



European Observatory on Plurilingualism



Newsletter N°49 (April-May 2013)

<http://www.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu/>

Translations into [German](#), [English](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Croatian](#), [Spanish](#), [Greek](#), [Italian](#), [Portuguese](#), [Romanian](#) and [Russian](#) available online.

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1) Stop to the off shore universities!

All over Europe, in the universities, engineering schools and management schools, we can see the appearance of an incredible number of masters and sometimes doctorates taught all in English on a background of competition between the universities in order to attract students. It is extremely surprising because, when English-speaking students register in universities in France, Germany or Italy for example, it is à priori not to study in English. In the same manner, foreign students from the Francophone countries but also from anywhere in the world, and there is quite a big number of them in France, they do not come either to study in English. In fact, the foreign students who are targeted by this business competition between the colleges and universities are foreign students who only have English as foreign language and sometimes a few words in the language of the country where they chose to come and study. What will they have learnt at the end of their educational time in France? Some knowledge with international standards, and they will go back to their country of origin with a knowledge of the host language and host country as superficial as when they arrived for the linguistic requirements for admission are minimal (when Anglo-Saxon universities demand a good level in the TOEFL exam) and those requirements are also minimal at the end except for some exceptions. In some way, off shore universities are freed from the culture as the off shore societies are freed from all fiscal and juridical regulations protected by fiscal paradises. It is easy and does not cost much.

However, in way of globalisation, we can do better. Using agreements between universities, the student can spend a part of his student education, in one country and the other part in another. He can also follow classes in two languages including his mother tongue, according the principle of international departments or EMILE classes or even learn a third one. All this already exists and has to be developed, at higher level as well. So, for a Korean student for example, having a B2 level in English, registering in a French or German university with a minimal level in French or German, should be given the best possible welcome and the first thing to do is to give him accelerated languages classes for him to reach the level to be able to follow classes in these languages. A part of the classes could be given into English, on condition that the teachers are native English-speakers or perfectly bilingual, the interest of it being to get the degree being fully bilingual or trilingual rather than having only one single international language as qualification. The international excellence is worth that price. And if competition has to exist, it has to be through differentiation and not through

global imitation. But in order to do this, you need a real political will, real linguistic politics, and not just obey exclusively commercial logics.

It is a debate crossing many European countries in Europe and around the world. We published on the EOP website a big number of articles on the matter, an insight of which is given at the end of this article.

The debate shook Germany in 2010, and Italy in 2012, and it now reaches France with the draft bill on higher education and research presented by Geneviève Fioraso, French Minister for Higher Education and Research, on March 20th last at the Minister counsel, and has to be debated at the National Assembly on 22nd May.

This bill includes one article, article n°2, which would allow to open the higher education to training all in English and judicially secure many educational trainings, nearly 800 according Campus France, over 70% of which are Masters. It is less that 6% of the total, but this proportion that is bound to increase if the law is voted is not insignificant.

France has in fact a protecting legislation curtain, which poses as principle that the teaching language in France is French. This protective legislation, known under the name of its author, the “Toubon law”, plans for some exceptions such as foreign schools or some specifically aimed at a certain type of foreign people, for the need of the language teachings, for invited professors, or for teachings having an international character. The list of exceptions is already quite long, but here the idea is to go further and to somewhat deregulate.

We wrote [to the Minister](#) to explain that she was going on the wrong track and that she would only succeed in arousing the anger of the Anglophones who are expecting something else and would feel cheated on what they are getting, that she would make the foreign students of the French-speaking community evade even though they have a good mastery of French as they would feel that their efforts to learn French is then despised. That for those students who have succeeded in passing the assessments of their linguistics abilities when there are some and that they should be better treated in offering them a levelling class before they start they training education or during the first few months of it.

Many associations have got mobilised, petitions were launched which the EOP relayed as best as possible, important personalities expressed themselves.

We hoped we were heard, in any case we hope to be heard at the national representation.

We published [a ten questions argumentative paper](#) that everybody can use to write to his/her deputy, and that all our friends in Europe can use in their countries with little adaptations. We are in the process of translation the document so as to make the task easier for you.

As of course, the stakes are bigger than the French language only. It is about all our languages and it is a major cultural, intellectual and civilizational stake.

We often speak of scientific publication in *lingua franca*, arguing that it is the only way to reach the whole of the scientific community. But, we do not make a difference between publishing in one language and thinking, training people and teaching in that language. Up to now, it was mainly a question of publishing, and in this matter, the domineering place of English is absolute in the Nature Sciences, but this domination is propagating in the Humanities and Social Sciences, always under the motive that we have to be read by a maximum of people.

However, today, the phenomenon starts to reach the teaching and the thinking itself. This evolution is logical, as when you stop publishing in one language, you stop nourishing that language with new concepts and one day it becomes impossible to teach and pass on that language. The language loosed in functionalities, becomes quickly marginalised for private usages, and one day it disappears as it is not passed on anymore, It is a huge impoverishment and it is an illusion to believe that scientific thinking and cultural creation would not be affected by that.

There is one place where the minds and thoughts do not have to be uniformed, it is the universities a place for intellectual teeming where innovation has to reign. Globally thinking in the same language is killing innovation coming from the history of the words which are peculiar to each language and each culture...

Today, if non-English-speaking scientists are more and more publishing in English, they are still hopefully thinking in their own mother tongue. It is a good thing that it is done this way, because as for the humanities and social sciences (the sciences of the culture as the thoughts by François Rastier), which are sciences for diversity, more dedicated to understanding the reality of the world in its diversity than reducing it to its smallest common denominator, the *lingua franca* can simply not have all the concepts necessary for the research. But nothing tells us that it is different in the Nature Sciences. The creation is done in the mother tongue and only the appropriation of some linguistics registers, which define plurilingualism, on the compost of the mother tongue allow to "[think in between the languages](#)", dear to Heinz Wismann, who is intrinsically creative, but it is not all the process which is today at work.

Today, teaching and studying entirely in another language is to expose a community to a memory rupture, cut it from their intellectual and cultural sources. It is to organise the relegation and then the disappearance of one own language.

Anyway we often speak of *lingua franca* thinking of Latin, without realising that as soon as the Middle-Ages, important writers such as Chrétien de Troyes contributed to spread the French vernacular language throughout Europe (his writings were largely translated when he was alive) when European vernacular languages, without realising that the Renaissance of the 16th and 17th centuries was done against the Latin of the scholastic clerks and by the development of national languages. It is at the same time that Dante gave its lettres de noblesses to Italian, that helped by printing, Luther allowed German to start up at a time when 90% of the printed writings were in Latin (70% around 1570) and that Descartes was writing in French the "*Discours de la method*". Alain Rey commented in his *Thousand years of the French Language History*: "...we cannot say that there was a significant difference between the works published in French and those published in Latin. His gesture does not necessarily means that he wanted to replace one language by another: on the other hand, he satisfied himself, such as Leibniz with German and French, of this bilingualism which without any doubt constituted an engine to his thought, a manner to move the frameworks. The affirmation of French, for Descartes, corresponds however to an obvious position: putting in relation philosophy with the free exercise of reason rather than the maintenance of tradition" (page 710 – translator's translation). We can better praise scientific plurilingualism and the unrivalled quality of plurilingualism for literary and scientific creativity.

Monolingualism is the expression of conformism and the movement that the see for an all-in-English in some fields for research and higher level is a show of intellectual gregariousness. During the last thirty years, English was the language of a conquering capitalism and a thought which wanted to be "unique". The neoliberal school imposed itself in a quasi-absolute manner in the economic sciences and management. It was a time of glacial age at the scientific level and the crisis that the system itself started, marks the beginning of a renewal. When modernity and misery develops around the world, it is symptomatic that the debate of the hegemony of English, on plurilingualism and cultural diversity happens within the English-speaking world. Faced by the uniformising threats, the world needs to maintain its diversity. As for research, Chinese people produce in English, but they also produce in their own language.

We invite you to read the three petitions supported by the EOP and to sign them if you wish so:

- <http://www.petitionpublique.fr/?pi=P2013N38649>
- <http://www.petitionpublique.fr/?pi=UFS2013>
- http://www.petitions24.net/contre_la_loi_esr_fioraso_parce_que_pour_la_langue_francaise

To be read on the same matter:

- [Take your pipette \(Le Canard Enchaîné\)](#)
- [Des cursus "tout en anglais" dans les universités françaises?](#)
- [Refusons le sabotage du français \(Cl. Hagège\)](#)
- [Le Premier Ministre recadre Geneviève Fioraso](#)
- [Jacques Attali s'oppose fermement au projet de loi Fioraso](#)
- [L'anglais doit-il être la langue de l'université ? \(Trad. Luisa Penalva\)](#)
- [¿Debe ser el inglés el idioma de la universidad? \(BBC Mundo\)](#)
- [L'université française menacée par le "tout à l'anglais", une enquête du Figaro](#)
- [Geneviève Fioraso répond à l'OEP](#)
- [Non, la langue française n'est pas un frein à l'attractivité des universités \(Pouria AMIRSHAHI\)](#)
- [Warum Deutsch als Forschungssprache verschwindet](#)
- [Tongue-tied? Perspectives on English as the international language of science](#)
- ["Un amour de Mme Fioraso" \(Libération\)](#)
- [Plurilinguismo em contexto universitário: encontro na FFLCH-USP](#)
- [L'attractivité universitaire de la France en question : L'anglais, planche de salut ?](#)
- [Renaissance der Mehrsprachigkeit? – Deutsch als Wissenschaftssprache](#)
- [Libre opinion : l'anglicisation de l'enseignement supérieur, un grave déficit démocratique !](#)
- [Politecnico, i prof sui banchi per poter insegnare in inglese](#)
- [Une grande université italienne passe au 100% anglais \(P. Frath\)](#)
- [Universities: Promoting National and International Multilingualism \(HRK\)](#)
- [La ciência deve ser multilingue : Peter Funke em entrevista](#)
- [Multilinguismo per una società competitiva](#)
- [Lancement d'un plan massif de traduction de revues de référence françaises](#)
- [L'université française va-t-elle parler anglais ? \(Libération\)](#)
- [Rapport : Pour une politique des langues à l'université](#)
- [Studium ohne Deutsch?](#)
- [Fuori l'italiano dall'università? \(Accademia della Crusca\)](#)
- [The use of national scientific languages and English at European universities](#)
- [Une science qui ne parlerait plus qu'une seule langue \(La Croix\)](#)
- [Dilemme pour la recherche suédoise : faut-il publier exclusivement en anglais ?](#)
- [Ne pas marginaliser l'usage du français dans les sciences « dures »](#)
- [Non-English Papers Dramatically Affect Rankings](#)

2) **Among** [the most recent updates of the website](#)

- [Éducatons plurilingues L'aire francophone entre héritages et innovations](#)
- [LRE chiude a Bruxelles e lancia il suo messaggio. Le parole chiave della conferenza](#)
- [Les technocrates / langues spécialisées en contexte plurilingue](#)
- [Language policy: Going \(beyond\) Dutch](#)
- [Ayrault met en garde Montebourg contre un usage intempestif de l'anglais](#)
- [Alsacien : un critère apprécié mais interdit à l'embauche](#)
- [L'AACC se félicite de la propagation du sous-titrage des spots publicitaires](#)
- [Bei DolmetscherInnen für Asylwerber zu sparen ist mehr als falsch](#)
- [Le PTB veut un enseignement bilingue français-néerlandais à Bxl](#)
- [Linguistic relativity](#)
- [Essor sans précédent de la langue coréenne en France](#)
- [Petición a favor de la permanencia del uso del francés en la enseñanza superior](#)
- [L'enseignement du chinois en plein boom en France](#)
- [Reperti di plurilinguismo nell'Italia spagnola \(sec. XVI-XVII\)](#)
- [Wat doet meertaligheid met het brein?](#)
- [Les défenseurs des langues régionales s'impatientent](#)

- [Cortes nas despesas do Parlamento ameaçam o multilinguismo](#)
- [Sprachen-Vielfalt \(Die Welt\)](#)
- [Vous avez dit "Silver economy" ? \(billet d'humeur et d'humour\)](#)
- [Multilingual scholarship and the paradox of translation and language...\(Ch. Steyaert & M. Janssens\)](#)
- [Languages are handy for Foreign Office diplomats, MPs to declare](#)
- [Un manuscrit multilingue par l'Université de Hambourg](#)
- [Discours mobilisateur en faveur de la Francophonie en Roumanie](#)

3) **Supporting plurilingualism and cultural diversity in [becoming a member of EOP](#)**

Linguistic and cultural diversity represents a huge stake at world level. There is no sustainable advancement without safeguarding this diversity.

The EOP tries to put into relation those who are working for this fundamental right: the right to language and to an interlinguistic and intercultural exchange. In a context of globalisation, this fight forced on us as a vital resistance, that the economic crisis should not diminish.

Even though it is mainly based on voluntarism, keeping up the site and writing this letter is costly.

You get this letter free and you have access freely to the resources on the site. Thank you for your support and accompany the EOP in this effort in [in becoming a member](#) or in making a [donation](#).

4) **Creating a directory of laboratories and research teams on plurilingualism, traductology and cultural diversity**

In order to favour the scientific cooperation and grouped answers to calls, the EOP started to create a European directory of laboratories and research teams.

You can register in this directory [on filling the form on line](#). It belongs to you and it will be up to you to keep it up to date.

5) **Announcements and publication**

- Le numéro 1/2013 des Langues Modernes vient de sortir : « *Enseigner la grammaire à des étudiants non spécialistes de langues* ». Ce numéro a été coordonné par Jean-Marc Delagneau. Sommaire et résumés des articles sur le site de l'APLV : <http://www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/spip.php?article4963>
- [La lettre d'info de la Clé des langues, avril 2013](#)
- [Repères-DORIF, Autour du français : langues, cultures et plurilinguisme, n. 2 - volet n.1 - novembre 2012 - Les francophonies et francographies africaines face à la référence culturelle française](#)
- [Lettre d'information n°1 de projet ProM \(Professionnalisation des acteurs de la mobilité en éducation \) du réseau REAL](#)
- [Traduction : nouvelles destinations, Istanbul, 8-10 mai 2013](#)
- [Call for Book Chapters: Crosslinguistic Influence and Multilingualism](#)
- [Plurilinguisme\(s\) et entreprise : enjeux didactiques](#)
- [Enseignement du FLE à l'université : une perspective plurilingue et pluriculturelle](#)
- [Les langues au coeur de l'éducation. Principes, pratiques, propositions](#), sous la direction de Daniel Coste, par Nathalie Auger, Marisa Cavalli, Mariella Causa, Jean Duverger, Pierre Escudé, Cécile Goï, Emmanuelle Huver, Sofia Stratilaki, Sylvie Wharton. La postface est due à Jean-Claude Beacco, 1973, 285 p., E.M.E. Editions
- [Traduire les langues pour naviguer entre les cultures](#), Le français dans le monde n°386, mars/avril 2013
- [Breve historia de la lingüística románica \(2ª ed.\)](#)
- [J.P.Gallerand : « Le tour du monde des langues avec des logiciels de SVT»](#)
- [Apprentissage par l'action et perspective actionnelle pour l'enseignement des LV](#)

- [Premier diplôme universitaire "Bilinguisme chez l'enfant"](#)
- *Mémoires et Imaginaires du Maghreb et de la Caraïbe*, Sous la direction de Samia Kassab-Charfi et Mohamed Bahi, No 15. 1 vol., 336 p., relié, 15,5 × 23,5 cm. ISBN 978-2-7453-2531-0. 75 €
- [n° 4 de la revue de traduction et traductologie Translationes](#), Editura Universitatii de Vest, Timisoara, 2012, 2012. EAN13 : 20672705
- Les biographies langagières au cœur du développement de compétences plurilingues et de lien social, mercredi 15 mai 2013 de 13h à 15h, avec Diana-Lee Simon, Maître de conférence à l'université de Grenoble (LIDILEM) à l'auditorium Marc Blancpain de l'Alliance française de Paris 101, Boulevard Raspail 75005 M° Notre-Dame des Champs
- Voyage en Chine, "la Chine traditionnelle cachée sous la modernité", sous le patronage de la Société de Géographie, Conférencier Philippe Ménard, Professeur émérite à l'université de Paris-Sorbonne, du mardi 10 au mercredi 25 septembre 2013. Voir le programme détaillé du voyage

6) [Re-again the former Newsletters of EOP in clicking here](#)



A PHONIC METHOD

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If you do not wish to receive the newsletter, answer this message with NO as subject.

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