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LANGUAGES OF REGIONAL COMMUNICATION (*ReLan*) IN EUROPE: THREE CASE STUDIES AND A RESEARCH AGENDA

Rudi Janssens, Virginie Mamadouh and László Marácz

Abstract

Languages can be classified according to the scope of the communication they enable. It is customary to talk of languages of local or of global communication. In the realm in between we distinguish Languages of Regional Communication (*ReLan*). We define "regional" here as communication beyond the realm of the local community. We are particularly interested in *ReLan* amidst linguistic diversity, either in multilingual regions when different language groups coexist or in transnational communication. The paper introduces three: the diversity of *ReLan* situations: Hungarian in the Carpathian Basin, German in Central Europe, and Dutch, French and English in the Brussels Capital Region and its agglomeration. The conclusion presents a typology of *ReLan* (regional vernacular, vehicular and *lingua franca*) based on the absence or presence of native speaker competence where the mix variant is taken as the unmarked case and a research agenda for languages of regional communication.

Key words: Language of Regional Communication, Regional Vernacular, Regional Lingua Franca; Dutch, English, French, German, Hungarian; Carpathian Basin, Central Europe, Brussels Capital City Region, European Union.

Linguistic diversity and languages of regional communication

Europe has been and still is characterized by linguistic diversity (see Extra & Gorter 2008). In the age of modern nationalism this linguistic diversity has been territorialized: it was contained in bounded spaces. Roughly speaking, the pattern of linguistic diversity was connected to the pattern of organized politics in a system of the European nation states, each with a different official and national language. In such a

system, transnational communication or in other words communication across the borders of the nation state becomes problematic for a lack of a common communicational language, as the state border represents and reproduces a linguistic boundary as well. Communication across such nation state borders then depends on the existence of a common language of communication. The same applies to communication across administrative borders separating groups using different languages within states.

To complement the sustained attention paid to the role of English as *language of global communication* in such situations, we underline in this paper the importance of *languages of regional communication* (*ReLan*) and illustrate that with some (representative) European examples. These languages of communication are often the heritage of past political constellations, the evolution of the European political maps and the contingent drawing of state borders. As a result linguistic constellations do not always fit the expected model of the mosaic of linguistically homogenous and distinct nation states, linguistic communities are sometimes divided by state borders and vernacular languages of formerly dominant classes in long disappeared political formations have remained important media of cross-border communication.

The paper begins with a discussion of different types of languages of regional communication, the corresponding linguistic constellations and political institutions. After these definitions and a historical overview, we present three regional cases in more details: Hungarian in the Carpathian Basin, German in Central Europe, and Dutch, French and English in the Brussels Capital Region and its agglomeration. We conclude the paper with an assessment of the importance of languages of regional communication, in the light of the evolution of European linguistic diversity and with the formulation of a research agenda of the different modes of communication deployed in combination with languages of regional communication.

Towards a Typology of Regional Languages of Communication

Languages of communication (as opposed to languages of identification) are often called *lingua franca* but the term has several connotations. The name *lingua franca* or *sabir* was the pidgin spoken in the Mediterranean from the 11th until the 19th century, especially in the Levant and in the harbours of North Africa. It featured elements of Roman languages (Italian, Provençal, French, Catalan, Castilian and

Portuguese) as well as borrowings from Turkish, Greek and Arabic. The term *lingua franca* is widely used to characterise older examples like Aramaic in the Persian Empire, the Greek *koine* in the times of Alexander, Latin in medieval Western Europe, Arabic in the Islamic world, French in diplomatic exchanges from the 18th century onwards. The role of *linguae francae* in European history will be discussed in more detail below. Narrow and broad definitions of a *lingua franca* differ in the sense that in narrow definitions no one speaks the *lingua franca* as her or his mother tongue, while in the broader definitions mother tongue speakers are outnumbered by other users of the language. We define a *lingua franca* as 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue, nor a common (national) culture, and for whom the *lingua franca* is the chosen foreign language (Hülmbauer et al. 2008, 7).

A *regional lingua franca (ReLF)* is a *lingua franca* used in a specific (cross-border) region, as opposed to a *global lingua franca* that is known in the whole social system, such as English in our age of globalization, Latin in the former Western Roman Empire and Greek in the former Byzantine Empire. Region refers here to macro regions (regions larger than a state or a political entity), or to transnational regions (regions divided by a state border).

It is useful to use the term *lingua franca* in the narrow sense and not for situations when the vehicular language is also the mother tongue of part of the community. This is an important distinction because it involves different power relations. One group adopting the language of the other group as their common language of communication is generally the outcome of specific asymmetrical power relations. At the same time, these linguistic practices generate further asymmetries, as mother tongue speakers are likely to be more proficient in the shared language of communication than the foreign language speakers, and to feel and behave as the owner of the language and the others as guests. In the case of a *lingua franca* in the narrow definition, no group of L1 speakers can claim ownership of the language and there may be a sense of equal communication between the linguistic groups involved. Examples of a *vehicular language of regional communication* include Russian in the Baltic states; examples of a *regional lingua franca* would be French between Romanian and Greek or between Polish and Russian cultural elites.

We need to distinguish another specific type of language of regional communication (Table 1). In some cases people from both sides of a state or administrative border can communicate with each

other, because they share the same vernacular language. Inhabitants of the borderlands share a *regional vernacular language* (for example across the Austrian-Slovenian border with Slovenian speakers in Carinthia and across the French-German border with German speakers in Alsace) where subsequent state borders have divided linguistic communities. Another possible variant concerns border regions with a language different from both state languages (for example Low-Saxony dialects at the Dutch-German border or Basque at the French-Spanish border. Political institutions, especially regarding language ideology, language planning, language policies and language education often generate in the long term different variants of the language (see for example Stevenson 2002 for a study of the language differences between German in East and West Germany). The difference between a regional *vernacular* language and a regional *vehicular* language discussed above, could be seen as a matter of emotional attachment linked to identity, customs and tradition: communities use to communicate in a certain vernacular languages and the vernacular is generally the mother tongue of the majority speakers in the region (although they might master another state language for other purposes) while the latter is generally the widespread second or third language of the majority in the region (who have different mother tongues).

In European history, prior to the establishment of modern nation states, the *language of regional communication* was usually the prestigious language of the ruling class or majority group, who had enough political power to impose their language on other parts of the political entity (be it a modern state or its predecessors). Many languages served as *language of regional communication*, like Latin, Greek, German, Italian, French, English and Russian (Ostler 2006). In the Roman Empire two 'official' languages of communication coexisted, koine Greek and Latin. They were used in Europe throughout the Middle Ages. Koine Greek was the *lingua franca* in the Byzantine Empire and its successor states, while Latin was used in the Western parts of Europe. Latin maintained its position as an important European *lingua franca* throughout the medieval period because it was the Roman Catholic Church's language of communication. It was also the language of the emerging scientific community until the early nineteenth century. German was the vehicular language in large areas of Europe for centuries, mainly on the territory of the Holy Roman Empire, as well as one of the official

languages of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Goebl 1994, Rindler-Schjerve 2003,).

With the rise of modern nation states, linguistic homogenization took place in most European states, especially in Western and Northern Europe. In Central and Eastern Europe, homogenization was delayed, partly because industrialisation and economic development were late, partly because it was longer ruled by multilingual empires: the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

As for the relations between the emerging states, French was the *lingua franca* of diplomacy from the seventeenth century onwards and the language of European literature in the eighteenth century. Italian was spoken as a language of culture in the main royal courts of Europe and among intellectuals from the fourteenth century to the end of the sixteenth century. Later, French replaced Italian as a *lingua franca* among educated Europeans. The rise of English as a *lingua franca* in diplomacy started after the First World War, when the United States became a major power at the Versailles 1919 Peace Conference. It gained even more influence after the Second World War when the United States became one of the leading powers in global relations.

Finally, Russian was the language of regional communication of the Soviet Union, and after 1945 in the Soviet sphere of influence. After the Soviet implosion, Russian remained the language of communication in the Commonwealth of Independent States and still is, to some extent, among the older generations in Central and Eastern European countries that were part of the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold War.

Next to these larger European languages, others have been used in the past as *language of regional communication*. Again the changing European political map largely explains the rise and fall of these languages of communication. Polish was in the nineteenth century a language of communication in Central Eastern Europe, especially in regions that belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, an empire that collapsed with the Third Partition of Poland in 1795 (Hupchick & Cox 2001). For several centuries, Polish was the main language spoken by the ruling classes in Lithuania, Ukraine and the modern state of Belarus. Another interesting case is Serbo-Croatian, a notion created in the nineteenth century to boost the claim to independence of different Southern Slavs, by downplaying the differences between Southern Slavic varieties. After the

establishment of Yugoslavia, it functioned as the state language of communication in all of the former Yugoslavian republics, including Slovenia and Macedonia, although it was not very effective (Ivanova 2010). The concept of Serbo-Croatian remained a fiction as it did not result in a codified and unified Serbo-Croatian of any kind (most obvious was the enduring use of different alphabets), and it exploded with the Yugoslavian civil wars of the 1990s. Nowadays Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, and Montenegrin are conceived of as different state languages, and intercommunication has become more difficult for ideological reasons.

Most of the earlier languages of regional communication stopped functioning as such, after the political entities to which they were connected collapsed or lost their prestige. After the First World War with the dismantlement of multinational empires and the establishment of nation states, regional vehicular languages were marginalized as the result of the institutionalisation of the national languages of the newly established or strengthened nation states.

With the European integration and the evolution of nation states into Member States of the European Communities and later the European Union, multilingualism has regained more status and practical importance (Mamadouh 1999, 2002) and the need for regional languages of communication grew with the intensification of supranational integration, multilevel governance and international migration. English is the most important foreign language in the European Union. While English has only 13% native speakers within the Union, it is further spoken by 38% of the Union's population as a foreign language. This gives a total of 51% of the Union's population speaking English which is clearly much more than German or French (European Commission 2006). Although German-speaking communities represent the highest percentage of Europeans, 18% of the population, German is used only by 14% of all the Union's speakers as a foreign language. This amounts to 32% of the total number of speakers. French ranks third with 12% mother tongue speakers and 14% foreign speakers, which amounts to 26% of the total speakers in the Union. In today's Europe, English can be seen as the *regional lingua franca* par excellence (one with a substantive group of mother tongue speakers), the lingua franca of the continent, while it is at the same time the global *lingua franca*, the language of global finance, global trade and global governance and the academic world community (Ostler 2010). Its expansion is however not wide enough (51%!) to function as the truly common language of EU citizens

(House 2008). Besides, this broad picture neglects the differences in social and territorial distribution between different parts of Europe and the existence of other languages of communication in smaller regions.

In the rest of this paper we want to highlight this diversity and deal with three types of cross border communication. In the first case we will look at a *regional vernacular language* in a linguistic community that has been divided by state borders after World War I and where the common language has remained a cross-border language of communication among Hungarian speakers (or ethnic Hungarians) until today. In the second case we will look at a *regional vehicular language* in Central Europe. Despite the redrawing of state borders, the displacement of linguistic minorities, and the loss of prestige after World War II, German remained an important language of regional communication in that region. Its spread and status has been boosted with the 1990 German reunification and the 2004 European enlargement. Finally we will look at the complex situation of the Brussels Capital Region (an officially multilingual region in the Belgian territorial arrangements) and its agglomeration in Flanders (where Dutch is the official language). The traditional vernacular Flemish (or Dutch in its literary variant) has been gradually replaced by French as the main language of the Belgian state (especially prior to the institutionalisation of trilingualism and federalization), but it regains now some importance with the changing political and economic balance in the country, while thanks to the strengthening of EU institutions and the associated influx of expats, English functions increasingly as a regional *lingua franca*.

Each section aims at providing a historical background of the present situation, a short description of the status and use of the languages (including English) in the region, the policies of the relevant states, the impact of Europeanization and the prospect for multilingualism and intercommunication in the near future.

Transnational communication and border: Case Studies

Hungarian in the Carpathian Basin

In 1867, the Hungarian kingdom became an autonomous entity within the Hapsburg Empire. As a consequence, the Hungarian language became an official state language and functioned also as a *language of regional communication*. In the Hungarian areas of the Hapsburg empire, the Nationality Law XLIV (1868) established a

hierarchy of the regional languages of communication stipulating that Hungarian was the language of the state but it did allow the use of any other (regional) vernacular language as an official language at the local level, both in governmental administration, judiciary, church organizations, and education (Bideleux & Jeffries 1998, Marácz 2010b). This state of affairs lasted until the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the First World War.

Due to the peace treaties ending the First World War, including the Treaty of Trianon (1920) (Chaszar 1982, Goldstein 2002, 31-33, Bowman 1923), the Hungarian language was used as the state language in the truncated kingdom of Hungary, while the Hungarian language received a minority status in the newly established states of Central and Eastern Europe, i.e. Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Austria. Due to the nationalist climate of the Interbellum the borders in Central-Europe became closed. It was hardly possible for ordinary citizens to cross them. Hence, the Hungarian language remained in all areas outside Hungary a local vernacular language being formally granted a minority status. However, even these minority language rights were hardly realized in practice. Because of the fact that Czechoslovakia seceded its easternmost parts to Soviet Ukraine a Hungarian minority came to live in Ukraine as well after the Second World War. The situation characterized by isolation in the Interbellum remained more or less unchanged during the Cold War. Only at the end of the Soviet period cross-border traffic increased, and the Hungarian language started to develop into a regional vernacular language.

Due to the collapse of communism and the new state formation in Central and Eastern Europe ethnic Hungarians have come to live in eight different countries in Central Europe (see for the data Table 3), including the Republic of Hungary (10.558.001), Romania (1.604,266), Serbia (339,491), Croatia (22,355), Slovenia (7,637), Austria (6,763), Slovakia (567,296) and Ukraine (155,711) (Marácz 1999, Van der Plank 2004, Fenyvesi 2005, Gal 2008). Ethnic Hungarians who live in all these states are autochthonous inhabitants of the region, especially in those areas that belonged to the former parts of the Hungarian kingdom. In the Hungarian discourse, this territory is often called the *Carpathian Basin* being a macro region that is defined by specific geographical, common socio-cultural and linguistic features (Teleki 1923, Szabó 2006, Marácz 2009, 117-118).

Let us consider in more detail the geo-ethnic linguistic distribution in the Carpathian Basin. In table 2 (see Appendix) the most important ethno-linguistic groups are listed based on the census data of 2001 (Kocsis, Bottlik & Tátrai 2006, 28). This table demonstrates that the biggest ethno-linguistic group in the Carpathian Basin is the ethnic Hungarians, i.e. ethnic Hungarians have a relative majority of almost forty percent. Table 3 (see Appendix) based on the census data of 1991 displays the distribution of the ethnic Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin in the eight different states (Kocsis and Kocsis-Hodosi 1995, 17) and again based on the census data of 2001 the corresponding percentages of the ethnic Hungarian groups in eight different states are spelled out (see Table 4). Most of the ethnic Hungarians live in the Republic of Hungary where they constitute more than 90 percent of the population (Tóth 2005). In all other seven countries ethnic Hungarians form a numeric minority. Ethno-linguistic Hungarian communities live mostly in compact territories bordering to the Hungarian kin-state (Tóth 2004, Kovács & Tóth 2009, Batory 2010, Marácz 2010a). In Slovakia, almost the entire ethno-linguistic Hungarian group lives in the southern parts of the country in a stroke of thirty kilometers along the border with Hungary that is 681 kilometers long. Although the ethnic Hungarians form a substantial group in Slovakia, i.e. more than ten percent of its inhabitants counting more than 560.000 people their geographic distribution is rather complex causing that ethnic Hungarians do not always have an absolute or relative majority in the areas they live in. In the Sub-Carpathian region of Ukraine, the ethnic Hungarian communities are located along the Ukrainian-Hungarian border (Beregszászi & Csernicskó 2003). In Romania, most of the ethnic Hungarians live in the northwestern part of the country, i.e. the Transylvanian area which is a traditional multi-ethnic, multilingual region (Cadzow et al 1983). In fact, the Hungarian minority in Transylvania lives in the northern part of the area stretching from the Hungarian-Romanian border to the Szeklerland at the feet of the Eastern Carpathians mountains deep into the centre of present-day Romania (Schöpflin 1993). In Serbia, the Hungarians live in the northern part of the country, i.e. the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Korhecz 2009). In Croatia, the ethnic Hungarian community lives in the Pannonian part of the country (Lábadi 2003). In Slovenia, the ethnic Hungarian community lives in the Mura-region and in Austria the Hungarians live in the Burgenland area (Szoták 2003).

Hence, the Hungarian language in the states with Hungarian minorities has a limited distribution restricted to the areas where the ethnic Hungarians live. Due to the fact that in these ethnic areas outside Hungary the official language of the states involved, i.e. Slovak, Ukrainian, Romanian, Serbian, Croatian, Slovene, and German, is used next to the Hungarian language these areas are multilingual. In fact, all Hungarian speakers are plurilingual speakers controlling the local Hungarian vernacular and the official language of the state they are citizens of. The Hungarian language is used by Hungarian minority speakers as a regional vernacular language in case of communication with Hungarian speakers from Hungary and the other Central and East European states with Hungarian minorities. The official state language is however used by Hungarian minority speakers as a language of regional communication with the authorities and L1 speakers of the Slovak, Romanian etc. state language. The latter speakers have a monolingual attitude toward regional languages of communication. Note that this asymmetric relation is a source of conflict. The majority speakers have more power than the minority speakers. This conflict is further sharpened by the fact that the geo-ethnic distribution of ethnic Hungarians in eight Carpathian Basin states is often perceived by the neighbours of Hungary as the rising of the Hungarian geopolitical power in Central and Eastern Europe, although ethnic Hungarians do not form a political nation but are rather a transnational cultural and language community connecting a family of related cultures in the Carpathian Basin in the sense of Smith (1991, 172) and Vertovec (1999, 2000, 2007).

The language policies of the states in the Carpathian Basin are in fact nationalist language policies in which each single state has declared an official state language, i.e. the language of the majority speakers (see Table 5). A policy of inclusion is pursued in Austria, Slovenia and Croatia where a Hungarian language minority is living in specific regions, i.e. Burgenland, Mura-region and the Pannonian part of Croatia respectively. In these areas the Hungarian language enjoys equality next to the official state language, i.e. German in Austria, Slovenian in Slovenia and Croatian in Croatia (Nádor & Szarka 2003). In these countries although the minority language is spoken in a country pursuing a nationalist language policy supporting the official language without restrictions, minority languages have an official status in the areas where the Hungarian minorities live (Szarka 2003). The position of the minority languages in the

Carpathian Basin, including the Hungarian language is the best in Vojvodina that has become an Autonomous Province (AP) within Serbia (Szilágyi 2009). The statute of the AP of Vojvodina has been agreed upon by the Serbian Parliament on November 30, 2009, afterwards it has been ratified in the Parliament of Vojvodina on December 14, 2009 and has entered into force on January 1, 2010. This statute defines the AP of Vojvodina as a multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural community. The Hungarian minority has received the status of a national community as well being equal with the Serbian majority national community (see article 25 of the Statute of the AP of Vojvodina). According to article 26 of the Statute (see Official Journal of the AP no. 17/09) the AP of Vojvodina recognizes six official languages, including Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Croatian, and Ruthenian. In this case, we can speak of a language policy of inclusion in a multilingual setting.

The situation is radically different in Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine where the Hungarian language is not equal in legal terms to the official state languages, i.e. Slovak, Romanian, and Ukrainian respectively, not even in the territories where the ethnic Hungarians live and form a majority (Péntek 2006). This means that in these countries the Hungarian language and culture face restrictions in the administrative, educational, judicial and public domains. These states follow a policy of 'exclusion', that is discriminating language laws restricting the use of the Hungarian language in the official and public space. Hence, this does not match EU's democratic standards. Although this language policy of exclusion hinders Hungarian in functioning as a regional vernacular language in the Carpathian Basin, Europeanization of Central Europe is actually supporting this function of Hungarian. The borders have become more porous in Central and Eastern Europe and there is a lot of cross-border mobility in the region (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005, Schwellnuss 2005). Minority rights protection in the region has improved (Kántor et al. 2004). This is true for the ethnic Hungarian communities as well. In the present day political situation it is allowed to speak Hungarian, to open Hungarian schools, to use the Hungarian language, although conditioned in public space. Ethnic Hungarians are able to organize themselves and to form political parties and other societal interest groups and organizations to raise their voice to protect the Hungarian language and culture both in local parliaments and in the European Parliament. At present the Council of Europe

specifies two legal treaties that are relevant for the protection of minority languages and national and ethnic minorities, namely the Language Charter signed on November 5, 1992 in Strasbourg and the Framework Convention concluded on February 1, 1995 in Strasbourg (Trifunovska 2001). These conventions provide protection for the speakers of Hungarian in the states where the Hungarian language is a minority language (Skovgaard 2007). The Framework Convention supports the positive discrimination of national minorities on the basis of human rights and general freedom rights, it recognizes the fact that minority rights are group rights and that cross-border cooperation is not only restricted to states but also local and regional authorities can take part in this. Table 6 demonstrates that all the states concerned, even those with the biggest groups of ethnic Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, namely Romania, Slovakia, and Serbia have ratified the Framework Convention.

The Language Charter has been motivated by the fact that languages are part of a common cultural heritage and that the protection of languages is necessary to counterbalance assimilatory state policy and uniformization by modern civilization (Brubaker et al. 2006). Note that all the Central and Eastern European states with Hungarian linguistic minorities have ratified this charter as well (see Table 7). In principle, the Hungarian language communities all over the Carpathian Basin enjoy some legal protection due to these two conventions.

The position of Hungarian as a regional vehicular language is becoming stronger in the Carpathian Basin. As a consequence, multilingualism will increase in this macro region. Most Hungarian minority speakers are plurilingual speakers, whereas the L1 speakers of the state languages have a monolingual attitude (Horváth & Tódor 2009). On the other hand there are a number of non-Hungarian L1 speakers who have developed a receptive competence of Hungarian. Hence the use of communication modes as receptive multilingualism or code switching (see Backus & Jørgensen, this volume) is certainly possible.

According to the 2005 data of the Special Eurobarometer 243 (European Commission 2006) of the three most widely known foreign languages in Central European states with Hungarian minorities we find interesting data that reflect upon the position of plurilingual speakers. Apart from the national languages mentioned above, English as a language of global communication and German as a regional vehicular might belong to the communicative repertoire

of speakers in Central Europe, including the Carpathian Basin. Data bearing on this are available from five countries where Hungarian L1 speakers live, including Slovenia, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary. The data regarding the three most widely known foreign languages in these countries demonstrate that English, German or French can not effectively cover all communicational needs in the Central European area. In Slovenia, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary English scores 56%, 43%, 26%, less than 25%, and 16% respectively, and does better than German, i.e. 45%, 33%, less than 5%, 28%, and 16% respectively. These percentages show that neither English nor German will be sufficient for communicational purposes in Central European states with Hungarian minorities. Hence, communication between Hungarians from Hungary and non-Hungarian speakers in the neighbouring countries can be most effectively complemented with the interpreter mode in which plurilingual speakers from the Hungarian minority communities mediate between the parties that have diverging monolingual competence.

German in Central Europe

The radical redrawing of the political map after World War I did not only affect the Carpathian Basin. Apart from the dismantlement of the multinational empire, the borders of the German Empire were also significantly redrawn. Both significantly altered the spread and the status of the German language in the region. Over the past millennium German speaking communities have played a recurrent role in the development of Central and Eastern Europe, such as Baltic Germans since the Northern crusades in the earlier Middle Age, and later Volga Germans – the German colonists recruited by Catherina the Great to develop agriculturally the Volga region. In the nineteenth century two German speaking powers competed for the political unification of the German speaking nation and the control of the region: Prussia and Austria. Eventually Prussia achieved German unification in a new German Reich, and took its place as a major European nation state, challenging British hegemonic power and French cultural power, while Austria remained a multinational Empire until the Great War. These two political powers greatly contributed to the status of German as a language of regional communication in that part of Europe. Finally German settlers overseas were numerous, and German became an influential minority language in North and South America. This changed when

the US joined the Great War. German became a suspected language in North America and disappeared from public life.

At Versailles in 1919-1920, Germany lost territories and German populations were displaced westwards. Most of the German speaking areas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were united in the small republic of Austria, nevertheless leaving many German speaking communities outside the territory of the new nation state (such as South Tyrolians in Italy, Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia, Danube Swabians in Hungary and Romania, and Transylvanian Saxons in Romania) in a fashion comparable to the impact of the Trianon Treaty on Hungarian speaking communities outside the territory of Hungary (as described above).

During World War II the German language was associated with the territorial expansion of the German Reich. After 1945 Germany and Austria were divided in occupation zones, and eventually three new states were created with the division of Germany. The territory of Poland was shifted westwards and large communities of German speakers were expelled from Poland (Silesia) and Czechoslovakia (Sudetes). During the Cold War, ethnic German migrated to the Federal Republic (West Germany). Linguistic homogenization policies were also more aggressive in most states than before, so that the use of German in local communities faded away. German vanished in some regions as the vernacular language after centuries of prevalence. Stevenson & Carl (2010) speak of a "dramatic shift from German to Hungarian and Czech and the "lost generation" of ethnic German who grew up in the Cold War period either genuinely monolingual in the official state language or with little more than receptive competence in the language of their heritage" (p.203).

The burden of the Nazi heritage and its modest international role in the new states also affected German's status as language of regional communication in interstate and cross state relations. German remained nevertheless an important language shared by five states, Western Germany, Eastern Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. This position as shared official language is complemented by the formal status of the German language in Belgium and in Italy (South Tyrol) while it remains a regional vernacular language across the borders of these territories for example in Alsace (France) and in South Jutland/ Northern Schleswig (Denmark).

A new turn in the situation of the German language occurred after the fall of the Iron Curtain (1989). The reunification of Germany (1990) and the establishment of the European Union (1992) brought about the return of German as regional vehicular language. In the European Union, all official languages are working languages, but with the successive enlargements and the rise of the number of official languages, some languages have come to dominate internal communication in the main institutions. French is the pivotal language of the Court of Justice, English at the European Central Bank, English and French (although in a diminishing share) at the European Commission. Since the German reunification in 1990, German is by far the largest mother tongue of the EU, a situation strengthened by the accession of Austria in 1995. In addition, reunified Germany is gradually taking the lead in European politics, while in the Cold War its economic power was coupled with French political and military power. In becoming a "normalized" Member State, no longer assuming European interest to be necessarily German best interest, Germany became more self-conscious and argued to keep German as the third language of communication at the European Commission (Ammon 2006). Nonetheless German was not used during the negotiations with the former Eastern European states for their accession, nor French for that matter. This can be seen as a missed opportunity to boost their status as languages of regional communication in the European Union. It is even more puzzling that in some cases senior civil servants and diplomats in candidate member states with a good command of German or French would have been much easier to find that younger colleagues speaking English.

As we have mentioned before, German is the most frequent mother tongue in the EU and the third language when foreign language speakers are taken into consideration. The percentage of German speakers varies, however, between member states. It is the highest in Luxembourg, where German and French are spoken alongside Luxembourgian, and in the Netherlands and Denmark where it is a commonly taught foreign language (in the Netherlands still compulsory for a few years in secondary education). Higher percentages are found in Central Europe (highest in Slovenia, less than 20% in Poland). Everywhere but in Luxembourg and Hungary, English is the most popular foreign language. (European Commision 2005). In the UK, Ireland, Malta, and Cyprus, where English is the official language or highly prevalent, French is much more common

than German as foreign language, as it is in Romania, Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

With the Europeanization of the minority policies of applicant Member States, German regained formal status in the Polish Opole region (Silesia) and in the Slovakian municipality of Krahule (Blaufuss in German). Under the European Charter for Regional Languages, it is protected to various degrees in Hungary (since 1995), Denmark (2000), Slovakia (2001), Ukraine (2005), the Czech Republic (2006), Romania (2007) , Poland (2009), and Bosnia Herzegovina (2010).

Beyond the general trends described above regarding the position of German, local situations differ strongly (Carl & Stevenson 2009). Wilkinson describes for example the linguistic divide on the German-Polish border in the double city of Görlitz and Zgorzelec, underlining that this border is frequently referred to as "die härteste Sprachgrenze Europas" (Wilkinson 2009, 73). The number of school pupils enrolled in learning German in Polish state education raised from 16% to 34% between 1992/1993 and 2004/2005 while Russian dropped from 34% to 7%, but English was even more successful, up from 18% to 65% (Jaworska 2009, 62). In the Czech Republic the difference between English and German is much smaller in secondary education, but English is learned by many more Czech children in primary schools than German (Nekvapil & Sherman 2009, 126). In Hungary the same trend is visible regarding Russian between 1991 and 1999, but German is more prevalent than English in primary and vocational schools, but less in high school (Maitz & Sándor 2009, 161).

Finally it is worth recalling how European integration interacts with the renewed valuation of German in Central Europe. This is illustrated by the attempt to link the two 2007 European Capital Cities of Culture through the German language: Luxembourg and Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in Romania. This initiative stressed the similarities between the Moselle franconian variants of German spoken both in Luxembourg and in Hermannstadt (Horner 2009).

The example of German demonstrates the impact of (geo)political changes on the status and use of a language of regional communication (see also Clyne 1995). German is now again an important vehicular language and might be seen as a potential candidate for a regional *lingua franca* in the European Union. Ammon (2005) argues that due to the fact that Germany is the most powerful economic country in the Union, its language might become more

influential outside the Union, but at the moment this is certainly not the case, and German has a geographically limited function, whereas English and French have a global scope (De Swaan 2001, Maurais & Morris 2005, Calvet 2006,). Let us now turn to a region where the EU has an even more direct local linguistic impact: Brussels.

Dutch, French ...and English in the Brussels Capital Region

At the moment of its creation as a nation state in 1830, Belgium was composed of the Flemish provinces in the north where different Dutch dialects were spoken, and the Walloon provinces in the south where the majority of the population spoke a French dialect. The elites in political, economic, social and religious life in both parts of the country spoke French. French, in those days the *lingua franca* of the European upper class, was adopted as the national language of the new state. Brussels was a Flemish city dominated by the Francophone minority. The linguistic divide was a social one as well. The craving for upward social mobility became the driving force behind the process of frenchification of the Dutch-speaking majority. Census data show that where in 1866 39.3% of the population of the city of Brussels was monolingual Dutch-speaking, this figure dropped to 9.9% in 1947. On the other hand, the number of monolingual French speakers increased from 20.1% to 36.2%. The overall majority was bilingual. There was a clear shift from monolingual Dutch-speaking families to become bilingual, later switching to French. This implies that Brussels was composed of two language groups but not of two different ethnic groups. In 1947, 74.2% of the inhabitants of the municipalities of the current Brussels Capital Region claimed to use French as the language most spoken in daily life. French became the regional vehicular language.

The main goal of the ten-yearly census in Belgium was the decision on the linguistic status of the municipalities. The law stipulated that in municipalities where the minority exceeded 30%, their language should be used in the administration. When they reached the 50% threshold, the municipality became bilingual. The growing bilingual agglomeration around the city of Brussels was highly contested by the Flemish Movement, a political movement striving for the emancipation of Flanders and the Dutch language. The local municipalities, responsible for the data gathering and eager to adopt the high status language as an official one, were accused of fraud. These malversations, together with francophone political campaigns linking the use of Dutch to the Nazi occupation, heated the

political climate. The political conflict lasted till 1961 when the language censuses were abolished and the language border was fixed (Witte & Van Velthoven, 1999, 2010). The principle of territorialism became the rationale behind the Belgian language policy. Three official languages are recognized: Dutch, French, and German. The official language of each municipality is stipulated in the Constitution.

Monolingual municipalities are the norm, but there are two exceptions. The first are the municipalities with so-called "language facilities" where another language than the official language can be used in contact with the government and in primary education. In Flanders (for example in a few municipalities with "language facilities" in the suburban ring around Brussels) French can be used alongside Dutch; in Wallonia a few municipalities have Dutch language facilities alongside French, while at the German border municipalities in the German community have facilities in French alongside German, and a few neighbouring municipalities have facilities in German alongside French. The other exception is the Brussels Capital Region. The 19 municipalities of the Brussels Capital Region are bilingual Dutch-French with the two languages having the same status, regardless of the number of its speakers. The theoretical concept of political bilingualism implies that as a speaker of one of the two official languages, one can act as a monolingual in relation to the government agencies and public services. This results in a situation where there is no language that is an official language for the country as a whole.

The complex federal system in Belgium consists of a national level, three language communities and three regions each with its own responsibilities, elections, parliament, government and administration. Brussels is the Capital Region, where the parliament is composed of 17 members elected on a Flemish list and 72 on a Francophone one, but governed by the minister-president (not to be confused with the prime minister of national government) and four ministers, two from each language community, deciding unanimously. The representation is based on the principle that only monolingual lists take part in the regional elections. Regions are competent for matters connected to the territory, like environmental issues, urban development, transport, etc., and the economy. Personal competencies, like culture, education and welfare, are the responsibility of the communities. In Brussels they are organized by the Flemish and French Community, acting independently with their own organization and legislation. Education illustrates this perfectly: there are two independent educational

systems with Dutch in the one system and French in the other system, each as sole language of instruction (McAndrew & Janssens, 2004). Theoretically the question whether you belong to the current Dutch-speaking minority or the French-speaking majority is legally irrelevant. A concept such as sub nationality or any other membership criterion to belong to a language community does not exist. In contact with the administration or other civil services, the linguistic preference a citizen of Brussels makes in a particular situation has no consequences for the future choices he or she makes. This means that a citizen of Brussels can have his passport in French and his driver's license in Dutch, he can send one of his children to a Dutch-medium school, the other to a French-medium school and one is allowed to switch school system during one's school career.

Since the abolition of the language census there are no official figures on home languages or language use in Brussels. Survey data provide an insight into the development of the language situation (Janssens, 2001; Janssens 2007; Janssens 2008a). The dichotomy between the two language groups that shapes the complex institutional system is not reflected in the population itself: about 7% of the adults are raised in a homogeneous Dutch-speaking family, about 56% in a French-speaking one. Self reports on language competence show that 95% claim to speak French quite well, 35% English, and 28% Dutch. The status of Dutch rose with the stronger economic position of Flanders. It is an asset on the labour market. In kindergarten and primary education in the Dutch-medium education system in Brussels the number of children from monolingual Dutch-speaking families hovers around 10% of the pupils. Survey data and the data on school attendance also show that Dutch as a home language is more frequently used in combination with another language than as the unique home language. Although the importance of Dutch exceeds the community of home language speakers, it is no threat for French as regional vehicular language, which is spoken by the most citizens in Brussels and frequently adopted as a second home language by immigrants. Almost 80% of those who claim to speak a 'good or excellent' French inherited the language via the family of origin, for Dutch it is the case for less than 50% of its speakers.

But in a globalizing context with, for Brussels, a substantial number of immigrants from all over the world and its importance as seat of European institutions and NATO, English as a global *lingua franca* becomes more prominent. English does not replace French as the regional vehicular language, but is more and more used in domains

where French was spoken before. Although only 5% of its speakers also spoke it as a home language, the knowledge of English already exceeds the knowledge of Dutch, and the younger people are, the more fluent they are in English.

Europeanization has a double impact on the local language situation. First, the presence of the European institutions and international organizations and companies contributes to the linguistic diversity of the Brussels Capital Region and increases the visibility and the use of English in daily life. The enlargement of the EU towards the east has brought an influx of highly educated immigrants inclined to switch to English rather than French as a regional *lingua franca* in their local networks (Janssens, 2008b). Secondly, European legislation has its impact as well. Unlike France, the Belgian government has signed the Framework Convention, but never ratified it, due to the fact that all regional parliaments and communities had to ratify it. The notion of 'national minority' is highly contested in political discussions between the different regions in Belgium. For the Brussels Capital Region, it would reopen the discussion whether the Dutch-speaking minority has to be considered as a minority, which would weaken the position of the Dutch speakers, a position that can only be understood when you take into account the fact that Dutch-speakers are a minority in Brussels, but a majority in Belgium as a whole, resulting in a complex system of checks and balances. Nevertheless, the possibility of ratification is used as a bargaining chip in the political negotiations between Flemish and Francophone political parties in the continuing process of state reform.

The future of Brussels is definitely more and more multilingual. Between the survey in 2000 and 2005, the number of home languages increased from 72 to 96 due to the impact of international migration. This growing diversity changes the notion of language communities and widens the gap between the political concept of two exclusive and exhaustive language groups and daily life in the homes and at the working places of the citizens. The growing importance of English is not only a matter of immigration, but the local youngsters show a much more positive attitude towards English than towards their second language, whether that is Dutch or French (Mettewie & Janssens, 2007). Brussels seems to evolve towards a trilingual city with Dutch as an important regional *vernacular* language and now *vehicular* language also used by non-native speakers, French as the established vehicular language, and English, the global lingua franca,

gaining importance as a regional lingua franca in this globalizing multilingual urban region.

Conclusions

In this paper we have claimed some attention for languages of regional communication (ReLan). Languages can be classified according to the scope of the communication they enable. It is customary to talk of languages of local or of global communication. We introduce the in-between concept of Languages of Regional Communication (*ReLan*). We define "regional" here as communication beyond the realm of the local community, but not necessarily global. A specific category of *ReLan* are Standard Languages institutionalized by political authorizes as the official languages on their territories (the so-called official or national languages). Nevertheless we are particularly interested in *ReLan* amidst linguistic diversity, either in multilingual regions where different language groups coexist, or in transnational communication. The region might be a borderland divided by state or administrative borders or a macro-region composed of multiple states. These transnational *ReLan* are especially relevant when state borders become porous, making transnational encounters more frequent with globalization and Europeanization.

In addition we can distinguish specific types of *ReLan* on the basis of the mix of native and non-native speakers involved. When the users are almost exclusively L1-speakers, we speak of a Regional Vernacular Language (*ReVer*). When the users are almost exclusively spoken by L2-speakers with different L1 we talk of a Regional Lingua Franca (*ReLF*). In the more balanced situations, we speak of a regional vehicular language, the unmarked case.

In this paper we have discussed three regions with different linguistic configurations, stressing the historical background of these configurations. In the Carpathian Basin Hungarian is essentially a regional vernacular language. German is a regional vehicular language in Central Europe, while French, Dutch, and English are languages of regional communication in the officially multilingual region of the Brussels Capital Region.

The comparison between these three cases demonstrates the diversity of situations in which languages of regional communication can be found and the dynamism of such situations. Moreover political

and geopolitical events are crucial in these dynamics: new state borders like the ones drawn after World War I with the dismantlement of the Dual Monarchy, new geopolitical orders like the collapse of the European domination of the Nazi regime, and the end of the Cold War, new territorial arrangements like the federalization of Belgium, and political integration projects like the deepening of the European Union all influenced the status and the use of the studied regional languages.

Our aim is to expand the research agenda on European multilingualism beyond the issue of the position of English and its impact on national languages and to bring back to the fore the traditional and persisting linguistic diversity in terms of foreign language learning and speaking. Languages of communication other than English should not be forgotten between the *official* celebration of multilingualism and the *de facto* progress of English as a *lingua franca.* Combinations of foreign languages vary across Europe, according to locally specific cultural heritage and (geo-)political influence. In addition these regional languages might have an additional asset compared to English as they can convene a sense of European identity, as opposed to the global and therefore not specially European character of English as global *lingua franca.*

Further research on ReLan should concern the characteristics and dynamics of different configurations in different localities and their institutionalization, the reasons for specific groups to choose, appropriate and maintain certain languages, and the historical periods of relevance for significant changes, such as the end of the Second World War and the forced displacement of German populations for the demise of German as regional vehicular in Central and Eastern Europe, and the end of the Cold War for the demise of Russian as ReLF in former Central and Eastern European Countries.

In Toolkit Europe (see Introduction to this issue) we examine the challenges and the possibilities of different language combinations and different modes of interlingual communication: code switching, *lingua receptiva, lingua franca*. We expect *Lingua Receptiva* to be a valuable tool between different varieties of the same *ReLan* (especially between a local dialect and the standard variety) between L1 and *ReLan* (especially when they are part of the same language family like Dutch and German) and between *ReLan* and English. Code switching is likely to occur between L1, L2 and *ReLan* (especially when they are part of the same language family) and between *ReLan* and English; and *Lingua Franca* interactions are by definition

characteristics for the language of regional communication that functions as *Regional Lingua Franca*. Empirical work in the regions discussed in this paper and other settings in Europe should examine whether and how these language resources are deployed.

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Table 1: Selected examples of Language of Regional Communication (ReLan)

Label	(historical) examples
Vernacular Language of Regional Communication (ReVer)	**Hungarian in Carpathian Basin** **Dutch in Brussels and Agglomeration** Catalan in (French and Spanish) Catalonia Basque in (French and Spanish) Basque country German in Alsace in South Tyrol Slovene in Italian and Austrian borderlands Polish in Polish-Lithuanian borderlands Yiddish in Central Eastern Europe Roma in Central and Southeastern Europe Turkish in Bulgarian borderlands
(Vehicular) Language of Regional Communication	**German in Central Europe** Russian in Central and Eastern Europe Caucasus and Central Asia **French in Brussels** Serbo-Croatian in former Yugoslavia
Regional Lingua Franca (ReLF)	Lingua franca in Mediterranean (Middle Ages and Early Renaissance) Latin in Europe (Middle Ages and Early Renaissance) Scandinavian mutual intelligibility in Nordic Countries French in Southern Europe **English in Brussels**

Table 2 Geo-ethno-linguistic distribution in the Carpathian Basin

Ethnic group	Number	Percentage
Hungarians	11,706,000	39.7
Romanians	5,464,000	18.5
Slovaks	4,716,000	16.0
Croats	2,828,000	9.6
Serbs	1,497,000	5.1
Russians/Ukrainians	1,125,000	3.8
Roma	579,000	2.0
Germans	372,000	1.3
Slovenes	82,000	0.3
Czechs	60,000	0.2
Montenegrins	38,000	0.1
Russians	33,000	0.1
Bosnyaks	27,000	0.1
Others	105,000	0.4
Unknown	828,000	2.8

Source: Kocsis, Bottlik & Tátrai (2006, 28)

Table 3: Ethnic Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin states

	Carpathian Basin
Hungary	10,558,001
Slovakia	567,296
Ukraine	155,711
Romania	1,604,266
Serbia (Vojvodina)	339,491
Croatia	22,355
Slovenia	7,637
Austria	6,763
Total	13,261,520

Source: Kocsis and Kocsis-Hodosi (1995, 17)

Table 4: Geo-ethno-linguistic distribution in Carpathian Basin states

Territory	Percentage of state nationality	Percentage of national minorities
Hungary	91.2	1.3
Slovakia	85.5	11.5
Sub-Carpathia (Ukraine)	80.5	18.3
Transylvania (Romania)	74.6	23.8
Vojvodina (Serbia)	65.0	26.7
Pannonian Croatia	90.1	7.7
Mura-region (Slovenia)	85.0	9.5
Burgenland (Austria)	87.4	12.5
Carpathian Basin	83.7	11.5

Source: Kocsis, Bottlik and Tátrai (2006, 29)

Table 5: Language policies in the Carpathian Basin

	NATIONALIST LANGUAGE POLICY	MULTICULTURAL LANGUAGE POLICY
Policy of Inclusion	Austria (Burgenland) Slovenia (Mura-region) Croatia (Slavonia)	Serbia (Vojvodina),
Policy of Exclusion	Slovakia, Romania (Transylvania) Ukraine (Sub-Carpathia)	

Source: Marácz (2010c)

Table 6: Framework Convention (FCPNM, CETS no. 157)

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into Force
Romania	01/02/1995	11/05/1995	01/02/1998
Serbia	11/05/2001	11/05/2001	01/09/2001
Slovakia	01/02/1995	14/09/1995	01/02/1998
Austria	01/02/1995	31/03/1998	01/07/1998
Croatia	06/11/1996	11/10/1997	01/02/1998
Slovenia	01/02/1995	25/03/1998	01/07/1998
Ukraine	15/09/1995	26/01/1998	01/05/1998
Hungary	01/02/1995	25/09/1995	01/02/1998

Table 7: Language Charta (ECRML, CETS no. 148)

States	Signature	Ratification	Entry into Force
Romania	17/07/1995	29/01/2008	01/05/2008
Serbia	22/03/2005	15/02/2006	01/06/2006
Slovakia	20/02/2001	05/09/2001	01/01/2002
Austria	05/11/1992	28/06/2001	01/10/2001
Croatia	05/11/1997	05/11/1997	01/03/1998
Slovenia	03/07/1997	04/10/2000	01/01/2001
Ukraine	02/05/1996	19/09/2005	01/01/2006
Hungary	05/11/1992	26/04/1995	01/03/1998

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