

THE STATUS OF GERMAN AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN WRITTEN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION: A STUDY ON LANGUAGE POLICIES IN LINGUISTIC JOURNALS

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Abstract. Many scholars agree on the point that the role of German as a lingua franca in scientific communication has undergone important changes during the last hundred years. Although the status of German in scientific communication has been intensively discussed within the field of German Sociolinguistics, there is still much work to be done on this issue, especially with regard to the lack of representative empirical studies on developments in specific communication contexts. This explorative study aims to investigate the current position of German as a lingua franca of science, departing from the explicitly declared language policy of scientific journals of the selected countries. The focus of the study lies within the field of Linguistics, but also takes into account some of the 'Nischenfächer' ('niche disciplines'), in which both the German language and German scientific tradition have played an important role.

Key words: language policy, scientific communication, linguistic journals, scientific German, lingua franca

INTRODUCTION

The decline of German as a lingua franca of communication in the natural sciences as well as a general decline of German as a language of scientific communication, have often been discussed within the field of German Sociolinguistics; as most scholars underline that at the beginning of the 20th century, English was far from being the 'dominant' or 'universal language of science' in the way it is today. This period was, on the contrary, characterized by a triad of English-French-German, with different functional distributions evident in various scientific fields (cf. Ammon, 2015; Gordin, 2015).

The following figure (Figure 1) illustrates how decisive the shift away from the use of German towards the use of English was in some fields of scientific communication during this time period. It shows the language of articles submitted to the prestigious journal of the *Acta Scholae Medicinalis Imperialis*

Universitas in Kyoto, whose mission was to present to the world the best of Japanese medical research and which accepted ‘any European language’ (cf. Maher, 2007: 147, also 1989: 306). The declining curve illustrates the status of German between 1916 and 1967, from a clearly dominant role in Japanese medical communication (cf. *medical diglossia*) at the beginning of the last century to the total dominance of English four decades later.

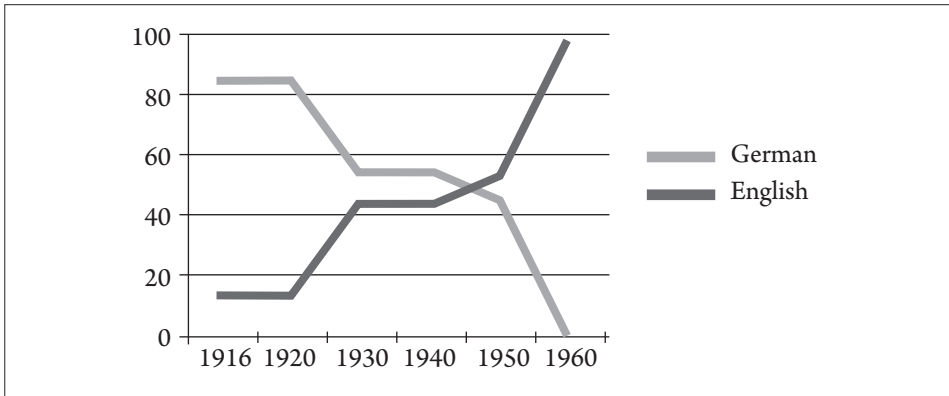


Figure 1 Language use in *Acta Scholae Medicinalis Imperialis Universitas in Kyoto*, 1916-1967 (Maher 2007: 147)

The historical and political factors which led to the decline were extensively explored by sociolinguists (Reinbothe, 2006; Ammon, 2015: 519-537) and historians of science (Gordin, 2015: 161-212), who identified several important shocks to the system of the three main science languages impacted by the political constellations during and after the First World War, including the notorious *Aufruf* signed by German scientists as one of the first stumbling blocks in the international scientific community, and the international *Boycott* of scientists from Germany and Austria who were cut off from the newly established science governing organizations, from international conferences and prestigious Western journals (Reinbothe, 2006; Ammon, 2015: 532-536; Gordin, 2015: 173-184). Furthermore, there was an increasingly anti-German attitude in the United States after entering the First World War. This, coupled with the general decline in foreign language education, led to a new, predominantly monolingual generation of US-American scientists, who were used to reading, writing and speaking only in English. The further decline in the use of the German language was, in addition, strongly influenced by the growing National Socialist movement and the general *Nazification* of research and education. After the Second World War, the situation was exacerbated by the post-war political order. As a more recent *coup de grâce*, it was, above all, globalization that further weakened the status of German, despite economic growth in the German speaking countries (cf. the considerations on the economic strength of German and other languages in Ammon, 2015: 407-518).

The current language constellations have been discussed from various viewpoints: with regard to the relationship between language and cultural identity within a scientific communication and between English as a lingua franca and multilingualism (Foschi, 2012), in terms of benefits and disadvantages that the predominance of one language might have for the progress of science and the balanced socioeconomic and cultural development within ongoing European integration processes, for the diversity of scientific styles and traditions (Gotti, 2017) and for academic careers. Gehrman and Rončević (2015) examined the implementation of anglophone linguistic hegemony in international scientific publishing and the role of the Journal Impact Factor in the marginalization of national and regional languages, as well as the changes in the meaning of the concept ‘international’ in itself (cf. also Lutterman and Lutterman, 2019: 48). On the other hand, there are a lot of examples for limited reception and dissemination of scientific results caused by language barriers. As for linguistic studies published in German, for example: Harald Weinrich’s ground-breaking *Bildfeldtheorie* (Weinrich, 1958, 1967) has some relevant features in common with the widely quoted Cognitive Metaphor Theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980); however, a glance at the respective bibliographies shows that Weinrich’s concepts and thesis have been, if at all, narrowly received by anglophone cognitivists. To illustrate the tendency to ‘perceive things discovered through English as the pioneering work’, Willemyns observes that ‘Ferguson is credited in most studies as the inventor of the concept dislossia (1959), when in fact the concept and its implications were known since ca 1890-1930 in French Hellenistic studies’ (2011: 399f). Emblematic of this problem is the low visibility and limited dissemination of Russian scientific works, which were often impeded by political factors.

In conclusion, given the increasing importance of *one* lingua franca and the growing monolinguality of scientific communication, at least in some fields, it cannot be denied that publishing in less diffused languages (in terms of *linguae francae* of scientific communication) sometimes creates parallel universes instead of promoting scientific exchange and synergy. Nor can it be denied, on the other hand, that a proficiency in the dominant lingua franca of science can be an important factor of international visibility and prestige. In regard to the potential contribution of translation to the visibility of non-anglophone scientific work, by far not all important or pioneer studies have been translated in a timely manner. Often the translation manages to contribute *a posteriori* to the future visibility of scientific works, once their significance has largely been established in the respective lingua-culture.

This very important and controversial issue (cf. also Frath, 2016: 98) is, however, not the focus of this article. The primary aim of the explorative study presented here is to contribute to the description of the current situation of German as a scientific lingua franca by exploring the current language policies of some prominent scientific journals. Even if such provocative titles as ‘Ist Deutsch noch internationale Wissenschaftssprache?’ (Ammon, 1988) and

'Remains of the day: language orphans and the decline of German as a medical lingua franca in Japan' (Maher, 2007) might, at first glance, suggest that there is not much left to be said on this subject, there is still a significant international community of linguists who are interested in the use of German as a lingua franca for scientific communication. This issue is furthermore worth a closer look with regard to the dynamics of internationalization, to changes within the realm of scientific communication and their socio-economic as well as cultural implications. Of particular interest are, considering the language(s) of scientific journals, the following questions:

1 *Journal language policy * national and geopolitical contexts:*

How are the basic values of the variable *journal language policy* (journals accepting only English – journals accepting only national language – bilingual journals – multilingual journals) distributed in the journals of different countries and regions?

2 *Journal language policy * scientific fields:*

How are the basic values of the variable *journal language policy* distributed in different scientific fields and disciplines?

3 *German, French, Russian, Spanish, Italian etc. as linguae francae of journals:*

How often do multilingual journals accept individual languages (in different countries, regions and in different scientific fields)?

4 *Expression of journal language policy:*

How is the journal language policy represented and formulated on the journal pages?

5 *Journal language policy * ratings of journals:*

What is the relationship between the journal language policy and the position of journals in international ratings?

6 *Declarative language policy * effective language use:*

What is the relationship between the declared journal language policy, expressed by nominating the accepted languages of the contributions, and the effective language of the journal articles?

It goes without saying that a detailed and systematic answer to all these questions would require an extensive, team based, interdisciplinary project. The exploratory study presented in this article has examined these questions with a focus on the position of German in the field of Linguistics and Language Studies and in some selected national contexts, and can be seen as a preparative work to the planned comprehensive project.

To investigate various aspects of the situation, two different publicly available sources, often mentioned in the self-presentation of international journals, have been used: the current list of the journals approved by the *European Reference*

Index for Humanities and Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS) and the *Scimago Journal Rank*.

The ERIH PLUS-list was developed by European researchers under the coordination of the Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH) of the European Science Foundation (Online 1). Besides discipline and country, this database contains information on the language policy of every single journal by means of indications 'multilingual', 'English', 'German', 'Italian', etc.

Since some indications of the journal language turned out not to be correct or updated (for example, some journals are listed in the ERIH PLUS-list as multilingual, even if the verification on the respective website confirms that they are monolingual, and vice versa), for the purpose of this study, ERIH PLUS was *not* used as an information source for the declared language policy (which was verified directly on the respective journal websites), but only as the information source in terms of a database offering a homogeneous list of journals with similar characteristics (cf. the 'inclusion criteria and the approval procedures' on the website).

In order to assess the so called *Nischenfächer* or 'niche disciplines' such as Anthropology, Archaeology, Psychology, Musicology, Classic studies, Indo-European Studies, etc. where German traditionally played an important role (Weinrich, 1986; Skudlik, 1990: 216; Ammon, 2015: 540, 603-23), not only the ERIH PLUS-outputs defining Linguistics as the only discipline ('Discipline: Linguistics') were taken into account, but also multidisciplinary journals containing 'Linguistics' among other disciplines (for example 'Disciplines: Cultural Studies, Linguistics, Literature' or 'Disciplines: Classical Studies, Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities, Linguistics').

The second publicly available database consulted in this study, *Scimago Journal Rank*, uses the *Scimago Journal Rank indicator* (SJR) as a measure of the journal's impact: 'It expresses the average number of weighted citations received in the selected year by the documents published in the journal in the three previous years' (Online 2). Even if the rankings for single countries are partly distorted by the classification criteria (for example, the fact that the Global Player De Gruyter is treated as a German publisher has a significant impact on the ranking for Germany), the consultation and comparison of the Scimago /SJR values have allowed first insights into the relationship between the journal ratings and the journal language policy (sub-objective 5).

Before moving on to the results regarding linguistic journals in countries and regions focused upon in this study, it should be underlined that the used (as well as any other) databases are far from being perfectly representative of the quality or local importance of single journals: firstly, because of the fundamental impossibility of defining uniform criteria which could be entirely suitable for every single scientific, linguistic, cultural and institutional context; secondly, because the proliferation of indexes and lists appears to be substantially more symptomatic of the commodification of science (cf. Barbosa de Oliveira, 2013

and different contributions in Radder, 2010) than of the effective concentration of ‘research excellence’. These considerations, however, in no way diminish the sociolinguistic relevance of these database as indicators of the academic and commercial visibility of the respective journals and indirect indicators of the language status, language policy and language use in single countries and disciplines.

SELECTED NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS

1 GERMAN SPEAKING COUNTRIES

In regard to national contexts, the analysis of the journal language policy in the field of Linguistics in three German speaking countries shows an overall tendency toward bilingual or multilingual journal policy and a low percentage of monolingual German journals. More than half (39 of 68) of the journals listed in ERIH PLUS as German journals are bilingual or multilingual (most frequent combinations being: German and English; German, English and other languages), whereas monolingual English journals amount to one third of all listed journals (21) and monolingual German journals only to 10 per cent (7).

The mono-anglophone policy of journals listed in ERIH PLUS such as German or Swiss journals often goes along with restrictive language norms:

The submission has been proofread by a native speaker of English (if written by an author/authors who is/are not native speakers of this language). (Online 3)

Submissions should be in English with American spelling. Contributors whose native language is not English should have their manuscripts read by a qualified native speaker before submission. (Online 4)

The numbers of linguistic journals concerning the other two germanophone countries are rather small, but some basic trends can still be identified, such as a tendential multilingualism of Austrian journals and a tendential anglophone monolingualism of Swiss journals: All the four listed Austrian journals are either bilingual or multilingual, while the Swiss sublist displays seven monolingual English journals and three multilingual journals. If we take a closer look at the category ‘multilingual’, besides English and German, the journals usually accept either one or more Romance languages or Russian. As for the aforementioned ‘Nischenfächer’, it can be observed that the multilingual language policy characterises, among others, the journals focusing on Oriental Studies, Classical, and Ancient Studies (i.e. the traditional ‘Nischenfächer’) like *Glotta*, *Indogermanische Forschungen*, *Altorientalische Forschungen* or *KUSATU*, which accept German, English and mostly also French.

2 FRANCE AND ITALY

In comparison to the above presented results, the two examined ERIH PLUS-lists of countries where Romance languages are spoken show much lower shares of journals limited to English, and subsequently higher shares of journals that publish only in the national language. For instance, 20 of 44 listed French Journals accept French or primarily French, using formulations such as ‘prioritairement en français’ or ‘dans la limite de 3 articles non francophones’.

Glottopol publie prioritairement des contributions rédigées en français. Sous réserve de la disponibilité des membres compétents du comité de rédaction, nous acceptons les contributions rédigées en espagnol, en italien, en anglais, en catalan, provençal, corse, occitan et en allemande. (Online 5)

As for our central question on the role of German, the use of German seems to be limited to the journals which can be described as limitedly or declaratively multilingual. To illustrate this point, three out of five journals explicitly mention German among the accepted languages:

- The above cited *Glottopol* mentions German besides English and six Romance languages, but a closer look at the last four issues of this journal published between 2019 and 2017 (No 32, 31, 30 and 29) shows that none of a total of 52 texts is in German.
- One of these five journals, the *Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*, is relevant as an example of the ‘Nischenfächer’. This journal can be qualified as limitedly or declaratively multilingual judging by the last published issues which are declaratively trilingual (French, English, German) and effectively predominantly bilingual, with a very low share of contributions in the German language: The last four issues published between 2018 and 2015 contain 25 articles in English, 12 in French and only two in German. (The short reviews were not taken into account).
- The third example: *Synergies pays germanophones* provides the same declaration on language policy as the other journals in the series *Synergies* (*Synergies Italie*, *Synergies Europe*, *Synergies pays riverains de la Baltique*, etc.): ‘Les articles rédigés dans une autre langue que le français seront acceptés dans la limite de 3 articles non francophones par numéro, sous réserve d’approbation technique et graphique.’ A closer look at the last four issues of *Synergies pays germanophones* shows that in spite of the main research subject, two of the last four issues are completely in French (2018, 2016) and two display a low, symbolic share of articles in German (2017: two articles in German, eight in French; 2015: one article in German, and seven in French).

It can also be noted that French maintains an important status as a language of journal communication even in the countries where it competes with languages with larger numbers of speakers and/or geographical diffusion. In Switzerland, the accepted languages in the three multilingual journals are respectively (1) English and French; (2) English, German and French; (3) English, German and 'all Romance languages'.

In comparison to all the journal lists analysed for single countries, the widest variety of accepted languages could be found for Italy, namely, almost 80 per cent of journals (27 of a total of 34 listed journals) indicate three or more languages (for example, Italian, English and French; Italian, English, French, German, Spanish) or use such expressions as 'X and other languages', 'X, but also other languages':

LEA – *Lingue e Letterature d'Oriente e d'Occidente* publishes research papers in Italian, English, French, German and Spanish, as well as other languages with translations on the facing page in one of the above-mentioned languages. (Online 6)

Articles can be written in any Slavic and main European languages (Italian, English, French, Spanish, and German). (Online 7)

English is the preferred publication language, but articles in any other language can be submitted, provided that the abstract and the author's biographical notes are in English. (Online 8)

Monolingual journals are rare (5) and limited mostly to the cases of journals specifically for the Italian language and its varieties (4 of 5 journals). This relatively open journal language policy favours the use of German, which is mentioned in 11 of altogether 27 multilingual journals that explicitly mention single accepted languages.

3 SCANDINAVIAN PENINSULA

An analysis of the listed journals in Finland, Norway and Sweden confirms the *declarative* status of German as one of the accepted *linguae francae*: five out of ten listed Swedish journals are multilingual, all accepting German among quite a large variety of languages including Skandinavian/Nordic languages, English and German (3 journals), English, German and Romance languages (1), Slavic and Scandinavian languages, English, French or German (1). The remaining journals are predominantly monolingual: two journals publishing in English or 'preferably in English', two traditional, national journals publishing only or mostly in Swedish, and one bilingual journal (Spanish-English).

As for the *effective* use of German, the analysis of the first three listed monolingual Swedish journals shows that German is the language of only four of more than hundred viewed texts published in the last four issues. The articles

in *Studia Neophilologica* (No 91(1) 2019, 90(1) and 90(2) 2018, 89(2) 2017) are mostly in English and sporadically in Romance languages, but none of the 30 viewed articles is in German. Three of a total of 34 articles in *Studia Anthroponymica Scandinavica* (issues with online available contents: 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013) and one of a total of 45 texts in *Scripta Islandica* (No 69, 2018 till 66, 2015) are in German.

The ERIH PLUS-list for Finland contains one monolingual Finnish journal and four journals declared as bilingual or multilingual; two of them list German among the accepted languages:

- The Journal with the international title in German *Finnisch-Ugrische Forschungen* publishes articles in German or English: A closer analysis shows that four of the total of 24 articles published in the last four issues (No 61/2012 till No 64/2018) are in German.
(Reviews could not be taken into account for very different length and since the language of the text partly cannot be derived from the title of review, i.e. title of the reviewed work).
- The *SKY Journal of Linguistics* lists as the languages of publication English, French, and German; nevertheless, all the articles, squibs and reviews in the last four issues are in English, i.e. the status of French and German is highly symbolic.

The four listed Norwegian journals are mostly monolingual (two anglophone journals, one journal publishing in Norwegian bokmål). A closer look at the only multilingual journal *Maal og Minne* accepting Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, English and German confirms the predominantly declarative status of German as a lingua franca: None of the texts published in the last four issues (2019-1, 2018-1, 2018-2, 2017-2) is written in German.

Summing up the results for Scandinavian journals, it can be observed that in all cases where German is explicitly listed as one of the accepted languages, it plays a rather marginal role as a language of effective publications.

To conclude this chapter, it can be said that in contrast to the journals of the Baltic region, several Scandinavian journals display prescriptions on the 'quality of language': However, these regard – unlike in the journals of the other analysed countries – not only English (first example), but also other languages (second and third example):

- (1) All papers submitted should be written in idiomatic academic English. If the author is not a native speaker, it is their responsibility to have the accepted paper checked by a native speaker (preferably prior to submission). Papers should follow British spelling and punctuation throughout. In special cases, the journal accepts papers written

in German or French, though this should be agreed in advance. (Online 9)

- (2) *Slovo* accepts contributions written in any Slavic or Scandinavian language, as well as English, French or German. [...] All manuscripts by non-native speakers must be proofread by native speakers. (Online 10)
- (3) Non-native speakers of English, German or Romance languages must have their final drafts checked by a native speaker of the language in question versed in linguistics or literature. (Online 11)

4 BALTIC REGION

Despite the relatively small number of journals listed in ERIH PLUS (Lithuania 7, Estonia 6, Latvia 2), some common tendencies can be noted. Firstly, it can be observed that the journal language policy in the focused scientific field differs significantly from the mono-anglophone policy.

The seven listed Lithuanian journals are all declared as multilingual, mentioning mostly five languages (Lithuanian, English, French, German and Russian), in single cases – four or six languages (the above mentioned languages without Russian, without French or with Latvian), whereby German always figures as one of the explicitly accepted languages. However, a closer look at the first two listed journals shows the following outcomes (as the Baltic region is of particular interest for this volume, the number of the viewed issues was increased from four to six):

- One of the seven Lithuanian journals (*Kalbų Studijos/Studies About Languages*) lists as accepted languages ‘English, German, French, Russian and Lithuanian’. The vast majority of 48 texts in the last six issues (No 29 from 2016 till No 34 from 2019) are in English, the only exceptions are five articles in French and two articles in Lithuanian.
- Another Lithuanian journal (*Lietuvių kalba*) lists the same languages in a different order ‘The journal publishes articles in English, French, German, Lithuanian and Russian’. The 60 texts in the last six issues (from No 8 for 2014 till No 3 for 2019) are in Lithuanian or English; however, German language entries appear in only five abstracts.

Similar results in terms of multilingualism and the declarative role of German were found in Estonian and Latvian journals. The Estonian language policy, at least within the focused discipline, seems to be more devoted to promoting regional, Ugro-Finnic and Baltic languages than striving for Anglicisation (accepted languages in different journals: ‘Estonian and Finnish’, ‘The Estonian language, as well as Baltic and Nordic languages’, ‘English, Estonian or

exceptionally some other Finno-Ugric language'). Only one of six listed journals is monolingually English, two journals accept English and other languages (as a result, 3 of 6 journals are *not* anglophone). However, as already observed for German and Swiss journals, the mono-anglophone policy goes along with restrictive language norms:

Make sure of the quality of English in your manuscript. If you are not sure of the quality of the English, you can use the services of translator, editor, proofreader of our editorial staff [...] (Online 12)

One of the six Estonian multilingual journals (*Linguistica Uralica*) lists 'English, German, and Russian' as accepted languages. A language analysis of the 52 last published texts in the six latest issues (2 issues in 2019 and 4 in 2018) shows that the journal has recently published primarily in Russian and secondarily in English, while German has a marginal position: only two of 52 texts are in German.

As for Latvia, one of the two listed Latvian journals is bilingual (Latvian, English) and the other (*Linguistica Lettica*) multilingual. The latter lists 'Latvian, Lithuanian, English, Russian, French, and German', yet the analysis reveals that none of the 103 articles in the last six issues (No 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4) published between 2014 and 2019 is written in one of the three international *linguae francae* Russian, French or German.

SCIMAGO JOURNAL RANK

The comparison between the best placed linguistic journals according to the *Scimago Journal Rank* (for 2017, accessed on 30 May 2019) shows a considerable difference between the categories named *Western Europe* and *Eastern Europe*.

The Scimago-category *Western Europe* seems to confirm the affinity between the placement and the language of the journals observed by some scholars (cf. Demeter, 2018: 95; Liu et al., 2018), i.e. a high share of monolingual anglophone journals among the best placed journals: 22 of a total of 30 best placed journals are UK-journals, seven journals are registered as Dutch journals, and one as a German journal.

On the contrary, a closer look at the 30 best placed journals of the category *Eastern Europe* (published in Poland, Russian Federation, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Romania, Moldova, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia) reveals that 17 journals are multilingual, while only eight journals are monolingual anglophone; the remaining five journals are monolingual journals accepting only the respective national language. Among the 17 multilingual journals, 11 specify the accepted languages, and German figures in almost all cases (10 of 11) as the accepted journal language (Table 1).

Table 1 Multilingual journals listing the single accepted languages (11 of the 17 best placed journals of the Scimago-category Eastern Europe, 2017)

Rank	Journal	Country	Accepted languages according to the declared journal language policy	German
13	<i>Analele Universitatii din Craiova - Seria Stiinte Filologice, Lingvistica</i>	Romania	English, French, German , Italian, Romanian, Spanish	+
14	<i>Ural-Altaiic Studies</i>	Russian Fed.	Russian, English, German	+
15	<i>XLinguae</i>	Slovakia	Slovak, Czech, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, English	
17	<i>Linguistica Praguensia</i>	Czech R.	English, German , French, Spanish or Italian	+
18	<i>Rasprave Instituta za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje</i>	Croatia	Croatian (+other Slavic languages), English, German , Italian, Spanish	+
21	<i>Slovo a Slovesnost</i>	Czech R.	Czech, Slovak, English, German , Russian and French	+
24	<i>Revue Roumaine de Linguistique</i>	Romania	English, French, German , Spanish, Italian	+
26	<i>Jezikoslovlje</i>	Croatia	Croatian, English, German	+
27	<i>Slovene</i>	Russian Fed.	all the Slavic languages, English, German , French, and Italian	+

FIRST CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

The first findings of this exploratory study can be summarised as follows:

English predominance in terms of a relatively high share of monolingual anglophone journals, as well as prescriptive elements of journal language policy, are more evident in the contexts where Germanic languages are official or co-official languages (Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavian countries), and where the specialised journals are run by global players showing a tendency to standardize and homogenise the editorial and language policy (e.g. De Gruyter).

As for prescriptive formulations concerning the language, two aspects are particularly striking: firstly, the required conformity to English native norms, not necessarily congruent with the concept of scientific lingua franca in terms of intelligibility and reaching the widest possible scientific audience (this point of view could be found only in the *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*); secondly, such formulations refer mainly to *English*, even if they could theoretically refer to any language used as a scientific lingua franca (cf. Scandinavian journals).

If we consider German and French as essential members of the traditional triad of scientific *linguae francae* of the last century, so it appears that the respective journal language policies do not have much in common: The ERIH PLUS-list of French linguistic journals shows a considerable share of journals accepting only or preferably French, whereas the German speaking countries have significantly higher shares of monolingual anglophone Journals or multilingual journals, thus journals *not* limited to the use of the national language or even excluding the use of the national language(s).

In regard to the role of German in the focused, non-germanophone contexts, the first findings lead to a hypothesis that its status as a secondary *lingua franca* can be confirmed (also with regard to the so-called 'Nischenfächer') for North European and East European regions, though first and foremost at a *declarative* level, rather than with regard to the *effective* use of German in the specialised journals taken under consideration. The relationship between the declarative language policy and the effective language of journal articles might be influenced by a series of factors such as language choice of the author, language and subject preferences of the individual journal. It would be of particular interest to explore, for different countries and scientific fields how the effective use of the accepted journal languages has developed over time.

In conclusion, it should be emphasised that reliable and representative statements on these and other aforementioned research questions can be made only as a result of an extensive, cross-linguistic and interdisciplinary study which also includes the diachronic dimension. Such a research design should constitute an important and urgent desideratum of (German) Sociolinguistics, especially with regard to the growing commodification of knowledge and science, to the fact that academic systems increasingly equate quality to the 'good placement' of written scientific works (Frey and Osterloh, 2013 subsume this issue under the dichotomy 'gut publizieren' vs. 'gute Publikation'), and to the importance of the selected language for this 'good placement'. More generally speaking, developments concerning both declarative and effective use of language in the realm of science communication may have a far-reaching and not yet foreseeable economic, socio-cultural and educational impact.

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