

DYLAN:  
Language Dynamics and the Management of Diversity  
Workpackage 2: EU Institutions

**Provisional Results  
Task 2.3  
(Deliverable D3)**

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## **1. Introduction**

The general aim of DYLAN's Research Task 2.3 is to "analyse documents in which European institutions describe multilingualism and possible actions on multilingualism". Accordingly, our Task focuses on how multilingualism-related language ideologies are produced within EU institutions and then communicated via diverse institutionally- and purpose-specific documents and texts. Task 2.3 also closely considers the ways in which what is communicated internally (within/between EU institutions) is further transmitted to the EU-external environment (of domestic spaces of EU-member states and beyond). Here, partner LANCS is eager to assess whether the recently-narrowing scope of multilingualism practised in the EU-institutions – displayed, inter alia, within the discrepancy between EU-working and EU-official languages studied in WP 2 as a whole (cf. below) – gradually penetrates into non-EU-institutional spaces of the member states (and, if so, in which way).

## **2. Type of observables in relation to methodology**

The operationalisation of research aims of Task 2.3 is undertaken by means of an 'outside-inside perspective' which looks holistically at both external and internal communication flows in/of the EU institutions:

- *The outside perspective* looks at how multilingualism in/of the EU institutions is perceived in the European Public Sphere, or, more specifically, how it has been debated in the national public spheres of EU member states. Research in this perspective resulted in extensive analysis of the coverage of EU-Enlargement of May 2004 in the European Media. Whereas the overall analysis has covered 495 press-articles on EU enlargement from four countries (Germany, France, Poland and the UK), the in-depth examination was undertaken on a downsized corpus of 98 articles dealing directly with languages and multilingualism in EU institutions (cf. Pilot Study - Working Paper 1).
- *The inside perspective*, on the other hand, looks at definitions of, as well as arguments in favour or against, multilingualism and related notions in the key EU-documents of the last decade. That analysis – spanning over the years 1997-2007 when multilingualism very strongly entered EU language policies – has so far covered 22 key EU-documents (366 pages in total) analysed from an in-depth, qualitative perspective (cf. Working Paper 2).

All analyses undertaken within both 'outside' and 'inside' perspective have been guided by the overall methodological framework of Task 2.3, i.e. the Discourse-Historical Approach in Critical Discourse Analysis. This framework has led both general research design of our studies (at the macro level) as well as their

analytical categories of the in-depth text-based analyses (at the micro level).

### **3. Key Research Findings**

#### **3.1 The 'Outside' Perspective**

Our research within *the 'outside' perspective* (pilot study on media analysis) points to the clear discrepancy which exists between, on the one hand, positive descriptions of languages/multilingualism as elements of the wider European (mainly cultural) space and, on the other hand, the rather negative perception of the increased multilingualism of/in the EU institutions (particularly after the 2004/07 EU Enlargement). Such '*Europe vs. EU discrepancy*' was reflected in the general picture of diverse language ideologies which were inscribed into several language-ideological debates. Within those language ideologies, the most salient one was that of the so-called *hegemonic multilingualism* (HM). Despite forging more than one language (but actually several languages, and therefore a form of multilingualism), that hybrid language ideology was very far from the actual multilingual stance that would allow for all languages of the EU member states to be fully represented in the EU institutions and their everyday functioning. On the contrary, while it was acknowledged within various displays of the HM that several languages of the broader EU should be given some symbolic status (i.e. as the Union's 'official languages'), it was persistently argued that only selected 'core' languages will (and should) remain the de-facto 'working languages' of the political organism of the EU institutions. At the level of discourse, HM was realised by diverse arguments such as those pertaining to the costs and inefficiency of the full multilingualism or to its imminent dangers ('Babel tower') which, unless coped with, will soon cause the EU-institutional system to come to halt or even collapse.

#### **3.2 The 'Inside' Perspective**

On the other hand, our recent research within *the 'inside' perspective* (extensive in-depth analysis of EU documents) points to the ways in which multilingualism and related notions (e.g. language learning and teaching, linguistic diversity, etc.) have become key tools in the implementation of the hegemonic project of the 2000 EU Lisbon Strategy (arguing in favour of creating a globally-competitive European Knowledge-Based Economy – or KBE - and placing language skills among KBE's main distinctive features). Our analysis reveals that it is only with the arrival of the Lisbon project that we encounter the immense acceleration within the EU-originating multilingualism- and language-related documents and activities. Topics pertaining to teaching and learning of languages (i.e. to the acquisition of language skills favoured by Lisbon), to multilingual character of the EU (incl. multilingual society and economy or the traditionally KBE-related issue of Lifelong Learning), or to the implementation of Lisbon itself, were among the most frequently debated issues. Likewise, our in-depth analysis of documents

also reveals that arguments pertaining to, inter alia, the 'contribution' of linguistic diversity and language learning to European KBE (or to the implementation of Lisbon as such) or to the role of diverse language skills and competences (hence traditional KBE-related arguments) were indeed salient and dominated the analysed discourse. The latter also displayed typical 'hybridity' of discourses on Knowledge-Based Economy and was characterised by, inter alia, duality between (a) value-laden arguments (in favour of Europe's multilingualism, democracy, social Europe, etc.) and (b) KBE-related arguments (on globalisation, competition, etc.). Importantly, as revealed by the structural and in-depth analyses of our corpus, the majority of EU-originating language policies (initiated under Lisbon) concern areas of EU member states while largely ignoring the growing multilingual problems within EU institutions as such (cf. 'EU-Europe discrepancy', above).

### **3.3 Summary: Hegemonic Multilingualism in/of the EU Institutions**

Summing up, our research within both 'outside' and 'inside' perspective points to the fundamental role of *hegemonic multilingualism* (HM). On the one hand, viewed from the outside perspective (by EU member states and their national public spheres), HM is a language ideology which describes (and sustains) inequality between different languages in EU-institutional settings. On the other hand, re-/produced inside the EU institutions, HM points to how multilingualism becomes a very prominent tool in a hegemonic project of the 2000 EU Lisbon Strategy on European Knowledge Based Economy (KBE) and Society. Salient within both 'outside' and 'inside' perspective, key features of HM include:

- (a) *Ideological Foundation* – HM is either an overt language ideology or a part of larger highly-ideological project;
- (b) *Duality* – HM is ideologically and discursively based on constructing dichotomies and binary oppositions (e.g. 'EU vs. Europe discrepancy' prevalent in both 'inside' and 'outside' perspective);
- (c) *Hybridity* – HM is constructed as a hybrid language ideology (neither mono- nor multilingualism) or is based on hybridity of discourses (on KBE, democracy, values, etc.);
- (d) *Flexibility* – HM is present in in different discourses and contexts (media vs. political/institutional discourses, inside vs. outside of EU institutions, etc.).

## **4. Conclusion**

In line with the general aim of the DYLAN project ('to demonstrate that linguistic diversity prevalent in Europe is potentially an asset rather than an obstacle') research in Task 2.3 provides a critical perspective on how language ideologies (representations) related to multilingualism are dealt with in EU language policies constructed in supranational contexts (EU institutions) and in their

communication with national milieus (national public spheres, EU member states). In so-doing, our task contributes to all of the DYLAN's key research dimensions (*representations, contexts and language policies*).

While, at the general level, our key findings related to *hegemonic multilingualism* (HM) point to the strongly ideological role played by multilingualism in the EU politics and policy-making in recent years, they also reveal an obvious mismatch between visions/conceptions of multilingualism within EU member states (outside) and within EU institutions (inside). Whereas the former perspective reveals a widespread perception of unequal multilingualism in the EU institutions and its obvious divergence from the growing linguistic and cultural diversity of a broader EU-ropean space, the inside perspective on HM in EU institutions emphasises the EU's will to make wider EU-rope multilingual while in fact retaining narrowed multilingualism within the Union's institutions.

Accordingly, our findings point to the ever-more obvious lack of coherent multilingualism policies in the European Union. Taking into consideration the very diverse perceptions, as well as practices, of multilingualism 'inside' and 'outside' EU institutions, such coherent policies should be created if multilingualism is to become a key element of (a) inclusive construction of social EU-rope (and not only of the EU-based Knowledge-Based Economy directed at EU-internal or – external competition) and (b) democratising Europe – showing inherent social and political links between the inside (EU institutions) and the outside (wider EU-rope).