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ELF and the EU/wider Europe

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Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the present situation of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in the EU and the expanding European context. It views ELF as one of many strategies for solving communicative and sociocultural problems, both on the macro and micro level. This strategy is realized in: 1) situations in which ELF is an alternative to the use of other regionally and/or internationally important languages (French, German, Russian); 2) situations in which ELF is an alternative to receptive multilingualism between closely related languages; and 3) situations in which ELF is an alternative to translation/interpretation. It also emphasizes differences between regions and individual national contexts in Europe, particularly in regard to local language constellations and ideologies, as well as the positions of languages/varieties on the labor market. I place particular focus upon Central and Eastern Europe (former Soviet Bloc countries) where English has replaced German and Russian as lingua francas in recent decades. The chapter will conclude with a brief consideration of the position and management of ELF in light of the increasing Asian presence throughout Europe in the business sphere, higher education and tourism.

The use of a lingua franca as a language management

In this chapter, English is understood as one of many lingua francas that have always existed throughout history (see Ammon and Mattheier 2001 or Knapp and Meierkord 2002 for an overview of these) in the context of inherently multilingual situations (see Jenkins 2015 on the conceptualization ELF within paradigms of multilingualism). Varieties of language emerge as lingua francas for one generally presumed reason: that the speakers in the given situations and communities do not otherwise share a common language that is the first language of at least some of them. Therefore, the lingua franca is selected so that the given communication may take place at all. In other words, a variety is chosen as a strategy for solving a communication problem. But in some situations, participants may opt for a lingua franca for different reasons, the main one being that other candidate varieties are laden with

historical and political connotations and may signal a power imbalance. In this case, the variety is selected as a lingua franca as a strategy for solving a sociocultural problem. In addition, the process of selecting the variety may vary greatly, ranging from a momentary decision in the context of an individual interaction to a carefully planned policy decision on the part of an international organization.

This problem-based view of the selection of languages for the role of lingua francas is based on the language management approach (Jernudd and Neustupný 1987; Nekvapil 2006; Nekvapil and Sherman 2015), in which the range of strategies described above corresponds to the distinction between so-called simple and organized management. The language management approach enables us to integrate macro and micro perspectives on language use and metalinguistic behaviour and to demonstrate how sociocultural and socioeconomic issues can very strongly influence the choices that are made regarding the use of both entire varieties, e.g. opting for English instead of German for the purposes of a business meeting, and individual linguistic features, e.g. selecting the non-standard, yet intelligible construction "he know", as opposed to "he knows", in the context of such a meeting.

According to this approach, people encounter problems or inadequacies in everyday communication, either because they cannot understand others or make themselves understood, or because they deem the linguistic or other semiotic means used to communicate to be either incorrect or otherwise inappropriate for the given situation. A typical example is a tourist situation, related to shopping, eating, finding accommodation or asking for directions. The tourist, if he or she is not a native or highly competent non-native speaker of a language of the area visited, i.e. cannot rely on the same norms for communication as at home, becomes aware of this fact, selects another way to communicate, and enacts it. In terms of the language management approach, this roughly corresponds to the phases of noting, evaluation, adjustment design and implementation (see Jernudd and Neustupný 1987).

Like any other form of behaviour toward language, language management related to ELF is never a matter of language alone, but rather, is grounded in and primarily serves broader communicative and socio-cultural issues. This applies, we will see, to the overall selection of English as a lingua franca as the means to be used in a given communicative situation, either spontaneously or in the form of official policy.

ELF in the new and expanding EU

Over the twentieth century, norms and expectations for the selection of lingua francas in communication in the European context have undergone specific development in line with a number of extra-linguistic factors, above all political and economic ones. Among the most recent and, for the purposes of this text, the most important points of transition are the end of the Cold War in 1989, the subsequent breakup of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Bloc, and the gradual expansion of the European Union to include former Soviet Bloc countries and other countries in the Mediterranean region, with the greatest change occurring in 2004.

For many of the countries of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe that joined the EU in 2004 or after (with the exception of Poland), the local or state language constitutes a medium-sized language (Vila 2012), meaning that the pressure to speak foreign languages is significant, and for the youngest generation of job-seekers, often a basic assumption. Most of these states belong to the former Soviet Bloc, which, overall, means that they have experienced the following changes over the past quarter-century that are relevant to the use of lingua francas:

1 Foreign language knowledge as a symbol of prestige and resulting manifestations of standard language and/or native speaker ideology regarding those languages.
2 Russian as the most commonly taught foreign language prior to 1989 and as the lingua franca used in communication between people living in the region.
3 The gradual shift to English as the most commonly taught foreign language.
4 A generational difference in foreign language knowledge.
5 Specific constellations of ideologies relating to selected languages (see Nekvapil and Sherman 2013) and their varieties.

English, then, is often viewed as many scholars (including Kachru 1986; Pennycook 1994; Nekvapil and Sherman 2009, 2013; Zabrodskaja and Ehala 2015) have observed in expanding-circle and even outer-circle countries, that is, as a language perceived by its speakers as neutral for all practical purposes in selected communication situations. This means that ideally, no particular group (e.g. Czechs vs. Germans, Estonians vs. Russians, etc.) has a linguistic or cultural advantage, although the inevitable impossibility of true neutrality has been exemplified by many authors, e.g. Pennycook 1994 or Nekvapil and Nekula 2006. English is also subject to the ideology of the absolute instrumentality of a language (Nekvapil and Sherman 2013), i.e. if one learns the given language, one can communicate with anyone else in the world. The teaching of Russian (in the Czech Republic in particular) has made a comeback, particularly due to the employment opportunities it affords, connected to business with Russian-speaking countries. Though both Russian and English are selected for their instrumental value, it still cannot be stated that Russian would be viewed as neutral in the same way that English is, but rather, as a language that brings certain economic benefits.

Also, in European nation-states characterized by strong standard language ideology (see Seidlhofer, Chapter 7 this volume) relating to the national language, there is a long tradition of a strong orientation toward linguistic form and "correct language use". This is attested to by the existence of state-funded language consulting services (see Beneš *et al.* in prep.), in which callers often demand that the linguists working there provide them with a single correct linguistic variant for use in a given situation. Furthermore, in the case of selected small- and medium-sized languages, speakers are also not accustomed to interacting with speakers of non-native varieties and have limited ability in foreigner talk as described by Ferguson (1971). This ideology can then easily extend to the teaching of foreign languages, with native varieties of the languages being preferred, which, in the age of the internet and the extensive exposure to English language popular culture, can lead to conflict between teachers and students regarding legitimate English knowledge. In this vein, the United Kingdom's 2016 advisory referendum vote to leave the European Union, if carried out to completion, will most likely have implications for the further development of teaching resources and the orientation toward British varieties of English in EU institutions and policies.

Given these present conditions, while the potential to manage communication and socio-cultural problems through the selection of languages other than English as lingua francas has theoretically not lessened, it is continually subjected to the ideological and economically motivated preferences of individuals and institutions. These will be discussed in the next section.

ELF is an alternative to other regionally and/or internationally important languages

If we are to imagine situations in which communicative management is done by selecting a lingua franca, ELF presents one of many options, above all in situations that are more

regional in the European context. The potential for the selection of languages other than English in this role has been transformed both by the EU's recent growth and by shifts in the teaching of foreign languages. Other languages that have functioned as lingua francas in recent history and continue to do so are German, French and Russian. At this point, it can be hypothesized that the potential for any of the above-named languages as lingua francas is very closely related to the cultural and economic power of the national states in which those languages are the first or second languages of the majority of the population. German is a strong case in point (see Darquennes and Nelde 2006; Ammon 2015; Dovalil 2015). German is the language with the greatest number of native speakers in the EU (TNS Opinion and Social 2012), as well as a second or foreign language by many Europeans. But though German served as a major lingua franca of science and scholarship for many years, in the last century, its position has declined. This is visible, for example, in its status as a work-ing language of the European institutions. As Darquennes and Nelde (2006: 68) and most recently Ammon (2015: 752–780) describe, the United Kingdom's joining of the European Community in 1973 led to a decrease in the use of the previously predominant working languages, French and German, effectively pushing German into "third place" and gradu-ally out of de facto working language status. As a result, it is not uncommon to encounter situations in which English is chosen as a lingua franca, but in which German would have served this purpose. This is particularly the case in Central Europe, where, following the Second World War, German was associated with the Nazi regime and later with post-Cold War economic domination, thus English is often chosen with the claim that it is the "neutral" option. This has happened despite Germany's strong position as a foreign language for many years, and the abundance of qualified teachers of German as opposed to qualified teachers of English (see Dovalil 2010).

The main potential for German as a lingua franca (GLF) is shifting, from a lingua franca used internationally to one used extensively within the borders of German-speaking coun-tries, which are often target countries for migration. For example, due to recent economic development in southern regions of Europe and despite the widespread markets for Spanish in the world, it is not uncommon to find Spanish speakers from Spain and other parts of the world working in Germany, in GLF. And with the strong economic position of Germany in the EU context and the rising costs of university study elsewhere, there is particularly increased potential for GLF in the German academic space as well as in the professional one. For example, in 2015, all of Germany's public universities were tuition-free, upon the condition that the studies take place in German. German's position as a language of business communication has also shifted, due for the most part to the internationalization of large companies that were originally German, such as automobile manufacturers. Previously, German may have been the lingua franca for people employed at company branches in Central Europe, whereas at present, this function is retained only regionally. In both academia and business, then, we can presume that GLF is used mostly in informal situations, such as when students and employees socialize in small groups.

French, like German, is used as a lingua franca inside of the countries where it is an official language (France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxemburg), including by numerous migrants. It supersedes German in that it is used more often in officially EU contexts. Wright (2006: 36–38) points to a number of reasons for the strong position of French as a lingua franca (FLF) prior to the twentieth century, including France's earlier military and economic power, the colonial legacy of French, Paris as a cultural center, and French as an important scientific and scholarly language and the most important language of world diplomacy prior to the Second World War. The two World Wars gradually weakened this

long-established position, followed by the gradual shift from French to English in interna-tional organizations beginning in 1973, when the UK joined the European Community, and countries joining the EU later (particularly after 2004) were not those that spoke French as a predominant second or foreign language, being more likely to have German or Russian (Wright 2006: 39–40). However, French continues to act in the European context as a lan-guage that has speakers of considerable enough power to keep certain genres of institutional communication from becoming entirely monolingual. For example, an EC Sixth Framework Programme project focused on multilingualism, *Language Dynamics and Management of Diversity* (DYLAN project 2006–2011), established both French and German as working languages and also submitted reports to the commission in French (for some examples, see www.dylan-project.org/). In new EU-member states such as the Czech Republic, French is often selected as a foreign language instead of German based on ideologies of "beautiful" and "ugly" language (cf. Nekvapil and Sherman 2013). Even so, German remains more commonly taught than French, and with the expansion of the EU eastward, the position of FLF is challenged by that of Russian, even though countries with Russian as an official (non-minority) language are not members.

Russian has traditionally served as a lingua franca following processes of russification in the Russian empire and the corresponding language policy in the nineteenth century (Pavlenko 2006), then having become a second language of citizens of the USSR, then the first foreign language learned by people living in the Soviet Bloc throughout the twentieth century. The potential for Russian as a lingua franca (RLF) thus still exists among a large number of speakers who were exposed to Russian as a foreign language in countries of the former Soviet Bloc. This is, very roughly speaking, anyone who was born prior to 1980. The use of RLF occurs in communities of migrants from the former USSR (e.g. Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, the Baltic states, Central Asia and the Caucasus region) living in other European countries, and it is not uncommon to observe locals in Central European countries "reviving" their school knowledge of Russian to communicate with these new migrants as well as with tourists (see Pavlenko 2012). Pavlenko (2006) poses the question of how long this potential will last. With Russian's comeback as a foreign lan-guage, often motivated by the chance to do business in it, it can be predicted that RLF will live on, albeit with a shift in or reduction of domains for its use. For example, it is a question whether RLF will continue to function in the academic sphere outside of Russian-speaking countries and fields of study focusing on the region and its languages.

For languages other than English, then, the potential of a language for use as a lingua franca often depends on the number of speakers who can easily learn it as a foreign lan-guage. It is not uncommon for speakers of Romance languages to pick up French quickly when studying or working in Brussels, Luxembourg or Strasbourg, or for speakers of one Slavic language to quickly acquire another, even as a "truncated repertoire" (Blommaert 2010), which is one step removed from practices of receptive multilingualism, which will be discussed below.

ELF as an alternative to receptive multilingualism with closely related languages

Another proposed adjustment to the problem of communication within Europe is the concept of receptive multilingualism (ten Thije and Zeevaert 2007), in which two or more participants in communication can use different languages, but the minimal necessary degree of mutual understanding takes place (see Haugen 1966 and the concept of "semicommunication").

This is also known as lingua receptive or LaRa and it has been actively presented and pro-moted as an alternative strategy to ELF in certain contexts, see e.g. ten Thije *et al.* 2012; Kristinsson and Hilmarsson-Dunn 2012; Rehbein et al, 2012). This occurs most typically between speakers of languages differing from one another in correspondence with Heinz Kloss's (1969) concept of Ausbau (varieties defined as separate languages due to elaboration) as opposed to Abstand (varieties defined as separate languages due to extensive structural differences). These models as a strategy, in contrast with ELF, are particularly applicable to Germanic languages, above all in Scandinavia, in which some countries may be moving from Kachru's expanding circle to the outer circle, as there are some societal domains that have shifted nearly entirely to the use of English to the detriment of the national languages. The situation has reached such a state that it has become necessary to demonstrate and describe situations in which receptive multilingualism is preferred to English in situations where (at least, from the outside) English might be expected (see Barfod in prep.). And more recently, particularly following the separation of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and the subsequent (re-)creation of national states with national languages that are the mother tongue of the majority of the population, these paradigms have received renewed attention in the Slavic world (see e.g. Sloboda and Brankačkec 2014). Among younger people, it is possible to observe the selection of English as a medium of communication between Czechs and Slovaks. For example, it even occurs occasionally, though still very rarely, that a Czech university student will prefer an English text to a Slovak one.

One experimental exploration of the potential for ELF communication vs. receptive mul-tilingual communication is Blees *et al.* (2014), who tested it on German and Dutch university students. Their participants found it easier to solve a puzzle task with the help of ELF than with the help of LaRa, even though they were using their L1 in the LaRa interactions. They were also more successful in communicating when they had a positive attitude toward the language they were using (either English or their L1), and when their passive proficiency in the language used by their interlocutor (either English or their interlocutor's L1) was higher. The main explanation for these results, then, was that even though the participants' native languages were closely related, they were all more proficient in English, which ultimately led to increased ability to speak to one another and handle the task. It is possible, then, to speculate that the ease and effectiveness of communication using ELF or LaRa, and thus their future potential, is largely dependent upon pre-existing contact between speakers of different languages, language ideologies, and above all, trends in language teaching in the individual countries in Europe.

ELF as an alternative to translation/interpretation

Selected spheres of communication opt for the use of language professionals, i.e. translators and interpreters. Among the most prominent of these are the European institutions, which, on the whole, employ many such professionals. Part of this use of language professionals stems from the rights afforded to the *de jure* official languages of the European Union, of which there were 24 in 2016. These rights concern both communication within institutions and communication between individual citizens and those institutions. For example, EU citizens may communicate with institutions in any official EU language. The EU has three de facto working languages – English (used most often), French, German, but German is not typically used in this function. Theoretically, the extent of the interpretation and translation work that occurs in EU institutions means that it is often being done when the use of ELF would suffice. There are significant economic considerations in the discussion surrounding

policies here. For example, the costs of working in English alone vs. translating and inter-preting have been compared, e.g. by Gazzola and Grin (2013), who conclude that the latter is more economically effective and evaluate it as fairer.

Translation and interpretation have also become the subject of debate regarding the ques-tion of dubbing of audiovisual media. A loose connection is often postulated between access to media in the original language and foreign language (predominantly English) knowledge of the general population. This occurs particularly in "dubbing countries", where move-ments such as a Czech Facebook group "Stop mandatory dubbing, let's replace it with the original subtitled version", presume that this change will lead, based on the Scandinavian model, to higher overall competence in English nationwide. In this connection, politicians such as German EU Commissioner Günther Oettinger and Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka have been colourfully mocked by internet users for their English skills, or lack of them, very often reflecting some of the local standard language ideologies discussed above.

Translation studies emphasize the teaching of standard language varieties, as these pro-vide them with an important source of cultural capital, and in fact, the building blocks upon which their profession is built (for more on this potential conflict, see e.g. Hewson 2009). There are, however, many contexts in which, despite the supply of trained translators and interpreters on the market, they are not used, often due to the lack of specialized competence. Instead, in-house employees are utilized, or participants simply to count on the fact that not everyone in a meeting will understand everything, then later summarizing for those who did not (cf. Angouri and Miglbauer 2014).

ELF and the increasing Asian presence in Europe

Older constellations of languages in the role of lingua francas have not only been influenced by European unification and expansion, but also by the increased presence of individuals and institutions from other parts of the world, most predominantly Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Due to the focus of this volume as a whole, in this section I will consider the question of contacts between Europe and Asia, in particular what is known as "the Far East", and countries within it that represent significant economic partners for Europe such as Japan, China and South Korea. In all three of these countries, there has been a recent push toward English, connected both to personal desire for lifestyle changes and to the market value attributed to the language (see Park 2009; Seargeant 2009; Park and Wee 2012).

There are three main manifestations of these contacts between continents. The first consists of the presence of Asian businesses of various sizes, ranging from Thai massage parlors to Vietnamese restaurants to multinational companies producing automobiles and electronics. This is, in part, complemented by the presence of European companies in Asia (see Fairbrother 2015). The second is connected to the increasing Asian student presence in Europe. Many universities have joined the wave of internationalization and used it as a selling point. With decreases in state funding for universities, this internationalization often consists of the increased recruitment of students from outside the European Union, among others as a way to gain additional tuition fees. The third is the ever-growing Asian tourist population in Europe (see e.g. Sloboda 2016 on the resulting increased linguistic repertoire of service personnel in the center of Prague to include Chinese).

This final reality faced by Europe is a good way to analyse the possibilities for the three language management strategies discussed in the sections above. I will use a newly emerging example: contact between speakers of Czech and speakers of Japanese, Korean or Chinese. First and foremost, contact between speakers of these languages is occurring for the first time

in recent history. Other than language specialists, there is not an extensive history of one group speaking the other's language. There is also no history of the extensive and predominant use of a lingua franca other than English between these groups. There are no "natural" opportunities for receptive multilingualism and speakers often have strong beliefs about the languages being "completely different" (see Nekvapil and Sherman 2013). Previous contacts were defined by the use of translators and interpreters. And indeed, translating and interpreting are used in two of the spheres of communication discussed above – in business as well as in tourism, via which Asian languages can be increasingly observed in the linguistic landscape of European cities – on signs for businesses and attractions (one notable example is the "Romantic Road" in Germany, the official signs for which are in German and Japanese), in train transportation announcements, on menus, and the like. In manufacturing companies, translators and interpreters may be employed in production, where employees hired from abroad by agencies may not speak any other language.

The differing nature of ELF communication in these contexts reminds us of an important consideration for the analysis of ELF communication overall, that is, the role of context. In tourist interactions, the communication is predominantly of a transactional character, with mutual intelligibility being of primary importance. Language is managed in these transactions above all in situations in which this mutual intelligibility is disrupted, for example, when idiomatically named food items on a menu are translated word-for-word into English, and thus cannot be understood by customers. Language is also managed merely on the level of noting and evaluation, when translations or other expressions are noted as funny or evaluated, based on local ideological assumptions, as "bad English". In the business interactions, linguistic form ranges in importance, but overall, is of less significance than in the higher education interactions, where students from Asia are typically expected to conform to European linguistic and genre norms. Rather, the business context is characterized by the management of socio-cultural issues. Problems arise in connection to differing cultural styles of communication, for instance, in the perception of hierarchical relations in a company unit or in the question of how much time employees should spend at work vs. with their families.

The management of communication in one such case is as follows (see Nekvapil and Sherman in prep.). Extensive ELF communication occurs because Korean company managers are constantly coming in and out of a large manufacturing plant, local employees get used to the way they speak (referring to it as "Kor-English", a local variant of what may be referred to elsewhere as "Konglish"), eventually learning to understand it. Communication is also enabled by the use of technology – mobile translation applications are often employed in cases of unknown vocabulary. On the shop floor, individual levels of English knowledge are typically not evaluated negatively, while in white-collar positions, the Koreans' English is evaluated as problematic by Czech employees, who themselves, have spent extensive time and energy on their English skills. However, it may not be possible to design and implement adjustments to the Korean employees' language due to their ownership of the company. All the while, there *is* a push at the headquarters to standardize the international employees' English, in line with the overall push toward English in some Asian countries mentioned above.

Concluding remarks

Very frequently, the strategies of choosing ELF, other languages in the role of lingua francas, practices oriented toward receptive multilingualism, or translation and interpretation are implemented in the same context, complementing one another (cf. Hülmbauer 2014, who

echoes the European Commission in stating that this is desirable). At the same time, it cannot be denied that there are cases in which the selection of one strategy can lead to a decrease in awareness that others are possible. The most apparent manifestation of this phenomenon can be found in the changes in speakers' understanding of the potential for receptive multilingualism, particularly in regard to closely related languages, in communication. In addition, it is apparent that individual strategies have certain advantages, particularly economic ones, for the actors involved at selected moments, and it is thus necessary to understand the conflict between them as a structural characteristic of human society as a whole. This is most apparent in the question of language-related professions, in which certain varieties are commodified (cf. Heller 2010). In countries of Kachru's expanding circle, which joined the EU in 2004 or after, this is very much the case, as can be observed in contexts such as advertising for translation agencies and language schools, and the structure and content of university language majors.

At this point, it is important to distinguish between acting as sociolinguists and acting as (language) teachers, policymakers or other types of language managers. As sociolinguists, we consider the fundamental fact that people will always 1) find multiple ways to communicate using whatever means possible and available; and 2) behave toward language in a way that corresponds to its multiple functions, even beyond basic communication. This means that all interests must be included in our interpretations (cf. Haberland 2011). Institutionally based language managers, then, need to be informed by sociolinguistic research, to the degree that it is possible to create compromises in light of multiple, often conflicting interests.

Related chapters in this handbook

2 Baker, ELF and intercultural communication

3 Ehrenreich, Communities of practice and English as a lingua franca

29 Cogo, ELF and multilingualism

44 Morán Panero, Global languages and lingua franca communication

Further reading

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