

Gerhard Stickel

Introduction/Einführung/Introduzione

Signor Presidente dell'Accademia, rappresentanti della Commissione Europea, gentili ospiti, cari colleghi e colleghe,

Tredici anni fa, nel 2001, rappresentanti di prestigiose istituzioni linguistiche di dieci paesi europei convennero in questa sala dietro invito di Francesco Sabatini, allora presidente dell'Accademia della Crusca. Si trattava del secondo convegno preparatorio alla fondazione della *Federazione Europea delle Istituzioni Linguistiche Nazionali* (EFNIL). Sono molto lieto che oggi la EFNIL possa di nuovo riunirsi in questa bella sala. Furono frutto del convegno del 2001 le *Raccomandazioni di Mannheim-Firenze per la promozione delle lingue nazionali/ufficiali d'Europa*, che videro la luce nelle dieci lingue dei partecipanti. Nel documento si proclama la convinzione che “la ricchezza culturale dell'Europa, sulla quale si fonda l'identità europea, può essere salvaguardata solo mantenendo la diversità linguistica del continente e quindi curando lo sviluppo delle singole lingue e il loro adattamento ai bisogni di comunicazione del mondo moderno”. Nello stesso documento si raccomanda l'istituzione di un consiglio permanente per le istituzioni linguistiche nazionali. A questa raccomandazione ha dato seguito il convegno inaugurale di Stoccolma del 2003.

Desidero ringraziare per la cordiale accoglienza il presidente Marazzini. Per il loro contributo all'apertura del convegno ringrazio poi i rappresentanti della Commissione europea. Il direttore generale Benedetti è un amico di vecchia data della EFNIL, che ci ha dato il suo appoggio fin dai primi incontri. Le gentili e informative interviste del direttore Mairesse e la signora Contino trasmettono sostegno e incoraggiamento a continuare il nostro lavoro. Un sentito ringraziamento alla vicedirettrice dello *European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe* (ECML), la dottoressa Slivensky, per averci presentato la sua istituzione.¹

1 Thirteen years ago in 2001, representatives of important language institutions from ten European countries met in this hall as guests of Francesco Sabatini, then the president of the Accademia della Crusca. It was the second of the preparatory conferences that led to the foundation of the *European Federation of National Institutions for Language* (EFNIL). I am very glad that EFNIL can meet today again in this beautiful hall. Results of 2001 were among others the *Mannheim-Florence Recommendations for Promoting European Standard (or National) Languages* that were published in the ten languages of the participants. This document presents the conviction that “With the maintenance

(Se mi è consentito, passerei ora a parlare in una lingua che mi è un poco più familiare.)

At our founding conference in Stockholm 2003, we discussed already the use of languages in the field of tertiary education. In their presentations, the participating members singled out the domains of higher education and research as the realm with an increasing use of English beside or instead of the individual national languages. Then, most of the participants considered this development as a danger or disadvantage for their native languages. Only one of our colleagues² warned us of premature alarmism. Since then, the discussion concerning the linguistic media of instruction and research has not ended. The General Assembly of EFNIL, therefore, decided at last year's conference in Vilnius to propose "Language use in university teaching and research – past, present, future" as the general theme of this year's conference. This proposal was soon accepted by the hosting organisation, the Accademia della Crusca.

Concerning the past, we should remember that the present European standard languages were not always the media of science and higher learning. In the Middle Ages, the early forms of our languages existed mainly as bundles of vernacular varieties with very limited regional and social range. It took several centuries and demanded the efforts of many writers, scholars, and scientists to develop, expand, and standardize the various vernacular languages to a degree where everything that can be thought, asked, said, and written in science could be expressed. It must be remembered that until the 16th or 17th century, in some countries even until the 19th century, Latin was the dominant communicative medium of science and the humanities and also the medium and object of higher education. Traces of this

of linguistic diversity as well as the development and adjustment of languages to the requirements of the modern world, the cultural wealth of Europe as a basis for a European identity will be retained". This document also contains the recommendation that a permanent council should be formed by the central language institutions of the European states. This recommendation was met at the foundation conference of EFNIL in Stockholm in 2003. I thank President Marazzini for their kind welcome. I am also grateful to the representatives of the European Commission. Director General Bendetti is an old friend of EFNIL who has given us his support already at earlier occasions. I take the kind and informative words of director Mairesse and Ms Contino as encouragement for our work. I thank Dr. Slivensky, the deputy director of the *European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe* (ECML), for the attractive presentation of her institution.

- 2 See the trilingual paper of Johan Van Hoorde on the EFNIL website: <http://efnil.org/conferences/archives/stockholm-2003/speeches/van-hoorde-english>.

are the many Latinisms preserved not only in the daughter languages of Latin but also in the other European languages.

Allow me, please, to take my own *lingua materna*, my mother tongue German as a prototypical example for the change from Latin to a developing national language as a medium of scientific communication. And let me do this in German.

Gegen Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts schrieb Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, der große deutsche Universalgelehrte und Erfinder, meist lateinisch, manchmal französisch und nur selten deutsch. In einer seiner wenigen deutschen Schriften beklagt er das Ungenügen in der Entwicklung und im Gebrauch der deutschen Sprache. Er erklärt, dass die Wissenschaftler selbst am schlechten Zustand ihrer eigenen Sprache schuld seien. Die meisten von ihnen seien nicht am Gebrauch der deutschen Sprache interessiert, weil sie meinen – wie er es sagt, „daß die Weisheit nicht anders als in Latein und Griechisch sich kleiden lasse“ oder weil sie fürchten, dass die Welt sonst ihre mit großen Worten maskierte Unwissenheit entdecken werde.³ Ein weiterer negativer Aspekt sei – wie Leibniz feststellt – dass die meisten Gelehrten seiner Zeit nur für andere Gelehrte schrieben und so alle, die kein Latein gelernt hätten, von der Wissenschaft ausgeschlossen seien.⁴ Mehr als 300 Jahre später können auch wir dies sagen, wenn wir Latein durch Englisch ersetzen.

Leibniz betonte, dass der Sprachgebrauch in Wissenschaft und Erziehung eine größere Bedeutung für die allgemeine Entwicklung einer Sprache habe als Fortschritte in ihrem literarischen Gebrauch. Mit solchen Ermahnungen setzten Leibniz und mehrere andere Intellektuelle die Emanzipation und den Ausbau der deutschen Sprache seit der Zeit der Aufklärung in Gang, bis sie schließlich in allen Domänen der Wissenschaft in den deutschsprachigen Staaten und Regionen verwendet werden konnte. Dies wurde aber erst in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts erreicht. Dann konnte Immanuel Kant seine großen „Kritiken“ auf Deutsch schreiben, später Hegel seine „Phänomenologie“ und Marx sein „Kapital“, und noch später zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts auch Albert Einstein seine „Relativitätstheorie“. Im Verlauf des 19. Jahrhunderts gewann Deutsch als Sprache der

3 „[...] teils weil einige unter ihnen gemeint, daß die Weisheit nicht anders als in Latein und Griechisch sich kleiden lasse; oder auch weil manche gefürchtet, es würde der Welt ihre mit großen Worten verlarfte [maskierte] geheime Unwissenheit entdeckt werden.“ (Leibniz in Pörksen 1984, 62).

4 “[...] Denn die Gelehrten, indem sie fast nur Gelehrten [nur für Gelehrte] schreiben, sich oft zu sehr in unbrauchbaren Dingen aufhalten; bei der ganzen Nation ist aber geschehen, daß diejenigen, so kein Latein gelernt, von der Wissenschaft gleichsam ausgeschlossen worden [...]” (Leibniz in Pörksen 1984, 63).

Naturwissenschaften, der Medizin und Philosophie Bedeutung über die Grenzen der deutschsprachigen Länder und Regionen hinaus.

In ähnlicher Weise ließe sich die Entwicklung der anderen europäischen Standardsprachen skizzieren mit zeitlichen Unterschieden und den Namen anderer Protagonisten. Nicht für alle Sprachen entwickelte sich aber der Gebrauch in Lehre und Forschung gleichartig. Wissenschaftler mehrerer Sprachgemeinschaften in Europa mussten zeitweise andere Sprachen als ihre eigenen verwenden, um international wahrgenommen zu werden. Ungarische und finnische Gelehrte zum Beispiel schrieben oft deutsch bis zum Beginn des letzten Jahrhunderts, polnische Wissenschaftler oft französisch. Obwohl die europäische Welt der Wissenschaft und der Lehre vielsprachig wurde, war die internationale sprachliche Welt über längere Zeit nicht ganz so reich und bunt, wie wir sie uns heute manchmal vorstellen. (Now back to English.)

It is, however, important to be aware of the historical fact that the developing diversity of the various European languages did not hamper the progress in science and learning. In the late middle ages, the thinking and teaching of the European intellectual elite had come to a certain canonical dogmatism and sterility in its Latin monolingualism. With the emancipation of the various vernacular languages in combination with religious reformations and the spread of philosophical enlightenment, intellectual Europe woke up and increased its creativity: It became modern. The great literatures of the European peoples, renaissance in art, modern philosophy, and the many scientific and technical discoveries did not develop within one and the same language but in the variety of the developing European standard languages. As I mentioned already at our founding conference, it is absurd to imagine that Dante, Cervantes, Molière, Shakespeare, Goethe, Andersen, Mickiewicz, Donelaitis, and other outstanding poets and novelists could all have written in Latin. They and other writers, philosophers, scientists, and inventors wrote in those various languages that had become fully developed national idioms, that is, languages that can be used for all purposes in all communicative domains, including those of science.

Since last century, the linguistic situation has changed, as we all know. The development that Leibniz and others had advocated seems to be reversed, to move backwards. As far as my native language is concerned, everything in science can, perhaps, still be expressed in German with sufficient effort; however, a lot is not being said and written in German any longer. The use of Anglicisms as terms and working phrases in several sciences is only part of the development. It is more relevant that scientists in various fields have left their native tongues behind and immigrated into English, at least in their publications. The European multilingualism

of scientific communication that had overcome the Medieval Latin monolingualism is now being gradually substituted by the new monolingualism of scientific English. More than 25 years ago, the then president of the renowned Max-Planck-Society, Hubert Markl, already declared: "Top science speaks English".⁵

As far as the German language is concerned, there are obvious reasons for its decline as an international language of science.⁶ There were first of all the two world wars. Many people felt that during the so called Third Reich not only the Nazis but also the German language had become guilty. This is, of course, an anthropomorphism of language. Only people can be guilty, not a language. Although this gives some explanation for the decline of German as language of science, it does not explain the recent development of other European languages. The attractiveness of English, especially the American variety, is not limited to Germany and Austria, but it has also become prevalent in many other countries where no guilt or collective shame because of the Nazi crimes have to be dealt with. The outcome of the two world wars and the end of the cold war favoured the rise of the United States of America as the leading economic and military power and by this also supported the increasing importance of English as the international vehicular language in trade and commerce, politics, and science. I hesitate in this context to use the ubiquitous phrase *lingua franca*, because the historical *lingua franca* was never a medium of science and learning: It was just a primitive pidgin of sailors and traders along the coasts of the Mediterranean.

The increasing use of English as medium of instruction and research at the universities of our countries is, probably, also being promoted by the so called Bologna-process. It is remarkable that the name of the city with the oldest European university is being used for the process of standardization of the universities in Europe that apparently could also lead to their linguistic monotony.

However, at present, language use in the academic realm of our various countries is not that uniform. We would like to learn at this conference how the present linguistic situation really is. This conference should provide us with a more detailed picture of the present linguistic situation of tertiary education and university research within various European countries. We hope to also learn about language use in the past and to discuss the possible future development of language use in academia. We should use this occasion also to discuss the advantages

5 "Die Spitzenforschung spricht Englisch" (Hubert Markl in Kalverkämper/Weinrich 1986, 20–25).

6 This was carefully studied and described by Ulrich Ammon (1998).

and disadvantages of using an international vehicular language in science and the humanities.

We will not be able to gain a complete picture of the entire European scene. The two days of our conference are too short for a description and discussion of the situation in all 28 member states of the EU and additional European countries. At least, we will hear reports on ten different countries. Some basic data concerning language use at the universities of most European countries can be found on ELM, the European Language Monitor, results of which presented on our website. My EFNIL-colleague Sabine Kirchmeier-Andersen will give a presentation to all interested in the coffee break. We will now hear within the next sessions also general observations and reflections by several invited experts in the field of European language politics and policies. I thank them very much for their readiness to contribute to our conference. The concluding panel discussion will hopefully stimulate us to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the present linguistic situation and whether the future development could or should be influenced. Our joint work should now go on. Thus, let me conclude this introduction with repeated thanks to our hosts, to the previous president of the academy Nicoletta Maraschio, and especially to our colleague and friend Cecilia Robustelli. And, of course, I thank you all for your attention and patience.

Many thanks Vielen Dank Merci beaucoup Tante grazie

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