TRANSLATION IN A EUROLINGUISTIC CONTEXT: IDEAS AND THEORIES FOR EUROPEAN LANGUAGES – BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE EUROLINGUISTIC APPROACH

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Which language will Europeans speak tomorrow? Will there exist a *European language,* or a *Eurolanguage,* will it eliminate the art of translation, which is sometimes considered unuseful?

In 1996 Diego Marani, an appreciated Italian writer, translator at the European Council, has invented *Europanto,* a language which, at first sight, is more similar to a joke than to anything serious. It is a mixture of English-Spanish-Italian-French-Dutch, and not necessarily each one in the same proportion. He has been using *Europanto* for years, writing articles for a Swiss newspaper; what's more, he has also written a book of short stories published in France *(Las adventures des inspector Cabillot*, Editions Mazarine, Paris, 1998), welcomed with great favour by the press. But, leaving such *exercices de style* out of consideration, can we really write or speak in a shared language understandable by all Europeans?

In ancient times, the role of a *lingua franca* belonged to the Latin language, even though only in cultural and academic circles. Today this role belongs to the English language, and, in a geopolitical context, to the English language spoken in European and international institutions. This language cannot be considered pure English anymore. It is rather a "europeanized" English, a language "levelled" by non-native speakers, with a limited range of registers and vocabulary.

However, it would be rather depressing and unscientific to consider English as the only instrument of communication among Europeans. In the present scenario, it should be regarded as only one of the multiple possibilities in a rich and diverse linguistic universe. The Berlin wall has been playing for three decades not merely the role of a political and social barrier, but also of a linguistic barrier. Consequently, its disappearance has led to an increase in contacts between different people living in bordering linguistic areas, producing a real physical contact between languages, which, coupled with the gradual enlargement of the European Union, contributed to shaping a new linguistic identity for the continent. Hence, the overcoming of nationalisms and dictatorships needs to be seen in the framework of an incipient new *linguistic democracy*, joining language equality with the maximum possibility of dialogue between the members of an enlarged linguistic community. The very structure of the European Union – a union of indipendent States, not a federation of States – bears the intrinsic elements of a democracy of languages.

An *English only* solution contradicts the principle of linguistic equality among all citizens as provided by the Treaty of the European Union and confirmed in the recent communication on multilingualism issued by the European Commission. Because of its

nature, the contemporary human being is not a *monolingual*, but a *plurilingual* individual, a quality translating itself into the mastering of various foreign languages, dialects, idiolects, jargons, pidgins and so on. The multilingual – or *eurolingual* – person is the study object of Eurolinguistics, a new branch in contemporary linguistics, which, through its multilingual programme, resists, or contrasts, this linguistic levelling and the old nationalist, mononational and monolingual conceptions.

Eurolinguistics was officially created in 2007 in Lille, France, when ELA (Eurolinguistics Association) was founded through the merging of three regional associations already active in this field in some European universities: Eurolinguistischer Arbeitskreis Mannheim (ELAMA); Associazione Eurolinguistica-Sud, Rome (AES) and Eurolinguistic Network South East, Zagreb (ENSE). Each of them deals with academic research of the languages spoken in the region they belong to, in the wider context of the European linguistics. Research guidelines and principles were originally established on an informal level some years ago, through the formulation of the so called *20 Pushkin Theses*, after the name of the Russian city where the Second International Symposium on Eurolinguistics was held, in September 1999.

Among its declared objectives, Eurolinguistics deals with the description of the contact typologies of European languages, as well as the analysis of the historical, political and social factors generating such contacts, in order to establish European and extra-European influences on the languages of Europe. Investigating relations between languages leads to the identification of Europeanisms, namely the common traits which in the course of centuries have called forth a shared European Heritage, which needs to be explicitly widespread to the public. The European Heritage so formed will contribute to shaping a European identity which, according to Eurolinguists, still lacks in our continent, even among young generations. Shaping European identity, however, will not be possible if Eurolinguistics does not support the research programmes on European minority languages, or least used languages, in order to create an authentic linguistic democracy.

Linguistic objectives, in case they will be achieved, will have social, political and cultural implications, for instance the support of those policies promoting European education in European states, the struggle against extremist and nationalist trends and discrimination on ethnic grounds, the creation of plurilinguistic curricula for the cultural and linguistic preparation of migrants and of their children, who will become bilingual Europeans.

Eurolinguistics, which has become an integral part of a new horizontal research field of humanist studies, namely European Studies (Europäistik), will endeavour the identification and the eradication of the causes of conflicts between majority and minority languages, in the spirit of peaceful coexistence.

Besides, bearing in mind that European languages are spoken not only in the old continent, Eurolinguistics will work as an innovative drive also in former colonial territories, where European languages generated new languages, new language variants, which served as real propellers for the economic, social and cultural development. Therefore, the study field of Eurolinguistics overcomes European borders, or European Union borders, becoming a global one (*Global Eurolinguistics*) and regarding World English, World Spanish, World French etc.

The realization of this heterogeneous multilingual programme will only be possible through a political paneuropean approach encompassing research and organization in all

European states, starting projects and creating research centres on Eurolinguistics in the long term, in countries where they still do not exist, particularly where the minority integration policies prove necessary to encouraging the feeling of one Europe, regarded as our Homeland, the Homeland of us all.

Among the research activities carried out by Eurolinguists in the last ten years there are studies on the contacts between languages belonging to different linguistic regions, as well as contacts between languages spoken in bordering areas. To name but a few, Olga Voronkova (Mannheim University) and Elena Guseva-Lozinski (Moscow) analysed the contacts between Russian and the non-Indo-European languages of Eurasia. They concentrated on glaciological terminology and the borrowing of many words by Russian, and their subsequent transfer into scientific English (e.g. snow cover, freezing of water, sea ice, variants of glacial ice etc.) Other studies regard phraseological issues, such as those conducted by Elisabeth Piirainen (Steinfurt), who has led an extensive project collecting widespread idioms, trying to determine whether they spread through language contact or were spontaneous coinages in different languages. For instance, she analysed the following expressions: *to take the bull by the horns* (English), *den Stier bei den Hörnen packen* (German), *prendere il toro per le corna* (Italian), all meaning "to grapple fearlessly or proactively with a problem", and similar ones from Turkic, Caucasian and Semitic languages, even Esperanto. The conclusion is that they are quite similar, even if in Dutch one can either *take the bull* or *the cow by the horns*.

Another interesting and less investigated field regards the contacts between majority and minority languages, or between a national language and the language spoken by a numerous community of immigrants. Romanians are among the main migrant communities in Spain, and some linguists have already recorded the existence of *rumaniol* in Spain. Similar considerations are surely applicable to linguistic interference between Italian and Romanian. Of course, this kind of phenomenon mostly occurs among languages belonging to the same linguistic family, but this does not exclude interferences between, for instance, German and Turkish, Russian and Romanian, and so on.

The Pushkin Manifesto (formulated in connection with the 2nd International Symposium on Eurolinguistics in Pushkin, Russia, September 1999)

A. *Multilingualism in focus of research and a factor of glottogenesis in Eurolinguistics.*

Thesis 1: Departing from the insight that man is endowed with a faculté du language that is not of a monolingual but a multilingual nature, Eurolinguistics places the multilingual individual in the centre of research.

Thesis 2: Linguistic and cultural divergence or convergence, which arises through the effects of multilingualism, is the focus of Eurolinguistics.

B. *Contact Typologies and networks of language contacts.*

Thesis 3: The description of historical and contemporary contact typologies of the European languages is an urgent task of Eurolinguistics.

Thesis 4: The historical, political, social and economic factors giving rise to such contact typologies are indispensable for describing the European and extra-European influences on the languages of Europe.

C. *Common linguistic characteristics (europeanisms) mirroring networks of contacts.*

Thesis 5: Therefore to be described are the common linguistic characteristics of European languages, which have been the result of contacts between the peoples of Europe throughout the centuries of fusion.

Thesis 6: The common European Heritage underlying these characteristics (europeanisms) will thus be made known to the general public in an explicit way.

D. *Europeanisms, European togetherness and identity.*

Thesis 7: Such insight into the common linguistic and cultural basis of European languages will foster a sense of European togetherness.

Thesis 8: Such feeling of European belonging together, from ancient to modern times, will help to create a European identity which is still lacking even among the younger generations.

E. *Eurolinguistics, nationalism, national Weltbilder and discrimination*

Thesis 9: Eurolinguistics will become a discipline counteracting nationalistic tendencies in the science of language, supporting the European educational policy of the member states of the European Union, and disintegrating biased national Weltbilder.

Thesis 10: A sense of European identity based on insights into the common European linguistic and cultural heritage will help to block the growth of extremist national movements and ethnic discrimination.

F. *Eurolinguistics, lesser-used languages and linguistic equality.*

Thesis 11: Eurolinguistics will be a support for research into European minority languages of the past and the present promoting the equal standing of lesser-used languages and their inalienable rights of use in all domains.

Thesis 12: With its Europe-wide programme Eurolinguistics will promote an understanding of the inner causes of cultural, religious and political conflicts between major languages and between major and minority languages in Europe, thereby serving peace research (cf. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992).

G. *European studies (Europäistik) as a subject in education.*

Thesis 13: Eurolinguistics as an integral part of a new interdisciplinary branch of the humanities – European studies (Europäistik) – with the aim of promoting a European-minded programme in the education of young Europeans from primary schools to universities.

H. *Migration and Europeanisation.*

Thesis 14: Eurolinguistics also will incorporate urgent multilingual programmes for promoting the training of migratory workers and refugees and their children who become bilingual Europeans through long periods of absence from their native countries.

I. *Eurolinguistics and globalisation – European languages world-wide.*

Thesis 15: The foundation of a international basis of European linguistics will set an example also to a global scenario by including English-world-wide, Spanish world-wide, French world-wide, Russian world-wide, etc.

Thesis 16: The overseas contacts of the former colonial languages have given rise to new pidgins and creoles and acted as catalysts for the technical, economic and cultural development outside Europe on other continents.

Thesis 17: Therefore, Eurolinguistics is not only a European concern but that of a world civilisation in its function as a linguistic innovator for languages spoken outside Europe.

J. *Eurolinguistic initiatives for a Europe-wide orientation.*

Thesis 18: The members of the Pushkin Symposium support the campaign of the Eurolinguistischer Arbeitskreis Mannheim in its efforts toward a Europe-wide orientation in research and organisations in the member states of the European Union and other European counties.

Thesis 19: Research projects and possibly research centres on multilingualism and Eurolinguistics should be founded in European countries where such projects and institutions do not exist, and where the assimilation of immigrant minorities is an issue called for to foster a feeling of Europe as our "Heimat", especially among the younger generations of migrated guest workers.

Thesis 20: The members of the Pushkin Symposium and ELAMA call upon official and private organisations to sponsor Eurolinguistic activities (exchange of scholars, meetings, workshops, symposia, research projects, campaigns for the acquisition of linguistic literature) in all countries and ask private persons to become members of Eurolinguistic associations.

У багатомовній Європі, у Європейському Союзі понад 20 офіційних мов, кожна з яких є унікальною. Падіння берлінської стіни, що функціонувала як політична, соціальна й мовна перепона, зумовило зростання мовних контактів. Це разом із поступовим розширенням Європейського Союзу сприяло моделюванню нової мовної спільноти континенту. Зменшення впливу націоналізму та диктаторських режимів сприяє становленню мовної демократії, яка поєднує рівноправність мов із максимально можливим діалогом між членами розширеної мовної спільноти. Асоціація Eurolinguistics Association займається вивченням мовних контактів та просуванням лінгвістичної демократії.

Ключові слова: євролінгвістика, мовна демократія, європеїзм, багатомовність, мовні контакти, мовна рівноправність.

В разноязычной Европе, в Европейском Союзе более чем 20 официальных языков, каждый из которых уникален. Падение берлинской стены, функционировавшей в качестве политической, социальной и языковой преграды, вызвало рост контактов между языками, что вместе с постепенным расширением Европейского Союза способствовало моделированию новой языковой общности континента. Уменьшение влияния национализма и диктатур приводит к становлению языковой демократии, соединяющей равноправие языков с максимально возможным диалогом между членами расширенной языковой общности. Ассоциация Eurolinguistics Association занимается изучением контактов между языками и продвижением языковой демократии.

Ключевые слова: евролингвистика, языковая демократия, европеизм, разноязычие, языковые контакты, языковое равноправие.

Webgraphy:
1. *Electronic resource*: http://www.elama.de.
2. *Electronic resource*: http://www.eurolinguistica-sud.org.
3. *Electronic resource*: http://www.piirainen.homepage.t-online.de/aim.html.