

Introduction: Interpreting and Translation in the EU

Fotini Apostolou

[...] one must not forget that the relations of communication par excellence – linguistic exchanges – are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers or their respective groups are actualised.
Bourdieu 37

The European Union as an Institution

This section of the *GRAMMA/ΓΡΑΜΜΑ* issue will focus on interpreting and translation services provided by the institutions of the European Union, which according to Kaisa Koskinen is “a prototype case of an institutional setting” (7). In her study *Translating Institutions*, Koskinen identifies the features shared by institutions:

[...] any institution can be defined as a form of uniform actions governed by role expectations, norms, values and belief systems. [...] Institutions are [...] embedded in the society that endows them with legitimacy and authority. The institution endows people with particular roles, and they are then expected to act accordingly. These roles outlive their holders, thereby giving the institutions consistency and stability. This consistency is a result of the normative constraints of actions. The constraints are imposed by rules, and these rules and the values and beliefs behind them all constitute an institution. (17)

Cultural and linguistic diversity are two of the key elements of and challenges posed by the Union, and the institutional framework that has been put into place allows the EU to deal with this diversity. The four papers hosted in this section give the reader a broad idea of the interpreting services provided in the various

bodies of the Union (mainly by the European Parliament and the European Commission), of the interpreter training provided by the EU, and the issue of human rights in relation to translation and interpreting. However, they will also provide readers with a glimpse of the EU's internal structures, their relations to other institutions and organisations, their impact on the communities, and their role as producers of ideas and ideologies.

Complexities of the Translation and Interpreting Process

Ever since the onset of the Union (European Coal and Steel Community) in 1952, the equality of languages was promoted. Adopted in 1958, Council Regulation No 1 determined the languages to be used by the European Economic Community; these were the four languages of the six member states of the Community (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Germany): Dutch, French, German and Italian. The Council Regulation of 1958 has been amended a number of times, with the most recent amendment determining the current official and working languages of the EU: "The official languages and the 23 working languages of the institutions of the Union shall be Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish".

It would be important to note here the difference between *official* and *working* languages as given by Michele Gazzola in his paper "Managing Multilingualism in the European Union: Language Policy Evaluation for the European Parliament":

Although no difference is made between official and working languages in Regulation no. 1/58 (art. 1), in the literature there is an operational distinction between them. Thus, "official languages" of the EU are generally defined as those used in communication between institutions and the outside world, and "working languages" of the EU are those used between institutions, within institutions and during internal meetings convened by the institutions [...]. (396)

And there is the potential of further enlargement of the Union, which has 27 member states at the moment,¹ and is holding accession negotiations with five candidate countries (Croatia, Iceland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey) and four potential candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia). More member states would mean more official languages added in the agenda.

¹ The 27 member states of the EU are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

Despite the complexity and the high cost of translation and interpreting services with 23 official languages at the moment, the above policy has been retained so far. The principles of equality and diversity have been ongoing as suggested by Barry Wilson's comment in his paper "The Translation Service in the European Parliament":

The Council conclusions of 12 June 1995 on linguistic diversity and multilingualism in the European Union (EU) emphasised that "linguistic diversity must be preserved and multilingualism promoted in the Union, with equal respect for the languages of the Union and with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity". Parliament has argued in a number of its resolutions in favour of retaining the system of using several languages. The Nyborg report, for instance, emphasises the use of the Union's official languages on an equal footing at all meetings of Parliament and its bodies (with interpreting into and from all languages and use of all languages in both speech and writing). (2)

Interpreting Services

Consequently, the European Union is the largest employer of interpreters worldwide. The three main institutions of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Court of Justice,² have extended interpreting services, which are provided through separate bodies for each of the above institutions: the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences, the European Commission Directorate-General for Interpretation (the largest conference and interpreting service in the world),³ and the Court of Justice Interpretation Directorate.⁴ Moreover, the European Parliament has its own broad-

²The European Parliament, the only directly elected institution of the EU, debates and passes laws, together with the Council of the European Union, scrutinizes other EU institutions (e.g. European Commission), adopts the EU budget, together with the Council (http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-parliament/index_en.htm). The European Commission proposes new laws to Parliament and Council, manages the EU's budget and allocates funds, enforces EU law (together with the Court of Justice), and represents the EU internationally (http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-commission/index_en.htm). The Court of Justice interprets EU law to make sure it is applied in the same way in all member states, and settles legal disputes mainly between member states' governments and EU institutions (http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/court-justice/index_en.htm).

³For a detailed discussion of the European Commission interpreting service, see Christian Heynold's "Interpreting at the European Commission".

⁴The DG Interpretation of the European Commission seems to be the most organized and extroverted of all interpreting services of EU institutions, boasting its own website (http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/j_8/), its social network (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Interpreting-for-Europe/173122606407>), and an online intranet, SCICNet (<http://>

cast service (EuroparlTV) which broadcasts all Parliamentary sessions, either online or from an archive, and the viewer can choose the language s/he wishes to listen to (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/el/home.aspx>); the European Commission also has a Webcast portal which allows access to live internet broadcasts and video recordings of conferences in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe, as well as European Commission documentary videos on various policies, again giving the viewer the possibility to choose the language s/he will listen to (<http://webcast.ec.europa.eu/eutv/portal/about.html>). This gives the viewer an idea of the interpreting process, since s/he can hear the interpreters' performance in any of the 23 languages s/he chooses, in the case of the Parliament, or the working languages, in the case of the Commission.

The Directorates-General of the Parliament and the Commission also provide interpretation services for the meetings of other institutions and bodies of the EU, including the European Council, the Council of the European Union,⁵ the Committee of the Regions, the Court of Auditors, the European Ombudsman, the Data Protection officer, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank, and other agencies and offices in the member states. DG Interpretation of the Commission states on its website under the title "Why are all those languages important?": "Giving everyone at the table a voice in their own language is a fundamental requirement of the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. In many cases, the legal acts resulting from discussions will have an immediate and direct effect on people's lives. There should be no obstacle to understanding and putting views in meetings. The citizens of Europe should not have to be represented in Brussels by their best linguists: they can send their best experts. DG Interpretation will make sure they understand each other" (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/about-dg-interpretation/index_en.htm).

scic.ec.europa.eu/scicnet/jcms/jop_5003/home). The European Parliament and the European Court of Justice give online information on their interpreting services in a number of webpages (http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_12357/; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/expert/staticDisplay.do?id=54&pageRank=10&language=EN>; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/public/staticDisplay.do?id=155&pageRank=4&language=EN>; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/public/staticDisplay.do?id=155&pageRank=4&language=EN>; http://www.europarl.europa.eu/multilingualism/interpretation_en.htm; etc.).

⁵The European Council has its own "Language Service" whose "main task is to provide all the translations necessary so that the documents on the basis of which the European Council and the Council hold their discussions are available to them in all the official and working languages. [...] The Language Service plays no part in multilingual oral communication at meetings, which is a matter for the European Commission's Directorate-General for Interpretation" ([http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-\(1\)/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/contacts/languages-(1)/the-language-service-of-the-council-general-secretariat.aspx?lang=en)).

Cost

With 500 staff interpreters, 300-400 freelance interpreters per day, 2,700 accredited interpreters, 10,000-11,000 meetings a year, the European Commission had a total operating cost for interpreting services in 2005 of 100,000,000 euros. As the official site of DG Interpretation estimates (the figures have not been updated), “the cost of interpreting is likely to increase by 20-40%, when full capacity is reached in the new Member State languages”, since “after the 2004 enlargement, DG Interpretation needs 15-40 interpreters/day per new language” (http://scic.ec.europa.eu/europa/jcms/c_6636/what-we-do).⁶ The Directorate General for Interpretation and Conferences of the European Parliament employs approximately 430 staff interpreters and has at its disposal a reserve of some 4,000 freelance interpreters, while the European Court of Justice employs 70 permanent interpreters. The European Parliament gives some interesting figures on its website under the title “European Parliament – Never Lost in Translation”:

The EU is a “multicultural, multilingual democracy” and it uses three alphabets: Latin, Greek and Cyrillic. [...] here are a few statistics about multilingualism and its costs.

- For 2006 the cost of translation in all EU institutions is estimated at €800 million, in 2005 the total cost of interpretation was almost €190 million.
- Multilingualism expenditure represents over one third of the total expenditure of Parliament.
- The EP translated 673,000 pages during the first half of 2007 (165,000 of them externally).
- Since 2005 the EP has translated over a million pages a year.
- EU system on average requires over 2000 translators and 80 interpreters per day. (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?language=en&type=IM-PRESS&reference=20071017FCS11816>)

Lost in Translation?

The above excerpt is a good starting point to show the absence of a translation policy or a concrete translation methodology in the EU. Looking for the Greek version of the English text, so that I quote the official translation, I realised that there are significant differences between the Greek and the English text, despite the fact that the date given at the top of the page is the same for both versions (29-10-2007). The English text has a short introduction:

⁶The European Commission also gives a different version of the cost, by providing the figure per citizen per year (0.21 euros/European citizen/year).

The EU is a community of 27 countries, whose unity and diversity is expressed via 23 official languages, as well as a plethora of other national, regional and local languages. It is home to nearly 500 million people with diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Multilingualism contributes to European values of democracy and equality. The European Parliament is committed to debate and discussion in all EU languages. The reason for this and how it is achieved is explained in this focus. Preserving this unique linguistic diversity is a big challenge. As the EU has recently started operating in 23 languages, it is worth looking at the meaning of multilingualism, its benefits and its costs. The EU is a “multicultural, multilingual democracy” and it uses three alphabets: Latin, Greek and Cyrillic.

The Greek version of the above introduction is the following:

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση αποτελεί μια κοινότητα 27 κρατών μελών, των οποίων η ενότητα και η πολυμορφία εκφράζεται με τη χρήση 23 επίσημων γλωσσών, καθώς και μιας πληθώρας άλλων εθνικών, περιφερειακών και τοπικών γλωσσών. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση αντιπροσωπεύει σχεδόν 500 εκατομμύρια ανθρώπους από πολλά έθνη και με διάφορες γλώσσες, και χρησιμοποιεί τρία αλφάβητα: το λατινικό, το ελληνικό και το κυριλλικό. Διαβάστε το σχετικό φάκελο και μάθετε περισσότερα για την πολυγλωσσία!

[The European Union is a community of 27 member states, whose unity and diversity is expressed through the use of 23 official languages, and a plethora of other national, regional and local languages. The European Union represents almost 500 million people from many nations and with different languages, and it uses three alphabets: the Latin, the Greek and the Cyrillic. Read the relevant file and learn more about multilingualism].

The Greek version omits two thirds of the introduction; from “with diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds” to “multilingual, multicultural democracy”. The omitted part obviously provides some fundamental information on multilingualism, which is why “[t]he European Parliament is committed to debate and discussion in all EU languages”, since “[t]he EU is a ‘multicultural, multilingual democracy’”.

The English version continues with five bullet points as follows:

To set the stage for the rest of our article here are a few statistics about multilingualism and its costs:

- For 2006 the cost of translation in all EU institutions is estimated at €800 million, in 2005: the total cost of interpretation was al-

most €190 million.

- Multilingualism expenditure represents over one third of the total expenditure of Parliament.
- The EP translated 673,000 pages during the first half of 2007 (165,000 of them externally).
- Since 2005 the EP has translated over a million pages a year.
- EU system on average requires over 2000 translators and 80 interpreters per day.

The Greek version is again significantly different, this time not only because of the omission of some parts, but also through the addition of others. The bullet points in Greek are introduced only with the short phrase: “Είναι γεγονός ότι:” [It’s a fact that], without the reference included in the English version that these figures will “set the stage for the rest” of the article. But what is even more interesting is that the Greek version adds a bullet point, thus raising their number to six, and placing this additional point first in the list. The point reads as follows:

Το συνολικό κόστος της μετάφρασης και διερμηνείας σε όλα τα όργανα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΕΕ) το 2005 ανέρχόταν στο 1% του γενικού προϋπολογισμού της ΕΕ (περίπου 1,123 δισ. ευρώ, δηλαδή λιγότερο από 2,3 ευρώ ανά κάτοικο ετησίως – το κόστος ενός καφέ)

[The total cost of translation and interpreting in all the European Union (EU) institutions in 2005 amounted to 1% of the general EU budget (almost 1.123 bil. euros, that is, less than 2.3 euros per citizen annually – the cost of a coffee).]

From this addition, placed first, it is evident that the Greek version attempts, through the reduction to the cost per citizen and the comparison to “the cost of a coffee”, to change the reader’s perspective concerning the cost of interpreting.

What about the remaining 21 languages of the EU? Do they include this bullet point or not? From some research, I found out that 18 languages include the reference to the cup of coffee: Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French (adding an exclamation mark at the end: “le prix d’un café!”), Hungarian, Italian (presenting all points in a paragraph, without any ordering), Lithuanian (here the cup becomes a few: “kiek kainuoja keli puodeliai kavos”), Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish. The remaining two, German and Latvian, include the information about the cost without the reference to the cup of coffee.⁷ Irish is not included in the versions provided on this

⁷ For German: “Gesamtkosten für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen in allen EU-Institutionen: 1 Prozent des Gesamthaushalts der EU im Jahr 2005 (ca. 1,123 Mrd. Euro, d. h. weniger als 2,30 Euro jährlich je Bürger)”; and for Latvian: “visu ES iestāžu tēriņi mutiskai un rakstiskai tulkošanai 2005. gadā bija 1% no ES kopējā budžeta (apmēram 1,123 miljardi eiro jeb mazāk nekā 2,3 eiro (1,61 lats) no katra ES pilsoņa)”.

page. So, it is only in English that this bullet point has been completely omitted.

The above case raises a number of questions: Is there an original text and translations of it? If yes, which one is the original and why are there these significant differences among the different versions? Is there a body that supervises the outcome of translations, as well as the uniformity and consistency among texts in different languages? Was it the translator who decided on the above changes or some other individual or body?

These questions remain unanswered, as there is no official reference to a translation policy or methodology in the European Union. Therefore, despite the substantial role of interpreters and translators, who are a vital part of the multilingual and multicultural profile of the Union, they are mostly absent, together with any reference to a specific translation policy on the part of the Union. Koskinen makes this point in her work:

Translating and interpreting are [...] among the core functions in the EU institutions. Their relative absence in research reports and text books on EU institutions is therefore striking. For example, an internal anthropological survey of the European Commission [...] ignores translators and interpreters; an anthropology of the European Union [...] only mentions them in passing, and a recent text book on the administration of the European Union devotes one page to “linguistic duties”, listed just before a slightly longer section on house-keeping, repairs and cleaning [...]. (63-64)

However, there have been efforts to facilitate the role of translators mainly. An example is the work of the Directorate General for Translation (DGT) of the European Commission which provides on its website “Translation and drafting resources” for contractors translating into the languages of the EU (http://ec.europa.eu/translation/index_en.htm). Nevertheless, these exhaust themselves in technicalities and generalities, such as “Text production”, “The European Union on the Web”, “Computer Assisted Translation”, “Field offices for multilingualism”, etc., and are available in English, German and French.

Proving the lack of an overall policy again, the Greek version of this website *does* provide methodological references in an extensive guide entitled “Style guide for the drafting, translation and revision of legal acts and other documents of the European Union in Greek” [Οδηγός για τη σύνταξη, τη μετάφραση και την αναθεώρηση των νομικών πράξεων και λοιπών εγγράφων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στα ελληνικά] which, quite interestingly, starts with an epigraph from Cavafy.⁸ The guide is quite extensive (417 pages) and very comprehensive, but it

⁸The lines are from the poem “For Ammonis, Who Died at 29, in 610”: “Πάντοτε ωραία και μουσικά τα ελληνικά σου είναι. Όμως τη μαστοριά σου όληνη τη θέμε τώρα” [Your Greek is always elegant and musical. But we want all your craftsmanship now – Transl. Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard]. The poem refers to the drafting of a Greek epitaph for a poet, involving an act of “translation”, since this epitaph will allow “Our sorrow and our love move into a foreign language” [Σε ξένη γλώσσα η λύπη μας κι η αγάπη μας περνούν].

is an anonymous body of work, with no reference to its author(s). The second part of the guide, entitled “The principles, the methodology and the practice of drafting, translating and revising European Union documents” [Οι αρχές, η μεθοδολογία και η πρακτική της σύνταξης, της μετάφρασης και της αναθεώρησης των εγγράφων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης], makes extensive reference to translation practices and processes but the message is quite obscure and complicates rather than clarifies the situation.

Starting with definitions, things are quite blurred from the beginning of the chapter on translation, where the author(s) attempt to identify/define “The author and the drafting process” [Συντάκτης και σύνταξη]:

Specifically for legal documents, we can observe the following: these two parties (the author of the original and the translator) do not set off from the same starting point, and the roles they play are not completely identical. The author of the original, often based on the outcomes of intra-service and extra-service consultation preceding the drafting of the legal document (at times these develop parallel to the drafting), essentially creates the message that the community legislator wishes to convey and expresses it in the working language of the general directorate s/he works for. On the contrary, the translator does not participate in shaping the core of the given message (only marginally, within the context of his/her cooperation and dialogue – on translation problems – with the author of the original), but merely reformulates it, in order to make it accessible to the reader of his/her language.

However, this somewhat “deficient” (in relation to the author of the original) mission of the translator does not deprive him/her of his/her capacity as an author. But as it would be irrational to misunderstand the evident dependence of the translator on the author of the original, it would be more appropriate to use the terms *primary author* for the author of the original and *secondary author* for the translator (and, correspondingly, *primary drafting* and *secondary drafting*). (84, my translation)

Although the excerpt attempts to clarify the roles of author and translator, it ends up confusing the two parties of the drafting process, blurring even further the already hazy boundaries between original and translation in the EU. So, the first paragraph of the excerpt states that “the translator does not participate in the shaping of the substance of the [...] message” but the following paragraph suggests that “this somewhat ‘deficient’ [...] mission of the translator does not deprive him/her of his/her capacity as an author”. This confusion is further enhanced in the following excerpt from a footnote in the same guide: “We should not forget that – at least theoretically – *the various language versions of a community legislative act are not ‘translations’ but equal and equally authentic ‘originals’*. The Greek trans-

lator can evidently translate e.g. a regulation from English, but his/her ultimate goal is to express authentically in his/her language, *as an author*, the will of the community legislator” (ft. 73, 103, emphasis added). Here, the translator is evidently awarded the role of an “author” who produces “equal and equally authentic ‘originals’”!

If one overlooks the confusion caused, all the above examples seem to imply an empowerment of the translator, either indirectly (through the differences in the different language versions and the absence of an original) or directly (through the above guide of the Greek section of DG Translation). Therefore, the lack of an explicit and strictly defined translation policy proves to enhance the power of the translator and his/her upgrading to a co-author of a text, since s/he is probably considered the best equipped individual to determine the localisation needs of a particular text.

Last but not least, although the EU is the largest employer of translators and interpreters worldwide, it does not have a Code of Ethics for its interpreters or translators, unlike the majority of international bodies and organisations who employ interpreters and/or translators.⁹

So, the only “translation policy” in the EU is the one that Mårta Fischer suggests in her work “Language (Policy), Translation and Terminology in the European Union”: “[I]n spite of the absence of any explicit reference to a translation policy, the management of translations, costs, logistics and translator training constitutes the elements of a translation policy at institutional level” (22).

Multilingualism Policy

Multilingualism is the broader cross-cutting policy framework within which translation and interpreting fall. As the European Commission Communication “Multilingualism: An Asset for Europe and a Shared Commitment”, issued in 2008, stipulates:

In a multilingual European Union [...] i) everybody should have the opportunity to communicate appropriately in order to realise his or her potential and make the most of the opportunities offered by the modern and innovative EU; ii) everybody should have access to appropriate language training or to other means of facilitating communication so that there is no undue linguistic obstacle to living, working or communicating in the EU; iii) in the spirit of solidarity,

⁹ Indicatively, we can refer to a number of codes of ethics: Code of Professional Ethics in AIIC (International Association of Conference Interpreters) (<http://aiic.net/ViewPage.cfm/article24.htm>), Code of Ethics of Interpreters and Translators Employed by the International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia (<http://www.tradulex.org/Regles/ethICTFY.htm>), National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care NCIHC (National Council for Interpreters in Health Care) (<http://data.memberclicks.com/site/ncihc/NCIHC%20National%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>) etc.

even those who may not be able to learn other languages should be provided with appropriate means of communication, allowing them access to the multilingual environment. (3)

But, as Marco Benedetti suggests in his article in the present volume, multilingualism “is not only learning languages but also spreading the expression of our different cultures through translation. Europe has always spoken through translation”. The issue of multilingualism, therefore, is quite complicated and involves a host of issues, as Michele Gazzola very aptly puts it: “What could be seen at first sight as an unjustified indulgence towards ‘small’ languages and a waste of money is in reality a highly sensitive political question. It is common knowledge that languages fulfill two functions that cannot easily be separated: a communicative function, i.e. the transmission of information in a broad sense, and a symbolic function, associated with cultural and political traits, for example with people’s sense of national identity” (394). Michele Gazzola identifies legal, political and cultural reasons in favour of multilingualism. These are related to issues of equality of rights, democratic participation, equality of representatives, prestige of Member States, role of political forces in representative institutions and bodies, linguistic and cultural diversity; reasons against full multilingualism relate to efficiency in communication and budgetary issues (397-400). But, as the same author concludes: “The perception of how expensive a service is depends on the subjective value that the observer or the society attributes to it” (400).

Equal Treatment of Languages

According to Joshua Fishman, “[...] efforts to promote equal treatment of all official languages in the administration of the EU have fallen flat. Although 15 percent of the European Commission’s 17,000 personnel are translators, interpreters, and terminologists, EU institutions use only a handful of ‘working languages’ to conduct daily business” (38). With 506 possible language combinations (23 x 22 languages), the interpreting process is rather chaotic, both in its organisation and its performance. Christian Heynold wrote as a representative of the European Commission in his paper “Interpreting for the EU” (1994): “For our Service a Community with 15 languages is a ‘nightmare scenario’. This would imply 210 language combinations as opposed to the present 72; this requires at least 45 interpreters in 15 booths at each meeting” (17). As Ulrich Ammon suggests: “Official EU comments or policy guidelines regularly praise the multitude of languages as part of the Community’s cultural ‘wealth’ and stress the need for their maintenance (this was especially the rhetoric during the European Year of Languages in 2001), while non official observers occasionally characterize it as a ‘predicament’ or source of communicative ‘chaos’” (321); “EU linguistic diversity has also been seen as a hindrance to economic progress or political integration and democracy” (322). Therefore, in recent years, due to the growing number of languages, there has been a change in this approach, as many institutions use a subset of languages

(mainly English, French, German and Italian) as their working languages, while the remaining are merely EU's official languages. The fact is that English has to a large extent become the main language of the EU, with the exception of the European Parliament which, as stated in Olga Cosmidou's paper, is the only institution that "functions in its day-to-day operations with a regime of 23 official languages". This evident predominance of English triggers protests, since, according to Ulrich Ammon, "[f]ear of loss of function is [...] widespread among the large language communities or their linguistically sensitive citizens and is not based on mere imagination" (323).

The following table compiled by Michele Gazzola (2006) shows what the current state is like with official and working languages in EU bodies and institutions:

Official and working languages in the EU institutions, advisory bodies and ECB

Institution or body	Official languages	Working languages
European Parliament	All 20 languages	All 20 languages
Council of the European Union (Ministers' meetings)	All 20 languages	All 20 language
European Commission	All 20 languages	English, French, German
Court of Justice	All 20 languages+Irish	French
Court of Auditors	All 20 languages	English, French, German
Economic and Social Com. Committee of the Regions	All 20 languages	All 20 languages
European Central Bank	All 20 languages	English

Recruitment Process

The European Union interpreting services employ both staff interpreters and accredited freelance interpreters. For the staff interpreters (permanent members of staff), each of the three services (the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Court of Justice) holds an open competition every time staff interpreters are needed. The competition is organised by EPSE, the European Personnel Selection Office. As concerns freelance interpreters, who will be called to work in specific assignments and are not permanent employees of the Union, inter-institutional accreditation tests are carried out jointly by all three interpreting services of the European Union. These tests provide interpreters accreditation to work as freelance interpreters for the EU, without any nationality requirements or specific language combinations (all languages worldwide can be included). To be eligible to take this inter-institutional accreditation test, an interpreter must fulfill one of the following conditions: hold a recognised university degree in interpreting; hold a recognised university degree in any subject and a postgraduate qualification in conference interpreting; hold a recognised university degree in any subject and have documented experience in consecutive and simultaneous conference interpreting. The test is carried out by a panel of professional interpreters from the three interpreting services of the EU. This accreditation, apart from al-

lowing the interpreter to work for the EU, is also a form of proof of the interpreter's abilities in the language combinations s/he has been tested on.¹⁰

Training Support

The EU does not only provide interpreting services for its meetings and missions; fostering the above policy of multilingualism and respect for language diversity across the union, it promotes the interpreter profession by providing support to university programmes for interpreters not only in European countries (including third countries) but also in Africa “in order to help the development of a network of African interpreters for the more and more frequent meetings of institutions”, as Benedetti suggests. Thus, it has developed a special service for university support, both financial, through the provision of grants, and material, through the pedagogical assistance programme. The former are provided by the Directorates General for Interpretation of the European Commission and the European Parliament “to co-finance actions which serve to promote post-graduate courses in conference interpreting” (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/cooperation-with-universities/training-grants/index_en.htm). Pedagogical assistance includes “sending experienced interpreters to universities to improve training; sending interpreters to sit on examination boards; providing teaching tools [...], e.g. video-cassettes, manuals; organizing university study visits to DG Interpretation” (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/cooperation-with-universities/pedagogical-assistance/index_en.htm).

Moreover, the EU provides for further training for its interpreters, as Alison Graves from the European Parliament suggests in her paper: “To fulfil our mission statement to provide high quality interpretation for all the meetings of the European Parliament (EP) and the other institutions and bodies we cover, and taking account of the fact that the European Parliament is perhaps the most multilingual of all international organisations, [...] further training for interpreters is the only way to keep pace and ensure that our standard of service is maintained at the high level our clients have come to expect and demand”.

The European Union (Directorate General for Interpretation and Conferences of the European Parliament and Directorate General for Interpretation of the European Commission) has also moved a step further and provided the framework for a Masters programme at European level. The programme, known as EMCI (European Masters in Conference Interpreting), was launched in 1997 after identifying “a shortage of highly-qualified conference interpreters, particularly for language combinations which include less widely-used and less taught languages”, as we are informed on the website of the programme (<http://www.emcinterpreting.org/whatis.php>). The programme provides for “a core curriculum for interpreter training at post-graduate level which is being offered across the participating institutions [...]. The partner institutions pursue a common policy on student re-

¹⁰For more information, see http://europa.eu/interpretation/accreditation_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/become-an-interpreter/interpret-for-dg-interpretation/index_en.htm.

recruitment and assessment and are committed to quality maintenance and regular reviews of the programme to adapt to changing needs and new developments". The programme has offered insight on interpreting training not only to participating institutions,¹¹ but to other institutions as well that are not included in the programme but have decided to follow the basic guidelines of the programme.

Interpreting and Human Rights

The European Union, as stated above, considers multilingualism beyond the learning of languages, because "the language issue today has acquired also a dimension that concerns rights and not just languages", as Benedetti suggests. It has set up a number of working groups, comprising experts in different fields, in order to comment on the current state of affairs concerning interpreting and translation services for immigrants and refugees, legal interpreting in the EU member states and beyond, possible solutions to problems and deficits, improvement of training for public service interpreting, and future prospects. The European Union Directive 2010/64/EU of the EP and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings is proof of the constant effort for improvement of the language services provided for people who are faced with language barriers. As Benedetti again suggests: "The most important field where the language professions in general and interpretation in particular are reaching a new frontier is legal interpreting". Thus, EULITA, the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association, launched in November 2009, aims at "contributing to activities geared to achieve high-quality standards for interpreting services in judicial settings" and "harmonizing the legal interpreting and translation regimes" in EU member states, as Liese Katschinka, President of EULITA, informs us in her paper "Interpreting and Human Rights".

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

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¹¹ The participating institutions include: ITAT, Karl-Franzens-Universität, Graz, Austria; Artesis Hogeschool, Antwerpen, Belgium; Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic; CBS, Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen, Denmark; Turku University, Turku, Finland; ESIT, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France; FTSK, Johannes Gutenberg Universität, Mainz, Germany; Eötvös Loránd University (Elte), Budapest, Hungary; SSLMIT, Università degli studi di Trieste, Trieste, Italy; University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland; Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal; Facultatea de Litere, Universitatea "Babeş-Bolyai", Cluj-Napoca, Romania; Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Universidad de la Laguna, La Laguna, Spain; TÖI, Stockholms Universitet, Stockholm, Sweden; ETI, Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland; Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey; University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom.

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