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Sociolinguistic perspectives on emerging multilingualism in urban Europe

GUUS EXTRA and KUTLAY YAGMUR

Abstract

In this article, sociolinguistic perspectives on the status and use of immigrant minority (henceforward IM) languages are presented. After a general introduction to the theme we focus on multilingualism and European identity, paying special attention to the European discourse on IM groups and integration. Next, we present information on the rationale, design, and core results of large scale home language surveys in six major multicultural cities across Europe. The data were collected and analyzed as part of the Multilingual Cities Project, carried out under the auspices of the European Cultural Foundation, established in Amsterdam. Against this background, we deal with the need for changing language regimes at school as a consequence of processes of migration and minorization across European nation states.

1. Introduction

As a consequence of socioeconomically and/or politically determined processes of migration and minorization, the traditional patterns of language variation across Western Europe have changed considerably over the last decades. Most nation states find it hard to deal with the significant demographic changes they are faced with. Nation state institutions not only want to retain their traditional structures, but also want to strengthen their connection with old practices, local identity, and attachments. Traditional norms and values are reintroduced so that newcomers adopt them. The latest public discourse on whether the “norms and values” of mainstream Dutch society should be accepted and obeyed by IM groups is a typical case symbolizing social cohesion and the identity concerns of the general public. Faced with deep transformations in society, policy makers struggle to find adequate solutions to ever pressing

problems. Politicians and media might opt for the easy way out by simply blaming “newcomers” as the cause of all social “problems”, but such unfounded simple actions lead to growing anti-immigrant feelings and antagonisms in mainstream society, which turn out to be a serious threat to social cohesion.

Migration is taking new forms as diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and language groups move between borders much more freely. It is particularly in the EU that people are moving across national borders. Not only indigenous populations but also immigrant populations seek employment beyond national borders within the EU, which leads to increasing transnationalism. As the immigrant-receiving societies become more and more diverse, nation states need to find adequate ways of dealing with this increasing diversity. Public and educational institutions are challenged by this. Most nation states in the EU are reluctant to consider themselves multicultural societies. In some EU countries, the explicit goal is the assimilation of newcomers. In France, for instance, if immigrants want to be full citizens, they need to assimilate into mainstream society. They are required to surrender their languages and cultures in order to become full citizens (Castles 2004; Archibald 2002). In Germany, on the other hand, *Aussiedler* (ethnic Germans from Eastern European and former Soviet Union countries) are treated as a privileged group on the basis of their blood bond, compared to other immigrants (Bühler-Ottens and Fürstenau 2004). The issues of democratic citizenship, the language rights of regional versus IM groups, and social cohesion versus linguistic diversity are unresolved issues facing immigrant receiving societies (see Extra and Yagmur 2004 for a detailed discussion). However, the gap between the democratic ideals of European nation states and the daily educational experiences of IM groups in schools continue to challenge nation state ideologies. Policy makers still persistently ignore the *bottom-up* push for pluralism. Present language regimes in European schools mostly ignore IM languages. As indicated by Coulmas (2004), “Schools are where language regimes and their social effects are most in evidence and where it is most obvious that a language regime bears on both structure and use. For it is here that the seemingly effortlessly and naturally acquired language is forged into a recognized form legitimated by custom or officially sanctioned norm.” The act of abolishing home language instruction in primary schools in some EU countries shows that some languages are not yet admissible in the classroom and in the schoolyard. On the basis of the demographic and sociolinguistic evidence derived from this study, we agree with Coulmas (2004) that proscribing the use of IM languages will gradually become more difficult because pluralist language regimes will gradually take over national language regimes.

Derived from Max Weber (cited in Laitin 2000), Laitin makes a distinction between a “rationalized” language regime and a “multilingual” regime. If a language is imposed as the only language for educational and administrative purposes, the state has a “rationalized” language regime. According to Laitin (2000: 151), states can achieve language rationalization by three different methods: (a) rationalization through the recognition of a *lingua franca* (such as Swahili in Tanzania or Bahasa in Indonesia), (b) rationalization through the recognition of the language of a majority group (French in France or Han Chinese in China), and (c) rationalization through the recognition of the language of a minority group (imposition of Amharic on Ethiopia or Afrikaans in South Africa). If states have not pursued any form of rationalization or were obliged by the social and political circumstances to recognize the language rights of minority populations, then these states are said to have multilingual regimes. There are different forms of multilingual regimes with varying numbers of languages. In India, for instance, one can talk of a 3 plus/minus 1 language regime. Different languages are used for different purposes in different domains: Hindi for state documents, English for higher civil services and big business, and the state language for state services and education. In addition, another language is used for communication in the domestic domain and within a particular group. There is also the 2 plus/minus 1 regime, in which in addition to the mainstream language another legalized language is used, e.g., Spanish (with Basque, Catalan) or Russian (with one or two official languages in federal republics plus a variety of minority languages). In some multilingual contexts, some minority group members have neither the regional language nor the mainstream language as their mother tongue. Such speakers are often trilingual. For instance, Turkish speakers in Friesland in the Netherlands may be trilingual in Dutch, Fries, and Turkish. Yet, Turkish has no status in the mainstream society. Most IM communities within EU countries share this *de facto* multilingual position.

2. Multilingualism and European identity

Major changes in the form and type of international mobility have led to the development of concepts such as a transnational citizenship and transnational multiple identities. Inhabitants of Europe no longer identify exclusively with nation states, but give increasing evidence of multiple affiliations. At the EU level, the notion of a European identity was formally expressed for the first time in the *Declaration on European Identity* of December 1973 in Copenhagen. Numerous institutions and documents have

propagated and promoted this idea ever since. The most concrete and tangible expressions of this idea to date have been the introduction of a European currency in 2002 and a European constitution in 2004. In discussing the concept of a European identity, Oakes (2001: 127–131) emphasizes that the recognition of the concept of multiple transnational identities is a prerequisite rather than an obstacle for the acceptance of a European identity. The recognition of multiple transnational identities not only occurs among the traditional inhabitants of European nation states but also among newcomers to Europe. Recent research carried out amongst the Turkish and Moroccan communities in Brussels led Phalet and Swyngedouw (2002: 14) to the following conclusions:

While Turks and Moroccans share with Belgians a social-contract type of citizenship in Belgium, they also adhere to a communal type of long-distance citizenship in Turkey and Morocco, which centres on a close linkage of national and religious attachments. We conclude that multiplicity is a key feature of minority perspectives on citizenship, which combine active participation in the national context of residence with enduring ethno-religious identification in the national context of origin.

Multiple transnational identities and affiliations will require new competences of European citizens in the twenty-first century. These include the ability to deal with increasing cultural diversity and heterogeneity (Van Londen and De Ruijter 1999). Multilingualism can be considered a core competence for such ability. In this context, processes of both convergence and divergence occur. In the European and global arena, English has increasingly assumed the role of *lingua franca* for international communication (Oakes 2001; House 2003). The rise of English has occurred at the cost of all other national languages of Europe, including French. At the same time, a growing number of newcomers to the national arenas of the EU member-states need competence in the languages of their source and target countries.

Europe has a rich diversity of languages. This fact is usually illustrated by reference to the national languages of the EU. However, the inhabitants of Europe speak many more languages. Examples of such languages are Welsh and Basque, or Arabic and Turkish. These languages are usually referred to as “minority languages”, even when in Europe as a whole there is no one-majority language because all languages are spoken by a numerical minority. The languages referred to are representatives of regional minority (henceforward RM) and IM languages, respectively. These “other” languages of Europe bring to mind the well known *Linguistic Minorities Project* of the mid 1980s: *The Other Languages of*

England. In that study, the following explanation was given of its title: “The other languages of England are all those languages apart from English that are ignored in public, official activities in England” (Linguistic Minorities Project 1985: xiv). Viewed from our perspective, the “other” languages of Europe are all those languages apart from the national languages that are largely ignored in the public and official activities of the EU (Extra and Gorter 2001).

RM and IM languages have much in common, much more than is usually thought. On their sociolinguistic, educational, and political agendas, we find issues such as their actual spread, their domestic and public vitality, the processes and determinants of language maintenance versus language shift towards majority languages, the relationship between language, ethnicity, and identity, and the status of minority languages in schools, in particular in the compulsory stages of primary and secondary education. The origin of most RM languages as *minority* languages lies in the nineteenth century, when, during the processes of state formation in Europe, they found themselves excluded from the state level, in particular from general education. RM languages did not become official languages of the nation states that were then established. Centralizing tendencies and the ideology of *one language — one state* have threatened the continued existence of RM languages. The greatest threat to RM languages, however, is lack of intergenerational transmission. When parents stop speaking the ancestral language with their children, it becomes almost impossible to reverse the ensuing language shift. Education can also be a major factor in the maintenance and promotion of a minority language. For most RM languages, some kind of educational provisions have been established in an attempt at reversing ongoing language shift. Only in the last few decades have some of these RM languages become relatively well protected in legal terms, as well as by affirmative educational policies and programs, both at the level of various nation states and at the level of the EU.

There have always been speakers of IM languages in Europe, but these languages have only recently emerged as community languages spoken on a wide scale in urban Europe, due to intensified processes of migration and minorization. Turkish and Arabic are good examples of so-called “non-European” languages that are spoken and learned by millions of inhabitants of the EU member states. Although IM languages are often conceived of and transmitted as core values by IM language groups, they are much less protected than RM languages by affirmative action and legal measures in, e.g., education. In fact, the learning and certainly the teaching of IM languages is often seen by speakers of dominant languages and by policy makers as obstacles to integration. At the European

level, guidelines and directives regarding IM languages are scant and outdated.

3. European discourse on immigrant minorities and integration

In the European public discourse on IM groups, two major characteristics emerge: IM groups are often referred to as *foreigners* (*étrangers*, *Ausländer*) and as being in need of *integration* (Extra and Verhoeven 1998). First of all, it is common practice to refer to IM groups in terms of *non-national* residents and to their languages in terms of *nonterritorial*, *nonregional*, *nonindigenous*, or *non-European* languages. The call for integration is in sharp contrast with the language of exclusion. This conceptual exclusion rather than inclusion in the European public discourse derives from a restrictive interpretation of the notions of citizenship and nationality. From a historical point of view, such notions are commonly shaped by a constitutional *ius sanguinis* (law of blood bonds), in terms of which citizenship is based on descent, in contrast to *ius soli* (law of the ground), in terms of which citizenship derives from the country of birth. When European emigrants left their continent in the past and colonized countries abroad, they legitimized their claim to citizenship by spelling out *ius soli* in the constitutions of these countries of settlement. Good examples of this strategy can be found in English-dominant immigration countries like the USA, Canada, Australia, and South Africa. In establishing the constitutions of these (sub-) continents, no consultation took place with native inhabitants, such as Indians, Inuit, Aborigines, and Zulus, respectively. At home, however, Europeans predominantly upheld *ius sanguinis* in their constitutions and/or perceptions of nationality and citizenship, in spite of the growing numbers of newcomers who strive for equal status as citizens.

Smith and Blanc (1995) discuss different conceptions and definitions of citizenship within a number of European nation states, in particular Great Britain, France, and Germany. They argue that, in the former two countries, citizenship is commonly defined on the basis of a mixture of territoriality and ethnicity, whereas in the latter country, citizenship is commonly defined directly on the basis of ethnicity. Nationality laws based strongly upon ethnicity are more restrictive of access to all dimensions of citizenship than those with a greater territorial element. Along similar lines, Janoski and Glennie (1995) discuss different types of responses from nation states to the issue of full citizenship for those who originate from abroad. Some nation states make extensive efforts to naturalize immigrants and offer them full citizenship, whereas other nation states are

reluctant to do so and even place obstacles in their way. Janoski and Glennie (1995: 21) argue that countries with a strong colonial past are much more inclined to offer naturalization than countries without such a tradition:

Weakened by emigration, a significant segment of society looks at immigrants as the final insult to national identity. Naturalization means the disappearance of their nation and *ethnie*. Both national identity and group interest create resistance to granting citizenship to foreign immigrants. If successful in restricting incoming foreigners, many citizens, especially in the lower classes, will replace emigrants and get better wages through less competition. This social mobility creates more solidarity. The remaining citizens reduce the demand for legal and political rights, and favor the development of social and participation rights. Driven to its extreme, the avoidance of immigration can even lead to the persecution and forced emigration of religious and ethnic minorities.

The non-colonizer scenario of reluctance or closure applies to a number of European nation-states. In contrast, traditional settler nations such as Canada, the USA, and Australia have developed an inclusive conception of citizenship rights, and have become more open to immigrants from different ethno-racial, religious, or language backgrounds. Solomos (1995) points to the fact that rapid processes of demographic transformation have provided a fertile soil for extreme right-wing parties and movements to target ethnoracial minorities as “enemies within” who are ultimately “outsiders” or “foreigners”. One should add that reference to “foreigners” is also often maintained in the European public discourse for those who have in fact acquired full citizenship of the nation state in which they live.

A second major characteristic of the European public discourse on IM groups is the focus on *integration*. This notion is both popular and vague, and it may actually refer to a whole spectrum of underlying concepts that vary over space and time. Miles and Thränhardt (1995), Bauböck et al. (1996), and Kruyt and Niessen (1997) are good examples of comparative case studies on the notion of integration in a variety of European (Union) countries that have been faced with increasing immigration since the early 1970s. The extremes of the conceptual spectrum range from assimilation to multiculturalism. The concept of assimilation is based on the premise that cultural differences between IM groups and the established majority groups should and will disappear over time in a society which is proclaimed to be culturally homogeneous. On the other side of the spectrum, the concept of multiculturalism is based on the premise that such differences are an asset to a pluralist society, which actually promotes cultural diversity in terms of new resources and opportunities. While the concept

of assimilation focuses on unilateral tasks of *newcomers*, the concept of multiculturalism focuses on multilateral tasks for all inhabitants in changing societies. In practice, established majority groups often make strong demands on IM groups to assimilate and are commonly very reluctant to promote or even accept the notion of cultural diversity as a determining characteristic of an increasingly multicultural environment.

It is interesting to compare the underlying assumptions of “integration” in the European public discourse on IM groups at the national level with assumptions at the level of crossnational cooperation and legislation. In the latter context, European politicians are eager to stress the importance of a proper balance between the loss and the maintenance of “national” norms and values. A prime concern in the public debate on such norms and values is cultural and linguistic diversity, mainly in terms of the national languages of the EU. National languages are often referred to as core values of cultural identity. Paradoxically, in the same public discourse, IM languages and cultures are commonly conceived of as sources of problems and deficits and as obstacles to integration, while national languages and cultures in an expanding EU are regarded as sources of enrichment and as prerequisites for integration.

The public discourse on the integration of IM groups in terms of assimilation versus multiculturalism can also be noticed in the domain of education. Due to a growing influx of IM pupils, schools are faced with the challenge of adapting their curricula to this trend. The pattern of modification may be inspired by a strong and unilateral emphasis on learning (in) the language of the majority of society, given the significance of this language for success in school and on the labor market, or by the awareness that the response to emerging multicultural school populations cannot be reduced to monolingual education programming (Gogolin 1994). In the former case, the focus is on learning (in) the national language as a second language only, in the latter case, on offering more languages in the school curriculum.

4. The need for empirical data on multilingualism

Given the overwhelming focus on mainstream language acquisition by IM groups, there is much less evidence of the status and use of IM languages across Europe. In contrast to RM languages, IM languages have no established status in terms of period and area of residence. Obviously, typological differences between IM languages across EU member states do exist, e.g., in terms of the status of IM languages as EU languages or non-EU languages, or as languages of formerly colonized source

countries. Taken from the latter perspective, Indian languages are prominent in the United Kingdom, Arabic languages in France, Congolese languages in Belgium, and Surinamese languages in the Netherlands. Most studies of IM languages in Europe have focused on a spectrum of IM languages at the level of one particular multilingual city (Baker and Eversley 2000), one particular nation state (Linguistic Minorities Project 1985; Alladina and Edwards 1991; Extra and Verhoeven 1993a; Extra et al. 2002) or on one particular IM language at the national or European level (Tilmatine [1997] and Obdeijn and De Ruiter [1998] on Arabic in Europe; or Jørgensen [2003] on Turkish in Europe).

Few studies have taken both a crossnational and a crosslinguistic perspective on the status and use of IM languages in Europe (Jaspaert and Kroon 1991; Extra and Verhoeven 1993b, 1998). In sections 5–8, we present the rationale, methodology, and some outcomes of the *Multilingual Cities Project* (henceforth MCP), carried out as a multiple case study in six major multicultural cities in different EU member states. The aims of the MCP were to gather, analyze, and compare multiple data on the status of IM languages at home and at school. In the participating cities, ranging from Northern to Southern Europe, Germanic and/or Romance languages have a dominant status in public life. These cities are Göteborg, Hamburg, The Hague, Brussels, Lyon, and Madrid. The criteria for selecting a city to participate in this multinational study were primarily that it should be a major urban centre and have a great variety of IM groups, as well as a university based research facility that would be able to handle the local data gathering, the secondary analysis, and the final reporting of the local results. Given the increasing role of municipalities as educational authorities in all partner cities, the project was carried out in close cooperation between researchers at local universities and local educational authorities.

Given the decreasing significance of nationality and birth country criteria in the European context, the combined criterion of self-categorization and home language use is a potentially promising longterm alternative for obtaining basic information on the multicultural composition of European cities. The added value of home language statistics is that they can offer valuable insights into the distribution and vitality of home languages across cultures, and can thus raise the awareness of multilingualism. Empirically collected data on home language use can also play a crucial role in the context of education. Such data will not only raise the awareness of multilingualism in multicultural schools; they are in fact indispensable tools for educational policies on the teaching of both the national majority language as a first or second language and the teaching of IM languages. In sum, the rationale for collecting, analyzing and comparing

multiple home language data on multicultural school populations derives from three different perspectives:

- Viewed from a *demographic* perspective, home language data play a crucial role in the definition and identification of multicultural school populations;
- Viewed from a *sociolinguistic* perspective, home language data offer insights into both the distribution and vitality of home languages across cultures, and can thus raise the public awareness of multilingualism;
- Viewed from an *educational* perspective, home language data are indispensable tools for educational planning and policies.

5. Design of the survey instrument

The questionnaire for data collection was designed after ample study and evaluation of language related questions in nationwide or large-scale population research in a variety of countries with a history of migration and minorization processes (see Extra and Yagmur 2004). Table 1 gives an outline of the questionnaire. As far as the design of the questionnaire is concerned, a number of conditions need to be met. In the first place, the questionnaires were intended for young pupils, which is why the format and language need to be suitable for such pupils. (Very young children filled out questionnaires either with trained adults or with their class-teacher). Children who speak a language other than or in addition to the mainstream languages in their homes were asked to answer additional questions. As mentioned earlier, in developing these questions, extensive research had been conducted into previous home language surveys in multicultural contexts.

Table 1. *Outline of the MCP questionnaire*

Questions	Focus
1–3	Personal information (name, age, gender)
4–8	School information (city, district, name, type, grade)
9–11	Birth country of the pupil, father and mother
12	Selective screening question (Are any other languages than X ever used in your home? If yes, complete all the questions; if no, continue with questions 18–20)
13–17	Language repertoire, language proficiency, language choice, language dominance, and language preference
18–20	Languages learnt at/outside school and required at school

The first eight questions provide background information about the informant and the school. In accordance with the privacy legislation in most of the European cities, the *name* variable was either not included or not processed. The answers to questions 9–12 make it possible to compare the status of birth country data and home language data as demographic criteria. The countries and languages explicitly mentioned in questions 9–12 were determined on the basis of the most recent municipal statistics about IM children at primary schools; thus, the list of languages for, e.g., Hamburg was quite different from the one used in Madrid. The language profile specified by questions 13–17, consists of the following five dimensions:

- Language repertoire: the number and type of (co-) occurring home languages;
- Language proficiency: the extent to which the pupil can understand/speak/read and write the home language;
- Language choice: the extent to which the home language is commonly spoken with the mother, the father, younger and older brothers/sisters;
- Language dominance: the extent to which the home language is spoken best;
- Language preference: the extent to which the home language is preferred.

Taken together, the four dimensions of language proficiency, choice, dominance and preference result in a language vitality index. On the basis of questions 18–20, a school language profile can be produced. This profile provides information about the language education in and outside school, as well as the need for instruction in a given language. The questionnaire had been tested on many occasions in the Netherlands (Extra et al. 2002). The Dutch questionnaire was translated into French, German, Spanish, and Swedish. As a result of the piloting and suggestions from local educational authorities and researchers, the phrasing and wording of the questionnaire were further adapted.

The final questionnaires were printed in multiple copies. Due to automatic processing it was essential that printed rather than photocopied questionnaires were used. Uniformity both in terms of content and form was highly important for the data processing. Local educational authorities sent out letters of permission to schools and/or parents so that their children could participate in the survey. In each city, the printed questionnaires were distributed to school headmasters. Each school received a sufficient number of questionnaires. In some cities, school headmasters asked the cooperation of classroom teachers to complete the questionnaires together with their pupils. In some other cities, for instance in Hamburg

Table 2. *Overview of the MCP database*

City	Total of schools	Total of schools in the survey	Total of pupils in schools	Total of pupils in the survey	Age range of pupils
Brussels	117 ^a	110 ^a	11,500	10,300	6–12
Hamburg	231 public 17 catholic	218 public 14 catholic	54,900	46,000	6–10
Lyon	173 ^b	42 ^b	60,000	11,650	6–11
Madrid	708 public 411 catholic	133 public 21 catholic	202,000 99,000	30,000	5–12
The Hague	142 primary 30 secondary	109 primary 26 secondary	41,170 19,000	27,900 13,700	4–12 12–17
Göteborg	170	122	36,100	21,300	6–12

^a Dutch-medium schools only^b *Réseau d'Education Prioritaire* only

and Brussels, students at teacher training departments took part in the data collection. Both for classroom teachers and for data collection assistants a manual in the local language was prepared to facilitate interaction with the pupils. In some cases, e.g., in Brussels, a one-day workshop was held to train student assistants.

The completed questionnaires were sent back first to local universities. Data processing was centrally done in Tilburg by “Babylon” researchers. Given the large amount of the database, an automatic processing technique based on specially developed software and available hardware was developed and utilized. By means of the automatic processing technique about 5000 forms per day were scanned. Because some fields were filled-out in handwriting, manual verification of some questionnaire items had to be done by means of character recognition software, which reduced the number of processed questionnaires per day to about 4000. After scanning and verification had been completed, the database for each city was analyzed by using the SPSS program. Table 2 gives an overview of the resulting database, derived from the reports of primary school children in an age range of 4–12 years (only the data of The Hague include secondary schools). The total crossnational sample consists of more than 160,000 pupils.

6. Some findings of the Multilingual Cities Project

The local language surveys amongst primary school children have delivered a wealth of hidden evidence on the distribution and vitality of IM

languages at home. Apart from Madrid, latecomer amongst our focal cities in respect of immigration, the proportion of primary school children in whose homes other languages were used next to or instead of the mainstream language ranged between one third and more than a half. The total number of other languages per city ranged between 50 and 90. The figures were 36% of the total student population in Göteborg (75 different home languages), 35% (89 languages) in Hamburg, 49% (88 languages) in The Hague, 82% (54 languages) in Brussels, 54% (66 languages) in Lyon, and 10% (56 languages) in Madrid. The common pattern was that the children referred to few languages often and that many languages were referred to only a few times.

The outcomes of the local surveys were aggregated in one crossnational database. On the basis of the number of references made to home languages, the top 20 of the most frequently mentioned languages in each city were identified. Forty-nine languages were in the group of the top 20 list in the six cities. Out of these 49 languages, 19 languages were represented in 3–6 cities and 30 languages in only 1–2 cities. Unique references in the top 20 per city were made to the following languages:

- Göteborg: Danish, Finnish, Macedonian, Norwegian, Tigrigna/“Eritrean”;
- Hamburg: Dari/Pashtu/“Afghan”, Romani/Sinte;
- The Hague: Hind(ustan)i, Javanese, Moluccan/Malay, Papiamentu, Sranan Tongo;
- Brussels: Lingala, Swahili;
- Lyon: Comorian, Khmer/Cambodian, Lao, Wolof/“Singhalese”;
- Madrid: Bubi, Bulgarian, Catalan, Dutch, Galician, Guyanese, Roumanian, Tagalog/Filipino.

Most of these languages are either languages of neighboring countries, languages of former colonies, or RM languages. For purposes of crossnational analysis, 20 of the most frequently mentioned languages in these cities were chosen. Two criteria were used to select these 20 languages from the list of 49 languages: each language should be represented by at least three cities and there should be at least 30 pupils in each language group in the age range of 6–11 years. Based on these criteria, the top 20 languages were included in the crossnational analyses. As shown in Table 3, eight languages were represented in 5–6 cities, while eleven languages were represented in 3–4 cities. Even though Romani/Sinte was represented only in two cities, it was included in the final list of the top 20 languages because of its nonterritorial status. For each language group, language profiles were made for language proficiency, choice, dominance,

Table 3. *Overview of the numbers of pupils (6–11 years) per reported language and city*

Reported languages	Gö	Ha	tH	Br	Ly	Ma	Coverage
English	1,039	1,077	950	676	426	359	6
Arabic	768	464	1,391	1,608	2,789	662	6
Portuguese	88	360	88	77	259	202	6
Italian	51	192	92	361	255	43	6
Turkish	385	4,948	2,535	606	468	1	5
Spanish	328	431	288	389	353	—	5
German	148	—	156	119	91	45	5
French	118	17	185	7,327	—	157	5
Chinese	184	7	180	22	37	160	4
Kurdish	468	197	273	11	36	4	4
Albanian	186	410	5	107	62	3	4
Polish	163	1,729	16	33	3	100	4
Russian	70	1,652	14	32	11	37	4
Berber	4	—	1,334	214	145	37	4
Serb./Croat./Bosn.	795	460	46	29	26	6	3
Vietnamese	55	153	14	14	91	—	3
Somali	315	—	135	—	49	—	3
Urdu/“Pakistani”	27	238	294	32	1	3	3
Armenian	8	82	5	47	41	1	3
Romani/Sinte	51	219	6	8	3	1	2

and preference. Due to space limitations, it is not possible to present any data on language profiles here (for details see Extra and Yağmur 2004). Derived from the home language profiles of these 20 language groups, a crosslinguistic and pseudolongitudinal comparison has been made of the four dimensions of language proficiency, language choice, language dominance, and language preference. For this analysis, these four dimensions have been operationalized as follows:

- Language proficiency: the extent to which the home language is *understood*;
- Language choice: the extent to which the language is spoken at home *with the mother*;
- Language dominance: the extent to which the home language is spoken *best*;
- Language preference: the extent to which the home language is *preferred* to be spoken.

The operationalization of the first and second dimension (language proficiency and language choice, respectively) was aimed at a maximal scope. The final aim was the construction of a language vitality index (LVI). Since Giles et al. (1977) introduced the concept of ethno-linguistic vitality, the focus has been on its determinants rather than on

Table 4. *Proficiency in language understanding, per language group and age group (in %)*

Language group	6–7 years	8–9 years	10–11 years	Average
Turkish	97	96	97	97
Urdu/“Pakistani”	96	96	94	95
Romani/Sinte	99	93	94	95
Polish	94	94	97	95
Russian	95	94	95	95
French	95	93	94	94
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	93	91	92	92
Berber	91	91	93	92
Albanian	95	87	89	90
Vietnamese	91	90	89	90
Chinese	91	85	93	90
Somali	92	85	88	88
Kurdish	90	89	84	88
Armenian	91	87	85	88
Arabic	87	88	88	88
Portuguese	89	87	86	87
Spanish	84	82	81	82
Italian	80	75	73	76
English	72	64	75	70
German	72	62	67	67

its operationalization. In our case, the operationalization of ethnolinguistic vitality was derived from the language profiles. In Table 4, the four above-mentioned language dimensions are compared as proportional scores, i.e., the mean proportion of pupils per language groups that indicated a positive response to the questions under consideration. The (decreasing) LVI in the final column of Table 4 is, in its turn, the mean value of these four proportional scores. This LVI is by definition an arbitrary index, in the sense that the *chosen* dimensions with the *chosen* operationalizations are *equally* weighted. For each language group, language vitality indices for three age groups and three generations are distinguished. The age groups consist of pupils aged 6–7, 8–9, and 10–11 years old. The three generations are operationalized as follows:

- G1: pupil + father + mother born abroad;
- G2: pupil born in country of residence, father and/or mother born abroad;
- G3: pupil + father + mother born in country of residence.

On the basis of this categorization, intergenerational shift can be estimated. Due to space limitations, only three tables on language proficiency and language vitality per age group, and on intergenerational language vitality are presented here. In Table 4, we present a crosslinguistic

and pseudolongitudinal overview of the first language dimension, i.e., the extent to which children reported that they could understand the language under consideration. The data presented are proportional scores.

On average, all languages were understood well to very well, with Turkish in the top position, and English and German in the lowest positions. The latter two languages were less used in daily interaction at home, but they had a relatively high international status and/or school status. When the average scores of the youngest and oldest age groups were compared, 13 language groups showed the highest scores for the former and 5 language groups for the latter.

7. Crosslinguistic perspectives on language vitality

In this section, we present a cumulative language vitality index (LVI) for all 20 language groups on the basis of the four language dimensions described earlier, i.e., the obtained proportional scores for language proficiency (understanding), language choice (with mother), language dominance, and language preference. The LVI was based on the mean value of the obtained scores for each of the four language dimensions (see Extra and Yagmur 2004 for further details). Table 5 gives a crosslinguistic and

Table 5. *Language vitality per language group and age group (in %, LVI in cumulative %)*

Language group	6–7 years	8–9 years	10–11 years	Average
Romani/Sinte	76	71	64	70
Turkish	70	67	67	68
Urdu/“Pakistani”	65	70	69	68
Armenian	64	59	65	63
Russian	66	58	57	60
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	60	58	59	59
Albanian	63	56	58	59
Vietnamese	57	60	58	58
Chinese	56	58	60	58
Arabic	59	58	58	58
Polish	57	59	53	56
Somali	58	54	53	55
Portuguese	54	54	54	54
Berber	51	54	51	52
Kurdish	54	47	51	51
Spanish	47	49	47	48
French	47	40	44	44
Italian	39	40	39	39
English	37	33	39	36
German	35	31	32	33

pseudolongitudinal overview of the LVI per language group and age group.

Considering its nonterritorial status, it is not surprising that Romani/Sinte had the highest language vitality. English and German ended up in bottom positions given the fact that they often had a higher status at school than at home. When the average scores of the youngest and oldest age groups were compared, 11 language groups showed the highest scores for the former and 5 language groups for the latter. The largest interval between the scores emerged for Romani/Sinte. Strong maintenance of language vitality across the youngest and oldest age groups, with intervals of $-1/0/+1$ only, emerged for 8 out of the 20 language groups. A different crosslinguistic and pseudolongitudinal perspective is provided in Table 6, in terms of generations.

Table 6 reveals significant differences between language groups in the distribution of pupils across different generations. In most language groups, second-generation pupils were most-represented and third-generation pupils least. Remarkable exceptions to this rule were

Table 6. *Intergenerational distribution (in %) and intergenerational language vitality (LVI in cumulative %) per language group*

Language group	Total pupils	Intergenerational distribution			Intergenerational language vitality		
		G1	G2	G3	G1	G2	G3
Albanian	675	39	56	5	72	51	34
Arabic	7,002	21	73	6	64	57	35
Armenian	153	49	42	9	69	55	—
Berber	1,656	20	78	2	59	50	45
Chinese	523	22	74	4	72	59	—
English	4,045	16	42	41	43	41	28
French	7,090	7	45	48	55	43	30
German	506	18	45	38	43	35	22
Italian	916	12	60	28	49	43	29
Kurdish	900	50	49	2	61	43	33
Polish	1,837	14	82	4	73	59	31
Portuguese	1,004	27	66	8	63	52	33
Romani/Sinte	231	35	41	23	76	66	65
Russian	1,616	81	16	3	64	—	—
Serbian/Croat./Bosn.	1,191	38	58	4	71	50	—
Somali	464	38	58	5	70	50	—
Spanish	1,570	18	61	21	63	47	30
Turkish	8,248	17	79	4	71	68	58
Urdu/“Pakistani”	534	25	72	3	70	67	—
Vietnamese	270	12	85	3	60	57	—

Armenian and in particular Russian, with mainly first-generation pupils. Third-generation pupils were relatively well represented (>20%) for English, French, German, Italian, Romani/Sinte, and Spanish. As expected, Table 6 shows a stronger decrease of language vitality across generations than Table 5 shows across age groups. All language groups showed more or less decreasing language vitality across generations. The strongest intergenerational shift between G1 and G3 emerged for Polish (42%), Albanian (38%), Spanish (33%), and Portuguese (30%), whereas the strongest intergenerational maintenance of language vitality occurred for Romani/Sinte and Turkish.

The top position for language vitality of Romani/Sinte across age groups in Table 5, and its relatively strong maintenance across generations in Table 6, were also observed in earlier and similar research in the Netherlands (Broeder and Extra 1998: 70). The high vitality of Romani/Sinte was also confirmed by other studies on this language community (Acton and Mundy 1999; Kyuchukov 2002). One reason why language vitality is a core value for the Roma across Europe is the absence of source country references as alternative markers of identity — in contrast to almost all other language groups presented in Tables 5 and 6.

8. The Multilingual Cities Project in retrospect

The findings show that using more than one language is a way of life for an increasing number of children across Europe. The data make it clear that mainstream and nonmainstream languages do not compete with each other. Rather, the data show that these languages are used alternatively, depending on such factors as type of context and interlocutor. The data also reveal that the use of other languages at home does not occur at the cost of competence in the mainstream language. Many children who address their parents in another language are self-declared dominant in the mainstream language.

Among the major 20 languages in the participating cities presented in the above tables, 10 languages are European and 10 are extra European. These findings clearly show that the traditional concept of language diversity in Europe should be reconsidered and extended. The outcome of the local language surveys also demonstrates the high status of English among primary school pupils across Europe. Its intrusion in the children's homes is apparent from the position of English in the top 5 of the non-national languages referred to by the children in all of the cities. This outcome cannot be explained as an effect of migration and minorization only. The children's reference to English also derives from the status of

English as the international language of power and prestige. English has become the dominant *lingua franca* for intercultural communication across Europe, and has invaded the terminology of all of the national languages under consideration. Children have access to English through a variety of media. Moreover, English is commonly taught in particular grades at primary schools. In addition, children in all participating cities expressed a desire to learn a variety of languages that are not taught at school. The results of the local language surveys also show that children who took part in instruction in particular languages at school reported higher levels of literacy in these languages than children who did not take part in such instruction. Both the reported reading proficiency and the reported writing proficiency profited strongly from language instruction. The differences between participants and nonparticipants in language instruction were significant for both forms of literacy skills and for all the 20 language groups. In this domain in particular, the added value of language instruction for language maintenance and development is clear.

Owing to the monolingual *habitus* of primary schooling across Europe, there is an increasing mismatch between language practices at home and at school. The findings on multilingualism at home and those on language needs and language instruction reported by the children should be taken into account by both national and local educational authorities in all types of language policy.

9. Dealing with multilingualism at school

In Europe, language policy has largely been considered a domain which should be developed within the national boundaries of EU nation states. Proposals for an overarching EU language policy were laboriously achieved and are noncommittal in character (Coulmas 1991). The most important declarations, recommendations, or directives on language policy, each of which carries a different charge in the EU jargon, concern the recognition of the status of (in the order mentioned):

- National EU languages;
- “Indigenous” or regional minority (RM) languages;
- “Nonterritorial” or immigrant minority (IM) languages.

On numerous occasions, the EU ministers of education have declared that the EU citizens’ knowledge of languages should be promoted (Baetens Beardsmore 1993). Each EU member-state should promote pupils’ proficiency in at least two “foreign” languages, and at least one of these languages should be the official language of an EU state. Promoting

knowledge of RM and/or IM languages was left out of consideration in these ministerial statements. The European Parliament, however, accepted various resolutions which recommended the protection and promotion of RM languages and which led to the foundation in 1982 of the *European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages*. Another result of the European Parliament resolutions was the foundation of the European MERCATOR Network, aimed at promoting research into the status and use of RM languages. In March 1998, the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* came into effect. The Charter is aimed at the protection and promotion of RM languages, and it functions as an international instrument for the comparison of legal measures and other facilities of the EU member states in this policy domain.

As yet, no such initiatives have been taken in the policy domain of IM languages. It is remarkable that the teaching of RM languages is generally advocated for reasons of cultural diversity as a matter of course, whereas this is rarely a major argument in favor of teaching IM languages. The 1977 guideline of the Council of European Communities on education for IM children (*Directive 77/486 1977*) is now outdated. It needs to be put in a new and increasingly multicultural context; it needs to be extended to pupils originating from non-EU countries; and it needs to be given greater binding force in the EU member states.

There is a great need for educational policies in Europe that take the new realities of multilingualism into account. Processes of internationalization and globalization have brought European nation states to the world, but they have also brought the world to European nation states. This bipolar pattern of change has led to both convergence and divergence of multilingualism across Europe. On the one hand, English is on the rise as the *lingua franca* for international communication across the borders of European nation states at the cost of all the other national languages of Europe, including French. In spite of many objections against the hegemony of English (Phillipson 2003), this process of convergence will be enhanced by the extension of the EU to Eastern Europe. Within the borders of European nation states, however, there is an increasing divergence of home languages due to large-scale processes of migration and intergenerational minorization.

The call for differentiation of the monolingual *habitus* of primary schools across Europe originates not only *bottom up* from IM parents or organizations, but also *top down* from supranational institutions which emphasize the increasing need for European citizens with a transnational and multicultural affinity and identity. Multilingual competencies are considered prerequisites for such an affinity and identity. Both the European Commission and the Council of Europe have published many policy documents

cherishing linguistic diversity as a key element of European identity — now and in future. Language diversity is considered to be a prerequisite rather than an obstacle for a united Europe in which all citizens are equal (not the same) and enjoy equal rights (Council of Europe 2000). The maintenance of language diversity and the promotion of language learning and multilingualism are seen as essential elements for the improvement of communication and for the reduction of intercultural misunderstanding.

The European Commission (1995) opted in a so-called *Whitebook* for trilingualism as a policy goal for all European citizens. Apart from the “mother tongue”, each citizen should learn at least two “community languages”. In fact, the concept of “mother tongue” refers to national languages, ignoring the fact that for many Europeans mother tongue and national language do not coincide. At the same time, the concept of “community languages” refers to the national languages of two other EU member-states. In later European Commission documents, reference is made to one foreign language with high international prestige (English was deliberately not referred to) and one so-called “neighboring language”. The latter concept related always to neighboring countries, never to next-door neighbors.

In cooperation with the Council of Europe and with the support of UNESCO, the European Commission (2001a) declared 2001 the “European Year of Languages,” stating three aims:

- To increase awareness of Europe’s linguistic heritage and openness to different languages and cultures as a source of mutual enrichment to be protected and promoted in European societies;
- To motivate European citizens to develop plurilingualism, that is, to achieve a degree of communicative ability in a number of languages, including those less widely used and taught, for improved mutual understanding, closer co-operation, and active participation in European democratic processes;
- To encourage and support lifelong language learning for personal development and so that all European citizens can acquire the language competences necessary to respond to economic, social, and cultural changes in society.

The Council of Europe developed projects for the European Year of Languages that covered 47 states and engaged with UNESCO in order to spread involvement to as wide a range of countries as possible. The EU formally agreed to support the European Year of Languages in July 2000. The European Commission (2001b) set a number of objectives that were similar to, if somewhat more detailed than those of the Council of Europe. These were:

- To raise awareness of the richness of linguistic and cultural diversity within the EU and the value in terms of civilization and culture embodied therein, acknowledging the principle that all languages must be recognized to have equal cultural value and dignity;
- To encourage multiculturalism.

In a follow-up to the European Year of Languages, the heads of state and government of all EU member states gathered in March 2002 in Barcelona and called upon the European Commission to take further action to promote multilingualism across Europe, in particular by the learning and teaching of at least two foreign languages from a very young age (Nikolov and Curtain 2000). On 14 February 2002, the Education Council invited member states to take concrete steps to promote linguistic diversity and language learning, and invited the European Commission to draw up proposals in these fields. In preparing an action plan, the European Commission undertook public consultations involving other European institutions, relevant national ministries, a wide range of organizations representing civil society, and the general public. The consultation document was made available online in all EU languages. Over 300 substantive responses to the consultation were received. The final action plan 2004–2006, published by the European Commission (2003: 9) contains a number of remarkable passages, one of which is quoted here:

Promoting linguistic diversity means actively encouraging the teaching and learning of the widest possible range of languages in our schools, universities, adult education centres and enterprises. Taken as a whole, the range on offer should include the smaller European languages as well as all the larger ones, regional, minority and migrant languages as well as those with “national” status, and the languages of our major trading partners throughout the world. The imminent enlargement of the European Union will bring with it a wealth of languages from several language families; it requires a special effort to ensure that the languages of the new Member States become more widely learned in other countries. *Member States* have considerable scope to take a lead in promoting the teaching and learning of a wider range of languages than at present.

These and other pleas made in this European action plan may lead to an inclusive approach in which IM languages are no longer denied access to Europe’s celebration of language diversity. In particular, the plea for the learning of three languages by all EU citizens, the plea for an early start to such learning experiences, and the plea for offering a wide range of languages to choose from, open the door to such an inclusive approach. The empirical evidence presented in this study shows the extent of *de facto* multilingualism present in European schools.

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