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MULTILINGUAL EUROPE?

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ABSTRACT

Europe has now 27 members and 23 official languages. How is this multilingualism being dealt with? EU multilingualism is criticized by many commentators, as it is practically impossible to use every official language in bureaus and agencies, not mentioning minority languages. Such a difficult situation can be faced only through a program of linguistic policies. Three different solutions have been suggested so far: an articulated multilingualism (trilingual Anglo-Franco-German); a global bilingualism (national language and international common language – global language – generally recognized in English); an ecological bilingualism (an auxiliary planned language – maybe Esperanto – as a pivot in institutions and among EU citizens). We try to consider the reality of the EU languages in order to think out which could be the most suitable solution for the problem.

Keywords: *Multilingualism; Auxiliary/Foreign/Second language; Globish; Linguistic Policies*

1. WHICH EUROPE?

After the Second World War, the need of an eternal peace, as in the wave of Kant's categorical imperative **Zum ewigen Frieden**, generated the new idea of a European Community: a long way – from the foundation of the EC in 1952 to the last enlargement in 2007 – enriched the new political reality of both socio-historical and linguistic contributions. What is Europe is a difficult question: *World superpower, federation of sovereign States, or still just an agreement for a common foreign policy?* Rifkin (2004) underlines these building features: community relationships; sustainable development; universal human rights; nature's rights; while the Treaties are trying to concretize a political stronger reality. What EU is nowadays is shown in the figures 1-5 below.

2. THE TOWER OF BABEL

2.1. “UNITED IN DIVERSITY”

The motto of the European Union means that, via the EU, Europeans are united in working together for peace and prosperity, and that the many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent, including languages.

2.2. EUROPEAN LANGUAGE POLICY

Article 22 (*Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity*) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, adopted in 2000, requires the EU to respect linguistic diversity (*The*

Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity) and Article 21.1 prohibits discrimination based on language (Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief),

European Union Member States

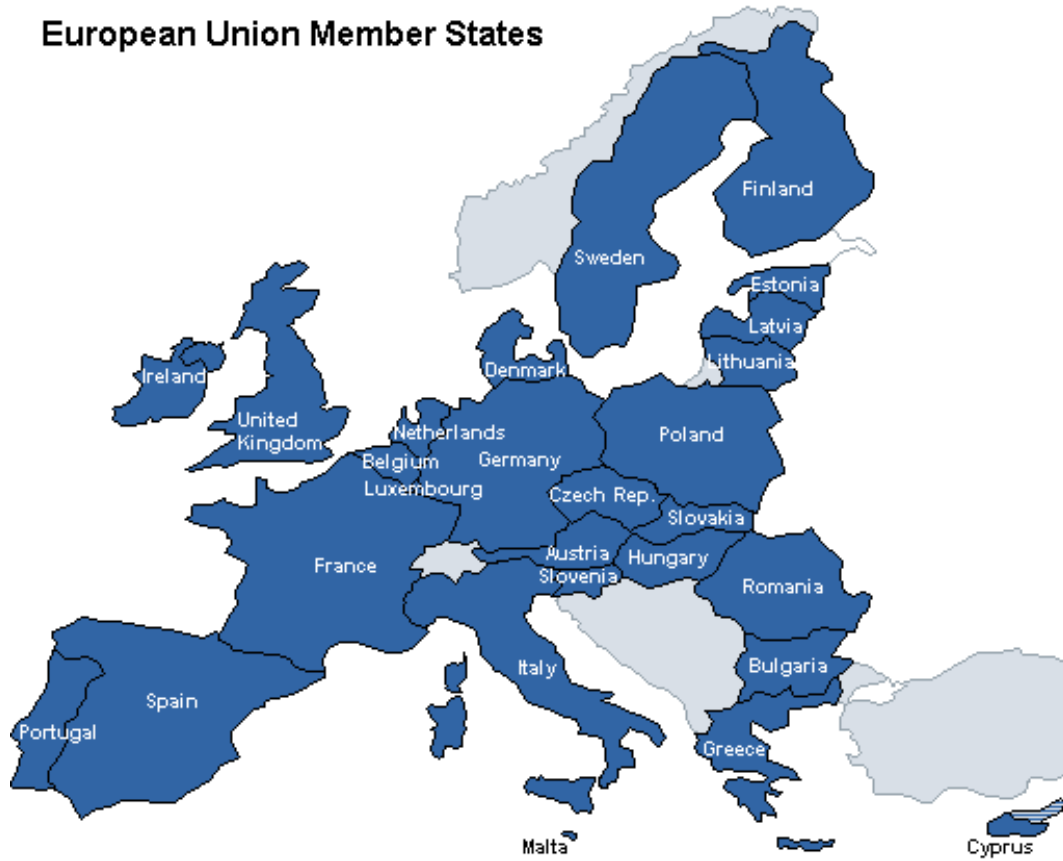
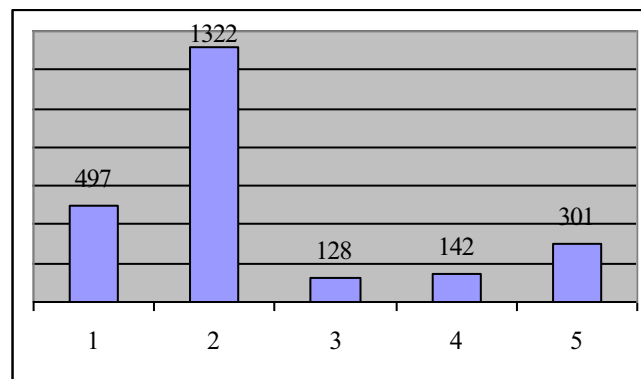


Figure 1. European Union Member States



*Figure 2. EU population in the world (in millions):
EU – 487; China – 1322; Japan – 128; Russia – 142; United States – 301*

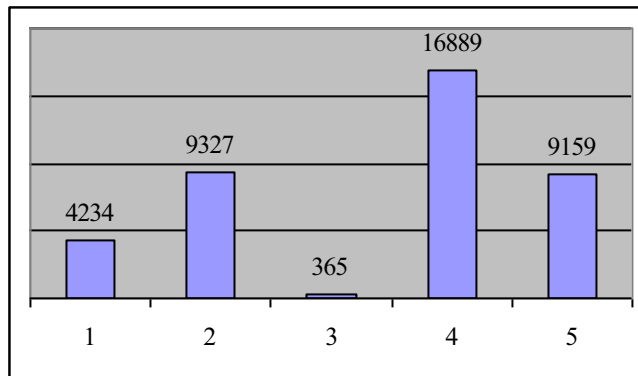


Figure 3. The area of the EU (1,000 km²) compared to the rest of the world:
 EU – 4,234; China – 9,327; Japan – 365; Russia – 16,889; United States – 9,159

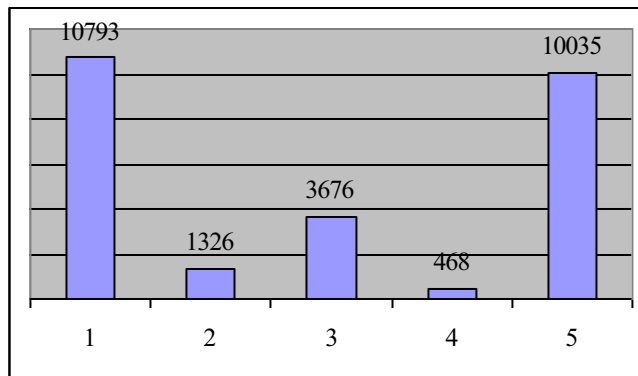


Figure 4. Size of economy: Gross Domestic Product in billions of euros (2006):
 EU – 10,793; China – 1,326; Japan – 3,676; Russia – 468 – United States – 10,035

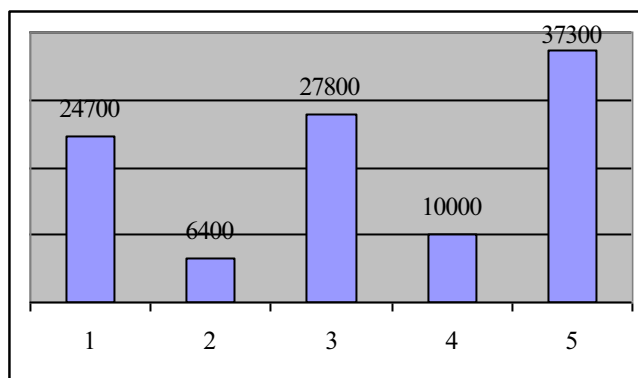


Figure 5. Wealth per person:
 EU – 24,700; China – 6,400; Japan – 27,800; Russia – 10,000; United States – 3,730

political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited).¹ Together with respect for individuals, openness towards other cultures, tolerance for others, respect for linguistic diversity is a core EU value. According to the Treaty of Lisbon, signed by the Heads of State or Government of all EU Member States in December 2007, the EU shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced².

This utopic situation lives the paradox between equality *de jure* and pragmatism *de facto*, falling in the opposition between official and working languages.³

Near the official languages, Europe presents a more variegated situation: regional, minority, community and protected languages are spoken by segments of its population – Euromosaic⁴, on one hand, and *rete Mercator*⁵, on the other, are the EU diamond point in this field. This situation should create – as quoted in the EU official pages – “not a ‘melting pot’ that reduces difference, but a place where diversity can be celebrated as an asset”, as results e.g. from the so called *Mannheim-Florence Recommendations*, document about European language policy edited by the European Federation of National Institutions for Language (EFNIL), established in Stockholm in 2003, consisting of academies which protect and regulate languages all over Europe. The *Recommendations*, available in English at <http://www.eurfedling.org/rac/raceng.htm>, suggest that the educational curriculum in every member country should foster multilingualism, EU favours a multicultural society implying multilingualism, so that every EU citizen should be at least trilingual.

2.3. TRANSLATING

How many combinations are possible through the official languages of EU shows Phillipson (2003) 115: French, Italian, German, Dutch, Greek, Portuguese, Spanish, Danish, English, Finnish, Swedish + the other 10 ones of the 5th enlargement (21 x 20) = 420. And this means money: the costs of such Babel are shown in Table 1 (readaptation from Gazzola (2006: 400)).

Table 1. Costs of translating and interpreting in EU

	Translation	Interpreting	Total
Costs (millions)	€ 807	€ 238	€ 1,045
% budget EU	0,8	0,2	1
% administrative expenses	13	3,8	16,8
Costs/citizen/year	€ 1,8	€ 0,5	€ 2,3

Systran. Among the different possibilities of an automatic translation, for more than 40 years SYSTRAN products and solutions have been the choice of leading global corporations (Symantec, Cisco, EADS), Internet portals (Yahoo!®, Lycos®, AtlaVista™), and public agencies like the US Intelligence Community and the European Commission. “The leading supplier of language translation software – as promoted in his site (<http://www.systran.co.uk/>) – SYSTRAN is the market leading machine translation solutions provider. The company’s advanced language translation software helps enterprises and individuals communicate more effectively in multiple languages. SYSTRAN’s software instantly translates text from and into 52 languages for individuals

Table 2. The risk of the double translation.

<p><i>Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited. (English, original)</i></p>	<p>↔</p>	<p><i>Ethnic or social, belief, the adhesion of a national minority, the property, birth, incapacity, the age or sexual orientation, no matter who discrimination based on no matter whom ground like the sex, the race, the colour, the origin, characters genetic, the language, the political opinion or no matter who other of the religion or of defended. (English, from French)</i></p>
<p>N'importe quelle discrimination basée sur n'importe quelle terre telle que le sexe, la race, la couleur, l'origine ethnique ou sociale, les caractères génétiques, la langue, l'opinion politique ou n'importe quelle autre de la religion ou de la croyance, l'adhésion d'une minorité nationale, la propriété, la naissance, l'incapacité, l'âge ou l'orientation sexuelle sera interdite. (French, from English)</p>	<p>↔</p>	<p>Ethnique ou social, la croyance, l'adhésion d'une minorité nationale, la propriété, la naissance, l'incapacité, l'âge ou l'orientation sexuelle, n'importe qui discrimination basée sur n'importe qui terre comme le sex, la race, la couleur, l'origine, les caractères génétiques, la langue, l'opinion politique ou n'importe qui autre de la religion ou du défendu. (French, from Italian)</p>
<p>Qualsiasi discriminazione basata su qualsiasi terra come il sesso, la razza, il colore, l'origine etnica o sociale, i caratteri genetici, la lingua, l'opinione politica o qualsiasi altra della religione o della credenza, l'adesione di una minoranza nazionale, la proprietà, la nascita, l'incapacità, l'età o l'orientamento sessuale sarà vietata. (Italian, from French)</p>	<p>↔</p>	<p>Etnico o sociale, la credenza, l'adesione d'una minoranza nazionale, la proprietà, la nascita, l'incapacità, l'età o l'orientazione sessuale, chiunque discriminazione basata su chiunque terra come il sesso, la razza, il colore, l'origine, i caratteri genetici, la lingua, l'opinione politica o chiunque altro della religione o di vietato. (Italian, from Spanish)</p>
<p>↓</p>		
<p>Étnico o social, otro de la religión o de la creencia, la adhesión de una minoría nacional, la propiedad, el nacimiento, la incapacidad, la edad o la orientación sexual, cualquiera discriminación basada sobre cualquiera tierra como el sexo, la raza, el color, el origen, los caracteres genéticos, la lengua, la opinión política o cualquiera será prohibido. (Spanish, from Italian)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p><i>Ethnic or social, another one of the religion or the belief, the adhesion of a national minority, the property, the birth, the incapacity, the age or the sexual direction, any discrimination based on any earth like sex, the race, the colour, the origin, the genetic characters, the language, the political opinion or anyone will be prohibited. (English, from Spanish)</i></p>		

to understand and publish any type of information. Use of SYSTRAN products and solutions increases business productivity in enterprise collaboration, eCommerce, customer support, knowledge management, search, and other initiatives. In 2009, SYSTRAN extended its position as the industry's leading innovator by introducing the first hybrid machine translation engine. This breakthrough combines the advantages of linguistic technology with statistical techniques so the software automatically learns from existing and validated translations. SYSTRAN's hybrid machine translation solution is easy and quick to customize. The self-learning techniques allow users to train the software to any specific domain or business objective to achieve cost-effective publishable quality translations. SYSTRAN is headquartered in Paris, France with a North American office located in San Diego, California, USA".

Useful to understand quickly and in general the topic, but not usable for texts with legal value, it presents as biggest problem the need of a human operator to control the quality of the results (it's a help in translating, not a solution). Let's try an experiment, using the automatic translation on Article 21.1 of EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights (discussed in 2.2).

Principle "of the relais" – pivot. In the European Parliament, a delegate speaks in a language which the interpreter doesn't know, being obliged to contact the booth of another interpreter.⁶ That means: all delegates have the right to express in their own mother-tongue, but not to hear the other ones in their "less important" language; and more: lost of time ... and of quality. Theoretically, the question is how iniquitous can be an asymmetrical translation; the real problem is in the double risk of a double translation.

3. ONE COUNTRY, ONE LANGUAGE?

EU has its symbols: flag, anthem, motto, celebration day (May 9th, day of the "Schuman Declaration"). Culturally, it's going to blend on its historical and cultural values. But to really exist as a political reality, EU needs more: among them, also a common language. The problem is: which one? Here are some of the proposals.

3.1. ENGLISH / ENGLISHES

English is nowadays without doubt the global *lingua franca par excellence*⁷: it meets nevertheless on one side with the criticism of who is worried about homologation and disappearance of languages⁸; on the other side, it suffers a process either of simplification, either of regionalization, either of barbarization.

Basic English. Still before the Second World War, the idea of English as global language for the Continent spread off with the conscience of the difficulty of learning a high standard. The idea was to offer a simplified variant of English. So was born the international base English.

In 1931, Charles Kay Ogden, under the suggestion of Henry Ford's slogan 'Make everybody speak English' and with the initial support of Winston Churchill, invented and published the scheme for a Basic English, a punning acronym for 'British American Scientific Industrial Commercial' English, an auxiliary international language of 850 basic words divided in three categories (things, qualities, operators), comprising a system that covers everything necessary for day-to-day purposes.⁹

As a result of a long consideration (from the *The meaning of meaning*, 1923, which set forth principles for the understanding of the function of language, through the editing of the international psychological journal *Psyche*, which he used as a vehicle for publishing research on international language problems), Basic English had a lexicon planning-driven approach, every concept able to be expressed by circumlocutions: to descend becomes to come down/to go down, to wander becomes to go from place to place without aim.

Here is a specimen:

<p><i>Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. Let your kingdom come. Let your pleasure be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day bread for our needs.</i></p>	<p><i>And make us free of our debts, as we have made those free who are in debt to us. And let us not be put to the test, but keep us safe from the Evil One.</i></p>
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Simple English. Another way of using English as *lingua franca* is Simple English, a simplified form of the English language with the intention to make content more understandable to those less familiar to the language, using only basic words. Simple English arrived on Wikipedia¹⁰, from where we take some of the following notes.

<Simple English> follows some of the rules of Basic English, but is not so strict about using only a certain number of words. Simple English is still changing, and does not have only one word list. A good starting point to writing in Simple English is to learn to write using Basic English words. This helps you write with a limited vocabulary. Start with Basic English (BE) 850. Let us say that your readers know the BE 850 words. If your writing sounds strange, or is not clear, use a less common word. The less common word may be in BE 1500 or Voice of America (VOA) Special English.

The example below shows why we do not insist on using only Basic English words. The full English sentence is from Winston Churchill:

Full English: "I have nothing to offer but *blood, toil, tears, and sweat*." →

Basic English [BE 850]: "... *blood, hard work, drops from eyes, and body water*."

- 'Blood' is a BE 850 word.
- 'Hard work' is good for those who understand English as their mother language. But a learner could understand the word 'hard' as 'solid' or 'difficult to understand'. Perhaps 'much work' is better.
- 'Drops from eyes' sounds strange to people whose mother language is English.
- 'Tears' is a BE 1500 word, and you can use it. 'Body water' also sounds strange to a person whose mother language is English.
- 'Sweat' and 'perspiration' both sound better. 'Sweat' is a more common word, and you can use it by linking to the article on sweat. Often, for difficult words that are from Latin (like 'perspiration') there will also be a native (Old English or Anglo-Saxon) word like 'sweat' meaning the same thing, that is much more common and basic, but this is not always the case.

Do:

- Write your words normally, as you would speak to another person.
- Look for your words in the word lists.

- If a word is a name, idiomatic (the meaning of the words is not clear from the roots), or jargon (special words used by experts), then it should be described in more detail. Linking to an article about the word can also help (for example, *Stephen Hawking is a cosmologist – someone who studies the structure of the universe (stars and space)*).
- Change to active voice (e.g., *The bird was eaten by the cat* → *The cat ate the bird*).
- Look for a Basic English verb in past, present or future only.

Do not:

- Use bad grammar and bad spelling.
- Use bad English: This is Simple English, not Bad English.
- Use idioms (words or phrases that mean something other than what they say).
- Use words you're not sure about without using a dictionary.
- Write in the second person.

How to translate English into Simple English:

- *abandon* → *give up, leave alone*;
- *continuous* → *not ending, going on*;
- *contradict* → *to go against*;
- *individual* → *one, some*;
- *justified* → *lawful, right*;
- *luminescence* → *giving light*;
- *originate* → *come from*;
- *specific* → *special*;
- *taken aback* → *surprised and scared at the same time*;
- *translate* → *to turn one language into another language*.

Globish. “Dialecte planétaire du 3^e millénaire, solution intégrée aux problèmes de communication internationale”. A basic form of English, to communicate worldwide using only 1.500 words: this is the presentation emerging from the Official international Globish site (<http://www.globish.com/>). Let’s hear, directly from the worlds of Jean Paul Nerriere, the French inventor of Globish, how his project grew up¹¹:

In the late 1980s, I was a Vice President with IBM USA, more specifically in charge of International Marketing. My job gave me the opportunity to travel a lot around the world. I went very often to Tokyo and Seoul. I did my best to speak English there, and so did my local counterparts with me. This is where I observed that my communication with the Japanese and the Koreans was much easier and more efficient than what could be observed between them and the American or British employees who came with me to visit our operations in these countries. Then, I observed it was the same in all non English speaking countries. I came to the conclusion that the language non Anglophones spoke together was not English, but something which sounded vaguely like it, but in which we were better off than genuine Anglophones. I refined the thinking, added more detailed observations, and made a theory out of it: this is Globish, the worldwide dialect of the third millennium. English is not really needed, Globish is enough to reach and enjoy fruitfully the “threshold of understanding” (which is what you need). [...]

First of all, <Globish> is not a language. A language is the vehicle of a culture. It carries a heritage coming from history. Actually it also shapes the way we think and act, it is the DNA of a culture. Globish has no such ambition; it is only a tool to

Table 3. Examples of simpler English

Difficult English	Simpler English	Why is it simpler?
Include 1. Some countries, including Britain and France... 2. The Nearctic Ecozone includes most of North America	For example, in 1. Some countries, e.g. Britain and France. 2. Most of North America is in the Nearctic Ecozone.	'include' is not a common word.
Like Fish like cod live in... Carpets are like rugs.	For example / similar to Fish, for example cod, live ... Carpets are similar to rugs.	'Like' has a lot of different meanings: it can also mean 'love', 'similar' and 'similar to'. 'For example', the same as 'similar to', has just one meaning.
Passive 1. He is known as... 2. It is considered... 3. It is made of... 4. It is used for... 5. The name given to ... 6. Men are divided into three sorts.	Active 1. People know him as... 2. Many/some people think it is ... 3. There is ... in it 4. We use it for... 5. The name which we give to ... 6. There are three sorts of planets.	If you can use the active form, it is easier for learners.
Reduced relative clauses: 1. The man walking past the door was Bob 2. The man given the letter was Bob 3. Antigua and Barbuda is an island nation located in the eastern Caribbean Sea	Full relative clauses, or rewriting: 1. The man who was walking past the door was Bob 2. Bob got the letter. 3. Antigua and Barbuda is an island nation in the eastern Caribbean Sea	This can make confusing sentences: <i>The horse raced past the barn fell.</i> It is also difficult for learners to guess what is missing.
Since, so 1. The chalk comes out of the eraser so it can be used again. 2. Since we can use geometry to describe geometrical shapes...	Because 1. Because the chalk comes out of the eraser, it can... 2. Because we can use geometry ...	'Since' has another meaning: <i>He has lived there since 1989.</i> 'So' can have many meanings: <i>He washed the eraser so the chalk would come out; The eraser was so chalky that ...</i> 'Because' has one meaning. Learners usually learn 'because' before 'since' or 'so'.
Such a A book with such a cover is a paperback.	This sort A book with this sort/type of cover is a paperback.	In books of EFL, 'such a' with this meaning comes quite late. 'Such a' can also mean 'very', e.g.: <i>It's such a big book!</i>
Used to John Brown used to live in London, but now he lives in York.	In the past / before In the past, John Brown lived in London... Before, John Brown lived in London	'Used to' can also mean 'we use it to ...': <i>Nickel is used to make coins.</i> 'Used to' as a past form comes very late in books on English as a foreign language.
Would As a boy, John Brown would go fishing in the river.	Past + often When he was a boy, John Brown often went fishing...	Learners usually know 'would' as in these examples: <i>Would you like a cup of tea? / I would buy one if I had enough money.</i> This past construction with 'would' comes very late in learners' books.

communicate internationally. It's simple, hence needs only a limited investment to master it at the proper level. It's enough for whatever need you may have. It might communicate internationally. It's simple, hence needs only a limited investment to Esperanto, it's not artificial. It derives from the observation that some kind of English Master it at the proper level. It's enough for whatever need you may have. It might not be always elegant, but it serves its purpose. On top of that, as opposed to is spoken everywhere. Instead of fighting this reality, and dreaming of something better, it aims at taking advantage of it. It capitalizes on it. [...]

The original book "Parlez Globish" was published a year ago. It's not a manual. It develops and demonstrates a theory, and gives only a beginning of the recipes to make it work. It describes the potential consequences of this theory on English, and on the other languages in the world. [...]

<Globish consists in> 1.500 words. The list can be downloaded from the website www.jpn-globish.com. This is a lot, as many English words become other words, which are then viewed as legitimate in Globish. For instance, "care" gives you "careful, carefully, carefulness, careless, carelessly, carelessness, uncaring", etc,... Many words are missing though, on purpose to keep it light. For instance, you should not use "nephew", too complicated for many people in the world. Instead, you will say "the son of my brother", and you do not lose anything in terms of precision. When you are used to it, it becomes automatic.

<Globish functions according to the rules of> the English grammar. Nothing else. Globish is not incorrect English. It is "English light". We recommend simple sentences, but each of them is constructed along the usual rules. As they are shorter, they are less convoluted.

The <main> goal <of Globish> is to spread, and become an official language which would facilitate the life of everyone, and put everyone on a par. Globish is not easier for an Englishman or an American than it is for me or you. Maybe, some day, it will be accepted as a viable alternative by the European Union or the United Nations, or other international bodies: it would increase their efficiency very fast, and to a great extent. And the national languages like French could hardly complain: it leaves them a great space in which to have a wonderful influence.

Table 4 is a specimen from President Obama's speech of January 20, 2009.

Broken English Between grotesque creativity and need of communication, broken English is more and more heard everywhere, from tourism to scientific conferences. Among the spread possibility of quotations, here is¹² a provocation of Michael Swan, writer specializing in English Language teaching and reference materials.

<p><i>I Can Make Myself Understood</i></p> <p>Halloo, taxi. Airport, please. I sunny time. I like your urb. Here for congress. Academic intercourse.</p>	<p>Are you sposed, taximan? I sposed, have three dwarfs. Residual in Roma. For my work I insane the students. I insane to a degree. There Are Many Complications.</p>
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Table 4. Specimen from President Obama's speech of January 20, 2009

English	Globish
<p>My fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as the generosity and co-operation he has shown throughout this transition. Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms.</p> <p>At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because we, the people, have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbears, and true to our founding documents. [...]</p> <p>This is the source of our confidence - the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny. This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed - why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall, and why a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath. So let us mark this day with remembrance, of who we are and how far we have travelled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of an icy river. The capital was abandoned. The enemy was advancing. The snow was stained with blood. At a moment when the outcome of our revolution was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people: "Let it be told to the future world... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]". America. In the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come. Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.</p>	<p>My friends and citizens: I stand here today honoured and respectful of the work before us. I want to thank you for the trust you have given. And I remember the sacrifices made by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as for the spirit of giving and cooperation he has shown during this change-over. Forty four Americans have now been sworn in as president. The words have been spoken during rising waves of wealth and well-being and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often, these words of honour are spoken surrounded by gathering clouds and wild storms.</p> <p>At these times, America has carried on not simply because those in high office were skilled or could see into the future. But it has been because We the People have kept believing in the values of our first fathers, and stayed true to the documents that created our country..[...]</p> <p>This is the beginning of our trust – the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain future. This is the meaning of our freedom and what we hold true – why men and women and children of every race and every belief system can join in celebration across this wonderful public walk. And it is why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served food at a local restaurant, can now stand before you. He will today be sworn in to the most important and respected office of the president. So, today, let us remember who we are and how far we have travelled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small group of nationalists sat together around dying camp-fires on the edge of an icy river. The capital was empty -- all had left. The enemy was coming forward. The snow was coloured with blood. At a time when the outcome of our battle for change was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people: "Let it be told to the future world... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and [honour] could survive... that the city and the country, [awoken to] one common danger, came [forward] to meet [it]".</p> <p>America. In the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our suffering, let us remember these words always. With hope and honour, let us brave once more the icy currents, and make it through what storms may come. Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let our progress end, that we did not turn back nor did we fall down.; and with eyes fixed on the distance and God's goodness to help us, we carried forward that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future people.</p>

3.2. LATIN

The language of Cicero has never stopped to be used, and non only by ecclesiastic institutions, till today: Just look at the emblematic translation of Henry Potter: Rowling (2003). The Italian Astori (1995), author of a handbook of living Latin, gained, as cultural provocation, reviews even in America (*The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times*), where classical languages have nowadays a big revival. Don't forget, among much to say, that the Finland Presidency inserted also Latin in the links of the EU web pages. To know the many opportunities to use Latin also in everyday life, see the Wikipedia (Vicipaedia) pages *lingua latina*: http://la.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pagina_prima.

3.3. EUROPANTO

Que would happen if, wenn Du open your computero, finde eine message in esta lingua? No est Englando, no est Germano, no est Espano, no est Franzo, no est keine known lingua aber Du understande! Wat happen zo! Habe your computero eine virus catched? Habe Du sudden BSE gedveloped? No, Du esse lezendo la neue europese lingua: de Europanto! Europanto ist uno melangio van de meer importantes Europese linguas mit also eine poquito van andere europese linguas, sommige Latinus, sommige old grec.

Here is a provocation in Europanto, the 'creature' Diego Marani born, while working 1996 as a translator for the European Council of Ministers.¹³ Let's hear directly from his words something about it.

Reading the satirical article in Europanto which I write regularly for the weekly magazine in Belgium, "Le Soir Illustré", many readers might think that this is a new artificial language, constructed from the major European languages with the aim of becoming a universal language. This is only partly true, however. Europanto is a mixture of words and grammatical structures borrowed from a number of different languages which anyone of average culture with a basic knowledge of English can understand. But it is not a language, nor is it intended to become one. At least not yet. Europanto is a linguistic code of conduct, a series of guidelines or "precautions" to be taken if we want to communicate with someone who does not speak the same language as ourselves without using a specific lingua franca. [...]

Europanto is not an artificial universal language that can be used as an alternative to Esperanto, nor is it intended to replace English in international relations. Making use of past experience and new information technologies, it would not only be possible, but also very easy, to codify a Europanto grammar, making Europanto another artificial language like Esperanto. But that would be a mistake. Europanto would become just another elitist language, spoken by a small group of enthusiasts, but totally ignored by the rest of the world.

The dominance of English cannot be challenged. With the exception of a few small areas that have been cut off from the processes of industrialization and globalization, English has become the universal language of our time. Europanto has a different goal. Rather than an artificial language, it is a system for the creation of a new language of the future. It is intended to give voice to the frustrations of the vast

majority of people who are forced to use English even though their command of the language is not very good.

This can be achieved by speeding up the process of the internationalization of the English language and by its isolation from the Anglo-American culture. Instead of trying to compete with English, the aim is to cause the language to implode, to destroy it from within. The mechanism is very simple. Nowadays, virtually everyone knows a few words of English and is capable of putting together very simple sentences, but most people are unable to speak the language properly because they do not know all the nuances, the subtle differences in meaning that only a mother-tongue speaker knows. In a conversation in English between two non-native speakers with just a smattering of the language, the register is naturally very low and only the basic message is communicated – often little more than could have been achieved by gesticulating. But what would happen if the two speakers could enrich their vocabulary with words from their own languages or from other important European languages? The worst that would happen is that the level of understanding would remain the same. If, however, the words used were similar to ones in the other person's language or were somehow recognized, then their mutual understanding would be enhanced. This is the mechanism on which Europanto is based.

The structure is essentially English, but the words are borrowed from other languages [...]. The strength of Europanto is that it does not have to be studied: to be able to read, write or speak the language, people use whatever linguistic knowledge they already possess, i.e. a very basic knowledge of English and the other major European languages which derives from their everyday experience. Europanto must, clearly, borrow from the best known European languages and “Europantize” above all those words which are most likely to be recognized because they have a common root or because they are frequently used. [...]

In conclusion, although it is not a language as such, Europanto does exist. But it is, as yet, rather amorphous and any attempt to try and describe the language and write down its grammatical rules would be rather like planting a seed and wanting to take a photograph of the tree. Instead of wasting time on this futile pursuit, it is far more useful at present to observe the development of the language and leave the analysis of its forms until later. As in the case of all other languages: the language comes first and the rules follow. [...]

It is clear that great things are going on in the Europanto laboratory and that a new European lingua franca is being created in the most natural way from the magma of multilingualism. Like any living creature, it will contain a number of flaws and contradictions, but, unlike other universal languages, it will be successful because it is being produced from the lowest levels. And just as Vulgar Latin replaced Latin at the beginning of the first century, so Europanto, at the beginning of the third millennium, will cause international English to implode and will prevail over European multilingualism. (Quotation from: <http://www.neuropeans.com/topic/europanto/what/more.php>)

Specimen (the first one is a Romanic, the second one a Germanic version):

Und por eine bisschen divino help te bekriegen, here est de “Pater Noster” in Europanto™. Apprende quick und declame esta prayera desnog today. May esse dat God speake solo Europanto™ und por esta reason el never antoworde aan nos prayeras!

*Notre Padre who est en la ciel,
 may votre nombre est sanctificado.
 Venga votre reino.
 May votre voluntad est fatto,
 comme en ciel, assim on la terre.
 Da us notre pane de chaque giorno.
 y pardonu notre deudas,
 assim comment we pardonar notre deudress.
 y not induce us en tentasion,
 mais free us del mauvais.
 Amen*

*Vader nostro nel sky volante
 teine name sancto esse
 Teine kingtum komme.
 teine will noman discusse
 Up el sky und in der mundo
 nostro bread give nos alledag
 nostros debts forgive nos tambien
 comme nos forgivons nostros debtors
 Ne pushe nos in tentazion
 aber libera nos des mal
 Amen*

4. WHICH FUTURE?

4.1. LE RAPPORT GRIN

Asked from the **Haut Conseil de l'Évaluation de l'École** to study the situation and the costs of the present-day linguistic policies, Mr. François Grin¹⁴ produced the document¹⁵ *L'enseignement des langues étrangères comme politique publique*, supporting the idea of three possible scenarios, so described in Table 5, concluding¹⁶:

- The frequent rejection against Esperanto make scenario 3 impassable, not viable.
- In a medium/long term we should prefer scenario 2 (plurilingualism): even if it is not the most suitable, the reduction of unjust benefits to Anglophone countries is however considerable.
- Scenario 2 contains some risks of instability and erosion favourable to English, and this constitutes an argument for scenario 3.

*Esperanto.*¹⁷ Esperanto is a language introduced in 1887 by Dr. L. L. Zamenhof after years of development. He proposed Esperanto as a second language that would allow people who speak different native languages to communicate, yet at the same time retain their own languages and cultural identities. Esperanto doesn't want to replace anyone's language but simply serves as a common second language. Although there aren't a lot of people who speak Esperanto in any one place, there are some almost everywhere and over a hundred periodicals regularly published in Esperanto, and thousands of books, both translated and original works. Esperanto has had continuous usage by a community estimated at between 100,000 and 2 million speakers for over a century. Today, Esperanto is employed in world travel, correspondence, cultural exchange, conventions, literature, language instruction, television, and radio broadcasting. At least one major search engine, Google, offers searching of Esperanto-related websites via an Esperanto portal. The Esperanto Wikipedia contains over 113,000 articles, as of May 2009.

*Patro nia, kiu estas en la ĉielo,
 via nomo estu sanktigita.
 Venu via regno,
 plenumiĝu via volo,
 kiel en la ĉielo, tiel ankaŭ sur la tero.
 Nian panon ĉiutagan donu al ni hodiaŭ.
 Kaj pardonu al ni niajn ŝuldojn,*

*kiel ankaŭ ni pardonas al niaj ŝuldantoj.
 Kaj ne konduku nin en tenton,
 sed liberigu nin de la malbono.
 (ĉar tia estas la regno kaj la forto
 kaj la gloro, en eternecon / por ĉiam)
 Amen*

Table 5. Comparison of the 3 scenarios

Scenario and linguistic environment	General features	Languages to teach
1 st Scenario: everything on English	Inter-linguistic communication mainly in English; inequities in favour of natif English speakers; high risk of erosion of linguistic and cultural diversity in time.	1 st Language: English 2 nd Language: any language
2 nd Scenario: plurilinguism	Inter-linguistic communication in different European languages, heading towards a small number of “great” languages, particularly the three languages privileged by hypothesis (English – French – German); wider linguistic and cultural diversity, but risk of instability resulting in the need for adopting measures meant to favour communicative contexts in non dominant languages, particularly in other languages than English.	1 st Language (for France): English or German* 2 nd Language (for France): any language* <i>Note 1: One of the two languages should be a Romance language</i> <i>Note 2: Within this teaching, also develop te receptive competence in other Romance languages</i>
3 rd Scenario: Esperanto	Inter-linguistic communication mainly in Esperanto; quasi-complete equality between locutors no matter the mother tongue.	1 st Language: Esperanto 2 nd Language: any language

**for the countries whose residents do not have English, French, or German as monther tongues, the 1st and 2nd languages shouldbelong to the trio English-French-German to make sure the 2nd scenario ensures intercomprehension as well as the others*

4.2. VERTICAL MULTILINGUALISM BY THE INDIAN MODEL

Gobbo (2004) hops for a situation of triglossia as shown in Table 6: a local language level, where people may cultivate whatever ‘mother language’ they want (regional, community, etc.); an official language level, where country membership implies proficiency in (at least one of) the official language(s) of the country; a *lingua franca* level, where is given strength to Europeanization.

Table 6. The 3-level scheme

Level	Principle	Identity
Local/Mother Language	personality	Core (very own group)
Official Language(s)	territoriality	National (country members)
(pan-European) Lingua Franca	propedeuticity	European (EU citizenship)

4.3. LANGUAGES AND FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Also focusing on the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, we'd like in conclusion to reflect on the evidence below, from the pen of Ngugi wa Thiong'o (*Decolonizing the Mind*, 1986):

How did we arrive at this acceptance of 'the fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English'¹⁷ in our literature, in our culture and in our politics? [...] How did we, as African writers, come to be so feeble in our claims on other languages, particularly the languages of our colonization? [...]

Berlin of 1884 was affected through the sword and the bullet. But the night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. [...] In my view language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation. Let me illustrate this by drawing upon experiences in my own education, particularly in language and literature.

[...] We spoke Gikuyu (the most widely spoken language in Kenya) in and outside the home. I can vividly recall those evenings of storytelling around the fireside. [...] We children would re-tell the stories the following day to other children who worked in the fields picking the pyrethrum flowers, tea-leaves or coffee beans of our European and African landlords.

The stories, with mostly animals as the main characters, were all told in Gikuyu. [...] We therefore learnt to value words for their meaning and nuances. Language was not just a string of words. It had a suggestive power well beyond the immediate and lexical meaning. Our appreciation of the suggestive magical power of language was reinforced by the games we played with words through riddles, proverbs, transpositions of syllables, or through nonsensical but musically arranged words. [...] The language of our evening teach-ins, and the language of our immediate and wider community, and the language of our work in the fields were one.

And then I went to school, a colonial school, and this harmony was broken. The language of my education was no longer the language of my culture. [...] It was after the declaration of a state of emergency over Kenya in 1952 (the Mau-Mau anti-colonial rebellion)] that all the schools run by patriotic nationalists were taken over by the colonial regime and were placed under District Education Boards chaired by Englishmen. English became the language of my formal education. In Kenya, English became more than a language: it was the language, and all the others had to bow before it in deference.

Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment - three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks - or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teachers catch the culprits? A button was initially given to one pupil who was supposed to hand it over to whoever was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. Thus children were turned into witch-hunters and

in the process were taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community.

The attitude to English was the exact opposite: any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded. [In the colonial education system, which advanced by qualifying exams,] nobody could pass the exam who failed the English language paper no matter how brilliantly he had done in the other subjects. [...] English was the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitism.

In primary school I now read simplified Dickens and Stevenson.

[...] I started writing in Gikuyu language in 1977 after seventeen years of involvement in Afro-European literature, in my case Afro-English literature. [...] I believe that my writing in Gikuyu language, a Kenyan language, an African language, is part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggles of Kenyan and African peoples. In schools and universities our Kenyan languages - that is the languages of the many nationalities which make up Kenya - were associated with negative qualities of backwardness, underdevelopment, humiliation and punishment. [...] I do not want to see Kenyan children growing up in that imperialist-imposed tradition of contempt for the tools of communication developed by their communities and their history. I want them to transcend colonial alienation.

[...] But writing in our languages per se [...] will not itself bring about the renaissance in African cultures if that literature does not carry the content of our people's anti-imperialist struggles to liberate their productive forces from foreign control; the content of the need for unity among the workers and peasants of all the nationalities in their struggle to control the wealth they produce and to free it from internal and external parasites.

5. HOPE

Here follows the message from Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, General Director of UNESCO, on the occasion of International Mother Language Day, 21 February 2009.

As the twelve months devoted to celebrating International Year of Languages have come to an end, this year's International Mother Language Day, marked on 21 February 2009, signals the beginning of a new phase for reflection and assessment.

Ten years after the Day was proclaimed by the General Conference of UNESCO on the proposal of Bangladesh, what conclusions can now be drawn?

One point must be made. After laying emphasis on each community's recognition of its own mother tongue, the Day has increasingly drawn the international community's attention to the foundations of linguistic diversity and multilingualism. It has also become clear that languages, which form part of the identity of individuals and peoples, are key to the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals.

A growing number of increasingly diverse stakeholders in governmental organizations and civil society acknowledge that languages are central to all forms of social, economic and cultural life. Links between multilingual education (involving the mother tongue, national languages and international languages), education for all and the Millennium Development Goals now constitute the pillars of any sustainable-development strategy.

We do indeed hope that tangible results conducive to the use of mother languages and to multilingualism will emerge under the impetus of the communication campaign

conducted by UNESCO during International Year of Languages 2008, and that these challenges will continue to be the cornerstone of action taken by governments and development agencies.

In addition to the interest aroused by the Year and the hundreds of language promotion projects launched in 2008, the impact of the International Year of Languages will be assessed in the coming months to gauge the importance of languages to development, peace and social cohesion.

Accordingly, on this the tenth International Mother Language Day, I appeal for action to ensure that the many declarations and initiatives announced in 2008 will be followed up by specific sustainable measures.

I hope, in particular, that governments will introduce, in their formal and non-formal education systems and their own administrations, measures designed to secure the harmonious and fruitful coexistence of the languages of each country. We shall thus succeed in preserving and promoting multilingual environments that show due respect for all expressions of cultural diversity.

So let such a hope be ours.

NOTES

1. From the legal basis of the Regulation No 1/1958 to the Article 21 of the Union's founding treaty, roles of language policy are promoting and maintaining peace in the EU as a plank of the EU's cohesion, laying on two fundamental principles: *language right* as a human right (citizens have a right to their language) and *equity in communication* (equality of treatment between *peoples and individuals*). In the *Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe 2004*, III, II-81 is written: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited". Or more: "While committed to integration at European level, the EU promotes the linguistic and cultural diversity of its peoples. It does so by promoting the teaching and learning of their languages, including minority and regional languages. The EU's ambitious goal, set out in a new Action Plan, is that as many of its citizens as possible should speak one – and ideally two – languages in addition to their mother tongue. The European Union as an organisation now works with 20 official languages. This is because, in a democracy, the laws it applies must be understandable to all its citizens. There can be no discrimination, for instance, between the way people in big and small countries are treated. In their dealings with the EU institutions, all citizens have the right to use their own national language – as do their elected representatives in the European Parliament (from *Europe on the move*, European Commission - Directorate General Press and Communication, manuscript finalised in July 2004: *Many tongues, one family. Languages in the European Union*). And in the Treaty of Amsterdam (art.2.11): 'Every citizen of the Union may write to any of the institutions or bodies referred to in this Article or in Article 4 in one of the languages mentioned in Article 248 and have an answer in the same language.'
2. The whole text is available online: http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/full_text/index_en.htm.

3. For a good *status quaestionis* see Gobbo (2007).
4. Decisions on supporting regional and minority languages need to be based on a full understanding of their status and the challenges they face. The European Commission initiated a comprehensive study - "Euromosaic" - of minority language groups in the European Union. The Euromosaic study dates back to 1992, when the Commission decided to examine the potential for expanding the use of regional and minority languages, and the barriers they face in this respect. The study identified the social and institutional variables that provide the context for the continuing use of a language, and which create the conditions for expanding its use. The main variables influencing this process were found to be family, education and community, along with the institutional and legal frameworks in which languages are used. The motivating forces involved language "prestige" or the value of a language for social mobility and cultural reproduction. The second main task of this study was to examine the condition of different languages within this framework. The team behind the study compiled more than 50 reports on regional and minority languages, assessing the situation and condition of each language. A further study, using the same framework, was completed following the 1995 enlargement of the EU, when Austria, Finland and Sweden joined as Member States. This was followed in September 2004 by an additional study, when Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia acceded to the EU. The team of experts and scientists who carried out the study also drafted a [comparative summary](#) providing a general overview of the situation in the Member States that acceded in 2004 and a comparison with the fifteen pre-enlargement Member States. The full range of Euromosaic reports provides a valuable overview of the status of regional and minority languages in the EU. [Reports outlining the general language context of each new Member State](#) can also be consulted. An overview report, based on the study and published by the Commission in 1996 under the title *Euromosaic: The production and reproduction of the minority language groups in the European Union*, is available from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. (from the official site).
5. From the official presentation (<http://www.mercator-education.org/news/archive/read-about-mercator-in-23-languages/english>):
"Generally speaking, the same problem is experienced by all European minority languages: low status, parents who do not pass on their language to their children because they feel that their children can only move up the social ladder if they speak the majority language, and governments that are indifferent or sometimes even rigidly opposed to minority languages. There are approximately 70 minority languages in the 25 member states of the European Union. This translates into approximately 45 million people who speak a minority language in addition to their official national language. It would be a shame if Europe's minority languages were to disappear. After all, language is more than a means of communication; it is also about identity, culture and history. Mercator Education, a component of the European Mercator Network, dedicates itself to European minority languages by conducting research, providing a platform from which experiences can be exchanged and information can be collected and disseminated. Important tools in all this are the Mercator centres' websites (www.mercator-central.org). The European Commission founded the Mercator Network at the end of the 1980s as one of its initiatives. The network consists of three centres, each of which specialises in its own area of study:

Mercator Legislation in Barcelona (Spain) studies linguistic rights and legislation and the use of minority languages in public administration; Mercator Media in Wales (United Kingdom) concentrates on minority languages in the media – from the press to digital media – and Mercator Education in Leeuwarden (The Netherlands) focuses on minority languages in education – from preschool centres to university education. All of these three areas are important for the maintenance of minority languages. [...] The teaching of minority languages is crucial in order to hand down a language to the younger generation. It teaches children that a minority language is a language in its own right and not merely meant for use in casual situations or at home. Mercator-Education has initiated a variety of projects with respect to minority languages in education. Some have been short-lived, while others have been running for years and continue to do so. The two most important projects at present are the Regional Dossiers and the Network of Schools. Through the publication of the Regional Dossiers, Mercator Education has mapped out minority-language education in the European member states. The dossiers are concise reports that provide factual information on where a minority language is placed within the educational system of the European member state concerned. Local authors, well versed on their local situations, compile the reports. Over thirty such dossiers have now been written. The layout of every dossier follows the same fixed pattern, which makes these booklets suitable for comparative study. It is notable how many authors lament the fact that the speakers of minority languages see their bilingualism as a source of embarrassment when they ought to see it as something valuable. Mercator Education set up the Network of Schools some years ago. In the interim, some 50 schools from European minority-language regions have joined up to it. [...] Mercator Education hopes to be able to help strengthen the position of minority languages in Europe. Ultimately, however, the responsibility for the continued existence of a language lies with the speakers of that minority language themselves. If they do not consider their own language to be important, if they do not cherish their bilingualism as something of value, and if they no longer teach the language to their children and no longer teach them to be proud of it, then the European Commission can support as many projects as it likes to no avail.

6. For a closer examination:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/scic/interpreting/tech_asymmetric_it.htm;
http://europa.eu.int/comm/scic/interpreting/tech_pivot_it.htm;
http://europa.eu.int/comm/scic/interpreting/tech_relay_it.htm;
http://europa.eu.int/comm/scic/interpreting/tech_relay_en.htm;
http://europa.eu.int/comm/scic/thescic/history_it.htm.
7. See at least Crystal (1997) as one of the first voices concerning the topic.
8. Just some bibliography of a rich discussion in progress about the linguistic policies in Europe: Ammon (2001), Calvet (1987, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002), De Witte (2004), Fidrmuc-Ginsburgh (2004), Gazzola (2002), Hagège (2000), Phillipson (2004), Piron (1994), Selten (1997), Tsuda (2001), van Els (2001), van Parijs (2004). As it appears through the given bibliography, linguistic democracy means also economic equability. Here is shown the question by the words of Max de Lotbinière from *The Guardian Weekly* of 17.10.08: “Last month’s European Day of Languages, the Council of Europe’s celebration of linguistic diversity and language learning has prompted a controversial proposal to compensate EU countries for the cost of having to learn English by taxing Britain and Ireland. Michele Gazzola, a researcher at the

economics languages and training observatory of Geneva, said that English speaking countries gain huge financial advantages from not having to master Europe's main language of communication. They should help to fund their neighbours' efforts to learn English. Gazzola quotes a 2005 study that estimates the EK's savings on language education, and profits from the sale of English language teaching materials to the rest of Europe, at between \$14bn and \$23bn. His solution is simple: and the controversial \$7bn annual rebate that the UK receives from the EU budget and spend the money on expanding the EU's interpreting and translation services or supporting linguistically burdened researchers".

9. <http://ogden.basic-english.org/basiceng.html>, <http://www.basic-english.org/institute.html>.
10. The front page of the Simple English Wikipedia project is: http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page; an expanded description of the project's goals and the simple form of English used: http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Simple_English_Wikipedia.
11. From an interview given in 2005 to Elia P. Pekica Pagon in Zagreb, chief editor for the Croatian cultural magazine EPOHA (<http://www.jpn-globish.com/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=171>).
12. Thank's to Andreea Varga (Banat University of Agricultural Science and Veterinary Medicine, Timișoara) for the indication.
13. In Europanto Diego Marani published different articles, short stories and video clips. Since his first novel in Europanto (1999), he is also a well known and appreciated essayist and novelist: his most famous novel, *Nuova grammatica finlandese*, was translated in different languages and received in Italy the Grinzane-Cavour literary prize. See more on Europanto and EU in Astori (2009).
14. After a PhD in economics at the University of Geneva, François Grin has worked at the Universities of Montréal and Washington (Seattle). From 1998 to 2001, he was the Deputy Director of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Flensburg, Germany. He is currently Professor of Economics at the School of Translation and Interpretation (ETI) at the University of Geneva. He is also a visiting professor at the University of Italian Switzerland in Lugano, where he teaches the management of linguistic and cultural diversity. François Grin has specialised in language economics, education economics, and policy evaluation in these areas. He is the author of some 200 scientific publications and sits on the editorial board of several journals in language policy and educational issues. He has carried out research projects for international organisations (European Commission, Council of Europe, World Bank Institute) and advises various national and regional governments on language policy issues. He is the Deputy Coordinator of the DYLAN research project on "Dynamics of language and diversity management" funded by the European Commission under Framework Programme 6 (<http://www.dylan-project.org>).
15. You can find the document at: http://cisad.adc.education.fr/hcee/documents/rapport_Grin.pdf.
16. Here is his *Conclusions générales*: "Le constat final peut sembler amer. La politique que recommandait le *Rapport de la Commission du débat national sur l'avenir de l'École*' est assurément la plus simple; on a toutefois pu voir, au fil de la présente étude, que d'un point de vue de politique publique, c'est peut-être la plus mauvaise des solutions. Ce n'est pas, et de très loin, la meilleur marché; c'est par ailleurs la

plus inéquitable; et elle condamne le français, et avec lui toutes les langues d'Europe sauf l'anglais, à la provincialisation. Certains parleraient même d'inféodation, avec toutes les conséquences géopolitiques et culturelles incalculables que cela comporte. Si une solution aussi peu attrayante est souvent recommandée, c'est sans doute parce qu'elle résulte d'une analyse effectuée à l'intérieur d'un cadre trop restreint. Étant donné qu'en l'absence de coordination, il existe une forte incitation à converger vers l'anglais, il est effectivement tout à fait logique de recommander qu'on l'enseigne et qu'on l'apprenne. Mais cela revient à ignorer toute la dynamique des langues. Celle-ci doit être prise en compte autant pour l'analyse que pour la formulation de recommandations. Le caractère très particulier de la langue, qui en tant qu'outil de communication donne naissance à des réseaux, mais qui est aussi un élément crucial de l'identité individuelle et collective, interdit les solutions simplistes. Il n'est guère surprenant, somme toute, que le fait de ne pas tenir compte (ou pas assez) de cette complexité puisse conduire à des choix inefficaces en termes d'allocation des ressources, injustes en termes de distribution des ressources, dangereux pour la diversité linguistique et culturelle, et très préoccupants en termes géopolitiques, tout en ayant l'apparence trompeuse de l'évidence. Il est donc nécessaire, pour sortir de l'impasse, d'élargir le cadre de la réflexion et de repenser la question de l'enseignement des langues étrangères avec une logique plus vaste, dans laquelle un plus grand nombre de paramètres puissent être réexaminés. L'une des conséquences les plus importantes d'un tel élargissement est qu'il replace la possibilité d'une coordination entre États au centre de l'élaboration des stratégies. Dès que le cadre est ainsi élargi, le problème change du tout au tout: s'il n'est pas facile, il devient soluble – pour le plus grand bénéfice du contribuable, de la justice sociale, et de la diversité des langues et des cultures”.

17. Thanks to Renato Corsetti, former President of the *Universala Esperanto Asocio* and President of the *Itala Esperanto-Federacio*, for redacting this chapter. For more information in English, see <http://www.esperanto-usa.org/node/3> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esperanto>.
18. Nothing against the wonderful language of Shakespeare, ‘English’ means in the present approach every language becoming hegemonic and imperialist over other cultures.

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