of mobility (Murphy, 2003; Murphy and Gohard-Radenkovic, Chapter 3), through the vital flexibility that comes from tackling complexity head on, also enable the articulation and orchestration of a polyphony of experience by acknowledging the importance of intercultural competence (Zarate and Gohard-Radenkovic, 2004). To be sure, the social sciences postulate a dynamic vision of the social world, contrary to the normative approach that too often dominates and crushes reflection on language teaching. Trajectories, strategies and tactics, for example, concepts defined by Michel de Certeau (1980: 9, 20-23), describe the everyday nature of social practices that are mindful of the “surreptitious forms taken by the dispersed, tactical and workmanlike creativity of groups” (1980: 14). Such a philosophy of action runs counter to “routines of ordinary thought” and acknowledges “potentialities inscribed in the bodies of agents and in the structure of situations in which they act or, more precisely, through their relationships,” as Pierre Bourdieu (1994: 9) puts forth preliminarily in order to eschew a standardized approach to stereotypical representations, a conformist vision of difference, and a naïve representation of the circulation of symbolic goods between actors who have been socialized in systems of value that are sometimes either partially or totally incompatible. Instructors and teacher trainers are indeed ready to rally around such objectives, but they must be given the intellectual and pedagogical tools needed to do so.

What does accounting for the social actor bring to the debate over language learning and teaching? It opens up multidisciplinary horizons that encompass, but are not limited to, psycho- and sociolinguistics. Debates over the rights of minority cultures,

the struggle against social discrimination, the interpretation of cultural differences within societies—until now excluded from reflection on language acquisition—thus fall within the horizon of action of multilingual speakers. These debates address the relationships between social forces that are often embodied in symbolic form, through latent or explicit identitary tensions—indeed, through conflicts in which the multilingual individual is a participant, whether or not he or she is conscious of it. Through constructive and mobilizing actions, the individual who manages linguistic and social plurality may function as a mediator—a role native to law and psychology—positioned at borders and performing ethnology of the near and distant (Lévy and Zarate, 2003). The social actor is engaged in a collective dynamic, a reality that he or she must not only tolerate and negotiate, but also accept—a reality in which he or she assumes the right to intervene. The multilingual social actor plays a role of social intervention, a position antithetical to the social mimesis demanded of the foreigner who subscribes to linguistic and social codes that belong to the native speaker.

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Chapter 2

# Languages and the self

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# NOTES ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 2

Claire KRAMSCH

The translation of this chapter into English presented particular challenges. Some of the authors originally wrote in Italian or German, and were eventually translated into French, others wrote directly in French, all were then recast from French into English. Furthermore, the multiple disciplinary orientations of the authors – some from educational psychology, others from applied linguistics, literary studies, or foreign language education, required calibrating the English discourse to the particular fields. For example, did the expression “situations de vraisemblance validées par le communicatif” correspond to ‘credible communicative situations’ (a more general phrase) or ‘communicative authenticity’ (the more specialized phrase in communicative language teaching)? Did the term ‘acteurs’ refer to theater actors on a stage or to social actors in social contexts of language use? And how to translate the pun ‘le soi-disant’, which is both the ‘speaking self’ and ‘the so-called’ with the scare quotes adding yet another layer of distantiation as in ‘the so-called speaking self’? And what, anglophone readers would be likely to ask, is the meaning of the irony implied by the use of ‘so-called’?

Translation brings to light the pervasive metaphors and allusions on which academic writers thrive. For example, in the expression “Self as an Other”, the allusion to Ricoeur is unmistakable, but will anglophone readers recognize it, and should the English translation capitalize ‘Other’ if the official translation of Ricoeur’s book, titled *Oneself as another*, does not?

The difficulty was not to try and find English equivalents for non-English words, but to evoke in the English translation worlds that would be equivalent enough to the worlds evoked in French to make sense to a reader who might not have the same points of reference nor the same sense of the history of the field as the authors of this chapter. It has become a well accepted fact since Benjamin Whorf that “we cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language” (Whorf 1940/1956: 221). The difficulty of translating the key concept of this book is a case in point. ‘Didactique des langues’ does not map easily onto neither ‘language teaching and learning’ nor ‘second language acquisition’, ‘applied linguistics’, ‘foreign language education’ or ‘bilingual education’ - all fields of research that taken together cover roughly the domain referred to by the French ‘didactique des langues’ but fit uneasily with a category that does not exist, as such, in English.

Ultimately what such a translation reveals are new ways of talking about seemingly familiar issues and new intellectual horizons that emerge in the process.

## INTRODUCTION

# LANGUAGES AND THE SELF

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**Translated from French By Nazario PIERDOMINICI**

## **EXPRESSION OF THE SELF: A GRADUAL ACCEPTANCE WITHIN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Language narratives - language learners' and language users' accounts of their experiences with language - always cause deeply emotional reactions. Some people appreciate the unexpected opportunity to hear the voices to those who are not usually heard, the unfortunate actors of untold and forgotten pasts; others reject such narratives as glorifying the ego and inciting exhibitionism or self-absorption. Academic institutions and researchers in the social sciences view language memoirs or testimonies with distrust, fearing their destabilizing potential, while artists and researchers in the field of humanities embrace them, because they testify to and promote the social emergence of the self.

In the “return to privacy” of the 1980s, individualism seemed to replace an interest in social and political issues. It was then that the field of foreign language teaching recognized the expression of the Self in, through and about languages, as well as discourses and meta-discourses grounded in psychoanalysis and psycholinguistics. Pedagogic notions such as learner-centeredness, motivation, authenticity, research approaches such as pragmatics, discourse and conversation analysis, enunciation theory, the ethnography of communication and the study of nonverbal communication began to create new terrain for the expression of the Self.. Learning how to describe oneself and how to situate oneself in space and time foreshadowed the emergence of a less abstract learner/speaker, for whom the learning activity itself represented just one of many experiences over the course of his or her life.

During the following decade, and despite resistance from certain linguists, psychoanalysis and sociology became central to the field, along with text and discourse semiotics, fueling the development of communicative language teaching – or, rather, the communicative approach to teaching languages and cultures –and foregrounding self-reflection, self-expression and an awareness of Self and Other in social contexts.

But in ensuing years, characterized by ideological reversals and widespread mobility, during which geographical, social, political, religious and ethnic borders have been erased or reinforced through so-called « global communication », languages – all languages – have begun to shift within the individuals who acquired them, forgot them or abandoned them according to the needs of the moment. Within such a permanent state of fluidity, in which internal, real and symbolic borders are constantly redrawn, the need has arisen for either a plurality of languages, or for one single language of survival, or for the on-the-spot acquisition of linguistic competences, accompanied by the desire to learn new languages, or the nostalgic longing for languages one has lost. In such an imperfect world, it has become necessary to establish one's own relationship to languages and to take into account one's potential and variable linguistic capital.

### **Languages and the Self: a *Précis du plurilinguisme***

#### *Relevance, potential, interactions, limits*

The variety of situations of linguistic contiguity, of cultural contact, of the many ways of acquiring or learning a language, and of the processes of integration or the refusal thereof, forever deprive an individual of a linguistic adventure characterized by any regularity or fixed pattern. Whether languages resemble one another as cognates, or whether they are in contact because of the forced or voluntary coexistence of different groups or individuals, they cause unstable and variable relationships of exchange and stratification; they are accepted or rebuffed depending on the stakes of collective and personal history. Is this cultural and linguistic polyphony? Is this a Utopia—if it's not some sort of cacophony for the speaking subject, whether s/he is multilingual, monolingual or linguistically deficient—that gives rise to complex processes of integration? Whether they are involuntary, casual or necessary, such processes—and their interpretation—are never linear and fixed.

Although the standards and objectives for foreign language teaching are determined by eminent models, such as the European Framework of Reference which calls for the educational and linguistic harmonization of Europe and for positive attitudes toward intercultural relations, researchers tend to question basic concepts such as mother language, monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism, and interculturalism. And even though they are sometimes out of touch, debates have begun on the principles of language teaching, on languages themselves and on the interplay between subjectivity and language. One learns how to talk about oneself, about one's mastered languages, as well as how to interpret the subjective dimension of discourse on languages—all with a view to developing one's linguistic skills and insight into individuals, to engaging successfully in the processes of language learning and teaching.

It seems to us that a program for teaching and learning foreign languages and cultures that questions the appropriateness of the context of social actors and speakers – teachers, researchers, learners and experts alike – cannot but also consider the feelings and linguistic representations of individuals, the ease or the difficulties they encounter in approaching those languages, the irritation or help from languages they already

know, the feeling of familiarity or estrangement - the degree of foreignness (Communications n. 43) they are exposed to - and the pleasure or hatred they feel toward a language despite its linguistic proximity, its recognized status, or the competence that they have in it.

While a multiplicity of studies and the analysis of individuals' speech should incorporate within the field of language learning and teaching social, affective, unconscious, and political themes that are generally addressed by other disciplines, it is nonetheless necessary to articulate the ethical, epistemological and practical limits entailed by opening the field of language teaching to these new research methods on languages and their instruction.

*The consequences of language policies and the effects of the school system: toward a new perspective on subjectivity*

This work as a whole strives to illustrate the relationship between individuals and history in situations of language learning and teaching, and this chapter in particular aims to highlight some specific points of contact between them.

Today, mobility is both a condition and a permanent state of change that spares nothing and no one. Movement—necessary or voluntary, solitary or collective, reversible or not, pleasant or painful—blurs, questions and puts at risk our perception of ourselves in relation to others, and the relationship we have with (our) language(s), or even the legitimacy of our position in the world. Yet it is within the context of mobility that individuals learn languages in order to live and to construct their identities (Cognigni, 2007).

School in multicultural societies, the xenophobic and/or xenophilic attitudes one encounters there, the hybridity, the unavoidable need for mediation in the educational setting, the efforts made by teachers to favor acquisition of the local language (or L2), but also the concealment or folklorization of native languages, raise blunt questions about the integration of learners through language and about their teachers' training. « Small languages », minority languages, and languages of origin are often the subject of vehement declarations and empty practices, as learners, teachers and researchers perceive in their own ways the role played by those languages in the construction of individual identities.

Interculturalism is played out in an uneven field where practices of adjustment sometimes precede principles, where, empirically, languages in contact find reasons to continue "trading" with one another, and where, for example, code-switching and the production of interlanguage are enacted regardless of norms and hypercorrection. It is within this field that one can discern the most intimate desires, the competences and the life history of a person as a social actor.

Linguistic and cultural skills—at once plural and partial, but also creators of new and thriving cognitive spaces—as well as the relationships between languages and cultures animated by the individual mind, institutions, or communities, and the representations that teachers and learners make of them, are generated - or endorsed - by institutions

that have formalized a new approach to learning: the lifespan approach (White Paper, 1994). Lessons not necessarily given in traditional educational settings, the development of partial learning, and the encouragement of mutual understanding between speakers of different languages are coupled with tools intended to enhance a reflexive attitude and an awareness of one's languages—tools such as language portfolios, linguistic and language biographies, intercultural autobiographies, measured *curricula vitae*, or even language passports.

As a result, foreign languages are freed from their peripheral status to become « partners » in the construction of citizenship and of cross-curricular tools that provide new perspectives on the speaker's mother tongue and identity. Thus, the teaching of languages close to the hearts of individuals and to societies makes possible a progressive multidisciplinary that relativizes the sovereignty of linguistics. Through its reaction to the constant performance and anonymity of globalization, to the forced display of identities, the return to the Self, on the Self—the manifesto of an unfolding Self—forces the teaching of languages to confront subjectivity. A potentially unlimited corpus of infinite productive occasions, teeming with emotions and stories where individual time and historical time intersect, along with the roles of protagonist and reader-interpreter, throws into question the researchers themselves, and the status, legitimacy, and role they should be granted.

### **Writing, describing and talking about one's languages, or talking about oneself through languages: from genre to practice.**

#### *Actors and expression of the Self, the Self and the Other: the observer and the observed*

Having to articulate one's life history is a common activity: anyone looking for a job, any migrant wishing to be let through customs, or any patient in a hospital may have to provide a retrospective narrative of their lives in order to explain, witness, justify or defend themselves; in the same way, private diaries, logbooks, travel histories, or debates in the media, in which the Self becomes relevant, can attribute the status of observer to the observed, making it possible for him to enjoy, most often in a conflictual manner, the same right to speech, analysis and interpretation of life trajectories as any political, social or academic body (Communication n. 43, 1987). As for the issue of language and psychoanalytic practice, it is both a medium and an object of focus that can be (de)constructed and reinvented by patients and therapists alike; they can set free the « speaking Self, » and thus represent a potential source of subversion (Wolfson 1970, Amati-Mehler et al 1990, 2006).

#### *A close up look*

The need to make one's voice heard in one or more languages emerges through the reflexive approach, as well as through theories of the representation of Self as an Other (Pineau et Le Grand, 1993, Formenti, 1998), and through an analysis of proximity and its strategies, tensions and paradoxes, or the place and social position of individuals in school settings, or through the study of the status of socio-historical and reflexive subjects within a multilingual model (Molinié 2006). The language of the Self

comes into contact with language as a hermeneutic tool *par excellence*, a subject of study and a competence to acquire, at school or otherwise. But if subjectivity is always present, the aim of the learning process consists precisely of controlling the Self—that is, of mandating limits to the field of study, of building models and methods, of providing learners with frameworks of reference to help them in their reflections; and also of generalizing, codifying, and regulating, so as to make that field widely approachable by many.

This regulating principle is taken up in language policies at national, local, or transnational levels, shaping frameworks for language management and linguistic planning, which serve as the basis for long-term strategies that constitute viable actions as well as linguistic activities and actual initiatives that intervene on (a) language(s)—that is to say, their teaching, acquisition and diffusion. Detachment, regulation, generalization—all of which are necessary both for the visibility of the discipline and for its implementation in active contexts, helping the model to expand—are thrown into question by the concomitant acts of looking, listening and speaking, which are oriented toward the Self. Models for action devised to manage and stabilize global trends confront—but not always consistently—the need by a variety of individuals to try to make heard and seen their displacement and existential transformations. In the teaching of languages and cultures, « Languages and the Self » represents a symbolic common meeting ground where individuals, groups, and different voices can take positions, construct relations and try to make sense of them.

*Linguistic narratives by multilingual writers: what to say? How to say it? And in what language?*

Newly rediscovered autobiographical work finds its inspiration in a variety of genres, as we will see in this chapter (see Rachédi, Crawshaw, and Puccini), not only for the learning of foreign languages and literatures, but also for the understanding of one's own linguistic trajectory. Memories are inscribed within the perspective of historical discourses of the *me* and of the *self* in which the narrator is at once witness and protagonist; self-portraits in which the project of telling stories with a psychological component is not made explicit (Memmi 1957, Wolfson, 1970, Lévy 1994), and in which the progress of narration can be logical or thematic; or the autobiographical novel (Memmi, 1957, Wolfson, 1970), in which the autobiographical « I » is distanced from the « he » that describes the novel's main character; or also personal diaries in which authors and narrators record their thoughts and feelings day by day. The conceptual system around which these different genres revolve is an articulation of the tension between the singular and the collective. In the case of autobiographical novels in particular (Esteban 1990, Sebbar 2003, Djebbar 1997), the narrative "I" reveals, declares and (de)constructs itself through metalanguage and through the writer's reflection on identity and personal trajectories. The always in-process destruction and recomposition of languages and personal histories turns into a metaphor for the very act of literary writing (Cheng 2002), which is at the heart of the construction and use of *corpora* of texts by learners, teachers, migrants and travelers for pedagogical purposes. Aporetic voices make clear the real density of such texts, unable as they are



to solve the mystery represented by the self, languages, and the act of writing (Alexakis 1995, Robin 2003).

At the intersection of these issues, we must create a place within intersubjective encounters for the technologies of the self, because they offer an extraordinary opportunity for the production of innumerable forms of writing, such as the Internet as a literary or non-literary tool: the Web and forums, “a Penelopean writing, a bastard writing, changing, part-collective part-individual” (Robin, 2005), biographical, imaginary, fictional and unstable, reveal how hypertextual configurations acquire a certain autonomy, escaping in part the author’s control and freeing his or her discourse in a non-linear temporality and a multiform virtual space.

### **The Self and Language in the Activity of Teaching: from Usage to Function in the Biographical Approach.**

Less rigid and more dynamic than a “method,” a biographical “approach” reveals an individual’s and a society’s interests in and attitudes toward the relationships among life, reality, and the representations that are made of them, as well as the role of language in society. We must accept preliminarily that narratives are always in the process of evolving, as are the interpretations that we make of them. These interpretations can take forms as different as, on one hand, the autobiographies, narratives, memories or testimonies that we are examining... or, on the other hand, biographies, reconstructions, inquiries and questionnaires—the former emphasizing the role of the narrator, the latter emphasizing analysis and interpretation.

#### *Different sorts of corpora for language teaching*

In the study of the biographical genre (Besemeres & Perkins, 2003), which is characterized by the displacement of boundaries between the private and the public, between what can and cannot be said, between truth and represented reality, one encounters spontaneous and solicited narratives, constructed dialogues and discourses, dispersed and collected words, solitary or networked acts of writing at different levels of awareness and complexity, diaries, and training or vocational programs for teachers and students. Whether they have emerged from interviews, questionnaires, testimonies or narratives, all of these documents anchor the study of languages and the appreciation of those who are learning to speak them (in Cognigni, Vitrone, Krumm), those who are learning them (in Anquetil-Molinié), or those who are teaching them—which makes possible the analysis of personal and collective contexts, the creation of tools for teaching and self-instruction in educational and vocational workshops, as well as the construction of multilingual identities (Cognigni 2007).

Through our interrogation of voices and discourses, through the relationship between co-construction and deconstruction, among silences and (failed) discourses, we also intend to show that the learning and teaching of languages and cultures accounts for the pleasure and the pain that the subject experiences through his or her languages, the love or hate of languages, the ease or difficulty encountered in knowing them, recognizing them or making them one’s own. But it is impossible to separate narrator



from narrative and analysis from interpretation. Few autobiographies fail to incorporate meta-discursive elements, and on many occasions, researchers themselves assume the first person and begin to tell their own stories. Understanding and construction, reconstructing personal trajectories, narrative and narrative control—including choice and orientation—affect everyone involved. And it is not uncommon to see the emergence of obscure categories and suppressed worlds, both in the narrator's and the interpreter's voices, from the peripheries of discourse.

*Actors of this discourse: conditions and situations*

Our experience as teachers and trainers, as well as field researchers, allows us to make the claim that, outside of monolingual situations or those defined by immobile logistics, all individuals can effectively describe themselves and their languages, talk about their life experiences and construct their own self-representations, and that every act of narrative bears on one's understanding of language, individuals and the dynamic between them. Yet there remain certain emblematic or extreme situations that have shed light on this area of research and activity:

Teachers and students who have either directly or indirectly experienced migration and integration into the society of their host country, or who have been confronted with some “problematic” form of non-recognized and non-accepted multilingualism under the conditions of incongruence between languages (cultural languages, mother languages, family languages, vehicular or scholarly languages, “home” languages and official language...) and expectations about them—spheres that are psychically and culturally divided;

Displaced individuals confronted with interrupted periods of time, geographical back-and-forths, linguistic parentheses (marginal languages and the societal and individual demands for their promotion); or confronted with conflicting linguistic choices (through wars and colonization), when it becomes necessary to make one's voice heard and to recognize or take up the language of the Other in order to vindicate one's own language

Teachers and trainers working within the framework of experimental, multilingual projects, or teaching intercultural education in multi-ethnic schools, or working in second language or citizenship instruction; teachers who are active in the cooperation and development of projects for peace, where foreign language teaching becomes a medium of social formation and throws into question old ways of doing things, prepares people to accept others, stops xenophobic attitudes, helps to form citizens, and retains cognitive value, because an approach to diversity can throw into question categories of Otherness and mechanisms of evaluation and comprehension;

Training of language teachers through an approach that encourages their reflection on their own experiences with language in order to develop awareness of these experiences and to acquire the skills to narrate and analyze

partial data through biographical methods (Formenti, 1998, Demetrio, 1996, Lévy, 2001, Estéban, 1999)

Collective workshops on multilingual literary creation aimed at reconstructing the internal and external temporal and spatial dimensions of the nomadic experience, in which the “holes” and lacunae of personal narratives are acknowledged

Migrants, travelers, students in a situation of institutional or personal mobility, and mediators have all been investigated by researchers and teachers

And this is just a partial list!

## **Telling, Interpreting, Constructing Life Stories of the Self and Languages.**

### *On the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach*

Within our area of research, one cannot conceive of the expression of Self on or through (one’s) languages without listening to an Other, to his or her interpretations as they change over time. Voices emerge on request or of their own accord; once they have been heard by individuals or institutions concerned with preserving them, their fate changes. The analysis of trajectories, persons, discourses—whether it be to improve our understanding of languages and the dynamics between them or of subjects who situate themselves in the social by constructing themselves through language, or to understand the pain caused by languages or their absence, or to train educators—brings into play a variety of methodologies and hybrid procedures that fall outside of a single discipline. One borrows from and adapts to the field and to corpora concepts such as resources, capital, representation, competence, attraction, pleasure, as well as attitudes from other areas: mediation, mimesis, negotiation, translation, cooperation. Following the dominant approaches within the field (linguistic, institutional, mass-media, political, historical, anthropological, social and psychological), we shall use—indeed, blend—instruments from the corresponding disciplines, always remembering that no unique or irreversible conclusions should ever be drawn, and that those very conclusions may question and transform not only what they are expected to interpret, but also the researcher him- or herself. For example, instead of traditional anthropology, in which researchers conduct their studies of life stories while trying to maintain their cultural distance and work toward reconstructing the Other, one should turn to dialogical anthropology, which aims to situate an individual in the midst of his or her culture. Such an approach accepts cultural standpoints that are then reflected in the narratives or in questions asked by the researcher. In this way, one can read singular stories, in which a “methodological bridge” reconstructs traces of linguistic and cultural practices, the very paths of learning and teaching—which entail pleasure in or rejection of languages (Geertz 1988; Lévy 1994)—that are manifested in an individual’s trajectory in a multicultural setting.

The endless variety of cases and of emerging discourses should highlight the paradigmatic aspects of subjectivity—who “speaks” languages and about languages?—and incorporate into our knowledge base and into the transmission of languages the social, affective, unconscious or political issues that have so far been ignored or repressed.

*Individual, corpus and analyst between truth and authenticity: is this a legitimate menage à trois?*

It is advisable to make a distinction between the speaking Self (orality raises concerns about justifiability) and the writing Self (writing allows deferred responses). But we are only considering here a few aspects that they have in common. When approaching past events and analyzing them in the present, we can only grasp discursive reality through discourses: as testimony, rehabilitation, excuse or celebration, yet always as « fictional » narrative. And those discourses too should be considered as texts, in turn requiring descriptions, explications, and some degree of evaluation both in regard to their obvious singularity, and their proclaimed representativity of some social reality. Reflection, reflexivity, and discursive, linguistic and narrative meta-activities inscribe themselves between oblivion and memory; the narrator selects and omits or even adds (fictitious) elements to the story so that it makes more sense.

Since 1990, biographical narratives have enjoyed much – possibly too much – prestige in the field of education. Self-instruction, taking charge of one’s education or that of another person, involves taking back one’s own narratives. Inspired by the French model (Pineau and Le Grand), which values the dynamic, self-generating vision of the educational process, these narratives give the individual an educational and identity boost through the understanding of repression, oblivion or failure. And yet, another voice—that of the researcher who is interpreting and formulating strong, even aggressive, hypotheses—may end up tossing aside the formative subject, or adding to his or her emergent voice all sorts of superstructures that may eventually suffocate it. A principle of cooperation becomes vital when the teller, the listener or reader, and the analyst “agree” on how to make sense of a given narrative, either through stressing its coherence or accepting its inconsistency (Robin 1998, 2003).

These approaches, through which narrators construct their life stories, provide a three-layered diachronic representation of the Self: the empirical reality of historical life events, the psychic and semantic reality of the narrator, and the discursive reality of the narrative (Bertaux, 1997). This process of varying depths (Geertz 1988, 1990) entails a (generally *a posteriori*) reconstruction of lived experience and reveals the capital of biographical experience. Distancing oneself and reflecting on the dynamic nature of identity enables an individual to address the delicate act of establishing coherence between one’s lived experience and the contradictory multiplicity of the social, creating a space for a redefinition of the Self and Other. What does it mean, then, to interpret a speaking subject? Applying categories (discursive, ethnomethodological, psychological, linguistic, political) to interpretation and analysis? Or allowing the emergence of new categories based on life narratives, while questioning those of discourse analysis, pragmatics, and language policies? Within the “third spaces” that

emerge through the process of interpretation, the figure of the mediator surfaces—a witness of complex, autonomous trajectories, concerned with exploring, interpreting, and manipulating the individual and autonomous existences of other subjects, who, what’s more, play multiple and active epistemic roles: as narrator, protagonist, audience or receiver. The moment of interpretation cannot escape the need for interrelationship, lest this relationship itself become mystified.

A historical, cultural and projectual dimension is thus established for researchers and for the authors of life stories, precisely because it places at the heart of the interpretive enterprise, not the result—that is to say, an identity conceived as a constellation of psychic contents, acts of learning and facts—but rather the process of co-construction of historicized knowledge (Cognigni 2007). Narratives make sense through these interpretive relationships, thanks in part to the medium of language, which is nothing more than the material of narratives themselves.

### **Talking about, writing and describing one's own languages and cultures: a language teaching perspective**

#### *An evolving metalanguage ahead of its times*

Whether one narrates one’s life through one’s languages or tells about one’s languages through one’s narratives, one engages in a metalinguistic activity that precedes the political or scientific discourses about narratives from specialists, linguists, analysts, sociologists... It is within the individual that *authentically* plural thought is formulated in reaction to ideologies of plurality, to the globalization of alternative thinking, and to official discourses on difference. Thus, self-awareness is encouraged, and teaching is inscribed within politics in a broad sense. At the same time, narrative serves in the construction of personal and affective storytelling, as recourse to collective history and linguistic explanations, because even non-specialists always have a sense of how it functions. Tools for learning and evaluation, such as portfolios and linguistic biographies, are created through the intersection of linguistic and educational policies and self-representations of language, as the former attempts to recognize the latter.

First, the mother tongue is thrown into question; every “speaking subject” must confront Derrida’s (2003) paradox: “I only have one mother tongue, and it’s not mine.” Where do mother tongues come from? From the mother? The father? Is it the first language we learn to speak? The one we have mastered best? Or the one that promises affiliation with a community and that promises citizenship? And what does it mean to acquire a language “naturally” when you have been forced to migrate or to go into exile (Esteban 1990)? As a consequence, definitions of bilingualism, diglossia and multilingualism surface in narratives (Khatibi 1983) despite official political and educational discourses concerning the status of languages—big languages, small languages, important, widespread, prestigious languages. These definitions may even precede and legitimize narratives (Cognigni 2007).

Because of discourses on the Self, the use of renewed and refined notions and concepts has become widespread: “linguistic serenity” and “mediating language”

(Lévy 2000) surface in the accounts of young migrants for whom their parents' colonial French of history, which is neither a “mother” nor a “step-mother” tongue, but rather a “godmother” tongue, facilitates their development of new competences in other Romance languages (for example, Italian), once they realize the importance of linguistic capital in the process of integration. From such paradoxes, one can better understand the role of interlanguage in the constitution of linguistic patrimony and linguistic competence, or the shifting relationships among the languages that an individual knows, or the definitive failure of the idea that fixed relations must exist between languages and cultures or languages and nations, and the perception that many cultures can be present in the same language, because otherwise we would be condemned to silence (Lévy 1990).

*Instances of emergence: one's own languages, alien perceptions, alien emotions*

When the spoken word aims to elicit more than silence or embarrassment, emotions overflow and submerge the interpretation of personal trajectories. Considered a central element in psycholinguistics in connection with the study of motivation, emotions enliven narratives. Languages give pleasure and they do harm—those of which we are ashamed but that we speak within ourselves, those that one rejects or that one “forgets” as a temporary or permanent aphasic, those that one detests but that one imitates as closely as possible—because they carry the promise of promotion or integration. Desire, reticence, resistance, thwarted loves, the instable configuration of personal and collective history, of linguistic competences and behaviors, invite a moderated optimism regarding the interpretation of the acquisition of “new” languages, each one inscribing itself in the background of, or substituting, a preceding one, but in neither a linear or a lasting way.

Multilingual research on language teaching seems to show that the learning of foreign languages does not depend on one's mother tongue, once considered the *only* starting point, and that the reversibility and instability of learning trajectories render unavoidable an account of multicultural and multilingual competence (Zarate & Gohard Radenkovic, 2004).

*Across the lifespan: the voice of professional speakers*

The highly metalinguistic narratives of professionals/teachers, who are multilingual by profession or as a consequence of their lives, are less easy to decipher because they both display and dissimulate the lives and the languages of their authors. Nevertheless they hold potential in the medium term for an interpretation of social and cultural universes based on individual experiences, and for leading towards a comprehensive experience of the social (in Rachedi). Language teachers, whose professional trajectories have been marked by felicitous or infelicitous multilingual experiences, are legion! Their multilingual awareness, mediated through language, helps construct multilingual and multicultural teaching methods. Whether they have had direct or indirect personal contact with migrant experiences, whether they have felt or witnessed the paradoxes of diglossia, bi- or multilingualism, (Meneghello 1993), whether they have analyzed the uneasy relations among scholastic experience, the

experience of migration and mobility in general, whether they have exploited their own experience for the benefit of the teaching of languages and linguistic education, whether they have studied in depth the reasons behind the choice to teach or learn a mother or foreign language, they have nevertheless unleashed an individual and collective discourse through the mere force of testimony and analysis. Beginning with “autobiographical education,” going beyond witnessing in writing through the act of reflexivity, they have constructed a new profile of mediator-researcher, for whom subjectivity is an object of study in its own right.

### *Languages and the Self: auxiliary discourse or counterdiscourse?*

How do different patterns of personal expression relate to institutional discourse? Is their collision inevitable? Of course, if we pursue medium-term aims, all frameworks of reference based on field research must translate their principles into didactic procedures that can be easily and rapidly implemented, and that can be understood and accepted by all parties involved regardless of their possibly different personal histories and teaching experiences. But when, despite our standardized curricula and standard discourses, the learning and teaching of languages and cultures committed to life-long learning are faced with a world replete with new and multiple objects of division as well as public and private conflicts, even the most complex and well-articulated standards will not be able to cope with the emergence of the individual in the social fabric. Biographical, research and referential practices stand side by side with curiosity and mistrust, some threatened by dissimulation, others by obfuscation. Homonymic terminologies generate misunderstandings, as educational institutions strive to distinguish between linguistic biographies, intercultural biographies, portfolios and reflexivity in learning processes, driven by a desire to diversify teaching practices rather than to understand their inner dynamics. The difficulty lies in synchronizing the research, the institution and the individual.

### *Potential risks, limits and cultural misunderstandings*

The questions we face in this reflection show the limits of a field that, after eliciting excessive enthusiasm, risks becoming unmanageable. After a long silence of the “self” within narrative, we find ourselves submerged in an autobiographical brouhaha. Is such inflation healthy for the field? To the learning and teaching of languages? Does the multiplication of “I,” of “me,” of “self” lead effectively to visibility for everyone involved? Are all these “selves” equal? Should all manifestations of the “self” be taken into consideration, everywhere and whenever they occur? What methodological approach should we follow? And how do we tackle the linguistic inadequacies of a person who can hardly express him- or herself? How does our quest for linguistic narratives and for metadiscourse accommodate the psychological and cultural impact on people who have not been integrated or who participate in cultures in which personal narratives are forbidden or impossible? Is the biographical approach to language paradoxically ethnocentric? One must avoid a situation in which a complexity of analysis engenders a confusion of roles, and in which the hazy boundary between scholastic mediation and therapeutic or consolatory temptation threatens the participants in narrative practice. And when it becomes necessary, if even only

temporarily, to create survival skills by putting the Self aside, such excesses put at risk the communicative and educational pact, whose rupture would inhibit the individual's socialization.

A demand for legitimacy is unavoidable at this point: whatever (good) intercultural intentions invite a translation of the Self, it is impossible to deny the violence inherent in those intentions if one imposes the autobiographical model on everyone—on those who have endured unspeakable suffering (Rosenblum 2000), on cultures characterized by a silencing of the Self despite relational or institutional taboos, on languages that do not possess the verb “to be.” Is the biographical panacea politically correct? And even if it is possible, one always forces the individualness of subjectivity to inscribe itself within some collective dimension, which is itself represented and thus controlled within educational, political and research domains. Expected, elicited or just encouraged, the autobiographical format can become an instrument of conformity or discipline for a *forced* interculturality.

Finally, we must ask whether the tripartite division researcher/instructor/speaker—each constructed through a different history of experience and language—has any meaning in an enterprise dedicated to finding within individual trajectories a new paradigm for the understanding and management of linguistic and cultural plurality based on interpretation, categorization and diversification in co-constructed narration. Wouldn't constructed interculturalism gain from a revision of the roles involved? All doubts aside, the distancing of languages through narration, the construction of yet another narrative through analysis, and the formation of learners and professional actors through this narrative, leave us with a double advantage: familiarity with one's own languages, and with other languages as well. Languages that become so familiar, perhaps, that they become *less and less* foreign?





# THE ERASMUS EXPERIENCE FROM A REFLEXIVE PERSPECTIVE: CONSIDERING AND CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL ACTORS

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## FROM PRIOR LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE TO "CULTURAL AWAKENING": INSTITUTIONS AND APPROACHES

In order to benefit fully from their time abroad, Erasmus students must develop a new relationship to their languages. They must transform their academic linguistic competence into communicative action through which they can access new social, linguistic, existential and intercultural knowledge. Experiential learning provides them the opportunity to develop new multilingual/multicultural identities. The challenge they face involves creating connections among the various dimensions (epistemic, existential and identity-related) of their experience of cultural alterity.

As exchange students gradually become aware of the implications of communicating in a foreign context, they experience what P. Kohler-Bally (Kohler, 2001) calls the "cultural awakening" of foreign speakers, who discover the importance of linguistic strategies of learning and cooperation that are specific to multilingual situations, but also the cultural diversity that thwarts their initial fantasy of easy assimilation into the host group. They are attracted to what is distinctive, but what they learn about it may never go deeper than a superficial level of impenetrable exoticism. Difference in proximity (Levy, 1989) can be uncomfortable, and it may even strengthen the facile representations provided by stereotypes. The destabilizing situation of individuals removed from their habitual cultural references presents an ideal opportunity to set up pedagogical activities based on intercultural competence and to encourage reflection on the social status of the foreign student participating in a European exchange program.

From an institutional point of view, it is important to frame the exchange experience as a training program in intercultural communication that will enable the development of skills for participation in a European social landscape. Within such a program, the autobiographical approach plays a primary role, in particular through the pedagogical use of travel journals. To be sure, a number of other approaches rely on the concept of reflexivity. Ethnological observations (Roberts, 2001) reveal the fundamental diversity that prevails within Europe and that entails recursive shifts in focus between participation and distance. The autobiographical approach (Wagner, 1995) offers a means of tracing one's changing subjectivity, and it may be evaluated aesthetically as well as analytically (Bruno, 2006). The comparative approach fosters political education, creating citizens who are capable of making critical choices based on contextualized understanding (Doyé, 1993).

## **INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND CURRICULAR PLANNING: FORMAL TRAINING SUPPLEMENTED BY THE FIRST-PERSON NARRATIVE**

The work of M. Byram and G. Zarate defined the objectives of intercultural education as the basis for any teaching program, generating a broad European consensus (Byram & Zarate, 1997) that has been only partially propagated within the European *Framework*. Proliferating initiatives surrounding the notion of mobility are still struggling to achieve recognition in institutional programs. Oftentimes, hosting foreigners has more to do with displaying hospitality to promote international recruitment than with enhancing an integrated educational program based on a European model; for generations of Erasmus students, while their time abroad remains a significant life event, it has not always led to the expected results either in terms of individual learning or the Europeanization of institutions.

Our hypothesis is that full recognition of the Erasmus program depends on its integration into the institutional protocols that govern the relationship between experiential learning and pedagogical reflection. Such was the focus of a pilot program in a research-action initiative at the University of Macerata in Italy (Anquetil, 2006), which, demanding in terms of both content and methodology, was designed to assess combined competencies in terms of knowledge (about foreign cultures as well as intercultural relationships), know-how (in interpretation activities and situations of interaction and mediation), and finally the implementation of approaches to learning, the management of intercultural contact and metacultural reflection.

The “first-person narrative” is a fruitful means of elaborating on personal experience. It is now included in the *European Language Portfolio* under the heading of “Language Biography”. Since 2005, a 24-hour module entitled “Trajectories and projects of international mobility”, which entails the writing and pedagogical use of learning journals and narratives of educational trajectories, has been used among Erasmus students (Molinié, 2006).

The learning journal shares the chronological and thematic limitations of other “temporary journals” (vacation, travel, work, research), as well as the possibilities of expression, memory and pleasure that they provide for the individuals writing them (Lejeune, 2000). Once an instructor draws on these journals in the classroom, they assume a reflexive and regulatory function; engaging in dialogue about learning journals (reciprocal reading, linguistic and semantic correction, identification and analysis of themes) enables their authors to objectify, understand and analyze their experiences in a multilingual context. Introducing notions and concepts (interlanguage, identity, alterity, acculturation, multilingualism, etc.) helps them to name the obstacles they have experienced and to understand the changes they have undergone through contact with other speakers and their cultures.

Complementing the learning journal, educational trajectory narratives function through their articulation in different timeframes: long (the life of the subject) and short (marking the beginning and end of the period spent at the university). Through such narratives, the individual interrogates his or her actions in the here and now, situating them within an analysis of his or her historical trajectory: does s/he become an actor of – or is s/he only acted upon by – his or her familial, educational and socio-cultural history? The period abroad becomes the major event in relation to which the narrator positions his or her project of change.

### **1. Training program for Erasmus students at the University of Macerata.**

#### **- Program for incoming students**

Introductory course covering three areas: daily life (familiarity with the urban environment, using public services, housing, consumption); integrating as a foreigner (intersecting representations and stereotypes, intercultural dialogue, active exploration of the social landscape); study (university systems and culture, observation methodology for module tasks).

#### **- Program for outgoing students**

Two sessions: general intercultural training (discussion on the status of the foreign student, travel and narrative, current culture, intercultural communication); training that focuses on bi-national relationships with the host country (critical approach to local culture, socio-cultural relationships and representations, university culture).

#### **- Qualifying individual work**

Observational report based on one of three approaches: ethnological survey as a participant-observer, autobiographical journal, or comparative study of institution or discipline.

## **2. Reflections of FFL degree tutors at the University of Cergy-Pontoise on the subject of learning journals written by their students**

“The learning journal allows Erasmus students to express their experience in words and in so doing really become aware of their approach, their progress, the challenges of a journey of this kind and the difficulties they encounter. It not only gives them the opportunity to practice writing in their target language but also to express themselves freely and thus become more aware of what they need to do to succeed.”  
(Molinié, 2006).

## **CREATING A NEW SPACE FOR TEACHING AND WORKING ON IDENTITY: ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE ENCOUNTER AS POTENTIAL INSTITUTIONAL MEDIATORS**

The teaching staff involved in the autobiographical module piloted at Cergy-Pontoise (Molinié, 2006) tried to ensure that working on the learning journal had a retroactive effect on their students’ awareness of the purpose of their time abroad. In addition, teachers were able to adjust their pedagogical activities as they gathered data on the learners. Through their use of learning journals, they created a teaching environment that legitimized identity change. Engaging in dialogue and reflection creates knowledge, prompts mediation and enables an intersection of individual stories; the time and space of each individual trajectory is embedded in a larger historical time and space shaped by the institution’s desire for multilingual cultural development in Europe. The students thus become actors within a Europe based on awareness, creators of their own histories who can envisage their learning as an individual and collective component of the European project.

The overall objective of Erasmus training programs is to promote the link between self-reflection and reaching out to other people as a means of creating an “in-between” space of identity possibilities: stepping out of oneself—not to become the Other, but to act as a mediator, to develop alterity, to be open to influences and be able to interweave pathways based on a position of constructive marginality (Bennett, 1993). In sum, it involves transforming a fleeting period of time into an opportunity to explore oneself and an Other in depth, an exploration that is itself a transforming experience, offering tools for fomenting the change that anchors individuality in the processes of social metamorphosis that are necessary for the construction of European citizenship. Reflecting on the experience of multilingualism and cultural difference is a basis for seeing oneself as an active participant in European history; reflecting on intercultural issues provides tools for developing the inchoate coherence of a European identity that understands how to recognize and accept its own complexity. (De Martino, 2005).

# «MOTHER», «SECOND» AND «NATIONAL» LANGUAGES: SHIFTING CONCEPTS IN SELF-NARRATION

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Translated from French by Ludovica BRISCESE

## CREATING DISCOURSE FOR THE PERSONAL LINGUISTIC UNIVERSE OF MIGRANT PEOPLE

Talking about native, first, or second languages is perhaps more suitable for scientific categorization and for linguistic and institutional discourses than for the multilingual individuals who reflect on their own linguistic and cultural trajectories, and for whom their different languages intermingle in their memories as well as in their experience of learning.

Nevertheless, these concepts of language (native, second, national) are popular designations, or at least that's what we learn from the linguistic reflections of Faruq and Sarah, multilingual subjects in Italy and the protagonists of our analyzed corpora. The relations of balance and power among the different codes within the multilingual repertoires of Pakistan (Faruq) and Ireland (Sarah) cannot be ignored, as they inform both collective and subjective representations of language. Nevertheless, our main focus is on the process of (re)interpretation these learners apply to their own "linguistic and cultural baggage" in the third space of voluntary mobility (of the Erasmus student) or necessary mobility (of the young immigrant), which shows how the concepts and categories of research on the teaching of language and culture evolve and modify one another.

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<sup>5</sup> The introduction has been written by both the authors. Part 1 (Faruk) has been written by Edith Cognigni, part 2 (Sarah) by Francesca Vitrone .

Rather than strive to integrate different disciplinary points of view (acquisitional, glottopolitical, sociolinguistic), we explore how multilingual subjects reproduce, deconstruct or expand upon linguistic and institutional discourses when they are asked to categorize their various languages and identity affiliations. Faruq's narrative conversations and Sarah's writings, their reflections on languages—produced within a pedagogical context intended to stimulate learners' metalinguistic reflexivity—show, in fact, the cross-disciplinary nature of the learning process in subjects who share Italian as a target language, but whose experience of mobility as an immigrant and a foreigner (Balibar E. 1989) affect their linguistic representations in a mirror-like way, enriching their references to categories that had previously been ambiguous or meaningless.

Faruk

1. URDU! IS OUR LANGUAGE! You speak, don't speak, is my mother language
2. QUESTO URDU, è na- mio NATIONAL language, non c'è che mio madre language
3. Mio madre sempre parle che Urdu è buono lingua, questa lingua è... musicale [...] Softly, soft language!
4. Adesso NOI nove... sì PARLO PUNJABI SEMPRE perché ah, seconda lingua è Urdu
5. Si chiama MADRElingua [...] mio paese, provincia Punjab, sempre parlo Punjabi
6. *And with your father?* Punjabi. Punjabi lingua di madre. A casa parle sempre punjabi. Solo a casa
7. **Punjabi come italiano. {They shout.} They shout! [ridono] È uguale! {When your father speaks Punjabi, does he shout?} Yes**
8. **For my children no Punjabi, I don't like Punjabi. NO NO! I LIKE PUNJABI [ride] I'm so sorry!**
9. English is an important language, in your country... and other country
10. English and other language is not my language
11. here Italia, ehm... yes. {È utile?} Yes. I don't speak other language so I speak English
12. I don't understand your Italian. With English I understand [...] Mi piace... piace moltissimo inglese

**Sarah**

1. Macerata mi è piaciuto subito piena di giovani studenti. Tanti conoscono lingua inglese! (24.11.05)
2. *Quali lingue conosci e vorresti perfezionare?* Inglese, italiano, francese, gaelic
3. *Ci sono lingue che potresti insegnare?* Sì, inglese (madrelingua)
4. *Aiuteresti un partner italiano a studiare argomenti delle discipline che conosci meglio?* No. Io preferisco in italiano (dicembre 05)
5. Adesso conosco “Ciao”, “Grazie” e “Arrivederci” in almeno 5 lingue
6. Ci sono almeno 20 lingue italiane, tra la lingua delle mani, la lingua dei libri e tanti dialetti. Anche in Irlanda abbiamo una lingua mista
7. La lingua nazionale è irlandese, ma sfortunatamente sparisce e in pratica la nostra madre lingua è inglese, significa che capiamo bene l'importanza della lingua unica! (03.02.06)
8. *Nella vostra lingua madre esiste una forma simile? Se sì, scrivete una frase e se possibile la traduzione.* “Níl aen thinteán mar do thinteán féin”. Non posso tradurre (28.05.06)

## **DEFINING EFFORTS IN NARRATION: TALKING ABOUT ONE'S OWN LANGUAGES, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION PERSONAL HISTORY IN THE EXPERIENCE OF DISPLACEMENT**

The first learner defines both Urdu and Punjabi as his mother tongues (1, 5, 6), even if during his narration this representation is de-constructed or contradicted. In the effort to categorize the languages of his repertoire, he appeals to the dominant linguistic ideology, according to which Urdu is the national language and Punjabi the mother tongue, symbols of a double identity belonging – national and regional – where languages are crystallized in fixed spaces – the State, the region, or home. Then he resorts to his subjective point of view in his relation to languages, identified in different family figures, but endowed with mobility in space and time. A linguistic *lapsus*, the embarrassed narrator apologizes for (8), reveals the two narrative levels in competition within his story, thus partly clarifying the meaning of the duplicity of his linguistic representations.

Punjabi is defined as mother tongue, the symbol of an ethnic and regional belonging (5). It is the first and the most current means of family communication (6), but it is also a «shouted language», clearly associated with the father figure (7). Urdu is defined as the national language (2), but also as the mother tongue (1), or rather, the «language



of his mother»: this almost murmured code takes us back to the mother figure and, differently from Punjabi «father tongue», it is a tender and musical language (3). At the core of necessary mobility, Urdu keeps representing a strong code of identification with the national group of origin and of self-promotion in his story. However, deterritorialization contributes to a larger use of Punjabi, a language which is intimately refused or underestimated (8), whose presence within the domestic space in Italy causes Urdu to be perceived, by now, as a «second language» (4). Therefore, the condition of mobility has an impact on the questioning of the notion of national language, as we will see with the Irish student, too. For these two people, it is especially the role of English which clarifies the complex and sometimes unconscious, process of re-reading of their linguistic repertoire.

Symbol of a transnational linguistic power (9), English is for Faruq a prestigious language before and after migrating, even if in a completely different way. In his country English is a passport for socio-economic privilege (Rahman 1996), but it is, at the same time, a *they-code* (Gumperz 1982), felt like the other's language (10), learnt at school and whose potential he will fully understand only after migrating (11). Thanks to mobility, the «second language» inherited by colonialism becomes in fact a preferential code and a mediating language (Lévy 2001) which allows and facilitates the construction of interpersonal relations and the learning of the language of the hosting country (12).

## **PRIORITY OF IN-PROGRESS EXPERIENCE, THE BACKGROUND STORY IN CATEGORIZING LANGUAGES**

As in a mirror, in Sarah's linguistic repertoire (2), English is initially seen with enthusiasm from the quantitative point of view, the same that has made it a global language (Crystal 1999) revealing its great diffusion (1). Its role as metalanguage in communication, even if it is conceivable in her experience as a student in mobility, is not mentioned in the representation. On the contrary, in her vision of the linguistic exchange, Sarah curtly refuses English (despite declaring that it is her mother tongue and that she could teach it in tandem (3) as vehicular language), as well as the idea of helping her partner, because she «prefers it in Italian» (4). Therefore, the language she initially defined as mother tongue cannot be a language of study or of thinking, now that Sarah is in a situation of temporary mobility in the country she has chosen for her Erasmus stay. This is particularly meaningful, as Sarah gives English an intrusive role, even in answer to a question asked in a neutral way (4).

In her opinion Italian is suspended between the foreign language and the second language, as she is not only learning it, but also living «in Italian». We could say that, as for Faruq, an element of reflection penetrates into a totally personal hierarchy of languages. In the final test of the first course, when students were asked to think in particular over the Erasmus mobility, the situation is even more fluid and the seeming contradictions are discussed and admitted. She seems to have found a certain solace in



the variety of Italian language (6), but she operates an opposed conceptualization defining Irish as «one», mixed language, establishing in this way a link between national language and maternal language, which is opposed to the current concept in language teaching. Irish is defined as her national language, but «unfortunately disappearing». A significant image if we consider that Gaelic in Ireland is spoken only by a small minority and it would be invisible if the institutional logics did not impose some bilingual inscriptions (Euromosaic 2006). English becomes a mother tongue «in practice» (7), simply in the light of its impact on real life. The concept of mother tongue shows to be denser, it becomes complex in the experience of mobility and it will be able to legitimate a temporary turn during a classroom activity in the following course: when she has to make use of Italian structures and of the one which is mentioned as mother tongue, she writes a proverb in Gaelic (8) without translating it. It is difficult to know whether the chosen topic refers to some representations linked to linguistic «maternity» based on the domestic place (after a long negotiation of sense in class, she translated: «there isn't, there could never be another home like mine»): this remains— thankfully — an intimate space of the self.



# REFLEXIVITY AND AUTONOMY IN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION: BIOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

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This article reports on the outcome of an experiment led by two teacher-educators within the foreign language section of the School for Specialization in Secondary Education (SSIS) in the region of Latium, Italy; the trainees involved were all second-year students and future teachers of French and English as a foreign language. Beginning in 1998, the SSIS courses, the implementation of a law passed in 1990, marked the first initiative undertaken by Italian universities in the field of pre-service teacher education. The two-year course was organized into four curricular areas common to all sections within the school: 1. Preparation for the teaching profession ; 2. Subject-specific studies ; 3. Educational and methodological training ; and 4. a practicum in local schools. On the basis of the professional development models designed by Freeman (Freeman, 1989), Kennedy (Kennedy, 1990), and Wallace (Wallace, 1991), and taking into account the specific nature of language teaching, the two teacher-educators began fieldwork research in order to devise training paths aimed at developing a reflexive attitude in teachers with regard to their classroom practice.

To be sure, over the last twenty years, foreign language teacher education has been characterized around the world by a reflexive approach that considers the trainee as an active subject, personally committed to his or her own professional development. In tandem with the development of such a reflexive approach, there has also been a gradual shift from a focus on the academic discipline itself to a focus on methodology and, ultimately, on the learner. The same has happened with teacher education: initially based upon the transmission of notions about the discipline and about classroom management, it has more recently focused on the central role of trainees' individual histories and personal beliefs.

As noted by Zeichner and Liston (1996), learning how to teach is a life-long process that teachers experience throughout their careers. Even the best pre-service courses are almost exclusively designed to help teachers start their teaching careers. But once teachers have adopted a reflexive attitude, they can take responsibility for their own professional development and commit themselves to improving their own teaching. We foresee two phases of reflection: the first, *in-action*, which involves a quick, immediate, automatic reaction followed by corrective reflection; and the second, *on-action*, which involves revision at a specific but less punctual moment, followed by systematic research developed over a longer period and culminating in a newly formulated theory-based supposition.

Over the course of their careers, teachers may pass through all of these reflexive phases if, for example, they become involved in a research group. It is therefore advisable to introduce teachers-to-be to reflexive practices from the beginning of their pre-service training. Within the framework of foreign language instruction, a reflexive approach has unique features, precisely because language:

- is the subject (L2 or L3) being taught, as well as the means used to transmit that knowledge;
- offers a unique opportunity to build both individual and collective identities;
- is internalized behavior as well as knowledge.

Moreover, in the language classroom, learners, and maybe teachers as well, are bound to use a communication tool they aren't perfectly in control of, taking risks in interaction, which can create a sense of unease and insecurity vis-à-vis the language and culture that they are learning. This particular situation incites affective and emotional responses that, even more so, demand awareness on the part of teacher-trainees of the stakes underlying the learning-teaching discipline.

In reference to the final report of the *European Profile for Language Teacher Education* (Kelly, Grenfell, Allan, Kriza, McEvoy, 2004), this work is situated within the framework of *Knowledge, Understanding, Values*. The two teacher-educators took the following steps in their fieldwork research: an analysis of the existing literature on reflexive teaching, questionnaires, reflexive group activities on the internship experience in comparison with other subject areas, and journal writing.

The trainees used questionnaires (A) to express their perceptions of the training they had received in their first year in relation to the training they were currently receiving and to their future profession. The questions concerned:

1. the knowledge acquired ;
2. their attitudes ;
3. their expectations at the end of their first training year ;
4. their perspectives regarding their professional future

Through activities (B), the trainees reflected on themselves, on others, on themselves in relation to others, on the language being taught, on the training they had received, and on their own personal development. In their journals (C), the trainees expounded on and narrated their training experience. The teacher-educators proposed that their trainees keep in touch with them after the program in order to check whether the training they had received had left any meaningful traces.

<p><b>(A)</b>  <i>«Ho paura di non essere in grado», «Mi sento insicuro», «Vorrei sapere come comportarmi con gli studenti», « Ancora non è chiaro il rapporto tra teoria e pratica ». « È una professione difficile »  « Il tirocinio è la migliore formazione » « Ho ancora bisogno di dare senso e coerenza a tutti gli input ricevuti»</i></p>
<p><b>(B)</b>  <i>« Mi viene in mente la mia prima lezione intera a scuola per il tirocinio. La lezione si teneva in lingua e la mia host teacher è madrelingua. Mi sentivo terribilmente a disagio e sentivo di non essere in grado di comunicare correttamente in inglese, soprattutto per il mio accento »  « A volte le richieste dei docenti formatori non tengono conto delle nostre reali capacità e allora penso che anche noi facciamo la stessa cosa con gli studenti »</i></p>
<p><b>(C)</b>  <i>« Credo che la riflessione sia un momento fondamentale nel discorso educativo nel mio caso riesco abbastanza spesso ad individuare i motivi dei successi e dei miei insuccessi »  « Aumentare la fiducia in se stessi . Questo è un aspetto che riguarda più da vicino la mia persona e che si lega all'esperienza che ho vissuto e che ancora sto vivendo nella SSIS. Alcune volte infatti mi sono sentita non all'altezza della situazione.  « L'evoluzione professionale può passare solo attraverso una continua messa in discussione di se stessi »  «Non conoscendoci bene non sappiamo perché in determinate situazioni reagiamo in una certa maniera e solo prendendone consapevolezza possiamo imparare a reagire in maniera diversa. E per farlo ci vuole sicuramente molto coraggio. Non credo sia facile scoprire parti di noi delle quali non conosceamo neanche l'esistenza. »</i></p>

## REFLECTION AND SELF-OBSERVATION: STEPS FOR THE BENEFIT OF TEACHER AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The answers to the questionnaires show a sense of insecurity on the part of the trainees that they have not managed to overcome during their first year, particularly with regard to their relationship with students and the language they are going to teach. Several trainees speak of their uneasiness in communicating in a language that they have not fully mastered. On the other hand, the trainees' expectations are focused on their methodological competencies, revealing their need for:

Being able to plan teaching units ;  
Being capable of motivating their students ;  
Learning how to assess and evaluate them ;  
Being capable of making the connection between theoretical notions and classroom activities.

What also emerges is the awareness of wanting to undertake a “difficult job,” in which taking responsibility for one’s own professional development entails a continuous challenge to one’s own certainties and behaviors.

The activities aimed at self-observation and developing the capacity to reflect were inspired by the training model known as K.A.S.A. (Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Awareness) proposed by Donald Freeman (Freeman, 1989:36) and by Kathleen Bailey, Andy Curtis and David Nunan (Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 2001) in their work on language teacher professional development. The trainees are asked to communicate to the group their reactions and reflections on their training and their first teaching experiences. Such reflection, instigated by specific activities, engage future teachers and serve as commentary on the process itself.

In fact, reflexivity and self-criticism, the expression of judgments on the training one has received, the *a posteriori* awareness of interactions and of their constructive use, the stated sense of uneasiness, fear, the feeling of ridiculousness when expressing oneself in the foreign language one is teaching, but also the expression of one’s opinions about one’s trajectory, the capacity to reinvest and modify one’s initial teaching posture—that is to say, taking responsibility for one’s professional development—have all been acknowledged as fundamental factors in teacher training throughout one’s career.

Specialized literature and the experience described above show that reflexive practices are already possible at the initial stages of teacher education. They allow trainees to develop not only as specialists in their own subject field, but also, and above all, as professionals who are responsible and autonomous, who, beginning with their own experiences and environment, ask themselves questions about their practice, evaluate the quality of their own actions, and eventually, if necessary, modify their ways of teaching.

# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE IMAGINATION AND LINGUISTIC EDUCATION OF A MIGRANT WRITER

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## **THE WAY OF THE MIGRANT WRITER, THE TEACHER'S LABORATORY, A WORD ON LANGUAGES**

The complexity of Québécois society presents a particularly significant framework through which one may approach questions concerning multilingualism and multiculturalism as they apply to education. In 2002, the Ministry's Educational Policy Statement begins by declaring: "In a pluralistic society such as ours, schools bring people together. Our schools must not only help students develop a feeling of belonging to the community but also teach them how to 'live together'" (Ministère de l'éducation 2002). For a long time, different waves of immigration have in fact introduced a new element into Québécois society, one capable of rupturing the dichotomy between Francophones and Anglophones: allophones.

From the 1980s onwards that, Marco Micone, a Quebec writer of Italian descent and a teacher of Italian, has produced a series of reflections devoted to the question of multilingualism in addition to his literary production. For Micone, his school's classroom, with a majority of allophones, has always served as a laboratory in which he notes on a daily basis the obligatory recourse to language in the expression of identity. In the linguistic autobiography in which Micone describes his journey as a student and the path that enabled him to acquire an identity and creative language, he discusses belonging and exclusion as well as language acquisition and socialization. This journey sketches imaginary lines and real spaces that, in turn, evoke others that are only imagined. The borders between internal and external worlds, between inclusion and exclusion, become porous and unclear. By means of his imagination and through his process of reflection, Micone, in his triple role as educator, creator, and spokesman for an immigrant community, assumes the role of guide for that

community's participants, and, in explaining to them their position, he provides them with the means with which to question it.

Marco Micone's approach can contribute to the debate on the teaching of languages and cultures, as well as on the expertise of the potential educator in a multilingual and multicultural setting. Moreover, through the kinds of migratory and creative experiences that he writes about, one can come to understand something that is already the subject of debate among linguistic anthropologists: the difference between "real" communities and "imagined" communities, and the essential role of variation – linguistic and cultural – in understanding the human condition. (Duranti, 2000: 75)

**Excerpts from Micone, M., "La Parole immigrée" in: CACCIA, F., *Sous le signe du Phénix*, Montréal, Guernica, 1985, pp. 261-272.**

1- Quelques jours après mon arrivée à Montréal, je suis allé frapper à une école française du quartier et là j'ai essayé un refus catégorique de la part de l'administration.

(...)

2 - Finalement j'ai abouti dans une sorte d'école d'accueil française fréquentée uniquement par des jeunes italophones. Cette école étant située trop loin de chez moi, après quelque temps je me suis inscrit à l'école anglaise de mon quartier. (...) C'est à l'école anglaise que j'ai ressenti l'émigration dans son aspect le plus difficile: la marginalisation (...). J'étais entouré exclusivement de jeunes d'origine italienne, et nous ne parlions que l'italien aussitôt sortis de la classe.

(...)

3 - L'apprentissage du français je l'ai fait lentement dans le quartier où je vivais plutôt qu'à l'école.

4 - Plus tard au collège Loyola j'ai opté pour l'étude de la littérature française parce que en plus de parler mieux le français que l'anglais je m'étais aperçu soudainement que la majorité de la population d'ici au Québec était francophone. (...) C'est à ce moment là que j'ai commencé à réfléchir non seulement sur l'identité du peuple francophone au Québec mais sur mon identité aussi et sur celle de la communauté à laquelle j'appartiens.

(...)

5 - Moi je m'intéresse particulièrement aux écoles mono-ethniques anglophones fréquentées par les jeunes d'origine italienne. Il y a des milliers de jeunes qui subissent la marginalisation dans ces écoles qui ont été mises sur pied au début des années soixante. (...) Ces jeunes là vivent dans un « no man's land » culturel très néfaste à leur épanouissement.



Excerpts from Micone, M., “Apprivoiser Babel” in: Plourde, M., *Le Français au Québec*, 400 ans d’histoire et de vie, Montreal, Fides, 2000, pp. 424-425. \*\*

6 - J’ai besoin de parler français, mais je n’ai pas besoin du français pour parler. De mes trois langues, aucune ne suffit à exprimer ce que je suis. Je n’écris qu’en français, sachant que dans le Québec multiethnique d’aujourd’hui, le français québécois se nourrit désormais de l’imaginaire de toutes les autres langues. L’espace identitaire, qu’il soit individuel ou collectif, ne peut être traduit exclusivement par les mots et encore moins par ceux d’une seule langue.

## DESIRE, PLEASURE, NECESSITY, EXCLUSION..., AN ESSENTIAL MULTILINGUAL JOURNEY

In his account of his acquisition of French, the narrator simultaneously describes a linguistic and identity trajectory. This voyage, as with all consciousness raising, is accomplished in stages. Initially (1), the student-narrator suffers rejection. The text promptly describes an interior space—the school—to which closed borders deny access. Here, the image of the door is an image of enclosure and evokes exclusion. Subsequently (2), the border is crossed, but in appearance only, as the space that opens up is yet another closed space: the ghetto. Marginalization rears its head once again, but the text already indicates a place outside the classroom that is primarily a place for words and the expression of identity: the *I*, in effect, recognizes itself amongst its own. It is only afterwards (3) that the outside (the neighborhood surrounding the school) becomes a site of language learning and socialization. Speaking, gaining access to the language of the other, signals a realization; the street has functioned as a space of initiation that indicates a new step in the life of the young narrator. The emergence of awareness is expressed in the moment that (4) the *I* manages to choose a language to learn, which hinges upon a reflection on identity positions within the receptive community. In this instance, the foreign language ends up creating a bridge between two different spaces, whose borders then dissolve. In the narrator’s search for identity, the francophone community and the narrator’s community are superimposed on one another, thereby becoming a single space of questioning.

The switch to the present tense (5) marks the end of the phase of emergent awareness and the beginning of another narrative: the educator’s. Enlisted to work within the closed space of a monoethnic school, the narrator now presents us with an approach to teaching that encourages access to the “outside.” Inasmuch as the school-ghetto is a site of confinement, one must speak in order to cross its borders. Through the development of his linguistic skills and his identity (6), Marcone clearly presents himself as a mediator between imaginary spaces, facilitating the act of grieving and providing a space for restorative speech. (Zarate, 2003: 61)

In Micone's account, the image of the school evolves: from a space of reclusion and exclusion, it changes into a space for the interrogation and exploration of identity. The school ends up resembling the site of mediation described by Mariette Th  berge: "Pour   voluer la personne doit se questionner au sujet de sa propre conception identitaire, les enseignants sont constamment aux prises avec ce d  fi puisque l'  cole agit d  s l'enfance comme un lieu transitoire entre la famille et le monde environnant" "In order to evolve, the individual must examine his or her own construction of identity; teachers are constantly faced with this challenge, as, from childhood on, the school acts as a transitory site between the family and the surrounding world". (Th  berge, 2006: 92)

## **BREAKING THE MONOLITHIC LINK BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE: THE SELF-NARRATIVE**

This intermediate space is a type of agora where different cultural groups must learn to understand and to communicate with one another. In Quebec, this idea is losing its luster through the articulation of a common societal project, a cultural convergence "emphasizing the affirmation of the francophone character of the Qu  b  cois society and the acknowledgement of a common public culture [mettant l'accent sur l'affirmation du caract  re francophone de la soci  t   qu  b  coise et la reconnaissance d'une culture publique commune]" (Mukamurera, 2006: 20). Within such a project, however, whose realization has been partly entrusted to educational institutions, the educator must not forget that the school's role in multicultural settings is to take into account the affordances of a cultural model that is neither unique nor dominant (Ndione, 2002: 79). Anyone teaching languages and cultures must be especially aware of the importance of opening up the language-culture link to new modalities that consider the asymmetries of the plurals and the singulars (language-cultures, languages-culture).

Thus, one must constantly engage in an "exercise of memory" or the "construction of a self-narrative" because, as Dasen and Perregaus remind us, "it is then fundamental for every teacher to know who he or she is [il est alors formateur pour tout enseignant de savoir qu'il est]" (Dasen and Perregaux, 2000: 216)

As for the pain that accompanies this awareness, we leave the final word to Blanchard-Laville: "in this human-centred occupation one speaks of this profession in terms of latent suffering. It's the flip side of the coin in this promised land, where its practice over time will reopen unhealed wounds [dans ce m  tier de l'humain on parle de cette profession en terme de souffrance latente. C'est l'envers de la m  daille de cette terre promise o   on ne peut exercer    long terme sans que resurgissent des blessures non cicatris  es]" (Blanchard-Laville, 2001: 44).

# LITERATURE, HISTORY, LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING: AN APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF SELFHOOD AND OTHERNESS

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## MULTILAYERED TEXT OR A REFLEXIVE DEMONSTRATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FICTION AND HISTORY

The main subject of *The File on H.* (Kadare, 1981) is the breakdown of communication between two ethnographic researchers and the informants on whom their study is based: the singers of the epic poems performed in the Northern frontier region of Albania bordering on Kosovo. In their concern to demonstrate the originality of their theories, the two scholars are unaware of the cultural realities which underpin their fieldwork. They undergo an identity crisis when their material and all their data are mysteriously destroyed by unknown local residents. The mistrust between the scholars and the local community derives in part from the convergence of different languages and dialects: the language of government officials, the mixture of English and archaic Albanian spoken by the scholars, the dialect of the mountainous region in which their research is carried out and that of the Slav inhabitants of Kosovo who accuse the scholars of usurping their cultural heritage. On both sides of the border, the same epic songs are sung, but in different languages and using different musical instruments. They symbolise a cultural capital which is as bitterly fought over as the territory from which they emanate. The tribal confrontation of languages and cultures in a little known corner of the Balkans serves as a parable on the dangers which await culturally naïve ethnographers who seek to appropriate the cultures of others for their own scholastic purposes.

*The File on H.* is a minor masterpiece by the International Man-Booker prizewinning Albanian author, Ismail Kadare. First written and published in serial form in 1981, the novel was translated in French by Josuf Vrioni (Vrioni, 1989), and subsequently into English by David Bellos (Bellos, 1990). Kadare based his plot on a real event: the

celebrated series of field studies into the origins of the Homeric epic undertaken in the 1930s and 1950s by two classical scholar ethnographers: Milman Parry and Albert Lord. In fictionalizing a brief early episode in their professional itinerary, Kadare mounts a swinging attack on Communist-inspired totalitarianism, anachronistically translating the 40-year long Albanian dictatorship of Enver Hoxha (1948-1986) into the pre-war ‘monarchy’ of the first king of independent Albania, Ahmed Zogu (1934-38). Kadare’s satire deconstructs the relationship between popular myth embedded in folklore, official history, the long-standing territorial conflicts of the Balkans and literary fiction (Crawshaw, 2006). Anticipating Hayden White’s (2006) thesis that all historical fact is by definition tropistic and hence transforms empirical reality, Kadare mounts an implicit defense of literature’s role in relation to history. The defining feature of what Linda Hutcheon (1988) has termed ‘historiographical metafiction’ is precisely that it deconstructs history through ironic reflexivity, laying bare the machinery of narrative and so demonstrating its relative validity. Kadare achieves this effect through a mixture of anachronism and ‘*mise-en-abyme*’. As the two researchers travel back to America, disconsolate following the loss of their data, they discover that their visit has itself become the object of an epic song. *The File on H.* is a tale which underlines at least two fundamental aspects of ethnography: first the problem of undertaking fieldwork without alienating informants and second the risks of drawing conclusions which ignore essential features of local culture. This problematic which is integral to Ricoeur’s (1990) conception of selfhood and otherness is explored in detail in the novel. Its narratological techniques offer university students of language and culture a penetrating representation of intercultural (mis)communication and a glimpse into a little known chapter of Balkan political history.

**Kadare I., *The File on H.*, 1981, Translation David Bellos, 1990, pp. 49-50**

**Extract 1**

“We’ve just got back from Washington where we filled in our applications for Albanian visas. I can’t hide the fact that we were rather disappointed by the way the Albanian Legation treated us. Not at all warm. On the contrary, the atmosphere was all suspicion and mistrust.”

*This passage describes the visit by the two researchers Max and Bill (aka Parry and Lord) to the Albanian consulate in Washington. A record of the exchange has been kept in Bill’s personal diary. The diary has been stolen and poorly translated by informers working for the regional governor who mistakes the two researchers for spies. The governor himself is under the orders of the Minister of the Interior who is attempting to blackmail the two scholars into writing a hagiographic biography of the King, Ahmed Zogu, a thinly veiled anachronistic reference to Enver Hoxha, the totalitarian leader of Albania in the early 1980s when ***The File on H.*** was first published.*

**Extract 2**

“The plenipotentiary, who saw us in person, took our breath away. The representative of this partly archaic and partly grotesque little monarchy turned out to be intelligent,

crafty, and witty, to have an extraordinary knowledge of world literature, to speak all the European languages (including Swedish). He was even the friend and patron of the French poet Apollinaire, and he pokes fun at everything, most especially at his own country and its people.”

*The Americans find themselves in the presence of a remarkable personage. The character of the ambassador is the portrait of a real person, Faik Konitza, the Albanian Chargé d’Affaires in Washington during the 1930s. Through the voice of this character, Kadare is able to express his own point of view toward his country and toward Western culture in general. The ambassador’s erudition and ironic attitude turn the tables on the two scholars, leaving them perplexed and bewildered.*

### Extract 3

“Although we were trying to be as vague as possible about the reasons for our visit, we couldn’t help mentioning the name of Homer – and the diplomat butted in:

‘Did you know that some people claim that in the first line of the Iliad, *Ménin aeidé, théa Péleideo Achileos...* (“Sing, goddess, of the anger of Achilleus, son of Peleus...”), the word *ménin*, as you can see for yourselves, is the Albanian word *méni*, meaning “resentment”. Which means that of the first three or four words of world literature, the first and unfortunately the bitterest is in Albanian... Ha! Ha!”

*The minister is alluding to the Greco-Roman origins of Albanian culture, one of the country’s founding national myths to which Kadare himself subscribes. The word **méni** symbolises not only Albania’s antique cultural pedigree but at the same time the suspicious, combative attitude of its people which will eventually subvert the work of the two researchers.*

### Extract 4

“The diplomat’s eyes flashed with a fearsome mixture of intelligence, cynicism, bitterness and malice.

‘As far as the word [*méni*] is concerned, I believe that what I told you is in effect correct, and yet... [...] And yet’, the diplomat came to the point at last, ‘the Albanians of today maybe have nothing at all in common with the way you imagine them’.

‘We don’t imagine anything at all’, I answered. ‘So far you are the first Albanian we have ever met and I can’t hide the fact that we are, well, overwhelmed!’”.

*Thrown off track by the ironic brio of the minister, the two Americans no longer know what to believe. Their bewilderment is a foretaste of the sorry outcome of their scholastic project.*

### Extract 5

“The notes ended there. The governor rubbed his eyes. Funny business, he thought. His mind felt a complete blank.”

*The regional governor in Northern Albania cannot make head or tail of the business. As a State official, he knows nothing about Homer and persists in believing that he is dealing with a pair of foreign agents. The scene epitomises the black humour of the work as whole which belies its fundamentally serious message.*

## INSIGHTS INTO BREAKDOWNS IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION, ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE ORIGINS OF NATIONAL CONFLICTS

The interest of the above extracts for designers of a university program in intercultural awareness derives from a number of interdependent factors. From a narratological perspective, the extracts constitute a multilayered text, consisting of a personal research log which, having been stolen and translated by a native informer, is then read out of context and misinterpreted by an official of a totalitarian regime. The text is a simultaneous ensemble of four different voices giving rise to multiple reflections: on intercultural communication, on the politics of totalitarianism and on the nature of ethnographic research. It must be assumed that, with the exception of the ambassador, none of the participants is able to understand the true nature of events. Each is operating at cross-purposes with the others. The burlesque figure of the government official is incapable of accepting as genuine the scientific mission of the researchers. For their part, the two scholars, blinded by academic ambition, are shown to have embarked on a project that is doomed to fail due to a combination of historical ignorance and cultural naivety.

From an educational perspective, a reading of the complete text of *The File on H.* invites a detailed insight into the processes involved in ethnographically grounded scholarship whilst at the same time offering a lesson in the history and politics of territorial dispute in the Balkans. This in turn can be seen as a microcosm of the tensions between East and West and Slavonic and Greco-Roman cultures at one of the key cultural crossroads of contemporary Europe.

# WRITERS AND IDENTITIES: NARRATIVE AS A TOOL OF INTERVENTION IN SOCIAL WORK

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## WORKS OF THE MIGRANT WRITER: EXPERIENCE, STORIES, LESSONS

Maghrebian authors in Quebec constitute an ethnic and literary minority, and identifications of them often highlight their ethnic origin. However, these authors resist such categorization and call instead for the recognition of their professional abilities (Giguère, 2001). Harel (2000) goes so far as to say that the concept of a migrant writer is an alterity invented by the dominant community. The analysis of the place given and assigned to these “foreigners” at the heart of Quebecois literature allows one to see the power and the influence of national determiners that categorize this literature and contribute to the designation of identities. Nevertheless, there is unanimous agreement that the literature of immigrant authors in Quebec highlights common denominators related to the migrant experience (Nepveu, 1988) and trajectories characterized by hybridization and *métissage*.

We approach the subject of immigrant authors here as a social phenomenon and from the point of view of the immigrants themselves. We focus on the authors, their personal and cultural identities, rather than on their writings. These identities are displayed in the migrant experience, the adventure of writing and the publication of their works. We have developed a framework of identity types through the use of excerpts taken from the migrant trajectory and writing based on the life-narratives method, together with a thematic analysis of significant works by four participant authors.



### **Wahmed Ben Younes, l'arpenteur**

« Un algérien qui va écrire sur la (fête de) Saint-Jean baptiste à Québec, il est plus qu'algérien. Il est aussi québécois et français. Ma Kabylie ça a beaucoup d'importance. Pas au niveau géographique, au niveau d'être à l'aise, d'être en sécurité. Alors c'est comme si je me dis ce lieu là il a existé maintenant je peux passer à un autre milieu »

### **Wahmed Ben Younes land surveyer**

« An Algerian who writes about (the festival) Saint Jean Baptiste in Quebec is more than just an Algerian, he is just as Quebecan as French. My Kabylie is very important; not in a geographical sense but in terms of feeling comfortable and safe. So it's as if now that I can say that this place existed I can move on to another place».

### **Œuvres: Yemma et Ziri et ses tirelires**

« Pour Yemma, j'ai commencé d'écrire par nostalgie, par pensée au village. C'était vraiment la culture qui revenait, c'est comme si j'avais envie de cracher ce que j'avais à l'intérieur. Juste de me dire, il faut le sortir sinon je vais retourner en Algérie. ».

« Avec Ziri et ses tirelires, je reviens toujours aux enfants. Je pense que je me vois comme quelqu'un qui garde son cap de changer les choses que ce soit par l'écriture ou comme éducateur aussi. On peut expliquer aux jeunes que ce soit le racisme, que ce soit la différence, que ce soit l'ouverture ».

### **Works: Yemma and Ziri and her piggybanks**

« For Yemma I started to write out of nostalgia, because of thoughts about the village. It was really the culture that came back; it was as if I had to spit out what I had inside. To say to myself, get it out or I'll go back to Algeria ».

« With Ziri and her piggybanks I keep coming back to children. I think that I see myself as someone who sets his course to change things either through writing or as a teacher. One can explain to youth that this can be racism, this can be difference, and this can be an opening up».

### **Salah El Beddiari, le citoyen**

« L'appartenance à la nation, un pays, une communauté, une religion, ça me pose problème. Je pense qu'une fois qu'on se définit forcément on appartient à quelque chose et forcément on fait exclusion d'autre chose. »

### **Salah El Beddiari, le citoyen**

« Belonging to a nation, a country, a community, a religion, poses a problem for me. I think that by defining oneself one you end up belonging to something and excluding others things. »

### **Oeuvre: La mémoire du soleil**

« La mémoire c'est ce qui s'était passé dans le temps dans mon pays d'origine. C'est toutes ces histoires qu'on a vécu là-bas qui sont restées dans ma tête. C'est cette mémoire-là qui est transportée dans un autre lieu. C'est comme si j'essayais de faire revivre un peu toutes ces choses là que j'ai vécu chez moi ».



**Work: The memory of the sun**

« The memory is of what happened before in my country of origin. It's all the things that we experienced there and that have stayed in my mind. It's this memory that has been transported to another place. It's as if I try to relive to a certain extent all these things that I experienced in my country. »

**Majid Blal, le bipolaire**

« Sherbrooke, c'est la ville où je vis. Midelt, c'est celle où j'ai vécu. Oui, c'est toujours entre le Canada et le Maroc. Plus on vieillit, plus on appartient à des lieux aussi ».

**Majid Blal, the bipolar**

« Sherbrooke is the town where I live. Midelt, is the town where I lived. Yes, it's always between Canada and Morocco. The more one grows old the more one belongs to places as well. »

**Œuvre: Une femme pour pays**

« C'est un témoignage sur les choses qui ne se disent pas. La vulnérabilité, le fait de « brûler » pour obtenir les papiers, le rêve de quitter le pays d'origine, la désillusion dans le pays d'accueil, etc... ».

**Work: A woman for a country**

« It's a witness to the things that go unsaid. The vulnerability, the burning desire to get the immigration papers, the dream of leaving one's homeland, the disillusion in the receiving country, etc... »

**Nadia Ghalem, la nomade**

« J'ai le physique, j'ai l'allure de quelqu'un qui vient d'ailleurs mais n'importe quel ailleurs fait mon affaire. J'adore être une étrangère. Parce que c'est une forme de liberté. Je suis pas obligée d'obéir aux diktats sociaux ».

**Nadia Ghalem, the nomad**

« I have the look, the look of someone who is from elsewhere but anywhere is good enough. I love being a foreigner. Because it is a kind of freedom. I am not obliged to obey social diktats ».

**Oeuvre: Villa Désir**

« Le titre c'est la maison de ma mère. Par une fenêtre on voyait un pin vraiment échevelé par le vent et derrière lui y avait la Méditerranée, on voyait la mer. C'était immense, c'était superbe. C'est ça Rome c'est une ville à désirs, ça revenait à être peut-être Alger. C'était comme une transposition vers quelque chose d'idéal. »

**Work: Desire House**

« The title is the name of my mother's house. From one of the windows we could see a pine tree that had been really blown about by the wind and behind it was the Mediterranean, we could see the sea. It was immense, it was superb. This is Rome, a town of wishes; it was like being in Algiers. It was like transposing an ideal ».

## THE WORKS OF MAGHREBIN AUTHORS IN CANADA, PLACES OF UNVEILING, OF CONSTRUCTION AND OF SHARING

In the life stories of immigrant authors faced with multiple ruptures (geographic, cultural, relational, material, etc...) and in a process of identity reconstruction, memories and the past are given different roles, statuses and functions by the author. Writings taken from migrant trajectories communicate the thought processes of the individual who is trying to work through historical, cultural and identity-related impasses. Furthermore, French Quebecois literature is situated in a country that is primarily Anglophone. The Maghrebin author, as an ambassador for the French language, appropriates his bilingualism and plays with his languages, including his mother tongue. Thus, his writing is affected by cohabitation and linguistic contamination; as a result, the work includes examples of linguistic *metissage*.

Finally, migration is not a phenomenon exogenous to writing. The immigrant, the subject of the story, of memories and languages, constructs his identity through the activity of writing. Writing functions to add aesthetic value and bear witness to, critique, acknowledge and heal (in a therapeutic sense) the narratives of immigrant authors. It is thus important to promote the use of this tool amongst social workers.

Composed of experiences and actions, the life story is rooted in the meaning that the actors give to the events of their lives. It shows the subject at work, moving, looking to give meaning to his experience. Thus, it is not just a chronological narrative of happenings and events, but also a story that takes into account affective and symbolic bonds. The immigrant is actively involved through his references, his interpretation of events, and his testimony. The story is not just a narrative but a construction; and in this process of personal construction of the past, social and collective memory is constantly invoked. Addressed to an Other—whomever that Other may be—there is always an element of the reconstructed; there is always one part fiction and one part reconstruction. Narratives are the reflection of the history of an individual, at the same time that they help to construct this history. One's identity is a continual process of self-development, a «machine» that brings together elements that are seemingly separate. Narratives thus unveil identity at the same time that they construct it. This process of identity construction is displayed both in the life-story method as well as in the telling of one's story.

Currently in Quebec, questions are being asked about how best to help the development of identities, especially for second-generation migrants born in Quebec. The use of life stories may be a tool for identifying, promoting and catalyzing all the processes related to the immigrant's identity reconstruction, as well as everything that will enable these processes to succeed. Books, sites for sharing immigrant experiences and actions, could also be useful tools of identity development.

# MULTILINGUALISM AND SUBJECTIVITY: « LANGUAGE PORTRAITS», BY MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

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## «LANGUAGE PORTRAITS» AND THE LINGUISTIC WORLD OF MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

Children often become aware of multilingualism very early in their lives. They notice that their mother speaks differently from their father, or that their neighbor, too, speaks in a different way. Later, at kindergarten, they meet children who speak other languages. Or they are part of a multilingual family and have a multilingual biography even before they go to school.

However, we must always tread carefully around such children if we want them to speak about their languages. Many children learn very early that our society, kindergarten and school do not appreciate multilingualism as a general rule, but stick to the mastery of «good» language whose use is generally compulsory. Some schools even go so far as to forbid the use of family languages during play-time. Members of linguistic minorities or of families descended from immigrants know that it is better to avoid speaking the languages spoken at home; that is why questionnaires for school enrolment often contain false information (see, for example, K. Brizic, 2006). In order to get to know an individual's language histories and how they are used, I have resorted to the «portrait of languages» method (Krumm, 2001), which allows children to represent their «linguistic world» more easily. For their language portraits, the children receive blank figures on which they can draw their languages with the help of colored felt-tipped markers. Drawing gives them a certain amount of pleasure, because they can color the figures all or partially, dress them, give them hairstyles or put shoes on their feet – all of which are reflections of their perceptions of language. Languages are distributed on the figures' bodies in different ways because children have very different ways of representing themselves.

These language portraits were created between 1990 and 1995 within the framework of «the complementary training of teachers with pupils of different mother tongues». Every year since 1998, we have carried out independent language portrait projects in different schools under the aegis of the University of Vienna. The following language portraits belong to the 2004/2005 session.

**Martin, 12 ans**

L'anglais est chez moi dans la tête, parce que je dois réfléchir pour cette langue.  
L'allemand est chez moi dans les bras, parce que c'est ma langue maternelle et par conséquent très facile.

**Joyce, 11 (geboren in Nigeria)**

Deutsch ist bei mir in den Händen weil ich damit am besten vermitteln kann.  
Yoruba ist bei mir im Körper, weil der Körper nicht hören kann und ich kann Yoruba nicht so gut verstehen.  
Englisch ist bei mir im Kopf weil ich mich manchmal ziemlich konzentrieren muss um mir Vokabeln zu merken.  
Französisch ist bei mir in den Beinen weil es für mich sehr fern liegt es richtig zu lernen obwohl dass mein Wunsch ist. Und um in die Ferne zu gehen muss man Beine haben.

**Milica 16 (geboren in Serbien/Montenegro)**

Herz: rot/ Englisch  
Gehirn: schwarz/ Serbisch  
Mund: violett / Deutsch  
Serbisch - schwarz deshalb, weil ich Deutsch besser kann als Serbisch, d.h. ich verlerne es mittlerweile. Trotzdem rede ich jeden Tag Serbisch, um das Verlernen zu hindern bzw zu reduzieren. Aber wenn ich denke, denke ich in Serbisch.  
Englisch – rot deshalb, weil Englisch meine Liebessprache ist und ich seit der Volksschule gut darin bin.  
Deutsch – Violett ist meine Lieblingsfarbe und Deutsch verbinde ich mit Violett, weil sehr gern Deutsch spreche und schreibe.  
Französisch – mag ich weniger als Englisch.  
Spanisch –, „Es grünt so grün, wenn Spaniens Blüten blühen“ – möchte ich noch lernen.

**Merve 11 (in Wien geboren)**

Im Kopf: Türkisch, Englisch, Deutsch  
Der gesamte Körper: Kurdisch  
In den Händen: Deutsch  
In den Beinen: Türkisch  
Türkisch hat meine Papa und Mama gelernt <ihr beigebracht>  
Deutsch habe ich in die Schule gelernt.  
Kürdisch hat meine Papa und Mama gelernt.  
Englisch habe ich in die Schule gelernt.

## IDENTITY FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGES, LINGUISTIC INTERACTIONS, STRENGTHENING OF DIFFERENCES

The most important effect of this process is to capture the wealth of multilingualism: the more languages an individual knows, the more colorful the portrait. Our aim is not to influence the language portrait or to examine children's linguistic proficiency; this is why there is no task for the children besides drawing. Rather, the idea is to get them to reveal their «hidden identity», their subjective representations of their linguistic identity. The fact that they can represent their own languages without having to answer questions about the languages spoken in their families enables them to freely represent their relationship to them. The language portrait reveals the identity forming function of languages and the function of linguistic interaction. More often than not, the first language takes up most of the coloring space – warm colors like red and orange are often situated near the heart. Given children's answers to our questions, it becomes clear that they are aware of creating this language portrait from the point of view of the meaning that languages have for them, rather than their actual proficiency or frequency of use.

Rita Franceschini has coined the term «*randständige Sprecher*» for multilingual subjects: her model stages the dynamic between center and periphery, according to which the subject, right from the start, increases his knowledge of his first languages without them all being linked «to the same mass of functions and identification. These variations, which are found at the center of the linguistic system, can be used normally and immediately at a certain moment in life where the identification of the subject is strongest.» (Franceschini 2001: 114). The language portraits bring some precision and modifications to this model.

In the first two cases above, the native language is reduced, although Joyce draws the entire body with the color for Yoruba – even if German is her current language of communication, which she does not reject in any way. Using Franceschini's terminology, German, represented in the colored drawing, is «in the margin/*randständig*». Milica's portrait is different. Her favorite colors or languages are clearly English and German, but she continues to think in her original language. She makes an effort to conserve it. The same goes for Merve, for whom the four languages of her life have an important meaning independently of her command of them and the frequency with which she uses them. This is very obvious for Kurdish, which is the language she speaks at home and which has an enormous emotional value, while Turkish is her language of communication outside the family; according to data given by her parents, the school listed Merve as «Turkish».

The centre-periphery model does not allow clear divisions between the first, second and foreign languages. In a similar vein, Gogolin (Gogolin, 1998) speaks about «obsessive purity». The migratory biography, providing rich linguistic potential that is used in communicative contexts, is not organized in a linear way following a single language; rather, it constitutes the multilingual identity. The concept of language for

children who have grown up in contact with several languages, according to Ellis (Ellis, 2001), entails a model of linguistic capital. German and English are described in the examples above through an account of the characteristics of investment, exemplified in the metaphor of «wrestlers» associated with Milica's attempt to conserve her mother tongue. What Hu (Hu, 1997, 2006) shows about the dichotomy between «own and foreign»—that is, the dissolution of a definable concept of self and the criticism of a concept of purity in relation to identity—turns out to be much more true for migrants' concept of identity when, according to Gogolin (1998), they do not know the imperative of purity.

Drawing these language portraits, many children become aware, for the first time, of the diversity of their languages. For this reason, we advise teachers to develop other language projects inspired by this reflection (see, for example: Oomen-Welke/Krumm 2004 as well as the project «Children discover languages»). Thus, language portraits become part of language courses; they call attention to the sphere of language reflection and allow us to address other possibilities, degrees of relationship, word migrations, similarities and differences between languages. At the same time, they belong to the sphere of intercultural apprenticeship in the sense that they contribute to the awareness of «the right to one's own language» and the strengthening of linguistic diversity.

# COUNTERPOINT

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The Austrian linguist Mario Wandruszka (1979) developed a concept of the multilingualism of the person (« *Die Mehrsprachigkeit des Menschen* ») and showed how the speaker carries out and uses this multilingualism. According to Wandruszka, every person is multilingual, because he possesses more than one language within his « mother tongue », starting from the familiar language he uses with people close to him, the dialect he needs to communicate with the people in his village, town or region, the « standard » language that he learns at school to become literate, which he uses with other language speakers, and lastly the specialized language(s) that he acquires over the course of his professional life and with which he works. In all its forms, his mother tongue is in contact with other languages – through, for example, the process of borrowing. Over time, it incorporates elements from other languages, and thus it contains within it bridges that lead to those other languages.

The multilingual individual need not remain enclosed within his/her mother tongue. He is capable of acquiring other languages at an early age, in his youth, over the course of his entire life (*Livre blanc* 1994). His « first language »--or his first languages—give him access to other languages (as will the study of other languages later on) through the mere fact of their interrelatedness. His mother tongue and other languages are replete with borrowings from yet other languages: they all possess an international vocabulary, a vocabulary common to certain language families (for example, pan-Roman/pan-German/pan-Slavic/pan-Turkish, pan-Arab, etc.), with many borrowings from various languages generated over the course of history, with lexicons and structures from his specialized languages (which abound in internationalisms), and grammar structures borrowed from yet other languages. In fact, each language is a large repository of other languages which he must know how to use—or, in other words, which he must *learn* how to use (Stoye 2000 ; Meissner, Meissner, Klein & Stegmann 2004).

Therefore, a multilingual person's language is never static; on the contrary, it is dynamic and open. Speakers are not « on principle monolingual and sedentary », but potentially mobile and flexible (Franceschini 2003: 247). Their language, plural from

the outset, expands and shrinks over the course of their lives, and it can be differentiated from the languages of others. The individual, the self, is capable of learning these other languages, mostly in institutional contexts (pre-school, school, university, professional training), but even more so in other situations – migration, travel, studies, family relations, social relations, reading etc. (see Ch. « Publics et domaines » in « Un niveau-seuil », Coste et al. 1976). In short, we can summarize this first section by saying the following: the speaker's language(s) belong to him; they are *his*. It is therefore better to say «the Self and *his* languages».

This change of article – *les/the* vs. *ses/his* – highlights the subjective dimension of the plural approach. It is clear that the «plurality» of «*his* languages» is not identical for speaker A as for speaker B. Bilingual repertoires are not the same for anyone. Nevertheless, they serve in communication; everyone manages to communicate with others with the help of his own means of expression. The speaker's language is, effectively, *his* language; the languages he has acquired outside of his mother tongue are also *his* languages, even if he is afraid of saying so (he calls them – after a long tradition – « foreign » languages, «*Fremdsprachen* », other people's languages). *His* language is not the same—*his* languages are not the same—as the language(s) of the other; they are effectively *his*. For his first language (mother tongue), we speak of *ideolect* to indicate its subjective, personal dimensions.

For other languages – the so-called foreign languages – we return to the concept of «interlanguage» (Selinker, 1972). Every language acquired or learned after the first one is effectively an «interlanguage», a learning language—that is, it is unstable and, at the same time, constantly in a process of «normalization». Here, we refer deliberately to the language and not the (native) speaker mistakenly idealized over the course of the history of language teaching and in certain linguistic trends. It is our «foreign» language that we intend to develop until it appears more or less «normal», comprehensible, pleasing, not shocking to the other (and certainly not the native one).

In spite of all our efforts toward «normalization», we will never speak the language of an «ideal» speaker, or even that of a “real” native one—but we will speak our «other» language. The authors of the *Common European Framework for Languages*, who have named the highest level of learning competence « mastery », stress that they are not motivated by «the ambition to compare such mastery to the competence of a native or near-native speaker. The aim is to characterize the degree of precision, adaptation, and ease of the language that one finds in the utterances of those who have been high-level learners.» (2000: 34). High level learners, but learners just the same.

Processes of normalization differ greatly according to situations of acquisition and apprenticeship. In a case of institutional apprenticeship—at secondary school or university or in a specialized school—normalization is encouraged by teachers and through an appropriate pedagogical apparatus. It is often experienced in terms of conflict (censure and self-blame, fault and sanctions). It is marked by the struggle against forgetting and everything that constitutes «unlearning». In situations of verbal communication between native and non-native speakers outside of school, normalization is manifested in the negotiation of meaning, in the effort to make



oneself understood. If all goes well, the negotiation occurs without mutual discrimination; if there is conflict, it can lead to misunderstanding or disagreement. In situations of written communication – writing a letter, translating a text, composing a text – normalization is a long and difficult, individual process, assisted by reference books. In every situation, normalization does not come about effortlessly or painlessly as certain methods have been promising for more than a century.

In this second section, we have described the slow process of normalization: the person, multilingual by definition, can acquire several languages over the course of his life. This acquisition never ceases. His foreign language will never be *the* foreign language.

Is it still necessary to ask how the individual—the self—perceives his languages: what value does he attribute to his «mother tongue», his «second language(s)», his «foreign languages»? This is, in fact, a question of perceptions and values according to different categories: aesthetic (beautiful language, hard language, musical language, prestigious language), political («universal» language, national language, regional or local language, «glottophage» language, colonizers' language, occupiers' language), economic (work or business language, commercial (national and international) language, banking language, etc.), entertainment language, scientific language, journalistic language), emotional language (family language, friends' or group language, enemy language, competitive language, work or study language, etc.).

How does the individual define himself when faced with his languages? Is he ready to accept them as they are and to integrate into the communities of their respective speakers? Or rather does he tend to refuse integration and keep his distance for some emotional, political, economic or social reason? We know that those who want to integrate into a community normally make more effort—to speak and to write than others.

Does the individual believe in and want to «possess» his languages? Or rather, does he feel possessed and dominated by them? Does he feel under their control? No metaphor in this field is innocent. To what extent are his languages at his disposal? The issues are different for a writer, for an Erasmus student or for a migrant worker. We could discuss indefinitely whether the individual dominates, commands or possesses a language. Even if we said that we have mastery over the language of a certain field, we still have to recognize that languages do not allow themselves to be freely “mastered” by anyone: they impose rules on us, they limit us in our ways of expressing them. This is true of all languages, «maternal» and others. This limitation is, among others, one of the reasons why individuals are sometimes so restrained in their language activities that they do not even speak, why they prefer one language to another, why they avoid certain languages, why they sometimes block their ears, why they practice *code-switching*, etc.

After having questioned in this third section an individual's perception and his acceptance or refusal of his languages, we are now going to ask what he knows of his

languages (language and linguistic knowledge), what he can do with his languages (know how) and how he acquires/learns them (learning techniques).

To describe the individual's knowledge of his languages and the opinions he has formulated over the course of his life, we speak about *language awareness* (Hawkins 1984) or *conscience linguistique/conscience langagière* in French or *Sprachbewusstheit* in German (Gnutzmann 2003). This knowledge and these opinions are strongly influenced by school (and therefore indirectly by the language sciences), by public life (public opinion, the media, the world of work, commerce, linguistic policy), but also by families and groups.

The *European Language Portfolio* is at the same time an instrument for the investigation of a person's linguistic or language awareness and a working tool for the learner himself at any age (see theme number of Babylonia 1/1999). The *Portfolio* is used to help form and develop the individual's linguistic and language awareness in all fields concerning languages and their use. This runs from simple knowledge (such as the knowledge of grammar), to the knowledge of communicative usages and opinions on the history and relationships among languages, including their cultural significance, and lastly to their ecology and politics.

In fact, the individual possesses, and needs, different types of language knowledge. This knowledge is often, although not generally, different from his «opinions» on languages. Opinions have a long life and a long history. The historian, Arno Borst, illustrated this in his monumental work *Der Turmbau zu Babel* with this subtitle: *The History of the Opinions on the Origin and the Plurality of Languages and Peoples* (Borst 1957-1963).

The «practical aptitudes and know-how» listed in the *Common European Framework of Languages* refer to social, technical and professional aptitudes and intercultural know-how. Their common denominator is the ability to communicate with the Other.

For the individual and his languages, communication is a principle that one could formulate with a communicative imperative: communicate! However, this does not prevent the individual from refusing to communicate on occasion, for he needs a communicative know-how that revolves around the following questions: how to address the other? How to answer the other? How to negotiate opinions, talk about knowledge? How to renew contact? How to end a conversation? Through what means should we communicate: the voice, writing, body language, gestures?

To acquire these skills, the individual needs help. He asks himself where to find information, the resources to foster and improve communication, to avoid ambiguity and so on. These skills also include the knowledge that brings help and information.

In our opinion, the individual's fate is to being a constant state of learning. That is why we must consider the skill to know how *to learn* as an indispensable third category. When the individual reflects on his languages (on his knowledge and opinions), and when he develops his language skills to communicate, he is learning without needing to be a student.

It is important to speak of the learner's age. A baby who acquires two or three languages at the same time is in a different situation of acquisition/apprenticeship than a three or six year-old child who learns a second, and later a third, language after having acquired his first. The adult learner is in yet another situation. Given his age and previous acquisitions, he learns differently. Learning depends on one's age and on what one has already learned and previously acquired.

Thus, the individual and languages – the individual and *his* languages – privilege the person and a subjective approach *par excellence* where living and learning are inseparable from one another. This person lives and acts; he recognizes his biography and his multiple belongings in space and time as products of his personal history.

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Chapter 3

# Mobilities and Itineraries

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# NOTES ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 3

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Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune, who practices English and French on a daily personal and professional basis, took over the translation of the Introduction. She also read and amended all the “micro-entrées”, rewriting some of them altogether when required. Aline Gohard-Radenkovic assumed responsibility for coordinating and communicating with the authors as well as for the final reading of the translations.

For some, translating was a routine exercise, for others it was a challenge and for others still a torture without taking into account the first round’s avoidance or refusals. Among the 16 contributing author in Chapter 3 who became “impromptu translators”, we identified five categories:

- the « *experts* », English-speaking and/or professionals of English such as George Alao and Valerio Massimo de Vangelis as well as Catherine Berger who took over the translation of their own “micro-entrée”;

- the “*language habitués*” who, without being English-speaking or professionals in English, nevertheless use English frequently in their work and research and could take over their “micro-entrée” with or without the help of their co-author. This was the case for Claudine Brohy with Anna Triantaphyllou, Patchareerat Yanaprasart with Bernard Fernandez ;

- the “*risk takers*” such as Brigitte Lepez for Patricia Kohler et Isabelle Lallemand and Tania Ogay for Aline Gohard-Radenkovic who undertook the translation of their own text on their own;

- the « *perfectionists* » such as Mauro Peressini (with Paola Gilardi) who secured the services of a professional translator, Paula Sousa in Paris;

- the « *generous* » like Dr Patricia Pullin, an English professional, who assumed responsibility for the Contre-point by Marc-Henry Soulet, Mirko Radenkovic who rewrote Tania Ogay and Aline Gohard-Radenkovic’s text and last, but not least ...

*Antoin Murphy who gave all the translated texts a final look over...*

All along during these translating tasks, through back and forth exchanges of mails and different strata of work, some questions kept cropping up, such as the term “micro-entrée” repeated in all of the chapters. We will mention but two of the main questions here:

First question: **how can we maintain the internal coherence within the chapter?** In order to do so, we had to agree on a similar translation for some key-words which run through the different texts such as “*appartenance*”, “*repli (ide)ntitaire*”, “*acteurs*”, “*compétences*”, etc.

Second question: **how can we translate those concepts which originate from a Francophone academic context** such as “*langue passerelle = ?*”, “*un pays tiers = third country?*”, “*bricolages = identity shifts?*”, etc. Would it be better to keep the original terms, difficult to translate, in the language of their origin ? Or should we turn to an officially recognized English translation for well-known concepts such as Bourdieu’s “*discours d’autorité*” ?

*So should we translate everything or not ? That is the question ...*

When dealing with a chapter involving 16 authors and 7 « micro-entrées », the translating challenge consists in trying to harmonise the texts within the chapter itself. However, this issue is probably relevant, it would seem, to all of the chapters in the *Précis*.

## INTRODUCTION:

# MOBILITIES AND ITINERARIES

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## MOBILITY AND DIDACTICS

Mobility is not a new phenomenon. And for many reasons, it has always existed in various guises, whether individual or collective, extensive or isolated, selected or imposed. The present vogue enjoyed by this concept may be understood not only as a consequence of the increase in migratory movements and global exchanges, but also as a sign of the growing uncertainty and fluidity of contemporary identities. So why has the issue of mobility engaged the attention of didacticians of languages and cultures only recently? Indeed, any political, economic or ecological upheaval, be it national, regional or international, brings about displacements which in turn generate needs in terms of languages and competences to adapt to foreign contexts.

### **A fledgling academic area under construction**

Can mobility and didactics meet? Whether one examines the official sites interested in mobility, the social actors involved, the objects of study or the pedagogical methods, the area appears to be scattered and in need of coherence.

In Europe, the first to consider population movements and their consequences within didactics was the Council of Europe in the 70s who created the Threshold Level for migrant workers. The word “mobility” appeared in European Union discourse at the end of the 80s and little by little gained strength in pedagogical settings. Today, the mobility issues at stake are at the interface between politics, education and economics with human mobilities increasingly regarded as international economic activities. In a way, the globalisation of population movements as well as their greater individualization take away from national entities their role over the management of migratory flows.

The area is also confused in terms of the actors involved in mobility. Research on different types of mobility usually differentiates between educational, professional and migratory mobility. This confines those concerned into secluded categories. Yet situations are too diverse for a single status category to be relevant. The official term of “migrant” presupposes that there are non mobile populations and sets hypothetical sedentary people against mythical nomads, contrasting miscellaneous situations in two opposite poles. The tendency to homogenize cannot account for the diversity of status, motivations, interests and itineraries. Favoring the host society’s perspective and leaving aside the role played by the societies to which the individuals belong at home or in transit, is another form of exclusion. In didactics as well, similar divisions may be observed. The educational and academic world is set apart from social and community settings or from the world of business, and each area adopts different pedagogical approaches.

The object of study within mobility didactics is hybrid and contested by various competing academic areas. The *in situ* experience of mobility may be researched by demographers and geographers, economists, lawyers, political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists, educators, and linguists as well as the administrations in charge of international exchanges. Each academic area rests on different disciplines, with their own concepts and specific analytical tools. What role may be assigned to each discipline in our field?

Similarly, the pedagogical methods relevant to the study of mobility still need to be developed. In language didactics, the focus of attention has been on the mastery by immigrant children and teenagers of the languages used in local schools. In the world of educational and academic mobility, the focal point has been on the integration of mobility programs into the curriculum. In international firms and organizations, the management of plurilingual and pluricultural teams raises the issue of language needs and intercultural communication training. These various pedagogical approaches usually privilege one aspect of the experience of mobility over others. As a result, the experience is rarely appraised in all its dimensions nor validated for what it is.

Narrow conceptions of languages, cultures and relationships to otherness create obstacles to the kind of disciplinary opening which is required. Existing didactic models lead to a dead end, between one extreme, intercultural education and training without language, and the other, language education without any intercultural or social input. A didactic of mobility remains to be invented in order to analyze migratory flows in all their complexity and the broken itineraries they create.

## **The debate**

The current forms of mobility are multiplying, reshaping space, place, and pace of life to the extent that the plural, “mobilities”, is a prerequisite to account for the differences in movements be they local or global. How are they to be analyzed? What would be the areas and methods adequate for the study of the processes involved and the social contexts which impact on them?

To start with, who are the actors involved in mobility? All those who actually move from one location to another (students, academic staff, expatriates, migrants, etc.). But such a definition is too narrow. Actors also involved in mobility include people called upon by mobile individual or groups, because of their professional expertise in the area of language (teachers, interpreters, trainers, etc.) or in other areas such as education, professional training or the administration of international services. They are co-actors in these mobilities.

The future debate should examine the motivations behind various mobility projects, the duration in time of the stay (whether fixed, indeterminate, temporary, intermittent or cyclical), the organization of movements in national, inter-regional, frontier or international spaces, the characteristics of these movements (physical or virtual, isolated or collective), as well as the official aims set out by the entities organizing the outgoing and incoming movements.

Highlighting the issues at stake in mobility implies analyzing previous experiences and the learning which takes place, the “mobility capital” under construction (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002), the strategies at play during the process of adaptation, the potential changes in terms of perceptions, values and behaviors towards self and others which these non formal experiences produce, the identity shifts (“bricolages”) which take place in-between by either borrowing or rejecting, opening up or closing in, or through a process of hybridity.

An assessment of the long term effects would help to increase the visibility of the competences which are acquired and their transferability to other contexts, the impact which real mobilities have on the outlook and attitudes of mobility (co-)actors, particularly at the institutional level, as well as the new profiles brought about by these experiences for potentially future language and culture mediators.

The creation of this kind of didactics is made all the more delicate given the competition between the various academic fields involved due to the multidimensional character of mobility, given the relentlessness of national politics concerning non nationals, and the neglect and lack of direction demonstrated by educational institutions in the area.

## **TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM FOR MOBILITY**

Different typologies highlight different aspects of those phenomena depending on the factors taken into account.

### **Traditional typologies**

Traditional typologies are in disciplines such as law and economics which are outside language didactics.

The legal rationale holds residence and nationality as determining criteria for classifying mobilities. Residence produces different statuses incorporating their relative rights and duties. Nationality essentially confers voting rights. The rules

allowing access to these as well as the resulting statuses vary from one nation-state to the other. Legal decisions fluctuate with political decisions, as the present tendency to close national borders exemplifies. The cases of multiple nationalities and multiple passports question the legal approach whose role of controlling mobilities is sometimes akin to a police role.

Economic typologies highlight as the driving force behind mobility the push and pull factors due to different stages of economic development between societies. These disparities together with the laws of supply and demand produce individual and group movements. The rationale is well-known: technical progress and economic growth on the one hand, social changes on the other, with migratory flows sandwiched in between, their role being to regulate and “clean” distortions between the two. This type of explanation does not always account for reality where phenomena are more likely to become entangled than to follow a cause and effect logic.

### **Modern typologies**

More recent research has examined a wider range of factors: demographic data, age, sex, family status, degrees and qualifications, membership and identity allegiances, personal as well as family, professional and social history, or the development of the migratory project. Inter-relations between various aspects of the experience are thus brought to light. This type of approach may be stimulating for didactics.

Spatial typologies focus on the geographical distribution of people. They classify movements according to geographic criteria of varying size: towns and rural spaces, regions, the planet, including density and distance (Domenach et Picouet, 1995). They investigate movements between points of departure and arrival, allowing for the duration of the stay as a variable: one way trips, return trips, re-entry, and unspecified movements such as nomadism. Another type of spatial typology studies borders and border crossings, and the distinctions between internal, borderline, regional and international movements.

Social typologies explore mobility in its social contexts of departure and arrival, in the social time, and highlight circular mobilities (flows alternating between origin and destination) and linear mobilities. Research which links together and demonstrates interactions between residential use in space, socio-economic and demographic factors, and personal history of mobility provides the most dynamic vision of the processes under study.

The most recent research (Viard, 2006) draws attention to a global tendency towards irregular and broken movements, even among less mobile neo-sedentary individuals. As a result, the distinction between an inside, the village, class or region, and an outside, the stranger or the “barbarian”, between the near and the far away, becomes blurred.



## Mobilities as metaphors and processes

The digital revolution along with the increasing globalization of the planet render it necessary to distinguish between mobility and physical displacement or the notion of territory. Mobilities now incorporate not only individuals and capital, but also social practices, objects, information, signs and ideas. Urry (2000) postulates that mobilities have not only changed our ways of being, they have become a way of life in itself, forcing us to think “beyond societies” and leading to a paradigmatic change in the social sciences, exemplified by original metaphors and processes.

The metaphor of flows and fluidity brings to the fore the fact that societal boundaries have become permeable, open and create new time-spaces: “sometimes boundaries come and go, allow leakage or disappear altogether, while relations transform themselves without fracture. Sometimes, then, social space behaves like a fluid” (Mol et Law, 1994: 643 in Urry, *op.cit.*: 31).

Fluid societies produce zig-zaging itineraries between predictability and permanent reconstruction (Marzloff, 2005). The notions of fluidity and non linearity personify the increasing complexity of present itineraries be they individual or collective. The image of the archipelago, both spatial and temporal, with its different islands for each sphere of activity contrasts with that of the territory – domicile, circular and stable. These metaphors bring to light the processes of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation which imply the active use of existing networks in third spaces. This can be the case of external migrations such as diasporas (Bordes-Benayoun et Schnapper, 2006).

The increasing multiplicity and coexistence of ways of travelling emphasise the multi-modal character of mobilities, which results in what is called hyper-mobility. This is a reference to those who “define themselves through their ease at gaining access to diversified movements in all areas (multi-modal movements in space, scattered shopping, restyled work practices, active use of various media and technologies) (...) thereby defining new ways of life” (Marzloff, *op.cit.*: 235, our trans.). Whether these mobilities are physical or virtual, real or imagined, global, “glocal” or local, they belong to the dialectic of the “inhabiting-and-travelling”. If access to “elsewhere” has become more democratic, social inequalities still emerge in terms of access to mobility. Some are left behind despite the current euphoria surrounding mobility.

Mobility didactics, while cognisant of these explanatory models, should nevertheless distance itself from them to establish its own pedagogical tools specific to the area of foreign languages and cultures.

## A RESEARCH-BASED EMERGING THEORY OF MOBILITY

How are mobility itineraries structured? The case studies below bring to light a specific set of concepts, emerging from a variety of areas. Grounded in distinct language or migratory policies, these studies bring home the diversification of mobilities in European, North-American, African and Asian contexts. Lack of

mobility and hypermobility, institutional and individual mobility, spiral-like and encased movements coexist and intermingle to varying degrees. Because of their heterogeneous nature, any analysis of these experiences must follow a “grammar of complexity”. To this end, the authors identify the actors’ motivations, biographies and profiles, as well as their successive or simultaneous positions. The contexts are diverse: school exchanges, international students stay abroad, professional expatriation, exodus from villages, individual migration, exported workforce, professional training in a plurilingual and pluricultural milieu.

The authors identify power games and tensions between institutions and individuals when different reasonings compete. Paradoxically, in spite of the official rhetoric praising adaptability and openness to otherness, institutions do not usually take into account the experiences gained by mobility candidates. Host societies are prone to assign a single status, either ethnic or national, to migrants. These attributions may in turn generate negative collective representations which are echoed by politicians, media and educational authorities. The authors also identify forms of exclusion, among seafarers from the Philippines or migrants placed in between excessive visibility and social invisibility.

Confronted with these attributions, individuals fight back and resist. One strategy consists of resorting to new roles and identities for one’s group or self as is the case with the Italians in Canada or the Yorubas in the Ivory Coast. Resistance, withdrawal, avoidance or ambivalent attitudes are also in evidence among young exchange or training students. However trying to get closer or to negotiate are also strategies in evidence as in the case of the Jewish diaspora in the United States or the professional expatriates in Asia. A pragmatic language choice allows some to comply with the majority. Resorting to a bridging language allows others to obtain a space for communication. These various strategies reveal the identity “bricolages” opted for by the actors.

Out of the various situations exemplified in the case studies, the authors observe the creation of transnational networks, the processes of re-territorialisation, the establishment of third spaces and spaces in-between several geographic or symbolic locations. A language course in a “third” country, work in plurilingual and pluricultural teams, meeting places for exiled communities are examples of spaces where intercultural encounters take place, where relationships are made and unmade, where one’s relation to otherness is put to the test. The resulting dynamic process questions one’s identity and makes identity shifts in relation to membership allegiances possible.

The authors wonder whether the experience, capital and competences acquired through mobility are adequately valued. They discover institutional inadequacies in terms of pre-departure orientation, welcoming and follow up measures as well as credit for the experience on returning home. In order to transfer the competences acquired to other contexts, institutions must take their part in pre-departure and post-stay orientation. Then mobility actors could become mediators of their own experience.

## A “GRAMMAR OF COMPLEXITY”: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

A same individual or group may go through different experiences of mobility at different times implying different statuses. The issue of individual fragmentation and of successive or simultaneous personal changes may then arise. Some outstanding features emerge from the research: tensions between self-integrity and fragmentation, gaps between institutional thinking and individual experience, coherence between imposed and chosen life choices. Such features are usually disconnected in research.

### Individual rationale

Autobiographical methods (see chapter: «Self and languages») such as personal narratives, comprehensive interviews, letters, diaries, personal reports, autobiographical novels, etc. are the best tools favoured by anthropology to analyse individual experiences. Anyone can become one’s own narrator. The coming out of the ego is a sign of an epistemological fracture which demonstrates the individual’s “identity emancipation” from “institutional programming” and highlights “identity as a narrative itself”: “the narration multiplies the identity process; ego transforms a mere reflection into reflexivity about one’s own experience” (Kaufmann, 2004: 151-152, our trans.).

These methods in which a narrator composes the story of her/his life present a diachronic representation of self at three levels: the existing historical and empirical reality, the narrator’s psychological and semantic reality, the discursive reality of the narrator (Bertaux, 1997). Such a process, more or less “thick” (Geertz, 1973), implies a reconstruction of one’s experience, generally *a posteriori*, and reveals a capital made up of biographical experience. Distanciation and reflection on the mobility of one’s identity are needed to establish some coherence between experience and the many contradictions of social life as well as to create a space for redefining self and other.

These research methods make it possible to establish a spatial and symbolic mapping of individual and collective movements. (Zarate & Gohard-Radenkovic, 2004).

### Institutional rationale, individual rationale

Considering mobility from the exclusive viewpoint of individuals may result in leaving in the dark the role which institutions play in personal itineraries. Ordinarily, mobility actors are perceived through categories where the other is marginalized and defined as stranger from “the inside” or from “the outside”. These attributions, imposed by politicians, are frequently echoed by other institutions (educational, community, etc.), by the media, the majority group, even by academic discourse, who make their own the current “discourse of authority” (Bourdieu, 1982).

The notion of “gaps” prompts a cross-analysis between the macro-dimensional (society, state) and micro-dimensional (individual, group) through “successive junctures” or “embedded” structures” (Thiesse, 1997). Cultural identity is frequently conceived in a binary and competitive way, contrasting “them and us” and

highlighting the confrontation between “the rationale of the State, which is variable and contradictory but always binary (majority-minority or nation-non nation, etc.) and the rationale of humans, variable, contradictory and multi-dimensional (Shiosé, 1995: 21, our trans.). The interconnection between several analytical dimensions allows for a fuller account of what is at stake depending on the context and situation, to account for the state’s ideology in managing cultural identity and for the individual’s who negotiates her/his identity within those parameters..

Analysing the spaces where tensions, conflicts and negotiations take place eases the way for a better understanding of the genesis of the categorizations and ideologies which govern societies, ways of thinking and actions. Such analysis would also elucidate the spaces where groups or individuals from elsewhere may be integrated, various levels of adaptation and the identity “bricolages” developed by actors. Gaps may be identified through a thematic analysis of oral and written discourse, for example contrasting official and personal documents (Papatsiba, 2003). The tools available in communication anthropology, such as the ethnographic observation of interactions (Winkin, 1996, 2001) may also prove useful.

The methods suggested here, arising from various social sciences such as anthropology, ethnology, sociology, social psychology, sociolinguistics, etc. are not all-embracing. New pluridisciplinary intersections must be invented in order to establish a didactics for mobility.

# INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ITINERARIES AND INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSE: SCHOOL EXCHANGES AMONG EUROPEAN TEENAGERS

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## **SCHOOL EXCHANGES: A PEDAGOGICAL «BLACK BOX»**

School exchanges are advocated by educational language policies and enshrined in official texts in the form of recommendations, curricula, charters, and learning material. They are also part of teacher training programs with a dual function: to take part in exchanges in order to be trained and to be trained to exchange programs.

They are encapsulated in the aims of the *Common European framework of reference for languages* and *the European Portfolio*, implementing the principles of the Council of Europe and the European Union which favour the development of multilingual and multicultural competences, thus ensuring social and civic cohesion.

School exchanges also aim to enhance students' motivation by adding an informal dimension to language learning in school. They are also meant to avoid the "plateau" effect, the much dreaded ceiling of language competences. The length of the exchange can be extremely variable. Their form also varies. They can be reciprocal or unilateral, L1 and L2 can alternate, the exchanges can be real or virtual. They are often combined with other pedagogical approaches, such as project pedagogy and intercultural pedagogy, autonomous or guided learning, etc.

Official documents advocate «intercultural understanding» among young people of different languages and cultures. But the exchange experience usually goes far beyond the declared aims and raises numerous questions about the type of communicative

processes involved. In order to understand the (dys-)functioning of such encounters, one has to consider the interpersonal relations which develop while living in a shared environment on a daily basis.

**Sociolinguistic research endeavors to throw light on the development of learners' language and identity strategies. The aim is to understand the long term effects upon users, institutions, curricula and teaching practices (Thomas et al., 2006) of this «black box».**

**What types of communicative strategies are used during these exchanges? Do these strategies play a part or not in the development of multilingual competences and intercultural relations?**

The first document is an extract from an official Swiss document (Brohy, 2004). The following documents are drawn from an ethnographic analysis of film sequences produced during a Lingua exchange program which involved European teenagers, Greeks and Italians in Greece, Greeks and Danes in Greece and Denmark (Triantaphyllou, 2002).

### Example 1

*Recommendation 10:* All students should be given the opportunity to participate in language exchanges which should be embedded coherently in the objectives of language learning (CDIP, 1998).

### Example 2

- Poor girl, she doesn't speak English well. So, to help her understand: I don't use the right tenses, no more grammar. I put two or three words one after the other plus one or two Italian words and a bit of Greek then she understands.
- When I don't understand, she makes gestures. She has got a dictionary, and when she doesn't know a word, she uses it. One day, I said "concombre", "cucumber", and she couldn't understand. I gave the description "what is green and that we use in a salad".

### Example 3

D. to N.: *ma che cosa...* (but what)

A: *ti amo!* (I love you)

E.: *αγάπη μου!* (my love)

N.: *my love!*

E.: *σ'αγαπώ!* (I love you).

A.: *μα δεν μπορώ* (but I can't stand it). Then, singing: *σ'αγαπώ, σ'αγαπώ* (I love you).

D. singing: *φταλει ο έρωτας...* (it's because of love).

Two Italian girls are talking to each other in Italian. N. is singing a Greek song.

E.: *from the beginning.*

N. to E.: *φτου σκουλικουρομηγκότροπα* (tongue twister)

E. is trying to repeat.

N.: *no, no, no!*

E. starts again with the tongue twister. A. is trying to repeat and then she says another tongue twister: *πάρε κουλούρι.*

E.: *Repeat!*

N.: *ο κουλουράς* and addressing to E.: say, say: *ο κουλουράς.*

D. repeats and adds: *una faccia, una razza* (a face, a race)

E. repeats and adds: *passata la musica, passata la festa* (gone the music, gone the party)

A. repeats and says: *shut up!*

#### Example 4

- They aren't as sociable as we are; it's simply a different race: they are Nordics. We are warmer while they are like their Northern climate, cold.
- I find it difficult to get used to the rhythm of Greek lifestyle .... they have lunch at 3pm and dinner at midnight ... we just cannot understand when it's noon and when it's midnight.
- Greeks are proud to exhibit the customs and the tradition of their country, and they do it because their culture is one of the most ancient in the world and they are not afraid to show it.

## BETWEEN CONSTRUCTION AND DECONSTRUCTION: LINGUISTIC “BRICOLAGES”

When young people are immersed in a foreign environment, they rely on previous language knowledge as well as on a communicative repertoire which transgresses the conventional linguistic code. As a result, they develop facilitation strategies such as code switching, the creation of neologisms, verbal juggling, verbal and para-verbal signs, dramatization, etc.

Young people use these techniques systematically in order to communicate and to be understood. Their techniques can be interpreted as language “bricolages” and illustrate the development of negotiating skills. They represent an initial step towards multilingual awareness.

## A CULTURAL AND BEHAVIORAL RHETORIC

Encounters between citizens of different countries are also encounters between mutual representations of one another. The other is seen according to one's own cultural references and to those of the community one belongs to. Identity is usually based on withdrawal into one's own group, on interpersonal difference in relation to the other, on the desire to differentiate oneself from the other. It is anchored in a dual

inter-subjectivity, towards members of one's group and towards members of the other group. Thus "one defines oneself in confrontation to the other" (Zarate, 1986).

These distinguishing criteria (us/them) go together with a cultural rhetoric which meets a behavioral rhetoric expressed through

- geographical terms (North/South, close/distant) related to temperament and to aesthetic models which reflect racial characteristics (blonde/brown, beautiful/ugly);
- a different perception of time, eg. monochrome or polychrome; in exchange program, participants find it difficult to get used to other people's life rhythms regarding meals, punctuality or planning;
- the history of their respective countries (countries "with" or "without" history) which creates feelings of superiority or inferiority.

Observation of these processes shows that linguistic inadequacies do not impede communication among young people. Dysfunctioning is due to more complex factors, such as power games, identity assertion which play a role in identity formation. The game goes beyond cultural issues. Research on educational exchanges force us to rethink the processes involved in identity formation as an expression of cultural symbols and as a place where social relations are developed.



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY: INSTITUTIONAL REASONING *VERSUS* STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL REASONING

Student mobility is commonly put forward as being both an objective and an ideal instrument to establish new political and economic spaces. This belief sometimes gives rise to a paradoxical policy. Students are urged to go abroad, but at the same time their preparation and reception abroad are inadequate. Institutions are more interested in the development of international links than in what mobility actually means to the person involved. Mobility as a market too often implies a lack of understanding of what moving abroad really means as well as an overemphasis on the qualifying and financial aspects. The official distinction between “incoming” and “outgoing” students promotes divisions rather than meetings. These categories cannot account for the variety of positions and itineraries nor for the complexity of the experience of otherness. Since institutional reasoning neglects the personal dimension, students tend to develop their own strategies whereby they redefine spaces in-between and in “multiple-between” (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002).

How does the gap between institutional policies and students’ needs manifest itself? What strategies do students develop in the course of their experience? What conditions would be necessary to prepare, then to welcome them, and to value their experience when they return?

Life stories, language biographies and comprehensive interviews (Kaufmann, 1996) allow these tensions to come to light as illustrated in the three case studies below. The first case analyzes perceptions of international and Erasmus students concerning the welcome that they received in the FFL university centre in France (Lepez, 2004). The second explores the experiences of individually or institutionally mobile students in France and elsewhere (Lallemand, 2004). The third case deals with the management of the various stages of their stay for Erasmus students in a Swiss bilingual context.

### Examples 1

Glykeria and Helene: On our arrival in Lille, there were no rooms available in university halls. But in order to rent a flat, a guarantor was needed. We didn't have one. Since we did not have any lodging, we could neither open a bank account, nor have a travelling card. We thought of going back home...

Mutsumi: Japanese women are relatively unused to foreigners and tend to be afraid of them. However, French society is multi-ethnic. Even if I do not speak French well, they spoke to me (...). I felt that I had to say something, anything in French society because if I do not speak, they seem very disappointed and cross.

### Example 2

A's case.

Country of Birth	1 <sup>st</sup> stay abroad	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Puerto Rico	University program (MICEFA) Paris X ( French Course) + Assistant Teacher in Spanish	2 years in Puerto Rico to finish her studies	4 and a half years in Paris: ESIT, Paris III ( Ph.D)	6 months in Puerto Rico Teaching translation	6 months in Paris for thesis

MICEFA = Interuniversity Mission for the Coordination of French-American Exchanges  
 ESIT: Post-graduate school of Interpreters and Translators

R's case.

Country of Birth	1 <sup>st</sup> stay abroad	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
Iraq	Childhood in New Caledonia	Primary school in France	End of Primary school and secondary school in Italy	Year 10 and lower Sixth form in Paris	Upper Sixth and Final Year in Jakarta	2Years in Paris	10 months in Bali	In Paris: 2 years in INALCO

**Example 3 Erasmus students**

Maria: When I arrived the first week, and if I wanted to go and buy something, I looked up the exact word in the dictionary, but now I begin to express myself, what I need... I think, I am no longer afraid of expressing myself (...). I find that it is not a problem for Swiss people to understand other people (...), they are very patient.

Elaine: I want really to know Switzerland... something which disturbs me a lot is that I do not know many Swiss people here and when I do, it is difficult to keep into contact.

Bernardo and Maria: We have already made plans for next year. There are some Erasmus who say: "Perhaps I will do another Erasmus year in Barcelona and *I'll remain with you...*".

**DIVERSITY OF EXPERIENCES**

Mobilities, whether they are of the institutional or individual type, blur traditional approaches on predictable academic itineraries. The diversity of mobility experiences challenges the notion of what a student is. Ages range from 20 to 50. Situations vary as students alternate between life as a student, as a professional and as a family member. The stay abroad covers a complex reality. Various itineraries reveal a great diversity, an intersection of motivations, family stories of mobility, a succession of interlinked comings and goings. As a result, the period abroad is experienced between adaptation and readjustment. This dynamics leads to the issue of what kind of life to choose after the stay abroad.

**A DUAL CULTURE SHOCK**

The success of student mobility is closely linked to how students manage their emotions. For individually mobile students or "free movers" who do not benefit from institutional support, the settling-down period is often destabilizing. They must solve hurriedly logistical problems when they have neither a full command of the language nor of the host country's cultural codes. Discovering otherness may cause distress to students, especially those coming from a distant culture. Going from an enchanted to a disenchanting relationship with their new culture, they complain about inadequate preparation to the problem of "culture shock" and take time to familiarize themselves with their new environment. They may also have to face culture shock when they return in their country.

**FROM INSECURITY TO RISK TAKING**

Because they do not expect a perfect command of language, speakers in multilingual and multicultural contexts may provide students with a sense of linguistic security. When natives demonstrate a degree of tolerance and co-operation towards non-natives, students then take risks in communication because they no longer feel threatened.

Initially students aim to build on their specific area of study and to improve their language skills. But the experience abroad challenges their representations of otherness. The discovery of a different cultural world raises doubts about theirs. In the end, they may go beyond a functional vision of the experience to discover its heuristic function.

## **WITHDRAWAL *VERSUS* OPENNESS**

Where the host institutional structure is too compartmentalized, identity withdrawal may occur. Students living within their own native group or an adopted group (eg. Erasmus) lose out on the opportunity to develop links with natives (as illustrated in the film “L’Auberge espagnole” by Cédric Klapisch). To compensate their lack of contact, they develop strategies of open-mindedness. Then they may engage in other kinds of experience or expend their new social networks in other places and contexts. In the end, students may identify with a new culture, the culture established with the group through mobility.

## **INSTITUTIONAL ROLE**

Academic institutions must be more responsive and take into account the many roles students experience through mobility. They are simultaneously expatriates, social actors, language learners, students in an academic discipline. Programmes for students’ pre-departure orientation (eg. Anquetil, 2006) as well as administrative assistance with practical transactions (through tutoring, tandem) are necessary. Such measures would facilitate integration in the university. Home universities should also provide students on their return with locations to reflect on the experience, to identify what has been acquired and to value the benefits of mobility.

# INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY: COMPETENCES AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL FIRMS

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## **A GLOBAL ELITE**

The concept of expatriation refers to migrants elite such as qualified professionals whose mission it is to import an international, mobile and flexible know-how. While in the past, the duration of the stay was either limited in time or on a life-long career, today local contracts are increasing. International mobility takes precedence over traditional expatriation. This change is perceptible in the discourse of expatriates and transpatriates, as well as in the creation of dedicated international offices. Mobility also draws in its wake an “imaginary migration” (Knafou, 1998), the “mobility capital” (Murphy-Lejeune, 2001) of a global elites, called “hyper-bourgeoisie” (Duclos, 1998), their lifestyle and practices are easily identifiable.

Several statutes exist. Experts can be sent as “expatriates” from headquarters to relocated subsidiary or locally recruited employees so called “impatriates” can be sent by the subsidiary to headquarter. Transpatriate executives sent across the world gained evaluable global experience. Multi-tasks, these actors must learn how to manage their mobility experience: what previous resources can they rely on? What professional knowledge and relational strategies are being developed in multicultural teams? What is required so that on their return, they become mediators of their capital of experience?

Our analysis of international mobility rests on a qualitative approach of representation and communicative interactions collected in semi-structured interviews.

The first case study (Yanaprasart, 2002) focuses on the identification of difficulties and misunderstandings encountered by Thai and French working in French companies operating in Thailand, and this is based on a socio-ethnological analysis. The second case studies (Fernandez, 2003, 2006) follow an anthropological approach to analyze the experience of European expatriates who were either director or consultant in various professional areas in China.

**Example 1. A manager in Thailand who spent ten years in France and works in a French company in Bangkok:**

What seems more important to me than communication skills is the mind frame that one develops through multicultural work in a team. The ability to understand the other is a very crucial element for working in team. We need team spirit. Everyone should have the ability to engage with the diversity of the workforce and to accept individual particularities. If we did not live in the environment of the people with whom we work, it would be really difficult to forgive their mistakes, their clumsiness in time of conflicts. If we understand their culture, their mentality, it is easier to solve problems arising from cultural conflicts. For me, two things are essential: knowing the language and understanding working relations.

**Example 2. A French Head of Human Resources in a French company in Thailand:**

We expect our staff really to take into account more and more personal qualities and social skills, much more than to professional qualities themselves. In spite of their professional knowledge, employees who have difficulties in adapting socially, e.g. critical mind or lack of communicative ability, are considered as a factor of potential trouble in a company.

**Example 3. A European manager living for five years in China:**

The typical profile of the expatriate in China is someone who has not only the ability to accept another culture, but also to spend much time explaining, negotiating, discussing, who will make an effort to go towards other people, to understand and, at the same time, is able to put aside previous knowledge to pass it to young local managers. Achieving this alchemy this is one of the greatest challenges that we face.

**Example 4. A French CEO in a company in China:**

An expatriate used to going to different countries will have a strong capacity for adaptation, to a language he does not know, to a culture, to different symbols. All this forces him to question himself, to get rid of internal stiffness, so that he acquired a greater vision of what happening at a concrete level with more distance and a more critical stance on events.

**Example 5. A French director of Human Resources:**

One has to prepare to return from expatriation. The potential welcoming structures are not always ready to receive an expatriate. So looking for another job within the group either in the mother company or in another subsidiary or in another country for a new expatriation, is required.

## THE “MOBILITYCAPITAL”

Employers’ perceptions concerning expatriation have relied on the *presumed* aptitude of mobility actors to work in another country and to feel “at home”. This ability to be an expatriate is not that easy. Expats therefore have to prepare themselves for the experience. The profile of the future expatriate might involve specific competences related to a given professional context. Their mobility capital might imply the ability to:

- To be aware of the socio-cultural specificities
- To question oneself and accept uncertainty avoidance
- To have a good command of the language and to know the professional culture of one’s partner
- To want to understand communication patterns in a professional context
- To learn how to work in multicultural teams and to accept differences
- Know how to pass on and how to share professional knowledge

The skills, necessary for mobility success, depend on the length of stay and involve general skills that draw upon the capitals and previous personal experiences.

## LEARNING MOBILITY PROGRESSIVELY

Time is a crucial variable to learn mobility and to develop the necessary skills. From adaptation to integration, the following steps may be necessary:

- Immersion, or the personal choice of entering in another culture
- Immersion-adaptation or the ability to discover diversity (implying from six months to a year and a half *in situ*)
- Immersion-understanding or the ability to understand diversity (implying from one and a half to three years *in situ*)
- Immersion-integration or the ability to be integrated in the host country (more than three years *in situ*, or more).

## A MAP OF GENERAL SKILLS

The surveyed “Elite” when discussing their experience said they had acquired general know-how, including how to manage of intercultural relations, which they defined as the ability:

- To distance oneself from one’s initial perceptions and value
- To Become aware of local interlocutors’ reference systems
- To identify the cause of misunderstandings in communication
- To adjust to interlocutors’ messages
- To assess the risk taken in cross-cultural conflicts and to develop negotiating strategies
- To adapt to a social environment and to develop relational familiarity

Conditions are required to insure the capitalization and reinvestment in other professional contexts of the required skills.

## **TOWARDS THE CAPITALIZATION AND THE TRANSFERABILITY OF THESE OUTCOMES**

Mobility is the capacity not only to leave and return, but also to learn and pass on experience on returning (Girin, 2001). Some methods allow professionals to capitalize on their experiences. They can reflect on their personal experience and value their capital they have acquired through collective assessment of the activities (Aubret and Gilbert, 2003), or through a workshop (Pautrot and Girouard, 2004) or a biographical approach (Maillard, 1998).

Retro-active learning relies on a personal critical look and on collective discussions. The aim is to ensure the transferability of skills acquired in mobility. A successful organization knows how to take ownership and how to reinvest the know-how of intercultural relation managers by helping them to become mediators of their capital of experience.



# IDENTITY REDEFINITIONS AMONG MIGRANTS: COLLECTIVE CATEGORIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES

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## COLLECTIVE CATEGORIZATIONS OF THE “OTHER”

In countries with a significant level of immigration, it is common practice to refer to newcomers by their original ethno-national identity (“the Italians”, “the Albanians”), and the pertinence of this practice is rarely questioned. This is true in daily life, in the media, in educational institutions, and even in the social sciences. These categorizations, and the attendant negative representations, are successful in part because they simplify matters quite effectively. They make it possible to reduce a large number of real players to a small number — “the Italian community”, “the Portuguese community” — without having to consider the diversity of migration situations and personal histories, leaving the individual in the shadows. They also make it possible to pretend that the whole group, which is supposedly homogeneous, has a common culture that explains newcomers’ practices, projects, successes and failures. Close observation of migratory realities repeatedly reveals *gaps* between ethno-national attributions and the multiplicity of strategies newcomers develop to redefine themselves and negotiate a social space in the host society.

What role do stereotyped collective categorizations play among migrants? Do accounts tell only stories of “ethno-nationals” or those of individuals featuring other roles and identities? What linguistic and social strategies do migrants develop in the host society?

The life-stories methodology (Bruner, 2002) makes an in-depth anthropological description (Geertz, 1983) possible and brings out these tensions. The first study deals with the life accounts of immigrants from neighbouring villages in Calabria who arrived in Quebec in the 1950s and 60s (Peressini, 1994); the second, with those of

first- or second-generation individuals who emigrated to Switzerland from southern Europe in the 1960s, 70s and 80s (Gilardi, 2006).

**Example 1.** Maurizio worked in a restaurant in Montreal:

There was the [owner's] son ... he'd throw stones at me and say — now I understand — all the French Canadians said to us, “Bloody Italians ... you came here to steal our bread.” Because, indeed, we — the immigrants — when we arrived here, we took whatever work was available ... Some had families; others, homes, so we had to work. At the time, we didn't understand. But once we understood ... I used to answer by saying, “But why take it out on us? Blame your government, which gave us the chance to come here. In Italy, we couldn't live on what we earned, and we found an open door to come here.”

**Example 2.** Alfredo explains the choice of English schooling for his children:

At the time [early years in Montreal], it's almost as if we followed ... Because, for example, if my brother sent them [his children] to an English school, I did the same. That was the main reason. Secondly, we knew that we couldn't make a boy speak French when there were 250 million people who spoke English versus five or six million French speakers. So, the wise choice, was that one, to speak the language of the majority of the population. That was our main concern ... Because, really, French is a beautiful language ... but however that may be, we're in North America, and French is perfect, but we mustn't lack English.

**Example 3.** Francesco, who is Tunisian, emigrated to Turin (where his mother is from):

When I arrived in Italy, I had two disappointments. First, when I arrived, I told myself, “Ah, I'm finally in my country ... I'm home!” First of all, I heard people say to me from time to time “*il terùn*” [pejorative term that northern Italians use to refer to those from the South] because I certainly don't have a Piedmont accent, even though I speak Italian. So I was already telling myself, “I came to Italy. Over there [in Tunisia], they called me “goddamn macaroni”, and here, they call me “*terùn*”... Compared to the way we lived in Tunisia, to come to Europe and see to what extent people were attached to profit, to money ... many Tunisians or other people from North Africa, weren't used to that ...

**Example 4.** Eleonora, who is Spanish, talks about her work in a laundry:

I worked illegally over there ... in the seventh year I got the [residency] permit. There were only two Swiss women, two ladies, the others were all Italian ... At first, I was the only Spanish one, then there were two, and in the end, there were three of us ... When you hear people speak [Italian] all day ... the first thing I learned in Switzerland was Italian ... Some were nicer than others, but then, I ... I want to get along more or less ... I got along well with all of them ...

## MULTIPLICITY OF IDENTITY STRATEGIES

Deconstruction and resistance strategies are applied to the ethno-national categorizations attributed to migrants. Life accounts show, on the one hand, how native residents use these categorizations to refer to newcomers and, on the other, how the narrators develop *various strategies* in response to these confining representations.

One strategy is to accept the validity of the categories and to appropriate them, either to define others or to define oneself. Another is to assume the ethno-national category, whether or not it is imposed by others, while rejecting the stereotyped, and negative, content that is associated with it (“bloody Italians”, “goddamn macaroni”). A third is to refuse to play the ethnic game by rejecting not only the content of the ethno-national category, but also the category itself, which is imposed by others. This “desolidarization” strategy implies effacing the categorization or replacing it with *a multiplicity of identities* that shift the balance of power to another level (that of the immigrant, the head of the household, the citizen, the universal individual who gets along well with everyone). A last strategy is a double deconstruction of the ethno-national category at the infranational (the inhabitants of Piedmont calling immigrants from the South “*terùn*”) and supranational (ethnically mixed group of North African populations) levels.

## LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES

Whereas the choice of French or English schooling is an issue in the identity debate that opposes French Canadians and English Canadians (Linteau, 1987), immigrants act as if language was stripped of its national identity dimension and was only functional and practical.

The double status of the Italian language in Switzerland — as a minority national language and a majority immigration language — makes Italian a bridging language for immigrants from southern Europe. This double status indicates that migrants can develop segmental-adaptation strategies using a language that is not among those of the host region.

## INDIVIDUAL REDEFINITIONS

Identity redefinitions and strategies of resistance to national categorizations are aimed at building a self-image founded on identities that are more meaningful to individuals, one that expresses a struggle against too great a cultural visibility and against the opposite: no cultural invisibility. They also allow migrants to set up spaces of partial social integration.

Specialists in language didactics are thus invited to track down the representations of “the other” that are self-evident and to formulate thoughts on their limits and their

effects on the individual, showing the tensions between collective attributions and individual (re)definitions.

# TRANSNATIONAL DIASPORAS: BETWEEN DETERRITORIALIZATION AND RETERRITORIALIZATION

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## INTERROGATING DIASPORIC IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES

The term *diaspora*, both literally and on a negative historical level, denotes communities of people dislocated from their native homelands through migration, immigration, or exile, as a consequence of colonial expansion. But, etymologically, it positively suggests «fertility of dispersion, dissemination, and the scattering of seeds» (Brazier and Mannur, 2003: 4). Recent research has stressed how diasporic subjects are «marked by hybridity and heterogeneity – cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national – and these subjects are defined by a «traversal» between ... boundaries demarcating nation and diaspora» (ibid.: 5). This «traversal» necessarily implies a period of suspension between displacement from place of origin and relocation in the new cultural space that produces a sort of *third space* (Bhabha, 1994) where, on both sides (the diasporic community and communities that already inhabit the «other» space), new transnational/cultural configurations are negotiated.

The most relevant questions arising from this process are the following: How do languages and cultures acquired either before displacement or in the place of immigration / exile interplay, in a diasporic experience? How does this interaction influence the realignment of the linguistic and (trans-)cultural identity of people who live a diasporic experience?

Strategies and results of these diasporic negotiations are the main subject of these two case studies. In the first, the Yoruba diaspora is presented from an ethnosociolinguistic perspective based on the study, *La diaspora vivant en Côte d'Ivoire*

(Lazidou, 2000). The second examines, from a linguistic-literary perspective, the representation of the Jewish-American diaspora in Roth's novel *Call It Sleep* (1934). The case studies investigate how the Jewish and the African diasporic experiences have come to terms with a new sociocultural reality characterized by a plurilingual environment.

**Example 1.**

During a Sunday service at Elijah Church, ... when it was time to welcome new worshippers, a young teenager timidly stood up when the Pastor called out his name and said, turning to the gathering, that the young boy could not speak Yoruba and that they [the Church members] therefore needed to help him to learn the language ...; in the Church, the Bibles, the song books and all the boards were written in Yoruba, as if to clearly state that this was a Yoruba church (p.72).

**Example 2.**

Inhabitants of the multi-ethnic Manhattan neighbourhood cease their activities and rush to the site of the accident, which brings the young protagonist senseless to the ground. The people comment on the event.

*"Holy Mother O' God! Look! Will yiz!"*

*"Wot?"*

*"There's a guy layin' there! Burrhnin'!"*

*"Naw! Where!"*

*"Gawd damn the winder!"*

*"It's on Tent' Street! Look!"*

*"Git a cop!"*

*An embellance – go cull-oy!"*

*"Don't touch 'im!"*

*"Bambino! Madre mia!"*

*"Mary. It's jus' a kid!"*

*"Helftɔ! Helftɔ! Helftɔ! Yeedin! Rotivit!"*

**(pp. 417-419)**

## GEOLINGUISTIC BIOGRAPHIES OF A DIASPORA

In every diasporic situation, the linguistic itinerary reveals the «geolinguistic biography» of the subjects in question. The trajectory of the Yoruba in Côte d'Ivoire commences in a Yoruba-Mother tongue and English-speaking context, and continues in a host country where French is the official langue, Dioula the vehicular language, and Baoulé the majority language. In this plurilingual environment, the trading diaspora also speaks a variety of pidgin known as «français petit-nègre». Though the adults hardly have a perfect mastery of an Ivorian language, it is from the second generation that trilinguals originating from this diaspora begin to emerge (Igue, 2003).

## LOCATIONS FOR IDENTITY TRANSMISSION AND RECONSTRUCTION

In order to ensure a certain continuity of school and religious life, different strategies are put to use. Yoruba protestant churches and schools in the Ivory Coast serve as symbolic meeting places as well as places of cultural affirmation where religious services and teaching activities are carried out in the Yoruba language and reflect programs of the country of origin.

Signs of identity avoidance and withdrawal are evident in this diaspora's family context where endogamy is common. No foreign language is spoken in the family and traditional activities of knowledge transfer are conducted by the elders, guardians of the community's collective memory.

This diaspora lives in ethnic compounds which often bear the name of the geographical location its inhabitants come from. By keeping their culinary practices, their mode of dressing, their judicial and socio-economic systems (saving schemes as well as credit unions), «they feel like ... they are living in Nigeria» (Lazidou, *op.cit.*: 95).

The attitude adopted in asserting their membership to this ethnic group vis-à-vis people of other origins is to introduce themselves as «simply Yoruba, in deference to other Nigerian ethnic groups, and Nigerian, when referring to other African nationalities» (ibid.: 56). However, it is the specific identity of the subgroup, the town s/he belongs to, that prevails when the subject has to identify him/herself in the presence of another Yoruba.

## A MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE: A BABEL-LIKE COMMUNICATION

The novel *Call It Sleep* shows, as many language biographies of Jewish immigrants to America do, how the complex interplay of the mother tongue(s) and the languages of the place of immigration is patterned according to a tripartite process.

The immigrant's first reaction is that of a defensive retreat in the cultural spaces where only the mother tongue (here Yiddish) is spoken. The second stage is that of the

necessary acculturation to the second language (here English), the «hostile» language that dominates the new world, though not the latter's only language. The third stage, returning to linguistic and cultural roots, even the ones the subject does not know he has, is represented in the novel through the young protagonist's learning classic Hebrew and Aramaic at the *cheder*, the Hebrew religious school, the symbolic place where American Jews try to ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge.

The acquisition of this mysterious tongue engenders a myth of empowerment through language that leads the hero to emulate the biblical Isaiah's linguistic purification through fire by dropping a metal dipper on the trolley tracks. His act of (almost) self-sacrifice manages to create a communicative bond among the ethnic communities peopling the Manhattan Lower East Side. They converge to the site of the accident in order to help the injured boy, in a Babel-like scene where everyone speaks his or her own native or (variant of) acquired language or a mixture of both. A third space is created where linguistic and cultural differences are stressed and overcome at the same time.

Multilinguistic and multicultural biographies suggest a different outcome to a trajectory that could otherwise lead to linguistic and cultural entrenchment. The cross-linguistic and transcultural dialogue, achieved through the appreciation of each specific cultural and linguistic heritage, makes the novel a useful didactic instrument, since it represents both the difficulties and the opportunities created by the processes of diasporic deterritorialization and reterritorialization in a multilingual society.



# STRATEGIES OF ADAPTATION TO HYPERMOBILITY: MIGRANTS WHO DO NOT SETTLE ANYWHERE

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## HYPERMOBILITY AND GLOBALIZATION

Our contemporary world is more and more frequently regarded as a world of hypermobility in which the circulation of commodities, people, information, cultural goods keeps increasing. Today, there are very few people who are not affected by these various forms of movement but mobility can cause a drastic change in the life of some of them (Tarrus, 2000). This is the case with migrants, particularly with those who keep leaving their homeland and coming back to it, because they work overseas for some months or some years in order to send most of their pay to the family they left in their native country. Some poor countries officially encourage this temporary migration which reduces unemployment, feeds a significant part of the population and brings in foreign currencies. The Philippines "export" workers all over the world, especially a large number of seafarers. These young men who often come from poor rural families have to cope with a new way of life to which they have hardly been prepared. They often sail among mixed-nationality crews because the shipping industry has been one of the first sectors to be globalized and to recruit its personnel all over the world in order to employ workers at a cheaper rate.

How can young seafarers manage to adapt to an extreme form of mobility which means for them endless moves from one world to another, permanent frustration for being far from their family, no country to settle in and imposed promiscuity with colleagues from other nationalities?

We will rely here on letters written in English by Filipino seafarers when they were at sea. These letters were all sent to the chaplain of a seafarers' centre who had housed them when they were students in a maritime academy. These letters would then be published in the local Newsletter of the Centre (Berger, 2004).

**Ronaldo, 1994**

*It is not only the waves that haunt us day and night, but also the lingering boredom and nostalgia that lengthen our working hours in the late time of night. I mean the memory of home and home and home which is weighing me down at times. There are also times when boredom and nostalgia can no longer be eradicated by any form of amusement. (...) Almost every minute of the hour, every hour of the day with the cacophony of jet chisel or hammer on deck, thinking of home is inevitable. I am now in the process of adjusting, of molding myself to plainly accept the truth, that I am now a seaman destined to spend my life at sea, destined to be lonely and destined to be away.*

**Richie, 2000**

*Hello guys, about my situation, we are in big trouble. Three days ago, the second mate from Ukraine was sent home because he left the bridge while on duty at 12:00-4:00 a.m. By 3:30 a.m., the captain went to the bridge, found nobody there and we are in the middle of the Pacific. The second mate was in the cabin of the third mate. They were drinking together. What a danger and risk to our lives! The situation in the engine room is very bad. Still trying to adjust to communication in sign language on board between the different nationalities!*

**Ray, 2002**

*We are only 3 Filipinos in the engine room, and we have problems with the chief cook. The crew is striking against him, about his menu. He is from India. The crew are making letters and signatures to send him home. I asked him if he has a family. He has two college and 6<sup>th</sup> year in high school. Everybody is depending on him for schooling. (...) He even cried before the captain. I felt what he felt, I understand him. Even if he has only two menus for one week, I think people should consider that he had a right to live too.*

**Jun, 2002**

*Shobe and Khyle are doing well; I am still working for a father and son bonding. Khyle is 9 months old. Sad to say I will not be here for his birthday. That is a reality I have to accept. The first few weeks/ months will be difficult, because your own son knows you like a stranger and when the time comes when you are close to each other, it's the time to say goodbye for the job. I know how hard it is to be far away from your family, however it is also for their future.*

**Brian, 2005**

*I need a little time to adjust to working with different nationalities. I am the youngest and the only unmarried crew member of the vessel. They work for their family, and I work for my future. My main concern now is to send financial assistance to my parents. Once I chanced upon a phrase printed on a t-shirt while walking along a street in India: "Sea is my Country, Ship is my Home, Duty is my life, then who is my wife ?".*

## THE SHIP AS A HOST TERRITORY

Life at sea can be extremely hard, but seafarers tend to think they have no other option but to adapt, because the competition for jobs is so tough. Their core value is that of the family and they are ready to endure a lot to be able to secure a salary in dollars that they will send to ensure survival, sometimes even, a certain opulence. Their strategy consists in inflicting on themselves a discipline which is very far from their usual way of life. Some admit to making a sacrifice of themselves. On the ship, which is above all a working place, social life is often reduced to a minimum. For these permanent migrants, each ship becomes a “host territory” with its specific material and human configuration, but the composition of the crew changes all along the journey, according to the arrivals and departures of crew-members, a process which requires new adjustments (Kahveci & al. 2002). Filipino seafarers usually speak English but the absence of a common language shared by the whole crew can go so far as to jeopardize safety. More commonly, it is a source of social isolation when a simple conversation demands too much effort. Discrimination linked to national or ethnic origin does exist but solidarity helps enabling mixed-nationality crews to work well (ibid).

## THE EXPERIENCE OF MIGRATION

The experience of mobility, in this specific case of migration, is often documented through interviews or life narratives recorded *a posteriori*. Consequently, it is frequent for informants to be unconsciously tempted to reconstruct their own life path so as to make it appear more coherent; they may also have a faltering memory. Documents such as diaries or letters which are produced during the period of mobility and are not elicited by a researcher, can prevent this type of bias and allow a diachronic perspective which proves particularly interesting. In one of the most famous landmark surveys of the Chicago School of Sociology: *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918-1920), the authors had exploited letters written by immigrants.

Social anthropology and the sociology of migration are two indispensable disciplines when dealing with current modalities of cultural and linguistic contacts in relation with mobility. They are also necessary to study such processes with the appropriate concepts and methods, even if the actual questionings in the area of didactics require that specific tools be devised.

Among emerging concepts, the paradigm of hypermobility seems promising insofar as authors who make use of it (Urry 2000, Diminescu 2003) highlight the fluidity of these phenomena and attempt to comprehend the mutations caused by globalization and the development of technologies of communication. Yet, the case of seafarers from poor countries indicates that a sociology of mobility cannot ignore more traditional dimensions such as economic and social inequalities.

These letters give us access to a concrete experience of problems linked to communication difficulties and cultural differences, areas commonly covered by language didactics. The maritime context, far away from the teaching environment and its actors, reminds us of the fact that, statistically, many of the social situations in which cultural and linguistic contacts occur, are linked to the imbalance between various areas of the world and to the movements of population that survival necessities involve.

# MOBILITY OR IMMOBILITY: AMBIVALENCE OF FUTURE TEACHERS TOWARDS LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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## **THE DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND “OTHERNESS”**

Whether they find themselves in a bilingual foreign university or on teaching practice in a plurilingual and pluricultural class, future teachers are eager to learn the language of others, to discover their culture or to help other people to discover it, in short to contribute to a better understanding of otherness. To this end, they rely on contacts built up during their teacher training. Disciplines such as social psychology (Gallois, Ogay & Giles, 2005), social anthropology (Barth, 1995) and sociology (Wieviorka, 2001) are used to analyze the development of representations of self and others, attitudes towards diversity and strategies used through the mobility experience.

How do future teachers come to understand linguistic and cultural diversity? Are their perceptions and attitudes towards self and others altered or not?

The two case studies below derive from semi-structured interviews with future teachers during their initial training in either pluricultural primary schools in Geneva or bilingual secondary schools in Fribourg. Based on grounded theory, the first study aims to understand the meaning that future teachers assign to the concept of cultural difference in relation to their future profession. Following an anthropological approach, the second study seeks to identify students' representations, attitudes and strategies as well as the reasons for their unexpected communication difficulties while they had chosen their host university because of its bilingualism.

**Example 1**

I had told myself, before we talked about “couscous-pedagogy”, I thought it could be a very interesting idea to ask a child to talk about, I don’t know, if s/he is Moroccan, to tell us about her/his country so that the other children could learn more about it. I am convinced that we are afraid when we don’t know, that you reject when you don’t know. (...) So, I would rather have been for the “couscous” type, but since we shouldn’t either, I don’t know where I stand now! (...) Yeah, I think it can be rewarding, just like a child may want to talk about cats, it might be a good idea as well that a child tells us about her/his culture. I don’t know...

**Example 2**

Because it's true that I always ... I grew up in the countryside, and everything ... I do not like the city. I hate the city. err... and it is clear that pupils are, they're different. I did teaching practice there at the beginning of the year in S. (a very multicultural suburb). Already there, it had nothing to do. (...) The percentage of foreigners is 80% of the class. Half of them don't understand French. It is true that teaching conditions are not ... they are completely different. But, well... I am not saying "oh no, I don't want to teach in the city because children are hopeless." It's not that at all! But ... if I can stay in the country, I'll feel better.

**Example 3**

*French-speaking student:* Yes, Röstigraben ["Rösti" is seen as a typical German Swiss dish] ... certainly exists. German speakers for me are disciplined, punctual, strict, serious, heavy at times ... We Francophones are light, we like the good things of life, we are individualistic, undisciplined, argumentative... but you should not believe... these are stereotypes huh? (giggles)

*German-speaking student:* Yes of course ... there are differences between Alemans and Romans, but we must accept them as such ... it is a richness, an enrichment, not a division... we must try to go towards others, we must show good will...

**Example 4**

*French-speaking student:* At first I didn't want to go on this language programme in Germany because it meant time and money ... and then I thought ... “ah these Germans, they are cold, rigid, disciplined” ... and then they can be very nice, warm, open, creative ... and then I was able to practice true German!

*German-speaking student:* Well ... we had to go on this programme even though we had come from another canton ... and it costs money ... I did not agree and I tried not to go ... but eventually I went to France and I loved the French ... they are querulous, undisciplined, not law-abiding, they are not like French-Swiss ....

## **AMBIVALENT REPRESENTATIONS**

Naive theories guide perceptions of others and their presumed difference. Thus thinking that one may promote intercultural understanding by asking “foreign” students to make presentations on their culture denotes a concept of culture as readily identifiable and explicable to others, who would then spontaneously abandon their own negative stereotypes about this “foreign” culture.

Negative collective representations of a "neighbour", symbolized here by the stereotype of the "Röstigraben", may be rejected under the pretence of understanding the other while difficulties of establishing contacts are acknowledged. A tension appears between the kind of intercultural evangelism which celebrates the enrichment provided by diversity and confusion when the potentially conflictual dimension of the experience with difference is revealed.

## **STRATEGIES OF AVOIDANCE, WITHDRAWAL, RESISTANCE**

The experience of contact, often less ideal than imagined, may result in a certain disenchantment (Amir, 1969), if not a sense of confusion and disempowerment. Thus, on becoming aware of the inadequacy of an intercultural pedagogy one had intended to implement, the unexpected complexity of the task is likely to upset. One strategy of avoidance is to prefer a teaching appointment in the country rather than in the city where pupils are judged "still very different." In spite of the rhetoric advocating closer contacts with others, students tend to withdraw towards their language group when engaged in collective tasks. To justify their behaviour, students attribute their resistance to the diglossia situation (German-Swiss are not deemed to speak "correct German") or the extra cost that a further mobility abroad would involve.

## **TOWARDS NEW INTERCULTURAL SPACES BETWEEN MOBILITY AND IMMOBILITY**

The majority of students think that they are "tolerant, open and integrative." But their discourse which reflects political correctness, naturalizes or ethnicizes the “other” while at the same time defending a kind of inclusive universalism. Both facets of this discourse contain hidden forms of misunderstanding of difference be they attenuated, discounted or rejected. They are expressed through ambivalent attitudes towards diversity and reveal a continual tension between the desire for differentiation, which tends to value the cultural dimension, and the desire for inclusion which tends to emphasize a common identity (Brewer, 1991).

A third-space, where identity may be redefined, helps to overcome frustrations and to build a less ego-centered approach to cultural difference. Thus the interview can be seen as a space for talking and facilitates awareness of the complexity of interpersonal relationships in an intercultural context. Similarly immersion in a third country (other

than German- or French-Swiss cantons, i.e. Germany or France) may provide a space for reconciliation with the partner's language and culture. Third spaces provide a less dramatic relation to otherness. They untangle certain forms of immobility and encourage new forms of identity mobility. They allow dialectical thinking about the unity and diversity of humanity (Morin, 2001).



# COUNTERPOINT

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Be mobile, travel – you are bound to leave your mark. Mobility is an intrinsic feature of modern life. Whatever the reason whether from choice or necessity, temporary or permanent, moving from one sociocultural sphere to another is a recurrent feature in the lives of our contemporaries. The consequences of mobility vary, depending on whether motives are mixed (a source of personal enrichment), take the form of a bridge or gateway (a source of mediation between the « here » and « there »), or a detour (a source of reduction for the individual « there »). In addition, communication technologies, whilst disrupting our relation to time and space, do bring us closer to each other and invite us to travel more. It matters little whether we are rich or poor, we are all on the move, each time we travel condemning those who stay put to their sad fate, i.e. being deprived of something essential. It is, in effect, striking to see how far a lack of mobility and marginalisation correlate (Orfeuill, 2003 ; Le Breton, 2005). Woe betide those who do not have the opportunity to travel or the desire to do so. They will be labelled « locals » (following the eponymous book « Gars du coin » of Nicolas Rehany, 2006). This reflects, of course, the first thing we should remember concerning the widespread invitation to be mobile that is currently shaking up the world: disqualification and a sedentary lifestyles. Those who stay in their « backwater », who don't go on holiday, or who return to their family home only once a year, those who don't take advantage of student mobility programmes, who have a fear of travelling, who wish to live and work where they were born and brought up, who have not done a trip around the world ... all of these people are viewed as inferior, reduced to their fate of life in one place. The value and essence of being a native of one place, living one's entire life in the same place, which has allowed, and continues to allow, many to exist and gain recognition, and on a more mundane level to simply survive, has been considerably devalued in our times.

Nevertheless, nothing is less straightforward than travelling. To move from one place to another, it is not enough simply to set off. Numerous conditions have to be fulfilled. To be more precise, there are a range of factors involved, tangible and intangible, human beings or things that contribute to helping us envisage mobility and making it possible. Let us try to identify the main factors. Firstly, motility, which one can, by analogy with physiology, interpret as an aptitude for mobility, i.e. the way in

which an individual or group manage, or do not manage, to adopt the concept of mobility with a view to undertaking a number of activities situated in specific loci. Such people can draw on both experiential capital and an imaginary world of travel. An openness to mobility derives, of course, from previous experiences of mobility (those who have travelled, will travel, so to speak). This is not because one knows the pleasures of travelling (not all trips are so pleasant: it is a euphemism), but because there has been an initial severing, because one's identity has been freed from the place of origin. Thus, it is clear that the link between the Self and those nearest to the Self no longer exists, allowing a « métissage » of identity. This openness to mobility also takes root in an imaginary world of travel, a true stock of references to mobility (from family, friends, social and institutional environments). The transatlantic cruise ship anchored in a port, a great instigator of dreams of escape, has led to the departure of many. Similarly, the tales of migrants on holiday in their homeland have resulted in others taking the route into exile, whilst the delighted student returning from a semester in another university has awaked numerous latent vocations previously hidden to studious fellow students who had remained at their home universities. However, this habitus of mobility would be nothing in itself, other than a vague inclination, if other actors did not play their part. Pre-existing circuits or routes in terms of organised travel from A to B are vital for mobility. These are comparable to the « autoroutes » or high-speed trains in France, without which the mass exodus of holidaymakers from the cities each summer would be impossible. Similarly, there are institutional agreements in the form of formal conventions between institutions that allow student mobility. It is always on such « tracks » that mobility takes place. There are, of course, also the descendents of Charon, those who help others to pass from one location to another and make the trip feasible. International migration, whether political or economic, would never have known its current volume were it not for intermediaries who ferry or smuggle people across borders, mapping out routes and protecting emigrants in transit (often for high fees). Some of these emigrants soon discover their clandestine status. Similarly, what would the organised package holidays for tourists be without the professionals who draw up the routes and negotiate the different components (sightseeing, accommodation, transport etc.), before delivering a ready-made « product », with all worries over organisation dealt with in advance. This is also the case for Erasmus students studying in a foreign university for a semester or a full academic year. Their stay has been negotiated in advance between professors heading departments, often as a result of personal links forged at academic conferences and meetings. One should also not forget fellow travellers, even if they travel independently. These may be people one meets when en route, and all those who help in the understanding or interpretation of the experience throughout the period abroad. As travelling always involves a degree of adjustment in terms of points of reference and certainties, it results inevitably in openness towards others – above all fellow travellers. How many chance encounters, romances, friendships or fleeting exchanges have happened when travelling! What solidarity has been forged on dangerous trips, what fears have been quelled before strangers to comfort or cheer up another migrant!

Once the Styx has been crossed, there are the welcome structures. These provide support for our existence as migrants in our new environment as we experience immigration. These structures include the immigration services, the association for Erasmus students, social services for immigrants, the international office at the university, the community of fellow exchange students, transit camps, immigration laws etc. And then there are also the «hospitable» (or not so hospitable). These include extremists, xenophobes, landlords renting seedy accommodation, employers hiring illegal workers, antiracist militants, interpreters or groups supporting ethnic minorities, devoted social workers, charitable souls functioning as substitute families, new local friends, interested in you and sometimes in future accommodation for a time when they themselves are on mobility programmes.

Hence, we never travel alone.

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## Chapter 4

# Social affiliations and relations

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## NOTES ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 4

It was to be expected that, in a chapter on Social Affiliations and Relations, the translators would have to grapple with differences in the conception of civil society in French and in English speaking countries. The challenges were particularly evident when translating *pluralité/diversité* in the Introduction and entry 1, and *traducteur médiateur* in entry 5.

While Geneviève Zarate is keen on avoiding the American term ‘diversity’ and favoring ‘plurality’ instead, Carla Giuliani uses ‘diversity’ as a counterpart to ‘unity’ - as in the American motto *e pluribus unum*. For the French researcher, ‘plurality’ seems to be more inclusive than ‘diversity’ as it refers both to inter-individual variety and intra-individual multiplicity of experiences and life journeys. For the Italian researcher, ‘pluralism’ seems to be synonymous with ‘diversity’ without the neo-liberal connotations of private interests that we find in the English term. So why the French distaste for ‘diversity’? Upon reflection, the French preference for plurality must stem from a preference for the republican ideals embodied in the French educational system and its integrationist mission, as Geneviève Zarate explains in her introduction. (Note that what Giuliani calls “assimilationist”, Zarate calls ‘integrationist’!).

‘Culture’ in the French educational system refers to the civic and moral values upheld by the French Revolution in 1789 and its republican ideal of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. These values have been asserted against cultural, regional and religious particularisms, and against the private interests of business executives and market speculators. While ‘plurality’ retains an integrationist agenda under the aegis of the State, ‘diversity’ implies a juxtaposition of private interests under the loose management of the government. Hence the visceral negative reaction of many French educators against what the sociologist Alain Touraine has called “the tyranny of the communities and the domination of the markets” (1999)

Even before the separation of Church and State in 1881, Jules Ferry set up a secular, free public school system which made schooling compulsory and was to guarantee the moral values of French society. Catholic schools did not disappear, but the school system was split in two. For the supporters of the secular system, religion was to remain a private matter and school was to be a democratic forum in which ideas could be debated, thus forming free citizens in contrast to religious schools that were perceived as indoctrinating students. At the time, secular schools reflected each citizen’s right to be educated in a centralized, standardized educational system that was to serve as an instrument of social and national integration. Since the French language was seen as defining the identity of the nation and its universal values, linguistic and

cultural diversity was viewed as anathema to French public education. Even today, the notion of cultural ‘diversity’ is not viewed favorably by French educators who see in it an anglo-saxon notion incompatible with French culture as defined above. They favor the term *pluralité* instead, a notion that, like the grammatical plural, retains the morphological integrity of the noun even as it dec lines its various forms.

In entry 5, “Go-between translators on controversial grounds”, the translator chose to translate *traducteur médiateur* in the title by “go-between translator”, even though the discussion refers to the mediating role of the translator and his/her ‘mediation’. In English, the term ‘go-between translator’ as an adjective + noun is more usual than the double noun ‘translator mediator’ which sounds a little bulky and this might have been the reason why the translator chose the first over the second. In addition, ‘go-between’ is more neutral than ‘mediator’ as it indexes a position or a motion, not an activity or a motivation to bring two warring parties together. But it might be too far fetched to give the term ‘mediation’ an ideological reading that the translator would have deliberately avoided. ‘Go-between translator’ might just have scanned better.

## INTRODUCTION:

# SOCIAL AFFILIATIONS AND RELATIONS

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## A PEDAGOGY OF LANGUAGES AND IDENTITIES

The most dominant usages in language teaching have a tendency to under-estimate the variety of social identities that can be observed both in a given society and in the communication among members of different societies. This chapter aims at making explicit the complexity that can be observed in the description of practices, and seeks to valorize an approach to the study of social relationships, as they could be studied by the Social Sciences.

Indeed, language teaching manuals and syllabi are often tempted to favor a description centered on a national entity which brings together the characteristics of a people or a nation, and allows for a simplified description of a foreign language and culture. Such simplification produces pedagogical compromises which in turn lead, for example, to:

- either having a glamorous view of the country whose language is being taught, which can be compared to the advertising used by tourism, for example, which often leads to promoting an over-simplistic approach to social reality that actual day-to-day experience may contradict,
- or, setting a more generalized approach to national reality, which takes into account a limited number of psychological, social and historical features describing the nation as a whole as factual data that tend to give a fixed a-historical description

The hypothesis here is that, rather than causing harm to the expression of strong social cohesion, highlighting plurality through social group dynamics reinforces the interplay of an individual's claim to multiple identities, by showing the intensity of social relationships and the underlying detailed strategies. To study the relation of

social relations and the spread of languages learnt at school or outside school is therefore not aimed at eroding social cohesion, but rather at consolidating it.

### **A dynamic reading of plurality in society**

The teaching and the use of languages are thus presented as being one of the keys that open the door to a network of social exchanges marked by the diversity of codes, usages and worldviews, not only at school, but also in the society at large. It is no longer the unique privilege of a European aristocratic elite or bourgeoisie that, right from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, introduced holidays for their pleasure and the Grand Tour for their children's education, but rather it is presently gaining grounds, in each and every country and region of the world. Migratory phenomena, the low-cost travel revolution, television transmission by satellite, the spread of Internet access and the technological developments linked to the mobile phone, all put now the experience of diversity within the reach of all classes of society, in every country. Language teaching still tends to under-rate this reality in the models it proposes.

Indeed, when a system of education is the product of a State or a Nation, as is the case in most European countries, its mission is to construct a shared collective vision of the national identity, a commonly shared feeling of belonging which may appear contradictory to the idea of getting to know speakers of other languages. A 'nation-centered' approach could end up being the representation of a homogenous national identity which adopts a principle of 'living together', is bound by the worship of common ancestors, has a territory that does or does not resist invasions, adopts endogamous filiations, rejects religious, regional, ethnic or linguistic minorities by giving priority to a group, which can itself be a minority but dominant group. On the other hand, there can be a national approach which integrates within the national collective memory, by democratic consensus, the memories of minority groups, the break-ups in national history and the contribution of Diasporas to the national community. It is worth noting that the citizenship dimension still exists, but becomes secondary, when the system of education makes it its mission to give each individual [an] equal opportunity and access to economic success, as is the case in the United States.

#### *Obstacles to the recognition of plurality*

This multi-polar and dynamic view of identity is in conflict with presuppositions of an identity understood to be a binary mode, which often pits citizens against foreigners and friends against enemies, dramatizes differences and exacerbates the role of the geographical border, "an imaginary line for which one is ready to die" (Brunet, Ferras, Théry, 2005). The spy, who slips into the identity of his enemy, is the archetype of the one who crosses the closed frontiers, borrows the identity of a smuggler and masters the Other's language at the risk of his own life, in the context of war or of geopolitical tension, and flirts with the status of a traitor. When national identity is thought to be under threat, double identity is suspicious especially when there is a feeling of threat regarding the loyalty of the one suspected to be torn between two national identities.

Some nations consider plurality to be a founding principle: the USA, Canada, and Australia all recognize immigrants as founding fathers who established the first settlement colony, when they were expelled from their countries of origin by religious intolerance or were attracted by the hope of socio-economic mobility. Yet, in the history of these nations, the principle of plurality was installed only after other founding groups of this national community were recognized. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the civic rights of African-Americans or those of Canadian natives and Australian aborigines were the fruit of a social and political struggle which culminated in the recognition of the contribution of conquered peoples, slaves, Indians and Amerindians, to the founding and the future of the nation. Between de facto plurality and institutionalized plurality, there is a difference that nourishes social conquests. Countries with a colonizing past do have a historically different relationship with plurality: within British society, the United Kingdom recognizes a multicultural element which is the heritage of the Commonwealth and the Colonial empire. Since the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, France has, in the name of the universality of Human Rights and secular values, made a different choice, by activating a model of social integration that aims to unify.

The debate on plurality cannot therefore be placed on an idealized horizon when indeed the languages therein are identity emblems whose position fluctuates between sources of prestige and stigma, depending on political, historical and social contexts. When examined from the ecumenical angle of “dialogue of cultures”, tolerance and respect, the debate risks becoming one of equal rights, which the observable social reality tends to deny or dilute. If the democratic context is a prerequisite for a state to value a plural approach to identity, without the latter being understood as a threat to national cohesion, diversity is then valued as a horizon of hope which social exclusion denies.

#### *A lack of pedagogical propositions regarding multiple identities*

Language manuals intersect with these debates without explicitly mentioning them. The model which relies on a supposedly exemplary adequacy between a territory, a community and a language whose symbol would be the native speaker, is in fact the narrowest. The foreigner then becomes the counterpoint of the native speaker when the scenarios of the textbooks develop a cultural in-between which is to be considered a more and more positive rendering of plurality, but in which the description of social relationships remains globally stereotyped.

The European political context has a moderating effect on this model built on social homogeneity by raising the issue of double – European and national - identity. But the debate is still undeveloped. In the emerging European modeling, one notable progress is the relative supplanting of the native speaker to the advantage of the foreign expert whose linguistic competences are modeled on a real mastery of the language (“he does not show that he is reducing what he wants to say”, “he uses a sufficiently wide range of modal procedures”, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Ch. 5 description of level C2, Council of Europe, 2001). The assessment of intercultural competences, a complex factor, is now being debated but was not

mentioned in the Framework. In the latter, cultural and intercultural competences are thus presented as the result of communicative competences, which leads to their being given a restricted definition.

Language activities which encourage a comparison between the culture being studied and that of the learner, and also produce generalizations, are assessed for their communicative quality, but often generally ignore the criterion of sociological relevance. Activities of comparison, that is to say, comparing different value systems and interpreting such difference, and activities of generalization, that is to say identifying a principle of one or several specific observations, are perceived as a systemization of cultural reality which can be done irrespective of the involvement (or not) of the one who compares or generalizes. The term ‘public’, ever so present in language teaching and which serves to categorize users of a language and their manuals by age-group, refers more to a segment of the publishing market and to training than to a generation driven by its own values. In the European context, manuals lack sociological tools. In countries like Canada where the concept of “visible minorities” is entrenched in law, school manuals are generally objects of a form of scrutiny which ensures a systematized social representativeness.

### **Tools and methods borrowed from the Social Sciences**

Social Sciences have a scientific tradition that helps categorize society, analyze social inequalities (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, Passeron, 1968), and discuss the role of the one who produces a discourse on a given society (Zarate G., Gohard-Radenkovic A., Lussier D. Penz H., 2004). This tradition introduces a critical reflection on a country’s school description which the learner captures through the lenses of stereotyped representations, on statutory inequality between the native speaker and the foreigner, and on the position of the person who classifies, organizes into a hierarchy, and judges, in light of what is familiar to her/him.

#### *Positioning oneself within the dynamics of social relations*

While distinguishing itself from the common usage that can be seen in manuals which attribute a statutory identity (nationality, socio-professional category) determined once and for all, the sociology of otherness unlocks this rigid vision of the social world by using the stable categories necessary for the systematization of observations (age, generation, socio-cultural capital inherited from earlier generations), and coupled with a dynamic approach of social belonging. Prompted by social ascension or decline or geographical mobility, social belonging is less a fixed status than a construction of identity, an expandable response to a socially dominated situation there and the provider of social hope here, like the chapter on Mobility and Itineraries of this book shows.

Individuals who consciously develop a plurilingual and pluricultural profile, seen as a social advantage, increase their modes of belonging by adapting themselves to the social contexts they encounter through personal experience. If they can only claim one nationality, they develop a capacity to use to their advantage the difference between



value systems through the diversity of their social experiences, by varying the hierarchy of their personal references, indulging themselves in a backward or forward movement between values linked to their personal identity and the demands related to the contexts in which they want to secure a personal position. Thus they expose themselves to frequent ‘identity configurations’ (de Singly, 2003) which are not necessarily irreversible rejections of interiorized time-space, but rather the controlled affirmation of peculiarities and individualities that create fluid identities, adaptable to multidimensional and nomadic itineraries. By contrast, those who develop a negative perception of their personal biography that has been affected by stigmatization and confusion, exclusion and denial of existence, can be inhibited by an identity pain caused by a marginal position attributed to them by society, by the limited number of identities that have been assigned to them and which they cannot exclude themselves from, as well as by the negative meanings with which their “self” is constantly associated.

*Conditions for setting up a plurilingual and pluricultural field of research (taille à revoir)*

The debate regarding the recognition of plurilingual and pluricultural competences assumes that sociological observation distinguishes itself from institutional characterizations which are always adapted to a multiple categorization. For example, a French secondary school pupil, registered at school as learner of German (as first foreign language), is neither likely to be identified with such languages spoken at home as Cypriot (her mother’s language), Turkish (her father’s language), nor with her mastery of English, learnt during her childhood in the United Kingdom. The recognition of the plurality of identities requires a wider scope of observation which takes into consideration school and non school experiences, languages learnt outside school and needing to benefit from the same criteria of recognition as languages learnt at school. This approach demands that the individual be understood within the context of a family history and an itinerary which involves several generations, within a trans-border framework. The country where s/he is studying is often only just a visible portion that could be hiding many other logics the researcher or teacher may not notice, if s/he limits her/himself only to the local level.

There is also a correlation between the multiple individual biographies and the geopolitical changes resulting from civil wars and genocides, which lead to more or less voluntary economic migrations which an individual, a family or a community cannot always resist. Such classifications as “migrant”, “illegal immigrants”, or “without immigration papers”, should not make the researcher forget that they are regulated by judicial and administrative criteria defined by law, but should not hide from her/him other socio-professional realities, for example, or personal heart-wrenching experiences. These traumatizing events responsible for break-ups in personal itineraries, and which make individuals likely to take risks, can be eclipsed by the same people who have succeeded in overcoming them and who are likely to adopt the worldview of the country which gives them a new start in life, and thus to neutralize the plurality which exists in their life’s journey. The researcher is therefore confronted with hidden identities which s/he may only be able to decipher if the ethical

conditions of her/his research to do so are met, for example, through comprehensive interviews with the interlocutor (Kaufmann, 2003).

### **A field in which teachers and researchers engage their view points**

While in principle operations of social classification seem to be geared towards those they categorize, the social sciences which use participant observation or comprehensive sociology have, in the last two decades of research called for a change in thinking towards the one who produces these categorizations and to consider her/him as a committed participant through the point of view that s/he shares, even if it is indirect. By breaking with the pedagogical tradition which suggests that the teacher should be neutral, these approaches, applied to language teaching, engage the teacher's responsibility because s/he does the work of describing, and that of the researcher because s/he does that of explaining, both being linked to the taught or studied object.

This principle is applicable in teacher training through a method called reflexive learning where the future teacher temporarily finds her/himself in the position of a learner learning a language that is unknown to her/him and which s/he will not be teaching, in order to discover the strategies that s/he personally uses. The principle is further developed when the teacher is invited to give an account of the personal and private relationship s/he has with languages and foreigners, as the chapter on Self and Languages of this book, elaborates. In both cases, it is recognized that the teacher cannot ignore her/his social history when s/he develops her/his relationship with the foreigner to the point of her/his professionalizing it. What may seem to be a time-consuming diversion during training actually frees the teacher from the certainty of an immediate and spontaneous relationship with the culture s/he is teaching, and with the idea of truth.

The aim is therefore to put together a debate which both recognizes and distinguishes the personal experience of a society from the cultural in-between of the teacher and the learner. A description which relies on a plurality of viewpoints of actors engaged in the production of discourses including the most extreme ones, as the critical study on xenophobic discourse helps to highlight the more or less implicit involvement of social actors in the description of a community of which they are supportive, or of a community which they understand only from a distance when they refer to preconceived ideas, with or without direct experience. The spontaneous point of view on a society or on one of its sections makes visible the social position of the person expressing such a viewpoint, and renders tangible the classifications which each actor necessarily uses to situate him/herself socially. Martine Derivry shows this by explaining the categories which divide the professional field of language teachers into "natives" and "non-natives", through job advertisements. The neutrality of the teacher or that of the researcher, as well as that of the translator, as Marie Vrinat Nikolov highlights hereafter, show an abstract and inexplicable identity, and in fact, deny the social positioning and the process of the construction of identity which are observable in any ordinary negotiations or interactions. Armed with tools of his/her discipline, the researcher explains the identities discretely in play, by placing his/her own modes

of classification at a certain distance. This paradox can be observed in the analysis of the discourse of political decision-makers presented by Nazario Pierdominici and by Ariana Benenati in the conversational exchange of students in an international secondary school.

## **AN EDUCATIONAL SPACE DEFINED BY PLURALITY**

These examples show how many viewpoints and standpoints exist in the educational space which itself is not an antechamber of the social environment governed by an ecumenical viewpoint, but a dynamic space, structured by plurality. A foreign student's confrontation with a new academic culture highlights the presuppositions common to each academic tradition; they are illustrated by the cases presented by Dominique Charbonneau. For citizenship and a right to nationality, there exist judicial tools for codifying a plurality which is sometimes suspected of anarchical proliferation. Carla Averso Giuliani demonstrates that this codification is the fruit of a national history and that, in a democratic context, it regularly adapts itself to the transformations imposed by the development of social relationship.

School systems are benefiting from the effects of the changes resulting from the end of the Cold War and the new lines that divide the world at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These lines re-write, and sometimes reverse friend/foe positions, just as the hypersensitivity of migratory flows to geopolitical and economic variations as well as the socioeconomic windfalls demand a new scale of reading, itself a product of globalization. In a country's national curriculum, the place allocated to mother tongues, regional languages, minority languages, less-commonly taught languages and foreign languages, taken as part and parcel of the same meaningful lot, is a factor that makes one understand how the identity of each country tries to cope with the plurality imposed by these rapid changes. These historical transformations create new opportunities in terms of pedagogical innovation; they diversify, increase and make commonplace the demands for interpreting otherness, something becoming generalized in every day social practice.

In an environment so sensitive to geopolitical and social transformations, language teachers occupy a special position, especially if they are defined as mediators whose professional responsibility is to initiate learners into a dynamic reading of social realities: the reality of the language they are learning, and that close to them which they reexamine with an experience enriched by otherness. Professionally speaking, they are neither psychoanalysts nor psychologists, for their aim is to develop a vision of the relationship with otherness which can be defined as being an integral part of social activity without any pathological basis.

The premise of a yet-to-be-construed sociology of language teachers shows that the language teacher who places the relationship with the other at the heart of her/his profession, has herself a special sociological profile. Formed as a habitus (Bourdieu, 1979: 189-248), and articulated around a plurality of identities that are either accepted or repressed, the teacher's personal and family history feeds professional convictions

that are more or less expressed. As a specialist of communication, the language teacher should be in a position to fully assess the strength of what links private and professional histories together - a challenge that calls for rethinking the training of teacher trainers.

# UNITY AND DIVERSITY: EDUCATION TO CITIZENSHIP AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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**Translated from French by Iginio Schraffl**

School, as the heart of public space, is a mirror of society whose shortcomings it crystallises, as well as the place where citizenship is learned. How can it best enable youngsters to grasp the meaning of diversity and its relationship with equality, to build their own identity, and to perceive their own interest and the interest of others as moral and legal equals?

Citizenship refers in the first place to a legal relationship – an individual’s participation in a political unit (generally speaking, a state) that assigns him/her a whole of rights and duties; it also defines, from a sociological point of view, a national community, i.e. the whole of relationships uniting individuals at the social and political level.

## **SCHOOL AND CITIZEN’S EDUCATION**

It is up to the school (GALLISON, R., 2002) to teach how the national community was constituted, to remind the youth that they belong to it, what its founding values are, its history, its institutions, that they take part in its destiny, that they have to participate in the process that makes the social system evolve and build up new equilibriums, given that its content moves naturally as time goes on and differs according to the “climate”, that a strict interlacing exists between stability and permanence of natural, social and political human rights, on the one hand, and the history and acknowledgment of the respect for citizens’ incompressible identities, on the other hand.

Schooling is necessarily achieved through language. The meaning of messages is construed by means of words, and an understanding of the texts of a different language/culture, starting with the analysis of the choice of terms and formulations used, enables youngsters to examine the representation that others have of the citizenship principle and the way they apply it. Thus interethnic relations are facilitated by mutual understanding.

**Document 1: Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, 1789 / Declaration of human rights, 1789**

Les hommes naissent libres et égaux en droits. Les distinctions sociales ne peuvent être fondées que sur l'utilité commune.

...l'exercice des droits naturels de chaque homme n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres membres de la société la jouissance de ces mêmes droits..

...La loi est l'expression de la volonté générale. Tous les citoyens ont le droit de concourir personnellement, ou par leurs représentants, à sa formation. Elle doit être la même pour tous, soit qu'elle protège, soit qu'elle punisse. Tous les citoyens étant égaux à ses yeux, sont également admissibles à toutes dignités, places et emplois publics, selon leur capacité, et sans autre distinction que celle de leurs vertus et de leurs talents.

Source: site du Conseil constitutionnel, France,

[http:// www.conseil.constitutionnel.fr](http://www.conseil.constitutionnel.fr)

**Document 2: Constitution de la République italienne, 1948, art.3 / Italian constitution,1948, art.3)**

Tous les citoyens ont une même dignité sociale et sont égaux devant la loi, sans distinction de sexe, de race, de langue, de religion, d'opinions politiques, de conditions personnelles et sociales.

Il appartient à la République d'éliminer les obstacles d'ordre économique et social qui, en limitant de fait la liberté et l'égalité des citoyens, entravent le plein développement de la personne humaine et la participation effective de tous les travailleurs à l'organisation politique, économique et sociale du pays.

Source: Crosa E, 1950, La constitution italienne de 1948, Paris, A. Colin

**Document 3: Projet de loi pour l'égalité des chances, 23/10/2006**

La République reconnaît à ses concitoyens, quels que soient leurs origines, leur sexe, leur situation sociale et de santé, leurs convictions ou leurs croyances, un droit identique à l'égalité des chances.

La loi de programmation pour la cohésion sociale du 18 janvier 2005, la loi pour l'égalité des droits et des chances, la participation et la citoyenneté des personnes handicapées du 11 février 2005 et le projet de loi relatif à l'égalité salariale entre les hommes et les femmes en débat au parlement concourent à la reconnaissance effective du droit à l'égalité des chances.

..... un certain nombre de nos concitoyens connaissent ..... des situations d'inégalité des chances qui ..... nuisent à la cohésion nationale.

...nous devons trouver des solutions aux problèmes des français. ...

Les discriminations, directes ou indirectes, sont particulièrement importantes pour les personnes habitant des quartiers défavorisés et pour celles issues de l'immigration ou encore originaires des départements et des territoires d'outre-mer. ....à curriculum vitae équivalent, un habitant d'un quartier sensible à près de deux fois moins de chances d'obtenir un entretien d'embauche qu'une personne résident hors des zones urbaines sensibles ; Une personne issue de l'immigration maghrébine a cinq fois moins de chances d'obtenir un entretien d'embauche qu'une personne qui ne l'est pas.

L'inégalité des chances touche particulièrement les jeunes de ces territoires .....

La présente loi vise à faire de l'égalité des chances une réalité pour tous .....

Source: site du sénat français, [http:// www.sénat.fr](http://www.sénat.fr)

## **UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE FRENCH CONTEXT**

The texts of the Declaration of rights of men and citizens of 1789 with its individualistic revolutionary lyricism and the Bill of equal opportunities of 23.10.2006 give an idea of the evolution of the concept of citizenship.

France, where immigration plays an important role not only at the economic but also demographic level, has for a long time applied an assimilationist policy. During the Seventies, after the decolonisation period, its society underwent deep changes. As France became a multiethnic and multicultural nation, it was obliged to let those who entered this new form of society independently of their will, understand the meaning of diversity in order that they would recognise community members as their own and find their unity. France, in view of realising its social cohesion, intends to build up a balance between universalism of rights and national diversity. In 2006, the above mentioned bill stresses the membership in the same community, in spite of existing diversities. In particular, it puts into evidence the sense of social solidarity meant as an ethical value, conveying the accountability of the stronger towards the weaker (the latter being a target for discrimination) and co-operation as a moral or material support for others, based on republican virtues and human rights.

## **UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE ITALIAN CONTEXT**

Art. 3 paragraph 1 of the Italian Constitution of 1948 states a universal principle (equality) and paragraph 2 indicates the actions the Government has to undertake in order to realize it, without mentioning national cohesion, because up to then it had not yet experienced immigration. In fact, the whole constitutional charter aims to guarantee what Fascism had suppressed, i.e. civil and political freedoms, pluralism of society, democracy. It is characterised by the search for social and political cohesion, the will of reconstruction out of respect for human rights and without ignoring the needs of popular masses.

## **UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT**

Fifty years ago, the European concept was born with the vocation of realizing a unity drawing its identity from pluralism.

During the last years, the European Union has encountered some difficulty in assigning itself a geopolitical identity, and this has led it to state - in the 1<sup>st</sup> Part, Title I, article 1-2 of its Constitutional Treaty – the values to be shared by European citizens, on which the Union is founded, and from which it draws its meaning and cohesion. These are: “the values of the respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, rule of law, as well as of the respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities ..., shared by member states within a society characterised by

pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men” (Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2004).

These few excerpts of founding texts belong to different outstanding moments of the development of society, reflecting the transformation and manifoldness of social reality in time and space as well as the relativity of concepts.



# **RELIGION AS A SOCIAL MARKER: DECODING LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATIONS OF CULTURAL BORDERS**

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## **RECOGNITION OF GROUPS AND CULTURES**

In the first half of the 20th century many European countries saw a massive emigration of their population overseas, mainly towards North and Latin America, and Australia. In the years following World War II new migration waves took place from country to country in Europe, as well as internally within the borders of some of those countries. These migrations led populations from the poorest and underdeveloped regions of Europe to move towards industrialized areas in search for jobs. Over the decades the EU has in turn become a rich and stable economic area, and a destination for migrant influx. As of the late 80s migration waves caused by processes of market globalization have led to a population influx from other nations, bringing about the emergence of new complex multicultural societies within various EU countries.

In Europe the identity of groups as cultural entities is a very strongly felt issue and culturally homogeneous national groups are identified through the recognition that a common language is spoken over a shared territory. This is an ideological approach, reflecting the categorization/classification of individuals on the basis of their nationality, and of nationality on the basis of language and territory only. Yet national belonging and cultural belonging do not always coincide, nor do linguistic and political borders. Rather there seems to exist a certain degree of ambiguity in the description of cultural borders between groups as people tend to adopt different self-representations and shift behavior or even language according to given conditions. The corpus below shows that religion too can become a major categorization criterion.

## **ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY**

In a society like Italy's, which is growing more and more multicultural thanks to the influx of migrant workers, the public school as a social mixer can play a central role in shaping the processes of self representation as well as the representation of the other.

It represents the starting point in the active construction of one's identity and sense of belonging. Active construction of personal identities means that the conviction to belong to some group or another is just the projection of a will or desire to belong, as is demonstrated in sociology and sociolinguistics: cultural borders are the result of individual or collective creation.

Recognition within school syllabuses and curricula of notions such as the fluidity and the arbitrary or random character of cultural borders between human groups, will enable the school to play its statutory role, namely as contributing to integrate young people from different backgrounds, educating them to the importance of cultural diversity, acceptance and valorization of otherness, thus also preventing stereotypes from forming and consolidating.

The following excerpts, chosen as examples for this article, are from "Moschee di origine italiana", ("Italian Mosques", or lit. "Mosques of an Italian Origin") published in: *Il Resto del Carlino*, Macerata local edition, page iv, 17 September 2002. The article gives us an account of the opinions by an elected member of the local council in Corridonia, a small borough near Macerata, concerning the presence there of a conspicuous number of workers coming from Pakistan, who would like to erect a mosque for their religious ceremonies, and as a place of worship according to their traditions. When reading the article one gets an interesting insight of the conceptual map by this Italian politician, and in particular of the relation that he establishes between the two notions of being a native Italian, and being a non native immigrant worker from Pakistan. Religion is the identifying criterion here, while no importance seems to be attributed to the linguistic factor.

**Excerpt no. 1**

L'istanza per costruirla (the mosque) non è stata presentata dai pakistani ma dai proprietari dell'immobile, che sono italiani e sembra non siano neppure di religione musulmana.

**Excerpt no. 2**

Riguardo alla moschea (...) ritengo sia loro diritto professare la loro religione a patto che i promotori della moschea riconoscano il diritto dei cittadini italiani di poter essere liberamente cattolici nei paesi mussulmani.

**Excerpt no. 3**

(Si) chiede pertanto la convocazione urgente di un Consiglio comunale aperto a tutte le comunità e a tutti i cittadini, per discutere sulla situazione degli immigranti in generale, ivi compresi i lavoratori meridionali.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN INTEGRATION PROCESSES

A mosque is a place of prayer characteristic of a specific religion: Islam. Islam is not the religion followed by the majority of Italians. This is the only way one could interpret the words in excerpt 1: the members of the Pakistani community, who are

Muslims, are the only group having an interest that the mosque is erected, but the request for the building permit was submitted by Italians.

In excerpt 2 the immigrants are again identified through Islam, and through their being Muslims. In fact not only are they identified with Islam, but with the whole of the Muslim world. We encounter here once more the implicit assumption that normally Italians are Roman Catholic, not Muslim, which makes clear beyond any doubt that religion is the identifying criterion adopted by this politician: native Italians are identified in their entirety through their affiliation to the Roman Catholic religion, Pakistani immigrants through Islam.

The claim that, because they are Muslims, the Pakistani residents should somehow ensure the respect of the Italians' right to freedom of religion throughout the Islamic world, as they are free to follow their religion in Italy, seems to betray the current existence of an underlying stereotype and of a certain amount of generalization in self-representation and representation of others and otherness. As Italians, it is the implicit claim based on a confusion between national identity and religious affiliation: we have different laws than the Muslims. The arbitrary nature of cultural borders between groups is well exemplified in these words, as we find here the religious criterion directly opposed to an ethno-linguistic one.

In the words of the interviewee from excerpt 3 we find attested a further subdivision that he makes within the category "Italians", when he differentiates between local residents, and *meridionali* (southern Italians). This attitude originated in the years of internal migrations that characterized the country from after the end of World War II through the 70s. So the notional map of the interviewee seems to comprise three broad categories: local people, *meridionali* and non EU Muslim Pakistani immigrants.

Identification and representation of individuals as belonging to specific groups, as well as the cultural borders between groups, are clearly defined according to arbitrary criteria. They seem to depend on an evaluation of the religious factor more than the linguistic one, as well as on other elements (for example the geographical origin, as in the case of southern Italians). It may be interesting to explore to what extent representing oneself as an outsider in relation to a given (linguistic) group, or vice-versa, being able to go beyond what - after all - are only psychological barriers (inherent in the notion of a static separateness of cultures and languages) may influence integration processes.

Considering the fluctuating nature of intercultural borders, studying one language / culture should be regarded as the acquisition of one more cultural tool rather than entering some sort of foreign territory; in other words learners should be aware that they are becoming members of a new community of speakers, to which they can contribute, and of which they can determine the evolution through interaction.



# NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE TEACHERS: TWO TYPES OF PROFESSIONALS COMPETING ON THE LANGUAGE MARKET

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The notion of native speaker no longer has any scientific relevance for linguists (Paikeday, T/M., 1985). It represents at best a theoretical abstraction for limited operational uses within the tradition of structural linguistics. As for sociolinguistics, this notion has no meaning at all since we cannot determine what a “pure” language is given that any speaker is a “native” of one language or another.

On the other hand, the term “native speaker” does point to a problematic social dimension of an affiliation to a language. Within each linguistic market, high stakes are at work depending on the symbolic capital of each variety of language. The French language from Quebec or from Senegal does not stand on the same linguistic footing as the French from France (Calvet, L.-J., 1999). Equally, the English language from India or Kenya does not benefit from the same social prestige as British English. The power struggle to own the legitimate language is deeply rooted in a social dimension and has strong political and economic implications.

Consequently, a teacher from Quebec will probably encounter problems teaching French to foreigners in France and even more so to French people in France. Likewise, a teacher from India would probably meet the same obstacles in teaching English in England or in the United-States. We may question the reason for such a situation as both teachers are native speakers, the former of French and the latter of English.

Similarly, a teacher of English who is a French native speaker might experience the same difficulty when teaching English to foreigners in England or English to British people. In the same way, a teacher of French, whose native tongue is Japanese, might encounter similar impediments when teaching French in France to foreigners or to French people.

These examples highlight a range of social hierarchies both within “native speaker” communities and within the ranks of “native/ non-native speakers”, based on the

apparent affiliation to a language. What is at stake is part and parcel of social order, which is linked to social hierarchies within a linguistic market and between linguistic markets on the international language market.

Consequently, any speaker has access to a range of linguistic capitals and, holds one or more linguistic repertoires, all of them imbued with different social values. Even though any language teacher cannot disregard these social views ingrained in his or her linguistic capitals, a teaching competence can nonetheless be justified in a given language whatever the linguistic background.

Merely speaking a language does not make the teacher. A teacher is not only a good speaker of the language being taught, he or she is principally someone who can explain, who can present the structure of the language and culture and, design relevant activities for the development of language and communicative skills on the basis of degree level study.

Working on what the language teaching competence really is would contribute to the professional development of teachers and would put an end to reducing them to mere “language speakers”, of ascribing them to linguistic affiliations or to teaching legitimacies that are all as essentialist as the values attributed to native-speakership. The task is to deconstruct the scientific legitimacy of the “native” teacher, and to construct a professional competence based on mastery of the language, as well as on an understanding of the learning process.

#### **A/ Ads at the French National Job Centre (2003)**

A1: Bilingual English Trainer: for a linguistic training company and aiming at GPs and wage-earners of the private sector, trainer (male or female), English native speakers required.

A2: English Trainer for managers of small to medium sized companies. English mother tongue an advantage. Flexible teaching hours from 38 to 40 hours a week.

A3: Teacher of French as a Foreign Language (male or female): you prepare and organize classes in FFL. French mother tongue. Your teaching schedule varies from 14 to 18 hours.

#### **B/ Ads published in an English-speaking free newspaper in France (FUSAC-2003)**

B1: Langues&Affaires: Experienced English Teachers. Take the time to meet us. Make up your own mind and join us. Be part of a dynamic team at a well-established languageschool. Stable positions. Native speakers with work papers.

B2: Intensive French course by native French woman. Paris 15th. Experience, Alliance Française: Japan, England, France. Study material provided. First Lesson free.

B3: WALL STREET INSTITUTE. If you are looking for a young dynamic and fun company to work for. Join us! EMT Business English Teachers. Paris, Apply now!

When reading these advertisements, the native speaker is confused with a “native” teacher.

Further, whatever the language taught – French or English – the social demand is for “native” teachers.

For advertisements published at the French National Job Centre (A1,A2, A3), the offers for “native” teachers may be expressed in somewhat lighter terms (English mother tongue being an advantage) as to not breach the law on non-discrimination at work. However, for papers aimed directly at the English-speaking community in France (B1, B2, B3), the terms are explicit about what is selective: “native speakers”, “English mother tongue essential”, “native French woman”.

Analysing these advertisements, it seems clear that the “native speaker” is associated with the “native teacher” as if there were an affiliation or obvious link between the native speaker of a language and the teacher of that language. Similar examples of the confusion can be reported in the press, the political sphere or even in the language teaching field:

“No, language teachers with teaching status and native speakers, teaching assistants or any language guests do not look at each other with angry faces. Each one is far too aware of the complementary role of the other”. (M. Dupuis, *Le Monde de L'Éducation*, février 2002, p. 28). Indeed, this confusion has been widely institutionalised after Claude Allègre, a former Minister of Education in France, allowed the employment of “native speakers” within state primary schools.

So, it was not surprising that to the question: “What do you think of an English teacher whose mother tongue is English” - 49 % of HND students (non representative sample but nonetheless illustrative with 600 respondents) said they preferred a “native” teacher whereas only 8 % said they preferred a “non native” teacher (Derivry, M., 2003)

All these examples support the portrayal of language teachers who teach their “mother tongue” as offering an advantage to learning. As an English teacher put it (Derivry, M, 2003), “the ideal is an English teacher who has a pedagogic sensibility and who is native !”

The dominant legitimacy, giving more credit to the language teacher is today to the benefit of the “native teacher”. Whatever field of reference – economic, media, political or educational, there seems to be a universal view and perception that credits “native teachers” with more competence. This positive attitude towards “native” teachers can be found in other countries to varying degrees depending on the language positions and the teaching markets. (Medgyes, P, 1994 et Braine, G, 1999).





# INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION: IDENTITARIAN AFFILIATION IN AN INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.

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Translated from French by Nazario Pierdominici

International or « foreign » schools, representing closed settings where students can develop specific skills (Gumperz, J. 1982) are perfect environments for field research and studies on diverse social/cultural groups and on mixed identities. If one considers that identities and groups, the nature of which is defined in advance for the sake of our inquiry, are the outcome of an effort of collective elaboration through interaction (Garfinkel, H. 1967), then the focus of our research will shift from describing a multilingual context to describing in real time the very actualization of the ethnic, linguistic and identitarian categories pertaining to that context. By shedding light on the dense and ever-changing, kaleidoscopic nature of reality, this approach allows the researcher to properly appreciate behaviors while avoiding stereotypes. And also, it allows us to analyze how sense is made interactively, as well as to discern the basic meaningful units of social interaction (Goodwin, Ch. Goodwin, M.H. 1992; Duranti, A. 2003).

Based on an excerpt from the transcription of an exchange that took place on the recreational premises of the Lycée français in Rome in 2001, on the final day of that school year, we shall try to understand how categories indicating nationalities (« Francesini », or little French, and all those who adopt an unconventional behavior regardless of their being Italian or French students; and « Classichini », a diminutive form from « classic », or « Pariolini », the real Italians and those who live in the Parioli neighborhood in Rome) get locally entwined with other categories describing identities, such as that of the narrator (Watson, R. 1994).

Despite a certain degree of reciprocal complicity, the two partners in the interaction (A1, a girl with a strong Italian accent, and F, also a girl, who speaks with a strong French accent), in fact vie for control over the role as narrator.

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**Document 1**
**A1, F, I (researcher), A? (unidentified student).**

1. A?: all'inizio i francesini erano quelli che appunto avevano erano avevan/ più
  2. avevano più cioè più difficoltà a abituarsi perché venivano da un altr/ dalla frANCia
  3. ee dunque la moda non la conoscevano e dunque si vestivano in modo differente e poi/
  4. piano piano questa cosa della moda è si è amplif/ amplificata e anche se sei italiano ma
  5. ti vesti in quel modo sei considerato francese cioè
  6. I: l'italiano come si veste in quel modo come si [veste↑
  7. F: [non sarebbe sarebbe francesino sarebbe
  8. classichino e pariolino
  9. A?: classichino però invece di dire classico che si veste classico e e secchione / ecco
  10. nelle scuole italiane si dice secchioni <bûcheurs> ehm da noi si chiamano francesino
- 

**Document 2**

1. (s)
  2. F: no ma eh si eh è questione di moda eh ehm invece di dire che sono secchioni
  3. <bûcheurs> secchioni li chiamiamo francesini perché↑ perché è tutto [<...?>
  4. I: [ <...? secch[ioni
  5. A1 [però io di:co una
  6. COSA . posso dire ORA/ ovviamente dico ora. quando siamo in classe no . la
  7. professoressa di storia ↑ è come se ci dia una colpa di come ci: vestiamo eccetera
  8. voglio dire io do::/ un anno FA sono partita e non sapevo dove [andarmi a vestire
  9. F: [lei si vestiva con i cosi
  10. pli[ssés
  11. A1 [← s:ono entrata in un negozio, e mi sono comprata]→ (h) dei pantaloni sono entrata
  12. scuola e hanno cominciato a guardarmi MALE:: (.)
  13. F: si invece [ <la ?>gonnellina:: [plissée:: (.) [eh ti rico::rdi::↑
  14. A1: & [dicendomi ah / [stai diventando parolina (.) [eh ↓
  15. F: & oh mxxx (diminutif) quanto eri [cari::na <voix aiguë >
  16. A1 & [ciòè:: non è che l'ho fatto APPOSTA io cioè:
  17. F: non l'ho fatto app/[ <ton ironique>
  18. A1 [NO↑ perché io non è / NO ma a m/perché/ ma/ TU vai alla cicogna
  19. <magasin pour enfants > a me la cicogna non piace perché trovo che è cAFONE quindi
  20. dove vado a vestirmi a tredici anni
  21. A?: è brUTTa la cico[gna
  22. A1: [scusa vado in un negozio che si chiama smile subdue <des marques
  23. de vêtements> perché c'ha cose per ragazzine (.) dove vuoi ANDARE senno↑
  24. F: non sei una ragazzina [mxxx (diminutif) / non lo sei più <ton ironique> cioè::
  25. A?: [scusa eh ma
  26. A1: si va beh / io non è che posso andare::/ CIOè/ io abito lì/ . non è che posso
  27. andare <in giro per?> smile e subdue non è che posso andare al c:entro ogni volta per
  28. comprarmi i vestiti capisci::
  - 29.
-

The friendly terms on which their interaction is conducted are apparent at various levels.

At the level of rhythm, in a surprisingly synchronous sequence A and F pause and stop speaking at exactly the same moments (13-16). This sort of reciprocal agreement can be detected at a semantic level too from the occurrence of the diminutive endings in «pariolina» and «gonnellina» (13-15) (echoed by a final «carina»). The same agreement is also apparent at a narrative level when F endorses her friend's decisions (sì, invece) and then makes an appeal to their shared memories of criticism coming to both of them from adults or from out-group peers (eh ti ricordi) (6-7); or when F and A1 both imply that they belong in one and the same group: F does so at line 3 by saying « nous » (« nous » les appellons Francesini), or elsewhere when she poses as an Italian (Sacks H. 1992) by pronouncing longer syllables than necessary (13 and 15) or resorting to the typically Roman idiom « cioè » (16).

The two girls' thematic trajectories, though, are antithetical. A1, who relates how she went shopping alone almost as if this was a fairy tale (io sono partita), feels that she belongs to the category of adults, or «grandes», as she defends her preferences regarding style and fashion (trousers vs. skirt); but when she takes on a «Pariolina» self-identification, F at once mentions her friends' childhood and pleated skirts, and addresses her with a diminutive (mxxx) and an exclamation (que tu étais jolie) in the high-pitched smiling tone which is typical of adults poking fun at children.

And as soon as A1 understands the undertone (lines 18-21), she also tries to treat F like a child: «tu vai alla Cicogna» the trendy shop selling dresses for children representing in her view the exact opposite of a *negozio*, ie. a dress shop for adults.

The struggle of the two girls for recognition as narrators (5-6 to gain control of the narrating role and 12-14 to keep it), with A1 and F both wishing to tell their stories, remains hidden at first; it is then transformed into a process of inclusion/exclusion with regard to a different categorial network: that of one's age (Sacks, 1992). And it explodes eventually, triggered by the word «ragazzine». To F this is the translated equivalent of «little children» whereas to A1 that same Italian word means «adolescente», as she does not accept her friend's implication (in Italian a difference exists between the meanings of adolescent «ragazze» and of «bambine», or little children); and then the issue of being Pariolino is raised again. That word does not convey any longer the idea of «(transgressive) adults», as was suggested by the history teacher (14). Nor does it represent now the categories of ethnic or cultural affiliation to the Italian people (doc 1, 6-8). In this case it merely serves as a topographical indicator of an area within Rome (io abito lì) (Mondada, L. 2000). Thus A1 abandons her attempts to control the interaction, as well as her self-identification as an Italian, as a Pariolina and as an adult, that are part of her complex, co-constructed and locally-oriented categorial network.



# GO-BETWEEN TRANSLATORS ON CONTROVERSIAL GROUNDS

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## THE MASKS OF TRANSLATORS

Since antiquity, reflecting upon translating has come within the dichotomies between literally and figurative meanings, dynamic and formal equivalence, content and form, source and target texts, just to take up the terms by René Ladamiral (Ladamiral R. 1971). The dichotomy was revived in the twentieth century by the structuralist movement with the distinction made by Ferdinand de Saussure between the signified and the signifier. A few received ideas stem from the primacy of the signified over the signifier, the content over the form that translators are not necessarily aware of, but that actually weigh on their translating – it is the image of the translator as "a go-between", a "mediator", the hackneyed cliché *traduttore traditore*, (the translation is a betrayal, or the translator is a traitor), the idea according to which a good translation does not read like a translation but sustains the illusion that the translated text was written in the reader's language. Yet, if the translator disappears, he runs the risk of missing a meeting point between different literary traditions and different relations to taste.

## TRANSLATORS UNDER PRESSURE

It is suitable to oppose all those myths weighing on translators to translators themselves, as people involved in a mediation that implies they are fully active, free to choose and dig in their heels, alert to self-censorship – that most of the time they are not aware of, that they are familiar with their rights on the texts they produce, despite the inevitable protests and criticisms that will no doubt arise. If it seems to go without saying that everything is allowed and possible in literature in the name of creation, when it comes to translation, on the contrary, translators are all too often under pressure from editors, proofreaders and correctors, readers and more widely from the dominant, widespread culture aiming obsessively at correctness, "fidelity", or what is received. It should be borne in mind though, that languages have become richer, and

still get even more so, notably thanks to daring translations that shape the use to-be of a language.

Any translator one day, is faced with some kind of violence exerted by editors and correctors who pride themselves on safeguarding readers' rights and tastes, rail about mistakes, misapplications, mistranslations or misinterpretations and compel translators to water down the text, to replace surprising images in the original culture by clichés in the target lingo that are supposed to 'sound good', but that in fact hold in check any speech and take off any suggestive power from the text.

### Exemples of translations and corrections

#### Exemple 1

##### **Original text**

„Посред небето висяха няколко звезди, едри като фасул.“ (Севда Севан, *Родосто, Родосто*, София, изд. Христо Ботев, 1996, стр. 41.)

##### **Translation proposed by the translator**

« Les étoiles pendaient au beau milieu du ciel comme de gros haricots. »

Le personnage du roman, point de focalisation de ce passage, est un propriétaire terrien qui adore sa terre, d'où cette image.)

##### **Commentary made by the corrector**

« en français, on dit: les étoiles brillent ». Ce qui aboutit au compromis suivant: « Quelques étoiles, aussi grosses que des fèves, restaient suspendues au beau milieu du ciel.»

Sevda Sevan, *Quelques part dans les Balkans*, traduit du bulgare par Marie Vrinat, Paris, L'Esprit des Péninsules, 2001, p. 48

#### Exemple 2

##### **Original text**

Градските хамали Али и Спирос бяха приседнали на плочите пред бараката на митничаря, наливаха си чай, отпиваха невъзмутимо, усетили с гърбовете си, че на този „вапор“ няма мющерии за тях.“ (Sevda Sevan, *ibid.*, p. 11)

##### **Translation proposed by the translator**

« Les portefaix de la ville, Ali et Spiros, étaient assis sur les pavés devant la baraque du douanier, ils se versaient du thé et buvaient, imperturbables, sentant avec leur dos qu'il n'y avait pas de clients pour eux sur ce « vapeur ».

##### **Final translation after the commentary of the corrector**

« Les portefaix Ali et Spiros étaient assis sur les pavés devant la baraque du douanier, ils se versaient du thé et buvaient, imperturbables – quelque chose leur disait, à la manière des rhumatisants capables de prévoir le temps, qu'il n'y avait pas de clients pour eux sur ce « vapeur ».

#### Exemple 3

##### **Original text**

« Enfin des poires parurent ; et le verger avait des prunes. » (Gustave Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, Paris, Folio, p. 97).

***Translations into Spanish, Italian and Catalan that make « le verger » no longer the subject of the sentence, but a location.***

« Alla fine, apparvero le pere: e nel frutteto le prugne. » (italien)

« Finalmente aparecieron las peras, y en el huerto habia ciruelas. » (espagnol)

« Per fi van venir les peres ; i al verger van sortir les prunes. »

Tiré de Jean-Claude Chevalier et Marie-France Delport, *L'Horlogerie de Saint Jérôme*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1995, p. 94.

Exemple 4

***Original text***

„(...) да виждам нейните пръсти – твоите пръсти, Алиса, надвесена над фугата, вълбена в гласовете, които сякаш слушаше с очи и питаше –

... какво е Бах? –

Защото вярваше, че знам (...)”

Емилия Дворянова, *Passion или смъртта на Алиса*, София, Обсидиан, 1995, стр. 26.

***Translation and lay-out according to translator's choice***

« (...) je verrais ses doigts – tes doigts, Alissa, penchée sur la fugue, recueillie dans les voix que tu semblais écouter avec tes yeux, et tu demandais –

... c'est quoi, Bach ? –

car elle croyait que je savais (...). »

Emilia Dvorianova, *Passion ou la mort d'Alissa*, Gardonne, Fédérop, 2006, p. 36.

## THE ACTOR-TRANSLATOR

At some point, any literary translator does instinctively feel that he can be a prisoner of his own clichés, representations – or those related to his people, his country or his social class – of his language (through the beautiful, the correct expression) and of the way to translate ("you cannot make out how to write your way through the translation"). It is what can be called self-censorship, providing a source of several unintended practices: you can comment, change the meaning, add elements, or to the contrary, withhold or suppress some. Example n°3 shows some kind of self-censorship through the shift of the subject, an inanimate object, to the locative case – a shift a few translators deemed a bit 'brazen'. But the translator does not suffer inner violence only. He is often confronted with another, outer form of resistance put up by editors and correctors, by readers, themselves prisoners of common ideas.

It is a kind of censorship that produces the same results, as in examples 1 and 2 mentioned above. In the first one, an original image is replaced by a cliché ("the shining stars") in the name of correctness in the target language. It is then replaced by another one, no doubt considered less common, with 'beans' turned into 'lucky charms'. Yet, in the name of the ethics useful for the source text, in the name of opening up on to difference and strangeness, translators have to stand up for their choice to respect images, phrases, expressions – though rough they may sound or read in the target language – different rhythms, long or short sentences, unusual punctuation; all that makes the specific literariness of a literary text. Hence the

uncommon use in example 4 of the dash at the end of the cue and the absence of capital letter after the question mark, which no more common in Bulgarian than in French. It is hard to resist the temptation to put the punctuation right again into a less disturbing form, but in this case editors have respected the choice of the translator who was eager to the voice of the text.

The history of translation teaches us that the choices translators have to make and the problems they still meet today have almost been the same since antiquity. Translators have constantly to take up a stand in the translating tradition left to them. They have to surpass themselves and go beyond the verbal tics passed on to them through traditional, deep-rooted representations of the beautiful in their languages. It is through holding their ground when defending their ethics of translation based on listening to the Other, to the strangeness they perceive in what is unspoken that translators will fully pursue their vocation as go-betweenes.



# DISCOVERING ONESELF AS FOREIGN: CONFRONTING ANOTHER ACADEMIC TRADITION

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## EXPERIENCING FOREIGNNESS IN A FRENCH LITERATURE COURSE AT A FRENCH UNIVERSITY

A foreign student taking an immersion course at a host university with an academic tradition different from his/her own finds him/herself confronted with ways of thinking and systems of representation that are different and that can give rise to academic, personal, and cultural misunderstandings.

This new student is perceived and perceives him/herself as a “stranger” in a class which already exists at the time of the student’s arrival and which will continue to exist after the student’s departure. The course with its norms becomes a representative model of the host society, while the institutional views insist on academic knowledge and know-how. The misreading of the host university system contributes to the internal conflict provoked by moving to a foreign country. In this context, the means of doing and being by the group (students and lecturers) constitute so many proofs of differences between the countries concerned. The foreign students compare courses taken ‘here’ and ‘over there’, thereby contrasting two societies with diverging university practices. Establishing differences in schooling prompts the question of membership and belonging in this new system which seems sometimes so far removed from familiar university traditions.

During an interview survey conducted on thirty-five Japanese, German and American students enrolled at a French university and taking a course in French literature – a course not primarily intended for them – the educational and cultural misunderstandings arising from the encounter between the two cultures were considered.

**Document 1 Brad, American student**

What is different in the USA, is we can add our opinion, for example: “this make me feels this, this make me feels that, etc. etc.” Here in France, we stay close to the text: “that sentence means this” and in the USA: “that sentence makes me feel this, makes me think of this”. In fact, the methodology is not at all like the French system. In the USA, it’s more personal. I find that with the French methodology, one cannot share the text with oneself. When we write an essay, it’s with our opinions: I feel this, I find that” and there is no particular order such as the three main themes and all that. With us, it’s just a beginning and an objective at the end – how do we get there??? I don’t know (laughter) but here in France, the three main themes, I found it difficult in the beginning, but now it’s fine. We don’t have the composed commentary, we don’t have the dissertation, the linear analysis: the explanation of the text – it’s just an essay. If you must write something on the text: write, write, write, ... and that’s it!

**Document 2 Echo, Japanese student**

In the literature course in Japan, the professor always asks us questions from the author’s perspective: “In your opinion, what did the author mean”. But we never ask the question: “and YOU, what do you think of the author’s ideas, what do you find interesting in this text... It’s always a little conventional, you see, “the author could have thought that this is interesting, the author meant this type of thing” always in relation to the author but not in relation to YOU. This is also why I had such difficulty doing the composed commentary because it’s very personal, it’s your point of view. Your ideas are requested. And us: we don’t have any!!! Well... we have some but ...!!! We are not used to expressing them!!! That’s it!!! (laughter).

**Document 3 Andréas, German student**

The approach to the text is the same: general questions, detailed questions on the text to be interpreted, all that is the same... but... the teaching in the university, that’s different, quite different. There, I prefer the German system because here you just need to be able to write very, very fast and learn things by heart. We are not asked to think for ourselves, you just need to reproduce what you have read. In our system, we must first of all regurgitate, then we compare, then we develop our own thoughts and then we interpret, that was different here. Now, I am used to writing very quickly! (laughter)

The analysis of the interviews on literature teaching / learning with those students interviewed and schooled in Germany, Japan and the USA reveal different literary profiles which correspond to text practices and to diverging conceptions of literature. The diversity of the details of self-expression transpires, according to the surveys, in the treatment of literary text and by extension, the whole educational system in the host society.

## THE FRENCH LITERATURE COURSE FRENCH-STYLE, AS SEEN FROM OTHER ACADEMIC TRADITIONS

The analysis of the interviews shows that American students seek a grasp of the literary text (1). Thanks to a personal and private approach to and reading of the text, the study of literature has a pragmatic aim which would be facilitated by the American system. This personal and life-shaping rapport that each person sustains with the literature constitutes the very essence of the interest of the literature. Art arouses emotions and sensations found within. The thematic analysis of the work supports this personal expression. During the interviews, the characteristics of literature teaching 'the American way' described by the students constitute a coherent system which is the opposite of French teaching of literature.

While the American student in his/her original schooling is invited to personally express him/herself on texts studied in the classroom, the Japanese student, in his/her country is subordinated to what the lecturer says. The words of the teacher organise the literary practices through a strong hierarchical relationship, so that the student follows a model and respects authority, like that of the author when the interpretation of the text is requested (2). Thus the lack of involvement and a distanced relationship with the text preserve the group harmony. In a context where the literature is held at a distance from the reader and where private expression is not usual within a group, the French literature lectures disrupt the literary habits of the Japanese students. From a Japanese student's point of view, personal interpretation is expected in a lecture on literature in France. The assertion of one's own choices and opinions required in France seems difficult to Japanese students, according to those interviewed.

Where the Japanese students see a form of liberty, the German students surveyed perceive imprisonment. Contrary to the American and Japanese populations, literary text analysis, during an immersion course in literature, did not pose a problem for the German students interviewed (3). However, their judgement of French teaching is severe. Literary practices are considered to be similar, with the exception of the dissertation which symbolises, from their point of view, the intervention of the French educational system which kills the individuality of the student, as the latter must content his/herself with reproducing the knowledge of the lecturer obtained during the lecture. The interviewees oppose the French *dissertation* to the German style research paper, that each symbolizes the principles of the educational system in which they are embedded.

By temporarily integrating the encounter with a class group, the confrontation with knowledge, and the acquisition of various knowledges and behaviors, the foreign student experiences the temporary and more or less significant conflicts, that each foreigner encounters in a new host society. The student must juggle between his/her past academic training and an unknown university present. All of the students confirm the difficulty of this task but also see an evolution, with time, in their response to the

lectures; their initial difficulties, literary and personal. The transformation, partly acknowledged and analyzed, constitutes in itself a key element of study abroad.

# CONTREPOINT

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Now more than ever, concepts of social science are being called up to try and manage the inevitable and most often unexpected effects of globalization, in particular on the level of the complexity of intercultural communication. We are living in an ideological context in which nearly everyone applauds cultural diversity yet as a backwash effect, identitarian and community tensions are coming back to cloud the issue. The paradox is an obvious one; nevertheless, there is a great confusion when it comes to setting up a conceptual paradigm that would be efficient— regarding for instance the teaching of foreign languages – if only concerning the content and the meaning we give to the concepts to which we refer, while they are often used as seminal arguments.

## **“INDIVIDUAL” AND “PERSON” DEFINED**

Akin to the individual, the « person » remains problematic within our societies, in discourses as well as in practices. The field of law is no exception. The issue gets even more complex when it comes to the cultures, religions and societies from which our everyday neighbors come. Besides, the duality individual/person is at the heart of identity processes. Indeed, although many traditional societies ignore or impugn the principle of the “individual”, all place the concept of “person” in its various modalities at the heart of social links – if only through names which constitute a universal identification principle, and in many societies an indicator for social paths – as is the case of a married woman’s name in France for instance— the name changes several times in the course of one’s life, according to the changes of oneself as a “person” acknowledged by society. Philologists and anthropologists often notice that when tribes, clans and ethnic groups name themselves, they actually appoint themselves as the sole “true men”. The ethnonym “Turk”, originating from the old “török”, a name still used by the Hungarian to refer to Turks, signifies “those who have been generated”, from the root tör, which means “generation”. It should be borne in mind that to some people, the concept of ethnic identity that is so often called upon makes no sense whatsoever: in the case of the Turk, one could say that it is a “herderien” people, according to J. G. von Herder’s definition in 1769 (*Treatise on the Origin of Language*) which refutes the divine nature of the origin of language, and lists all the factors that constitute it as a human, cultural and historical fact.

## WEAVING SOCIAL LINKS

In the remarkable collective work dedicated to « social links » (Supiot. A. (Dir.) *Tisser le lien social*. Maison des sciences de l'homme Ange Guépin / MSH, Paris, 2005, p.3), Alain Supiot reminds us that Plato's Cratylus had already prepared the way: in order to earn its place in a human society, a newborn must grow to share the community of meaning on which this society is established. In other words, every human being comes into the world with a debt of meaning, preexistent meaning that gives sense to his existence. The need for giving sense is added to the animal experience of senses. Access to meaning thus requires that every child learns to talk and to submit to the "legislator of language" mentioned by Plato, "who uses nouns to disentangle reality as a weaver with his weaving loom."

The weaver, the weaving loom and the fabric appear in Plato's metaphor. We still say that social links dissolve. Thinking social links is no easy matter. Of course, one can go back to Claude Lévi-Strauss's theory of incest prohibition, according to which the fundamental rule of exchange and reciprocity determines the passage from the state of nature to the social state, and from consanguinity binds and biological condition to marriage alliance rules and sociological constructions. This basis of the social state crystallizes the essence of social link: a universe of sociability and rules, a symbolic universe shared by everyone and for which language is the most important vehicle.

## SOCIETY AS A TEXT

Two anthropologists, Pierre Legendre and Clifford Geertz, suggest considering society as text. To Legendre, "we must bear in mind how language functions, as a mediation between man and the world's materiality. There aren't words on one side and things on the other. The word "things" refer to objects that are both exterior and reconstructed by representation. In other words, the relationship between words and things is inherent in language, so much so that an exterior object only exists if its material existence is coupled with its construction in representation. (Legendre P., *De la société comme texte*, Fayard, 2001, p. 18-19). With the concept of « thick description », Clifford Geertz sets a cultural anthropology based on the semiotic nature of culture and centered on the interpretation of cultures conceived as texts. To Geertz, the anthropologist "reads" the culture he studies/interprets, by copying over the shoulder of the culture's member.

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Chapter 5

# Images, discourse and cultural representation

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# NOTE ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 5

Stephanie ANDERSON

One entry in this chapter was written in English (Hillman) and translated into French for the original version of the *Précis du plurilinguisme et du pluriculturalisme*. In translating several of the texts into English, with two in particular (Maurer and Londei; Gallari-Galli), I struggled with the tendency of the authors to present as one thought what was in fact a compacted strand of ideas. For the discourse to flow more easily in English, I felt that the ideas condensed into different clauses needed to be unpacked and sometimes isolated at the risk of losing the encompassing sense of the densely constructed French sentence. At times, too, the level of abstraction of the French discourse—at least in my reading of the text—made the concepts being conveyed not readily accessible to an English-speaking reader who searches for a more concrete form of explication even when the discussion is theoretical.



INTRODUCTION:

# IMAGES, DISCOURSE AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

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**Translated by Stephanie Anderson**

The notion of representation tends to occupy a central place in the human and social sciences where its importance continues to be validated. Interest in this movement—in France promoted initially by Serge Moscovici—is growing in Europe and in the United States.

Research into cultural representations can be both theoretical and applied and calls on different methodologies (laboratory tests and field work, enquiries, documentary and discursive analysis etc.) (Jodelet, 1989). It touches on multiple domains: scientific, cultural, social, environmental, psychological and educational. All of which attests to the fertility of the concept, its scientific maturity and its relevance in treating problems of multilingualism and the multicultural in a didactic perspective (Zarate and Candelier, 1997).

Representations create distance or proximity with the other; they are subject to constant manipulation, both in the media and in schools, as well as in daily life. Visual representations are proving more potent and today are more extensively used by the new technologies. They are considered here as signs informing engagement and exchange with the other. The force of their impact makes them an “easy” and “dangerous” subject of generalisation involving academic culture no less than mass culture. Thus, when their circulation results in the same images being selected for different uses and by different authorities, they can become the sites of stereotypes as much as the means of displacing them.

## THE IMAGES AT THE HEART OF CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

We have chosen here to privilege the role of images in cultural representations as an approach to multiculturalism and multilingualism because representation by the image, together with language, has always been one of the means of expression and of transmission of the apprehension of the world that humankind has equipped itself with via the aesthetic function. The very term “image” remains deliberately general according to the iconographic object envisaged. According to this accepted sense, images, which are themselves constructed, lie at the heart of the representations constituted by discourse (Hall, 1997).

Indeed, the aesthetic and symbolic functions always accompany and support the other forms of expression in human communication such as argument, description, definition and narration. So it is that our way of thinking about the world—in terms of our collective memory just as much as our apprehension of the present or our projection into the future—is in the process of changing precisely because the image is widely supplanting the form of expression that has been dominant until now, namely writing. The “images” of “contemporaneity” are generated by a host of media such as cinema, advertising, television, contemporary art, the photograph, the cartoon strip, information technology, or the mobile phone. Our concern here is to grasp, on the one hand, how images cross disciplinary boundaries and multiply codes and, on the other, the representations they inform when they become modified for didactic ends, being called upon as a way of knowing other cultures. In addition, each educator is “an actor in a position of representation” (Coste in Zarate and Candelier, 1997:108; Goffman, 1959). Pedagogical discourse means then that they are addressed to quite distinct audiences as much through the transformations which they undergo in the process of selection and reorganisation of the visual material as through the reception that these same audiences accord them in relation to their own cultures, with the danger that any critical distance is abolished and that they become the images of the culture that is being studied. Indeed, if they end up being considered as vectors of broader, more intense and more widely shared exchanges which disrupt our way of seeing the world, they are no less reinterpreted, “modified” and to a certain extent reinvented from one culture to another, from one imaginary to another, as the notion of “bricolage” implies (Floch, 1992 and 1995 following Lévi-Strauss). What informs our way of conducting exchange with others is, therefore, less the simple circulation of representations than their appropriation and their symbolic transformation, key processes of the intercultural.

### **A necessary multidisciplinary**

In the last twenty years the importance that has accrued to the cultural domain, envisaged as an integral part of language teaching, has led to the role of the image being taken into consideration, especially as regards the use of the authentic televisual document (Viallon, 2002). The journals used by teachers who are interested in images are now numerous. However, the models proposed for analysis in the pedagogical

situation still too often remain subservient to the disciplines that developed in the first instance for the description of a language, linguistics and applied linguistics for example. Consequently the analysis of the image is presented in the form of a typology or a schema whose parts, although multiple, are conceived in a watertight manner in relation to each other and grant little importance to the relational and multicultural dimensions present in the production and reception of images. They lead for the most part to classificatory procedures which apply either to a culture of reference removed from that of the learner or to a model based on codes taken from other disciplines. If some researchers/teachers conceive of the image as a means of articulating those things that are not given verbal expression in a cultural context rather than as a simple tool of linguistic communication (Rodriguez, 2004), most often the elements of the image are diverted in favour of a verbalisation of which it is not the subject (Massetot-Girard, 2003).

In our view, the complex nature of the visual sign demands an approach which is able to use the contribution of disciplines which best correspond to the multiple dimensions of the iconographic object, including in its didactic dimensions. We refer to semiology for insights into the fluid relationships between the visual, the textual and the aural; to cultural studies for recognition of the place of the image in the modes of signifying of cultural representations; and to hermeneutic philosophy for studies of the relationships to time and movement of the static and the cinematographic image alike. And we look to the history of contemporary art for research into the iconic as a form of visual communication and into the function of the gaze as ideologically situated discourse. We can gain understanding from the discipline of cultural anthropology as well. All of these disciplines provide promising avenues of research into the image, and, in their interweaving, they direct analysis even more strongly towards the cultural and the imaginary.

### **The field of visual representations in a situation of discursive and multidimensional complexity**

What is involved, therefore, is to think out classroom practices starting from a multiple interrogation. An essential question is first of all to understand the meaning that the models which one uses to analyse the iconographic object generate in relation to the latter, in order to be able to evaluate its contribution. As well, if we are prepared to admit that the language-learning textbook only represents an increasingly limited part of the resources used in the learning/teaching of languages, the ideological values which underpin the choice and the elaboration of visual documents are practically never elicited, aside from analyses of language-learning texts where this subject has been well explored (Kottelat, 2005). Hence the use that is made of key concepts such as those of “contemporaneity” and “authenticity” corresponds to a collective notion about the choice of the visual document as documentary evidence for first-hand access to aspects of the language/culture that is being studied.

Indeed, the choice of material where visual signs predominate, such as advertising, film, television news and to a lesser degree, art, is often made according to criteria that remains largely unexamined but from presuppositions. It relies in large measure on

advertising which is supposed to permit direct access to the society or to be a simple reflection of it, and on film which, in allowing the incorporation of recent phenomena, favours the study of language via the image. To adhere to the meaning produced by analytical models applied to the iconographic object, whether these come from applied linguistics as seems to be the case most often in the pedagogy of languages and cultures, or from the social sciences (cultural anthropology, semiology) in relation to advertising, therefore leads us to question how these discourses define not only the image in a particular way, but entail as well a particular representation of the language learners. The founding discourses from which the systems privileged by educators are drawn, as well as the material selected, are sites where the representations of the cultures being studied are constructed, and where representations of the learner are made explicit.

To recognise the expressive power of the image is in the first place to incorporate the characteristics that are of an aesthetic order, which involves its cognitive as much as its affective dimensions. Here we touch on a basic principle of iconographical analysis. Although it is associated with the textual, it cannot be reduced to it. So the sites where these multiple dimensions intersect are particularly significant. A discursive semiotic analysis can, better than a grid it seems, grasp the interaction in an image of several representations, of a visual as much as textual nature. This type of interrogation whose objective is to initiate viewers into looking demands that we mobilise our abilities as readers of images and texts in a multimodal complexity, as Amanda Macdonald shows in her article.

## **MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL DIMENSIONS OF CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS**

The national and multicultural contexts of the learning/teaching of a language like French, although recognised by researchers, still do not enter sufficiently into classroom practices as Chapter 6 of this volume reports. To the classroom situation defined according to the presuppositions of the teacher, is added that of the representations held by learners of the cultures and the languages being studied (Zarate, 1986). The representations of the learners form part of their social context (Porquier and Py, 2004). Conceiving these as successive states of language learning rather than in terms of the dichotomy distance/proximity, as Mariko Himeta proposes below, allows us to take account of them, with the help of a scale sensitive to the effects of the role of the teacher in influencing teaching content.

Turning a story into images is another means of gaining social knowledge through personal representations. The contemporary novel contains a great variety of situations demonstrating multilingualism and multiculturalism. Using this type of text as a taking-off point, as do Carole Bailleul and Michele Tosi, makes it possible, with the help of the dual action of transposing and transferring the text into images, to visualise figures in relation to the cultural imaginary of each participant, as well as to set up a real exchange between participants of different cultures.



## CONCEPTUALISING THE RELATIONSHIP IMAGE/CONTEXT AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

The image as site of reference participating in the construction of sociocultural representations leads to critical reflection which produces active discourse, written and spoken, in the activity of language learning. Thus the gap which exists between illustrations and texts brings about a recognition of the heterogeneity of representations. When the site where this is apparent professes to be “neutral”, as in the dictionary, which Chiara Molinari discusses here, the symbolic values at issue give rise to a problematic about the role of ethnicity in representations. As far as discourse is concerned, we accept the idea of pedagogical progress, while privileging self-referential ability, and therefore consciousness of looking at one’s own culture in order to be able to refer to other cultures. The starting point will be a culturally referenced object, a film, an exhibition, an advertisement, a cartoon, the illustrations in an encyclopedia, or it could be an inquiry into the images that the learners have in their minds about another culture. To be in a position to communicate the complexity of such works is to grasp and express what is implicit in them and to interrogate the imaginary of these cultures. Accepting that the visual and the textual are so interrelated as sometimes to be almost interchangeable, involves the analysis into a discursive co-construction. What is required is that we find new ways of conceptualising this relationship instead of looking for models, “changing our attitude” as Claire Kramsch writes in relation to the need to go beyond dichotomies (2002). The ideas that we need to privilege are those of multimodality, understood not only as a multimodality of the elements of the image itself, through the variety of often hybrid materials and genres (Moine, 2005: 25), but also in the connotational values that are present in the interactions between images, text and context, or between images and film music with reference to historical and transcultural situations. The relationship between the music and images of a film is structured in terms of a multicultural framework, once the same piece of music comes to be used by a number of filmmakers. This process, as Roger Hillman emphasises here, makes us sensitive to the intercultural mobility of the piece which, in acquiring specific meanings, like a joker in a pack of cards, will thus contribute to making our representations more diverse.

### **Diversity of discursive configurations**

Besides coming to grips with the inter- and transcultural trajectories of visual representations, it is profitable to view the concept of representation from the perspective of an internal dynamics, similar to that which is recommended for the literatures produced in the French language (Gohard-Radenkovic, 2004). This means that we must examine how an advertisement, a film or a painting draws upon cultural references from the culture and language in which it was produced instead of commenting on a period by discussing its particular schools and groupings of artists. The key point here is that we must come to see the image in terms of a highly detailed

description. Insisting on the need for a careful description of the image is to recognise that a simple reproduction of it could not be a substitute for it (Gervereau, 2004). A description of this kind allows us to bring into the analysis the contexts of production and reception of the images by relating together the communication strategies of different groups belonging to specific cultural milieus, with a learner in the position of actor. A description that is conscious of the need to grasp the multimodal elements which go to constructing the meaning of images encourages reflection on the specific procedures involved in their making on the one hand and, on the other, on the process of interaction between an image and other images in terms of influences, exchanges and appropriation, as well as in terms of reception.

It is in this light that Louise Maurer explores how the representation of the national is at stake when it is exposed to symbolic conflicts present in the works of creators who manipulate the images they have selected as contestable symbols of particular national identities. The kind of description outlined above makes possible a study of the ways in which these images are subject to mutation, while not disregarding the fact that any approach directed to the visual demands an apprenticeship. To develop competence in reading images is also to gain a better understanding of how commonplaces and stereotypes are constructed and circulated by discourses in relation to visual products. In particular those which make an artist or a film or a series of advertising images the markers of national identity, since appropriation and the new forms that it generates transgress national borders. As well as that, to take on the question of the reception of a film at the national and international level falls within a problematic of identity, as the English language critique of European cinema has shown (see, for example, Ann Jackel's article (2001: 48). The reception of a film like *Les Visiteurs* is an example of this. Highly successful with a general audience in France where its reception was not even lukewarm among specialist film critics, in the *Cahiers du cinéma* for example, in England, paradoxically, it is now a film shown on the arthouse and experimental cinema circuits because it was seen by the wider audience there as not matching their expectations of what a French film should be.

The analytical framework chosen by Jackel, that of globalisation and the disruptions that it brings at the level of the means of communication and promotion, as well as trade (Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, 1994) could be just as relevant to art or advertising as it is to cinema where the phenomenon has certainly been studied (Aitkin, 2005: 79-85). Similarly, Bourdieu discusses the network of institutions that influence the making of a work of art (Bourdieu, 1992). A discourse of this kind submits the imaginary of national identities to questioning and allows us to render the invisible enduringly visible.

## **TOWARDS AN INTERCULTURAL READING OF THE IMAGE**

There are several possible analytical frames that can be used for treating multilingualism and multiculturalism. Faced with the binomial language/culture, our

interrogation proposes a re-equilibrium in favour of the image. We can foresee that in the future the emphasis may be put less on models that are indebted to other disciplines than on a discursive co-construction implicating the subject in an analysis of the effects of disciplinary discourses on the understanding of the image. One of the questions that this reflection prompts is that, instead of privileging one type of image because of its presumed relationship of proximity to the language/culture being studied, the approach can be displaced, as has happened in the last decade or so for literature, in the direction of different theoretical horizons. Thus the “inter-image”, in the same way that one speaks of “intertext” to take in the literary field in its inter- and transcultural complexity, still remains a little-explored domain. The field of the visual in cultural representations offers in its very diversity possibilities for the analysis of characteristics which are appropriate to different types of images, such as the notions of economy of meaning and of functional strategies for advertising, or of aesthetic choices in the expression of symbolic meaning in the plastic arts or in cinema. These notions are to some extent applicable to all types of images. Going beyond grids and dichotomies is a necessity in the approach to cultural representations. Careful consideration should be given to the analytical framework and to the object of inquiry to refocus attention on questions of discursive interpretations and articulating the transformations of iconic signs recognised in their specificity. The choice of historicised contexts of production, as of reception, is equally important.

The transition to a horizontal world, directly accessible, brings with it a different perception of our positions in time and space. Images, fixed or moving, real, imagined or virtual, available in the language class via increasingly sophisticated techniques, provide an inexhaustible resource, but they also carry the risk that our gaze ceases to discriminate or that we let ourselves be easily seduced. Given that, if we are to produce a reasonable discourse about the complexity of cultural representations, where would the criteria for selecting iconographic and symbolic objects lie? The consumers of images that we have now become must be educated in reading and critiquing images, in their contextualisation and in their functions, in order to understand the point of view of both the producer and the receiver. The image exists in the same way as the text by virtue of a receiver. At the same time it is implicated in the imaginary, the immaterial and even in the virtual—and has it ever been simply a reproduction? In short, “it is not only a transposition of the real, it is also real intrinsically with its properties and its circuits” as Gervereau tells us following other analysts (groupe  $\mu$ , 1992). Linguistic and intercultural teaching cannot overlook this type of cultural representation of alterity, it must take on board its defining elements, elements that are semiologically revealing, as well as their grounding in signifying practices.



# STATIST ADVERTISING AND THE MULTI-CULTURE: MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE ETHNOCULTURAL REPRESENTATION OF “A WHOLE COUNTRY”

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## ADVERTISING AND MODAL COMPLEXITY

To represent is to present X in order to signify Y, *as if* X were Y. Such a substitution can give rise to distortions, certainly, but the common conflation of “representation” with “ideological effect” sees the fundamental operation of representation (an enabling substitution) eclipsed in favour of a cultural drama (infidelity to an original). Reading a representation well demands, first and foremost, attentive, multimodal description, namely description that takes into account the complexity of material and conventional modalities that is characteristic of every sign (for example, within a single printed word are bundled several modalities: chromatic, aesthetic, lexical, semantic, typographic, generic, etc). Appreciation of the play with ideas that may lead toward ideological distortion depends upon an exhaustive analysis of the various modalities that constitute a representation. Advertising, being the art of economical representation, may well resort to stereotypes—pregiven figures with abusive tendencies. Magazine advertising, a super-economical form that is also intensely multimodal, demands a rigorous reading of both iconographic and verbal modalities that, however conventional, do not boil down to the operations of stereotype.

Reading one advertising representation of New Caledonia’s ethnic plurality shows how a variety of formal elements can translate sundry available discourses into the affirmation of a simple understanding of a complex country. Our multimodal analysis does not replicate the reductive advertising manoeuvre: to showcase one authentic document—in this case, a New Caledonian advertisement—is unavoidably to represent an entire pluriculture through one instance of its various, specific discourses,

but we warn against confusing the present exercise in exemplification with any project to capture the essential or the typical from all those discourses.

**Document: ENERCAL advertisement, *Tour de Côte*, Octobre 2002, p. 129**

To assist the analysis of this document, note that New Caledonia is a French possession in the Pacific, in the middle stages of an autonomy process begun in 1998, the result of an intense Kanak separatist campaign. Its 6 main ethnic groups are: Kanak (indigenous), French, Wallisian, Polynesian, Indonesian, and Vietnamese.

+ photo

## AN ADVERTISING REPRESENTATION OF MULTICULTURALISM: THE MULTI-CULTURE

The advertisement for ENERCAL, *la Société Néo-calédonienne d'Énergie* [the New Caledonian Energy Company], reproduced above, uses a slogan to position itself as a representation of an important business for New Caledonia: “ENERCAL, *l'énergie de tout un pays*” [ENERCAL, the energy of a whole country]. In other words, this magazine advertisement seeks to make perceptible a quality that ENERCAL asserts as its own (being an important business) but which is not directly present to the understanding of New Caledonians: printed words and images are advanced *as if* they were ENERCAL's importance. Essentially, the advertisement makes present a slogan in the absence of the fact of ENERCAL's importance. The slogan represents the vital fact (being an important business) which would otherwise be invisible, non-present. To ensure that New Caledonians are *presently* conscious of the fact that ENERCAL is an enterprise of great importance for their country, the company places a valorizing slogan before the eyes of the readers so as to *represent* this capital fact—also, alas, something of a platitude—that cannot easily maintain its presence in people's minds.

The problem with which ENERCAL is faced—the need to represent its importance to New Caledonians—can be linked to this volume's problem of “mani”-culturalism. The ENERCAL advertisement relies heavily on the notion of “*pays*” [country], which itself belongs to a New Caledonian politico-cultural discourse that, in turn, touches upon the pluri-ethnic composition of this former *Territoire d'Outre-mer* [Overseas Territory] of France. This can be guessed at via the four conjoined photographs at the centre of the advertisement: there we see represented a Kanak, in the main photo, and, in the three smaller photos, a Vietnamese woman, two Kanak children, and a European. This multiple image covers, iconographically, “a whole country”, whilst making reference to the ethnic diversity of New Caledonia, positively troped in common parlance as the “New Caledonian kaleidoscope”. In formulating a representational whole that reformulates the importance of ENERCAL, this advertisement relies upon a fragmented representation of a culture that is not one. To make out that intelligible whole, let us carefully read, in their interaction, the numerous semiotic micro-effects or modalities that shape the advertisement. We can allow ourselves a cultural diagnosis once we have carefully described the elements

before us, which represent, according to ENERCAL, a genuine summary of what the New Caledonian multi-culture actually is.

## MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS: FROM MANI-CULTURE TO “THE TERRITORY’S UNITY”

This advertisement relies heavily on juxtaposition. The five zones of the text (the banner section at the top; the iconographic ensemble; the chunk of verbal text set out like a dictionary entry; the brand line; the slogan line) are so many graphically distinct “pieces”. Eight contrasting fonts; four images, each bounded by a white frame, making a bloc set apart from the verbal texts; three colour palettes differentiating the five zones from one another: this is a text that favours the fragmentation of its compositional elements. It is, then, a radically plural text. This rough analysis of the layout should be borne in mind, because the plurality of the graphic fragmentation underpins a network of meaning that relates to the “many” of New Caledonian culture.

Two verbs in the infinitive bump into one another in the banner section of the advertisement, prompting questions: “*Electrifier Contribuer*” [Electrify Contribute]—Electrify what? Contribute to what? Approximate iconographic answers suggest themselves: Electrify machines; Contribute to people’s everyday lives. Curiously, the three little photos avoid scenes where electricity would play a role. The slogan suggests ample but vague answers, not to say exaggerated ones: Electrify *a whole country*; Contribute to *a whole country*. The “dictionary” section of the advertisement elaborates an answer for “Contribuer”: “*ENERCAL contribue à la solidarité territoriale*” [ENERCAL contributes to the Territory’s unity], where “Contribuer” means “*redistribuer des gains de productivité*” [redistribute the earnings of productivity], “*s’impliquer dans l’aménagement du territoire*” [be involved in the development of the Territory], “*favoriser les énergies renouvelables lorsque cela est compatible avec l’intérêt général*” [favour renewable energy when this is compatible with the common good], “*respecter l’environnement*” [respect the environment]. This elaboration of the meaning of “Contribuer”, leaning as it does toward infrastructural and thus governmental definitions, points up the lack of an explanation of “Electrifier”—electrification being infrastructural and governmental action, *par excellence*. Likewise the three sunny exteriors depicted, where no-one has need of electricity (no electrical appliances are to be seen; the people are smiling, happy with their lot), speak of “*Electrifier*” only by its absence. The three little photos, as we have seen, inflect the “whole” of the “country” towards a pluri-ethnicity. This pluri-ethnicity has a politico-civic connotation in a country where governance and ethnicity are tightly related. Pluri-ethnicity; the governmental background of the definitions given for “Contribuer”: a paradigm of “governance” is being elaborated in words and images. Never defined, “*Electrifier*” easily takes up some of this paradigmatic colour. Our intention to discern a representational whole is, however, frustrated: the three little images, compellingly relevant to any definition of governance in terms of the multicultural, are not “electrifiable”; nor can they be made to sit under the rubric of “Contribuer” (the



children, the old woman aren't working, aren't giving). Yet they are crucial to a hyperbolic equivalence that relaunches the relays between the different zones of the text.

Two equivalences are already clear: ENERCAL = energy; ENERCAL = electrify. The only illustration of “*Electrifier*”, the large image of the “*Exploitation centrale diesel autonome*” [Independent diesel-operated powerplant], equates with ENERCAL, too. Sitting beside and subordinated to that image are the three sunlit photos; their juxtaposition produces the equivalence: electricity = sunlight. Result: ENERCAL = Electrify = energy of a whole country = sunlight. This multi-equivalence releases ENERCAL from the physical grid of electrification, allowing it to arrive in the realm of energy-without-qualification, the energy “of a whole country”, sunlight. Not content to make of itself a sun, ENERCAL makes itself human life and human ambition, without saying as much (that would be absurd), without showing it (these aspects of the company are invisible), but representing itself thus, in words and in images. A very important business; indeed, a very important state.

## THE ETHNOCULTURAL REPRESENTATION OF A WHOLE COUNTRY

What of the ambition to create “the Territory’s unity” and the evocation of plurality through fragmentation? Depicting ethnically marked New Caledonians, in firmly bounded frames, the advertisement represents so many ethnic cultures in isolation. It is apt to speak of “cultures” because each portrait not only designates a racially typed face, an ethnically typed costume, but creates an effect of natural movement that signifies a typical way of life as it is being lived. This fragmentation into iconographic compartments does not deliver the “New Caledonian kaleidoscope”, which would *combine* the fragments in a multicultural society. On the contrary, ENERCAL represents a plurality of mutually insular ethnic cultures: a multi-culture. These images correspond to the ethnic fracture which is, for many people, New Caledonia’s most fundamental problem, a problem to which “the Territory’s unity” would be the solution. When ENERCAL asserts that it contributes to Territorial unity, it means that the company participates in the redistribution of social goods, in implicit recognition of the fact that disadvantage and under-development weigh heavily on the Kanak people, in Kanak homelands; it acknowledges that electrification is an ethnic question. But the complex photographic bloc, which makes explicit the ethnic dimensions of “the energy of a whole country”, and places electrification in the hands of a diligent Kanak, does not actually distribute electricity to the surrounding people, as we have seen.

What, then, is the nature of the Territorial unity to which ENERCAL contributes in this representation? Clearly, the main photo organizes the minor ones, the inserts. The yellow mesh section of the engine of electrification connects the first and the second photos, the second and the third photos, also. A strong graphic echo occurs between the yellow mesh and the old woman’s woven straw hat, the woven mat on which the



children are playing, and the checked shirt of the bushman. But the gridwork mesh of the crucial “Independent power plant” of the all-important engine is not merely a weave, it is a function of the modernity of infrastructural networks. By contrast, the weaving proper is enclosed, insular tradition. A graphic correspondence enables the semantic opposition. The image of the laborious, hi-tech Kanak—pitched against the stereotype of the do-nothing Melanesian, stuck in premodernity—is no adult doubling of the Kanak-ness of the children. Rather, through his work, his seriousness, his modernity, he contradicts their timeless ethnicity. Indeed, the main portrait of the worker-Kanak establishes itself against all three minor portraits of ethnic cultures, thereby prioritizing the work of a modernity indifferent to ethnicity—the work that manages the complexity of a whole modern country, the work that puts into circulation the energy of modernity—, instead of compartmentalizing the energies of a multi-culture within so many separate ethnicities. One can thus say that ENERCAL valorizes itself by representing itself as comprehending the multi-culture, without promoting either multiculturalism or pluriculturalism, because it promotes *itself*, an energetic *state* of general distribution, a *state* that is not so much in favour of the multiple as it is unfazed by it.

Do we hear in this an echo of French universalism? Perhaps. The limitless energy of the country of ENERCAL does not, in any case, admit any plurilingualism: New Caledonia may well be blessed with extraordinary linguistic riches, thanks to the 28 indigenous tongues and the diversity of exogenous languages spoken there; the ENERCAL vision of human resources allows no echo to be heard of a language other than French.



# BETWEEN DISTANCE AND PROXIMITY: STEREOTYPES IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE LEARNER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FOREIGN CULTURE.

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## THE LEARNER'S REPRESENTATION OF THE TARGET CULTURE:

In the context of the language class, teachers often feel drawn to correct students' stereotypes of both the country where the target language is spoken and of its inhabitants; that is, to correct certain excessively generalized representations derived from limiting or fixed notions to which the learners adhere. However, these stereotypes have the advantage of informing us of the learners' prior cultural knowledge. The stereotypical photographs of the target culture which illustrate the first lessons in the majority of language teaching methods (of fashion shows, perfumes, cheeses, etc., in the case of French) can also provide an invitation to learning. This reassures beginners, giving them the sense that their initial cultural knowledge is a starting point and that they are ready to go further.

As the origin of these initial representations, some learners willingly cite television, magazines, and information gleaned in school geography or history classes which reflect, approximately, the historical, geopolitical and economic ties between the target country and their own. Others point to their experience of direct contact within the framework of a trip abroad or other encounters with citizens of the culture concerned. In either case, their representations of the target culture are derived from certain elements of their own culture which should be the object of analysis rather than criticism. These are not just a base for knowledge, but also the seed of the relationship that the learners establish with the target culture. Starting from this principle, it is conceivable to define this evolution as affective, since it cannot be quantified in the

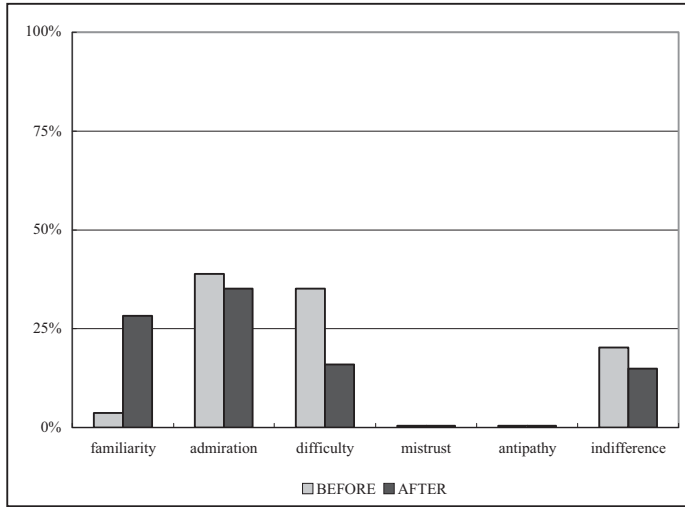
cognitive plan of objectives. It would appear that not only the presence of the teacher figure, who through his or her personal experiences and positioning between the two cultures conceptualizes a distance unknown to the students, but also the documents that he or she selects and presents, exert a stronger influence than the media on this affective sphere.

Furthermore, just as we often evoke the affinity/incompatibility binary in discussing the acquisition of cultural expertise in learning to communicate in the target language, we often tend to define the relationship which learners establish with the target culture in dichotomous terms of farness and proximity. However, while geographical or cultural proximity does not always entail a positive attitude, favorable dispositions are sometimes maintained thanks to, or sometimes despite, a geographic or cultural remoteness. Thus, we here propose a scale composed minimally of four types of distance, resting on these notions of farness and proximity on one hand, and positive or negative emotion on the other.

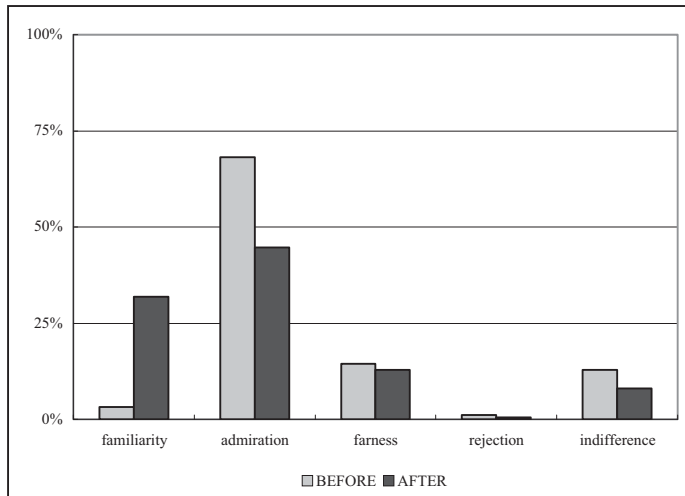
#### **Document: Scales of Distance and Proximity**

Our survey, conducted in Japan among 188 Japanese beginner students of French as a second language, aims to trace the evolution of the distance perceived by these young people as regards the target culture. The respondents were invited to choose for themselves between the terms *familiarity*, *admiration*, *farness*, *rejection* and *indifference* so as to define the distance toward France that they felt, first, before starting to learn and then one year later. As far as perception of the French people was concerned, the notion of farness was likewise divided: *difficulty of approach* and *mistrust*. Although unable to cite any new term in response to the questions on evocation, more than half the students had signaled an evolution of their feelings vis-à-vis both France and the French.

According to their responses, the students' initial perception of France was closer to admiration than familiarity; but after a year of learning, there had been an increase in familiarity. Regarding the French people, the accumulated score for difficulty of approach and indifference was superior to that for admiration; but these various items had later declined, shifting towards familiarity.



Graph 1: Distance perceived by Japanese students toward France



Graph 2: Distance perceived by Japanese students toward the French people

The students’ own statements revealed that it is television which at first had the strongest influence on their representations. However, a year later, they acknowledged that the factors connected to their language classes had exerted a notable influence. Indeed, while in reference to France the country, television still slightly outweighs the accumulated effects of items such as the “teacher’s narratives” and “video documents

watched during the lesson”, when it comes to the French people, television is far less influential than the sum of the two latter factors.

*Factors in rapprochement:*

Representations	narratives by teachers	vidéos	textbook	television	cinema	press	family	travel
of France	15%	12%	7%	30%	19%	5%	6%	6%
of the French people	19%	13%	6%	22%	9%	4%	9%	5%

*Table: Most important influences on representations after a year of learning French (% of 188 surveyed)*

One year earlier, at the beginning of the learning cycle, we conducted a survey among these same students on their initial representations of the target culture. The results suggested a nuanced position in their relationship with that culture: the young Japanese questioned did not, in effect, express any negative feeling vis-à-vis the target country, but neither did they display any urge to approach it, seemingly content with admiring it from afar. Indeed, their image of the French remained very vague. Here are some of the answers which enabled us to draw up this report: among the reasons for these students’ choice of French, the wish for contact with their interlocutors is less important than their aesthetic considerations of the language; it counts even less than the desire for contact with the country. The clichés of the castle of Chambord, of a café on the Champs Elysées or of the buildings on Boulevard Hausmann correspond more to the students’ portrait of France than images of a political demonstration, of the TGV, of a nuclear power plant or of Tahiti. The cultural areas typically cited as “Made in France” are dissociated. On one hand we find fashion and cuisine, on the other, French celebrities (a few names stand out in soccer and cinema, followed by a great range of figures from history and literature). The adjectives that Japanese students associate with the French (proud, elegant, bon vivant) stand in contrast to those linked to their co-nationals (shy, hard working).

The second survey, conducted a year later, whose results are presented in the Graphs 1 and 2 above, had as its goal to establish whether our analysis of their previous representations was pertinent and if these had evolved after a year of learning. We wanted to capture first the nuance between familiarity (*Shinkin-kan* in Japanese, to cast a positive glance from up close; the subject is willing to approach the object) and admiration (*Akogare*, to cast a positive glance but from afar; the subject is not yet ready to approach), and then that between the difficulty of approaching (*Chikayorigatasa*, a glance neither positive nor negative, but cast from afar; the subject cannot allow himself to approach the object) and other forms of negative distancing. The scale, which was set up taking into account the slight differences in the students’ initial representations, was defined without much recognition of the terms used by the students to express their feelings toward the target culture.

One relevant study (Kawatake et al., 2000:76) notes that the presentation of France in Japanese television coverage, is invariably limited within the boundaries of fashion, cooking, wines and Parisian monuments, and demonstrates a lack of renewal. This seems to indicate that there exists neither tension nor a close connection between the two countries. That is why the admiration felt by young Japanese for France, under the influence of television, is akin to a feeling for a fictive locus.

To counter this fictive element, the testimony of someone who shares the classroom-space with the students has the potential to be effective. A closer examination of the development of distances and of the importance attributed to each factor shows that narratives in the first person, explicitly subjective, in which the instructor feels free to give emphasis to whatever he or she pleases, have the effect of giving students the sense of being authorized to explore their individual interests. This, in consequence, permits them to develop a feeling a familiarity. Such rapprochement is not observable in *a priori* descriptions of objectives, although it is intrinsically connected to the relationship between the teacher and the target culture.

As far as video documents are concerned, the video medium, in particular when it describes communicative situations in French daily life, acts as an incentive on students, who are in a sense invited to participate. It helps them become aware of the realities of the target country, in a non-fictive form, even if the cultural standardization and the abstract representation of socio-cultural and linguistic diversity are sometimes called into question from a didactic point of view. The news channel France 2, accessible by satellite in Japan, does not succeed in replacing the 'fictive' France. Its descriptions of reality hold an informative value. For Japanese students this is a non-daily reality, in which they will probably have no opportunity to take part, and so does not prompt them to approach it. Although easy access to international current events, made possible by satellite, cable and the internet, seems to open the door to the "global village", this does not really facilitate our getting closer to the edges of the world map that each one of us has personally drawn. In the case of video documents used as supplementary material, especially when viewed without soundtrack and accompanied by the teacher's comments, the effect obtained ultimately depends, just as in the narratives mentioned above, on the way in which the teacher tackles the subject and manages his or her own representations.





# REFERENTIAL AND SYMBOLIC IMAGES: CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNOCULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS IN THE DICTIONARY

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## DYNAMICS OF LANGUAGE, LEXICOGRAPHY AND ETHNOCULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

Contacts between French and other languages or language varieties within the French-speaking world are characterised, at lexical level, by remarkable creativity: neologisms and borrowings from contact languages are very frequent occurrences. Long stigmatised as variations of mainstream French, Francophonisms have in recent years been revisited in a more positive light. Dictionaries reflect this emergence of greater openness towards Francophony, on two levels: on the one hand, there is a proliferation of glossaries and dictionaries entirely dedicated to the various Francophone lexicons; on the other hand, the Francophone lexis is integrated into dictionaries compiled in France (Poirier, 2006). The gradual acceptance of Francophonisms is seen as modifying linguistic representations of French by French speakers, both within and outside metropolitan France, so extensively does metropolitan French come into contact with a host of linguistic varieties within the Francophone world. Based on linguistic practices, representations in turn affect the attitudes and practices of speakers and play a considerable part in determining language dynamics (Calvet, 1999). Dictionaries offer a fertile terrain for studying linguistic representations since their normative status means that dictionary entries affect, and can modify, speakers' representations of their linguistic practices. In addition, since lexis is also a means of access to the cultural dimension, dictionaries play a role in conveying – indeed in building – ethnocultural representations. Sometimes, the issue of relations between Francophonisms in reference works and the linguistic and ethnocultural representations they engender becomes complicated by

the images which illustrate dictionary entries and enrich the paratext of the dictionary. The image itself is a source of representations: it “is distinct from the real world and [...] offers a chosen and necessarily biased representation of it” (Joly, 2005: 39 – my translation). Within the Francophone perspective developed below, this paper will examine whether – and how – representations stemming from the convergence of two different semiotic universes, the iconographic and the linguistic, contribute to setting up or modifying linguistic and ethnocultural representations of learners and thus favouring or hindering dialogue between Francophone cultures in contact.

## FRANCOPHONISMS: EXAMPLES OF ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARY ENTRIES

This brief discussion is based on some entries from the *Petit Larousse 2006* dictionary (*PL 2006*) and the *Base de données lexicographiques Panfrancophone* (*BDLP*). The importance of illustrations in Larousse dictionaries is well known. In the 2006 edition, some of the entries dedicated to Francophony are in the section entitled *Regards sur la Francophonie*; a number of them are accompanied by drawings by professional artists. We will focus here on the entries *savane* (Overseas section) and *arbre* (African section). With regard to the *BDLP*, the electronic format allows continuous updates and plentiful use of illustrations. In this case, the analysis will focus on the entries *Medina* and *indien*<sup>6</sup>.



**Savane** n.f. (esp. *savana*). [...] Antilles. Place principale d'une ville  
**Arbre** (*PL 2006*)

<sup>6</sup> For the *BDLP*, only a part of the information under the entries concerned will be examined.



### **Médina (BDLP)**

#### **Définition:**

Anciennement, partie musulmane d'une ville opposée à la ville européenne et au Mellah. Actuellement, vieille ville opposée à la ville nouvelle ou ville moderne.

#### **Renvois onomasiologiques:**

*bordj; fondouk; igbermas; kasba; kïssaria; ksour; méchouar; médina; mellab; souïka; souk; ville nouvelle;*

#### **Citations:**

- 1) De majestueux remparts, fidèles gardiens des secrets de l'histoire, protègent avec autant de vigilance que de tendresse une médina séculaire où des mystères fascinants donnent un avant-gout de la vie. (1988, G. M. Chniber, *Les murmures de la palmeraie*, p. 11. [littérature])
- 2) Le surpeuplement dans les appartements, les bidonvilles ou médinas participent de son mal être. 2000, *La Gazette du Maroc*, 9 février. [presse, journaux, périodiques]



### **Indien (BDLP)**

#### **Définition:**

Autochtone d'Amérique qui n'est ni un **Inuit** ni un Métis de l'Ouest canadien.

#### **Renvois onomasiologiques:**

*abénaquis, ise ; abitibien, ienne ; agnier ; agnieronnon ; algique ; algonquien, ienne ; algonquin, ine ; amérindien, ienne ; attikamègue ; attikamek ; bande 2 ; cri, crie ; Cristinaux ; esquimau, ande ; buron, onne ; buron-Wendat ; Ignierbonon ; innu, ue ; inuit ; iroquoien, ienne ; iroquois, oise ; iroquoisien, ienne ; malécite ; micmac, aque ; mohawk ; montagnais, aise ; montagnais-naskapi ; Montagnard ; naskapi, ie ; non-*

*Indien ; Poissons blancs ; sauvage ; Sauvage rouge ; sauvageon, onne ; sauvagesse ; souriquois, oise ; tête-de-Boule ;*

**Réalité propre:**

Emploi qui réfère à une réalité propre au pays ou à la région de la variété de français, ou qui en provient.

**Syntagmes et locutions:**

*Indien (Loi sur les ~)* Loi qui régit les **Indiens** du Canada.

*Indien (registre des ~)* Registre dans lequel sont consignés les noms des personnes possédant le statut d'Indien en vertu de la **Loi sur les Indiens**.

*Indien (l'été ~):* Nom donné à une crise **amérindienne** survenue au Québec en 1990, au cours de laquelle des **Mohawks** ont érigé des barricades pour contrer les projets d'agrandissement du terrain de golf de la municipalité d'Oka sur des terres qu'ils considéraient comme les leurs

## REFERENTIAL IMAGES AND SYMBOLIC IMAGES

The images chosen fall into different categories, being symbolic in the *PL 2006* and referential in the *BDLP*. A didactic approach based on otherness, on the knowledge of others through the medium of language, must take both types of image into account. Far from being considered totally distinct entities, they should complement each other so that the learner can achieve true multilingual and multicultural competence.

Apparently simple, the symbolic images of the *PL 2006* are appropriate for the entries concerned, restricted as they are to an extremely basic definition. The illustrations replace linguistic examples, allowing initial access to the word through the visual and cultural dimensions, while linguistic information is secondary. Though the world they portray is remote, the illustrations capture the learner's attention and are a stimulus to acquire greater knowledge of the entities concerned, ultimately leading to greater cultural proximity. However, the way the word *savane* is handled is not without its dangers: the illustration accompanying this entry shows only one of the term's meanings. By consulting the dictionary, the learner will see that the term *savane* is used elsewhere in Francophony (Quebec) in the sense of "low-lying, humid, often marshy terrain, unsuited to cultivation" (*PL 2006*, 963 – my translation). The image thus conveys a partial vision and can engender ethnocultural representations which fail to reflect the complexity of the Francophone dimension. In the same way, the picture chosen to illustrate the noun phrase *arbre à palabre* remains very abstract and the definition provided in the caption does not fill the resulting gap. Learners can thus understand the illustration only if they are already familiar with the ethnocultural significance of *palabre*, of the kind of discussion it refers to, and more generally of the oral dimension in Africa. Indeed, the illustration entails the risk of limiting the meaning of the expression to that of "long and idle discussion or conversation" (*PL 2006: palabre* – my translation) and restricting itself to a non-productive abstraction, thus slipping towards the kind of stereotype which hinders contact with cultural otherness.

The symbolic image stimulates the learner to form hypotheses on the foreign culture s/he is studying, but these will ultimately have to be tried and tested against actual reality. The learner will in this way develop ethnocultural representations which will provide a sound basis for advanced competence in intercultural communication.

The referential images in the *BDLP* feature alongside complex, detailed lexicographic entries. The definition is complemented by quotations, commentaries, and references to mainstream French as well as to Francophony in general. In the entry for *medina* the definition refers to the layout of the city, made up of Islamic, European and Jewish towns abutting on one another, the focus in modern usage being more simply on the distinction between the old and the modern part of the city. While the quotations in this entry help contextualise the word by foregrounding its cultural significance, they also reflect how the *medina* is seen with a different connotation from the past: thus, most of the quotations describe the medina in positive terms and in a way consistent with the illustration, but the final example – from the *Gazette du Maroc* – introduces a negative assessment. The mysterious atmosphere of the *medina* is here replaced by negative connotations and, in particular, by the problems of overpopulation. Finally, it should be noted that many photographs are included in the “see also” entries listed as links under the definition of *medina*, which the learner can thus envisage within a broader ethnocultural representation. However, all the illustrations hide the negative connotations of *medina* in favour of a positive vision through which the culture and ethos it embodies can be presented to advantage.

The entry for *indien* conveys linguistic and ethnocultural representations related to Quebec, highlighting Canada’s varied ethnic, cultural and linguistic make-up. In a didactic perspective, the illustration will not be an isolated step in overall progression towards acquisition of multicultural competence. The illustration accompanying the entry *indien* once again conveys stereotypes and offers a partial representation of reality. The definition itself, reflecting as it does the cohabitation of several ethnic groups within Canada, will thus be essential. Accordingly, referential images providing a direct link to the referent will here again entail the risk of leading to frozen ethnocultural representations. By the same token, the set expressions and noun phrases included under this entry give some insight into the history of the native Indian communities in Canada and thus promote the “decentring” which is the basis for true contact with other cultures.

Lexicographic illustrations – both symbolic and referential images – will thus be the starting point in a didactic approach which aims to help the learner acquire multicultural competence. The illustration in the dictionary or glossary will provide the learner with a source to raise questions; s/he will be encouraged to enter a different culture, albeit on the understanding that s/he will have to grasp it in its full complexity in order to avoid stopping short at collective stereotypes. The information in the other sections of the entries will ensure that the learner negotiates this stumbling block. In the same way, illustrations in dictionaries and glossaries should ideally be complemented with other resources (such as encyclopedic dictionaries or other media supports), to guarantee that the subject matter is not trivialised by reducing it to stereotyped representations and that the content made available to users is enriched and updated. Throughout this process, learners will be stimulated to establish connections between the different worlds they are exposed to, which will in turn help them construct linguistic and ethnocultural representations in a dynamic, multiple perspective and thus develop multilingual and multicultural competence in the truest sense.



# FROM ONE CODE TO ANOTHER: TRANSPOSING A LITERARY TEXT INTO A CARTOON

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## **TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE MULTICULTURALISM OF THE CLASS AS A MOTIVATING FACTOR IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

The cultural world of today's adolescents is oriented to mass culture rather than to literary culture and the cartoon has a legitimate place in this referential landscape. To suggest transposing a literary text into a cartoon means that rather than eliminating literary culture we may be able to safeguard it, while at the same time giving it a cultural orientation closer to that of adolescents. Adolescents will therefore be able to pass from a text that is almost "foreign" to them to one that is more familiar. Moreover, if we can get close to the cultural world of learners we can encourage their motivation, an essential factor in learning a foreign language and culture. As well as that, the stronger the motivation, the more the learner may be inclined to adopt positive attitudes towards "the different". Thus, by centring language learning around the learners, by keeping in mind that the cartoon is a means of expression which they find absorbing and which goes beyond the borders of language and culture, and by proposing teamwork in the form of games, we can develop their active participation and involvement.

The activity of transposition takes the form of a creative game to which each participant brings his contribution by virtue of their abilities and their prior linguistic and/or artistic knowledge. We now know how much adolescents identify with the group, and what the concept of game involves in any form of learning. Thus, the stronger the personal involvement and the participation in the group, the more the learner chooses to engage affectively and cognitively in the performance of the activity. In selecting a literary text which shows a situation that is multilingual and



multicultural and involves the learning of a foreign language, the learners are placed in a situation similar to their own and their possible identification with the situation is activated. Identification, as the standard bearer of social psychology, plays an active role in learning processes. An in-depth understanding of the text and the elaboration of its content allows learners a greater understanding and acceptance of their own lived experience.

By using the activity of transposition in this way the objective is to raise the consciousness of the learners as to the multilingualism and multiculturalism present in their scholastic and social environment. These bring to the students a mutual enrichment and language learning is a particular asset in deepening knowledge and understanding of the other, of the different. In focusing attention on the range of activities which expressly promote communication, interaction and integration between the learners of different cultures, the school extends a welcome to migrant children and is able to foster their inclusion and, for their part, encourage the notion of 'interculture' among the children of the host culture. The transposition of one code into another, here a literary text into a cartoon, demands the interdisciplinary participation of the teachers of the host language, of the foreign language and of the history of art alike.

The situation in Italian schools reveals increasing numbers of children of foreign backgrounds. This transformation, unlike what has happened in the other European countries, is very recent, and its rapid development requires that Italian schools must now take into consideration the concepts of multiculturalism and multilingualism.

### ***Kamo, l'agence de Babel (Kamo, the Babel Bureau)***

The choice of text for this activity centres on a work by Daniel Pennac, *Kamo, l'agence de Babel* (2002). Kamo is a French boy with little aptitude for English. His mother, who is multilingual, will not accept her son's failure and sets him a challenge: to learn English in three months. She will employ any strategy she can, without her son's knowledge, to get him to find the motivation he needs to meet the challenge. Pretending to be an English pen pal, in her letters she makes up a family situation in which a key element is the letter writer's emotional relationship with her father, and which is identical to that of her son's relationship with his father. In this way, the emotional involvement unlocks the child's desire to get to know his correspondent and to engage with her more and more. The motivation to discover the other, going beyond any prejudices and stereotypes, is the key in this text and the trigger to learning English. The desire to interact becomes such that even the presence of a mediator/translator is no longer enough, knowledge of the language becomes necessary and urgent.



## FROM THE TRANSPOSITION OF THE LITERARY TEXT INTO A CARTOON TO THE TRANSFER OF THE EXPERIENTIAL WORLD OF THE CLASS

The cartoon is a specific literary genre, a means of communication which brings image and language into close association, and which therefore combines textual narration and iconographic narration. The learners will thus construct a multicode and multidimensional world using this language. In relation to the text, the image is more direct, less ambiguous, and therefore more easily understood. The cartoon fuses words and drawn images, the interpretation of the words thus being simplified by the presence of the drawing which “tells” them.

The didactic purpose of transposition put forward here is therefore to employ *Kamo, l'urgence de Babel* as the starting point of the pedagogical activity in class. It lends itself to the activity of transposition into images/text and it also allows a transfer in the direction of the real life situation of the class. If, as Pennac's text implicitly shows, multilingualism and multiculturalism are not an obstacle to learning foreign languages, the teacher can transfer this same approach into the classroom and play on the identification factor.

With a deeper understanding of the initial text the learners will take on, in a language other than their native language, utterances that they will bring to life by means of drawing, in an active process of rewriting in three phases. Starting from a literary text, they will conceive a new narrative as a basis (with plot, character, and geographical and temporal setting) and then define the script. In taking up the script, the final phase of writing consists of creating a storyboard, that is a sketched layout, a grid of drawings representing the successive images with dialogues and description of the action, which, at this level, brings into play the multiculturalism present in the class. The cartoon that results turns out to be an autonomous object in relation to the original text, and at the same time one that preserves its thread, the narrative fabric as a whole, and reflects the multicultural characteristics of the class.

The final result will not be a true copy of the original model but a rereading, an interpretation, and even sometimes a new product that promotes individual and collective creation by incorporating all the cultures and languages present in the classroom context. Through raising consciousness of stereotypes, the activity allows the teacher to get beyond mere tolerance by educating students in the equality between the languages and cultures that come into contact in the class. Teachers/mediators must foster the integration of different knowledges and experiences into children's lives. Indeed, the success of this activity depends in large measure on the collaboration between the teachers of the different disciplines involved and the students. This collective activity is motivating for learners who come into contact, interact, and complement one another, each one bringing their knowledge, their abilities and their culture, to produce an original work in which each of them is reflected and can recognise themselves.



# MUSIC AS CULTURAL MARKER IN FILM: BEYOND THE FRAME OF NATIONAL IMAGES

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## **FILM AND MUSIC:**

Like images, film music has been present from the beginning of film history. Ahead of different language versions, film in the silent era was inherently cross-cultural (witness the international success of Chaplin's silents). If images in general have challenged the dominant expressive power of writing, then film images – unlike writing – are usually accompanied by a soundscape that frequently includes music. In the classroom, a generation whose sonic ambience features walkman headphones, mobile phone signals and i-pod downloads will be receptive to the topic of film music. Film music is a convention that is usually unrealistic, in the sense that its source is not onscreen, and yet it significantly affects audience response. The music in turn looks/sounds different if sung, i.e. if language and melody are interacting. And the register of the music chosen, whether rap or high opera, is usually a narrative commentary and a source of social and cultural representation in its own right.

Because even good students are often only subliminally aware of the presence of film music, the first pedagogic task is to establish that presence and to illustrate its potential richness. New technologies make it easier to demonstrate that there is no preordained relationship between image and sound, simply the one established by a director's matching of filmstock and soundtrack. But nor is there always a preordained relationship between the one melody and meaning: the melody of 'God Save the King/Queen', the only possible accompanying text to British and British colonial ears for centuries, had different resonance for Prussia at its historic height, as a setting of its own equivalent of a national anthem, 'Heil dir im Siegerkranz'.

The editors' Introduction has signalled the danger of critical distance being deactivated when image representations/representative images are taken to be archetypal for the society under scrutiny. Via more Brechtian aesthetics of distance rather than immersion (Adorno/Eisler, 1994), European cinema movements often created different force fields to music as mood within Hollywood. Music worked not to complement images, but as counterpoint, "as Humphrey Jennings demonstrated in *Listen to Britain* (1942) when he

juxtaposed Dame Myra Hess playing Mozart at a wartime London concert with the effects of Hitler’s bombing” (Macdougall, 1998, 235).

But there is a third alternative, potentially the richest, which neither overlaps with images, nor is at odds with them. Its effect is different to that of music commissioned as an original score for a film, in that it exists in its own right before the film, and brings a range of associations to the film. It draws on the overtones acquired by music in particular cultural contexts – this is music used as a cultural marker. National anthems are a typical example (though with the complication mentioned above of Prussia vis-à-vis England). This interaction between image and sound, once contained within clearer national limits, has become more complex at a global level, especially within a new Europe with a different notion of boundaries. *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (Akin, 2005) creates a multicultural soundscape of Istanbul via its musics.

Nazi propaganda left indelible imprints on some music chosen for its dramatic bombast rather than for pre-existing connotations as a cultural marker, as when *Les Préludes* interrupted regular programs with announcements from the Eastern front. The film *It Happened Here* (Brownlow/Mollo, 1964), imagining a counterfactual history of Britain occupied by Nazi Germany, brilliantly supports its mockumentary persuasiveness by this acoustic signifier. Such an ideological overlay in turn proved a rich resource for historical allusion in the New German Cinema. Music under a totalitarian regime is an extreme example of how cultural identities are at stake in media representations (*Slavonica*, XIII/1, 2007). They stake out the territory for examining the cultural mediation of classical music that occurs, often in veiled form, in film.

#### **Filmography and musical examples:**

Copyright strictures on the reproduction of images and sounds on the Web are a further phenomenon of global flux. Film stills are of course inadequate for the area of film music, as they illustrate a different channel of sensory information. Examples from musical scores, even in simplified form, frustrate those readers unable to read them. Some authors are starting to accompany books with a CD, while an enterprising path has been forged by *Echo: a music-centered journal*, accessible at [www.echo.ucla.edu](http://www.echo.ucla.edu). Its editorial philosophy reads partly: “the use of sound and film clips in our journal enables writers to discuss nuances of performance without relying solely on music notation”.

##### a) Filmography:

Michael Curtiz, *Casablanca* (1942)

Victor Fleming, *Gone with the Wind* (1939)

Jean-Pierre Jeunet, *Le fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain* (2001)

Oliver Stone, *Platoon* (1986)

Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, *La notte di San Lorenzo* (1982)

##### b) Musical examples:

Samuel Barber, *Adagio for Strings* (1938)

Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony no. 9* (1824)

'Deutschlandlied' – national anthem of Germany since 1922/semi-national anthem of W.Germany 1949-1990; Haydn composed 2 settings of the melody in 1797.

*Die Wacht am Rhein* – patriotic German anthem, especially associated with defence or expansion of the French-German border.

Dixie – unofficial anthem of the confederate states during the Civil War in the U.S.

Franz Liszt, *Les Préludes* (1848)

W. A. Mozart, *Piano Concerto no. 21*, KV467 (1785)

Robert Schumann, 'Ich grolle nicht' (*Dichterliebe*, op. 39, 1840)

Giuseppe Verdi, *Requiem* (1874)

## FILM MUSIC AS CULTURAL MARKER:

While there have always been international co-productions, well ahead of Brussels funding, film studies managed till recently to operate along largely national lines, reflected in the classroom with courses on parallel national cinemas. Within a narrative bearing appropriate ideological weight, music could profile the national, as a marker of national identity. A celebrated scene from *Casablanca* involves musical stereotypes that are heavily weighted. Rick's café witnesses a group of German soldiers intoning *Die Wacht am Rhein*, until Viktor Laszlo, the ideological core of the film, redirects the music via a bridge passage to *La Marseillaise*. This is sung lustily by the non-German patrons, including those whose hearts have fluctuated under the Occupation but are realigned by this definitive musical confession of allegiance. Film music has long enabled a national imprint or shorthand, as in the 'Deutschlandlied' in minor key accompanying the Germans' disgruntled exit from Rick's café, or the snatches of Dixie in the overture to *Gone with the Wind*. But just as the circulation of images leads to cross-cultural issues, music, even seemingly the most culturally specific music, can function as the joker in the pack. In pedagogic situations this creates not postmodern freeplay, but intriguing challenges to cultural assumptions.

A rare example of locally composed classical music in a US film is Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings. Indelibly associated in an American film context with the post-Vietnam *Platoon*, it functions there as a lament for dehumanization on both sides of the struggle. It brings associations to the film, as a kind of unofficial funeral march in State ceremonies (e.g. national mourning for John F. Kennedy). The same work appears in key scenes of *Les roseaux sauvages* (Téchiné, 1994) and while it is tempting to draw parallels to the Algerian campaign as a kind of French Vietnam, the director had supposedly not seen *Platoon* (Hillman, 2005, 172). Moreover, *Amélie's* sole use of classical music sees the same Barber work accompanying the title figure's vision of her own funeral, possibly an ironic commentary on its function in the U.S.A. In a different context, advertisements for the World Cup soccer championship of 2000 in France featured this music. Such unsettling of national identities is of a different order to crossover music (e.g. Clara's no longer artsong rendition of Schumann's 'Ich grolle nicht' as 'No grudge' in Reitz' *Heimat 3* (2004), or the virtually independent existence gained by the second movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto no. 21, KV467, in the

wake of *Elvira Madigan* (Widerberg, 1967). World music mirrors the dilemma of clinging to any concept of musical nationalism, while the concept of nationalism undergoes historical flux). This whole area is ideal for classroom approaches to fluctuating political identities via cultural markers. It highlights how musical, and not just visual representations, can cross borders of taste, nationhood, or symbolic function. Just as symbols in general evoke a link to a referent that is not directly present, the absence of a song's lyrics can have a negative after-image effect on purely instrumental music. Orchestral entries with the 'Ode to Joy' melody from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, when appearing in fragmentary form in German films, also evoke Schiller's poem which Beethoven set to music.

Such markers came under considerable scrutiny in postwar films from Italy and (West) Germany, whose cultural riches had often been propagandized during World War II, and were mobilized by directors of the 60s and 70s. Directors of the New German Cinema frequently employed soundtracks that included the 'Ode to Joy' section of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and/or the 'Deutschlandlied'. Thus they created three historical layers, alluding to the work's origin, its subsequent reception (especially under the Nazis) and the film director's historical present. Such an archaeology of reception could trace the paean to humanism with Beethoven/Schiller through Furtwängler's command birthday performances of the Ninth Symphony for Hitler, to an opening out towards world music. Subsequently the 'Ode to Joy' became the anthem of the EU, and the score of the symphony was the first added to the UNESCO Memory of the World program. Still richer in ambiguity was the 'Deutschlandlied', the German national anthem, known in its martial, jackbooted version to occupied Europe, and yet originating as a serenely beautiful melody with Haydn. The paradox of German history is perfectly captured in Alexander Kluge's *Die Patriotin* (1979) in a scene where the title-figure, a history teacher, looks out at the Berlin Reichstag, while the backing sound is this Janus-faced melody in the Haydn 'Emperor' Quartet version. Italian Cinema trawled Verdi for comparable cultural resonances. Verdi, yet again an anti-Wagner, was an ideal political figure, independently of the freedom connotations so much of his music had borne under Austrian occupation. He was then claimed for a view of history whereby the Resistance contribution to Italian history constituted a second Risorgimento (Crisp/Hillman, 2002), though Bertolucci ironized this reception of Verdi (especially in *Prima della rivoluzione* (1964)). Just as Beethoven's Ninth disappeared from post-unification German films, Verdi in this guise was comprehensively transfigured and farewelled in the *La notte di San Lorenzo*. Germans and Americans remain visual and acoustic mirages in this film, and Verdi's Requiem unites the dead of a Civil War on Italian soil, far from the 'ideal' version of Italian history at that point of the War.

While music as cultural marker is not confined to films, its interaction with visuals lends itself to classroom scrutiny as a marker of issues going far beyond the aesthetic. Cultural markers of necessity reflect historical flux. The banefully predetermined associations of Wagner's music were largely avoided by directors of the New German Cinema, with the notable exception of Syberberg and Herzog. Daniel Barenboim, whose conducting of Wagner in Israel in July 2001 caused such a furore, claims the

moment seemed ripe once he heard Wagner as a mobile phone 'theme' in Israel. And so we return to classroom practice and reality, the floating signifiers (Jameson) of the Western classical canon in the digital revolution, and the forked tongue of music, particularly film music, as a site of social and cultural representations.





# VISUAL IDENTITIES, THE LOCAL AND THE TRANSNATIONAL IN THE GENESIS OF A PAINTING

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I wish to thank Stephanie Anderson for her helpful comments and advice on my translation of the French version of this text.

## **MULTIMODAL INTERPLAY AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS.**

To focus on a painting in a language class is to seek to reintroduce the cultural and multilingual dimensions of the work that are often obliterated in the type of discourses common in such a setting. Yet these dimensions are to be found in the materiality of the work itself, in the multi-layered interplay between the words, images or text it contains or refers to, as much as in the critical discourses which become attached to it over time. The approach taken here challenges the reductive effects of employing fixed categories such as the particular cultural movements and groups active in a given epoch. The objective is to highlight the discursive complexities pertaining to notions of culture and identity which the image stands for, in order to move towards a critical response able to situate the painting in the field of social representations. This kind of critically informed response to images must take account of their significance to the cultural and transnational communities in which they circulate, to the way attitudes and mentalities are informed by the visual arts. It is also important to recognise the role played by images in cultural representations, in enabling the development of critical awareness and influencing taste.

This perspective is based on transdisciplinary research in visual identities which explore images as part of material culture « objets de sens » in relation to context and history. It stems from semiology (Floch), philosophy (Serres) and art history (Marin, Arasse, Biro). I am concerned in particular with what Floch calls, with reference to Claude Levi-Strauss, « the concept of a visual identity through « bricolage » of signs and symbols » (Floch, 1995).

The work of the German painter and sculptor Anselm Kiefer provides a template for the study of the interconnected layers of inter and transcultural meaning which it

generates. Kiefer often selects images for their overdetermined significance in a specific historical context. When he chooses to appropriate them, they already come in the form clichés. The repositioning of such images within the work is part of the negotiation of the work's meaning. In the 1980s, he explores in great depth the theme of the portrait, amongst other symbols of national identity. Working with a series of images taken from different cultures, places and times, but chosen for their relevance to questions of identity, he interrogates accepted understandings of national identity and, in particular, he challenges the idea that the images and texts that construct it can be viewed from a stable, monolingual standpoint. In conjunction with the images, the writing reproduced in the original language in the paintings is taken from well-known poems or German, French and English texts. In so doing the artist allows the diverse cultural and historical dimensions of these representations to come into play.

In diverting images from their original context and acquired meaning, Kiefer addresses the emotional attachments that the viewers have to these images of national identity. Such a gesture, paradoxically, reveals their mobile aesthetic qualities when placed in a new nexus of relationships in constant need of reinterpretation.

This process of bringing the work of different artists as well as various images together cannot rest simply on the analysis of forms and styles. It creates the possibility of new relationships dependent on a multiplicity of different kinds of knowledge, whether of a philosophical, historical or multicultural nature, notwithstanding ethical considerations. The last point is crucial, especially because common academic practice in language studies often consists in oversimplifying as well as codifying images without taking into account their materiality as objects, or the context of their production and reception. The diversity of questions raised by the work, the complexity of subjects, and the manner in which the connections are established show that affinities in artistic endeavors have no concern for national borders and historical gaps. It becomes evident in Kiefer's case that the work bears the inscription of various processes of appropriation, translation, and transformation where the context of production of the work in its local and international dimensions can be extrapolated.

Such a term applies to a visual language informed by several cultures. This language is the product of palimpsests and accretion, akin to an accumulation of diverse material and situated gestures dependent on a deep knowledge of one's culture as well as knowledge of the work of one's peers, something which is held to be essential for an artist attuned to the problems of his time.

## **MULTICULTURAL IDENTITIES: 3 WORKS OF ART AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS**

The painting reproduced here is Anselm Kiefer's *Wege der Weltweisheit: die Hermanns-Schlacht* (1978-1980). The work consists of woodcut panels with additions in acrylic and shellac, as well as words, on paper (3448 x5283 mm). It is held by the Art Institute

of Chicago. Kiefer (1945-), chosen with Baselitz (1938-) to represent Germany at the 1980 Venice Biennale, exhibited this work as part of a series in the German pavilion.



Please precise caption to insert here

It contains references to two installations: Andy Warhol's *13 most wanted men* (New York State Pavillon, New York's World's fair, 1964), 25 panels 120 x 120 cm in silkscreen ink on masonite, as well as Gerhard Richter's *Atlas: 48 portraits* (1972), an installation of portraits of the same size (70x55cm) hung next to one another in the central pavilion reserved for Germany at the 1972 Venice Biennale.

## MULTICULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE NATIONAL.

Portraiture is central to these works. If, in Western culture, the function of the portrait from the 16th century onwards has been to assert the individuality, rank and reputation of a model in the eyes of a community, the three works quoted above all question this notion of identity by shifting the conventions attached to the portrait as a function of social representation. In the three cases, the works are exhibited in public places and result from a commission. In effect, the three will come to be seen as symbolic of their time. In addition, Kiefer's woodcut derives its meaning largely

from the dialogue with the works of Richter and Warhol involving exchanges and appropriation between artists from at least three different cultures.

## A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THREE WORKS

Starting with a thorough description of *Wege der Weltweisheit: die Hermanns-Schlacht*, which seems, at least to this author, a prerequisite to any analysis of images, much of the discussion in the following paragraphs will be devoted to a study of the multimodal and intracultural characteristics of the work as they relate to questions of national identity.

I shall then consider the transcultural dimension of the symbols embedded in the work.

*Wege der Weltweisheit* consists of portraits copied from books, engraved in wood and glued to paper. The portraits display famous men of different times. Among them can be recognized military dignitaries, while Nazi ideologues are placed next to philosophers or famous German writers, and all assembled without any chronological order. The faces are grouped around blackened trees centrally placed in the upper middle part of the work. The base of the trees are on fire, the logs as well as the stunted branches emerging from the trunks extend into thick black lines in the shape of a spider web stretching to the margins of the work and appearing to link all the faces while at the same time crossing them out. The text in cursive writing at the bottom of the work stretches to three quarters of its width and seems to be scrawled in the same black paint and by the same hand that drew the spider web of which it is a part. This gives the work its title. The placing of portraits of Nazi figures with men who, over time, have acquired the status of cultural references serves to create an effect of surprise as well as an immediate impression of “contamination”. That the portraits are executed in the woodcut medium, deemed to be rather archaic in this second half of the 20th century, reinforces this effect. The salient position of the trunks, together with their blackened mass extending to the faces of the men, underlines the symbolic force of the work. The overall effect leads the viewer to construe the faces as leaves attached to branches of a tree. To the eye, the trunks as much as the seemingly anonymous multiplicity of faces, function as important markers in the economy of the work. The viewer is reminded here of another symbol of national identity, one pre-existing Nazi Germany, the “Urwald”, the Forest at the centre of a potent myth of the origin of Germania. The reference to the battle of Arminius (Hermann) in the title is yet another allusion to a discredited version of national history, the battle in the Teutoburg forest in the ninth century, where Hermann/Arminius defeated three Roman legions, a battle highly symbolic of the unity and identity of the German people in national mythology and exploited in an outrageous manner by the Nazis (Rosenthal 1987:55). In addition, woodcut as a medium of choice alludes to one of the most famous monumental compositions of the Renaissance, the Triumphal Arch for Maximilian I, to which Albrecht Dürer contributed, and which was completed in 1526, the Emperor having commissioned it for his own glory (Rosenthal 1998:120).

## TRANSCULTURAL RELATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The multimodality at play in the work—copies, woodcuts, acrylic paint, drawing and writing—is not confined to the material. It applies equally to the use of symbols. Attention is drawn to the connections they construct and the transposition of meanings that ensue. The lack of references or hierarchy of the portraits, the fire and blackened trunks, the rough quality of the marks, the irregular surface created by the patchwork of faces as well as the lack of colour, contribute an overall effect of violence. As a result, the words *Wege der Weltweisheit*, seemingly lifted from an 18th-century philosophical treatise, create an ironic counterpoint. The causal relationship established by the coupling of the word “schlacht”, battle, with the phrase *Ways of Wordly Wisdom* is a characteristic feature of a work concerned with the making of national identity. The controversial series to which this work belongs has no real equivalent in countries tainted by Fascism such as France and Italy, where such an archeological approach to memory takes place more in films than in paintings.

By the selection and the positioning of portraits, *Wege der Weltweisheit* continues a process begun by the painter Gerhard Richter (1932-), who was born in Dresden, came to what was then West Germany in 1961, and exhibited at the 1972 Venice Biennale. Richter had seen a reproduction of Warhol's work in a Cologne gallery in 1967. Richter is said to have cut out the 48 portraits he presented at the Biennale from several encyclopedias, and to have painted them in grey in reference to their photographic origin. However, this installation is in turn a response to that of the American artist Andy Warhol, commissioned by the State of New York, and exhibited at the 1964 New York World Fair on the wall of the New York Pavilion. For his *13 most wanted men*, Warhol had enlarged and silkscreened the faces of thirteen criminals whose photographs had been issued by the FBI. He was asked to take down the work two weeks before the opening because of its controversial nature and proposed instead to whitewash the faces. For Richter as well as for Kiefer the reference to Warhol is no accident given the political and economical role played by the US in the reconstruction of Germany in particular, but also of Europe after the Second World War. Having displaced Paris as the new centre for contemporary arts, the US at that time had the means and influence to promote its artists in Europe.

That the symbolic representation of the portrait is at stake here is best illustrated by the fate of Warhol's installation. In choosing well-known crime figures for models, he was displaying an aspect of American society that the organizers were prompt to dismiss. The portraits thus reduced to the status of commodity as well as to an index of celebrity, however doubtful, in post-war America, have the effect of undermining the exemplary value of the genre, in particular the expectations of worth and social hierarchy it commands. A move not lost on Kiefer. In addition to his own choice of portraits, Kiefer alludes to the installation exhibited by his fellow countryman Richter ten years earlier at the same Venice Biennale. Richter's row of blurred enlarged faces, painted in grey monochrome, mounted on the curved wall of the German pavilion, points directly to Warhol's installation while further assigning it to a German context. Crucially, Richter's choice of models, while seemingly random, was in effect the result

of a rigorous selection, excluding women and politicians in order to focus on white men of European and American origins, mostly living at the turn of the 20th century and some better known than others (Buchloch 1996:7). He was thus playing with contradictory elements to highlight the impossibility of presenting a cohesive ensemble representative of national identity. In making use of Warhol's visual language, by reversing the terms between the components of Warhol's work, exhibiting paintings using ready-made photographs as his source material where Warhol displayed photographic silkscreens, he alluded to a return of a measure of subjective agency in art, deemed necessary by several German artists questioning the meaning of art in the decades following the horror of the concentration camps. In contrast to the monumental nature of the curved wall of the pavilion, the number and unfinished aspect of the multinational selection of portraits made by Richter spoke of issues appropriate to the German context of the seventies. Kiefer, taking up the choice of discredited subjects made by Warhol, effected a spectacular return to the representation of a past which was then largely taboo.

# COUNTERPOINT

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Language has always been used to identify and qualify a group, both for educational and anthropological purposes. It is a mirror and at the same time the source of the culture of the group, a field within which territorial and/or social boundaries can be drawn. It is a vehicle of communication and expression, a sign of belonging and inclusion, a means of connecting with one's society and avoiding exclusion from it (Hymes, 1964).

For the anthropologist of the past, the “tribe”, “his community”, the people he was studying, found its unity in a shared language, a language in most cases different from his own and alien to his culture and tradition, a language often hard to learn and master though seemingly simple in its expressive codes. Educational programmes were also formulated with the objective of teaching the dominant language, all being persuaded – anthropologists, politicians, administrators and education decision-makers – that the acculturation of minorities should follow a vertical pattern, with peripheries attempting to learn and emulate the language and expressive codes – and as a consequence the values and habits – of the “centre”.

Bauman emphasized that the discourse on ethnic minorities seen as communities defined by a reified culture bears the imprint of a dominant discourse: it is conceptually simple, holds a monopoly on communication, has great flexibility of application and ideological plasticity and can easily serve the ends of existing institutions (Baumann, 1996).

The term “community” is so implicated in the idea of the adherence of a group to a territory and a reified vision of culture that many scholars think it is inseparable from the idea of stasis, of homogeneity. It therefore becomes synonymous with the rejection of change, innovation and cultural contact that does not invariably follow a vertical evolution – from periphery to the centre – but also and simultaneously horizontal movements – from periphery to the centre or from periphery to periphery – and which, moreover, are not always equivalent (Amselle, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

As early as 1931, however, Michel Leiris, writing his “Instructions sommaires pour les collecteurs d’objets ethnographiques”, warned his colleagues against making a twofold mistake: believing in the simplicity of the language and thinking that the groups being



studied by the anthropologist had no expressive codes other than linguistic ones. “When it comes to the purity of expression,” Leiris writes, “the first thing to say is that it does not exist. Everything is mixed, the result of disparate influences, of multiple factors.” By way of a response to the many anthropologists at the end of the nineteenth century who were captive to Western aesthetic categories and denied the ability to make art to the group they encountered, Leiris wrote: “the most mundane objects give us the best account of a civilization. A box, for instance, characterizes our own civilization better than a gorgeous jewel or a rare stamp” (Leiris, 1931).

Nowadays all cultural activities, representations or characteristics seem to be inscribed in multiple and different environments, and in their dislocation they become differentiated to such a degree that they lose their shared features. Sometimes they reappear in places far from one another, remodeled on the basis of quite diverse institutional levels, formal and informal.

In the new framework resulting from the economical and political processes which, from the second half of the last century, transformed an international order disrupted by globalization, ethnography must be framed as a way of representing this plurality. At the same time it must aim at qualifying and specifying the context in which contacts, hybridisations and contaminations occur as a consequence of the constant coming and going of people, goods, cultural objects and ideas (Matera, 2004).

Anthropology is thus becoming more and more transcultural, and there is a compelling need for fieldwork mirroring the contradictions and ambivalence of our pluralistic societies, in all their complexity. We can no longer labour under the illusion of finding small, homogeneous and insulated communities that allow the anthropologist to experience a full immersion in the chosen field of research, to count on having “informants” who can speak the language of the researcher, to neglect the many expressive codes that convey a culture’s deepest meanings in ways that differ radically from Western ones. Ethnographers are now required to expose themselves to pluricultural and pluriethnic environments, to master many languages and expressive codes, to empathize with the real and virtual nomadisms of contemporary human groups. And they must show a sort of bifocal insight that combines penetration and rapidity as well as depth and quality in the analysis of mobile and changing environments (Marcus, 1998).

Traditional anthropology and its ethnographic production used to bring distant and different worlds close to the reader, and through the authority of writing and of the institutional places in which they were produced, ethnographers declared that their accounts could contain those distant and different worlds, thus effacing through their texts the great sense of difference they had experienced during their fieldwork. In recent times, due to the rapid and pervasive processes already mentioned, the conditions of the human groups that are the subject of anthropological research have been completely transformed: the subjects are no longer the passive and unaware objects of an ethnographic representation handed down from above, but rather have become attentive readers and often outspoken critics of anthropological texts and, sometimes, themselves the authors of their own ethnographic accounts, articulated in



terms of Western categories they have learnt in our, or their own, universities. We are no longer the only reliable witnesses of their otherness, the only mediators of the differences that keep on being produced through always faster and unpredictable dynamics despite ongoing globalization processes. And the critical and political impact of these new representations, buried for centuries beneath the weight of humiliation and distress, and always excluded or set aside from the official debates, has forced anthropology to undergo a radical change, something akin to that rebirth Claude Lévi-Strauss used to wish for half a century ago when he wrote: “Anthropology will survive in a world undergoing transformation only if it will let itself die so as to be born again in new forms” (1966, p. 126).

The end of the gap existing between “our” representations and “theirs”, between the anthropologist “who comes back here” and his witnesses “who stay there”, has produced new concepts and new theories. Cultural and postcolonial studies, women’s and queer studies, literary and gender studies have all recast anthropology throughout the world as a form of cultural critique *tout court*, thus paving the way for experimental styles, a postmodern aesthetics, and raising discussion about ethnographic authority and the reliability of ethnographic texts (de Certeau, 2005). Such profound changes in the epistemology of representation have implied a new relationship between objectivity and subjectivity in writing; they have opened the way to the experimentation and stylistic invention that have made ethnographic analysis less authoritarian and self-referential, closer to the emotional experience of the ethnographers and of their informants (Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Clifford 1999).

Ethnographic writing, although it seems to follow in the footsteps of traditional anthropological research, implies a deeper elaboration of the epistemological premises as well as the enlargement of the field involved in the collection of data. Many issues of earlier anthropological research are being critically revisited: research on family structure, for example, has become gender studies. Anthropological interest, description and interpretation move to new cultural objects articulated disjointedly, such as information systems, media and transcultural bodies.

Due to the complex fields to which it must be applied, methodology has to adopt a perspective that has been considered contradictory by the social sciences up until now: it must adopt wide parameters; it must have broad horizons and at the same time be able to deal with specific settings and patterns; it must be open to the flow of encounters but also to confine them within environments where they can be properly observed; it must follow the nomadic patterns that flow through cities, nations and continents but always connect them to residential communities, no matter how precarious and instable their residentiality may be (Callari Galli, 2005, 2007).

Media studies are characterized by a multisituated ethnographic methodology articulated along two axes, those of production and reception. The necessary connections between them render research activity, which is already mobile and multisituated due to the constitutive process of the object of study, even more complex (Inda; Rosaldo, 2002).

To analyze media consumption from a cultural angle means employing participant observation, in-depth interviews and all the techniques of qualitative research. But it also means opening the ethnographic text to the dynamic between the “near” and the “distant”, between spoken and written messages, between direct and virtual relationships, and between the material and the immaterial (Hannerz, 1992, 2001).

The complexity of the contemporary world is increased by the polyphony and the varied stratification of the elements found within each fragment of cultural transmission. Whatever the means of transmission, when techniques, behaviours, knowledges or any other cultural elements are transmitted, the message also contains the codes for interpreting them: it is as if every explicit message were surrounded by a sort of invisible network connecting it with other messages, a network that structures a vision of the world to such an extent that it merges with the world itself. Through the invisible transmission of cultural materials behind explicit communication we exchange messages regarding “us” and “them”, masculine and feminine roles, and behaviours that are approved or disapproved within a group or society.

In the expressive codes that underlie the use of images implicit and explicit, messages proliferate and intertwine. Each image contains multiple elements and references that fix themselves more or less consciously in the memory of the observers (Faeti, 1972). Observers, as media studies have pointed out, absorb iconic information and interpret it according to their own cognitive style and their own life experience, thus creating new meanings that confirm (or progressively subvert) models, beliefs and knowledge. Every image has the potential to trigger effects that go beyond the control and intention of its producers (Gruzinsky, 1990). The image’s power of enculturation was employed systematically in order to colonize the imaginary of conquered peoples (Gruzinsky, 1994), and today it is massively used in the audiovisual media. “Like the baroque image, [the contemporary image] communicates a social and visual order, transmits models of behavior and belief, anticipates developments in the visual field that have not yet led to conceptual and discursive elaborations” (Gruzinsky, 1994, p. 334).

However wide and complex the present field of anthropological studies may be, this complexity is the environment in which cultural representations are produced and blended, in which the identities of the past are remodeled and in which new identities from distant places come together. These spaces are given new values not only by the men and women inhabiting them and traversing them, but also by the huge development of the new communication technologies that seem to be the main vehicle of current innovation in its most immediate aspects: rapid transportation, virtual nets, television transmissions, digital images. In order to construct our ethnographic text from a methodological point of view, we have to return to the practice of observation – leisurely and with no immediate goal – that was typical of the *flâneur*, the stroller, dear to Walter Benjamin and Baudelaire. The approach of the *flâneur* has been taken up by anthropology in Marc Augé’s image of the “anthropologist with his hands in his pockets”, but it must be further elaborated via literary insights, art production, accounts of the marginal life and of the past, movies

of immigrants about their own experience of migration, photography, or by any means or technique of representation that allows us to seize the rapid change of the urban landscape.

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Chapter 6

# Discourse on languages and social representations

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## NOTE ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 6

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INTRODUCTION:

# DISCOURSE ON LANGUAGES AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

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## LANGUAGES, REPRESENTATIONS AND DISCOURSE

Of all social phenomena, language has paramount importance as the central object of variously elaborated representations and as a crystallizer of different attitudes. Discourses, in their relation with the local contexts and situations of their emergence, constitute at the same time both the *spaces* where meaning is attributed to social practices, and the *loci* for the creation and the realization of social relationships.

In language contact situations and multilingual environments, circulating discourses about languages, their speakers and language learning shape and give meaning to social and linguistic practices, and to relationships between groups. These discourses voice cultural and historical conceptions of language. They thus give access to socially situated systems of representations, which can be examined at different levels. The study of discourse about languages, their maintenance and their spread, throws light on the complex forms and symbolic dimensions that structure social spaces and social action. Not everyone shares the same social representations: they reflect a social (ideological) stance, with historical roots (they are at the same time a product of the history they contribute to make).

Representations become apparent not only through behaviour, but also and especially through discourse on language in general, or on specific aspects of language. By “discourse on language or languages”, we understand:

a) the official activity that consists in the textual and discursive formalization and circulation of the relationships between languages and their users, with the purpose of developing, maintaining, modifying or destroying those relationships (time, space, social arena);

- b) the images held by the different social actors about language in general or about a particular language, its rules, its features, its status with relation to other languages, etc.;
- c) the enunciative status of the discourses involved.

## REPRESENTATIONS IN DISCOURSE

Social representations about languages are socially elaborated and shared. They are synthetic and efficient forms of knowledge. Their interpretative functions and readability materialize (mainly) in discourse, which is itself socio-historically situated. Discourse confers an observable dimension to a representation, paving the way for “a series of symbolic manipulations such as commentaries, contestation, adhesion, modalisation, citation, evocation, allusion, etc.” (Py, 2004:7). Therefore, discursive productions both give access to representations and provide the context for their verbalization. Representations are produced in situation, for an audience, they pursue argumentative goals, and they acquire their value and meaning through the dynamics of the interaction, and the places occupied by the interlocutors.

According to Abric (1994:15-18), social representations play a vital role in the dynamics of social relations and practices because they accomplish four core functions: a) knowledge, since they make it possible to understand and explain reality; b) identity, since they contribute to define the identity and the specificity of a group; c) orientation, because they guide behaviour and practices; d) justification, since they provide reasons for one’s decisions and behaviour. Because they make it possible for speakers to define zones of mutual comprehension and allegiance (or separation), representations are part of the knowledge and beliefs that are essential to social life.

### Representations as a social act

The study of social representations can be traced back to Durkheim’s sociology (1895) and his concept of collective representation. In Europe, research on social representations was initially undertaken in the fields of sociology of knowledge and social psychology. These disciplines led to what is described as the “French” theorization of social representations, which aimed to analyze their structure, and the mechanisms for their development. Moscovici, in particular, undertook to define how *theories* (folk, scientific or political theories) are circulated and transformed in a given society, and how they frame individuals’ interpretations and their relationship to the world.

Moscovici’s work on social representations about psychoanalysis stands as a reference since the 1960s for researchers in social sciences. It has inspired the development of increasingly dynamic frameworks to understand how social actors attribute meaning to languages, and to their place in society. Representations constitute a shared system of knowledge, influenced by the historical and social circumstances of its production:

“[a social representation] is a system of values, notions and practices with a double vocation. First, it instills a sense of order and gives individuals a chance to orientate themselves in their social and material environment, and exert control on it. Secondly, it facilitates communication between members of a community” (Moscovici, 1984:10-11, our translation).

Representations are therefore in essence *social*, in the sense that the speakers-actors resort to common references as frameworks to interpret and attribute meaning to the world around them, and to position themselves within this world. These social values, largely circulated, and often the conveyors of prescriptive rules, structure and organize a world of references and of possible affiliations for the speaker. They open up a field of practical knowledge, a “horizon of expectation”, a space of experience and action.

Defining representations as intrinsically social also acknowledges the complex mechanisms of their emergence, circulation, adjustment and modification. These processes are collective in the sense that they unfold in the interactions between individuals belonging (or not) to a same group. They can be best observed in conflictive situations, which are fertile ground for negotiations and explanations. Representations affect how knowledge is transmitted, how it circulates, it affects definition of self and of social belongings. Their study is at the crossroads of different fields and disciplines (cognitive psychology, sociology, anthropology, natural and social logic...). According to Jodelet (1989:61):

“A social representation entertains a relation of ‘symbolization’ with its own object, it is the object, and a relation of ‘interpretation’, it gives meaning. These meanings result from an activity, by which a representation is a ‘construction’ and an ‘expression’ of the subject. [...] But the particularity of the study of social representations is to integrate in the analysis processes of membership and belonging, and social and cultural participation.”

In the social sciences, the notion of representation is relevant at different levels of analysis, depending on whether the main focus of interest is the society, the group or the individual. Beyond the multiplicity of perspectives, the specificity of the study of social representations lies in the effort to provide an integrated account of socio-cultural affiliations and participations together, and the effects of *context*. Jodelet (1989:60) summarizes this integrative effort in a formula with three questions: Who knows, and from where? What, and how do we know? About what, and with what effect?

### **Ideology and social imagination**

At a macro-sociological level, to approach social representations as a *contextualized system* raises questions about the relations between representations and myths, ideology and imagination (see Boyer, 2003). The introduction in 1796 of the term ‘ideology’ to refer to the theorizing effort that accompanies the ‘science of ideas’ is usually attributed to Count Destutt de Tracy and the Cercle d’Auteuil:

“[...] la connoissance de la génération de nos idées est le fondement de l'art de communiquer ces idées, la grammaire ; de celui de combiner ces mêmes idées et d'en faire jaillir des vérités nouvelles, la logique ; de celui d'enseigner et de répandre les vérités acquises, l'instruction ; de celui de former les habitudes des hommes, l'éducation ; de l'art plus important encore d'apprécier et de régler nos désirs, la morale ; et enfin du plus grand des arts, au succès duquel doivent coopérer tous les autres, celui de régler la société de façon que l'homme y trouve le plus de secours et le moins de gêne possible de la part de ses semblables” (Destutt de Tracy, *Mémoires sur la faculté de penser*, 1796).

*Linguistic ideology* can be defined as a set of beliefs about language that speakers refer to in order to rationalize or justify the way in which they perceive language, its value and its usages. In this respect, linguistic ideology constitutes a ‘definitive’ system of interpretation that provides a justification for the existing social order, and contributes to the perpetration of asymmetrical power relations while laying the foundations for forms and rules of action. In the realm of *social imagination*, ‘ideology’ crystallizes models that tend to legitimize existing practices by accomplishing a reproductive function (Ricoeur, 1997). Ricoeur, in particular, credits imagination – understood as the faculty to explore possible worlds and as the locus for reassigning meaning to human experience – with great importance, an approach inspired by Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology and Max Weber’s sociology. According to Ricoeur, imagination “in context” leads to the creation of new referents, and provides guidelines for the interpretation and the comprehension of meaning. Imagination permeates discourses and practices, thus constituting a fundamental component of agency. Finally, imagination is a feature of collective life that finds expression in ideology and in utopia (Foessel & Lamouche, 2007).

Linguistic ideologies are not only about language. They also convey views on the relations between language and identity (for example, national identity), mainly perpetrated through dominant socializing models, religious rituals, education, etc. Therefore, the study of ideologies leads to a better understanding of the links between cultural models and social and linguistic behaviour, and of how socio-historical processes link groups to national and transnational spheres, and lead to value certain linguistic practices more than others. Recent publications emphasize the structuring role of ideology (rather than focusing on the notions of error and illusion), while questioning the functions of social power. The current social, economic and politic changes that accompany the promotion of social plurilingualism throw a new light on those relations by transforming the historical balance of power between groups, and by leading to the emergence of new values and ideological stances about languages and plurality.

## **REPRESENTATIONS *IN* AND *THROUGH* DISCOURSE**

The study of ideologies provides insight on the structure and the issues at stake in the determination of social dynamics. However, at micro sociological and psycho sociological levels, the focus is placed on the relations between representations,

attitudes and behaviour (Moore, 2001). Even if representations do not determine behaviour nor behaviour necessarily reflects representations, both entities are closely intertwined. This perspective draws attention to the transformational processes that, in the course of verbal interaction, bring about changes to existing rules, individual and group referents, and categorizations.

### **Interactional dynamics of representations**

Access to the verbal expression of a representation implies to study both its content, and its dynamic, changing and negotiated aspects in the interaction. Uli Windisch (Windisch, 1989:191) reminds us that sociolinguistics and discourse analysis provide evidence of strong connections between forms of thought and the linguistic forms that convey them. His careful study of a large corpus of five hundred readers' letters published in different newspapers in Romand (French-speaking) Switzerland, and of fifty long interviews, enabled him to identify what he described as a typical structure of xenophobe discourses: three basic propositions forming the typical argumentative structure of discourses to explain and condemn social phenomena. They emphasize the importance of discursive processes in the transformation of social conflicts:

This is how it should be

[a large number of immigrants should return to their home countries]

Things are not as they should be (which can be explained by...)

[immigrants no longer want to return to their countries, because they earn more here]

(Still) this is how it should be

[nevertheless, they must return to their countries].

By emphasizing the fact that social representations are built in and through the course of the interaction, Windisch underlines their fundamentally dynamic dimension, their changing, instable nature, and the effects of the permanent reconstruction of social reality in everyday discourse (p. 195), while at the same time focusing on the actual behaviour of the "actors" themselves (p. 197), who shape and transform their reality (p. 200).

Discursive processes can adopt several forms. One of the challenges involved in the analysis of discourse as the locus for the construction, the existence, the modification or the disappearance of representations lies in the enunciative status of every utterance. To begin with, a distinction needs to be made between prefabricated and newly fabricated utterances. Typically, a prefabricated utterance consists in the quotation of a proverb, which can be nothing more than a verbal tic with no relation to the speaker's actual experience. The same applies to certain stereotypical formulas and clichés. On the contrary, newly fabricated utterances result from the verbalizing efforts that are made by a speaker and addressed to an interlocutor, first in a specific context and, later, more or less decontextualized. Boyer (2003) draws attention to the "ethnosociocultural connotations" that certain lexemes may carry at a given moment in the history of a group, such as the word "foulard" (headscarf) in France, once a

clothing item devoid of any cultural aspiration, but presently a strong emblem of religious values, whose interpretation varies in different groups.

These distinctions are crucial, especially for the analysis of corpora gathered by means of sociolinguistic surveys in the form of interviews. Ritual and verbal aspects cannot be approached separately, but their relative weight may vary.

### **In and through discourse**

In this chapter, a social representation is defined as a micro-theory that aims to provide a readily available interpretation of an indefinite set of phenomena that are perceived to be similar. Social representations exist in and through discourse. It is in and through discourse that they are built, modified and transmitted. It is also in and through discourse that social representations are known and circulated in a social group. The circulation of a representation does not necessarily mean that every group member agrees with its content; rather, it signifies that it is *recognized* and understood by all members of a given group, at a given moment in time. In this respect, a representation creates an initial common ground between the members of a group; each individual may then choose to dispute, dissent or contest its value and contents.

It is therefore important to distinguish between *prefabricated* representations of cultural origin, which are part of the personal resources of every member of a cultural community on one side and, on the other side, representations *under construction*, in other words, representations that are elaborated as they are uttered, for instance by the participants in a debate. Discourse can convey a whole range of intermediate positions, for example, a speaker may reproduce a prefabricated expression while implicitly or explicitly disproving it (through various discursive movements that can be established through the analysis of dialogic and polyphonic, modalisation and hedging, the use of quotes, etc.). It is therefore important to distinguish carefully between representations of *reference*, which function as reservoirs of knowledge to make sense of the world and as group emblems, and representations *in use*, which are negotiated within the interaction (Py, 2000).

Finally, a distinction is to be made between representations about the current enunciation (*epilinguistic activities*) and representations about a particular language or language in general, regarded as an object with a (temporarily) stabilized identity; for instance, *French is a logic language, German is a concrete language*, etc.

Attitudes are very close to representations. They equally inform discourse about language and can be the motive or the justification for a representation, and inversely. For example, it is certainly easier to learn English and to voice positive assertions, such as *English is an easy language*, when the learner loves the English language and the Anglo-Saxon way of life. In the same vein, negative attitudes towards immigrants are usually associated with negative attitudes towards the languages they speak.

As an integral part of culture, social representations constitute an interface between the members of a group and the group itself; they intersect the individual and the collective levels. The individual preserves agency because he can recognize a belief



without having to adhere to it. In this respect, a representation can simply amount to knowledge of a cultural reality. On the other hand, displaying adhesion to that cultural reality signals belonging to the group. The distinction between recognition and adhesion thus opens a space for individual freedom.

## SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT LANGUAGES AND PLURILINGUALISM

Complex language contact situations are fertile ground for the examination of ideology-building about national languages, the status attributed to other languages in the resulting ideological constructs, and the values accorded to plurilingualism with regards to the power struggles and the relevant practices that derive from these ideologies. Based on a complexity model (understood in its etymological meaning “*complexus*”, “woven together”) inspired by Edgar Morin, Blanchet (2007) affirms that languages are abstractions built upon a certain understanding of certain practices and certain representations. According to him, representations are one of the three axes for the emergence of a complex system: “A language is a *complex system* that emerges from a helicoidal interaction process involving three poles constituted by *social practices*, *social representations* and *socio-political institutionalizations*, and deploys into a helix, depending on *temporalities*, *spaces*, *societal organizations*, and interactions between its actors and its own dynamics amongst other emerging systems” (Blanchet, 2007: 263 and 265, italics by the author, our translation). In this sense, the study of representations can throw light on the processes of social transformation by focusing on the global and local conditions that enable speakers to mobilize the resources of their plural repertoires, decide on their specific values, and negotiate them within temporal and historical spaces rooted in a collective memory, transmitted by a whole set of institutionalized mediators (the family, the school, associations, the church, etc.), and in a common reservoir of knowledge.

While social representations can be approached from several perspectives, this chapter will focus on three of their core aspects:

1. *Founding discourses and established ideologies*: we will discuss the origin and the evolution of the association between language and nation, which differs in France, the Republic of Djibouti, the Swiss cantons or the Spanish regions, to mention a few examples. The distinctions between mother-tongue, foreign language, second language, official language, minority language, as well as discourses about diglossia, ‘la francophonie’ or plurality, have different values, largely anchored in complex social histories, and language(s) is/ are either a space of social cohesion, or conflict.
2. *Linguistic policies* and decrees about language status and dynamics, including political initiatives, the work of linguists, educators, etc. on different areas: neologisms, terminology, language varieties, lexical borrowings, language feminization, spelling, foreign language learning, etc.

These two first axes insist on the importance of official, pro-active actions concerning languages, the documents prescribing them, the ways in which they are presented (in words and numbers) in national and supranational policies, as well as the ways in which they are interpreted by local mediators, linguistic legislation and educational policies, but also the work of historians, linguists, language professionals, writers, the media; all those parties who exert a competence, receive or claim the power to observe and build social ties through language.

3. *Popular discourses* about languages and language learning, as developed and construed by different social actors; parents, teachers, learners of different ages and in different situations, including discourse *in* and *about* the classroom. For example, there is widespread belief that knowing a language means knowing its vocabulary, a common social representation that reveals a lack of awareness of the importance of syntax or pragmatics. Such a belief affects understandings of second language learning and bilingualism, which are understood as the simplistic addition of a L2 lexicon to the L1, that confine to bilateral translations, as in basic bilingual dictionaries. This ideology materializes in the traditional vocabulary lists that learners are encouraged to learn by heart.

These insights raise more questions than they solve. For instance, to what extent and how can representations and attitudes be identified in and through discourse on language? How to avoid situations in which impersonal, stereotyped and uncommitted discourse replaces a personal reflection based upon the individual's real-life experience with languages and their speakers? To what extent and how can we assess and describe the impact of social representations on languages and on language learning and teaching? Can a representation in accordance with (or in contradiction with) a principle that we researchers view as essential for language learning, favour (or hinder) such learning? Or should we accept that *homo loquens* can sustain such contradictions?

Should we, as educators, attempt to influence the representations held by learners and teachers? What are the discursive and ideological values of discourses about language? Do these discourses belong to the realm of ordinary evidence and popular belief (*spelling mistakes reveal insufficient command of the language*), or do we need to distinguish between argumentative values (*I learn English because it is useful*, or *I learn Italian because it is the language of Dante*), identity values (*Arabic is my language but I don't speak it*), normative values (carried by political decisions, such as Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language that defines French as the official language in Quebec, and regulates the public use of French and English)?

Language contacts and plurilingualism constitute significant nodes of interpretative mobility; they stimulate reinterpretation and readjustment of experience for the individual, who has to redefine and redeploy, in a given situation, individual and social schemata. Representations appear as central resources for the discursive construction of social preferences. Discourse frames the emergence of social representations, the local and situated negotiation of their meaning, significance and value, and their evolution and transformation.

# FOUNDING DISCOURSES AND IDEOLOGIES.

## LANGUAGE PLANNING IN SOCIETY AND SCHOOLS

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### GLOBAL DISCOURSES ON LANGUAGES

Discourses about languages make them appear as a problem, a right or a resource. The several thousand languages spoken worldwide co-exist with difficulties, so much so that language contact is sometimes referred to as a “languages war” (*la guerre des langues*) (Calvet, 1999). Studies of the ecology of languages have emphasized major historical changes in terms of values attributed to different language, and economical metaphors such as “market of languages” (Bourdieu, 1982) are often used to describe these situations. After the 18<sup>th</sup> century’s ideal of French as a universal language succeeded the successful emergence of American English. Whereas in Eastern Europe Russian is widely used, a recent national discourse has sprung out in favour of the Old Empire languages. Beyond the political will to split Serbian and Croatian apart, are they really taught apart in the daily routines of the classroom? Languages have become an inalienable individual right, often as a part of the Nation-state. Languages are often a crucial resource in their role as the cement of a community: if communication at large cannot be established, a language will turn into a touch stone for discrimination and a integration/exclusion tool for communities.

The question then is: is there a need for language planning when everything goes well? Human languages are culturally, economically and religiously powerful. Let’s take the example of a fox wandering free in a farm with free chicken: the chicken will be eaten. Politics (in its strong acceptance, the one that rules the city) must regulate and protect the languages in use. Language planning is the political means of the need to regulate.

The first step in language planning is to understand what ideologies are in circulation in the concerned community/society. For many reasons, states find it difficult to clarify their intentions regarding language use in the social spheres: it was not before 1992 that a over-zealous French Minister declared French as the “language of the Republic”.

From a historical point of view, linguistic consciousness and clearer positions regarding language policies seem to be a sign of our times. For example, the European Community has undertaken a number of actions to protect the rights of member states (states, regions and communities like Roms) in using languages they want. In this respect, globalization of medias and of education becomes an important issue.

Key-concepts must be firstly reviewed: language norms at school and in the medias, corpus and status, languages and community, language choice for social communication in a variety of daily situations, as varied as a city's council meeting, enrolment in civil service, urban signage or instructions to use a machine.

Is a bi- or plurilingual education really possible? As it has been often noticed, social bilingualism is a difficult goal, except in some particular rare situations. Insidious or even clearly admitted diglossia creeps into the picture. People who speak French in Geneva and those who speak German in Basel are far from able to communicate with each other with fluency. One can be satisfied if language diffusion produces a shared knowledge, a knowledge that can contribute to make a wider community feel more unified. But this kind of common knowledge cannot always be turned into power. Even a minoritized language in a country such as France, or an African language of a specific group in Africa, are systems that do not always obtain a full right to exist within the society. They sometime have no right at all to exist, and some of them just slowly disappear. It takes time to add power to knowledge.

Linguistics, - that is the linguist himself -, is a social actor (whether his work has to do with descriptive linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics or ethnolinguistics): the linguist's discourse is one discourse among a variety of other discourses on languages. But in our view, he endorses a special responsibility: the discourses linguists develop about languages and their use are bound to inform policy-makers and influence their decisions and actions. In this respect, linguistics is intrinsically a human and social science, and as such it involves an ethical duty of social intervention. Linguistics is not only about languages; it is before and above all, about people who speak these languages, and who develop specific discourses about them.

## **THE BRETON LANGUAGE, A LANGUAGE OF FRANCE**

In France, the Breton language (Brezhoneg) has been associated with a group of languages called "languages of France". Breton is a regional language, spoken in Brittany, a western region of France. It belongs to a heterogeneous list of 75 minority languages of France (Cerquiglioni, 1999), alongside French, the national language of the country. In order to understand the position of regional and minority languages in France today, a quick incursion in the past is necessary. Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, linguists and the French Academy spent considerable effort to standardize and "purify" the French language, and when came the French Revolution it became a symbol for national unity. Under the strong will of Barère and Abby Gregoire, revolutionaries fought for French to become their national language and the language of instruction and schooling. Many subsequent laws and decrees vigorously enforced

this linguistic policy, and contributed to eradicate all languages spoken in France, but French.

In 1951, the Deixonne Law granted the right to study regional languages and local dialects. Up to 1992, the year when the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* was signed within the council of Europe, a number of other regional languages were given similar status. France chose not ratify this charter. In fact, five months before its signature, in a reflex of defence of French as the national language, the Constitution of 1958 was modified to give French official status as the language of the French Republic. Finally, two years later, the Toubon Law reinforced French language priority against foreign languages.

*Example 1: Breton as a language of France*

*Over the years, private schools have imposed their bilingual/immersion methods in France, while clearly enforcing their rights among the European Community. The following document pictures a demonstration in Vannes, in September 2002.*



Since 1977, a number of French-Breton bilingual schools have developed in Brittany. Breton (a threatened language) was either taught alongside French (time parity), or in total immersion (a possibility which was suspended in 2002). Although the situation of diglossia in Brittany does not favour Breton, more than 31 000 pupils were educated



in Breton and French bilingual schools in 2003-2004. Breton associations, in particular Diwan and Div Yezh have long fought for the official assertion of teaching principles and linguistics rights. Besides civil servants authorities, the Ya d'ar Brezhoneg charter has encouraged private companies or administrations to create linguistic tools and promote the use of Breton in official and public spheres, through the use of bilingual internal company's rules, and external public notices and postings (a promotion close to the levels 2 and 3 on Fishman's scale, 1991/1993).

However, nowadays, the state has been more and more disengaged in regional affairs, especially regarding the managing of the regional teaching. The settings of *Academic Councils of Regional Languages* (2001), the approval of the *European Charter of Local Self Government* by the French Senate in 2006 serve in the same lines. In Brittany, civil associations need a true commitment with the administration and a necessary hand-on policy of the town councillors to ensure Breton continues to be taught in schools. Moreover, the ideological defence of French language still constitutes a national priority in France, especially when fighting communitarianism, even if regional. The *orientation and program's law for the future of schools* (2005) reinforces this priority in the country. It mentions that the teaching of regional languages and cultures can only be done in areas where regional languages are used.

## MULTILINGUALISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

Djibouti, a 23,000 square kilometres' (8,900 sq mi) country, is located at the very extreme eastern point of East of Africa, which is commonly called "the Horn". It is a place where a multilingual and multicultural knowledge has been shared for ages. Djibouti is a place « Inside » and a place « Outside », a myth for many people, especially through travellers' traditions and literature. It is also a fragile human settlement, due to very harsh conditions of life.

It is nonetheless seen as a country with many contemporary linguistic assets, because of the main orientations this country has taken since its independence in 1977. The « Inside », firstly, is a cradle for all kinds of syncretisms. Cultural, literary and human dimensions construct Djibouti as a place of confluence, in search of balance. City's life tries to cope with and conciliate these specificities, a fact that had never been managed by the former colonial regime, nor admitted for a long time. Let us outline how change can be described: in the particular fields of economics, law, religion or philosophy, it shows the country's great ability to pragmatically integrate difference.

Djibouti is also a country of transit and transaction; it lives in a perpetual tension towards the « Outside ». Its situation, geographically and culturally, and its role as an « open door » (due to railway tracks between Ethiopia and Djibouti, or its deep-sea harbours) make it a remarkable support for development and knowledge transfer networks – traditional or modern – in this region of East Africa. It has complex connexions with a type of environment where political and/or ideal frontiers are ever-changing and intersecting in unique ways: Somalias, the Arabo-islamic world, Ethiopia, western countries, not to forget China and Japan. In this meeting place,

experiencing an endless reconstruction, French plays a central role. In the Horn and Red Sea areas, Djibouti is the only state to have chosen, beyond its two national languages (Afar and Somali), French and Arabic as its official languages, while showing at the same time great interest for other foreign languages, such as English.

The democratization of education, while it largely contributed to increase the number of schooled children, certainly led teachers to feel that their pupils' competence in French was quickly declining. Nevertheless, a high number of learners who have reached at least the first step in second language-based education can now be considered as bilingual. But, in the case of Djibouti, except for families with a high level of culture, bilingualism is probably not a "composed" and balanced one. "Coordinated" and unbalanced bi-/plurilingualism (when one language is acquired after the others, and each is used for different purposes, with abilities to switch between languages) would be a more suitable formula to reflect the nature of the linguistic situation in the country, taking in consideration that skills in different languages depend on the status of the languages, in particular whether they are vernacular, national, or official (like French). National languages are not nowadays widely used in education, but things are improving in the field of research, with: (i) the CERD, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche de Djibouti (Centre for Studies and Research), (ii) experimental curriculum development for national language learning in primary schools, and (iii) the linguistics curriculum of the newly established university of Djibouti, to equip all teachers and policy-makers with a new understanding of the sociolinguistic situation in their country.

Djibouti started its way to the path of education much later than other African countries. Its linguistic and cultural diversity is not a matter of dissension but as a factor of progress for the future in the eyes of its citizens. From that perspective, Oromyia and Amharic are paving the way to Addis Ababa, and Arabic builds bridges towards near neighbours, like Yemen or Dubai.

An independent press also makes it possible for publications to be available in all languages of the country, if readers can read alphabetical systems. Media highlight and enhance the main lines of the national policy. Four TV reports are aired every day, in all four official and national languages of the country, on an equal basis of time. From a social perspective, Djibouti stands out as a fair example of multi-/plurilingualism, anchored in its national heritage and traditions, while at the same time open to the world.

*Example 2: Multilingualism in Djibouti – Somali/Afar/French/Arabic*

*Multicultural Television Shows in several languages – RTD (Radio-Télévision Djiboutienne)*

**Djibouti**

Actualité  
Administration  
Documentation  
Statut  
**Formation**  
Conseil scientifique  
Partenaires

**Présentation**

L'Institut des Langues de Djibouti (ILD) a été créé en 2001. L'ILD est dirigé par Mr IDFISS YOUSOUF ELMI (Décret n°2002-0177 /PR./MESN) portant nomination des directeurs du CERD.)

L'Institut des Langues de Djibouti (ILD) fait partie des instituts qui constituent le Centre d'Études et de Recherche de Djibouti (CERD). Son champ d'action réside dans toutes les activités de recherches autour des langues et de la culture des langues.

Son démarrage exige une mise en place des besoins (humains, matériels et financiers)

**Missions**

L'ILD ayant pour mission de la réflexion, l'harmonisation, la standardisation et l'actualisation des langues nationales, couchétiques et sémitiques de l'Afrique de l'Est, se donne des priorités pour l'année 2008 aux tâches suivantes:

- Collecte des documents déjà existant
- Publication des ouvrages répondant aux objectifs fixés à l'institut
- Organisation du symposium pour l'harmonisation et la standardisation des mots et des expressions les plus usités par les locuteurs sur la langue afar.
- Organisation d'une manifestation autour du thème « Forum des langues et des cultures des langues » à Djibouti
- Participation aux travaux de recherches dont le but est l'enseignement des langues nationales à l'école de base de Djibouti
- Constitution d'un conseil de spécialistes de l'institut
- Préparation des conditions juridiques pour toute publication.
- Participation à l'organisation de la manifestation annuelle intitulée « Lire en fête ».

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Site: <http://www.cerd.dj/ild.htm>

*Linguistic policies have triggered various effects through more or less energetic plans, based or not on voluntary work. In France, Breton language illustrates this tendency just as the multilingual configuration Somali/Afar/Arabic in Djibouti.*



# MULTILINGUAL SPACES. URBAN DISCOURSE

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## SPACES OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

The four national languages of Switzerland, enshrined in the Constitution, guarantee in a certain – and paradoxical way – the monolingualism of the country's citizens. However, many people have more or less intensive contacts with other languages and are capable of getting along in at least one other national language and, increasingly, also in English. Moreover, with 20% of the population of foreign origin, the linguistic patchwork of the country takes many more colours. The best-known and shared language experience is related to education, since the learning of a second national language and English is compulsory in every Swiss canton. However, everyday social life offers a great diversity of language learning occasions outside the school, such as:

- Exchanges between cantons, whose political borders coincide with linguistic borders, as is the case between the French-speaking Canton of Jura and the German-speaking Canton of Basel;
- Exchanges between language communities inside bi- or multilingual cantons, districts or municipalities, each entity having its own characteristics related to pragmatic, ideological and cognitive aspects of language;
- Allophone islets without stabilized official political status, e.g. delocalised firms, associations of citizens whose first language is not the official local language, multilingual families;
- Social networks composed of partners belonging to two or more language communities;
- Different situations of immigration (education, work);
- Interregional and national meetings with people speaking different first languages and communicating according to the intercomprehension principle: "everybody speaks his or her language, endeavouring to make oneself understood and understand others";
- Short stays (practical training, exchanges, holidays).

Certain cultural tendencies linked to language regions can be observed, particularly in the realm of political culture. German-speakers are often claimed to be more conservative and more isolationist, and also more sensitive to the practical consequences of political decisions than the speakers of the Romance languages, whereas French-speakers are seen to show openness and to stress ideological aspects of language use. In any case, language *per se* does not seem to be a decisive factor inasmuch as the language regions are far from being culturally and politically homogenous; however, language is important as a vector of social representations: mutual stereotypes regarding the language communities abound, such as the term *röstigraben* (*roast potato ditch*) which stigmatises the real or imagined differences between German- and French-speaking Switzerland.

## THE CITY AS THE LOCUS OF LANGUAGE CONTACT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

There is a tendency to overestimate the role of school in the process of language learning, especially when lamenting the lack of language competence achieved by language learners. However, other places of contact, such as the ones we just listed above, have been shown to be just as crucial learning contexts (Porquier & Py, 2004). There seems to be a favoured mixed approach to language learning, with schools performing the propedeutic work of language awareness, and providing reference points in the form of lexical, grammatical and basic communicative competencies. The analysis of the situation in two bilingual Swiss towns, Biel/Bienne and Fribourg/Freiburg, allows to observe and to verify the complementarity of the two learning modes. Social, political, professional and cultural life fosters language immersion of variable duration and depth. In other words, there is a close connexion between two language-learning modes: a *formal* one (scholastic, and of limited duration) and an *informal* one (extra-curricular, and of unlimited duration). This questions once again how we view foreign languages teaching. The school has a natural propensity to claim the total responsibility and accountability for the linguistic competencies that language curricula aim at, yet only reluctantly admits learning objectives set outside its sphere of influence. The key question here is the following: How can we combine the language competencies acquired inside and outside the school context? A useful answer to this question can emerge only if certain conditions are fulfilled, such as:

- Mutual acknowledgment of the existence and worth of the competencies acquired in other ways;
- Knowledge and understanding of the nature of these competencies (which is far from evident, considering the lack of data and the actual state of learning theories);
- Rejection of all forms of purism, which encourage a confusion between a learner's actual competence, and his/her respect of monolingual usage;
- Adoption of a variationist representation of language, which is tolerant vis-à-vis interpretable language production (not) conforming to the norm. Purism entails

too often a rejection of a great number of competencies acquired outside the school context, disparagingly labelled as regional, colloquial, erroneous, interference induced, etc.

Cultural differences often arise in discourse through misunderstandings and stereotypes. As it is difficult to prepare for such incidents, the best we can do is to make learners aware of the concepts of misunderstanding and of stereotype, in order to set up appropriate discursive and behavioural strategies. The *language awareness* approach offers numerous possibilities to deal with issues linked to language attitudes and representations. The use of the *Language Portfolio* and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* offers the possibility to encompass linguistic and cultural learning accomplished before, during and after school. Multilingual urban spaces, insofar as they represent shared spaces, generate frequent and intense language contact and offer learning and research possibilities.



Train station in Biel/Bienne



Bilingual Signage in Biel/Bienne



Signage in Fribourg/Freiburg

En vue de l'extension de nos activités en Suisse allemande, nous souhaitons engager, dès le 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 2004 ou à une date à convenir, une

**ASSISTANTE BILINGUE  
à 100%**

de langue maternelle allemande avec de très bonnes connaissances en français (parlé et écrit).

La candidate sera âgée de 20 à 30 ans et disposera d'un bon sens commercial.

Votre offre manuscrite, accompagnée des documents usuels, doit être envoyée à:

MS [redacted]  
Route [redacted]  
[redacted]  
026 [redacted] 17 [redacted]

"La Liberté", Fribourg, 30 août 2004

### Excerpt 1

- A *Tu penses (...) alors...que ça sert pas à grand-chose le bon allemand à Bienne?*
- B *Non ça sert à rien du tout. Bon, rien du tout, c'est peut-être exagéré, mais c'est pas bien vu, c'est pas bien accepté, et puis ça crée une distance, ça crée une énorme distance parce que c'est toujours "du sprichst besser deutsch als wir" [tu parles mieux allemand que nous]...*
- [A *You think (...) then...that in Biel/Bienne standard German is not of great use?*
- B *No, it's completely useless. Well, useless is maybe exaggerated, but it's not well considered, it's not well accepted, and it creates a distance, an enormous distance because it's always "du sprichst besser deutsch als wir" [you speak German better than we do]...*

### Excerpt 2

- Y *Ab j'étais nullissime en allemand, j'étais toujours nulle et j'ai redoublé le gymnase à cause de l'allemand et, non c'était vraiment une catastrophe alors...*
- X *Mais quand vous avez commencé les premières leçons d'allemand, vous aviez déjà du dialecte bien configuré dans la tête...?*

- Y *Ab ouais...*
- X *Ça vous a pas semblé être un accès plus facile d'avoir le dialecte?*
- Y *Non, plutôt un frein moi j'ai l'impression, enfin, je peux pas dire comment ça aurait été si j'avais pas eu, mais en tout cas, j'ai jamais eu le sentiment que ça m'ait beaucoup aidé, parce que au niveau du vocabulaire, c'est pas la même chose, au niveau de la grammaire, ça sert à rien, je veux dire, le suisse allemand grammaticalement, il amène rien pour le bon allemand, he, je veux dire il y a des accords qui se font en suisse allemand ils sont différents de ce qui se passe en bon allemand, alors pour moi, personnellement, c'était en tout cas pas une aide..., je veux pas dire un frein, mais en tout cas pas une aide...*  
(Interviews excerpts done in Biel/Bienne)

- [Y *Oh I was very bad in German at high-school, I've always been bad and I had to repeat a class during high-school because of German, well it was really a catastrophe*
- X *But when you started with the first German lessons dialect was already well programmed in your head ...?*
- Y *Oh yeah...*
- X *You don't have the feeling that the dialect gave an easier access?*
- Y *No, more of a hindrance, I have the impression, well, I can't tell what it would have been without, but in any case, I never had the feeling that it helped a lot, because in the case of vocabulary, it's not the same, in the case of grammar, it doesn't help, I want to say grammatically, Swiss German doesn't help for standard German, I wanna say, there are agreements in Swiss German which are different from those in standard German, so for me personally, it was no help at all ... I don't wanna say a hindrance, but in any case not a help...]*

## DISPLAYED BILINGUALISM: SYMBOLIC VALUE OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The reproduced documents can be interpreted according to the proposed framework. Bilingualism on urban signs yields little information, in the sense that every Swiss citizen knows, notwithstanding his or her linguistic competence, that *Biel* is the German form of *Bienne*, and vice-versa, as it is the case with *Freiburg* and *Fribourg*. There is a little more information in the case of *Römerstrasse* and *Route des Romains*: the equivalence is clear for a reader with basic knowledge of the other language. These bilingual road signs primarily carry a *symbolic* value, as the city openly displays and declares its bilingualism. The double street name also circumvents that *Römer* or *Romains* be perceived as sheer labels (absence of the signified, the ideational component). The two largest bilingual cities of Switzerland implement bilingualism in different ways; Biel/Bienne does so in a parallel and near total manner, whereas Fribourg/Freiburg displays a partial and selective bilingualism (i.e. the name of the station is only in French, and only 22 streets and squares are labelled bilingually).

The example of the job advertisement, published in the daily Fribourgeois newspaper *La Liberté*, takes it for granted that bilingual persons belong to either the French- or

German-speaking language community, and not to a third group which could be bilingual. This shows a monolingual representation of language contact, insofar as the second language is added to the first one, rather than being integrated into a genuine bilingual repertoire. The advertisement is entirely written in French. It is seemingly addressed to German-speakers with a good command of French. In this sense, the form of the advertisement matches its content and it functions as a test. Bilingualism in this case is a *competency*, whereas in the case of the urban signage discussed before, it functioned as *recognition*.

Generally speaking, German is more permeable than French in Fribourg: the German newspaper *Freiburger Nachrichten* also publishes advertisements in French, and *La Liberté* also addresses bilingual readers of German-speaking origin.

The interview excerpts highlight the utility of language competencies and the importance of their value as identity markers. For a number of interviewees, utility and identity are more important than the respect of linguistic norms. This tendency (which needs to be verified) probably contributes to more openness towards linguistic variation, which itself is linked to the development of multi- and plurilingualism.

# ATTITUDES AND DIGLOSSIA. COLLECTIVE IMAGINARY AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC REPRESENTATIONS

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## SOCIAL VALUES OF DIGLOSSIA

Several models based on the concept of diglossia propose to describe (and possibly modify) situations of contact of two or more languages (Boyer, 2005). They are presented below:

1. The first model to be taken into consideration is Psichari's, developed between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Psichari used the concept of *diglossia* to account for the sociolinguistic situation of Greece in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where two varieties of Greek were competing: *Katharevousa* (learned Greek, the only legitimate version of the language used for literature), and *Demotiki* (vernacular Greek, used for common usage). Psichari, being an *engaged* linguist (and writer), spoke out for the generalization of the use of *Demotiki*. "Diglossia" is not synonymous with "social bilingualism": the Greek situation is considered as confrontational. Psichari recommended a reversal of the values assigned to the two competing varieties, and therefore of their *representations* within the speech community.

2. Fishman's and Ferguson's proposals can fall under the same theoretical framework, even if Ferguson referred to *diglossia* to describe contact between two *varieties* of the same language: a *high* variety, which uses are restricted to writing, teaching, religion... and a *low* variety, mainly used orally (for example Classical Arabic versus dialects of Arabic) (Ferguson, 1959), while Fishman extended the notion to encompass the functional distribution of the use of two *languages* within the same community. The notion of *prestige* is only associated with the use of the *high* variety or language. In this framework, diglossia is considered as a consensual situation; it is the complementarity between the social functions of the two coexisting languages (or varieties of the same language) that guarantees the stability of the system.



3. A third model, the model of the Swiss school of sociolinguistics, can be considered as a variant (albeit a very emancipated one) of the one just mentioned. The "consensual model of diglossia" developed by Lüdi and Py, in particular, highlights *cooperation* strategies in exolingual communication, for example in migratory situations. In this model, the interplay of circulating sociolinguistic representations is an important factor in the economy of linguistic contact (Lüdi & Py, 2002).

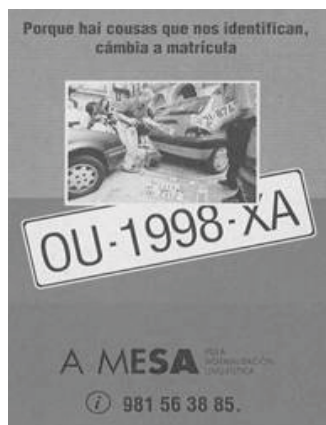
4. The theoretical framework of the Catalan-Occitan school of sociolinguistics differs from the last two models in several ways. These sociolinguists propose, from both a "peripheral" and "native" point of view, an in-depth analysis of the linguistic configurations in which they are immersed (the Catalan-speaking territory in Spain and the Occitan-speaking area in France). They believe that, in a situation of diglossia, concurrence, competition and finally *conflict* between a *dominant language* and a *dominated language* are inevitable: diglossia is neither balanced nor stable; its driving force is *conflict*. And when there is conflict, there is a dilemma: either the dominant language will continue its domination, in which case it will eventually replace (more or less slowly, yet inescapably) the dominated language, or the dominated community will resist this dynamic of language loss, and fight (through militant action, but also by means of an institutional *linguistic policy*) for a *normal* development of the social use of the dominated language (*normalization*). However, in order to achieve *normalization*, the language first needs to be normativized, i.e. the community members need to accept codification and agree on a standardized version of the language, thereby allowing their language to be written, taught and used in the media.

One of the major contributions of this last model is to have stressed the significance of *ideologies*, *prejudices* and *attitudes* (Ninyoles, 1971, Gardy and Lafont, 1981, Lafont, 1997); these represent the *community imaginaire* of the existing language(s). On the one hand, the representation of language A (the *dominant* one) shows clearly positive contents (language which is used in all domains of society, representing modernity, progress in science, technology etc., and social ascent). On the other hand, language B (the *dominated* one) is the subject of an ambivalent stereotyping through which it is perceived as the language of the origins, of the heart, of nature, but also of a rural way of life, of lack of education... and of the past. From this situation, equally paradoxical *attitudes* derive: sublimation, idealization, fetishization but also stigmatization, self-denigration, and guilt. In its turn, this context engenders *opinions* expressed through epilinguistic discourses whose outcome proves negative for language B, and *behaviours* that can be interpreted as compensations, or as a sort of "therapeutic accompaniment" for the *language replacement*, along the lines of a backward-looking folklore or a purely symbolic celebration. Yet, the most significant resulting behaviour is the non-transmission of language B within the family circle: this non-transmission is obviously the main marker of a replacement in progress. However, the comprehension of the ideologization of diglossia and the diagnosis of a more or less advanced language replacement can be the starting point of a militant, voluntaristic approach to a *collective contestation of the diglossic conflict*. Of course, the speech community has the last word; but for engaged sociolinguists, sociolinguistics is first of all a weapon of disalienation, and of mobilization in favour of the *normalization* of the hitherto dominated language.



**Example 1: *El correo gallego* 23-8-91, Letters to the Editor (Galicia)**

*Dear Sir: you are currently accepting little by little articles or short stories in Galician. Curb this attitude, otherwise you are going to lose all your readers. [...] Use Castilian, the universal language for which we must give so many thanks to God that it is our official language, and stop introducing anything at all in Galician, because either we don't understand it or we don't want to read it, because Galicia, without a deep knowledge of Castilian, is a lost, isolated people without future. [...] Don't allow Castilian to remain in oblivion, nor even to become the second language of Galicia, since in addition to isolating us, this would be a catastrophe for our communication with all Spaniards, tourists or pilgrims. Yours ever (D.H., A Coruña) (translated from Castilian).*

**Example 2: *Galicia***

"Because there are things that identify us, change your number plate"

**Examples 3 and 4: *German-speaking Switzerland***

"Dear parents ... wait, look listen, go"

(Information for parents distributed by the local school authorities. The situation has changed however, insofar as standard German has currently been reinforced in schools).

**Example 4**

« *A growing awareness of a true linguistic handicap. And maybe also intellectual, since these sympathetic local idioms, so rich regarding their rural vocabulary, are not refined instruments of thinking* » (Pilet, J., in *L'Hebdo*, 19 January 2006, p. 36).

## DIGLOSSIA AND NORMALIZATION, THE EXAMPLE OF GALICIA (SPAIN)

In order to understand the sociolinguistic situation of Galicia, it is necessary to present a brief overview of the history of the Galician language which, for historical reasons, after a period of literary glory and generalized use in all social functions during the Middle Ages (when only the *Galego-Portuguese* language existed), began to lose ground from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, when relations with independent Portugal broke off and Castilian became the increasingly widespread language in Galicia. Little by little, Castilian came to be identified with the nobility and the bourgeoisie, while Galician remained the language of peasantry and lost its status of learned language (a role thereafter played by Castilian). It is true that Galician has been, for centuries and up till now, the majority language of Galicia; nevertheless, its prestige has always been very low and its use has essentially been restricted to the working-class and the peasantry, being associated with the idea of poverty and ignorance. Following the promulgation of the Autonomy Statute in 1981, and the realization of the Law of Linguistic Normalization two years later (1983), Galician gradually gained in dignity and social recognition; its use has been *normalized* in several domains of social communication even though, for some people, Castilian still maintains its hegemony.

Whereas before the 80s it was still possible to consider that the *sociolinguistic conflict* concerned a *high language* (Castilian) and a *low language* (Galician), the official status of Galician and the (timid) enforcement of the Law of Linguistic Normalization made the situation more complex (even if a kind of diglossia already existed between different varieties of Galician, some being considered as rough, rural etc., others being perceived as pure, mellow etc.). Diglossia takes place between the different varieties of Galician and of Castilian (more or less prestigious, stigmatized or not). Such varieties range from standard Castilian (not widespread in Galicia) to vernacular Galician (surely the most widespread, the least prestigious and the most stigmatized variety), and include the regional Castilian of the recently Castilianized social classes, as well as standard Galician (not widespread and ideologically associated with nationalism), ‘*castrapo*’, or the ‘*novo galego urbano*’ (New Urban Galician) of the Neogalicians.

In the Galician sociolinguistic configuration, representations are a key element, and especially connotations of rural dimension (associated with lack of culture, with the past, etc.) and urban dimension (i.e. culture, modernity, etc.). Representations and stereotypes have hindered for many years the possibility of normalizing Galician: most of the decision-makers, not very motivated and often not in favour of such a normalization, did not feel a sufficient pressure from society in general, which was well settled in a context of diglossia that increasingly favoured Castilian, and mostly

stigmatized Galician. However, this situation has (slowly) evolved thanks to, among other things, the efforts of militants and of some associations like the *Mesa pola Normalización Lingüística (A Mesa)*, which fought so that the Law of Normalization be applied and respected.

The *normalization* of Galician first required its *normativization*. The Law of Linguistic Normalization officialized a standard that was considered by some people as being too similar to Castilian: it did not appease the conflict between the partisans of this standard and the supporters of a different version, which clearly reintegrates Galician in the Portuguese-speaking domain.

The two documents presented above concern normalization: the first one is an example of resistance to the normalization of Galician from a relatively important part of the population. The second one is the last page of an information leaflet: it shows the activity of the *Mesa* during the campaign in favour of the Galician place-name "Ourense" (against the Castilian translation "Orense"), and especially in favour of the use of the OU sign on the number plate (instead of OR).

## DIGLOSSIA AND IDENTITY: THE CASE OF GERMAN-SPEAKING SWITZERLAND

The denomination *Alemannic dialect* is an umbrella term for the dialects spoken in German-speaking Switzerland, but also outside it. However, the use of dialect in Austria and Germany differs from that of German-speaking Switzerland insofar as in the latter, a *generalized* and largely *consensual diglossia* prevails between the dialect (which is often called *Mundart*, oral mode – or *Schwyzertütsch*, Swiss German) and standard German (often called *Schriftdeutsch*, written German – or *bon allemand*, good German in French). While the use of dialects in Austria and Germany is in regression, as is the case in all industrial countries (e.g. Italy), their use in Switzerland remains stable, and is even on the increase. Another distinction: there is a continuum between the formal and colloquial varieties of German in Germany and Austria, modulated by pronunciation and lexicon, while in Switzerland, it is generally necessary to choose between one of the two varieties. The development of information and communication technologies in recent years has also fostered a more intense use of dialect in informal and private written interaction. Apart from the distinction between orality and literacy, another distinction can thus be made according to the degree of formality/intimacy.

Around 1900, some observers predicted the decline and even the extinction of the dialects in German-speaking Switzerland. But 20th century history would prove otherwise. Dialect use has been strongly encouraged to delineate Switzerland from Germany and its politics, as a psychological defence and Swiss identity marker. Some people were committed to the standardization of dialect, while others warned against what was called a *hollandisation* of German-speaking Switzerland. The end of the 1960s also witnessed a drive towards Swiss German, which became a symbol against

growing globalisation, a back-to-the-roots-movement, an identity quest and struggle against power.

Even if diglossia between Swiss German and standard German is part of the prototypical Fergusonian model (1959), certain aspects do not match, as the distinction between the H(igh) and L(ow) variety and the mapping notion of prestige. The most significant characteristics of the Swiss German dialect and its use appear below:

- No generational rupture – Swiss German is the variety transmitted to the following generation
- Urban as much as rural
- Used by all social classes and all professions
- Forward looking as well as backward looking
- Used for all topics of conversation
- Written form is sometimes also used for private letters, postcards, e-mail messages, blogs, SMS, especially by younger people
- Some social domains formerly reserved for standard German are impinged by dialect: media, school, Church.

The most salient conflict is apparent in contact with French-speakers (Switzerland being an officially quadrilingual country!), who often harbour negative attitudes towards the dialects, and towards diglossia in general. French-speakers, who are influenced by the gradual disappearing of their dialect – the patois –, learn standard German at school from the 3rd grade of primary school on and, more often than not, are bothered by the important position dialect holds in the social, professional and cultural domains, and even in the spheres of politics and education. For them, the dialect is a symbol of identity withdrawal (*repli identitaire*) leading to the isolation of Switzerland (e.g. the refusal by referendum to join the European Economic Area in 1992). Over the past few years, rules and recommendations to promote standard German at school from kindergarten on have been introduced in many German-speaking cantons. Pupils' mediocre results in the PISA surveys, the challenges involved in integrating migrant children, and economic and cultural factors are all motives for this backlash. One of the two documents presented above shows a flyer distributed in kindergarten classes in 1994 about traffic safety, which would be in standard German nowadays. The other document is an extract from a daily newspaper. A large number of articles in the press in the French part of Switzerland express negative attitudes towards the German dialects.

# LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY. LEARNERS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS' DISCOURSES

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## LANGUAGE AS SOCIAL AND IDENTITY PRACTICE

Links between language and identity are increasingly of interest to language educators, researchers and theorists, with the recognition that language is not only a linguistic system but also a complex social practice, in which users' identities are constructed. The modernist view of human agents having individual characteristics that endure over time has been critiqued with theoretical developments in the construct of identity over the last few decades. Informed by interactional sociolinguistics, Gumperz (1970) examined how social actors alternate between languages or varieties of languages to signal affiliation with different or multiple groups. In social psychology, Tajfel (1974) proposed the concept of social identity to articulate how individuals define themselves in relation to social groups. Expanding on this, Giles and Johnson (1981) suggested the notion of ethnolinguistic identity to explain how language serves as a marker of membership in social groups. In cultural studies, Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain (1998) described identity as a dynamic construction of many "selves" that vary depending on the contexts in which people are located. They argued that "identities—if they are alive, if they are being lived—are unfinished and in process" (p. vi). In the field of education, Norton (2000) elucidated the relationship between identity construction and language learning by highlighting the power dynamics in the larger social context that shape the ways learners invest in particular languages and define whether they are viewed as legitimate language speakers (Bourdieu, 2001). Bourdieu's theory has provided a useful framework for researchers in education since it explains why some social groups must expend greater energy and be more strategic than others to acquire the linguistic and social resources needed for survival.

The four case studies discussed below illustrate how Canadian education researchers have taken up theoretical notions of identity as shifting, multiple, contradictory and discursively created. This perspective informs their analyses of data related to child and adult second language learners, parents of plurilingual children, and teachers of

diverse ancestries. Classroom observations reveal how teachers rank children's performance on various dimensions of competence and these rankings, along with peer evaluations serve to construct school identities for students. Learners' affiliations with peers, teacher approval and particular classroom practices permit children access to desirable identities. These in turn increase their legitimacy as active classroom participants, and thus, their access to the linguistic resources of their community vital to language learning. Research with adult language learners shows how a shift in learner identities is central to the process of engagement in community activities. How this change occurs for adults can be partly explained with reference to the way activities are structured both inside and outside the workplace, and the way in which learners act upon the workplace to claim a more desirable identity with respect to their peers. Interviews with plurilingual families suggest that the linguistic practices parents adopt at home and the language programs they choose for their children constitute expressions of identity and represent strategic efforts to foster the development of multilingual resources that would position their children advantageously with respect to others. Research with teachers of different language ancestries shows how school district employers wield considerable power in shaping the discourse regarding marketable minority language skills. This has implications for the manner in which teachers characterize their linguistic identities in regard to employment.

### **Example 1: Field-notes of a typical classroom event**

*Harvey is colouring with a small group. A child has moved the crayon; Harvey is unable to reach them. In a long incomprehensible utterance (to me and I think, the other children), Harvey says:*

*/swʌts/ [meaning, I think, "stretch"].*

*Edward: (laughing, mocking) Trash?*

*Harvey: (twice) I didn't say trash, I said / swʌts / (angry, frustrated)*

*The children laugh and move the crayons farther away. Unable to remain an observer, I say I think Harvey wants to reach the crayons. Harvey, can you say: 'Can you pass the crayons, please?' He does, they pass the crayons back and he leaves.*

*Edward: I don't like Harvey.*

### **Example 2: Interview with Eva**

*For example yesterday when we went out, the manager she said to me - because I am just one year younger than she - "You look really different when you are not at work". Because when I am at the work I - when I do the hard job - I don't know, I'm different than like here. [...]*

*For example, we have a half-hour break. Sometimes—I try to speak. For example, they talk about Canada, what they like here, the places which they like.... Then I started to talk to them about how life is in Europe. Then they started to ask me some questions.*

### **Example 3: Interviews with parents**

*Mike: We told ourselves that she has to learn three or four languages. Not just one. Most kids here just know one language. . . . They are very good in English, right, but that's all they know.*

*Lak: Because in Singapore, she probably would be speaking Chinese, Malay, and Punjabi.*



*Mr. Smith: In today's competitive world, it helps to master a few languages, mainly French and English. It is very vital to survive in the job market. . . . We don't know where our children are going to live. They might not stay in Canada, they may be working who knows where.*

#### **Example 4: Interviews with teachers**

*Just being Indo-Canadian and being able to speak the language, that was an asset to get this job. Because with this school having such a big population of Indo-Canadians. . . I think that was a big factor in me getting the job.*

*When I started in teacher education people would say, "you have a definite advantage because you are Chinese". But the way I look at it is, I am a minority, but I don't know the language, so that's almost a knock against me. . . even when I wrote my letters of application. . . I didn't put down anything about being Chinese.*

## **LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND LEARNING**

Example 1 is part of an ethnographic study that followed six English language learners in Vancouver. Toohey (2000) investigated how the identities of learners of English as a second language (ESL) might be implicated in their language learning. One boy, Harvey, identified by his school as an ESL learner, entered kindergarten speaking fluent English (knowing, in his parents' estimation "no Chinese"), albeit with an "accent" similar to that of his Singaporean immigrant parents. Over the course of kindergarten, Harvey gained a problematic identity with peers that led to his increasingly being denied access to kindergarten material resources and to play, and over the year, his English production decreased. A beginning English language learner in the same classroom, on the other hand, was initially silent in interactions. She nonetheless was a valued playmate and she had access to many of the children and their imaginative play. Her English production increased dramatically over the year. Children's identities had observable effects on the extent to which they could have access to English speakers and practice their English.

In Example 2, a longitudinal study conducted with five immigrant women in Toronto, Norton (2000) investigated how one language learner, Eva, was particularly successful in negotiating entry into the Anglophone social networks in her workplace, thus facilitating language learning. Munchies, a fast-food restaurant, had differentiated practices for workers. Cleaning the floors and clearing out the garbage was seen as a suitable job for an immigrant, a newcomer, and an English language learner. Eva's positioning in these tasks blocked her access to conversations with customers and co-workers, thus limiting her opportunities to speak. However, the workplace community of practice overlapped with another community of practice, the monthly outings in which workers participated. It was at these times that Eva was taken outside the workplace where she had been positioned as a "stupid" person, only worthy of the "worst kind of job" to a context in which her youth and charm were valued symbolic resources. Outside the workplace, Eva's identity in the eyes of her co-workers became

more complex and began to change. It is significant, however, that Eva did not simply wait for structural relations to change, thus facilitating her opportunities to speak English. She herself acted upon the workplace, taking the opportunity to listen to the way her co-workers spoke to the customers, participating in social conversation, and contributing in unexpected ways to the general running of the restaurant. Eva also described how she would claim spaces in conversations, with the intention of introducing her own history and experiences into the workplace. Structural workplace practices, as well as Eva's appropriation of a desirable "European" identity, gave Eva increased access to Anglophone networks in her workplace and thus enhanced opportunities for language learning.

## LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND POWER

In Example 3, Dagenais (2003) examined immigrant parents' investment in language and education in Vancouver. While they maintained their family languages at home, these parents also enrolled their children in optional French immersion programmes that provided bilingual instruction in French and English. Drawing on their own experiences of immigration and language contact in multilingual settings, they adopted a transnational perspective in their efforts to have their children acquire the linguistic and social capital needed to survive as they moved from place to place in an era of globalization. The discourse of immigrant parents indicates that their practices in regard to language and education reflect a desire to position their children as plurilinguists who can access multiple social networks across national boundaries. While their material and social conditions as immigrants in Canada may not have allowed them to command attention, these parents wanted to ensure that their children find an audience in their country of adoption and abroad by acquiring languages that are highly valued in local and international markets. However, a follow-up study of their children's language experiences at school revealed that recognition of language resources was problematic in that context since teachers constructed students' identities in various ways as they focused on the language of instruction and rarely acknowledged plurilingual competence.

Example 4 is part of a meta-study (Beynon, Ilieva, Dichupa, & Hirji, 2003) of the language and employment experiences of 25 Chinese ancestry teachers and 20 Punjabi ancestry teachers in Vancouver. Results revealed that groups of teachers believed they were conversationally fluent enough to assist minority language students in feeling comfortable in classrooms. Few of the teachers considered themselves to be sufficiently literate to translate simple letters to parents. Yet, teachers of Punjabi ancestry consistently presented themselves to employers as linguistically skilled. On the other hand, teachers of a variety of Chinese ancestries felt that "knowing their language" meant having considerable literacy skills. Several historical, political, cultural and religious factors are implicated in these different perceptions. In the context of job interviews, where employers had considerable power to structure the discursive field, they commonly asked applicants "Do you know your language?" This opened



opportunities for Punjabi ancestry teachers to present themselves as knowledgeable, whereas Chinese ancestry teachers did not even want to enter this conversation.

When school district employers avoid uncomfortable (for them) issues of race, by focusing on language, they empower some teachers and disempower others. Rather than reproducing unequal power relations they could create a more equitable educational environment by discussing knowledge of language as one among a variety of resources that teachers of minority ancestry can bring to all students. Both groups' understandings of power and privilege can help students respond to challenges in school and society.



# ORDINARY DISCOURSES. TEACHERS' AND LEARNERS' REPRESENTATIONS OF CONTACT IN LEARNING

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## DEVELOPING DISCOURSES ON LANGUAGES

One of the characteristics of human thought is to perceive reality through the elaboration of categories. We take the existence of languages for granted; we naturally assume that Japanese is far more different from French than is Italian. This sense of obviousness is widely shared by ordinary speakers as well as by language teachers and linguists.

It is admitted that Saussure was the “father” of contemporary scientific linguistics, notably because of his idea of language as a “system in which everything holds together”. Structuralist linguists therefore hold that every language forms a system of its own, the system of German being different from that of English, and the Réunion creole system unlike that of French. Languages are perceived as “autonomous entities of internal dependencies” (Hjelmslev), all distinct from one another. Despite the fact that in the last twenty years, many linguists have been challenging this rather static and homogeneous view of language as a system in which everything holds together (for instance Berrendonner, Le Guern & Puech, 1983), this conception still underlies many discourses. For many people, contact between languages still means mixture, creolization, interference... phenomena that should all be avoided as far as possible because they threaten the integrity and uniqueness of cultures and may lead to a loss of reference points, and to anomy.

However, seen from Sirius, one cannot preclude the possibility that the languages of the Earth – in the sense of rhythmically organised sounds produced by human beings in order to communicate – form a continuum in which one language merges imperceptibly into the next (Saussure himself said that there were no natural borders between languages ...). Chiac, which is spoken in Acadia (Canada), is a good example

of this continuum. It also demonstrates how difficult it is to give a name to, and hence to categorize, what may well become a new language. Regarded as a variant by some (but in that case, a variant of French or a variant of English?), as a dialect on its way to becoming autonomous (« un parler en voie d'autonomisation ») by Perrot (2001) because of the peculiarities of its own structures, differing from both the French and English ones, Chiac is also invoked as an emblem of their identity by others, who may grant it a place of choice in poetry, as Gérard Leblanc did, or in literature, in the novels of France Daigle.

Chiac offers a prototypical example of *code mixing*. The other major phenomenon associated with language contact situations is *code switching*, widely observed among bilingual speakers, whatever the languages in contact. The universal character of these practices shows that linguistic activity also occurs between languages, not only within them. The use of these varieties based on code mixing or code switching can elicit contrasted – though nuanced – reactions.

All the following extracts are part of a research study on social representations of bilingualism and language learning in different geographical contexts (Andorra, Aosta Valley in Italy, and German and French speaking parts of Switzerland, subside FNRS 12-50777.97). Cf. Py, ed. (2000).

### Example 1: borrowing as loss or resource

Two Catalan speakers, over a distance of several speech turns, express two differing positions on borrowing: whereas the first one points out the risks of lexical loss, the second acknowledges the semantic and cultural enrichment stemming from borrowing.

033 An, p. 3 (...) *sí però amb reserves em això . però potser és una qüestió molt personal de que aeb:: a mi l'alarma una mica que se'm desperta és que . aeb: que agafis paraules que ja tens en la teva llengua però que . et vagis agafant d'una altra llengua . I que finalment pues acabem dient tots "buzón". Acabem tots amb una sèrie de paraules que ja existien en català.*

O57, Rf, p4 (...) *I llavors utilitzes les altres paraules ja amb intenció d'utilitzar-les no perquè no tens la paraula en català I agafes "buzón" . sino perquè tu en aquell moment vols utilitzar aquella expressió per donar més èmfasis al que estàs dient*

### Example 2: German as a difficult language

Extract from a research interview. M teaches Italian, B teaches German. The investigator (Enq) introduces the subject of the difficulty of the German language *vs* the easiness of Italian.

Enq *ouais . mais ça bon, ça c'est vrai que c'est un petit peu l'image qu'on a de l'allemand . de toute façon c'est difficile . [on sait dès le départ*

M *[ouais ouais*

Enq *et puis l'italien à la réputation d'être une langue facile*

B *ouais*

- M *alors qu'elle demande de la part de l'élève une attention relativement fine . à la progression parce que sinon ça devient un à peu près\*
- B *comme avec l'anglais*
- M *exactement . c'est comme l'anglais . c'est un deuxième temps . ça devient très: plus fin plus subtil (...)*

### Example 3: good friends vs false friends

Extract from a research interview. L teaches German, C teaches Italian, N teaches English. They introduce the topic of interference, with the expression “good friends” vs “false friends”.

- C *pis bon là y a eÿy a aussi un heu: . (G coughs) X (B clears his throat) quand heu moi j'ai appris les langues on m'a toujours dit fait attention aux faux amis\ . (lower voice) or moi j'insiste beaucoup*
- sur les . les BONS amis*
- L *(laughs)*
- C *parce qu'entre l'italien et le français il y en a beaucoup*
- L *ouais y en a beaucoup hein\*
- Enq *à force de voir les mauvais on oublie les bons hein/*
- L *(laughs)*
- C *voilà on oublie qu'y en a beaucoup de bons hein (laughs)*
- Enq *on se méfie de tout le monde (laughs) ..*
- C *heu: . pis là alors heu (lower voice) on veut travailler surtout avec les mauv-les bons amis\*

## EASY LANGUAGES, DIFFICULT ONES

In teaching situations, one of the basic premises seems to be the autonomy and independence of languages, though many teachers are probably not aware of this premise, still less do they formulate it explicitly. In this respect, it should also be checked to what extent ignorance of variants, and reference to a single norm, are connected to the role of schools in establishing and “freezing” a certain “format”. In this context, it is understandable that the formal teaching of languages should lead to organizing the contact between the source language(s) and the language that is to be learnt in such a way as to control interferences by relying on the two opposite but complementary processes of *fusion* and *separation* of the languages concerned. Thus French speaking learners of German or English will often hear their teacher say “it isn't difficult, it's the same in French”, or on the contrary “careful, it's not the same in French”. This opposition between “difficult” languages (such as German for French speakers) and “easy” languages (like English or Italian) is often criticised as being misleading, because language teachers tend to over-emphasize the difficulty of learning these languages “well”. In fact, advanced learning of any language is always perceived as “difficult”, however close to the source language(s) the target language may be perceived to be. [See Example 2].

## THE CONTEXT OF DISCOURSES

Representations of distance and proximity should always be construed in the context of their enunciation, for “perceived” proximity may be affected by essentially non-linguistic factors. Even in the close geographical contiguity of Europe, the Scandinavian model, which rests on mutual comprehension between Norwegian, Swedish and Danish speakers each speaking their own tongue, only works because of an equal legitimacy attributed to all the languages concerned. This receptivity to the neighbour’s language seems less important in the tiny Principality of Andorra where Catalan, French, Spanish and Portuguese, four Romance languages, are spoken alongside. In this highly multilingual context one cannot help being surprised at the very low level of understanding of Portuguese shown by the results of a survey focusing on the inhabitants’ language knowledge. One of the possible explanations is probably the lack of prestige of a language strongly associated with the working class: Portuguese is looked on in the same way as Spanish in the United States.

In the discourse of those concerned, the criteria produced in order to describe the distance/proximity of languages may involve different levels of analysis: phonetical, morphosyntactic or semantic... References to pragmatic or prosodic features are less frequent. And it is the lexical dimension, the most visible part of the language iceberg, which is put forward by many educational projects integrating the question of distance between languages, the “faux-amis” (false friends) banality being the one most frequently voiced. [See Example 3].

## WHAT CRITERIA TO ASSESS DISTANCE?

Distance is often measured according to the more or less important degree of perceived transparency between forms, even though this transparency is not a given, and is often relative and difficult to define precisely. The common, more or less distant origin of the languages concerned, contributes to the sense of similarity. Many – but far from all – French speakers will thus say they understand at least a little Italian or Spanish. A Korean student who had learnt a Romance language and a Germanic one told us that she found that Polish (a Slavic language) was very similar to these two Indo-European languages, and that she did not find it difficult to learn it. But the mechanism of borrowing, which operates through the speaker, whatever the languages involved, is also a factor of proximity (and even fusion) between two languages.

It thus seems reasonable not to conceive the distance/proximity duality as a strict dichotomy, and to favour instead a constructive approach: in the last resort, the speaker or learner will decide on the matter, in the light of his/her earlier language experiences and acquisitions. Representations of linguistic and cultural distance can also be questioned from a teaching point of view. It is for instance customary to stress the importance of this distance for Chinese students learning French, with reference to the difficulties they encounter in dealing with determiners in French, difficulties which are indeed barely addressed in language textbooks (see for instance Robert,

2005). But this representation does not take into account the fact that most Chinese students of French have previously learned English. In this case, the pedagogic treatment of the distance between French and Chinese should entail a reflection on the mediating role played by English. In some contexts, it would be advisable not to construe the "distance/proximity" duality as a relation of binary opposition, but rather to address it through a plural combination of the languages actually brought into contact.





# DISCOURSE ABOUT AND ON THE CLASSROOM.

## TEACHERS' REPRESENTATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

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### THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM AS CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE POLICY

All language policies assign to the school an important role, either in the simple replication, or frankly the alteration, of language habits; but its effectiveness is contingent on the actual practices of the speakers, which in turn are the outcome of power relationships (Bourdieu, 1982). Thus, far from being “neutral” ground, the school and the language classroom are constrained by institutional ideologies and social representations, while at the same time they need to acknowledge, guide and develop those of the social actors who work within it daily (Cavalli *et al.*, 2003).

The class can represent a plurilingual community recognised as such: if so, it hosts an “already present” plurilingualism wherein languages and language varieties and registers forming part of the learners’ initial repertoires are legitimately used, and are an object of observation and reflection. In this way, all languages in the learners’ repertoires – including code-switching in their spoken expression – can gain legitimacy (and legitimization) in the class and, be valued, and serve as foundation to develop a plurilingual and pluricultural competence, by its very nature unbalanced, plural, partial, asymmetrical, evolutive and malleable (Coste, Moore and Zarate, 1998). More often, though, it happens that inside the class - *de facto* multilingual – plurilingualism may be *known* but not *recognized*.

## THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM AS CULTURE: PLURILINGUAL PRACTICES AND REPRESENTATIONS

The class functions as a culture. Language use, how participation is configured in space and time, values and symbols, make up the culture of the class. This, linked with the broader socio-cultural backdrop, enables the participants to organise themselves, assign meaning to their activity, and identify with the group. Their plurilingualism demands more open arrangements, more room to allow for rotating, complementary roles, and circulation of skills to construct meaning, metalinguistic thought, scaffolding, and management and performance of tasks. The learners' various cognitive and linguistic resources are worth pooling on the one hand and multiple tracking on the other. An interactive theory of language education (a "holistic concept" as propounded by the European agencies) proves necessary to meet the needs of diverse learners in the same class group, for whom the language(s) to be learned may be present/absent among the people around them, close to/remotely from their repertoire, a means of identification/of plain communication, etc.

Code-switching is an integral part of classroom discourse, as a situated response to the asymmetry of proficiencies; it is a scaffolding for mutual understanding, it is also a product of the speakers' unique ability to choose a given language and/or to switch between languages, to generate certain effects. Code-switching in the language classroom fulfils various functions (Cambra, 2003): aiding comprehension and the construction of utterances; highlighting their different enunciative levels; signifying metalinguistic and metacognitive activity; revealing relational and affective activity. In situations of plurilingual education, also affecting non-language subjects, it seems important to distinguish between macro-alternation (as part of curriculum design by the teacher, and of situated negotiation of contractual language use with the learners) and micro-alternation (management *here and now* of phenomena not included in this contract)(Gajo, 2001).

Representations are essential because they help teachers to cope with the complexity of their task: they provide a meaningful framework for interpreting situations. They guide their actions and provide the background for managing dilemmas (Cambra, 2003). They must be reckoned with by research, as they inform teachers' judgments concerning their work, their decisions, their interactive behaviour and their moulding influence on learners. Representations are in part inherited, stereotyped, shared by the community; they are at the same time highly individual, and can evolve over time. They build up in social interaction, develop into systems, and emerge in discourse and in action.

They are strongly influenced by biographical factors, educational culture and didactic traditions, such as descriptions of language, the discursive forms of textbooks or of training, as well as by each individual's linguistic, interactive and learning history, plus experience as a teacher. Conversely, when training actions are confined to conveying declarative and procedural knowledge without really registering the representational substratum, they seem ineffective against any resultant opposition. Training and

research need to interlock, aided by the teachers and by the processes of destabilising and restructuring representational systems, because the contexts of plurilingual education call for great efforts of innovation.

Two areas in particular require thorough work on representations with language teaching professionals:

## PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION AND NON-LINGUISTIC ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES

The main changes in representations concern the transition from teaching the language as an object of learning to its use as a tool for content learning. This presupposes consideration of: a) the cross-disciplinary dimension of any linguistic tool, and its central role in the cognitive process; b) the roles which a L2 or L3 can perform, in rotation with the L1, in the processes of concept-building in school subjects with distinctive characteristics; c) the changes that bi-/plurilingual teaching involves for language teaching, and especially as regards the language teacher's identity; d) the indispensable decompartmentalization of disciplines that must be effected not only in respect of all language instruction (L1, L2, L3 etc.) but also between language and content subjects, and the necessary inter and cross-disciplinary forms of co-operation.

## PLURILINGUAL SPEECH

Classroom research has determined a range of situations of rejection or acceptance of code-switching (Py, 2004). A number of micro-alternation phenomena, sometimes repressed and sometimes promoted by teachers, cause genuine unease. However, forms of macro-alternation increasingly obtain and allow selective, reasonable and effective use of a plurilingual mode. This involves to reconceptualize the language classroom as a plurilingual space, where the monolingual and bilingual modes are possible, and where code-switching constitute a legitimate additional resource for communication and for learning.

**Example 1:** The person interviewed puts into words his/her representations of what, from his/her standpoint, should constitute a school language policy respecting the pupils' origins and identities.

268H la . la politica linguistica dev'essere (...) RITAGLIATA sulle esigenze e sui problemi dei RAGAZZI (...) che sono i figli degli emigrati che han lavorato per l'autostrada/ e che si sono insediati lì/ io devo tener CONTO/ io non mi posso PERMETTERE/ per esempio\ di fare delle politiche linguistiche sia sul francoprovenzale che sul francese che NEGHINO/ a quelle persone\ lì il DIRITTO di ACQUISIRE . elementi . nel di euh elementi linguistici di e di di: . innovativi di: di avanzamento e di di miglioramento e di arricchimento nel campo francese\ e delle altre lingue\ MA stando ATTENTI ai punti di partenza\ . non facendo una politica diciamo così di/ . . euh: euh . uniforme per tu- uguale per tutti\ come invece è stato fatto\ [...] (corpus IRRSAE-repr/OPIN-VdA/10.11.99)

**Example 2:** Sira, a teacher in a Catalan rural school, explains that foreign children speak Catalan very well; but that social use outside school (the rule of accommodation of Catalan to Castilian speakers) contradicts her representation of the value of using the language for better learning:

*A grocer (speaking Castilian Spanish) asks a child customer of Indian origin: “qué más quieres?” (= anything else? in Castilian). The child looks for the sugar on the shelves to point it out. Thereupon the teacher comes in to do her shopping and the child asks her in Catalan: “sucre com es diu?” (= how do you say sugar?). She answers (in Catalan, of course): “dignes-li sucre que t’entendrà” (= tell the shopkeeper sugar and she’ll understand). The shopkeeper says with surprise: “però que sap català?” (= but he knows Catalan!).*

**Example 3:** In an induction class for first-generation migrants, the teacher (P) helps prepare a text of instructions in Catalan to build a paper aeroplane for young children.

P: *ja pots posar què? (...)*

MA: *ja pode::m finit*

P: *com?*

MA: *finit*

P: *finit no/ aquí no/ ja podem què?(...)*

GR: *ja podem:: despegar (=décoller)*

P: *m:: un avió | aquests no despeguen | perquè no estan a terra/ i además despegar*

DE: *ja pode::m volar (...)*

PLURAL.OBS-AAPRIM-ESTER-ODG2004

**Example 4:** Two history teachers (EH) and French teachers (EF), jointly present in a classroom in Valle d’Aosta, get the learners (junior secondary level) working on their initial representations about the Resistance during World War 2, with a song of the partisans (“Bella Ciao”) as a teaching aid

13 EH *par exemple . la végétation tyPIQUE de la méditerranée . le long: le bord de la méditerranée . c'est quoi/ . in italiano com'è: com'è la:*

132Cl *la macchia*

133EH *la macchia . me- DITERranea . c'est quoi la macchia/ [...]*

146A *ensemble d'arbres*

147E.H *c'est un ensemble . [d'arbres*

148E.F *[justement*

149E.H *et aussi/.. de/*

150A *[buissons*

151E.H *[buissons arbustes etcaetera . donc\maquis/*

152E.F *eb . nous allons nous trouver: nous allons trouver la . définition tu lis Francesca elle a cherché maquis en français*

153F *(elle lit) darsi alla macchia*

154EF *[darsi alla macchia*

155F *[~~o~~rganizz~~az~~ione clandestina di resistenza durante la seconda guerra mondiale . diventare partigiano andare nella resistenza andare in montagna*

156EF *donc vous voyez combien d'infos j'ai à partir [d'un dico*

(Corpus IRREVDA\_MONTEMILUS3\_2005)

**Example 5:** A teacher explains how his representations regarding the teaching of his subject in French changed, in the context of bi-/plurilingual education in Valle d’Aosta.

246S [...] è stato per me eub . più seRENo eub . l’insegnamento/ perché ho accettato da subito l’idea che/ se proprio ero in difficoltà/ potevo ricorrere tranquillamente a un’altra lingua/ perché il mio obiettivo principale in quella sede/ era veicolare dei contenuti

247D dei concetti

248S co- costruire delle competenze negli alunni/ e non era soltanto la costruzione di una lingua perfetta/ e anzi lo: sforzo di usare un’altra lingua era proprio trasmettere . un messaggio ai ragazzi l’idea che l’insegnante di italiano/ che USA il francese/ è per loro . un messaggio fortissimo\ perché . dice/ questo qui che dovrebbe parlare solo in italiano/ parla anche in francese\ ed è il miglior messaggio che possa arrivare loro per superare eub i . i timori di esprimersi in una lingua\ se qualcuno li ha\ (corpus IRRSAE-repr/FORM-LING-VdA/23.12.99)

At the school level, curricular choices tend to cement the educational linguistic project, and the way of accommodating linguistic and cultural diversity; the margin of manoeuvre is highly variable depending on the contexts. School is also the context of specific social practices, in which community’s norms and values are experienced, questioned, and negotiated, and where relationships with languages and the school are built tightly together.

Consistency and continuity that should exist between social environment with its own features, and action of school together with the importance of protective linguistic policies for minority languages in “cross-bred” contexts –more and more multilingual and multicultural- underline the need for language education policy measures, flexible enough to accommodate complexity and to adapt to the proper needs of each (micro)context (see Example 1). This research for consistency between action of school (and its purposes) and language uses within a peculiar social context, as a matter of fact, may sometimes show a more or less open discrepancy: school might receive insufficient support to its efforts (see Example 2), when the community background does not play thoroughly its part as an acquisition environment in which the language learnt at school would be activated as a tool of social communication.

Within each classroom environment, contracts are set up in an implicit and/or explicit way, with the view to rule rights and duties. In language classrooms, the code-switching contract – what language(s) is the learner authorized to / expected to use – may require an explanation and be open to negotiations. Depending on circumstances and learning objectives, the teacher can: a) require the use of the target language (monolingual mode); b) accept, in case of a temporary difficulty, to draw on the various linguistic resources in the learner’s repertoire (code-switching can then serve fluidity in communication, or as scaffolding to restructure the learner’s intermediary system, or interlanguage, as in Example 3); c) alternate codes as a way to teach

language and content (bilingual mode) (see Example 4), while learners may also do the same in their learning process.

Several bi-/plurilingual educational systems provide for an alternate use of two codes in the acquisition of non-linguistic knowledge (CLIL, EMILE, Val d'Aosta bilingual school, etc.). These systems aim at better language learning as well as a better construction of the subjects' concepts (see Example 4). In these circumstances, code-switching might also be an excellent strategy for a teacher in charge of a particular subject to help overcome potential linguistic insecurity: the teacher then appears as a ("different") model of efficient learner and co-learner, and prompts learners to also take risks, in spite of difficulties (Example 5). Teachers as co-learners contribute to dispel learners' fears and apprehensions.

# CONTREPOINT

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Ma position de francophone enseignant l'allemand et la didactique des langues aux États-Unis me conduit à rédiger ce contrepoint d'une perspective à la fois anglophone et francophone.

## AU LECTEUR FRANCOPHONE

Le travail sur les représentations sociales présuppose un intérêt non seulement pour la manière dont les apprenants parlent et écrivent la langue, mais pour la façon dont ils pensent et se représentent le monde des locuteurs de la langue-cible: sa valeur symbolique sociale et culturelle, le monde auquel elle se réfère, les identités et les bienfaits économiques, sociaux et culturels auxquels son usage permet d'accéder. Un tel travail présuppose aussi un désir de faciliter l'accès des apprenants (soit immigrants, soit membres de l'Union Européenne) à des ressources nécessitant la maîtrise de la langue. Ces ressources - économiques, symboliques, identitaires - sont d'une grande importance pour les apprenants de français langue étrangère en Europe et d'anglais seconde langue en Amérique du Nord et en Australie. Dans les pays anglophones, les enseignants cherchent à comprendre et à influencer les attitudes et croyances, les constructions discursives – bref, les *représentations* – des apprenants afin de faciliter leur apprentissage et ultérieurement, leur intégration dans les sociétés d'accueil. Dans le reste du monde, les enseignants d'anglais langue internationale se soucient également de comprendre comment leurs élèves se représentent non seulement la langue anglaise, mais aussi les modes de vie et les identités associés à l'usage de l'anglais.

Mais « langue seconde » n'est pas « langue étrangère », même si parfois un seul vocable recouvre les deux dans le cas du « Français langue étrangère ». Alors que les langues secondes (e.g., *English as a Second Language* ou ESL, *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* ou DaF) servent à faciliter l'intégration d'étrangers dans une communauté nationale, et donc demandent un engagement avec la culture nationale et ses multiples manifestations, les langues étrangères (e.g., *English as a Foreign Language* ou EFL enseigné en France ou en Allemagne, le français enseigné en Allemagne ou aux États-Unis) servent les besoins variés d'une population autochtone désireuse de travailler, voyager ou vivre à l'étranger sans pour autant s'y intégrer. Dans la didactique des langues étrangères en pays anglophones, les représentations sociales, dans le sens donné dans ce chapitre, n'ont pas fait jusqu'à présent partie des soucis immédiats des enseignants. Le discours

sur l'apprentissage des langues y est dominé par la psycholinguistique ou *second language acquisition theory*, qui a traditionnellement nettement séparé le cognitif du social, bien que dans les dix dernières années, la *sociocultural theory*, basée sur Vygotsky, ait favorisé une approche plutôt sociocognitive de l'acquisition des langues. Dans l'imaginaire collectif des enseignants anglophones de langues étrangères, l'apprentissage d'une langue, et donc sa didactique, demeurent quelque chose qui se passe dans la tête des apprenants et dans une salle de classe ou sur l'écran d'un ordinateur, même s'il est bien entendu que cet apprentissage est facilité par l'interaction et la négociation du sens entre apprenants ou entre apprenants et locuteurs natifs.

Parmi le petit nombre d'anglophones qui apprennent une langue étrangère au niveau du secondaire (seulement 8% des élèves aux USA, 13% en Australie), peu d'entre eux ont le loisir ou le désir d'aller à l'étranger. La matière étant le plus souvent facultative, la plupart choisissent d'apprendre une langue vivante pour donner symboliquement du cachet à leur éducation, pour trouver un emploi plus tard, ou tout simplement *to have fun* dans des classes petites, et généralement interactives. Les représentations sociales portant sur la culture-cible sont très souvent basées sur une notion de la culture comme mode de vie exotique ou ethnique, mentalités et pratiques de la vie quotidiennes qui diffèrent du mode de vie anglo-américain, perçu comme allant de soi. Cette attitude est renforcée par l'idéologie nationale de l'Amérique comme melting pot multiculturel, dont les locuteurs/acteurs, certes, parlent divers codes linguistiques et ont des pratiques quotidiennes d'une extrême diversité, mais qui ont tous, en fin de compte, les mêmes représentations d'un monde social qui pense et parle l'anglais. Il faut se hâter d'ajouter que depuis quelques années cette idéologie diverge de plus en plus de la réalité actuelle des classes de langue, où un nombre croissant d'élèves sont plurilingues et pluriculturels. Le grand nombre d'immigrés refusant d'abandonner leur langue à leur arrivée aux États-Unis, ou désireux d'apprendre la langue de leurs ancêtres, ou tout simplement fiers d'être plurilingues - sans pour autant renoncer à perfectionner leur anglais - est le gage d'une diversification potentielle des représentations au sein même du monde anglophone.

## TO THE ANGLOPHONE READER

My first reaction as an American language teacher is to wonder how I managed to do without a notion as useful as that of *représentation sociale* in thinking about second language acquisition in multilingual contexts. But I am not sure to understand what it really means. My first impulse is to try and attach it to the various equivalents offered by the authors of the entries: attitudes, beliefs, stereotypes, frames of reference, connotations (entries 2 and 3), social norms (entry 2), values (entry 3), discursive constructions (entry 5), categories and categorizations (entry 6), schemata which enable social actors to interpret situations, take appropriate action and manage conflicts (entry 7). I try to order these notions as they seem to cover different disciplinary domains in French and in English. In English, attitudes, beliefs and stereotypes are familiar to researchers in educational or social psychology; schema is a well known concept from artificial intelligence and psycholinguistics; categorization, connotation and discursive



construction are notions taken from cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis; norms and values are of concern to sociologists and anthropologists. But not all these notions would fall under the English term ‘representation’.

Beside the differences in disciplinary boundaries, there is a more fundamental difference between the French and the English notions of *représentation*. In the anglophone world, representation is precisely not action or social practice. The term representation evokes mental structures, schemata or frames of expectation of a purely cognitive nature that linguists attempt to attach to verbal (and paraverbal) evidence in interlocutors’ speech. By analyzing the linguistic evidence of mental processes, they can gain access to what the speaker ‘had in mind’, i.e., his/her representation, at the time of the utterance. By contrast, the French notion of *représentation sociale* covers thought and action, knowledge and practice, the saying and the doing. It is at once mental structure and social habitus. It structures and is structured by what the authors of this chapter call *discours*, in the sense given to the term by Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault in social and cultural theory, and by James Gee and Norman Fairclough in educational linguistics. In fact, French *discours* corresponds here pretty much to what James Gee has called Discourse with a capital D, i.e., « a way of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles by specific groups of people” (Gee 1990, xix) – what most anglophone language teachers would lump together under ‘culture’.

But the Anglophone reader does not usually turn to a sociolinguist like James Gee to understand second language acquisition. The relevant fields of research for the teaching and learning of foreign languages are generally considered to be not sociolinguistics nor social psychology, but psycholinguistics. In an effort to bridge the gap between the cognitive and the cultural in language use, researchers in applied linguistics turn to work on linguistic relativity in cognitive linguistics, and discourse analysis in anthropological linguistics; researchers in language development turn to sociocultural theory under the aegis of Vygotsky or to a theory of intercultural language learning that is gaining in popularity in Europe and Australia.

## IN THE IN-BETWEEN

En écrivant ce contrepoint dans la perspective envisagée par les auteurs de cet ouvrage, c’est à dire d’une position énonciatrice décentrée par rapport à l’Europe et aux États-Unis, je constate que, malgré les différences de contexte social et éducatif, enseignants et apprenants des deux côtés de l’Atlantique auraient avantage à comprendre la notion française de représentation sociale. Peu d’enseignants discutent ouvertement avec leurs élèves de leurs préconceptions et des connotations qu’ils associent à la langue-cible, de leurs préjugés concernant la culture-cible et de ses représentants, et des idées qu’ils se font du profit de distinction que leur apportera l’apprentissage de cette langue. Ici et là, l’enjeu est non seulement de comprendre l’Autre, locuteur de la langue-cible, mais de comprendre la manière dont, adultes et adolescents, ils sont manipulés par le langage et dont eux-mêmes manipulent les

langues, idiolectes, sociolectes dont ils disposent pour changer le cours des actions humaines. Peu d'apprenants ont conscience du rôle qu'ils jouent en tant que locuteurs/acteurs non-natifs sur la vie ou la mort d'une langue, son développement, son usage, son potentiel sémiotique. Il n'y a pas grand'chose qu'ils croient pouvoir changer aux discours et aux représentations sociales qui leur sont imposés jour après jour par la télévision, les médias, la rhétorique politique, l'école et l'internet. L'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère, avec tout ce qu'elle apporte de décentration, de conflit et de découvertes, est une des matières scolaires les plus propices à remettre en question ces représentations sociales et à redonner aux apprenants la puissance d'agir discursive dont ils pensent manquer. Si en effet, les représentations sont « acte social » (entrée 1 et contrepoint du chapitre 1), elles impliquent une puissance d'agir qui vient – et c'est là une des prémisses de ce chapitre – d'une capacité à comprendre les discours qui forment aussi bien l'Autre que le Soi.

Si l'on considère la culture (au sens anglophone du terme) comme le travail de sémiotisation de la réalité à travers de multiples systèmes symboliques verbaux, gestuels, visuels, musicaux etc. (comme ceux présentés dans les diverses microentrées de ce chapitre), chaque activité discursive de la part de locuteurs/acteurs natifs et non-natifs contribue à la construction, déconstruction, reconstruction de la culture, aussi bien celle des apprenants que celle des représentants de la culture-cible. S'agit-il ici de la construction d'identités, comme le suggèrent les auteurs de l'entrée 5 ? Le terme est devenu à la mode, et a de nos jours presque remplacé celui de culture. Il faut penser qu'il connote quelque chose de plus essentiel, de plus irréductiblement individuel que le mot 'culture'. Mais c'est un mot qui a ses risques dans l'enseignement des langues si le psychothérapeute se substitue à l'enseignant. Dans ma position d'interlocutrice décentrée, je préfère le terme plus modeste de 'positionnement énonciatif' ou *subject-position*, qui redonne au locuteur sa dignité, et qui, dans une perspective austinienne de la performativité, redonne à l'acteur ce que les anglophones appellent *agency*.

*Agency* ou puissance d'agir constitue le thème de l'ouvrage de Judith Butler *Excitable Speech. A politics of the performative* (1997) traduit en français par *Le pouvoir des mots. Politique du performatif* (2004). S'appuyant sur la théorie linguistique du *Quand dire, c'est faire* de John Austin et sur la notion d'itérabilité de Jacques Derrida, Butler montre que l'emploi du discours d'autrui nécessairement réitère ce discours, en même temps qu'il lui donne un sens différent. L'énonciation même d'un discours étranger enrichit ce discours de significations inattendues et même insoupçonnées, comme on peut le voir dans les documents présentés dans ce chapitre.

Qui dit sujet énonciateur et performativité, dit choix. La notion de choix linguistique va de pair avec la notion de représentation: à la fois déterminée et libre, à la fois sociale et individuelle, la parole est le lieu par excellence d'un existentialisme linguistique dont enseignants et apprenants de langue ont besoin dans nos contextes plurilingues et pluriculturels. Apprendre à jouer sur la multiplicité des sens à travers une didactique plurilingue peut permettre aux apprenants d'échapper aux contraintes de la langue dans laquelle ils sont nés et d'ouvrir leurs coeurs et leurs esprits à des représentations sociales qu'ils ne se seraient jamais imaginées.

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Chapter 7

# Institutions and power

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# NOTE ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 7

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The only major conceptual issue raised by the translation of the 2 entries of chapter 7 of the *Précis* devoted to ‘minority and national languages’ and to ‘the institutionalization of la Francophonie’ respectively is related to the French term *alloglotte*. This convenient neologism is used in French to depict non-Natives speakers. J. Lo Bianco has pointed out that this term would not be understood by most English speakers. He suggested that immigrant children attending French schools, described as “enfants alloglottes”, would be called “Heritage or Community Language Speakers”, or “Minority Language Speakers” in an Anglophone setting. Neither of these terms is acceptable viewed from the French angle.

The notion of ‘heritage language’ is unknown in French and the French nation state ideology is averse to the concept of “community”. Although, the latter term is occasionally used in the Press or by members of a specific ethnic or minority group, the terms of “communauté”, translational equivalent of “community”, and “langue communautaire” (“Community Language”) are rarely, if ever used, in Academic French. Finally, “minority languages” are never used either for regional languages such as Catalan or Alsatian or for languages spoken by immigrants such as Turkish or Berber dialects. Thus, “Minority Language Speakers’ will not apply to the children, once known as “enfants issus de l’immigration” (immigrant children), and now called “enfants nouvellement arrivés en France” (newly arrived children in France).

In the last resort, “enfants alloglottes” has been translated as “alloglot children”. Although “immigrant children” is more acceptable in English, emphasis is shifted in this case from competence in the target language to social and political status.



## INTRODUCTION:

# INSTITUTIONS AND POWER

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The essential motivation for inserting considerations of power, institutional status and social position within discussions of foreign language education is that communication, and language, are now widely understood to have both a context as well as being capable of measurement.

This chapter which deals with institutions, language teaching policy and issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism is closely related to the section on the politics of literacy in the chapter devoted to “History, practices and models” and in many ways to the chapter dealing with “Social affiliations and Relations”. Through the issue of migration, which is a major topic in this chapter, it is also linked to the chapter on “Languages and the Self”. This chapter deals also with community and interaction and addresses the topics of language ideology and representations of languages. These issues relate this chapter to those bearing on “Agency and speaking” and “Discourse on languages”.

## CONTEXT AND INSTITUTIONS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THE TEACHING OF CULTURES

Including the notion of context, which refers to the envelope of culture, ideology, purpose, genre and relations of power that surrounds any language, and to various institutional supports for languages, means viewing language education in ways that more closely resemble the actual nature of communication itself. In recent years researchers and philosophers of language have been able to offer conceptual tools to more accurately understand and describe communication. As a result what used to be seen as random or unsystematic variations of language have come to be seen as systematically ordered, responsive to socio-cultural, economic and ideological structuring. Once it becomes possible to analyse and understand actual communication in reliable and careful ways, the relation between speech and language,

between the idealised forms that classical descriptive and normative linguistics produces and what is actually said, written, or otherwise communicated, becomes much clearer. The consequences for pedagogy become apparent as well. What in the past might have seemed random, irrelevant or unsystematic becomes relevant and well ordered.

Foreign language education in this new world of knowledge, informed by new understandings of language as communication involves at least the following.

1. Teaching the national standard language to non-speakers whether they are of immigrant or indigenous origin, by taking into account the citizenship and public participation uses of the national standard language and the original language of the learner;
2. Specialization of formal standard literate knowledge around the disciplinary conventions of particular fields such as professions, institutions or occupations, so that bilingual mastery for the learner involves gaining access to cultural capital stored in the prestige language without loss of the mother tongue;
3. Development of the discursive and literary language backgrounds of learners, be these non-standard varieties of the national language, or languages other than the national language whether of immigrant or indigenous origin, so that they can attain biliterate bilingualism;
4. The teaching of prestige, strategic, or status languages to all learners, whether of majority or minority background.

Because schools and school systems are agencies of secondary socialisation (the family being the agency of primary socialisation, Watson-Gegeo, 2004) and because schools inculcate citizenship norms and values these objectives of language education are relevant to the teaching of foreign languages and foreign cultures. As a result institutions, schools and school systems should be examined for the type of discourses they propound. As a case in point, since the end of the nineteenth century, the French school system has been one of the major actors for the enforcement of the French language upon a multilingual France. This enterprise has met with a large measure of success. However, since the mid-twentieth century resistance from the multilingual areas of France, international migration and later in the century action from trans-European bodies (such as the European Union and the Council of Europe) have enabled the promotion of both regional languages and of the languages spoken by migrant workers.

Although schools have an ancient history, often one of independence and freedom, education systems are different. Education systems with prescribed curricula and public accountability derive their legitimacy from states. Even in societies where education systems devolve their authority to semi-autonomous religious, parental or other bodies, states typically retain control through examination systems, or certification rights, or in other ways they licence and condition the operation of school

systems and of individual schools. State interest in education is therefore either conducted by direct control, by investment or by setting up diverse conditions under which tolerance will be granted. This is perhaps less true in France than in many other states. Although the Church has played a major role in the Frenchification of French colonies and in promoting local vernaculars, the specificity of French *laïcité* (lay power) has considerably reduced its role in Education within France itself.

The study of the role of education planning in Education has taken the form of “*educational linguistics*”, (Spolsky, 1978, Lo Bianco, 2007), meaning the application of explicit linguistic knowledge to problems of teaching and learning. Explicit linguistic knowledge originally came from the situation-independent understandings generated by the main branches of formal linguistics. However, in recent years, this knowledge has been extended to include the growing awareness of context, institutions and social setting. As a result in recent decades the assumptions of education linguistics that have been psychological, individualistic and based on formal linguistics have ceded space dramatically to more situationalist and constructivist paradigms, making social criteria, situation, context, variability and co-construction central issues.

## **SCHOOL SYSTEMS, MULTILINGUALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM**

The tolerance of heritage languages, of regional languages, of languages brought to a country through economic migration, which is in the last resort a political issue, is one of the major factors of the development of multilingualism and multiculturalism. This issue is strongly related to institutions, civil society and the State. In the French case, this includes the empowerment of regional languages from overseas France (including Creoles, Tahitian and Kanak languages from New Caledonia). These languages and immigrant languages within France differ in three fundamental ways from foreign languages as traditionally understood.

First, overseas French languages and immigrant languages in France have local contexts of use and institutions which support and sustain the intergenerational transmission of these languages. This is not found with foreign languages, whose sustaining institutions are located in the countries where the language concerned is spoken. Take, for example, the case of Arabic in France taught as a foreign language to French speaking pupils, and Arabic taught as a community, or immigrant language to Arabic and French speaking pupils in France. There are three main differences in these cases

1. In the first case the identity and emotional dimensions of the language are largely absent for the learners while in the second the learners are acquiring a more developed version of a language which they already speak or at least understand, with which they identify and with which they might have strong or at least weak emotional attachment to.

2. Beyond these differences of identity and emotion there is the living spoken reality of the language. In the first case Arabic is spoken by distant others, in the latter case it is spoken in communities of which the learners are part. This means that the language is available for these learners for informal learning, or reinforcement, sometimes even for the maintenance of non-standard or stigmatised forms and norms as well.
3. Finally, there is a major difference of institutions. In the first case, Arabic is the language of institutions that are distant from the learner, and for the most part not accessible to them. However, in the second case the learner has involvement in these institutions within France. They are likely to be evolving and changing as well, reflecting an amalgam of the Arabic original setting, and the French context, and therefore will be a kind of hybrid. The bilingual socio-cultural reality will be felt in the forms of communication as well, with a greater likelihood of code-switching and bilingual communication, and possibly even of multiple proficiencies, so that learners will have more developed listening and less developed writing skills.

This is of course a hypothetical case to emphasise the direct bearing that institutions, social context and inter-ethnic relations will have on foreign language education. In fact the very term foreign language education becomes untenable to describe the domestic multilingual context.

The teaching of Creoles and the languages of overseas French territories resembles the above considerations but with additional complications. In these cases, especially apparent in New Caledonia, is the contested nature of the languages themselves. This refers to what kind of political status the languages are likely to have. In New Caledonia, part of the Matignon Accords grants recognition to these languages, incorporates their teaching into schools, and encourages the idea of an ultimate vote of possible independence. If this succeeds these languages would assume an ever greater role as institutional languages of an independent polity and so knowledge of these languages will assume a qualitative difference from the bilingualism that an immigrant in France, or a French national acquiring foreign language competence is likely to have.

## **GLOBALISATION, TRANS-NATIONAL AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: MULTILINGUALISM, LANGUAGE POLICIES AND AGENCY**

In this chapter, the relation between institutions and multilingualism is discussed through a wide range of language policy questions. In the first place, the multilingual student has to face school policy which may be more or less tolerant towards linguistic and cultural diversity. Laurent Puren (U. de la Réunion) and Thao Tran Minh (Paris III) in *Alloglot Children and Linguistic Policies in Education: Minority Languages / National Language(s)* highlight the distinctive function of secondary socialization according to

the French model that has grown up over a long history of thinking about citizenship in the context of a centralized state. In the case of France, despite recent changes, the school institution tends to be diffident about linguistic and cultural diversity.

In a cross-national perspective, issues may also be unclear. As a case in point, Georges Daniel Véronique (Université de Provence & DILTEC, Paris III) considers the relation between *Institutionalizing a Transnational Linguistic Entity: Sociolinguistic Realities and Language Policies*. He surveys specifically how French is evolving in the world language ecology of today. A fundamental part of language policy and multilingualism has been the role of translation, across languages. Joseph Lo Bianco (the University of Melbourne) considers *Translation as Institution, Legacy and Practice*, by taking a long historical overview of the transfer of meanings across languages.

English as compared to French creates a different type of trans-national space. Amy B.M.Tsui (The University of Hong Kong) provides a survey of the use of English as a medium of instruction in Asian universities in her paper *Globalisation and Linguistic Paradoxes: the Role of English*. State policy as well as private interests favour this type of evolution leading to the generalized enforcement of English. Angela Cincotta (the Australian National University) brings more information on the linguistic and political issues involved in *Solidarity and Power: Legitimising the Language of the State*, a multilingual state, a former colony of France. Laos, like many newly independent states, is engaged in the establishment of the institutional and educational legitimisation of its national and state language over its minority languages in the schools.

The Council of Europe, yet another case of a trans-state, or supra-state body, provides another example of international language policy. This is well illustrated by Joanna McPake (Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, and also the Council of Europe) who reports on an initiative of the Council of Europe entitled *Valuing all Languages at School: Exploring Models of Provision*. McPake's paper can be linked to Tsui's in that it refers to a trans-national phenomenon, but also to Véronique's paper, because it is about an extra-national reality. However, it also differs from these considerations. In McPake's study we see that institutions that are not tied to a given language because of ethnicity, or a specific history of national formation, can be open to validation of a wide range of languages. It is also noteworthy that the discourse and justification that is generated to do this looks dramatically different from what national states would use, even for their own minority languages.

In this chapter, the essential claims of the role and importance of institutions and social setting in relation to plurilingualism are well emphasised. Puren and Minh show how the school is an agent on national absorption through its linguistic operations, both for immigrant children and for regional languages within the established state of France. From Véronique this discussion is extended outwards to the role of this same language to foreigners and others linked to France by its colonial expansion in the past, but also the prestige and attractiveness of French in other contexts, and how these relations necessarily involve other languages as well. In Lo Bianco's contribution, the central importance of the institution of translation, and the growth of the professions associated with both spoken and written language exchange

(interpreting and translating) which are like the cousins of language teaching, since they always go alongside it, are emphasized.

The remarkable reach and expanse of English in the most populous part of the world, in the context of rapid and deep economically driven globalization, is a remarkable feature. It may be compared in some way to Francophonie. Many paradoxes arise for national states as globalization seems to go along with English, but national developments seem to push towards other languages also. However, outside developed country higher education settings, the work of schools serves the wider case of legitimation and validation of linguistic norm. This is perfectly illustrated in the case of Laos, for instance, which represents the way in which a poor society overcoming political upheaval is in the process of establishing a national state and developing a language policy. In all of these cases, the central role of higher education is highlighted.

## **MULTILINGUALISM AND CHANGES IN DOMAINS OF REFERENCE AND SCIENTIFIC PARADIGMS**

Research in educational linguistics and in education systems, and in other disciplines that account for multilingualism, is undergoing major transformations. First, we can see, in recent research on non Western languages and education (Lo Bianco, 2007), that the researched languages from which generalizations about learning and teaching are drawn are becoming much more diverse. It is likely that we will have to re-think the assumptions in the sciences of education as we get more and more information from non-traditional sources. A key aspect of this concerns what counts as literacy, and the media through which educational practice is exchanged, both because new languages entering into social power, especially Chinese, are not written in roman alphabets, as French and English are, but also because all language education, and indeed the very institutions of schools, and education systems, are being transformed dramatically by information and communications technologies. Where language and learning take place, and how learners interact with the speakers of the languages they are studying are factors that will change the domain of reference and the sciences that are applied to understand these. Finally, education systems themselves are experiencing rapid change. Many learners develop knowledge, including language, from horizontal links and connections they make with peers of their own age, unmediated by adults, whether the primary socializers of the home, or the secondary socializers of the school.

In this chapter, we have tried to look beyond those cases that have been part and parcel of the dominant literature on educational linguistics from first world settings, or from post-colonial national language educational planning. We have looked at newly independent national states emulating the process of established national states, at the same time as those national states are becoming more multilingual through migration and through supra-national agencies like the EU and Council of Europe, or through transnational processes like economic globalization.



This is a paradox but one that can be easily resolved. The nations of Europe that have adopted the VALEUR initiative and which through directives of the European Union are giving recognition to languages that were once repressed to permit the national state to achieve its homogenizing goals have done so through an evolved form of self-interest. This is closely linked to globalization, which also has its own language consequences. In all of these countries, advanced literacies are linked to competitiveness in a time when economic criteria dominate education decision making.

As Baynham (2003) has pointed out researchers in adult literacy, bilingual education and other fields of educational linguistics examine a much richer array of problems and possibilities than relatively conservative institutions of education admit and acknowledge. This means that there is a major gap between research and practice and while this is neither particular to educational linguistics, nor particularly unusual, in some ways it shows that multilingualism is a reality ‘on the ground’ in which institutional responses are still slow. We can imagine intensifying pressure over time to make institutions more responsive to the demographic realities of immigration, recognition of indigenous or regional populations, recognition of supra-national languages and also acknowledgement of the realities of interlinked global communications that challenge the autonomy of centralized institutions of schools, curriculums and examinations.

## **MULTILINGUALISM: INSTITUTION, POWER AND SOCIAL LINKS**

The most trenchant challenge of sociology has been to account for the relations between the world of structures and their representations in the mind. Much sociological theorising that has influenced educational practice has been too deterministic in constructing human action as pre-ordered by forces of society, materiality or biology, while idealist theorising has tended to neglect the constraining power and effects of institutions, social life and links. For decades now sociologists of many ideological dispositions have attempted to operationalised connections between human agency and will with the forces of inherited practice, social structures, or fields of life that precede and interact with humans in activity. In educational practice the ideas of Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986) can be seen as one important instalment in not relegating either domain exclusively to the other, mediating structure and agency is the world of activity, constructed and produced discursively while more recently thinking about language as communicative practice embedded in economies of relations among social humans (Bourdieu, 1991) is widely acknowledge as exposing relevant histories, relations and symbols.

While each contribution in this chapter understands the interaction in particular ways, it is useful to keep in mind that in foreign language teaching and learning, and in the role of national languages, translation, and the spread of world languages, no individual action is capable of transcending structures that are located in publishing

houses, education systems, institutions such as schools and universities, all of which interact with the social links and networks within which individuals operate. Teaching and learning languages comes to us with the labels of social determination (foreign, minority, world, etc, all adjectives that account for the power and presence of particular languages within given social spaces) and these in turn are localised in schools, classrooms, and, ultimately lessons and interactions between teachers and learners. The activity of teaching and learning languages in context bears witness to the intricacy of factors that must be accounted for to understand incipient or institutionalised multilingualism.

# INSTITUTIONALIZING A TRANSNATIONAL LINGUISTIC ENTITY: SOCIOLINGUISTIC REALITIES AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

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In the course of the twentieth century, global alliances based partly on shared language use, have succeeded the large colonial empires that emerged mainly during the nineteenth century. Proceeding from the British Empire, the Commonwealth of Nations founded in 1931 unites 54 states. The Organization of Ibero-American States, formerly The Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (1949), comprises 24 sovereign states. The International Organization of the Francophonie, which emerged in 1970, is composed of 56 member states, 3 associate members and 14 observers. The Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), which includes 8 member states, was founded in 1996. The league of Arab states, born in 1945, comprises 22 members and 4 observers. Each of these entities, and the list is far from complete, has its own unique history. In this chapter, I would like to explore the emergence and the dynamics of a transnational entity and its sociolinguistic diversity through a case study of Francophonie.

The term ‘francophonie’ was first used by geographer O. Reclus in 1880, during a period when the French colonial Empire was expanding and a culture of colonization was developing (Reclus 1886). Reclus was aiming to count the inhabitants of the French Colonial Empire, whatever their legal status (citizens or indigenous or colonial subjects). It is striking that nearly a century later, in 1962, when the French Union (1946-1960) had come to an end, in the decolonization era after World War II, such historical figures as Senghor (Senegal), Bourguiba (Tunisia) or Hamani Diori (Niger) retained the very term of “francophonie” to advocate a new form of multilateral relation between France and its former colonies. It is probably the form of the neologism rather than its previous denotation that led to the adoption of the term by the promoters of the new enterprise. This initiative of statesmen from the South did not immediately meet with the support of the French authorities.

Two related domains will be analyzed here: the coming into being of francophone territories and the Institution of Francophonie. An assessment of the relation between French and the languages with which it is in contact in the francophone social formations where it is in use and a discussion of the doctrine and practices of the International Organization of Francophonie in matters of multilingualism will help explicate the process of institutionalization of a transnational linguistic space.

## FRANCOPHONE TERRITORIES

Two colonial expansions, different in form and content have disseminated the French language across the world. The first commenced with the exploration of Canada and the founding of Quebec in 1608 and concluded with the Seven Years' War (1763) under the *Ancien Régime*. The second began with the conquest of Algiers (1830) coming to an end in the early years of the twentieth century. Some of these French speaking territories, peopled by settlers from France, or shaped by slavery and the plantation system, inhabited by few settlers from the motherland, or governed by a handful of French expatriates in exploitation colonies and trading posts, left the French sphere of influence at various periods during the last four hundred years. Their fate differed. Some were lost as Canada and Dominica in 1763 and Mauritius in 1810 to England; others were sold out as Louisiana in 1803. The remaining territories were decolonized during the 1960s. However, all these places have retained traces of their colonial past: architectural elements and urban organisation, toponomy and cultural practices and, above all, the use of the French language.

## THE POLITICS OF DIFFUSION OF FRENCH

By the end of the nineteenth century, while colonial expansion was nearing an apex, a certain number of associations (l'Alliance Israélite Universelle (1860), l'Alliance Française (1883), la Mission Laïque (1902)) chose to promote the diffusion of the French language all over the world. They had been preceded in this task by Roman Catholic congregations (the Jesuits, the Ploërmel Brethren, the sisters of St Joseph de Cluny etc.). In turn, the French Government created a department devoted to the dissemination of French, the *Service des Oeuvres* (Service for social care) at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1921. At that time, the French authorities started to promote the teaching of French beyond their empire, in a way comparable to what they were accomplishing within the French colonial empire where the children of the loyal local elites received French Education. Thus, the Ministry for Foreign affairs started running primary schools, colleges and lycées under its control.

In 1945, the Direction Générale des Relations Culturelles (D.G.R.C) was created within the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs; it replaced the obsolete Service des Oeuvres. Its task was to foster intellectual exchanges and to fulfil the increasing need for more teachers of French. A cultural network was set up which became and remains the first of its kind in the world. In 1967, the D.G.R.C was replaced by the Direction Générale des Relations de Coopération culturelle, scientifique et technique

(D.G.R.C.S.T), a turning point for the Department in terms of technical and scientific cooperation. In 1999, a new reform of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs changed the old DGRCST into the Direction Générale de la coopération internationale et du développement (DGCID).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the deliberate policy of France has contributed to the maintenance and diffusion of the French language. This action has been relayed by local associations (see the activities of Alliance française or of associations such as the Conseil pour le développement du français en Louisiane (CODOFIL 1970) for Louisiana, for instance.

## **RELATION TO VERNACULAR LANGUAGES DURING THE COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL PERIODS**

During the nineteenth century, French colonial powers neglected vernacular languages: the experience of teaching bilingual courses in Wolof and French conducted by Jean Dard in Saint Louis du Sénégal was soon abandoned. In Maghreb countries, schooling in Arabic was more or less tolerated. It was only in the twentieth century that educational policies began to be modified in the French colonial empire. Thus, in Togo, the French authorities continued the teaching of vernacular languages as it commenced under German rule of the same territory. Between 1946 and 1960, the educational system in the colonies came closer to the model in use in metropolitan France. This system which favoured the French language was pursued in the first years following independence, after 1960. Sekou Touré's Guinea (Guinée-Conakry) proved an exception because since Independence in 1958 until 1984, many vernacular languages were taught and used as media of instruction. Independent Algeria started its Arabisation policy as early as 1964, substituting Arabic for French; Tunisia and Morocco were to follow some years later. From 2000, a new balance has been struck in the Maghreb between Arabic, Berber and French, the latter being considered as a privileged foreign language (*langue étrangère privilégiée*). Madagascar, which had substituted Malagasy for French between 1972 and 1985 in its school system, has also redefined relations between French and Malagasy in that system.

Today, many francophone states have organized some form of bilingual education including vernacular languages and French, at least at an experimental level. Among these countries, Mali, Niger and Seychelles may be cited.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF FRANCOPHONIE:**

### **THE PROGRESSIVE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF A FRENCH TRANSNATIONAL SPACE**

The initiative taken in 1962 by Senghor and his colleagues follows in some way the lead given by the creation of the Association Internationale des Journalistes de langue Française in 1952, and of the Conference of Ministers of Education of countries

sharing French (CONFEMEN) in 1960 (Léger, 1987). The proposal of these political leaders was motivated by three objectives: the desire to set up new relations, different from those that had prevailed within the French empire and the Union Française ; the claim of shared linguistic identity and cultural values and the will to promote new multilateral relations within the organization. The creation of the Agence de la Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) in 1970 was the first explicit sign of the Institutionalization of Francophonie. However, it was not until 1986, that a summit of Heads of States within Francophonie took place in Versailles, marking the beginning of political Francophonie. In 1997, the appointment of a Secretary General of the International Organization of Francophonie added the final touch to the process of institutionalization process.

Some well known Francophone countries, Algeria and Israel for instance, remained, for diverse reasons, outside the emerging francophone institution. On the other hand, non Francophone states such as Cape Verde Islands and Romania joined. Recently, Rwanda left the organisation to join the Commonwealth. The language policy of the French Government and of OIF, in a context of worldwide demographic language competition, is to foster linguistic partnership between French and less commonly taught languages, and to develop on a par, the diffusion of French and of vernacular languages, especially in the school system. Since the year 2000, the International Organization of Francophonie has extended its base and its projects. It has been active in the adoption by Unesco in 2006 of an International convention on cultural diversity.

« Ce qui unit les participants à cette réunion, c'est la langue française. Elle est un magnifique instrument d'équilibre, d'harmonie et de progrès au service des peuples qui sont faits pour s'entendre, à l'exclusion de toute considération de race, de croyance ou d'idéologie.

De quoi s'agit-il ? Le problème est d'organiser un ensemble de nations francophones, où s'affirme, peu à peu, une libre communauté de culture, qui ouvre d'immenses perspectives à nos aspirations les plus ambitieuses. Nous le savons, la coopération est une réalité majeure de notre temps, singulièrement dans le domaine de la culture. Partant, la communauté francophone que nous voulons créer sera essentiellement culturelle au sens le plus large du terme: elle aura mission de former et d'informer.

La création d'une communauté de langue française sera, peut-être, la première du genre dans l'histoire moderne. Elle exprime un besoin de notre époque, ou l'homme, menacé par le progrès scientifique dont il est l'auteur, veut construire un nouvel humanisme, qui soit en même temps, à sa propre mesure et à celle du cosmos. »

These extracts from a message of L.S. Senghor, President of The Republic of Senegal to the first conférence of Niamey (1969), reproduce some of the terms of his founding text of 1962 in *Esprit*: « la francophonie, c'est cet humanisme intégral qui se tisse autour de la terre, cette symbiose des énergies dormantes de tous les continents, de toutes les races qui se réveillent à leur chaleur complémentaire ».

These words bear testimony to a philosophical endeavour associated with a concrete intent of cooperation, well before globalization emerged as an all-encompassing phenomenon.

« Article 1: Objectifs

La Francophonie, consciente des liens que crée entre ses membres le partage de la langue française et des valeurs universelles, et souhaitant les utiliser au service de la paix, de la coopération, de la solidarité et du développement durable, a pour objectifs d'aider: à l'instauration et au développement de la démocratie, à la prévention, à la gestion et au règlement des conflits, et au soutien de à l'Etat de droit et aux droits de l'Homme; à l'intensification du dialogue des cultures et des civilisations; au rapprochement des peuples par leur connaissance mutuelle; au rapprochement des peuples par leur connaissance mutuelle; au renforcement de leur solidarité par des actions de coopération multilatérale en vue de favoriser l'essor de leurs économies; à la promotion de l'éducation et de la formation. [...] »

Article 1 of the Chart of la Francophonie of November 2005 directly echoes Senghor's words and project. It provides further specifications resulting from some 40 years of cooperation within la Francophonie.

## FRANCOPHONE TERRITORIES, THE DYNAMICS OF FRANCOPHONIE AND GLOBALIZATION

The French language is still strongly associated with France. Its identity seems to be still related to that country as doubts about the labels "French literature / Francophone literature" to describe French literature as written by French nationals and by foreign writers show. The part played by the French Government in supporting linguistic and educational policy in favour of the French language helps to foster a feeling of uniqueness about the French-speaking world. However, action in favour of the French language conducted by the French Government is different in some ways from that of an association like the International Association of the Francophonie, although both bodies share the same policy about favouring plurality of languages

All francophone states are not *de facto* and *de jure* members of the International Organization of Francophonie which includes member states which are not historically related to French and France. This latter trait is an interesting feature of the International Organization which may well come to play a role of its own in a globalized world, especially in the domain of cultural practices, and in the defence of endangered languages in Francophone countries. The International Organization of the Francophonie provides an excellent illustration of the institutionalization of a global linguistic space. However, it does present certain specific linguistic and philosophical characteristics that differentiate it from other world-wide linguistic alliances.





# TRANSLATION AS INSTITUTION: LEGACY AND PRACTICE

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The International Federation of Translators (FIT) is a global organisation for professional translators, interpreters and terminology researchers. From its establishment in 1953 FIT occasionally marked 30 September (St Jerome's feast day) as a day for public recognition of the profession. At its 1991 conference FIT adopted this date as International Translation Day.

Why would an ancient ascetic, a hermit, an apparently irascible religious polemicist, warrant such recognition? What are key ways people have thought about the process of rendering words in one language into another? What technological innovations have facilitated these developments? (Leighton, 1990; Gentile, Ozolins and Vasilakakos, 1996).

## TRANSLATION THEORY, LANGUAGE LEARNING AND PROFESSIONALISM

Born around 340 in the Roman territory of Dalmatia, Jerome died in Bethlehem around 420 and is buried in Rome (Olin, 1994). He was educated in Latin and Greek at Rome, mastered Aramaic and Hebrew and then Syriac and Arabic and has left language study descriptions that resemble an ancient instalment of today's "*learner's journal*". Mostly Jerome was a translator who reflected on process and problems of translating (Murphy, 1952). Although most of Jerome's works are translations he also produced "original" works. Indeed the very distinction between original and translated texts was debated 1600 years ago as it is today (Leighton, 1990). He is most remembered for the Vulgate, the Latin version of the Bible (Jerome, 1933).

Jerome's method of cross-language triangulation, continual checking and research for accurate interpretation ranks him as a formidable translator. He was also radically modern in his translation theory. For him it was important to avoid translations heavy with source language syntax and style and to produce idiomatic sense. He believed a good translation was "equal" to the original, invoking literary style and depth of treatment in addition to meaning. This radical notion contested prevailing norms which held that even the smallest linguistic units were divinely inspired and translations inevitably defective. His opponent, St Augustine of Hippo regarded

original texts as authoritative, believing that translations should defer to originals. A translator's job, in his view, was to render word for word the incomparable original, even if the result was stilted, and complex ideas were rendered simplistic or rhetoric impoverished. By contrast, Jerome's principle of dynamic equivalence repudiated literalism and advocated sense-based translation.

Jerome's dedication to learning languages (Syriac and Arabic) related to those he was translating from and into (Latin, Greek and Hebrew), for insights into ideas, events and their meanings, persuaded him that translations were more than copies. Against Augustine's word for word fidelity to originals and absolute deference to source language, Jerome devised sense for sense renderings. In this he was influenced by his training in Latin rhetoric, particularly Cicero's view that new readers of ancient texts need aids to interpretation, through commentaries and notes. Jerome added the focus on the meaning resources of the target language.

At its 2003 conference FIT adopted the theme *Copyright in Translation*. Ownership is a complex idea, with legal, professional and ideological dimensions, critical for translators in all senses: legally to protect original work, professionally for recognition of skill and autonomy, and ideologically for what follows from establishing protection.

The claims and ideals of the Translator's Charter influenced UNESCO's 1976 Nairobi Recommendation (<http://www.fit-ift.org/en/nairo-e.php>) on "legal protection of translators and translations" and the status of translation professionals. The Recommendation states that when human conflicts end, negotiation follows; and that treaties and resolutions usually require translation, translated texts and interpreted negotiations.

### Document 1: The Translator's Charter

Source: <http://www.fit-ift.org/en/charter.php>



1. ... translation ... a permanent, universal and necessary activity... must now be recognized as a distinct and autonomous profession...

2. A translation shall always be made on the sole responsibility of the translator...
3. Every translation shall be faithful and render exactly the idea and form of the original –fidelity ... a moral and legal obligation ...
4. A faithful translation...should not be confused with a literal translation...
5. A translation ... shall enjoy ... legal protection...
6. (Translator)...shall ... enjoy during his/her lifetime the right to recognition of ... authorship.... (a) his/her name shall be mentioned clearly and unambiguously whenever his/her translation is used publicly...

## Document 2

The book cover, designed by Molly Renda, of the 1993 memoir by Alice Kaplan, professor of French at Duke University in the US, depicts American officers at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials listening to simultaneous translation. Kaplan's memoir reflects on life with French and other languages, her grandmother's "lapses" into Yiddish and Hebrew, the literary brilliance but abhorrent anti-Semitism of Céline, her Yale dissertation on intellectuals tainted with fascism, working across divides of language and understanding.

## TRANSLATING SPEECH

Just as written translation is pervasive so is interpreting: the translation of speech. Three of the most commonly occurring features of human sociality combine in interpreting: human groups speaking different languages, inter-group contact and the intention to communicate. Interpreting, translating and language learning arise in these circumstances. The impossibility of universal and multi-directional language learning creates the essential need for the profession of translation.

For some time until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century French was the main language of diplomacy. The Congress of Vienna 1815 reconstituted Europe's borders after the defeat of Napoleon, but while aiming to constrain French power and territory the Congress used French as its working language. By contrast, the Versailles Peace negotiations a century later launched modern international interpreting. The Anglophone delegations at Versailles, unlike the Francophone delegations at Vienna, required engagement of military officers proficient in the combatant languages. Ending the fighting through organising the talking required the delegates to devise standard modes of interpreting speech. They devised consecutive voice interpretation for plenary sessions comprising large groups of listeners, smaller-scale close-person interpreting among interacting delegations, and authorised versions of printed decisions, i.e. binding translations. After Versailles international meetings formalised other procedures for organised language mediation. With the League of Nations civilian interpreters replaced military personnel, constituted professional bodies, refined practice, established standards and imposed regulation: inventing a field of spoken language professional labour

Conflict and devastation also produced the next major innovations in professional practice. At the Nuremberg Trials of 1946, at which Alice Kaplan's father presided as a judge, new technologies facilitated physical separation of interpreters from prosecutors, defendants, witnesses and judges, linking them radio-phonically. Located in soundproof booths interpreters were connected with the court-room through personal ear phones and microphones: the outcome was simultaneous interpreting.

Being far superior to consecutive interpreting for large gatherings simultaneous interpreting became the standard practice at UN and international conferences. Its most elaborate expression today is the efficient multilingualism of the European Parliament. A third modality of spoken mediation is liaison interpreting, closely associated with immigration; typically between lawyer and client, and doctor and patient.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Interpreting speech must be as old as human language; translation as old as human writing. Much of the discourse of the profession appears to be a struggle for recognition. When it speaks collectively it appears conscious of not being respected. At the time Jerome pioneered essential principles and practices of translation the eastern Mediterranean was at a critical juncture of ancient globalisation, in which Greek speculative thought, Roman institutions and law and Jewish religion, combined to forge Europe. Europe today is slowly transcending the exclusive sovereignty of its national states in a new globalisation.

Today globalisation, population movement and the emergence of supra-national entities have made translation universal. A cross-European study of legal interpreting (Hertog, 2001) reports on new professional systematisation. An EU Grotius project 'to encourage ... internationally consistent best practice standards and equivalencies ...'(2001:14) shows precisely the pragmatic, problem-solving reflections reported by Jerome. It also confronts the enduring issues of finding sense equivalence, acceptable practice, institutional authority, linguistics (what languages share and where they differ), and efforts towards innovations to solve practical problems.

# GLOBALIZATION AND LINGUISTIC PARADOXES: THE ROLE OF ENGLISH

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Responding to rapid change brought about by globalization, several Asian countries have revised their language policies to ensure that their people are adequately equipped with one of the global literacy skills, English, giving rise to linguistic paradoxes. In some countries, promotion of English has legitimated its hegemony over national languages, posing a serious challenge to national identities and cultural traditions. In other countries, the spread of English has deepened class and ethnic divides while sometimes it has fostered resistance to linguistic and political domination.

## **Action Plan to Cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”**

March 31, 2003

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology  
<http://www.mext.go.jp/english/topics/03072801.htm>

## **How Good Is the Samsung Chairman's English?**

A video clip of Samsung Group chairman Lee Kun-hee addressing the International Olympic Committee in halting English, which has been posted on the Chosun.com website, has set tongues wagging.

<http://english.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200707/200707130023.html>

## **Roh: English key to S. Korea's future**

SEOUL, April 7 (UPI) -- South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun says his country should focus on English proficiency to prepare for the future.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/upi/index.php?feed=TopNews&article=UPI-1-20070407-17550600-bc-skorea-english.xml>

## **Making English Asia's own Stories by TAN SHIOW CHIN and TAN EE LOO**

A necessary skill, not an advantage – that is how some people perceive English today. The language is very much the lingua franca in Asia and essential to the region's growth.

Sunday June 17, 2007

<http://thestar.com.my/education/story.asp?file=/2007/6/17/education/18008324>

### **English as National Mission**

In several Asian countries learning English resembles a national mission. Spurred by its successful bid for the 2008 Olympics China recently pronounced that learning English is for the whole nation (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has drawn up national strategies to ensure that all Japanese can interact socially in English and all professionals can use English in workplaces. In South Korea, English has been a focus of education reform since the mid-90s. Malaysia has emphasized that the nation's global success hinges on its people's English competence.

In order to accomplish this national mission, many Asian countries have pushed the learning of English to as early as primary one, and some have pushed to make English an official language. Such developments have generated heated debates. In Japan, a 2002 proposal to recognize English as a second official language met with strong objections for fear that it would undermine culture, national identity and Japanese proficiency (Matsuura, Fujieda & Mahoney, 2004). The proposal was dropped but in 2005 the government established 100 English as medium of instruction (MOI) "super high schools" (Tsui and Tollefson, 2007). A 1999 South Korean proposal to make English the 2<sup>nd</sup> official language was denounced by media and academics, depicting it as a "second crisis after Japanese colonization" (Yim, 2003, p. 43). This proposal was also dropped but the government increased the percentage of English medium universities from less than 10% in 2002 to 35% in 2006. It is expected to reach 60% by 2010 (Lee, Newsweek, February 2007). In 2003 Malaysia reversed its mother-tongue education policy and re-introduced English as MOI at all levels of basic education (Tsui and Tollefson, 2007). Many Malay intellectuals have challenged the change. In China, while English as MOI is still being debated, some tertiary institutions already employ English as MOI in science and technology disciplines while some private schools use English as MOI as early as kindergarten.

In Asian countries still suffering from poverty and heavily dependent on international aid language policies are shaped by these agencies' preference for English. English has displaced French in Cambodia as the most important foreign language and as MOI in tertiary institutions (Clayton, 2006). All government officials in Vietnam are required to study foreign languages, especially English (Do, 2000). In Nepal and Bangladesh, despite persistently high illiteracy, English medium education proliferates. In Pakistan, English retains its official status despite clear policy favoring Urdu, and English remains compulsory in secondary and tertiary education. Although restricted to elites,

internet access has allowed access to English beyond formal education (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). In these countries, compulsory English begins earlier, at either Grade 1 or 3, even in rural areas despite severe shortages of English teachers.

### **Linguistic Paradoxes**

How have the resulting linguistic paradoxes been resolved? In China, political independence and economic self-reliance had been celebrated as characteristic of national greatness. In recent years, impending adversities of globalization have been used by political leaders to open up the country. The March 2005 edition of the New English Curriculum for Schools states its mission as “understand the difference between Chinese and Western cultures, and enhance patriotic education”. Similarly Japan’s potential adversities have been used to reconstruct national identity. Globalization has been perceived as a malevolent force which has brought suffering to Japanese people (Tsui and Tollefson, 2007). While Japan recognizes the need to make changes in its domestic economy, it holds firmly to notions of self-reliance and cultural independence and reaffirms the national historical continuity and cultural coherence. The MEXT policy re-iterates cultivation of Japanese identity in the national curriculum (Gottlieb & Chen, 2001). Japaneseness is promoted through “deconstructing English”, that is, by treating English as a technical tool while reaffirming unique Japanese cultural values and qualities.

South Korea’s economic competitiveness has been constructed as dependent on English due to reliance on foreign trade. English has been appropriated as a tool for placing South Korea on the map and representing its views globally; English has been reconstructed as a new language of nationalism.

In Malaysia, nationalism has had to be reconstructed to include English, while strengthening the national spirit. The national language, which had formerly served to unify the nation, is now inadequate for economic modernisation. English is taken to help Malaysians defend the country, making its learning patriotic. Locally produced English textbooks give equal importance to developing a global outlook and enhancing national pride and celebrate national cohesiveness, ethnic harmony, integration and cultural assimilation (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007).

To address the linguistic tension between the construction of national identity in English and traditional values and cultures integral to ethnic identities, Singapore has appealed for mutual accommodation and respect between “heartlanders” and “cosmopolitans” urging the nation to maintain high English standards for international competitiveness while preserving the nation’s multicultural heritage. Students are encouraged to develop biliteracy and bilingualism in English and their ethnic mother tongue (Tsui and Tollefson, 2007).

In Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam the prestige of English and English medium education has given rise to a different paradox. Here the state language is dominant to the exclusion of ethnic minority languages and state-legislated linguistic hegemony is oppressive for minorities. Consequently, English medium education has become a form of resistance to linguistic domination and a way to

support minority languages, cultures and identities. In such settings English has made available moral and civic values associated with liberalism and fostered resistance to oppressive politics (Rahman, 2004).

In economically stronger countries, national identities have been constructed through the very discourse that legitimated the hegemony of English. English learning is tied to economic futures and national missions without sacrificing cultural uniqueness, continuity and tradition. In short, English learning has been appropriated in diverse ways for resolving linguistic paradoxes. In developing countries English also serves as a resource for resisting linguistic hegemony and promoting democratization. Attempts to resolve such paradoxes will continue to shape language policies in the next few decades.



# SOLIDARITY AND POWER: LEGITIMISING THE LANGUAGE OF THE STATE

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Over the past century, the establishment of modern nation states with fixed borders based on colonial histories rather than ethnic boundaries, together with the large-scale movement of people between states for economic and political reasons, has led to multiethnicity and multilingualism being the norm in societies around the world. Within this context of cultural and linguistic diversity, governments struggle to reconcile the rights of ethnic minority peoples with the need to establish a unified and integrated national identity. This often leads to an apparent contradiction in public discourse between claims of solidarity and equality on the one hand, and assertions of the cultural and linguistic centrality of the majority group on the other. Such a contradiction is exemplified in the case of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR).

## THE LAO POLICY DOCUMENTS

### **Resolution of the Party Central Organization Concerning Ethnic Minority Affairs in the New Era, 1992**

Relevant organizations are to research the writing systems of the Hmong and the Khmou using the Lao alphabet, for use in areas occupied by ethnic minorities in unison with the Lao language and alphabet. (Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee 1992: 7; translation: ILO 2000).

### **6<sup>th</sup> 5 year National Socio-Economic Development Plan**

Sustain and develop spoken languages and written characters/alphabets. Teach ethnic dialects in schools where ethnic characters/alphabets already exist' (Committee for Planning and Investment 2006:100).

## **Education for All: National Plan of Action**

Introduce bilingual teaching processes, especially for the first grades of primary schooling (Ministry of Education 2005:41).

## **Education Law**

Lao language and Lao script are the official language and script for the learning and teaching in all schools and education institutions... For the various ethnic languages, it is possible to study it for the teaching purpose according to the real situation and with the government's authorization (Ministry of Education 2002:7; official translation).

## **The case of Laos**

With up to 230 ethnic groups (ADB 2001:iii) and the 'majority' Lao group comprising only approximately 30% of the population, Laos is a country rich in ethnic and linguistic diversity. Since the establishment of the Socialist government in 1975, a discourse of interethnic solidarity and equality has been articulated by the State. Yet the policies above reveal perplexing contradictions. Some call for bilingual schooling for ethnic minority children, while others reinforce the status of Lao as the sole official language of education. Can these apparent contradictions be explained and what does this tell us about language, power and the State?

## **The rhetoric of solidarity and the reality of power**

The calls for bilingual education made in several of the policy documents might be interpreted as part of the government's commitment to interethnic equality. Certainly there is a strong discourse of multi-ethnicity articulated in post-1975 policy documents. Terms such as 'equality' and 'solidarity' are used liberally, and the Lao populace is referred to as 'the multiethnic Lao People'. Thus it is tempting to see the pro-minority languages stance as an elevation of minority rights, particularly regarding mother tongue education. Yet this interpretation would be mistaken.

In fact the same documents which claim interethnic equality and solidarity refer to the 'backward traditions', and 'restricted, distorted and incorrect' customs of the minorities; government representatives remain predominantly ethnic Lao; and development policies reflect a bias toward ethnic Lao socio-economic and cultural practices (c.f. Évrard 2006). Calls for official use of minority languages in education do not represent an orientation to interethnic equality. Rather, they contribute to the rhetoric of multiethnicity: an attractive but mostly empty one motivated by the need to recognize minorities and ideologically integrate them into the State, and to appear to meet the demands made by international donors regarding minority rights. The government's actual approach to ethnic minorities is one of ethnic Lao centrality and dominance. This is expressed in the anti-bilingual education stance of the Education Law, the 6<sup>th</sup> Education Development Plan and Education For All (Ministry of Education 2006). But why is this Lao-centric approach masked by the rhetoric of the other documents yet made explicit in these three?

## Formal and functional documents

The 1992 Minorities Policy and the National Socio-Economic Development Plan, which both make pro-bilingual education statements, are produced by officials at the upper levels of the Party. As such, the documents serve primarily political rather than pragmatic purposes, or are formal rather than functional. The documents outline an approach and some objectives issuing from this, but these objectives create at once the public face of the highest authority in the Lao PDR – a face which the Party unsurprisingly wants to keep attractive – and a generalized vision of what each sector will actually implement on the ground. It is the planning documents – the Education Law and the Education Development Plan – issued by the Ministry of Education, which provide the working guidelines for educational initiatives. And it is these two which constrain or ignore the possibility of bilingual education in ethnic minority languages, making explicit the discourse of Lao cultural and linguistic centrality. Education For All, also a planning document, is consistent with this anti-bilingual education stance. Although it mentions ‘bilingual teaching processes’, it does not specifically mention *written* bilingual programmes, and for this reason is interpreted by Ministry staff to mean oral (thus unofficial) bilingual teaching only.

## Legitimate language and the State

Thus we have in the Lao case study an example of the tension between recognizing minority rights – in this case achieved through a rhetoric of interethnic solidarity in the formal policy documents – and creating a unified national identity based on the majority culture and language. The latter is achieved through official planning and support for (written) Lao only as the language of education. This measure to linguistically integrate the new generation of ethnic minority children into ‘mainstream’ Lao culture accompanies other measures aimed at drawing minority people into Lao society economically, culturally and linguistically.

The discourse of ethnic Lao linguistic centrality articulated by the Lao state in its working approach to language in education is unsurprising if we accept Bourdieu’s (1977, 1982) theory of symbolic capital. Lao is the language which provides greatest access to social and economic opportunity on a national level, and this economic value is expressed as symbolic value in the educational policies and institutions controlled by the state. This then leads to a degree of ‘symbolic domination’ of minority peoples. Certainly in educational institutions in urban areas Lao has achieved the status of more ‘legitimate language’ and when minority people move into these educational spaces, they tend to reproduce this discourse of legitimacy. However, to recognize such domination by the State is not to ignore the many creative ways in which minority people also challenge the cultural and linguistic centrality of the ethnic ‘majority’ and in doing so, create their own symbolic marketplaces.



# ALLOGLOT CHILDREN AND LINGUISTIC POLICIES IN EDUCATION: MINORITY LANGUAGES / NATIONAL LANGUAGE(S)

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**Translated from French by Thao Tran Minh & Daniel Véronique**

School institutions in unitary nation-states, like France, and in federal states like the Helvetic Confederation or the Indian Union, are carriers of the linguistic and educational policies that organise the teaching of national and federal languages, of the minority languages spoken in the country when taught, as well as the teaching of foreign languages (the languages of the former colonial powers tend to have a specific place in the educational systems of previously colonized countries). The definition of linguistic and educational policies is determined by numerous factors, among which the history of the school system within the social formation in question, the history of the social formation itself, and its existing connections at a regional level and within cultural and economical globalization with other social formations. Within every social ensemble, the question of language and power in the school system and its discriminating power towards specific categories of pupils has been evolving regularly throughout modern and contemporary history. A close look at the French system of education yields a good illustration of the topic.

## **THE MONOLINGUAL HABITUS OF A MULTILINGUAL SCHOOL (GOGOLIN, 1994)**

The inherent multilingualism of French society has long been combated and denied by the educational institution, whose role is conceived to instil republican ideology, and

which has, historically, fostered linguistic homogeneity. A close analysis of the linguistic and educational policies led since the end of the 19th century towards the national or foreign alloglot children in the French nation-state illustrates the process of imposition of the national language and the evolution of the school system in the last fifty years vis à vis its alloglot pupils. This historical overview will be followed by the analysis of teachers, students and pupils' accounts about mother tongues and first cultures in the French school system, data collected in suburban cities around Paris.

'Alloglot', the term applies to children who are in contact at home with a language other than the dominant language of the environment. At home, these languages interact naturally whereas outside, at school or at work, the distinction is very clear. This term is used in several French studies bearing on immigrant children and their relationship to languages in and outside home. After the annexation of Alsace and part of Lorraine by Prussia, school policy under the Third French Republic exhibited strong intrusion in linguistic matters. One of the priorities of the ministry of J. Ferry was to use school as an instrument for « frenchifying » a linguistically divided territory. Article 14 of the rules and regulations for primary schools dated from the 6th of June 1881 stated that « le français sera seul en usage » (only French will be in use).

In this context, in the 1880's, Irenée Carrée, the then general inspector for primary education, experimented a new method for the teaching of French in Brittany. The main characteristic of this method called « méthode maternelle », was to ban the pupils' mother tongues from the classroom. This method was later extended, under the label of « méthode directe », to the whole of French alloglot regions as well as to the colonies. Mother tongues were forbidden in the classroom. Some teachers went on to hunt them, even during recess, using « the symbol ». Also known as « signal », « sign », « medal » or « cow », the symbol was a mark of infamy for children who had been caught using their mother tongues within school premises to carry. The teacher handed to the child who was « at fault » a symbolic object (a sabot, a plank...) which the child could not get rid of until he had denounced one of his schoolmates caught in the act of using his mother tongue on the school premises. The last pupil in possession of the bulky object, at the end of the day, received the punishment due for this kind of « offence ». The policy of ostracism towards regional languages, confirmed by a note on local idioms of the 14th of August 1925 from the Ministry of Education, did not change until after World War II.

A parallel can be drawn between the publication of this document and the publication of the first of a series of three administrative notes, regulating and organising the teaching of the mother tongue of some foreign pupils, as well as the recruitment of foreign instructors to supervise the courses. Except for this special measure in favour of the children of the Polish minors living in the north and the east of France, the treatment of foreign alloglot children in the French school system was not specifically different from that applied to national children. In both cases, the educational institution planned to transform an heterogenous body, viewed as potentially dangerous for national unity, into a homogenous whole.

## FROM REGIONAL LANGUAGES TO THE LANGUAGES OF IMMIGRATION: TOWARDS THE RECOGNITION OF MINORITY LANGUAGES

The second half of the twentieth century in France is characterised by a progressive shift in the official positions towards minority languages. It first began with the regional languages. The bill of law n°51-46 regarding the teaching of languages and local dialects, called « Loi Deixonne », brought some kind of recognition to the basque language, to catalan, occitan and breton. The place intended for these languages in school was quite modest as it was limited to an optional teaching activity, authorised one hour per week, as part of school projects (*activités dirigées*). However, the symbolic significance of the law was important as it paved the way, in the forthcoming decades, for important law making and legal activities in the domain ; the 1975 bill of law known as Loi Haby in 1975 and the 1984 bill of law known as Loi Savary ensued.

Only three main aspects of this process of legitimization will be emphasized: the gradual extension of the teaching of regional languages to Corsiccan, to the Alsatian and German dialects, as well as to some other languages from overseas, as Tahitian, several Melanesian languages (Agië, Drehu, Nengone and Paicî languages) and Creole ; the creation of an examination for the recruitment of teachers of creole as a regional languages (CAPES creole) ; the possibility opened for pupils to follow a bilingual education at parity of hours in regional languages and French.

However, these moves forward were strongly disputed by some policy makers and various bodies as these three events show: in June 1992, a new paragraph was added to Article 2 of the Constitution. It underlined that « la langue de la République est le français » (the language of the Republic is French). In 1999, France refused to sign the European charter for regional or minority languages. In 2002, the State Council (*Conseil d'état*) cancelled the decree of the 31st of July 2001 that authorised an immersive regional language teaching programme in the public school system.

From the seventies on, the linguistic and educational policies applied to immigrant children stand in strong contrast with the way the same population was handled in an undifferentiated manner under the Third Republic. The ideological background of the French educational institution now claims « the respect of cultures » and « the right to difference ». Thus, « particular programs intended for specific populations » (Ragi, 1997: 189) based on an « ethnic division » (Henry-Lorcerie, 1989: 96) of the pupils were set up. This differential and specific management of ethnocultural pluralism led to the opening of structures intended to receive foreign pupils who do not speak French: the « classe d'initiation » (CLIN) (Note n°IX 70-37 of the 13th of January 1970) and the « classe d'adaptation (CLAD) (Note n° 73-383 of the 25th of September 1973). At the same time, between 1973 and 1981, agreements were signed with eight countries of immigration (Portugal, Italy, Tunisia, Spain, Marocco, Yougoslavia, Turkey and Algeria) in order to allow their nationals attending school in France to follow courses in their first language and culture « langues et cultures d'origine » (now LCO), as set up by note n°75-148 of the 9th of April 1975. Recommending the

« organising of intercultural activities for all children », note n°78-238 of the 25th of July 1978 about the « schooling of immigrant children », opened a new perspective: to allow the school population at large to benefit from the linguistic and cultural pluralism represented by the immigrant children.

All these school programs do not mean that France has given up its logic of assimilation. They do not call into question the « logic of the child's denial » (Henry-Lorcerie, 1984). The injunction of integration for the populations hailing from immigration contrasts sharply with the valorisation of the « national linguistic deposits » (Legendre, 2003: 6) constituted by the languages of immigration.

This bird eye's view of the French linguistic and educational policies set up for the alloglot children since the end of the 19th century leads to the conclusion of a shift in the real stakes: from regional languages which, because they are on the verge of disappearance, are no longer perceived as a real threat for the unity of the Republic, to languages of immigration which, on the other hand, crystallize certain fears related to the maintenance of national cohesion.

## PUPILS AND TEACHERS' ACCOUNTS ABOUT THE LCO SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Are these fears justified?

To answer this question, let us pay closer attention to some accounts given by primary and secondary school teachers on the one hand, and pupils and students from Vietnamese and French West Indian backgrounds who are speakers of other languages or « alloglot speakers » on the other hand. These accounts were collected in several suburban cities around Paris, between 2003 and 2005 as part of the PhD project of Thao Tran-Minh (supervised by Daniel Veronique), at Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle.

**Question asked to teachers:** « In your classroom, are you (or have you been) in contact with your pupils' mother tongues and first cultures? If yes, under which circumstances? »

- « No, the authorized language in my class is the language which is understood by everyone, out of consideration for others »

(Laetitia)

- « No, French is the language used. Another language would be frowned upon inside school. »

(Laurence)

- « It is always French. I think it is a matter of politeness vis à vis the majority »

(Marie-Pierre)



- « They usually evoke their mother tongues and their first cultures, by chance, when they talk over or confide in me »

(Marie-Pierre)

- « I am generally in contact with mother tongues through some parents who cannot speak French. And children turn into translators. »

(Véronique)

**Question asked to pupils and students:** « Would you be in favour of a « langues et cultures d'origine » programme in your school? Would you take part in the programme? »

- « No, I wouldn't have liked learning Creole at school. I don't want everybody to know my language. » (AN 21 years old)

- « No, I wouldn't. Creole is the family language. It is a language that we use between us, not with everybody » (JN 19 years old)

- « I would... because it would be an easy way to have good grades. But it would depend on my motivation because... well, it would depend on my involvement in the other courses... concerning my planning, concerning my degree... » (MCK, 19 years old)

- « Yes, I would. But only if it would be taken into account for my degree! »

(KN, 17 years old)

- A program which would allow us to learn our mother tongue on our school time. So we could have free time on Saturday. »

(MN, 9 years old)

On the whole, these answers allow the analyst to highlight two main features:

In spite of the evolution of the sociolinguistic context and the evolution of school populations in France today, teachers, pupils and students still abide by the same monolingual ideology that existed in the French school system. On the one hand, teachers only consider their pupils' first languages in the scope of informal interactions, outside the classroom (during school breaks or recess). Teachers only have the opportunity to be in contact with the mother tongues of their pupils when they meet parents. Some accounts and studies (Pasquis-Dumont, 1992 ; Puren, 2004) show that immigrant pupils, who want to conform to the dominant ideology mainly because they do not want to look different from their schoolmates, jib at using their mother tongues inside school, in front of their teacher, even if it is because they have to speak to their parents. Alloglot pupils spontaneously choose a language relationship that respect the implicit contract by which French is the only authorized language at school. French is the language of school. Their answers reveal either total indifference, or a strong will to « find their own identity », or an expedient attitude to « get something more ». However, these pupils never call into question the monolingual

doctrine of the school system. At their level, what is at stake is of the order of a practical issue to be rapidly solved.

Up to now, initiatives taken to introduce mother tongues and first cultures in the French school system have failed. The answers given by the pupils are quite typical of the difficulties encountered by these programmes. Some of them, and particularly the students from French West Indian background, who speak a regional language, seem sceptical about the teaching of creole at school. Most of them consider that creole is a home language, a language that cannot be taught but can only be spoken. Some others would be in favour of a « langues et cultures d'origine » school program for school profitability issues: better grades for instance, or as a way of extending their leisure time by replacing mother tongues lessons, given in cultural associations on Wednesday or Saturday, by lessons at school.

This observation reveals how, within the French educational system, alloglot students and pupils are modelled by the repeated linguistic policies.

# VALUING ALL LANGUAGES AT SCHOOL: EXPLORING MODELS OF PROVISION

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How do policy makers support multilingualism in schooling beyond prestigious foreign languages? How do educators raise awareness of the resource represented by Community Languages (CLs)? How can curriculum designers ensure that students can exploit this valuable linguistic resource?

Alongside market integration, the clearest sign of globalisation today is the vast movement of populations (Castles and Miller, 2003). Migration is transforming education systems everywhere so that delivering effective schooling to all learners increasingly requires multilingual education policies. CLs is an umbrella term used to refer to several categories of languages. Included are migrant, regional and sign languages. In many societies speakers of previously neglected or repressed languages are being granted recognition as linguistic human rights. This legal and political recognition produces consequences in teaching and learning. CLs also includes languages that are 'non-territorial', spoken only by mobile, transient or traveler populations. Sign languages also come under the rubric CLs so that many societies now acknowledge the educational and cultural dimensions of non-verbal communication.

Educators seek to support learners to capitalize on their individual talents and potentials. To see CLs as a resource requires us to ask about the intellectual, cultural, economic, citizenship and human rights of learners (Lo Bianco, 2001). How is it possible to achieve such ambitious goals at the national and supra-national level?



## BUTS ET OBJECTIFS

### Un Centre pour la promotion de l'éducation aux langues en Europe

Les objectifs stratégiques du CELV (Centre Européen pour les langues vivantes) consistent à aider ses Etats membres à mettre en œuvre des politiques efficaces d'enseignement des langues en:

- valorisant la pratique dans le domaine de l'apprentissage et de l'enseignement des langues
- faisant la promotion du dialogue et de l'échange entre les personnes actives dans ce domaine
- formant les agents multiplicateurs
- apportant son soutien aux réseaux et aux projets de recherche liés au programme du Centre.

Afin d'atteindre ses objectifs stratégiques, le Centre ... organise un programme de projets internationaux dans le domaine de l'éducation aux langues.

Basant son travail sur les valeurs fondatrices du Conseil de l'Europe et son rôle de pionnier dans le domaine de l'éducation aux langues, le CELV est dans une position idéale pour servir de catalyseur aux réformes dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues. <http://www.ecml.at/aboutus/aboutus.asp?t=mission&l=F>

### European Social Charter (ESC)

Turin, 18.X.1961

Art 19: "Migrant workers who are nationals of a Contracting Party and their families have the right to protection and assistance in the territory of any other Contracting Party"

<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/035.htm>

### European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML)

Strasbourg, 5.XI.1992

The member States of the Council of Europe signatory hereto...(Part III Article 8 "undertake to make available" teaching and support of regional and minority languages from pre-school to adult, community and vocational education...

<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm>

### Valuing All Languages of Europe (VALEUR)

An innovative attempt to respond to the proliferation of CLs in light of these declarations and the needs of young European users of these languages is called *Valuing all Languages in Europe*.

VALEUR is a project of the CELV based in Graz, Austria funded under the theme of *Languages for social cohesion: language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe*. VALEUR began in June 2004 and runs to October 2007.

The starting point of the project was the recognition of linguistic diversity as a valuable asset. However, migrant and non-territorial languages (e.g., Yiddish and variants of Romani) or sign languages have received less attention than regional/minority languages and providing these languages in formal education has occasionally proved controversial.

VALEUR has adopted an inclusive approach on the basis that CL speakers have much in common, such as shared multilingualism and the difficult educational choices confronting parents who speak CLs to ensure that their children acquire formal skills in both the CL and the dominant language.

VALEUR has mapped provision for school age children to participate in CL programmes (especially for literacy) and to identify examples of good practice. The ECRML follows a standard project model. Representatives from Council of Europe member states participating in the ECRML are invited to workshops at which the project team set out the rationale, explain the support required from participating countries and invite their participation. 21 states participated in VALEUR and provided information about languages in use in their countries, educational provision available and debated definitions and examples of good practice.

The main findings were that some 440 spoken and 18 sign languages are used across the 21 countries, alphabetically from Abron to Zulu and geographically from Inuktitut to Maori or Tagalog to Quechua. It is likely these official records underestimate the true numbers. The UK recorded the highest number, over 300, due to a long history of immigration but countries with more recent immigration also reported large numbers, such as Spain, over 200, and Ireland, over 160. Most widely spoken are Polish and German (17 states), French, Arabic and Russian (16), Spanish and Turkish (15), Romani (14) and English and Mandarin (13).

Provision varies greatly. In Finland and Hungary CL support is considered a conditional right. Finnish municipalities are obliged provide CL support if more than 4 overseas born children request the same language in a given area. Typically provision is 1 to 2 hours a week of after-school or weekend classes. Hungary offers education in CLs when over 1000 people request such provision, when there are more than 8 children speaking the language per school and the linguistic group can prove a century's residence in Hungary. At present 13 language groups have such education rights including Polish, Greek and Bulgarian. In other countries, provision is considered the responsibility of the country of origin. The Moroccan and Portuguese embassies in Spain provide Arabic and Portuguese respectively, classes are held after school or on weekends, are taught by staff recruited from Morocco and Portugal and follow curricula from these countries.

Bilingual and trilingual provision is increasing. Several countries developed models where both the national language and a CL are used. A Finnish school with a sizeable Estonian population offers an Estonian stream, supported by the Estonian government. A bilingual Mandarin-Hungarian school operates in Budapest for children of Mandarin and Hungarian speaking parents. The Polish government has

instituted bilingual programmes for several CLs including German, Hungarian and Kashubian. An Austrian trilingual school offers German, Italian and Slovene as media of instruction.

For some languages, developing teaching materials is a major concern, particularly for languages with a limited or interrupted literacy history. In Armenia, Assyrian materials were commissioned from Swedish and Iraqi experts to enable Assyrian, banned in Soviet times, to be taught. France is supporting a programme to develop materials and pedagogy in Occitan.

### **Council of Europe (CoE)**

Key policy statements of the CoE assert that multilingualism is important for mutual understanding, democratic citizenship and social cohesion – and that all Europe’s languages are equally valuable (European Cultural Convention, 1954: Article 2, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/018.htm>).

However subsequent policy documents allocate differential status to languages. Whereas the 1992 ECRML promotes education from pre-school to adult through the medium of regional/minority languages, the European Social Charter attaches qualifications: “promote and facilitate, as far as practicable, the teaching of the migrant worker's mother tongue to the children of the migrant worker” (Article 19). Recently, the concept of multilingualism as a single competence encompassing languages learned at different times, for different purposes and to different levels (Beacco, 2007) has stimulated a move away from ranking languages to the more inclusive VALEUR approach.

The CoE does not impose policy on member states but proceeds by consensus. For ‘migrant’ languages such consensus can be difficult to achieve. This is because immigration is a sensitive issue across Europe and because mobility within Europe, and beyond Europe’s continental borders, increases the number of languages used thereby stretching available resources. Moreover immigrant communities are themselves transient. In the UK there are new Somali populations whose community language is actually Dutch or Danish, having migrated internally within Europe since the original move from Africa. Today’s populations are mobile and multilingual in ways that challenge models of education provision conceived on assumptions of greater demographic and linguistic stability.

The knowledge is an essential pre-requisite for changing policy. Teachers, curriculum designers and education officials generally work in education systems which operate on the assumptions of greater cultural and linguistic homogeneity, and assumptions of greater shared culture between teachers and learners. In the contemporary world these assumptions are less and less tenable. Projects like VALEUR aim to produce the more complex base of knowledge on which more productive responses to the CL diversity of contemporary school populations will be based.

# COUNTERPOINT

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[International Organization of “Francophony”]

As a Tunisian university professor, currently in charge of functions in the institutional *Francophonie*, I speak from a particular place of origin, a third-world and non European as well as a trans-frontier one.

Teaching French and having Arabic as a mother-tongue, I entirely identify myself with what Abdelkhébir Khatibi calls “*bilangue*”, which indeed founds and constitutes my being. Therefore, I am in a little off-center position in relation to this chapter, doubly so, I should say, if we remember that the majority of its articles were first written in English then translated into French. That is why I intend to extend the reflection we find in this chapter to other areas than those it naturally tackles, bearing in mind that, in our planet evolving toward total globalization, the phenomenon of immigration, for example, has made Arabic one of the main languages in France .

My own itinerary shows me, if need be, the fundamental role played by the school institution in the emergence of the multi-linguistic and multi-cultural spaces. Joining school at the dawn of the independence of my country, I received an Arabic-French bilingual education because such was the choice made by the political decision-makers of the period. Had I been born in Egypt , I would have spoken English. The place of languages in the different educational systems shows how each country tackles the problem of the plurality of its languages, whether they are actually spoken or the mastery of which is aimed at. In the Tunisia of that period, the compulsory and relatively early teaching of French was intended to give access to a “cultural capital”. The analysis of the educational reforms in this country during the last fifty years reveals, as far as still compulsory French is concerned, a fluctuation in the choice of the reference culture of the language taught, at times the culture of that language, at other times the culture of the home language, a fluctuation that is a reflection of the debate on identity which always goes hand in hand with the teaching of languages in the previously colonized countries.

History shows us that the development of scientific, cultural and economic development often depends on the opening up to the other languages and cultures and on the propensity to digest them and feed with them one’s own culture(s). The Arab world witnessed its glorious times during the period in which it translated thousands of Greek and Indian works. Sékou Touré’s Guinea , Madagascar , Algeria ,

though impelled by a more than legitimate identity-related preoccupation, are to blame for lack of pragmatism by voluntarily weakening, at different periods, the status of and the role played by French language which they were still in the greatest need of. In the newly independent Maghreb of the fifties, the stake about development was linked to languages. The political decision-makers' concern was to promote the acquisition of at least one performing language, directly connected with the production of knowledge and technological know-how, and at the same time to preserve the identity-related language(s). Whether they had made a pragmatic or a symbolic option, perhaps even a demagogic one, all of them had practiced a necessary but dangerous tight-rope exercise. Those of them who had succeeded best were those who had the least difficulty in coping with their history as a colony or a protectorate, therefore who were the least complex-ridden in the face of the colonizer's dominant and performing language, also those whose population was linguistically homogeneous. In Algeria, for example, Berber language, under its different forms, was ignored, the aim being the homogenization of the whole population by Arabic language, which has triggered rejection of this language within the Berber-speaking population, one can see some leaders of which, up to the present, express themselves in French when they speak to their electors, as if to mark their difference with the national reality dominated by Arabic.

Everywhere in the world, linguistic disputes revolve around social stakes which *in fine* are power stakes, which is clearly shown by this chapter as a whole. In Mauritania, the adoption of Arabic in the teaching of scientific subjects was felt by the black population, in spite of its belonging to the same country and the same language, as a measure which represented a handicap for them and an advantage for the Moorish population which is solidly rooted in the traditional Arab-Islamic culture, and considered that reverting to the teaching of those subjects in French was an arrangement that put everybody on an equal foot. This chapter analyzes the case of some Asian countries which pushed pragmatism up to its ultimate consequences by opting for an almost exclusively Anglophone educational system or by claiming to preserve their national language only by maintaining it at a purely rhetorical level. This is a choice like another but let's bet, paraphrasing Montherlant, that "there will be no lack of tears behind the curtain". The symbolic dimension of languages is never negligible and it is often prone, when it is put out of doors, to "come back by the window".

The institutional is a determining fact. All the linguistic and cultural reality of a country can change by a mere text of law or the active militancy of a decision-maker. With no little success did Tunisia become bilingual, while the imposition of Arabic in Algeria was attended by an utter failure the consequences of which are still alive. Yet, of the two countries, it was Algeria which was the more francophone. In Tunisia, Bourguiba's choice to democratize education by opting for a universal one has radically changed the social setting and mentalities.

Within the geographic limits of a each country, education, which is first the learning of language then the learning of other subjects, is the State's concern, the concern of the



State which, when it rests, in carrying out its mission, on relay structures, whether these are of a community or private, has every interest in keeping its control on certification and in assessing these structures, authorizing them or not to continue carrying out their mission according to the assessment results. After the battle waged for the recognition, worldwide, of the necessity to preserve cultural diversity, another battle is on the way: a movement is taking shape and structuring itself in favor of the protection of education. What is required is, by struggle, to prevent education from being considered as a negotiable property, or rather to ensure the definition of the required ethical conditions under which the State may partially yield the educational role it assumes to social or commercial relay structures.

On a trans-frontier scale, regional or international institutions play an important role in the development of multilingualism, even when they consider that their task lies in devoting themselves to the development of one language or to its protection. Within the globalizing current that drives forward the entire planet, tactical alliances have taken place between different linguistic groups, French, Spanish and Arabic speaking ones, all of them minorized by all-pervasive English, and it is these alliances that have finally led to the elaboration then the adoption of the Charter on cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2006) which is at the same time a plea for linguistic diversity. A favorable factor behind these alliances was the belonging of some countries to different linguistic associations, due to their bilingualism. This is for example the case of my country, Tunisia, which is a member of the League of Arab States and a founding member of the “*Agence de coopération culturelle et technique*” (ACCT: Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency), the different metamorphoses of which have finally led to the International Organization of Francophony.

Likewise, in the face of a reality that, for the sake of efficiency and gain of time, is more and more heading toward some sort of “*lingua franca*” more or less comprehensible by all or which all are obliged, in the long run, to learn, voices are rising demanding that in international spheres should be respected the rules of international institutions which aim at preserving a balance, if not between all languages, at least between the dominant so-called international languages. Thus, in order to incite one another to respect the language they have in share and organize its defense in the face of the dominant or exclusive use of English, the francophone countries have signed a *Vade-mecum* on the use of French in international organizations and intend to follow up its application.

With the same aim in view, the International Organization of Francophony train to French language legions of diplomats belonging to its member countries in which French is neither their mother-tongue nor of a current use. Joseph Lo Bianco emphasizes the essential role translation plays in the development of languages. The exigency of translation in the official languages of each organization has become the symbol of the daily resistance to linguistic uniformisation.

An institutional body voluntarily shapes the linguistic and cultural reality or at least ambitions to do so. Francophony, which was in 1970 a fact based on the existence of a common working language between many countries of Africa, the Arab world,

Europe and America, whether previously colonized by France or not, and which had already started to organize itself – especially with the creation of the “*Conférence des ministres de l’éducation des pays francophones*” (*Confemen*: Conference of the francophone countries’ education ministers), also by its incarnation in a multilateral institution, the “*ACCT*” which was to become the “*Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie*” (*AIF*: Intergovernmental Agency of francophony) then merge into the “*Organisation internationale de la francophonie*” (*OIF*: International organisation of francophony) under the name of the latter –, has legitimized francophony as a reality and endowed it with a surplus of existence, on the juridical level, true, but also in the everyday cooperation between countries.

Institutionalization is a step in the social organization of human needs. With reference to Francophony, this is to be seen for example in the paradoxical aspect of the claims made by the trans-frontier civil society, associations, diverse collectivities, professional organizations which claim to belong to Francophony and try to develop with the “*OIF*” such links as will give them legitimacy and have them recognized as institutionally francophone, but at the same time and as much as possible preserve their lee-way and decision-making freedom.

As this chapter shows, our world is more and more multilingual and multicultural and the institutions it is made of, be they national, emanating from the State, or trans-frontier, regional or international, are required to find the best way to tackle this phenomenon, to negotiate its effects and implications. We, researchers, do have a role to play in this negotiation. Our “*Précis*” is an example of this.

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Chapter 8

# History, practices and models

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# NOTES ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHAPTER 8

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The challenge in translating this chapter was to make anglophone readers aware of the historical antecedents of multilingual education in Europe, taking as an example the teaching of French, Latin and modern foreign languages in Europe throughout the ages. The outsider's view offered by Willem Frijhoff in his Counterpoint offers the possibility to reflect on difficult - because non-equivalent - notions such as *universalité* and universality, *communauté* and community, *pluralité* and diversity.



## INTRODUCTION:

# HISTORY, PRACTICES AND MODELS

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Multilingual education—that is, the learning of a foreign or a second language or several languages—has been an object of historical inquiry. Its underlying pedagogical practices have been a subject of discussion insofar as they constitute answers to questions about the field's aims and methods. Nevertheless, this historical foundation has long been ignored in the training of teachers of foreign languages within the professional and academic institutions founded in European countries since 1875. Moreover, it has too easily been suggested that in modern Europe, the Renaissance or the classical period, the models used for the teaching of modern languages were borrowed from those used for dead languages, primarily Latin.

While the institutional recognition of the profession of foreign language teaching dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe, the profession of language master is much older. The latter is inscribed within a spatio-temporal, geographical, political and socio-cultural context, and it goes hand-in-hand with a certain focus on the subject itself, which eventually became an academic discipline and took its place in the field of the Humanities. The personal history of teachers of foreign languages and cultures is a part of the history of teaching, with all of its social and political dimensions—a history that continues to unfold. This history throws into question the teaching institution and its actors—the teachers and students—with regard to the social and cultural functions of multilingualism, its use and the representations that have been made of it (Frijhoff & Reboullet 1998).

## QUESTIONING THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND THE RELATIONS AMONG THEM

### **Linguistic diversity and the myth of universality**

Linguistic diversity has long been understood as the outcome of the curse of Babel; since then, one has frequently expressed the hope for a universal language common to everyone that would facilitate understanding between peoples. For Comenius in the

17<sup>th</sup> century, accepting this diversity and considering multilingualism the inheritance of human activity means overcoming this curse while asserting at the same time the impossibility of a universal language. J. Suso Lopez exposes the modernity of such linguistic thinking in this chapter.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, this character of universality was associated with French, which by then had become the language both of European elites and diplomacy. It functioned as a political and social tool, crystallizing the image of a “language of universality” and revealing relations of power. The myth of the “universality of the French language”, relayed by Rivarol’s famous speech for the prize of the Berlin academy (1783), was further supported by the publication of the works of F. Brunot (1905-1979) at a time when French as a world language was beginning to lose ground (1905-1938). Nevertheless, it is good to keep things in perspective by underscoring the fact that “French was then only spoken outside France by limited minorities; {...} this French was not the language of the majority of French people” (Frijhoff & Reboullet 1998: 6).

### Norm and hierarchy in the mental image of languages

Representations of language follow certain norms and hierarchies according to their historical and geographical context. Thus, in the multilingual Europe of Modern Times, French was dominant until English took its place in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a dialogue taken from the *Nouvelle méthode [sic] pour apprendre les principes et l’usage de la langue françoise et hollandoise* by Pierre Marin (Amsterdam, 1712: 220-221), we read a justification of the idea of the universality of the French language, which

*“l’emporte sur toutes les autres. {...}*

*Elle suit mieux l’ordre des pensées & ne souffre point le galimatias. {...}*

*La langue allemande est énergique, mais rude.*

*L’espagnole est grave, mais trop enflée.*

*L’italienne est mignarde, mais molle.*

*La hollandoise est copieuse, mais peu châtiée.*

*La langue française a toutes les beautés de celles-ci, sans avoir aucun de leurs défauts.*

*C’est à juste titre, qu’on l’appelle la langue régente.*

*Les rois et les princes font gloire de la parler.”*

*“is victorious above all others. {...}*

*It regulates better the order of thoughts and doesn’t put up with gibberish {...}*

*The German language is energetic, but coarse*

Spanish is serious, but too pompous.

Italian is dainty, but weak

Dutch is copious, but not refined enough.

The French language has all the beauties of the above, without having any of their faults.

It is right that it should be called the reigning language.

Kings and princes glory in speaking it.”

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we find these same languages taught in the schools that trained future merchants, such as the first great Dutch commercial school founded in Amsterdam in 1846, which classified these languages in decreasing order of importance: French, German, English, Italian, Swedish, Danish—a sign of the hierarchy established in economic relations (*Documents Sibfles* 18. 1996: 330). Conversation handbooks for these future “commercial travellers” were written in six languages, and thus espoused multilingual teaching practices. And while the languages spoken in Europe had a certain image, the same was also true for languages spoken in other parts of the world. Thus, we read in the preface to *Dialogues persans-français* “to be used by dragomen, merchants and travellers” (Nicolas. 1856, 1869) *la langue persane, si peu connue en Europe, est sans contredit la plus belle, la plus riche en expressions figurées, et la plus poétique de toutes celles qui sont parlées en Asie* (the Persian language, so little known in Europe, is unquestionably the most beautiful, the richest in figurative expressions, and the most poetic of all those that are spoken in Asia).

The uses of multilingualism and the acquisition of multilingual competence must therefore be considered from the point of view of the image and function, of the supply and the demand, of foreign languages.

## USES AND PRACTICES IN LEARNING

### For what uses should one become multilingual?

The objectives put forth for learning foreign languages have differed according to their context and era; foreign languages have functioned as social, professional, scientific or even religious tools, thereby characterizing the demand for multilingualism. This demand was first and foremost practical, and multilingual textbooks attempted to satisfy it as shown in the analysis by M. Colombo Timelli and N. Minerva. If the assertion that a language exists to be spoken (*Documents* 22.1998) has been predominant since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, one still needs to ask why it is necessary to learn to speak it. Conversation and communication with foreigners can be useful objectives, as can the needs of diplomacy, trade and even travel—for example, the “Grand Tour” of Europe, which was part of the basic education of young members

of the European social elite. The need for interpreters or dragomen to “ferry” people between languages and cultures at the disposal of those in power has always existed. And just as English functions today as the language of professional communication in a large part of the world, French in its time was the language of commerce and the merchant navy for example, obligating the children of the bourgeoisie of Northern Europe to learn it, as illustrated by the title of a book by Meurier (1590) *Devisz familiers, propres à tous marchands, désireux d’entendre bien lire, et naïvement parler françois et flamen*. A good documentary source for approaching the question of the uses of multilingualism, the titles of works for learning languages often reveal the type of public targeted by the masters who wrote them. For small children, girls or adolescents, titles in the 17<sup>th</sup> century are metaphorical (*Le Perroquet mignon des petits enfants, francoys-flamen*, Meurier, 1601; *La nouvelle guirlande des jeunes filles, contenant plusieurs devis féminins et discours plaisants, pour bien apprendre à parler la langue françois*, Z. Heyns, 1653); for adults in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the titles are more prosaic, especially concerning multilingual guides to conversation (Nicolas, *Dialogues persans-français* 1856, 1869).

### **What are the objectives of the textbooks and the methods?**

The books often offer a key to the pedagogical strategies used by the master, who reflected on what he was doing and explained his method in a note to the reader, in a preface or in a foreword. The aim to communicate is fundamental in the master’s approach to his practice, and dialogues, an ancient tradition going back to the Middle Ages, are the primary means to achieve it. The direct or intuitive method, which became widespread in Europe at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and which was for a long time presented as innovative, is in fact inscribed within a long history of modern-language teaching practices in Europe.

Besse (2001) made a list of “the principal techniques that the West developed for teaching modern languages” and the beliefs implicated therein. Investigating “what is learning a language?” (Documents 17.1996), Besse refers to Latin masters, to Volney who adapted the European alphabet to Asiatic languages (between 1795 and 1820), to Cabanis and other grammarians, philosophers, pedagogical experts or medical practitioners who produced theoretical writings on methods of language instruction in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In their handbooks, the masters gave answers to the didactic questions that one asked. Thus, the question of knowing the most efficient means of learning a foreign language is dependent on the following: 1/ Should one make use of the mother tongue or not? 2/ Should one teach grammar and, if so, how? 3/ Should one’s learning focus on the language itself as a code or rather on its use—that is to say, on the practice of communication? 4/ Should one focus the progress of acquisition on content or on the conditions of learning, or how does one teach multiple languages—learning one language after another or learning several languages at once?

The first two questions allow us to distinguish between two different approaches. A bilingual approach, which uses the mother tongue, focuses on words or code; a more scholarly, diligent method, it enables the teaching of grammar (*ars grammatica*

becoming linguistic science in the 19th century) through recourse to conceptual tools. The learning of grammar, indispensable in the tradition of Quintilien, was ridiculed by Pielat in his symbolic title (*l'Antigrammaire* 1672/73) or simply rejected by authors or by the learners portrayed in the dialogues intended for teaching (*Je voudrais étudier la langue française – Désirez-vous aussi étudier la grammaire? – Non, seulement la conversation et la correspondance commerciale. – Qu'ai-je besoin de grammaire?* “I’d like to study the French language – Do you also wish to learn grammar? – No, only conversation and commercial correspondence. – Why would I need grammar?” Droz, *Méthode de langue et de conversation françaises* 1869/1870: 75). The monolingual approach is justified by the mere genius of language, which would lose its potential if we approached it through translation; this was the choice made by Peschier in 1871: vi, in his *Causeries parisiennes*, so as not to distort *les naïvetés sublimes de l’inimitable La Fontaine, les touches finement amères des satires de Boileau, les ballades fantastiques de Goethe, les grâces fugitives des canzoni de Pétrarque, ou les sombres inspirations de la muse byronienne* (the sublime naïvetés of La Fontaine, Boileau’s delicately bitter touches of satire, Goethe’s fantastical ballads, the fugitive grace of Petrarch’s *canzoni*, or the gloomy inspirations of the Byronic muse). The same approach was taken with the direct method, developed at the end of the 19th century, and later with contemporary methods of education in intercultural perception.

The second two questions above will be recognizable to today’s pedagogical experts. Should we teach one language at a time or several languages at once? Quintilien (first century) and the Jesuits in the 16th century strongly recommended the parallel teaching of Greek and Latin, whereas Comenius in the 17th century advocated learning one language at a time, using subsequently what one had already acquired. Can one model of learning serve as a model for another? While preparing a journey to Syria, Volney chose the grammar of Erpenius (1584? – 1624), who taught oriental languages at Leyden, to learn the first elements of Arabic; confused by rules he was not used to, he concluded that *le meilleur parti étant d’apprendre la langue dans le pays même et de la bouche des naturels* (the best way to learn a language is directly in the country, from native speakers) (*Alphabet européen* 1819, VIII: 96-97). Many textbooks claimed to offer the acquisition of two or more languages (and as many as twelve) according to the needs of business travellers; one such textbook is the *Vocabulaire* by Berlaimont (1511...), which, originally in French and Dutch, appeared in 1598 in eight languages and was reedited many times during the 17th century. “Reversible” textbooks (Reboulet 1992), such as those by Holyband, Mauger or Marin, were reprinted over several centuries and intended to teach two languages at once: either English or Dutch, in addition to French. Whether genuine or purely commercial, this intention reappeared in the 19th century in the *Dialogues franco-persans* with grammar and vocabulary (Paris: Klincksieck, 1883) intended by Biberstein Kazimirski *à l’usage des Français qui se proposeraient de faire un séjour de quelque durée en Perse {qu’à celui des} Persans qui désirent apprendre la langue française* (for French people wanting to stay for some time in Persia, {as well as} for Persians desirous of learning the French language).

## For what training?

Multilingualism can also be used within the context of education, as foreign languages play a role in individual development, in particular that of women. Excluded from education by classical languages, women found themselves in a privileged position to take advantage of an education in modernity, as illustrated by A. Mandich. The social and cultural role of French in Modern Europe should be studied in relation to Humanist ideology and the Enlightenment. While the French language opened the mind to modern thought through its disciplinary contributions to history, geography, science, philosophy, and literature, and while it was studied not only to be read, but also to be spoken, other languages have only been approached through writing. Such is the case with Latin and Greek, the classical languages, learned as dead languages in Renaissance Europe and up until the 20th century; but it is also the case for specialist languages such as Arabic, the language of the sacred book in the Muslim religion, and Chinese, whose characters one learns to read and which opens up a completely new world of knowledge, enriching the mind and the intellect. B. Allanic analyzes the implications of learning this “distant” language, which has been understood for centuries in its written form alone.

Gradually the teaching of foreign languages took the form of the professional exercise of a discipline, with the job of language master becoming a profession governed by training norms and diplomas, and with the foreign language itself becoming a scholarly and academic subject. This process occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries, in Northern and then Southern Europe; the *École des Langues Orientales* in Paris was a noteworthy forerunner, for Chinese was taught there as early as 1843.

## CULTURAL MODELS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

### The model of master

Just as today we use linguistic biographies to describe the multilingual trajectories of our contemporaries, we can also study the biographical trajectories of masters in the past, contextualizing them and their practices from the point of view of multilingual education. Their pedagogical models are strongly linked to the constitution of their linguistic and cultural identity and to the context of their teaching. The famed Berlaimont and Holyband, whom Reboullet considered as archetypes, masters of language at the end of the 16th century in Anglo-Saxon circles, were professionals. Teachers, writers, translators, diplomats, tourist guides and travellers, they practiced a didactics of multilingualism that went hand-in-hand with a multilingual education of which they themselves were the bearers. The language master teaching French in Italy in the 17th and 18th centuries was a dispenser of fashionable culture, a master in the art of conversation, and a model of pronunciation and morality. Tutors, who, thanks to their plural identity, educated their charges to be multilingual, were numerous: Théophile Frêne, master of the English, German, Italian and French languages in London at the end of the 18th century (*Documents Sibfles* 14.1994: 17-24), Matthias



Kramer (1640-1730) who had a comparative attitude towards language as well as culture (*Documents Sibfles* 8.1991: 19-25), and the famous authors of methods which, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, combined Romance languages and Anglo-Saxon languages in their very identity and therefore in their teaching (*Documents Sibfles* 12,1993: 5-10). As for Jacotot (1770-1838), he offered a method for learning any language without a master; drawing from Telemachus, who constituted a cultural and moral whole (*Documents Sibfles* 30.2003: 157-169), he aimed for “intellectual emancipation” through “universal teaching” which he applied to the study of languages.

### 3.2 The education of the individual

Forming the mind, opening up a world of knowledge, spreading cultural ideals—these are the assets of educational models, achieved through the learning of foreign languages. Representations of the language and its function in cultural and social contexts influence attitudes. The study of languages and a multilingual education are important elements in the ideology of the Enlightenment, which was dominant in Europe, as illustrated by the speech of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Dutch woman, cosmopolitan by birth, a migrant aristocrat through her places of residence. Belle van Zuylen, alias Isabelle de Charrière, explains in French that:

“... l'étude des langues est {...} la meilleure maitresse de métaphysique expérimentale pour ainsi dire. {...} et je dirai jusqu'à la fin de mes jours que l'étude des langues, l'attention qu'on donne à ce qui se dit, les comparaisons que l'on fait entre les langues du nord comme l'allemand et celles du midi comme le latin et tous ses enfants (le français, l'italien) est de tous les exercices de l'esprit celui qui le forme et l'étend et l'aiguise le plus” (Isabelle de Charrière, lettre 860 à Henriette L'Hardy, 19 octobre 1792, *O.C.* III, 425).

“... the study of languages is {...} the best mistress of experimental metaphysics so to speak. {...} and I will say until the end of my days that the study of languages, the attention we give to what is said, the comparisons we make between Northern languages such as German and those of the South like Latin and all its offspring (French, Italian) is of all the exercises of the mind the one that forms it, enlarges it and sharpens it the most”

The French language, which was for a long time the language of European elites, served the educational needs of the gentleman or *bonnête homme* of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the young aristocrat of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the peoples to be civilised in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; we can wonder about the effects of models proposed to address individuals, subjects on whom multilingualism and multiculturalism have been imposed. A cultural model of civilisation through language with universalist intentions became widespread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through institutional networks that spread education and instruction in the French language, in particular in the Mediterranean basin. These initiatives were political and, although they promoted a pedagogical model, they relayed at the same time an ideology, as illustrated by E. Argaud and C. Cortier's study. Thus, the

networks of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* (1860), the *Alliance Française* (1883) and the *Mission laïque* (1902) mediated the spread of a multilingualism founded on different prejudices and pedagogical policies, as much in the image of the French language—the dominant language of education—as in the image of the language and culture of the Other, that of the learners. The values that motivated their politics determined the modes of social and cultural relations that were transposed into a foreign context and used as models. The universal ideology of pedagogy was fortified by policies designed to spread French as a foreign language in the period after the Second World War; it became the object of attacks and prompted introspection.

### 3.3 Cultural model and construction of identity

If the image of others and of the cultural model brought by a language can lead to the rejection or the appropriation of multilingualism or multiculturalism, the tension over issues of identity that this implicates must be understood as attitudes of xenophilia and/or xenophobia within the context of cultural or political domination (the Europe of Versailles, the Ottoman Empire, the Chinese Empire) or colonial domination (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries). These tensions can be mobilized by political authorities in their efforts to support the construction of national identities, as was the case in the Netherlands, Italy and Turkey. The reform of writing adopted by the young Turkish Republic had important repercussions on questions of identity, and it underscored a desire to conform to a Western model by adopting not only its forms of communication, but also the cultural content associated with them. H. Güven explains how politicians have made use of such tactics.

Foreign language—as a language of communication, education or learning—can embody a model of knowing linked to a world of knowledge near or far, accessible or inaccessible depending on how strange it is, on its radical difference from the world one knows and accepts—or not—as a paradigm. Until late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the learning of Chinese in Europe occurred through written documents which in themselves represent a totally other world, a different way of representing thought. The spread of French through institutions with global objectives brought with it social and political ideologies. The transformation of the Turkish language into a form comparable to that of Western languages ensured the transmission of cultural content. Questions of the relation between language and culture are thus fundamental and timeless. It is thus not only justified but also desirable in a historical context to question the notions of skills, communication, and the development of the person as a learner and social actor, as well as the notion of cultural identity; these are situated right at the heart of multilingual education and presented today as a political issue in a multilingual and multicultural Europe which aims to educate social actors capable “of acting and interacting with others in a specific cultural environment” (Coste et al. 1997:9).

# DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES OR UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE: COMENIUS AND TRANSCENDING THE CURSE OF BABEL

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During the Renaissance and throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Europe underwent a fragmentation of linguistic unity as a result of four simultaneous processes:

- the disintegration of the universality of Latin as the language of access to (Græco-Latin) culture and as the language of all research or intellectual (philosophical) debate;
- the (re)discovery of Greek as a language of culture and of Hebrew as a religious language
- the promotion of different vernacular languages to the status of languages worthy of being spoken and written
- the discovery of multiple languages spoken all over the world through travel to America and the East Indies.

The Humanists and intellectuals of the 17<sup>th</sup> century experienced this with a certain uneasiness, but also with a renewed hope. The traumatic division of Christianity into Catholic and Protestant churches, religious persecution, the wars of religion, the Thirty Years' War... shook their confidence in humankind. Apocalyptic voices announced the end of the world, and visionary sects came into being. In the domain of languages, the curse of Babel was felt once again: *confusio linguarum* constituted an early warning sign of the dissolution of society and of civilization. And yet, in spite of this: "The disappearance of Latin as the international language of learning and of authority, the full recognition of the European vernacular languages, as well as new discoveries in the field of non-European languages, these factors all contributed to creating a feeling that it is possible for Man to improve and even to invent languages that suit the needs of the period" (Robins 1976:119).

Comenius's thought on language formed one of the bases on which this feeling of hope was founded.

## COMENIUS'S LINGUISTIC IDEAS (EXTRACTS):

How happy we would be if there were but one language!

I recognise that the knowledge of several languages is not essential in order to attain wisdom {...} In fact man would be no less happy if, as was the case in Paradise, he were forever unaware of languages and spoke but one {...}

In the present state of affairs, it is none the less true that one should learn languages {"linguae discendae sunt"}, and this for three reasons:

1/ first, because we should understand that it is a cure for the various ills born of the confusion of languages {...}

2/ second, because the very state of society requires it. There is, in effect, always a certain number of men who do not understand not only the language of their own people, but nor that of their neighbours either with whom they must communicate, in particular for reasons of work {...}

3/ third and last, because it is useful in itself, in order to have a well-developed mind, to work on it through the study of languages (in particular the most cultured). It will then be agreeable to us to glimpse the rays of light pouring down from divine wisdom and, overturning the obstacles placed before us, to start conversing with the different inhabitants of the earth, whether they be alive or dead ({1648} 2005: 111).

The origin of the confusion of languages

{...} It is at the foot of the tower of Babel that the multitude of languages was born. But how did it happen? The most widespread opinion is that God, by a miracle, formed several languages by dividing the only one that existed. Thus, at the very moment of the division, one man spoke perfectly one language, while another man spoke another. Each took his language to the land to which he emigrated and left it to his descendants {...} However, as far as I am concerned, I consider that at the foot of the tower of Babel, nothing happened other than the mix-up of languages, that is to say the minds of men were dumbfounded by God. They were as if they had been struck and, under the shock, they even forgot how to talk (and probably they even forgot reality and forgot themselves). They also became incapable of doing anything whatever and were affected by such lassitude that they shut themselves away from the world in total solitude. But it seems that a re-appropriation of the laws of speech took place. It was registered with time in the very process of the dispersal of men. Language, in effect, saw the light again at the very moment when, thanks to the return of social peace, men started once again to think. Thus, thanks to trade and exchange, words came back to them in the same way as the rules governing the organisation of speech {...} As soon as they were dispersed, men adopted new forms of behaviour which gave rise, at the same time, to the appearance of new forms in their language of communication ({1648} 2005: 55-56).

{...} If what I am putting forward be true, it would appear that Babylon is not at the origin of the multiplicity of languages, but only the expression of it at one moment. Consequently, it follows that peoples' ways of speaking, such as we know them, are the product either of the diligence of men or of their negligence, in other words, the product of their activity or their inaction. Any attentive observer can note this phenomenon where he himself lives ({1648} 2005: 58).

## **THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES SIGNIFIES “THE TRANSCENDENCE OF THE CURSE OF BABEL”**

Comenius noted an extraordinarily diverse linguistic reality during his time. In many respects, his approach to this question was quite modern: for him language (*lingua*) really existed only as speech (*sermo*) or spoken language (*loquela*), and not just as grammar, which is merely an abstract representation of language. Language is the “rational product {... that} allows men to communicate mutually the feelings of their minds by a variety of articulate sounds” ({1648} 2005: 33); language is usage (*linguae usus*), a production, an expression unique to human beings.

Comenius's thoughts on language are based on the assumption of linguistic diversity and the transcendence of the curse of Babel. He believed that the human mind had long since recovered from the state of confusion into which God had thrown the people of Babel, and that contemporary languages showed renewed efforts by human reason (guided by the Spirit, by God) to recreate a language which, if not perfect like the original language, was at least marked by internal analogy and a coherent relationship to reality. All languages are thus expressions of active reason, worthy of credibility and respect in the general work of “culture” and perfectibility: the understanding of the world (the “nomenclature” of reality) is spread through all of the languages in the world, and it is through a union of all world languages that one may “glimpse the rays of light pouring down from divine wisdom” ({1648} 2005: 111). Thus, every language, through its structure and in its own way, manifests the order of nature.

## **THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE MUST BE A PERFECT LANGUAGE**

Comenius' acceptance of the diversity of languages as a question not to be ignored, and thus his interest in learning them for the reasons he put forward, led him to a particular stance on the subject of universal language. For Comenius, a language could only be universal if it were perfect. The attempt to recreate a perfect language (see Eco 1994), “with logical rules, simple and absolute, easy to learn and to use” (Caravolas 1984: 115), occupied – and even obsessed – many Humanists and philosophers of the time (Kircher, Bacon, Mersenne, Dalgarno, Wilkins, Comenius

himself, Leibnitz...). This phenomenon essentially constituted a wish to transcend the linguistic division of their time—not only to find a lingua franca to replace Latin, but also to go beyond the weaknesses observed in Latin itself (concerning the link between words and objects, the question of internal analogy in grammar, or the inconsistencies of syntax), which gave the undertaking a wholly new dimension. A universal language had to be at once an ideal language, perfect for conveying knowledge, thoughts and concepts, in which words would correspond exactly to objects, in which lexical terms would have only one meaning, in which misunderstanding or even interpretation would be impossible, but also in which wrong ideas would be impossible to formulate because they would be immediately identifiable. Robins notes the relationship of this idea to rationalism: “The notion of a universal structure of human thought, or at least of that of civilised humanity, fundamentally independent of any specific language, and therefore expressible in a universal language, is a concept that was no doubt natural for the rationalists” (Robins 1976: 123). Comenius also expressed the wish for a perfect language, but he realized the impossibility of the task, and therefore supported the idea that it was preferable to “cultivate” languages in order to make them gradually more perfect.

## **GENERAL GRAMMAR: A FRAMEWORK FOR RATIONAL AND GLOBAL ANALYSIS FOR ALL LANGUAGES**

The debate on a (perfect) universal language takes up a subject dear to speculative grammar: the role of reason in language. Historians of linguistic ideas (Robins 1976; Malmberg 1991) underscore the fact that there is no discontinuity between medieval modist grammar and philosophical, structured grammar (Sanctius, Vossius, Scioppius, F. Bacon, but also Campanella, Caramuel, Juan Villar), a lineage that culminated in the *Grammaire générale* of the Port-Royal (1660). If language is a gift from God and thus reveals – as do all of God’s creations – the order of nature through its internal analogy, it therefore follows that one should be able to discover rules common to all the languages of the world! Comenius only asked the question of general grammar indirectly: he himself worked on particular grammar (*ars*) and not on philosophical grammar. However, he imagined that grammatical meta-language and the analytical framework for Latin could be exported to all the languages of the world, and that, as a consequence, once this knowledge had been acquired, learning other languages would be extremely easy, because one only needed to learn what was different or particular to a given language (Caravolas 1984: 141-142).

The transcendence of the curse of Babel—and thus the acceptance of the diversity of languages—the impossibility of a universal language, and the progressive genesis of the concept of “general grammar” place Comenius’s linguistic thinking in the modern era. However, the ideology of universal language (in this case French) came back in force in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Rivarol); partisans of this idea upheld the notion that the French language possessed the necessary assets to merit this distinction.

# LEARNING/TEACHING BY EXAMPLE. MULTILINGUAL TOOLS FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION (16<sup>TH</sup> -19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)

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Multilingualism is found in all kinds of language publications, from dictionaries to manuals, from conversation primers to travel guides—works written to teach languages to others or to oneself—as well as literary fiction, whether or not it has pedagogical intentions. What these all have in common is a foregrounding of practice: multilingual production constituted a response to new social needs manifested on a large scale at the beginning of the Modern Age. These pedagogical tools, in the broad sense of the term, make it possible now both to assess the distribution of languages in Europe at the time and to understand the linguistic vehicles through which modern languages spread.

Although multilingualism has been established as a constant throughout history, the same cannot be said for multiculturalism: on the contrary, the purported neutrality of language lies at the heart of countless polyglot tools known to Western civilization since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, multilingual production was affected by several phenomena, including the emergence of an educated public. Literature took on a new role; through the establishment of literary works as models of social and linguistic behavior, they became textbooks in their own right, from which it was possible to draw all kinds of lessons: *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon was used for its fine language and moral philosophy; Pope's *Essay on Man* was through to shape the mind; and Molière's plays guaranteed conversational propriety! Thus, we can trace two traditions: in the first, the corpus consists mainly of thematic lexical lists and conversational models, and it foregrounds a utilitarian function and a practical approach. *Vocabulista*, *Berlaimont* and numerous collections of dialogues including those drawn from the *Guide du voyageur* by Madame de Genlis represent just a few milestones. In the second tradition, the same principle of learning by example, according to which models are provided by prestigious literary texts, served the purpose of making languages visible and constituted an educational project in which multilingualism would guarantee a large audience.



1. Dictionary of the eight languages [...], Lyon, Jouve, 1573.

LIVRE I.				CHAP. XVII.			
Ἑλληνικῶν.	Latinum.	Duytsch.	François.	Español.	Italiانو.	Englisch.	Hochdentsch.
τιμῆς	forfex	een schere	forfe	tierras	forfese	fheeres	schar
ἀμφωροῦ	amphora	een cruyche	cruche	iarto	boccale	a gread potte	krug
κτεῖς. φιλχρησῶν	pecten	eenen kam	pecte	peyne	pecline	a combe	stral
ἐπίλυ	lubula	een elffen	alaine	fibia	fubie	an elfen	al
Κεφ. 17. περι τι μπεριου κτε νχιτων.	Cap. 17. de mercatoribus & artificibus.	Das 17. cap. van coopmans end ambachis licden.	Le 17. chap. des marchans & hommes de mestier.	El 17. cap. es de los merca. y artificios.	Il 17. cap del li mercanti artefani.	The 17. cha. of marchan tes and craf tesmen.	Das 17. cap. von kuffleut en handwerk mennen.
Λατῆς	Molitor	Een muelder	Meunier	Molineto	Mugnaio	Amylner	Eyn muller
μύλη	mola	muelen	moulin	molino	molino	a myll	cyn mule
ειταπος δ	pistor	backer	boulinger	hornero	fornaio	a baker	cyn bech
ειταπος δ	piftrix	backerfe	boulangere	hornera	fornaia	a bakers wyfe	cyn brotbekerin
κλιβωσ	furnus	houen	fou	horno	il forno	an ouen	ofen
χρυσοχ	faber aurarius	goutfmit	orfeure (stain	orifero	orevere	a goldfmyth	goldfchmid
κατερυχι	stanni fufor	ten ghiter	fondeur d'e-	petrero	stagnaio	a petuterer	zinn gieffer
βάνης	futor	schonmager	cordonnier	calceero	calzo laio	a fhowmaker	schuster
άνισης	fartor	cleetmager	parmètier, cou	xastro	fartore	a talyer	fchneider
μυχανις	faber	een fmit	feure (fturier	hortero	fabro	a fmyth	fchmid
χαλκοσ	faber ferrarius	een yferfmit	forgeur, marc	horrado	manfcalco	an yrofmith	eifenschmid
ύφλοτος	textor	een weuer	tiffèrat (chal	texedor	teftore	a weuer	wacher
δερματομακον	pellio	pellier	peletier	pelliiero	pellixiao	a fkyenner	kuyszner
τικτω	faber ligna-	timmerman	charpentier,	carpentero	maifiro d'ale-	a carpenter	zimmerman
	rius		menuifier		gnama		
γλυπτης	sculptor (rius	fneider, gzeuer	raillleur	efculpidor	fcultore	a keruet	bildgraber
τίχηρη	faber mura-	een meijer	maffon	murador	muratore	a brick layer	maurer
			tierras				E f

2. Noël de Berlaimont, Dictionary in four languages, Louvain, de Grave, 1556

**DICTIONARI**  
**QVATVOR LINGVARVM, TEVTONI**  
*Gallica, Latina, & Hispanica, eas linguas discrete volentibus vtilissimum.*  
*Commodo Valerio Pliuio interpretante. Cui diligenter hoc recens editio*  
*recoquisit accesserunt: Interpretatio quatuor partium orationis tedesca-*  
*bum, Et Orthographia linguae Gallica, Et modus legendi atque scribendi*  
*linguam Hispanicam.*

Vocabulaire en quatre langues, Flamengue, Fran-  
 coise, Latine, Espagnole, à tous ceulx qui les voudront aprendre  
 et estude.

Vocabulaer in vier spaken Duytsch, Francois, Latin  
 ende Spaensisch, posttelich allen den ghenen die dese spaken  
 leeren willen.

Vocabulario de quatro lenguas, Flamenco, Fran-  
 ces, Latin, y Español, muy prouechoso para los que quisieren  
 aprender estas lenguas.

A cette dernière edition y auons adionné les quatre parties indictionnelles  
 avecques leurs Verbans. Aussy l'Orthographie Françoisie: Puis apres  
 la maniere de lire, escrire, & prononcer la langue Espagnole.

In fide pefsi reuerentium fimo.




**LOVANIL**  
 Par Bartholomey de Graue, Imprimeur iuré.  
 L'an M. D. LVI.  
 Avec Grace & Privilège de la Maesté Impériale.



### 3. *Les Aventures de Télémaque in six languages, Paris, Baudry, 1852*

<i>Les Aventures de Télémaque.</i> Livre premier.	<i>The Adventures of Telemachus.</i> Book 1.	<i>Die Begebenheiten Telemach's.</i> Erstes Buche.	<i>Le Avventure di Telemaco.</i> Libro primo.	<i>Las Aventuras de Telemaco.</i> Libro primero.	<i>Aventuras de Telemaco.</i> Livro primeiro.
Calypso ne pouvait se consoler du départ d'Ulysse. Dans sa douleur, elle se trouvait malheureuse d'être immortelle. Sa grotte ne résonnait plus de son chant...	The grief of Calypso for the departure of Ulysses would admit of no comfort, and she regretted her immortality, as that which could only perpetuate affliction, and aggravate calamity by despair: her grotto no more echoed with the music of her voice...	Kalypso war untröstlich über die Abreise des Ulysses. Im Gefühl ihres Schmerzes hielt sie es für ein Unglück, unsterblich zu sein. Ihre Grotte ertönte nicht mehr von ihren Gesänge....	Calipso non potèva consolàrsi dèlla partènza d'Ulisse. La di léi immortalità rendèvala infelice nel súa dolóre. La di léi grotta piú non risonáva del dolce cánto dèlla súa voce....	Inconsolable estaba Calipso desde que la dejó Ulises: tal era su desconsuelo, que se tenia por disgraciada en ser immortal. Ya no resonaba en su gruta el dulce eco de su voz...	Calypso vivia inconsolavel da ausencia d'Ulysses: sua aflicção tornava-lhe pesada a immortalidade. Ja sua grutta não resoava com os suaves accents de sua voz...

## 1. «BOOKS FOR EUROPE?» (SIMONIN M. 1982)

The 16<sup>th</sup> century saw an extraordinary enthusiasm for the development of national languages and cultures, linked to the expansion of vernaculars used increasingly for intercommunication between neighbouring linguistic communities (in a period when the function of Latin as an international language only existed within a narrow circle of academics). Naturally, factors in the expansion of national languages, such as geography, politics, economics, religion, military campaigns etc., gave rise to the need to learn them. The intense multilingual activity that reflected an interest in modern languages (and entailed a «reconquest» of ancient languages) is encountered in two domains: academic research after the Renaissance devoted to the description and comparison of languages, and the more mundane phenomenon of contact between vernacular languages on trading routes and journeys.

In Mithridate (Mithridates. De differentiis linguarum tum ueterum, tum quae hodie apud diuersas nationes in toto orbe terrarum usu sunt..., Zurich, Christoph Froschauer, 1555), the Swiss scholar Conrad Gessner describes all the languages known in his lifetime (about 130, ancient and modern). The myth of Mithridates, like that of Pentecost, embodies the humanist dream of multilingualism: based on ancient accounts, Mithridates communicated with his subjects (without the use of an interpreter) in the 22 languages spoken in his territories (Auli Gellii, Noctes Atticae, XVII). It is no coincidence that, long after his death, Gessner's name appears in 1605 on the frontispiece of an edition of a Calepin in 11 languages (Ambrosii Calepini Dictionarium undecim linguarum... Conrado Gesnero auctore..., Basileae, per S. Henricpetri). (A Calepin, with its Latin entries and metalanguage, is the most widespread type of multilingual dictionary among lexicographical works targeting an educated public.)

«Mithridatism» (Simonin 1982: 384), then, described the approach to languages during that period. The 16<sup>th</sup> century did not yet seem aware of the balance of power between modern languages, even though relationships between prestigious languages (first Latin and sometimes Greek, then, in different periods, Italian and French) and less

prestigious ones were usually asymmetrical, organized into a hierarchy of widespread languages and those with a limited communicative range. The multilingual tools under consideration here reflect a favorable attitude towards all languages, which were seen to exist on equal footing (given the fact that, according to M. Simonin, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century «no language had yet obtained the upper hand in Europe» [1982: 387]).

Alongside the *Calepins* and other dictionaries of the same sort, manuals for international communication were circulating in Europe – destined for use by travellers and traders, and thus designed for non-academic learning contexts – first comparing two, and then several, languages. These dictionaries emerged from the tradition of the *Vocabulista*, a name used to define a series of manuals deriving from a Venetian-Bavarian thematic collection of 1477, which later used four languages (Lat., It., Fr., Ger.) in 1510. These manuals have an unusual history (cf. Rossebastiano Bart A. 1982). Although they were created to fulfil the linguistic requirements of limited categories of users (in 1477, the local language was Venetian and the language to be learned, Bavarian, was the language of privileged commercial exchanges), they became with subsequent editions tools adapted for far-removed geographical and linguistic contexts, from the Slavonic East to England, from German-speaking regions to the Mediterranean basin. As a real manual of «universal» language, the *Vocabulista* eventually juxtaposed up to eight languages for a total of twelve altogether; it benefited from the homogenous cultural and social spheres that it targeted as well as the abundant publishing activity of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, aimed not only at the intellectual classes but also at very diverse socio-professional categories. Its rapidly increasing geographical distribution demonstrates the demand for it, while its chronological distribution (from 1477 to 1652) demonstrates its effectiveness.

The *Vocabulista* offered vocabulary and short phrases sometimes organized into micro-dialogues. Practical both in form (organized into columns in a small format) and content (everyday themes, words and phrases from spoken language), it is also of interest for the language learning method it espoused (a natural method, ahead of its time in directness, where the spoken language was privileged and norms were totally absent). It was addressed to «those who practice (the language) around the world», traders and travellers, artisans and women wishing to learn languages without going to school. Later it would be for «all scholars and literary enthusiasts». Greek occupied the first column of these manuals, which nevertheless continued to focus on common languages in accordance with the needs of everyday communication. Moreover, the tradition of multilingual dictionaries was to continue for a long time, as demonstrated by, among others, a *Recueil de neuf mille mots les plus usités dans huit langues et deux idiomes* («Collection of the nine thousand most commonly used words in eight languages and two idioms»), which is meant to be a «Vade Mecum for the man of the world, for daily use for the requirements of life, for traders, travellers, juriconsults, soldiers, sailors, hoteliers, etc.» (Vanwyn 1841).

## 2. A PILLAR OF LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING: THE COLLECTION OF DIALOGUES

The adaptors of *Berliamont*, the most famous collection of colloquia originally in French and Flemish, used this same strategy of adding languages; to transform their work first into a four-language manual (Louvain 1551), then eight (but those in alternation were even more numerous) over the course of editions appearing until 1759 in the Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland, England, Italy and Poland.

The similarity between the *Berliamont* and the *Vocabulista* is striking in several aspects, such as:

- - the relationship between languages; the knowledge of several foreign languages is presented as a necessity;
- - the way in which languages are compared (equality of languages is accepted as an axiom, allowing no questioning of the possibility/impossibility/difficulty of translation);
- - alternation of languages in the different countries of publication (the bilingual edition which placed a local language alongside a privileged language for trade contacts was transformed into a multilingual tool);
- - the extreme rarity of comments about cultural aspects.

Nevertheless, the *Berliamont* adopts a distinctive, complex pedagogical view (from the beginning it was considered as a school textbook, its author being a « teacher in Anvers »), which was strengthened in subsequent additions:

- attention to oral and written communication (for which dialogues, models for letters and contracts provide the linguistic « blueprint »),
- alphabetical dictionary undoubtedly conceived for use in translation,
- moral content.

These features formed the basis of phonetic and orthographical treatises, the precepts of the 1567 edition, and the treatise on « how to study well » of 1577.

The tradition of multilingual dialogues had proven to be outstandingly durable: examples include the Latin-Greek *Hermeneumata* of antiquity and, in the Middle Ages, the French-English *Manières de langage*, and later the *Manuel du voyageur, ou Recueil de dialogues, de lettres, etc. [...] à l'usage des François en Allemagne et des Allemands en France* by Madame de Genlis (1799), which presented the text in French with an opposing German translation. It appeared first in three, then four, and then six languages, adapting to demand or to local linguistic contexts (cf.: *Książeczka dla podróżnych... Manuel du voyageur, contenant les expressions les plus usitées en voyage et dans les différentes circonstances de la vie*, in four languages: Polish, German, French, Italian, Breslau, Korn, 1807). A Parisian edition (Barrois 1810) is dedicated to «soldiers in foreign countries», travellers, artists and craftsmen; in a Florentine edition (Piazzini 1829), its stated

purpose is to «provide knowledge of idioms or particular sayings in six languages» and «expressions and phrases which appear at all moments in the commerce of life» (*Avant-propos*).

### 3. LEARNING LANGUAGES THROUGH TEXTS

In the same vein, the 16<sup>th</sup> century «invented» multilingual editions of literary texts. One single example – the *Tractado a su amiga* (late 15<sup>th</sup> century) by Juan de Flores – illustrates the typical chronological route: publication in the original language → translation(s) → bilingual edition(s) → multilingual edition(s). In 1521, the first Italian translation appeared, *Aurelio et Isabella*, and in 1529, the French translation (based on the Italian text): *Jugement d'amour*. From 1530 to 1555, at least 12 other editions of the French text were published, along with a second French translation: *Histoire d'Aurelio et d'Isabelle* (1546). In the second half of that century, there were 15 bilingual Italian-French editions—four bilingual French-Spanish editions (this was not the original Spanish text but a new translation based on the French text), one edition in three languages, Fr/It/Eng (London 1586), and three editions in four languages Fr/It/Eng/Sp.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, multilingual editions of literary texts never exceeded four languages and targeted an audience seeking to perfect its linguistic skills: the publishers (and publishing houses) were the same as those of the bilingual and multilingual dictionaries.

Obviously, their purpose was neither communicative nor basically instructive; rather, they enabled the comparison of two, three or four versions of texts. *Jugement d'amour* was a best-selling romantic novel throughout Europe (in a linguistic, but also a geographical, sense, with editions in Spanish, Italian, French, Dutch and English); it included no preface or any allusion to pedagogical or educational use. Nor did it contain any references to cultural particularities (the story is supposed to take place in Scotland at an undefined moment in the past; the country's customs are indicated as such in all the editions).

From a chronological point of view, the history of multilingual novels is short. In terms of languages, its trajectory differs from that of dictionaries:

Bilingual dictionaries → multilingual with subsequent additions;

Monolingual novels → bilingual → possibly multilingual.

The «literary multilingualism» of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries was to follow the same route; it was used for educational purposes but adopted different strategies. The educational approach was based on example; multilingual versions of literary works had countless editions, such as Pope's *Essay on Man* in five languages (English, Latin, Italian, French, German); they were useful for making oneself familiar with «the languages of one's choice, while acquiring the necessary knowledge to mold the heart and spirit» (*Avertissement de l'éditeur*, Strasbourg, König, 1762), or, as we read in the *AVIS*

of a trilingual edition of 1803 (Perpignan, Impr. J. Alzine), the plays of Molière, models of conversation, were useful «for acquiring the habit of speaking a living language», especially «the familiar style of the four main languages of modern Europe», as specified in an 1818 Italian edition in four languages (Milan, Giusti). If we keep the same criteria of influence across space and time, Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (1699)—after countless monolingual or bilingual editions had been used in schools—played the same «universal» role we recognize in the *Vocabulista* and *Berlaimont*. Designed for princely education, it would soon become a model text for universal pedagogical, cultural and ethical issues.

*Télémaque* in the «six most widely used European languages» (Fr., Eng., Ger., It., Sp., Port.), was re-edited several times in an oblong format in six columns so that—as the publisher pointed out in 1837—the reader could «compare the languages he wishes. Each paragraph or page may serve as a translation into the various languages for which the version alongside it provides the correction». This is not surprising; *Télémaque* had already proven itself through the famous Jacotot method of «universal teaching», and editions with interlinear translation had been published in many versions with French alongside English, Spanish, Italian, Latin... Signs of textual didacticism were to become increasingly evident throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This body of work owes its good fortune above all to its formal characteristics; the hundreds of editions bear witness to their use by several generations of tutors as an instrument of learning the French language and, later, other languages, including dead languages. Their stylistic and linguistic qualities, their virtue, their turns of phrase that were socially acceptable and therefore susceptible to imitation—all this was offered as a paradigm. Through a number of replicable processes, *Télémaque* provided an inexhaustible handbook of examples of maxims, precepts, speeches, dialogues, accounts and descriptions using incontrovertible linguistic and cultural content. In an educational model based on example, *Télémaque*, as a collection of stereotypes, became an exemplary text, appropriate for socializing youth.



# AN EDUCATION IN MODERNITY: WOMEN AND TEACHING/LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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There has always been a close relationship between women and foreign languages, at least among women from wealthy families who have access to education. This education, intended to give young girls the knowledge necessary for their future lives in the homes of worthy husbands, was generally entrusted to a governess or teacher, oftentimes from a foreign country, or to a religious institution. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, foreign languages belonged to the branch of knowledge known as “arts d’agrément”, their purpose being to “adorn” women in the same way that music, poetry and drawing did. Such gifts and forms of knowledge helped a married woman to play the part of housewife. Much has been said concerning the role that Parisian salons played in spreading culture throughout Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries; equally well known are the names of the women who, with their wit and intelligence, contributed to enliven them. The salons survived unaltered at least until the French Revolution, as illustrated by the revolutionary figure of Madame Roland. She was born into a modest family (her father was a master-engraver) that was unable to provide her with a good education. She thus took her education into her own hands and cultivated her natural talents and “taste for languages” by studying Italian—her correspondence with her future husband was rife with expressions from this language, which both of them loved—and English: « J’ai appris l’anglais sans maître; je l’ai entendu parler à Londres [...] ; je lis sa prose; il me faudroit maintenant étudier sa poésie... » (I learned English without a teacher ; I heard it spoken in London {...} I read its prose ; now I must study its poetry...) (Mme Roland, letter dated 1789 in *Correspondance de Roland de la Platière*, ms. BNF).

During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the practice of schooling began to spread, foreign languages became a recognized subject, studied alongside others. For almost a century, however, there was a marked difference between education for girls and boys, as each group followed a different curriculum. In primary and secondary schools, education focused more on classical studies, including Greek and Latin, but



such schools were primarily conceived for and frequented by male students. Throughout Europe, boys and girls did not have the same education until the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In school, the study of modern languages was often pitted against the study of classical languages. Secondary schools attended by girls offered an education considered useful for obtaining the “« vrai diplôme supérieur [...] le contrat de mariage » (real diploma...a marriage contract) (Viala, 1987: 16). At least until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the study of foreign languages was considered a pleasure, a mere embellishment, a sort of ennoblement akin to that provided by artistic disciplines; it was not regarded as the acquisition of knowledge or as a certain skill that could be used professionally.

*The italian case between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century*

Document 1: “La legge non vieta alle donne l’accesso alle scuole secondarie e superiori e in libero paese ciò che la legge non vieta dovrebbe essere permesso; ed è quindi un diritto, mi pare, quello che affaccia ora mia figlia, al quale non si potrebbero mai contrapporre dei danni ipotetici, ma solamente quelli avvenuti e provati” (Raichich 1987: 195)

Document 2: “La donna, [...] avendo minori bisogni dell’uomo, facilmente si accontenta di una modesta posizione e tutto il suo animo e il suo studio pone nel diventare eccellente nelle cose alle quali si applica” (Raichich 1989: 167)

Document 3: “Le donne che fossero designate per la nomina, non potranno essere assunte in servizio che nei soli istituti [...] i quali abbiano sezioni esclusivamente per le femmine” (Bollettino Ufficiale Min. Pubblica Istruzione, 1903: 1544)

Document 4: “Ma una questione di giustizia e di umanità si presenta subito per essere risolta: la condizione diversa di fatto, in cui sono poste le insegnanti, in quanto alla pensione, rispetto ai loro colleghi maschi. [...] Le insegnanti fanno gli stessi studi, conseguono gli stessi titoli, sostengono gli stessi concorsi, insegnano le stesse materie con gli stessi programmi per lo stesso orario dei colleghi maschi: percepiscono gli stessi stipendi, pagano la stessa tassa di ricchezza mobile e, quel che più monta, rilasciano mese per mese la stessa quota per la pensione. A parità di uffici e di doveri non deve corrispondere parità di diritto?” (Pétition présentée au ministre de l’Instruction Publique, Bollettino Federazione Naz. Insegnanti scuole medie, 1902, n. 2)

Document 5: “La commissione finanziaria istituita dall’on. Ministro Orlando ha emesso il parere che le insegnanti di lingua francese presso le Scuole Normali femminili debbano insegnare in tutto il corso magistrale venendo munite, come di diritto e di ragione, del medesimo stipendio che godono i professori reggenti di francese delle RR. Scuole tecniche.” (Boll. Di Fil. Moderna, 1905, n. 3, p. 65)



With the creation of the Italian State in 1861 came the institutionalization of language instruction and the birth of the modern figure of the language instructor. Whereas the teaching of modern languages had previously been entrusted to “maitres de langues”—often foreigners and usually male—it was now organized by the State, which employed its own nationals. It also introduced a system of certification that testified to the attainment of certain skills without specifying a type of training.

Italian schools were organized according to elitist criteria that reserved a special place for the classics (Latin and Greek), unconcerned with the study of modern languages. These were only studied in professional colleges or in the *scuole complementari*, where most schooling took place and which were mainly attended by girls. For a long time, the only language that had a special place in secondary schools was French. German and English were only taught in technical colleges mostly attended by boys. Not until reforms during the Fascist period did the state try—unsuccessfully—to introduce the study of other foreign languages into Italian schools (Mandich 2002: 11-44).

For a long time and up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, women had only marginal roles in schools. As students, they were had access to “liceo” (high school) only on rare occasions, and they often had to fight for respect (“the law does not forbid women to enter secondary and high school education ...”, see document 1). As teachers, they could only teach in female classrooms and for a lower wage than their male colleagues received for teaching in male classrooms (“A woman, whose needs are less than those of a man, is easily contented with her modest position ...” documents 2 and 3). But girls did not go to *licei* or universities, so it was not possible for them to have equal rights or even to become qualified teachers.

During their studies, women had the opportunity to learn French if only for a short period of time. In all female classes, including those that provided training for specific professions, French was included in the curriculum. No other languages were taught, however, because, as we have already mentioned, German and English were only studied in technical colleges and were introduced much later into *licei* (Mandich 2006: 138). Thus, regardless of their social and economic background, women’s knowledge of languages was never meant for practical use, but rather to be displayed in the “salons,” cultivated for their own personal pleasure, or even set aside along with the other subjects they had studied in school while they awaited an uncertain future...

Not until 1873 did women enter the field of modern language teaching (or rather, in the field of French teaching, as women instructors only taught in female classrooms, in which the only language taught was French) through the creation of *scuole complementari*. These were meant to prepare female students to enter teacher-training courses, with significant discrepancies between their salary and career prospects and those of their male counterparts (see documents 4 and 5). These disparities were not neutralized until more than thirty years later.

In 1910, when the first degree in Modern Philology was created in order to form teachers of modern languages, women were still very much behind in comparison with their male colleagues. In 1902, young women represented only 2,5% of the

population in the *licei*, and in order to attend a university one had to have a diploma from the *liceo*. This situation made it very difficult for women to gain access to important positions in society and higher education. It was not until the 1950s that women began teaching modern languages at the university level.

# THE SCHOLAR AND WRITING: A LEARNED APPROACH TO A FAR-AWAY LANGUAGE

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In 1814, thirty years before the start of a Chinese course at the *Ecole des Langues Orientales* (School of Oriental Languages), the teaching of Chinese officially entered the French state system with the creation of the first chair of “Chinese and Tatar-Manchu languages and literature” at the *Collège de France*. Today’s growing numbers of learners of Chinese as a foreign language (exceeding ten thousand in French secondary schools at the beginning of the new academic year in 2005), are as interested – if not more so – in learning how to speak the language as they are in understanding and mastering its written form. They are thus unlike the few secular individuals who set about studying Chinese in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and who had as their primary goal a deeper knowledge of Chinese civilization and the translation of Chinese canonical texts. Missionary priests, however, were an exception, as they typically took courses in the practice of vernacular Chinese at the *Missions Etrangères de Paris* before leaving for Asia. This situation might be explained by the scarcity of people traveling between China and France and by the lack of real opportunities for students of oriental studies during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During this time, scholars also had a deep interest in far-away and ancient civilizations, and they preferred to go back to the beginning of humanity by exploring the oldest writings available; it was only in 1822 that Champollion managed to decipher hieroglyphics. And yet, the *Bibliothèque royale* had prided itself since the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century on owning several thousand Chinese books and manuscripts, just waiting to be deciphered.

The biography of Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat (1788-1832), who was the first occupant of the chair of Chinese at the *Collège de France*, is particularly evocative of this beginning period of Chinese instruction in France. Highly cultured scholars, incapable of speaking Chinese after having learned it from books and without having traveled to China, aimed simply to train translators by teaching them how to read the characters and grammar of the only language they deemed worthy—literary language—and which they saw as the key to opening doors to the literary culture of the Middle Kingdom.

*Scholarly sinology and the neglect of spoken chinese*

Document 1: ...a magnificent set of Chinese plant illustrations was put in front of him. It caused him to be deeply impressed.” *Abel-Rémusat recognized some of the plants*, “soon, he felt the desire to be able to recognize them all; and what started off as simple curiosity became a real passion. The strange and enigmatic characters that accompanied each set must surely be the names of each plant; but how could one decipher them? Who could possibly explain them? No one was able to do such a thing and the first essential elements needed to do so were yet to be created (...). (Landresse 1834: 218-219)

Document 2: From this moment on, he managed to determine the meaning of certain words and created a sort of provisional vocabulary for himself with the help of a few Chinese dictionaries translated into Manchu and by often comparing the original texts with the vague and inexact translations available at the time. (Landresse 1834: 222-223)

Document 3: Expecting historical or literary information of a man of this sort would be like asking China to enlighten one on the History of France, or asking Bretons who only knew the language of Cornouaille, about Greek or Latin literature. (Landresse 1834)

Document 4: A person having only ever studied Chinese from books would never be able to understand a spoken sentence of the language. However, should he be granted the use of a brush, he would be able to converse with a Chinaman as easily as one would, pen in hand, with an educated deaf and dumb person.” (...) “This is precisely what Abel-Rémusat did... by conversing with the four Chinamen, with the finesse and joy of expression which, even in China, was the sign of a first class scholar or a member of the Academy. (Moniteur Universel, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1829)

Document 5: At the moment, there is not a single person to be found, either in Paris or in France, who is capable of fulfilling the functions of interpreter in our Shanghai consulate satisfactorily. (in Bergère 1995:17)

Document 6: The lessons are aimed at teaching students to read, write and speak the languages, and to teach them the political and commercial geography of the countries in which these languages are spoken. (Decree on the reorganization of the Ecole des Langues Orientales, 1869).

With a passion for biology from a young age, Abel-Rémusat decided to learn Chinese in 1806 after observing a set of Chinese plant illustrations during a visit to the cabinet of curios and the library of books in different Asian languages (including Chinese, Mongolian and Manchu) that had been collected by the Abbot of Tersan (doc.1) and brought to the Abbaye aux Bois. Abel-Rémusat taught himself Chinese with the help of books that the Abbot of Tersan lent him, as the language was not yet taught publicly and there were no private tutors (the last student to be taught by E.

Fourmont (1683-1745), the author of a grammar book of spoken Chinese, sadly passed away in 1800); this explains Abel-Rémusat's ignorance of vernacular Chinese (document 2).

Abel-Rémusat is often referred to as the founder of scholarly Sinology ('sinologist' and 'sinology' were first included in the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* in 1842). He was a gifted linguist, who knew Mongolian and Manchu as well as Chinese. His rich written work demonstrates a perfect command of reading Chinese. For example, he translated a Taoist classic, *Tao Te King* (1842), the account of the monk Xuan Zang's voyages to the origins of Buddhism, *Voyages du pèlerin Hiouen-tsang* (1853), as well as the first translation of a Chinese novel into French, *Lu-Kiao-Li ou Les deux cousines* (1826). However, even if his remarkable skills in literary Chinese (Wenyan) were akin to those of Chinese scholars, Abel-Rémusat was only capable of communicating in Chinese in writing, with a brush in hand. The account of his meeting on May 12, 1829 with four Chinese seminarians being trained at the *Missions Etrangères* illustrates this (document 4).

As we have state, his ignorance of vernacular Chinese was due to the conditions in which he learned the language, as well as the fact he was only interested in ancient history (represented in Paris by the few thousand Chinese works in the *Bibliothèque royale*, where he became the head librarian of oriental manuscripts in 1824). A sedentary scholar, Abel-Rémusat immersed himself in books and manuscripts, uninterested in the China and the Chinese of his time; he even refused to meet with one of the few Chinese travelers in Paris under the pretext that the latter would have nothing more to bring him than what he had already found in books (document 3).

As a Chinese scholar, Abel-Rémusat dispensed an essentially book-based knowledge to a handful of followers, with the sole aim of training translators capable of helping him decipher the main classics and the works of the great authors of "Chinese thought". As with the instruction of other foreign languages taught at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese was studied according to a traditional methodology of grammar-translation that was based on the teaching of Latin and Greek. Abel-Rémusat's first manual was published in 1822 under the title *Eléments de la grammaire chinoise* (Elements of Chinese Grammar), and it was based entirely on reading and translating extracts from literary texts. He guided students from the systematic learning of characters and vocabulary (by insisting on the etymology and analysis of written forms) to the grammatical mechanisms and structure of language through the use of basic sentences. His daily access to great Chinese books most likely enabled him to add continually to the literary quotes he used during his lessons. Meanwhile, he progressed on his various translations, as evidenced by the account of one of his students who wrote of an explanatory reading he gave of *Les deux cousines* in 1828, which he had just translated into French.

His teaching must have been of a high quality because one of his students, S. Julien (1797-1873), who succeeded him as the chair of Chinese at the *Collège de France* for forty years, also went on to become a famous classical Chinese translator.

## THE INTRODUCTION OF PRACTICAL SINOLOGY AT THE TURN OF THE 1870'S

The lack of interest in spoken Chinese and contemporary China lasted well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, despite the opening of a Chinese class at the *Ecole des Langues Orientales* in 1843 which was designed mainly to train interpreters according to the institution's fundamental statutes. Teachers' positions were given first to other representatives of scholarly sinology, sedentary masters who had never traveled to Asia and were preoccupied solely with ancient culture: A. Bazin between 1843 and 1862, then S. Julien from 1862 to 1873, who held this position concurrently with the chair of the *Collège de France*.

A critique of these sinology scholars from the philosopher W. von Humboldt in 1835 reflects the state of affairs during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: "I feel that scholars who have almost forgotten that Chinese is a spoken language have so exaggerated the influence of writing that they have, so to say, put writing in the place of language" (quoted by Alleton 1994: 260).

External events linked to the increasing commitment of French diplomacy in China after the Chinese army's defeat during the "opium wars," as well as the opening up of certain ports to foreigners, forced sinology scholars in 19<sup>th</sup> century France to create classes for spoken Chinese. They were motivated quite simply by a critical lack of interpreters, as illustrated by an extract from a letter that Count Kleczkowski, a member of France's legation in Beijing, addressed to the Quai d'Orsay in 1854 (doc.5), as well as M.-C. Bergère's analysis of the matter: "The first French diplomats and officers to be sent to China often have no other choice but to turn to missionaries, the only individuals who can communicate with the people and deal with the bureaucracy" (Bergère 1995: 16).

At the end of the 1860s, the struggle (recounted by Rabut 1995) to obtain the chair of Chinese at *Langues O* (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales) was a tough one; those in favor of scholarly sinology, led by Stanislas Julien, wanted to maintain their position, while partisans of a more pragmatic sinology, led by Count Kleczkowski, opposed them. The latter not only had a desire to train quality professionals in translation both into and from Chinese—professionals who would have a good knowledge of Chinese culture—but also to prepare them for using the spoken language in order to be able to converse with Chinese officials. The second group, who benefited from a general reform of the *Ecole des Langues Orientales* in 1869, finally won the battle and brought the school back to its initial vocation: that of serving France's "politics and trade" and of training interpreters (document 6).

After the arrival of these teacher-interpreters, who, until the 1930s, succeeded one another as the chairs of Chinese at *Langues O*, a new stage in the history of teaching spoken Chinese began with the recruitment of Chinese language coaches, facilitated by the opening of a Chinese legation in Paris at the end of the 1870s.

# UNIVERSALITY AND CIVILIZING MISSION: A HEGEMONIC MODEL OF THE SPREADING OF LANGUAGES

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The development of the notion of French as a universal language, frequently associated with Rivarol's famous discourse about *L'Universalité de la langue française*, (*The universality of the French language*), had been foreshadowed by the influence of the French university during the Middle Ages (Fumaroli 1992) and by the rivalry between learned and vernacular languages. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the French language, facing competition from Latin, had to be asserted on the national scene before it could spread to other areas (Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts, 1539; Du Bellay 1549). Later, it replaced Latin as the language of the European élite, and the association between its universality and the power of civilization was established through the influence of the French courts. The revolutionary impulse of the 18<sup>th</sup> century—and the ideals linked to human rights that sustained it—strengthened the place of French even more and contributed to the development of lasting national representations, including the idea of a French vocation for universality, to which various authors gave a messianic inflection. These ideals were ultimately co-opted by liberal Republicans, making France and 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe at once the cradle of the nation-state and the headquarters of important international networks and movements: freemasonry, Saint-Simonism, anti-slavery, socialism, philanthropy, etc. They contributed to the influence of France and its language in the Mediterranean basin and among the French-speaking elites of South America, while at the same time fuelling colonial conquests in the name of the “universal dominion defined as a civilizing obligation, as a burden for the white man” (Renan 1871). This is illustrated by the projects and discourse of the *Alliances* and other teaching missions, which, from the beginning of the Third Republic, and together with religious missions, were harbingers of linguistic and cultural policies: the *Alliance israélite universel*, 1861, the *Alliance Française*, 1883, the *Mission Laïque*, 1902. They campaigned simultaneously in favour of the development of education in



countries under European influence and of making French, if not a universal language, then at least an international language, “an auxiliary of civilization” (Nowicov 1907). These missions were extended into the 20<sup>th</sup> century through Gaullist policies that accorded France the right and obligation to “act on a global scale” (De Gaulle 1958-1962).

However, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, once the equation between French civilization and universality had been well established, the notion began to be questioned (Competitive examination of the Academy of Berlin motivating essays on the universality of the French language, Brunot, HLF, VIII: 864 sq)—indeed, to be severely criticized. This occurred most notably in Germany, where the concept of a *Kultur* rooted in the ethnic and cultural dimensions of language (Herder 1774, then Fichte, Arndt, Humboldt) was clearly conceived to counter the assimilation of *universal civilization* with *French civilization*. Such doubts were also expressed in the works of geographers, linguists, anthropologists and ethnologists who, beginning in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, considered the notion of universality with caution, exposing its ties with ethnocentrism (Leiris, 1951-1966; Todorov 1989). Moreover, France, given the conditions of historical events (decolonization, the end of the French Empire, the trauma of the German Occupation) and a new “requirement of reciprocity” in international relations (Salon 1983), gradually adapted its ambitions and abandoned the “nationalist interpretation of the nation that was Gallo-centric, imperial and universalist” (Nora 1993).

*From the discourse of the alliance française to the review le français dans le monde*  
(fdlm)

- L'on se laisserait volontiers à refaire le rêve déjà caressé aux temps de Fontenoy par quelques grands philosophes: toutes les nations de l'Europe adoptant une langue commune qui réponde à toutes les aspirations, à tous les besoins, convienne à l'infinie diversité des esprits et des mœurs. [...]

Cette langue, ce devrait être la nôtre, qui est tout raison, comme doit dominer sur les autres celui qui sait se commander à lui-même. Ce devrait être la langue d'un peuple privilégié qui paraissait avoir repris le flambeau des civilisations éteintes pour en éclairer les obscurités de l'avenir, la langue harmonieuse et claire qu'on pouvait apprendre par goût et par enthousiasme (C. Roy, *La langue française*, BAF, 41, 1891).

- We would gladly have again the dream which was nurtured by some great philosophers at the time of Fontenoy: all the nations of Europe adopting a common language that meets all expectations, all needs, suiting the infinite diversity of minds and customs. [...]

This language should be ours, which is entirely reasonable, just as only he who can control himself should have control over others. This should be the language of a privileged people, a people who has kept the torch of past civilizations, in order to light up the darkness of the future, the harmonious and clear language that could be



learned by inclination and by enthusiasm. (C. Roy, *La langue française*, *BAF*, 41, 1891).

- L'unité de langage a toujours poussé au rapprochement politique. En travaillant à faire de leur langue l'idiome européen, les Français travaillent en réalité, d'une façon indirecte, à l'entente des nations cultivées. On voit donc que les Français, loin de faire œuvre égoïste, en s'efforçant de propager leur langue, travailleront en réalité de façon indirecte, à la prospérité générale de notre espèce et aux progrès de notre civilisation (Novicow, *BAF*, 111, 1908).

-The unity of language has always incited political rapprochement. Working to make their language the European idiom, French people are in fact working in an indirect way towards the *entente* of cultivated nations. We see therefore that the French people, far from working for themselves, by trying hard to propagate their language will work, in an indirect way, towards the general prosperity of the human race and the progress of our civilization. (Nowiow, *BAF*, 111, 1908)

- [...] la langue française est la seule qui ait une probité attachée à son génie; oui, précision, probité, c'est tout un; enfin la plus humaine, parce que c'est l'homme qui est le centre et le principal objet de notre littérature (P. Deschanel, *Les destinées de notre langue*, *BAF*, 117, 1909).

- [...] the French language is the only one which has both integrity and genius; yes, precision and integrity are the same thing; finally it is the most human, because it is Man who is the centre and the main object of our literature (P. Deschanel, *Les destinées de notre langue*, *BAF*, 117, 1909).

- Chaque année s'accélère, se complète, se déploie le mouvement de propagande de notre langue. A côté de l'anglais, langue des relations pratiques entre les peuples, le français tend à devenir celle de leurs relations intellectuelles et morales, la langue universelle de l'esprit et du cœur.

O langue française, langue de nos aïeux, langue de nos mères, née avec l'héroïque épopée de Roland, langue de Jeanne d'Arc, interprète immortelle de Montaigne et de Rabelais, reine des châteaux au temps des Croisades, reine des Cours, des salons, des Académies au XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle; [...] En servant ta cause, les plus modestes fidèles de ton culte peuvent être assurés de travailler non seulement pour la France mais encore pour l'humanité (P. Foncin, *BAF*, 117, 1909).

- Each year, the propaganda movement for our language accelerates, develops, unfolds. Unlike English, which is the language of practical relations between peoples, French is tending to become the language of intellectual and moral relations, the universal language of the mind and the heart.

O French, language of our ancestors, language of our mothers, born with the heroic epic of Roland, the language of Jeanne d'Arc, immortal interpreter of Montaigne and Rabelais, queen of the castles at the time of the Crusades, queen of the royal courts, of salons, of the Academies in the 17<sup>th</sup> et 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; [...] serving your cause, your

most modest disciples can be sure they are working not only for France but for the whole of humanity (P. Foncin, *BAF*, 117, 1909).

- [...] il semble bien que ni sa force militaire ni son rôle diplomatique, même prépondérants à certaines époques, n'ont jamais déterminé dans le temps ni dans l'espace les limites à l'intérieur desquelles brillaient les arts et la pensée des Français. Et c'est là que nous retrouvons la vocation universaliste de la France (*fdlm* 2/61).

- [...] it seems that neither her military force nor her diplomatic role, even at the time they played a prominent role, ever determined the limits either temporal or spatial of the brilliance of French arts and thought. And it is here that we find once again the universalist vocation of France. (*fdlm*, 2/61).

- [...] la littérature française (...) s'est propagée partout parce qu'elle s'adressait à l'homme universel (*fdlm* 16/63).

- [...] French literature (...) was spread everywhere because it addressed universal Man. (*fdlm*, 16/63)

- Ainsi l'idée d'universalité linguistique, en passant de l'état de fait à celui de droit, est devenue le produit ambigu d'un mélange de nationalisme, d'impérialisme, et de paternalisme, mélange qui a pollué nos atmosphères culturelles depuis plus d'un siècle (*fdlm* 77/70).

- Thus the idea of linguistic universality, going from the effective state to the legitimate state, has become the ambiguous product of a mix of nationalism, imperialism and paternalism which has been polluting our cultural scene for more than a century (*fdlm*, 77/70).

- [...] une véritable pédagogie active et antidogmatique (...) implique le renoncement à une pédagogie de type universaliste (*fdlm* 113/75).

- [...] a truly active and anti-dogmatic educational method (...) implies the renunciation of a universalist method (*fdlm* 113/75)

NB: *BAF* means *Bulletin of the Alliance Française* ; the numbers in brackets refer, in order to the number of the review and the year of its publication;

*fdlm*: *Le Français dans le Monde*.

The field of French foreign language and second language teaching, which first developed within the context of colonial expansion (Cortier, 1998) and then in the backwash of decolonization, cannot be separated from linguistic diffusion. For that reason, it has proven to be a field that is particularly sensitive to historical and political change, as illustrated by the history of these early institutions, their policies and

discourses. Members of the *Alliance Française*, convinced that one should fight for languages and that linguistic and cultural strategies to penetrate the market would contribute to an increase in France's moral and economic influence, developed their initiatives from both an internal point of view (the nationalist side) and an external one (the Francophone side), first with regard to colonies and protectorates, and then more broadly with regard to Europe and the rest of the world. The Alliance organized international conferences, helped with the publishing and distribution of specific methods for language teaching and created the first holiday courses aimed at foreign students and teachers (1894). It worked with eminent linguists, including pedagogues like Ferdinand Brunot, the future author of the monumental *Histoire de la langue française* (*History of the French language*), phoneticians, historians in charge of civilization classes. The *Alliance* was situated at the avant-garde of the Francophone World, whose very emergence and name were its contemporaries (Reclus 1886); in 1900, it published a book under the supervision of P. Foncin, a geographer and founder of the *Alliance Française*, with a promising title, *La langue française dans le monde* (*The French language in the world*), which was reprinted in several journals. In their writings, these founders and distinguished members first expressed and formulated the recognition of a necessary reciprocity: the Alliance was spreading throughout the world as a network of local associations governed by the laws of the host country and under the responsibility of local French speakers and Francophiles, while some of its members, colonial administrators, showed a clear interest in the linguistic and cultural heritage of the colonies (Faidherbe in Senegal, L. Machuel in Tunisia, P. Bert and G. Dumoutier in Tonkin). In 1902, the legitimacy of their position was reflected in the creation of the *Mission laïque*, whose schools educated the local elite of many Mediterranean and Oriental countries, thanks also to the opening of the Jules Ferry *école normale* which trained “teachers able to understand cultural differences and to organize their teaching methods according to their insights”. These theses were developed between the two World Wars in the form of “colonial humanism”; colonization seemed inevitable, for if the West had temporarily surpassed non-western civilizations, one could think “that with contact made, these oriental civilizations would resume their activities which had gone to sleep for centuries, and no one can foresee what an impressive boost will be given to civilization by the combination, the contact, and the competition between such different but equally admirable qualities of the races of Europe and Asia” (P. Bert). Thus, the hegemonic model for the diffusion of French is located in the tension between aspirations of universality, required to accomplish its civilizing mission, and a deliberate recognition of contributions made by other civilizations.

In 1961, the creation of the pedagogical review *Le français dans le monde* (*fdlm*) sanctioned the arrival of French as a foreign language and the renewal of the French cultural policy abroad wished for by General De Gaulle, eager for France to reassume its place on the international stage. A reference in the field aimed at all who were teaching or spreading French as a foreign language, the review declared in its first editorial its intention of “*being the most universal review*”. The notion of universality, found among writers who more often than not held administrative, political or scientific positions, was, not surprisingly, applied to the French nation as well as to its

cultural expressions. Thus, in some of its articles, the review continued to echo an entire tradition and myth. One observes in its pages two groups of authors who are not necessarily homogeneous or equal, but who nevertheless offer clearly differentiated positions. Some, apparently, do not seem to question the representations and values contained in the words *universal* or *universality*. They do not question France's *universalist vocation*; rather, for them it is obvious, an initial presupposition making it possible to embark on a project that recalls the expression and contents of this vocation. On the other hand, some authors approach the concept with reservations; if they use the term, it is because they are trying to redefine it, to bring its content up to date, insisting in particular on its functions as a means of communication for the French language. *Le français dans le monde* animates a new discourse, which pleads for the respect of differences among learners, as well as their national and local realities, in the face of the cultural assimilation that was favoured in the universalist way of thinking. Influenced by an anthropological sensibility, discourse on teaching and learning has been a site for the emergence of the principle of renunciation of any form of hierarchy or discrimination in the presentation of language and civilization. The reflection on such discourse within the review has allowed the field of French as a foreign language to mourn the loss of the notion of universality and its accompanying ethnocentrism, while opening the way to a pluralist approach to languages and cultures.

# THE POLITICAL INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF A LANGUAGE: LATINIZATION OF THE ALPHABET

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The graphic representation of the phonemes of a language, as a means for the transcription of a language and, consequently, for the transmission of culture, has on a number of occasions been subjected to the intervention of political powers who have decided to transform it. Charlemagne's introduction of the written form called "Caroline" is the most famous example of a political intervention aimed at fostering development through education and modernization. And one of the cornerstones of the young Turkish Republic, founded after the fall of the Ottoman Empire (1918), was indeed the replacement of Arabic written form with Latin written form (1928).

The Turks had adopted the Arabic writing system after their conversion to Islam, which began around the beginning of 10<sup>th</sup> century. This entailed the introduction of Arabic, the sacred language, and Persian, the literary language, and a gradual marginalization of Turkish, which then became a vernacular language. In the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman, the official written language, was essentially based on Turkish, although it contained many Arabic and Persian loanwords and loan syntaxes, and differed increasingly from Turkish to end up becoming foreign to the vernacular language. This vernacular language, also called "Ottoman" or "Ottoman Turkish", was not understood by Arabs, Persians nor Turks, as the writer Ahmet Mithat (1844-1912) affirmed in an article published by the literary magazine *Dağarcık* in 1881 (Levend, 1973 125).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, influences from the French Revolution and the European model shaped the administrative reforms (*Gülbane Hatt-ı Humayunu*, also known as *Tanzimat*) that were undertaken in 1839, and through which "the empire, leaving a circle of civilization, within which it had been living for centuries, declared that it was entering the circle of another civilization with which it was in conflict; it was openly accepting its values" (Tanpınar, 1976, 129). In 1856, the Edict of Reform (*Islahat Fermanı*) established the equality of imperial subjects, following the Western model that would henceforth be very prominent in Istanbul. New words such as *sivilizasyon*, *kültür*, *sosyete*

were introduced into everyday language and adopted by the press as well as the new civil and military schools influenced by the decisive revolutions occurring in Europe.

These reforms, whose influence on social and cultural domains would gradually emerge throughout the century, presaged the political reforms of the Turkish Republic. Among these, the reform of the writing system through the adoption of the Latin alphabet was a symbolic decision that reflected a political will to transform identity and culture, as well as the model of society, particularly in its relationship to the religious.

## THE DESECRATION OF WRITING SYSTEM

The pioneer of the desecration of the writing system was an Azeri-Turkish polyglot playwright, named Feth-Ali Ahund-zâde (1812-1878). The proposals he put forward were twice rejected in the capital of the Ottoman Empire (Bala, 1964), although their significance was recognized. The writing system was considered to be sacred, and thus the idea of writing “the popular language, i.e. the most accessible expression of all”, as proposed by Ali Süavi in 1867 in *Muhbir*, was difficult to accept. Previously, however, in 1862 Münif Efendi / Pasha, a journalist, author and translator, detailed the reasons why a transformation of the alphabet was desirable in a meeting of the Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye (Ottoman Society of Sciences). Mismet, a French journalist, entertained similar ideas (Levend, 1973 115).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, debates on language and education regarding the “new language” occurred, with many reservations, in the pages of the literary magazine “Genç Kalemler” (Young Pens) in Thessalonica in 1911. Istanbul was prompt to denigrate this undertaking through the writings of Köprülüzade Mehmet Fuat and Yakup Kadri. The outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1912-13 weakened their discussions, but certain ideas took shape in the tenets of the philosopher Ziya Gökalp, notably the notion of linguistic identity and the genesis of a national consciousness (Levend, 1973 313-330).

Mustafa Kemal carried out changes to the writing system shortly after the foundation of the Republic in 1923, after they had been the subject of reflection and discussion for almost a century. This was one of the major pillars of the profound transformation that the country experienced on its path to Westernization. As Ramonet notes, this transformation happened on an identity level as well as on political and social grounds (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 2004):

“No other country has ever consented to sacrifice so many fundamental aspects of its culture to assert its European identity. Modern Turkey went as far as abandoning its ancient writing system (Arabic) to adopt Latin characters; its inhabitants had to get rid of traditional clothes to dress in western clothes; and, in the name of an official secularism inspired by the French law of 1905, Islam ceased to be the religion of the State”.

## Document 1

*“(…)Batı medeniyetine girebilmemize engel olan yazıyı atarak Latin kökünden bir alfabe seçmeli, kılık kıyafetimize kadar her şeyimizde batılulara uymalıyız. Emin olunuz ki, bunların hepsi bir gün olacaktır.”*

## Document 2

*“(…) Bizim İslâm harufatımız (harflerimiz) kâfi değilmiş, binaenaleyh Lâtin harufatı alınmalı imiş. (...) Acaba bu Lâtince kabul edilebilir mi? Bu kabul edildiği gün memleket her ü merce girer. Her şeyden sarf-ı nazar bizim kütüphanelerimizi dolduran mukaddes kitaplarımız, tarihimiz ve binlerce cilt âsarıımız bu lisanla yazılmış iken büsbütün başka bir şekilde olan bu harfleri (Lâtin harfleri) kabul ettiğimiz gün, en büyük felâkete (sic) derhal bütün Avrupa'nın eline güzel bir silâh verilmiş olacak, bunlar âlem-i İslâma karşı diyeceklerdir ki Türkler ecnebî yazısını kabul etmişler ve Hristiyan olmuşlardır. İşte düşmanlarımızın çalıştığı şeytânkârane fikir budur. Sonra bizim dilimizi terennüm edecek hiçbir Lâtin harfu yoktur.”*

“ We must choose an alphabet of Latin origin that will enable us to abandon the writing system which impedes us from being a part of the western civilization, and we must adapt ourselves to Westerners in everything, even in the aspect of our clothes. I assure you that, one day all this will come true.” (Statement of M. Kemal to the Bulgarian turcologue Ivan Manolof, « one or two years prior to the declaration of the constitutional monarchy », Kaskati 1948)

“ (...) Certain people say that our Islamic characters are not sufficient, hence, that we ought to adopt the Latin characters. (...) Can we adopt this Latin alphabet? The day it gets adopted, the country will fall into a state of chaos. First of all, despite the fact that all our sacred books, our history, several thousands of volumes of works that fill our libraries, are written in this language, if we adopt these completely different letters (Latin letters), on the very day we adopt them the ultimate catastrophe [would happen] (sic) all Europe would be provided with an efficient weapon which they would be able to use against us by declaring to all the Muslim world that “the Turks have adopted a foreign writing system and become Christian. Here is the satanic idea on which our enemies are working. Moreover, there is no Latin character that can express our language properly.” (‘Latin harflerini kabul edemeyiz’ (we can’t adopt Latin characters) Karabekir in Şimşir 1992 57-58, the original text published in *Hâkimiyet-i Millîye*, le 5 Mars 1923).



*Document 3*

*“Aziz Arkadaşlarım; her şeyden evvel her inkişafın ilk yapı taşı olan meseleye temas etmek isterim.*

*Her vasıttadan evvel büyük Türk milletine onun bütün emeklerini kısır yapan çorak yol haricinde kolay bir okuma yazma anahtarı vermek lâzımdır. (Sürekli alkışlar). Büyük Türk milleti cebaletten az emekle kısa yoldan ancak kendi güzel ve asil diline kolay uyan böyle bir vasıtayla sıyrılabilir(alkışlar). Bu okuma yazma anahtarı ancak Latin esasından alınan Türk alfabesidir(alkışlar). (...)”*

*“Efendiler! Türk harflerinin kabulüyle hepimize, bu memleketin bütün vatanını seven yetişkin evlatlarına mühim bir vazife tevccüh ediyor; bu vazife, milletimizin kamilen okuyup yazmak için gösterdiği şevk ve aşka bilfiil hizmet ve yardım etmektir. Hepimiz bususî ve umumî hayatımızda, rastgeldiğimiz okuyup yazma bilmeyen erkek, kadın, her vatandaşımıza öğretmek için tebalük göstermeliyiz.*

*Bu milletin asırlardan beri ballolunamayan bir ihtiyacı birkaç sene içinde tamamen temin edilmek, yakın ufukta gözlerimizi kamaştıran bir muvaffakiyet güneşidir (alkışlar). (...)”*

*“Aziz arkadaşlarım; yüksek ve edebî (sic) yadigarımızla büyük Türk milleti yeni bir nur alemine girecektir (bravo sesleri, şiddetli ve sürekli alkışlar).”*

“Dear friends; first of all, I would like to speak about the work which will be the cornerstone of all development of our country.

Above all other tools, we are obliged to give the great Turkish people a tool to eliminate illiteracy that will help them out of the arid path [of ignorance] that renders all their efforts futile. (Continuous applause) It is only by means of such an instrument that the great Turkish nation will be able, swiftly and with little effort, to free itself from ignorance. The sole key to the elimination of illiteracy is the Turkish alphabet adopted from the Latin (applause). (...)”

“Dear Sirs! With the adoption of the Turkish characters, an important mission befalls us for the sake of all the patriotic and responsible children of this country. This mission is to contribute, and give assistance personally, to the enthusiasm and affection which all our nation shows for acquiring literacy. We all must devote ourselves to teaching the new letters to our illiterate citizens that we encounter in our private or public life, be they men or women.

If we meet this age-old need of our nation in a few years, a dazzling sun of success will be on the horizon. (Applause) (...)”

“My dear friends! It is thanks to your sublime and permanent dedication that the great Turkish nation will enter a world of light.” (Exclamations of 'bravo', intensive and prolonged applause).” (Speech by Mustafa Kemal delivered on November 1st, 1928 in the National Assembly, Atatürk' ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, 1945 341-346).



<p><i>Document 4</i></p> <p>“ (...)Ülkesini, yüksek istiklalini korumasını bilen Türk milleti, dilini de yabancı diller boyunduruğundan kurtarmalıdır.”</p>	<p>“(…) The Turkish nation, having managed to free and protect its country and its supreme independence must also emancipate its language from the yoke of foreign languages.” (M. Kemal, a handwritten note, dated 2. IX.1930, on the occasion of the publication of the book “<i>Türk Dili için</i>”, on the back of the frontespiece, in Maksudi (1930?).</p>
<p><i>Document 5</i></p> <p>“ (...) Garp kültür ve tefekkür camiasının seçkin bir uzvu olmak dileğinde ve azminde olan cumhuriyetçi Türkiye, medeni dünyanın eski ve yeni fikir mahsüllerini kendi diline çevirmek ve âlemin duyuş ve düşünişü ile benliğini kuvvetlendirmek mecburiyetindedir. Bu mecburiyet bizi geniş bir terceme seferberliğine davet ediyor.”</p>	<p>“(…) Republican Turkey that aims at being a part of the western community of culture and thought is obliged to translate the works which contain the old and new ideas of the civilized world and to strengthen its character with the thought and the sensibility of the universe. This urges us to a mobilization for a large-scale undertaking of literary translations.” (Speech of the Minister Yücel on the occasion of the inauguration of the First Congress of Publication, in <i>Birinci Türk Nesriyat Kongresi Raporlar Teklifler Müzakere Zabıtları</i>, 1939 12)</p> <p>(Quotations are our translation)</p>

The reform of the writing system was a decisive stage in the westernization of a traditional society that had not undergone the same reforms and industrialization as Europe did in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Document 1). Because religious affiliation was considered to be the primary aspect of one’s identity, the official abandonment of the sacred writing system was experienced on an individual level as an existential crisis. It strengthened the rupture and the identity confusion that had been entrained by the abolition of the caliphate and the suppression of religious orders in 1924. For some, the process of identity construction spurred rejection. Even for the elites and the close companions of Mustafa Kemal, such alterity and banishment were so difficult to digest that some preferred to emigrate in order to preserve the integrity of their identity. For Kazim Karabekir, the reform of the writing system had the symbolic strength of a conversion to Christianity and constituted an infringement on the collective memory (Document 2).

The adoption of the new "Turkish alphabet of Latin origin" was tied to expectations for the future and stressed two aspects of identity: national and western. This delicate initiative required a maximum degree of support: that of an institution that associated literacy and education, since the new form of writing allowed "the great Turkish nation to leave the realm of ignorance". After three months of a campaign to increase awareness, a law came into effect on November 3rd, 1928. The establishment of "Millet Mektepleri" (Schools of the Nation) embodied a project of "civilization" that ensured education for all individuals between the ages of 16 and 45. In addition to the new writing system, students would also acquire basic knowledge concerning reading and writing, arithmetic and the bases of measurement, hygiene and citizenship required in everyday life (Millet Mektepleri Talimatnamesi, 1929). Mustafa Kemal was considered the main figure in the initiative of Turkish "lights" (Document 3).

Subsequently, linguistic policy focused on "the nationalization of the lexis". The Commission of Language drew words from the popular vocabulary that corresponded to loanwords of Persian and Arabic origin. This awareness-raising effort became widespread following the foundation of the Society of the Turkish Language (1932), which began to systematically simplify and purge the language of "contaminating" foreign elements. The passion for purifying the language became so powerful that it worried the elite and divided them once again. The fervor for purification decelerated after the full transition into a pluralistic democracy in 1946, however, and it ended completely with the closure of the Society after the military coup of 1980. However, the debate continues between supporters and opponents of the purification movement (Document 4). The cultural policy became crystallized through the removal of Arabic and Persian from the high school curriculum in 1929-1930. The intention to replace them with a second "foreign"—namely European—language remained until 1933-1934 (Yücel, 1994 186). The school year of 1940-41 saw the establishment of classical departments in high schools, based upon the European model, with the introduction of Latin to the syllabus. And the mobilization for translation of the "world classics" under the auspices of the Ministry of Education constituted another large step in the appropriation of European culture. In 20 years, the number of works translated reached 947 volumes, not including reprints. Thus, attempts were made to fill the great void that had been created in the educational and cultural domain and to meet the reading needs of the new generations through the cultural heritage of the West (Document 5).

The political stakes of writing system reform included the national reconstruction of a traditional and religious society through the reconfiguration of identity around language. This change, accompanied by linguistic reforms and the policy of translating Western classics into Turkish, ensured cultural integration. It also guaranteed the appropriation of a European identity by future generations who, lacking knowledge of the former writing system, had no access to the cultural heritage it encoded. The change of writing system reflected the will to replace a fundamental element of identity – religion – with another: language. Today, the project appears to have succeeded, even if there remains a tendency to confuse politics and identity, thereby slowing down the process and sometimes inducing conflicts.

# COUNTERPOINT

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## LINGUISTIC CONTINGENCIES

Before it becomes discourse, language is practice. Without getting into the linguistic quarrel over generative grammar (Chomsky), what the historian sees is clear: instead of saying that such and such a (pre)existing language is practiced, one must assert that practice makes language. Language – any language, of whatever origin, color or flavor – is first and foremost social action. As such, it eschews excessive abstraction and opposes its monopolization by any group, community, or nation. A language is not created in an ideal world that is socially and politically controlled, from a pre-designed grammar, but rather in the contingent acts of speaking, writing, or reading, in the utilitarian need for contact between people, in the imagination of the speaker and in the mental models of his or her community. And when one talks about acts or practices, one is talking about history, development, expansion and contraction, adoption and rejection, inclusion and exclusion – processes that are realized as much in the constitution and evolution of a language as in its political and symbolic trajectory within a community of people who speak it—indeed, within the entire linguistic panorama.

In this respect, all languages are equal. No one language can claim to be superior or to have a monopoly on prestige within a nation, country or linguistic community. On the contrary, its vitality is measured precisely by its capacity to expand and to compete with other languages, ensuring its renewal and forcing it to adapt to new practices. What is true for French is true for any other language. If the French language conquered the space called France, it is due to a specific confluence of geopolitical, social and cultural conditions, rather than the language's natural genius or its formal pre-eminence. Such qualities do not precede historical evolution but follow from it. And so, the hierarchy of languages, as the human community tends to establish it, is the result of intellectual, political or aesthetic operations, inscribed in a history that is never irreversible. Italian, for example, the international language of banking during the Renaissance, eventually gave way to English; however, it gained international recognition for its literary quality, which Spanish, brilliant in the Baroque period, was losing while becoming at the same time a language of international colonization, transmitting a cultural empire whose values were spread to the four corners of the Earth.

## ENRICHMENT BROUGHT BY DIVERSITY

In large countries that are officially monolingual, such as France or the United States, the official language plays a role that is doubly crucial: it is the formal language of the national community and the preferred language in international communications. We easily forget that multilingualism is omnipresent in the everyday life of the majority of countries. In the same way, formal monolingualism generally underestimates the forms of diglossia within the national community as well as – to use the happy phrase of Michel de Certeau – the “poached” forms of linguistic knowledge in a context in which the languages of both domestic and foreign migrants jostle one other. In public discourse, the political power of a single language of a territory or an area where power is exercised (such as a colonial, financial, political or cultural empire) easily prevails over the cultural enrichment promised by linguistic diversity. For many centuries – in France since the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts in 1539 – the governments of Western countries have imposed a single administrative language as much to maintain order in government as to promote a territorial unity and the cultural identity of the nation. Nevertheless, competing or subordinate languages, regional dialects or social dialects, as well as professional jargons that are more or less international (such as the basic, simplified and formal “English” used in the exact sciences) have always played an enriching role in internal and external exchanges.

## NOSTALGIA FOR A SINGLE LANGUAGE

Multilingualism cannot make us forget that in all myths of origin, paradise had only one language. The loss of universal understanding, broken up into multiple languages that bred linguistic confusion, was always felt to be a social and cultural catastrophe, and the nostalgia for a universal language is one of the most remarkable constants in human history. The story of Babel rationalized this fragmentation by attributing to it a moral cause. The desire to restore linguistic unity is therefore found less in utilitarian discourse than in moral discourse, advocating the virtues of human culture, elevated to the status of “civilization”, and of a universal ethic where the rights of man run parallel to his desire for understanding. The inadequacy of this idealistic discourse in the real world made possible linguistic imperialisms and hegemonies, which were forced on people by utilitarian practice, customs, the law, and sometimes even by physical violence. From the attempts to restore linguistic unity by the linguistic imperialism of Greek and then Latin in the ancient world, a direct line led to the safeguard of Latin, then of French, and now of English as the preferential language of the international scientific community, and finally to the hegemony of English, gradually enforced by the world of the media, of popular culture, of technology and more recently of the digital world. This dominance of English is often explained, or feared, as an inevitable and final consequence of globalization, and it often readily assumes symbolic manifestations, such as the prestige of liberty, prosperity and democracy that its bearers disseminate. But flaws are already appearing in the Far East. With the probable decline of the American hold on the world, the historian

foresees that Anglo-American will one day follow the same route as French, considered in bygone days as the definitive universal language. French had to lower its flag on account of the failure of the ideology of the superiority of French civilization and the political decline of France on the international stage. A community that wants to safeguard its future chances will diversify its linguistic investments, observing not only immediate needs but also scrutinizing the political, economic and cultural balance of power on the horizon. We must remember that the prestige of a foreign language and its transnational unity are as dependent on its symbolic role in the international cultural balance and on the image of power and attraction created by political communities (nations, countries, or simple territories) that support and disseminate it, as on its established utility in exchanges.

## DESIRE FOR THE UNIVERSAL

At the same time, people want a universal language that is understandable by all and a guarantor of culture, peace and prosperity. As early as the Renaissance, people tried to determine which language offered the best of such guarantees assuming it was the language of paradise itself, the original language (*lingua adamica*): Hebrew, Chinese, German, even Dutch were all included on this roll of honor. This utopian-sounding search gave rise to the birth of linguistics, which, as a result, made it fail: inevitable linguistic diversity has to be recognized and accepted (Comenius). The desire for unity is then transferred to efforts to elevate an existing language to the status of a universal language for the civilized world. This would, of course, be the language of the country enjoying world hegemony at a particular moment, imposing itself on the international elite, the cosmopolitan jet-set and other world citizens. In the modern period, it was French. France was deluded by three successive dreams that justified its claims to the linguistic universality exalted by Rivarol: the dream of universal monarchy, the revolutionary ideal, and the imperial adventure. Other countries took up the linguistic torch: colonial Castilian, scientific German in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the victorious English of the British Empire, then of American expansion helped by two world wars. Idealists on the fringes of the cultural epicenter of the Atlantic world, often from central Europe, were buoyed by the political tribulations of the great powers and the failure of the civilizing offensive of linguistic imperialism; they suggested the creation of new universal, apolitical languages—languages such as Volapük (created in 1879 by the German priest Schleyer), Esperanto (created in 1887 by the Polish oculist Zamenhof) or Novial (constructed in 1924 by the Danish linguist Jespersen). Assimilating the best of existing languages, these artificial languages attempted to promote practical understanding as well as a new moral harmony between peoples. Esperanto, reflecting this desire in its very name, constitutes the most polished example of this. Language thus became a laboratory of human perfectibility. A reliable vehicle for contact as well as misunderstandings between individuals, language also symbolises unsatisfied desires for communication, for harmony—indeed, for fusion.

## SOME OF THE TRAPS OF MULTILINGUALISM

The success of French as a foreign or a second language must not mask the reality of another multilingualism at the very heart of French-speaking countries: that of immigrants who, in settling there for life, willingly or unwillingly adopt French as their first language in public, but continue to practice their original language in private or among their ethnic communities. Although it is deemed a first language, French functions for them as a foreign or second language, even within French-speaking countries. It is a *lingua franca* for integration but at the same time an imposed language, whose use is forced upon them. As long as it has not become the language of intimacy, religion, or friendship, language is felt to be profoundly foreign. The surface conflict of languages reveals something deeper—a torn identity, affiliations with rival communities and opposing interests. An adopted language only becomes intimate over the course of one or two generations; one must not allow oneself to be deceived by exceptional immigrant writers who, exaggerated by the media, manage to make their adopted language a personal instrument for integration. We must not be unrealistic. The imposition of French is as oppressive and culturally alienating as the imposition of Anglo-American, Mandarin Chinese and classical Arabic in their own contexts. Opposing the familiarity of the mother tongue, which is irremediably threatened, the beauty or genius of the imposed language can heighten the feeling of alienation. Consequently, the dominant language, whether it be official or simply tolerated, plays an obvious political role. It ensures access to full citizenship, while painfully severing cultural roots. We must not naively attribute to a linguistic or patriotic love what for the majority is often nothing more than a requirement for survival, a question of calculated intelligence—indeed, of cunning strategy.

## MAKING DO IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Sociolinguistics has made us attentive to linguistic bricolage in everyday, multilingual contact and to ordinary self-instruction, ill-conceived and almost unconscious. Often, we make do as best we can, accepting the embarrassment of mistakes, misunderstandings, false friends and other everyday linguistic catastrophes. The millions of women who migrated, sometimes with their husbands but also very often on their own, simply to escape poverty, to find an honest job or to free themselves from the yoke of a tradition considered oppressive, had to make do on the job in a hostile linguistic universe which was sometimes difficult to master. It is through these involuntary if not resistant linguistic alliances that languages are unnoticeably enriched with borrowed vocabulary, new expressions and paradoxical grammatical forms. That which resists order, bursting in on everyday life, upsetting what is already there, proves in the end to be enriching. In the same way, the distinction between classical languages, codified and canonised, and modern languages, spoken, massacred, or put into jargon and adapted for the use of specific groups, constitutes a resource that the teachers of French as a foreign language outside French-speaking countries have often understood better than their counterparts back home. In textbooks, some of which

were reedited dozens of times, from Holyband and Pierre Marin to the Assimil method or the classes at the Alliance Française, live dialogues imitate reality – or at least they suggest it with insistence, for it is always a clinical reality, avoiding conflicts and resisting the wear and tear of a changing reality. They give the illusion of a direct and personalized access to French culture. More than the canonised, official and academic culture, these works insidiously impose a global view of the French-speaking world and the culture of its different parts. This view is all the more effective because it relies on linguistic imagination, more powerful than visual imagination, because it can name—and thus define and preserve—what it envisions. Within such textbooks, history becomes memory.



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# General conclusion

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As this plurilingual and pluricultural project draws to a close, we must now address both the limits and possibilities of the Handbook, clarify what we mean by a “plurilingual and pluricultural language didactics”, recapitulate the questions and debates that have emerged over the course of our discussions and open the way for placing this work on the Web.

## **Limits and possibilities**

As most of the researchers brought together in this project draw on sociological and anthropological readings of social phenomena, the approach that we recommend emphasizes the social, cultural and political dimensions of language didactics. The reflection focuses on language teaching and learning in educational settings but it also discovers or constructs new sites of lifelong learning through voluntary mobility or obligatory migration to European countries, America or Australia to meet economic, political and scientific needs. In these circumstances, learning and teaching are inevitably influenced by the geopolitical and identity conflicts, geographical displacement, societal evolutions, and social and cultural representations conveyed by learners/speakers/actors in the varied contexts in which they use languages. Teaching and learning are closely tied to the academic, professional, national and international institutions that manage and finance national language policies. They are also tied to the supranational organizations, which, for centuries, have established and controlled the practices and models of language didactics.

The primacy we give to social phenomena is deliberate. Language learning, that was hostage first to literature, then to theoretical linguistics, became isolated from the social and cultural realities that surround us. Hence the turn to sociology and anthropology to illuminate aspects of language learning neglected up to now. 1) But social linguistics in all of its forms (psycho- and sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, educational linguistics, ecological linguistics and textual linguistics) as well as cognitive science obviously have a lot to bring to the field. Moreover, a theory of language learning and teaching cannot exist without literary stylistics and discourse and conversation analysis, or without the structural, semiotic and pragmatic readings of written and spoken texts. One must also keep in mind the contributions made to language instruction by pedagogical theory and methods. Using the social and cultural perspective presented here as a point of departure, the Handbook now invites its readers to open the discussion on the multiplex relations among the cognitive, the linguistic and the anthropological within an expanded conception of language didactics.

### **From language didactics to a didactics of plurilingualism/pluriculturalism**

Where does language didactics end? Where does a didactics of plurilingualism/pluriculturalism begin?

Language didactics traditionally concerns the teaching of one foreign language to individuals considered to have only one native language (L1). The instruction of the target language (L2), seen chronologically as a second language, takes the native language more or less into account according to the chosen methodology, be it contrastive, comparative or communicative. Until now language didactics has hardly been plurilingual, as it has developed out of monolingual presuppositions (cf. Introductions of Chapter 1 and Chapter 7).

A didactics of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism is a means of teaching not only a foreign language to those who do not speak it, but of diversifying and relativizing such traditional notions as L1 and L2, native and non-native speaker, mono-, bi- and plurilingual individuals, national languages and cultures, universal language, standard language, spoken and written language, as so many social and historical constructs. In order to teach any standard language, a didactics of plurilingualism must situate that language in its historical plurality and in relation to the politics of its diffusion over the centuries. Chapter 8 offers a good example of this. Such a didactics insists on the cultural diversity and historical relativity that exist within a single national culture, whether it be the target or the source culture.

A didactics of linguistic and cultural plurality must also teach languages in their relation to various contexts: the individual and his/her private sphere (Chapter 2), social structures and the public sphere (Chapter 4), ideological constraints (Chapter 6) and political constraints (Chapter 7) in both linguistic and non-linguistic environments (Chapter 5). In the case of foreign language instruction at academic institutions, such a contextualization enables the learner to analyze and interpret contemporary cultural

events through the target language and the “cultural memory” that it mediates (Chapter 7). In the case of second language instruction in school settings or in adult education, such a contextualization demands that the instructor capitalize on the linguistic and cultural diversity of the students, renounce the exclusive use of the target language as language of instruction, and that she turn the linguistic diversity of the class into a pedagogical asset.

Ultimately, a didactics of plurilingualism can be sustained only through the systematic training of teachers. Most language teachers in institutional settings have been trained within a literary or linguistic tradition that favors either a grammar/ translation or a communicative approach within a monolingual L2 context. A didactics of plurilingualism, like the one sketched out in this *Handbook*, challenges this exclusively literary or linguistic focus and explores the uses of L1 in L2 learning environments.

### **From a didactics of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism to a plurilingual and pluricultural didactics.**

Compared to a didactics of plurilingualism, a plurilingual and pluricultural didactics proposes an altogether different way of viewing language and language learning. Language is no longer an object whose structures, spelling, pronunciation, and use are normalized by the Academy, codified in dictionaries, standardized by the media, controlled by academic institutions. The preeminence of the native speaker is called into question (Chapter 4), and parole in the Saussurean sense – i.e., the use and appropriation of language by any subject or group constructed within the pedagogical interaction, including the instructor, takes precedence over the standardized linguistic system itself. This parole is plural: spoken, shaped, constructed and modified by multitudes of native and non-native interlocutors and cultures that are themselves diversified, changing, hybrid and constantly renewed. Parole—the bearer of social and cultural representations, themselves linked to realms of memory that are more or less distant across time and space—becomes a privileged space that has to be explored not only under its referential aspects, but in all its sociolinguistic, pragmatic and discursive dimensions.

Traditional schooling, founded on the concept of homogenous written languages, has up to now considered language instruction to be the acquisition of knowledge and know-how (e.g., how to learn, how to do, how to appreciate, how to categorize, how to interpret...). But as soon as one speaks of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, one calls into question not just a unified and homogenous linguistic system, but the notion of a homogenous speech community as well; one must speak of what Bakhtin called heteroglossia, i.e., diversity, change, mobility and potential conflict (Chapters 2 and 3). The challenge is precisely to rethink the acquisition of knowledge and know-how in a multilingual perspective that runs counter to the monolingual and universalist perspective generally imposed by educational institutions. This doesn't mean we should no longer teach facts of knowledge or communicative practices, but, rather, that we should make students aware of how facts and practices are contingent upon language and the other symbolic systems through which they are expressed and

transmitted.(2) For, plurilingualism also means multimodality of expression and communication. In its multiple configurations, plurilingualism includes the verbal, but also the para-verbal, the non-verbal, the visual and the virtual forms of expression (Chapter 5), which must all be taken into account by the instructor.

## Questions and discussions

The *Handbook* constitutes a preliminary attempt to map out the interdisciplinary topographies of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, as they have been reflected upon by an interdisciplinary team of researchers and educators. Having staked a terrain of varied epistemologies in an international context, with researchers who often think in a variety of languages, the *Handbook* raises many questions that may serve to enrich subsequent research. Here are some of the questions that accompanied us throughout our discussions:

How is the field of language didactics construed in Europe, North America, Australia and Asia? For example, what are the scientific contributions of research when “didactique des langues” is called Sprachlehr- und lernforschung, glottodidattica, applied linguistics, foreign language methodology, second language acquisition? What institutional support is given to these different domains of research? What is their symbolic prestige in the academic hierarchy of different countries? These domains are often linked to the needs of instructors of major world languages and of those who teach minor languages and the culture of minority communities. How are these needs linked to the economic and political interests of the institutions that employ these instructors? As Alain Touraine asks: how does one both avoid the domination of markets and the tyranny of communities?

Any ecological perspective, whether it be in linguistics, sociology or applied linguistics, stands to be reproached for a lack of social and political engagement. In the name of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, does one not welcome the abolition of borders between languages and cultures, the indifference to norms and conventions that regulate the use of languages in a given society? How does one position oneself vis-à-vis the imperatives of social justice which are often at the origin of the efforts made by those who subscribe to a plurilingual and pluricultural point of view?

What is the nature of the action posited by the expression speaker/actor (Chapter 1)? Most of the authors in this *Handbook* presuppose a relationship between speech-act and social action, between a language and the cultural memory of its speakers. What is the nature of this relationship? Does a plurilingual didactics strive to change the social representations of the learners, and if so, how do these modified representations lead to action? How does one put in place a plurilingual didactics without transforming language courses into courses on sociology, cultural anthropology or history (Chapter 8)?

In a plurilingual didactics, the relationship between language and culture is no longer founded on the equation one language = one culture. To what extent must one teach the social and cultural representations of one given group of native speakers, especially if the very notion of native speaker has become problematic (cf. Chapter 4)?

A multilingual pedagogy is founded on the systematic exploitation of grammatical, lexical, stylistic, pragmatic and modal variation in the use of the target language and in its contact with other languages spoken by the students. The notional-functional approach was a contrastive bilingual pedagogy that considered L1/L2 primarily as written languages; the communicative approach is mostly a monolingual pedagogy in the L2 as a spoken language. Recent research shows that the multiple languages likely to be present in any given foreign language classroom have attracted attention and are now being exploited, and that linguistic variations of the target language are being systematically explored with students (Chapters 6 and 7).

But how does one implement a plurilingual didactics without privileging unrestrained code-switching and a relaxing of the norms that structure the use of every language? If a plurilingual individual is not the sum of multiple monolinguals, how does one train instructors of a particular language to exploit the plurilingualism present in their class? Code-switching, seen as an imperfection or a deficit, is often banned from the classroom, even when it appears to be a means for students to harness their linguistic resources. In these times when globalization, the Internet and globalized media are making languages, cultures and means of expression more and more hybrid, we must re-examine our conventionally monolingual foreign language pedagogies.