



Migration, Xenophobia: Challenges for the Language

Curriculum

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Abstract

Many Europeans ignore the fact that Europe always has been –and always will be– a multilingual and multicultural society that includes more cultures than the number of member state national cultures which emerged in the 18 th century. In the course of the foundation of national states in Europe, minority cultures, along with their respective languages –even those which originated in Europe– were systemically suppressed in favor of the often forced identification with one national culture and one national language. This act of identification usually led directly to xenophobia by all concerned. In the decades after WWII, it seemed that Europe had rediscovered its humanistic values in the approach to the 21st century. However, when crisis struck, old stereotypes reemerged, which served to allow deeply-seated xenophobic structures to reemerge. It was forgotten that European values, including language and cultural values, had to be carefully nurtured and tended in order to survive. But this is not what happened: research in the field of foreign language acquisition and cross-cultural communication was often sidelined. In the face of the current immigration crisis, it is largely the volunteers and language teachers who are longing for support from the academic world as a means to maintain and foster the concept of a humanitarian Europe. The author argues that a closer understanding of cross-cultural communication issues is directly connected to the necessity to include all languages spoken in Europe in foreign language classes, and that only a multilingual curriculum which comprises a multifaceted concept of culture will lead to mutual respect and understanding among the stakeholders invested in the linguistic and cultural well-being of today's Europe.

Keywords: culture; multilingualism; European refugee crisis

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Why do the senators sit there without legislating?

Because the barbarians are coming today.

What laws can the senators make now?

Once the barbarians are here, they'll do the legislating.

(Constantine Cavafy)

One part of the current displacement crisis in Europe shaking the foundations of the European community is a homemade one: Many Europeans ignore the fact that Europe always has been –and always will be– a multilingual and multicultural society that includes more cultures than the number of member state national cultures that emerged in the 18th century. In the course of the foundation of national states in Europe, minority cultures, along with their respective languages –even those which originated in Europe– were systemically suppressed in favor of the often forced identification with one national culture and one national language. This act of identification often led directly to xenophobia by all parties concerned: both those who were forced to be integrated and those who were forced integrate.

In the decades after WWII and its inhumane barbarity and even more so after the fall of the Iron Curtain, it seemed that Europe had rediscovered its humanistic values as the 21st century approached. However, when crisis struck (or what was perceived as crisis in Europe), old stereotypes reemerged, which served to allow deeply seated xenophobic structures to reemerge and to strengthen geographic and national identity.

In the course of the enthusiastic celebration of European humanitarian ideals, it was forgotten that these values, including language and cultural values, had to be carefully nurtured and tended in order to survive. But that is not what happened: despite the widely recognized and cel-

ebred Common European Reference Frame for Languages (CEFR) as set out in the 1999 Bologna Process reform, research in the field of foreign language acquisition and cross-cultural communication was either completely neglected (by politicians), was sidelined (by the representatives of STEM¹) or came to a complete halt before it had gained a solid research foothold (by a lack of resources).

In the face of the current immigration crisis, it is the volunteers and language teachers who are longing for support from the academic world as a means to maintain and to foster the concept of a humanitarian Europe. I argue that a closer understanding of cross-cultural communication issues and the humanitarian development of a European society is directly connected to the necessity of including all languages spoken in Europe in the teaching of foreign languages. My intention is to make clear the idea that only a multilingual curriculum that encompasses a multifaceted concept of culture—in direct contrast to ideas based on one national culture—will lead to mutual respect and understanding among the stakeholders invested in the linguistic and cultural well-being of Europe today.

1 Background

Although many politicians try to make us believe so, the current refugee and migration situation in Europe is neither new nor the first one. Even the extent and scope is nothing that justifies racist phrases like “refugees are flooding Europe” or “refugee crisis”. The crisis is rather a crisis of European values which in fact are not really defined. A couple of decades ago, Europeans intellectuals with a conservative world view were talking about the Jewish Bolshevik conspiracy against the Occident. The same kinds of people in alliance with religious leaders are now preaching about the Islamic threat against the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe. Earlier in the twentieth century, it was the dichotomy of Christians versus Jews, now it is the dichotomy of the open-minded, tolerant Judeo-Christian European society against the narrow-minded, homophobic, anti-women’s rights fighting Muslims. Now, they pretend

¹ STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics, previously METS)

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to fight for the progress of human rights that European societies made in the last decades. However, in countries all over the world, human rights only are enjoyed by persons belonging to the majority; and many administrators, politicians, intellectuals claim to follow racist argumentation to protect their own populations, but their actual goal is to maintain power and resources for their own community or even worse for their own personal good.

However, many researchers, linguists and language teachers, and luckily many other people, often belittled as *Gutmenschen* (“do-gooders”) see it as their job to take up the fight against this racism and ethnocentrism. The real crisis is not the refugee crisis; it is the crisis of European or human values –an empty phrase being used to create a superficial cohesion of what turns out to be a European Community mostly, but not only, based on economic needs just like a big supermarket.

Based on the undeniable assumption that Europe is multilingual and multicultural, any kind of European xenophobia always turns against Europe itself. This xenophobia is already deeply inherent in the European education system, among other fields, mainly in the foreign language policy of educational institutions and their linguistic research, as well as in the applied linguistic policy of the Council of the European Union and its members’ national(istic) interests.

Refugees, having a lawful right to come to Germany (cf. GG, Art. 16), bring this long-time unattended European dilemma to the surface and are now made responsible for the Europeans’ own failure to attend to their too-long neglected linguistic and cultural problems.

This paper contrasts the situation mentioned above with the ideas of many linguistic researchers in Europe, who have developed comprehensive multilingual curricula to promote equal status to all linguistic groups –minorities and majorities alike. They have also developed a respectful appreciation of their particular cultural characteristics in order to identify with the idea of European countries as equal partners of the European system. In the conclusion, I argue that respectful dealings

among partners with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds is possible, if languages and cultures are treated equally in value in the education system.

2 (Un)intended Linguistic Xenophobia in Educational Settings

– traditional paradigms

Europe is a well-established multilingual and multi-communal region. The European Union has twenty-four official and working languages. They are in alphabetic order: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish (Home 1). The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, which protects the languages of autochthone minorities, was ratified by all 28 member states. In addition, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages was adopted in 1992 by the Council of Europe to protect and promote historical (e.g. Latin), regional and other minority languages (e.g. Tatar in Poland, Meänkieli in Sweden, and even all European sign languages) in the European Union.

These languages differ significantly from the official and working languages mentioned above, but the Convention and Charter only apply to languages traditionally spoken within the borders of any of the member state, thus they are called autochthone minority languages. The legal framework around the EU's language policy shows clearly that the European Union understands itself *de facto* as a multilingual and, no doubt, multicultural society; however, this understanding does not include refugee or migrant languages, especially from non-occidental regions of the world, the so-called allochthone languages. According to Corson (2001, p. 123), language minorities can be found in three different settings:

1. Innate, autochthone language minorities in a specific country (e.g. Danish in Germany)

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2. Language minorities who immigrated a long time ago to a specific country (e.g. Dutch in South Africa)
3. Language minorities who immigrated only recently to a specific country (e.g. Vietnamese in Germany)

The list of languages mentioned above does not include any language of language of recent immigrants to Europe –that means in the last hundred years or so. This not really surprising fact inherently contradicts the EU’s own language policy, since the EU defines in article 1 of the 1992 Charter regional or minority languages mean languages that are:

- i. traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State’s population; and
- ii. different from the official language(s) of that State;
- iii. it does not include either dialects of the official language(s) of the State or the languages of migrants (Home 2).

This definition contradicts the United Nations’ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights signed by most EU member states, which states in article 27: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language” (Home 3).

This contradiction leads to the question: how culture is defined within the EU framework, and do these definitions already imply othering, leading to racism or even xenophobia? When we talk about culture, we usually talk about literature, music and fine arts: everything that can be seen as a creative product of a society. We think less often about issues like how to teach, how to handle problems and even the role of food in a specific society. Starting in the 18th century, culture was regarded as part of the formation of the intellect or mind. “Superior” cultures spent less time on the satisfaction of human basic needs, which left more time for forming the mind, taste and intellect (cf. Müller & Wendelborn, 1998). As Müller and Wendelborn state, culture was the measurement

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of intellectual achievement (cf. Wundt, 1913, p. 22). At the center of attention was not the ability to create culture, but the real achievement of culture: the cultural products themselves (cf. Boas, 1914, p. 3; Boas 1914, p. 173). Only since the middle of the 20th century do scientists plead for the basic equality of all cultures: culture is learned, shared across generation, symbolic, structured and able to adjust itself to new circumstances. That means that culture is neither inherited nor biologically transmitted. It is acquired by means of experience and learning; it is shared by members of a specific group or society and reaches across generations. Culture cumulates and is transferred from generation to generation. Furthermore, it is based on symbols. It is structured in a typical way and interrelated into different fields and even other cultures. Changes in one area cause changes in another area. This process of acculturation is based on the basic human skill of adapting to one's environment (cf. Hodgetts and Luthans 1997, pp. 95f.). Importantly, culture is implicit knowledge which allows one to distinguish different members of different groups, societies or communities from each other. However, difference does not say anything about the value of culture. Cultures possess per se the same value. So do languages.

One might argue that European educational institutions concerned with language teaching (especially after the implementation of the CEFR in 2000, and being a product of the 21st century's educational academic discourse based on a modern action theoretical definition of culture) might have overcome 19th century attitudes toward members of other cultures. Regrettably, these problems are still found among politicians and educators due to limited knowledge of the role of the mother tongue and the role of other prior learned languages when it comes to teaching or learning a new language.

3 Why mother tongue education?

The opinion of some applied linguists and teachers that the L1 has a negative impact on the acquisition of a second language has been successfully refuted at least since the 1980s. Since then, it has been ac-

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cepted that the L1 is the most powerful tool of human socialization and, importantly, the tool that develops meta-linguistics knowledge: the knowledge of how language itself functions. There is no reason to exclude the mother tongue (or any of the other languages spoken by many immigrants) from second-language classes. In the 1980s, it was the state of the art to first stabilize the mother tongue in order to proceed with a second language (c.f. Steinmüller, 1981), whereas today applied linguists assume that early double language acquisition and alphabetization in both languages is imperative (viz. Stölting, 2001; Rösch 2005, p. 22).

The reason not to accept certain languages in schools is rather a socio-political than a psycho-linguistic one: If a language has a presuming high cultural or economic value, e.g. English, Spanish or French in Germany, a multilingual classroom is not subject to discussion among the economic and cultural elites of a country. In contrast, educational politicians and native European parents try to implement these languages in schools as early as possible, whereas non-prestigious languages like Turkish or even Polish as a less prestigious EU language are devalued by mere ignorance (c.f. Gärtling, Plewnia & Rothe, 2010).

The rapidly developing discussion on the important role of prior learned languages on the acquisition of further foreign languages (L3 or tertiary languages; L3 = any language learned after a first foreign language) (viz. Cenoz, 2003; Cenoz, Hufeisen & Jessner, 2001; Hufeisen, 2003; Hufeisen, 2005; de Angelis, 2007; Hammarberg, 2009) shows without any doubt that new languages profit from former language knowledge. The fact that acquiring an L3 is significantly different from learning an L2, both in quality and in quantity, is a well-established fact (Hufeisen, 2003; Hufeisen, 2005; Merkelbach, 2006). Bilingual learners possess better metalinguistic knowledge, better foreign language learning experiences, and better learning strategies than those who know only one language (cf. Mißler, 1999; Hufeisen, 2003, Merkelbach, 2011). These facts do not only apply to foreign languages, but also to heritage, home or family languages as recently shown by Brehmer & Mehlhorn (2015).

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In a 2010 article, Cummins also challenged the traditional monolingual instruction assumption for learners from families with migration backgrounds. He goes as far as to state that data from around the world

“refute any strong interpretation of the time-on-task hypothesis that proposes a direct relationship between exposure to a language and achievement in that language. [...] there is either no relationship or an inverse relationship between achievement in the majority language and instructional time spent through that language” (Cummins, 2010, p. 17).

He furthermore claims that five types of transfer are possible:

1. of conceptual elements
2. of metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies
3. of pragmatic aspects of language use
4. of specific linguistic elements
5. of phonological awareness

These facts are not really new in the discussion of tertiary language acquisition. Butzkamm raised that monolingual instructional dilemma in the early 1970s, when he criticized the monolingual approach in favor of the inclusion of mother tongues into foreign language acquisition (cf. Butzkamm. 1973).

Last decade, Brizić (2007) developed the so-called *Language Capital Model*. The author assumes that language competence and identity can be compared to education or money. They only can produce a surplus and prosper if they are collected and tended to, with other words if the macro-level is suitable for a growth. Only if the societal conditions are suitable, language acquisition as a whole can develop. Her central argument is that the language competence of the first generation is vital for the next generation (cf. Brizić, 2007, p. 173f). She proves in her model that well-developed multilingual competence leading to a flexible identity can only lead to high proficiency in any newly acquired language. In other words: If families, for one reason or another, are not able to speak their proper mother tongues, they lose language, knowledge and

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educational capital. This loss of language capital leads to a negative influence on the acquisition of new languages, since a transfer as described above by Cummins in his interdependence hypotheses will not be possible.

What are the consequences for the current situation in Europe? An exclusion of the allochthone minority languages in primary, secondary and even tertiary education sends the message of devaluation of the speakers' language capital as well as of their respective communities and consequently their cultures. Furthermore, it ignores the fact that missing language capital will influence not only the current immigrant generation, but also their offspring for several generations. Why should a person appreciate a language and the speakers of a language when they (the Europeans) in turn send the contrary message, that the heritage languages of refugees are less valuable than others? And why does Europe itself again create troublesome situations for future generations resulting in racism and xenophobia? One reason is that most politicians are not able to create policies or do not have a vision for the far future, longer than a four-year mandate. Academic research does offer several visions and ideas based on empirically researched data on how to shape a multilingual and, as a result, less xenophobic Europe; however these ideas have to be raised with the people of Europe as the ones who vote politicians into office. Scholars cannot expect politicians to do that job because their immediate interest is not the future of Europe but the present. The responsibility to come up with visions thus lies within the hands of scholars, language researchers and most importantly, in the hand of language teachers. And here we have a vicious circle: the responsibility goes back into the hand of politicians who decide on the employment of educators and researchers.

4 A new set of paradigms in language policy is necessary

Metacognitive, metalinguistic, and learning strategic advantages of teaching and learning heritage languages or L1 to a high proficiency – even if it is an allochthone minority language – is necessary in the sense of a *flexible identity* (cf. Brizić, 2007, p. 190). The inclusion of learn-

ers' multilingual backgrounds not only fosters positive feelings towards one's own culture and language, but also towards cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe. Inclusion supports the identification process of all language learners, bringing in the sense of *language capital* (cf. Brizić, 2007, pp. 173-202, see also Brizić, 2009), which allows general access to language acquisition itself and becomes an equal partner within the framework of the multilingual and multicultural values of Europe. Language must be seen as capital to which everyone the Europe has equal access and not as an artificial rare resource with limited access.

Migrants do in fact know that learning a European language is important in order to live in Europe. The contrary would not make sense, and really no one would deprive oneself access to a key resource that is necessary to survive and succeed in a country. And it does not make sense to keep people away from access to the key resource, namely language proficiency, if we need skilled, highly qualified and knowledgeable workers in Europe for an economically successful Europe. If we want to make language acquisition an integral part of the integration process, we must create conditions for the motivation to learn a European L2. That means Europe has to provide positive stimuli in the fields of language acquisition, foreigner's laws and working environment. If not, Europe creates again a class of economic and intellectual disadvantaged people.

As the research into third language acquisition mentioned above correctly states, foreign language acquisition can only be successful, if it builds on prior language capital; so, in our particular case, teachers of German as a foreign language must understand their teaching of German as an addition to the individual's multilingualism. If foreign language acquisition, as understood by many European politicians, is understood as a narrowing or deleting force of identity, it will not work in the long run. This approach does not only deprive the first generation of its language capital but also many more generation to come (cf. Brizic, 2007).

Successful foreign language teaching needs to relate to the different life situations, socio-cultural and educational background and the economic

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setting of migrants. One language course does not serve all migrants, since there is no homogeneous group of migrants. Volunteer language teachers do their best in the refugee camps, however they are not trained language teachers. My colleagues and I have developed two of the first training courses to support volunteer language teachers that explain how to help learners to learn a foreign language (Merkelbach & Sulzer, 2016). Unsurprisingly, however, during the evaluation process it became obvious that volunteer teachers –even if they have a pedagogical background– cannot substitute for proper foreign language teachers. Learners bring different language learner strategies, different foreign language acquisition experiences as well as different foreign languages to their education, (cf. Bushati, Niederhoff & Rotter, 2016) which do not allow clear CEFR categorization. BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) are not enough for a life in a foreign country: CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) is the necessary goal for achieving integration (cf. Drumm & Henning, 2016). The submersion principle (hardly any language specific training for pupils in schools) failed, as the principle of immersion rather appears to be more successful. Immersion supports learners linguistically in regular content classes and leads to higher educational success plus a more profound knowledge of the new L3 (viz. Gogolin et al., 2011; Schulte-Bunert, 2016). That requires a long term plan for its execution and maintenance, as shown in the state of Schleswig-Holstein (cf. Schulte-Bunnert, 2016). The same author states that children from families with a migration background only have a chance to succeed in school education, when they are supported linguistically. It is only academic success that gives them the chance to escape from the margins of the majority society and to move into the center of society (cf. Schulte-Bunert, 2004).

Research in second/foreign language acquisition came to a standstill as its political and social importance was considered less important than the economic motives (see Kelly, 2016, p. 44). We currently find hiring qualified foreign language teachers difficult since a career in the field does not pay off. Few can survive on the money earned alone. Some universities now try in haste to develop new study programs for teaching foreign languages. However, they do not take into account the wish of

students for a secure future. But language classes for migrants do face specific challenges which require more research.

5 Challenges for the Language Curriculum for migrants and refugees

The most important paradigm to change is the idea that language teaching, pedagogy and language education is a genuine and worthy topic of scholarly experts, practitioners and researchers alike, and not a topic of politicians. However, their teaching and research requires political (or state) support. But only experts, practitioners and researchers can create a valid language policy for Europe; and, in addition, educators must continually convince the people of Europe of the importance of their findings. Multilingualism does not mean an accumulation of single languages; prior language knowledge has to be included into the process of learning foreign languages. That would, on one hand, mean cooperation across the languages spoken in Europe and, on the other hand, a detachment from the idea that some languages are more prestigious than others.

Another challenge for language teaching pedagogy is detachment from the idea of the goal of native speaker competency in a foreign language. We need to define what speech act competence means and should look more into receptive and domain specific multilingualism, e.g. a person who repairs washing machines in Germany does not have to know the specific language of literature interpretation in German. (However, we should of course not deprive that person of the opportunity to read literature in any language.) At this point, language learning motivation and the aptitude to learn foreign languages comes into the center of attention: Language pedagogy scholars should have a closer look at the learning strategies and techniques of learners, since learning itself is a rather individual competence and strongly related to a person's socialization and cultural tradition.

A next step would be the replacement of the monolingual habitus (cf.

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Gogolin, 1994) in educational institutions. Teachers of all subjects should understand that their subject is related to language and that pupils –and not only non-native speakers– need linguistic support in order to understand content. Drumm (2016) has clearly shown that science teachers are not aware of the specific language requirements for their subject. They lack metalinguistic knowledge. We must support teachers to reflect upon their own language in order to teach pupils content in a linguistically supportive manner. Additionally, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) must move into the center of attention, including all heritage or family languages. A possible way to proceed would be a Multilingual Whole School Policy (MWSP) as developed by Hufeisen (c.f. Hufeisen, 2011; Hufeisen, 2015; Hufeisen, accepted).

The following summary of the MWSP is based on Hufeisen (accepted), a forthcoming paper to appear in the *International Journal for Applied Linguistics*. The MWSP as proposed by Hufeisen has no readily identifiable subjects that are taught during classroom hours, but all subjects contribute to dealing with relevant content. The MWSP may be seen as a principle that repeals the traditional classification between language and content subjects in a sort of curricular plurilingualism with the objective to integrate various aspects of institutional language and content learning in order to harness synergies of languages, such as grammar terminology, planning and teaching content, and foreign language learning strategies. In short, a MWSP fosters the systematic inclusion of many languages into the curriculum, in the educational institution of the school and the language education of all learners, including those with a migration background. Within the context of a MWSP, foreign languages merge on an early stage into combined language and content learning. As numerous studies have shown, this combination of language and content subject learning does not compromise communicative competency in the foreign languages (cf. for example recently Lamsfuß-Schenk, 2011). In this case, it is especially important to ensure that a bilingual content subject instruction is not only conducted in the particular foreign language, but both the target foreign language (which may be the majority language) as well as in the respective heritage or family languages. The theoretical groundwork of Hufeisen's thoughts is

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based on multiple language learning and plurilingualism as discussed in Aronin and Hufeisen (2009) and Hufeisen and Jessner (2009). The first foreign language (L2) always serves as a steppingstone for multiple language learning because its teaching (and consequently learning) prepares learners to learn additional foreign languages. Together with L1, the L2-instruction must develop language awareness, language learning awareness, interlingual sensitivity, the ability to compare between languages, and other crosslinguistic strategies for learners to be able to learn a second foreign language (L3) and further foreign languages.

Another important aspect for all models of multiple language learning is the assumption that the competency of learning a foreign language promotes and fosters the development of the foreign language learning strategies. Jessner (2004, p. 21) calls this in her Dynamic Model of Multilingualism the “M(ultilingualism)-factor” and Hufeisen refers in her model (Faktorenmodell) to it as the “foreign language-specific factors” (Hufeisen, 2011, p. 278).

Hufeisen (2010) describes some of the core principles of the MWSP as follows: Any MWSP must include the existing individual plurilingualism of the learners into the institutional context, in order to make learners aware of their often existing individual plurilingualism. In addition it is necessary to raise the awareness of all teachers in regard to all aspects of plurilingualism, multiple language learning, teaching plurilingualism and language learning in general, as well as to systematically promote the awareness of languages and language learning awareness across different languages. This can be manifested by frequently employing foreign language learning strategies across languages involving intercultural aspects of languages and content subjects. In order to achieve these synergies of multiple language learning must be created to facilitate the learning and teaching of (foreign or second) languages.

All together, the basic idea of this model is that the majority language is learned and taught throughout the entire period the learner attends school, whether as the first language, second language or first, second

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or nth foreign language. A remedial instruction offered by intensive classes in majority as a second language should be available up to the point at which students who have needs in this language can communicate in this language at the levels of everyday language (or BICS), and at the levels of the language of education (or CALP) (cf. Gogolin, 2003; Gogolin, 2004; Gogolin, 2005; Cummins, 2000).

Parallel efforts can be made to include the heritage languages in the CLIL subjects to support the instruction of other subjects in the language of origin such that the learners also learn to interact in the particular language of origin about the concepts that have been studied. The great success of dovetailing the instruction in the languages of origin has been discussed for example by Fredriksson (in press) for refugee children in Swedish Schools.

Hufeisen's model includes all foreign languages spoken in educational institutions. However, it would shake the fundamentals of traditional school education, since it moves away from teaching and learning facts to a strictly constructivist and procedural approach of education, holding learners responsible for their learning.

6 Conclusion

We have a long way to go. A lot of research is done but now it is the duty of politicians to implement research results. But, let's face it: An implementation of research results would mean a financial burden on, and investment into, the future. It is usually the critics who come up with discrediting half-true statements and rather trigger xenophobia than xenophilia due to the fear of losing ground in the fight for apportion of resources and power. In short, they try to avoid investments that do not surely produce revenues within their tenure. They would rather invest in banks because their revenues are assumingly sure.

Now, Europe has the chance to overcome old resentments against multilingual societies as an obstacle to a one- language-one-nation-state

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model. Europe is neither one nation nor one state; Europe is colorful and manifold and must develop new ideas in order to become a place that offers home, refuge and liberty to people. We must overcome old and comfortable ideas, which never worked well, get out of the comfort zone and try to think or develop new ideas in order to endeavor in new, unknown territory, and not restore old nationalistic, colonial and racist thinking. A new language and cultural policy is the first step. To my great surprise and pleasure, it is the volunteers and practitioners who drive the new development, not the politicians or academics. I am not surprised about the first group, since they are not really famous for developing new ideas. But, I am more than disappointed about the second group, which should initiate and develop new ideas. However, being one myself, I understand them: Experts refuse to be a part of this huge project, since the framework and conditions given in political, public discussion are flatly stupid, not to say racist, in order to catch voters for the next election. Scholars refuse to take part in this discussion unless they are not heard by politicians first. Any researcher, applied linguist or teacher would appear unqualified when (s)he settles for the unqualified conditions set by politics. Scholarly experts should not be sought in order to justify politics, but they should be heard in order to establish an empirically profound and academically sound language policy. Researchers have found significant amounts of knowledge and resources which can be drawn upon, but they are meaningless without action. .

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