



EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY FOR PLURILINGUALISM



## Newsletter of the EOP N°80 (september-november 2019)

<http://www.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu>

### Editorial – The time for plurilingualism

The Roman Empire was not monolingual, but bilingual, because the Roman elites discovered the full value of the Greek culture and language from which they drew their inspiration. Everyone knows Gargantua's letter to Pantagruel in Chapter 8 of Rabelais' *Pantagruel* in which Gargantua, before even listing the long list of fundamental knowledge to be acquired in the sciences, arts, law, history and religions, wrote to his son in these terms: "I intend and want you to learn languages perfectly: first Greek, as Quintilian wants it, then Latin, and then Hebrew for the Holy Letters, and Shaldaic and Arabic similarly; and you to shape your style in the imitation of Plato, as far as the Greek language is concerned and in the imitation of Cicero, as regards Latin".

We probably know less about Diderot's recommendations to Empress Catherine II in his *Memoirs for Catherine II*, Diderot who, in the *Encyclopedia*, condemned the curriculae of the French university of his time which, remaining true to a medieval and "Gothic" tradition, was based on Latin, Greek, rhetoric and Aristotelian logic<sup>1</sup>. He had planned three levels in education. Simply "the capacity to read well and to write well for the first level and a little arithmetic; the second level will allow a better knowledge of science and logic; the third "leads to the state of a scientist". One will learn: « the-Russian language by principle, the Latin language, the Greek language, the Italian, English and German languages" (p. 662). This is the linguistic space of the Europe of Enlightenment".<sup>2</sup>

A revolutionary opening, in his *Project for a university*, Diderot considers that "A university is a school whose door is open indiscriminately to all the children of a nation, and where masters stipulated by the State initiate them to the elementary knowledge of all sciences" (p. 749)... Is it worth recalling that Diderot wrote at a time when Education was reserved for the privileged and was essentially provided by members of a religious order? »

Have things changed today, when English seems to dominate everywhere? In reality, some fundamentals are unchanged. When it comes to languages, the elite is always plurilingual. In the ancient times we have just mentioned, the educational ideal was first aimed at the upper classes, and the new idea that emerged from the end of the 17th century, taken up by Diderot and Condorcet a few ... ->

Direction and writing : Christian Tremblay,  
Anne Bui

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#### In this issue

- Edito – The time for plurilingualism
- Articles not to be missed
- Announcements and publications

-> years before the French Revolution, was that education could reach all the social classes. But the idea is then more to democratize an elite or aristocratic model than to provide second-rate education.

The unifying thread of this plurilingualism from ancient times to the present day, is the appetite for knowledge linked to the ability to gain access to the original works in various languages, which is very far removed from the very modest ambitions of modern education. For modern education learning foreign languages has no objective of knowledge at all, it is simply to give oneself the means to get by almost anywhere in the world with a minimal linguistic knowledge. This is what the concept of "English of International Communication" means, that is, if we want to free ourselves from hackneyed a language that sounds like English but is not English. ...->

1 Article Collège de l'Encyclopédie (p. 752).

2 Didier Béatrice. Quand Diderot faisait le plan d'une université. In: Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie, n°18-19, 1995. pp. 81-91; doi : <https://doi.org/10.3406/rde.1995.1292>, [https://www.persee.fr/doc/rde\\_0769-0886\\_1995\\_num\\_18\\_1\\_1292](https://www.persee.fr/doc/rde_0769-0886_1995_num_18_1_1292), p.88.

-> In fact, it reduces language teaching, in this case English, to very little. This reduction of language to a communication tool is a constant feature of educational programs to this day and has been widely used for decades by many linguists. Unfortunately, it is based on a misconception. Chomsky<sup>3</sup>, who is not especially expected in this field, sets the record straight in *What kind of creatures are we?*<sup>4</sup>, stating that "languages are not tools designed by human beings, but biological objects in the same way as the visual or digestive systems" and to follow on to the "concept of communication" which "is largely devoid of substantial meaning and serves as a generic term for various forms of social interaction". It therefore plays "a role - albeit a minor one - in the concrete use of language", but the essential thing is that this dogma of language having a communication function "has no basis in itself, and there is now sufficient evidence to think that it is simply false. Language is certainly sometimes used for communication, as are clothing styles, facial expression, posture and many other things. However, the fundamental properties of linguistic architecture confirm the teachings of a rich philosophical tradition for which language is essentially an instrument of thought<sup>5</sup>". Chomsky thus follows in the footsteps of Vico, Leibniz, Humboldt and many others<sup>6</sup>. To go even further in the formulation, Chomsky considers that "there is no reason to doubt the fundamental Cartesian idea that the use of language has a creative dimension". In fact, Descartes had not invented anything and was only making available to his contemporaries the idea enclosed entirely in the word "poetry" derived from the ancient Greek ποιησις (poiesis), the verb ποιεῖν (poiein) meaning "to do, to create".

This purely instrumental conception of languages, which predominates both in education and in the whole general culture, where the linguistic fact is dramatically absent, is likely to shake all motivation among children and young people as well as among their teachers.

We remember a major national debate on Education that took place between September 2003 and March 2004. It is symptomatic to note that in the 550 page report published under the title "Les Français et leur École", modern languages did not appear in the fundamental learning and that only 3 lines devoid of interest on page 380 were devoted to modern languages.

It is therefore not surprising that in 15 years no serious progress has been made in language learning, neither in France nor in most European countries.

If we take the programme of modern languages for the second year of high school, under the stamp of the Conseil supérieur des programmes, we discover a surprising preamble:

"The globalization of exchanges, the strengthening of the cultural and linguistic diversity of societies and the development of electronic communication make the role of modern languages even more fundamental today. To participate fully in these economic, social and cultural developments and to integrate into today's world with confidence and without apprehension, it is essential that French pupils achieve sufficient fluency in modern languages, particularly in the field of oral communication. »

You can deduct that languages, whether it be the mother tongue or foreign languages, do not play a role in the formation of the mind, in the discovery and construction of a true culture.

A minor reservation however, in the third paragraph: "Just as a matter of priority, while consolidating his or her linguistic and communication skills, the student deepens his or her knowledge of the geographical and cultural areas of the languages he or she is learning in high school, and opens up to new worlds and spaces through a presentation free of stereotypes and prejudices. »

But we can see that this is indeed a false priority and lifeless knowledge, because it is a matter of adapting to a world on which none of us have the power to act. The question is never raised to ask whether language is a freedom and a power. ...->

-> Clearly, issuing a certification in language is little more than the equivalent of a driving licence, both

3 We quote Chomsky because of his fame, but he is not alone.

4 *Quelle sorte de créatures sommes-nous*, Noam Chomsky, 2016, Lux, p. 27 à 29, édition originale *What kind of creatures are we*, Columbia university press.

5 We can regret the terms "instrument of thought" or "instrument of thought" insofar as Chomsky calls into question the strictly instrumental conception of language which nowadays predominates very largely in all forums, from the academic spheres to public opinion. This is probably the result of a simple difficulty in formulation. Leibniz had the idea that language is "an environment", which Humboldt cannot deny for whom "the world (external and internal) is given to us by language, it is always given to us by a given language". A point of view that Chomsky takes up again when quoting Humboldt: "something quite particular, language faces a field without any limits, which constitutes the very essence of what can be thought. ", d° p.16-17.

6 d° p. 27 à 29

essential and derisory at the same time. Too bad it can't be bought, because if it were possible, we could dispense with the expenses of a training course.

The devaluation of languages obviously goes hand in hand with a fascination for English and a neglect of other languages. Even if the extreme polarization on English contributes to reducing more than broadening the field of vision on the world and reinforcing a supremacy that is only too prevalent.

Indeed, if a certification in English is equivalent to a driving licence, it is quite normal for families to swear only by English.

The attractiveness of English is the application of an anthropological law problematized by Pierre Frath<sup>7</sup>, in the line of Jean Calvet's gravitational model of languages<sup>8</sup>. It is a law that has always worked and is working particularly well today all over the world in all linguistic contexts<sup>9</sup>. The challenge is to ensure a better future for oneself and one's children and to raise oneself socially. This is the real driving force behind the language preference for English, as it is behind the disappearance of so many languages in the world.

This idea is also based on a postulate-which is wrong.

In countries where, in the middle of the last century, the level of secondary-schooling was still quite low and language learning still concerned only relatively well-off groups, it is understandable that English has attracted attention and that as education became more democratic, other languages have seen their position decline rapidly, particularly in France where many languages were available.

It is surprising that this unadulterated preference for English continues to this day. Because the world has changed.

From the last European Conference on Plurilingualism held in Bucharest in May 2019, we learned from the testimony of several companies that public opinion is far behind the companies themselves. For them, the question of English is outdated. Of course, it is important to have a good command of English, especially as you move up the hierarchy. But the linguistic need is not limited to English, it depends on the territories, customers and partners. Moreover, the question is not strictly a linguistic one. The desired competence is also cultural. It is necessary to understand the values involved, behaviours, hierarchical relationships, negotiation, etc. And knowledge of English from this point of view is not enough at all. The real "elites" know all this very well but do not brag about it.

It should also be noted that the language competence has an economic impact, both from the point of view of the company's performance and from the individual's point of view, as one cannot go without the other. The lack of knowledge of English is often a handicap for recruitment and career development, but plurilingualism is a much stronger asset than English alone. A good command of a second language immediately gives the advantage over the single one. English is not an asset, but its lack of knowledge is a handicap on the labour market. It is from this point of view that the analogy with a driving licence makes sense.

While learning English alone is similar to the school of the poor, many parents still see English as a lifeline for their children, a guarantee of social advancement when it is a way to avoid exclusion.

It is therefore necessary to combat the prejudice of the « all-English » language. But Einstein would have said that it is more difficult to disintegrate a prejudice than an atom.

So, hammering, hammering untiringly the right and simple ideas, giving them the best possible dressing, diverting simplistic marketing arguments towards more noble goals, this is perhaps the only thing we are able to do...

But above all, we must understand and make people understand: Plurilingualism is much better than the « all-English », because plurilingualism is a *poetic* conception, in the sense of the ancients, creative, we would say today, of politics, the economy and society ... *The End* ◀

**If you think that the OEP is doing good analysis and promoting good ideas, do not hesitate to support it. As announced in Letter 79, from this issue onwards, the OEP Letter is only available in full for a modest annual subscription of 5 euros or membership.  
THE OEP NEEDS YOU.**

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7 « Le sujet anthropologique dans le choix des langues », <http://www.res-per-nomen.org> (to be published)

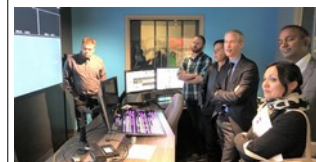
8 CALVET, Louis-Jean, 1999, *Pour une écologie des langues du monde*, Paris, Plon.

9 See in this regard *La langue mondiale. Traduction et domination*, Pascale Casanova, Paris, Editions du Seuil

## And to share



### Articles not to be missed



#### [« multilinguisme », « richesse à cultiver », le français en Ontario vu par le gouvernement Macron](#)

ONFR+ - Actualité - Publié le 11 octobre 2019 - Photo : Le ministre Franck Riester (au centre) visite le LUV, le studio de production numérique de TFO. Crédit image: TFO TORONTO – « Il y a pas une mais des langues françaises. » La phrase du ministre français de la Culture, Franck Riester, vient apporter un éclairage dissonant au moment où les propos de Denise Bombardier...



#### [Lire la suite... Bilingualism, Multilingualism and Plurilingualism: Living in two or more languages](#)

Source: Healthy Linguistic Diet, 27 mars 2019 The terms bilingualism, multilingualism, and more recently plurilingualism, are used more and more frequently in public discourse, whether we speak about schools and education, immigration and multicultural societies, language policy, exclusion or inclusion. But what is the difference between them? Are they referring to different concepts? The three...

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#### [Dans les couloirs de l'UE, l'usage de l'anglais fait râler \(Libération\)](#)

Par Jean Quatremer, correspondant à Bruxelles — 30 septembre 2019 à 18:16 A l'Union européenne, de plus en plus de voix s'élèvent contre l'omniprésence de l'anglais dans les communications, au détriment des autres langues, et notamment le français et...

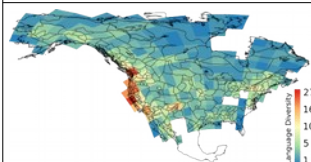
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#### [Português deve aproveitar fenómeno do multilinguismo para crescer](#)

O linguista brasileiro Gilvan Müller de Oliveira defendeu que a língua portuguesa deve saber aproveitar as oportunidades decorrentes do multilinguismo, um forte instrumento económico, histórico e de humanização, e que é “a verdadeira língua do século XXI”. Fenómeno atribuído à globalização e um elemento no radar da UNESCO, o multilinguismo é “uma oportunidade para o...

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#### [Why are so many languages spoken in some places and so few in others? \(The Conversation\)](#)

People across the world describe their thoughts and emotions, share experiences and spread ideas through the use of thousands of distinct languages. These languages form a fundamental part of our humanity. They determine whom we communicate with and how we express ourselves. ...

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#### [Interpreting in Nuremberg Trials](#)

A young graduate in Nuremberg Par Yves Beigbeder L'auteur livre ici quelques

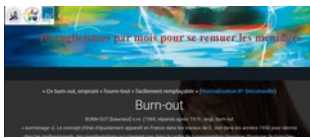
	<p>impressions sur son expérience d'assistant du juge français Henri Donnedieu de Vabres au procès multilingue de Nuremberg en 1946, dont les procédures recoururent à la compétence d'interprètes en quatre langues. La profession d'interprète n'était pas reconnue à l'époque, mais l'interprétation...</p> <p>Ce document paraîtra dans/to be released in <i>Cosmopolis</i>, 2019/3-4, fin décembre/late December.</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Joies et tourments de la traduction des « langues dites rares » des Balkans</a></b></p> <p>Source : Le Courrier des Balkans, 8 décembre 2018 « Quand on fait de la traduction littéraire son unique profession, il est préférable d'avoir un compagnon ou une compagne riche », sourit, un peu amère, Pascale Delpesch, traductrice de Danilo Kiš et d'Ivo Andrić, en ouverture d'une table-ronde sur la traduction littéraire, organisée à l'occasion du vingtième...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>Pour valoriser son patrimoine, la mairie de Paris se surpasse : 4 anglicismes majeurs en 4 lignes</b></p> <p>"Au coeur du Marais, un lieu d'exception dédié à la mode et à la jeune création avec des ateliers, des <b>masterclass</b>, des rencontres, un <b>hub</b> de la Création et de la Mode, un <b>Espace de Coworking</b>, deux <b>concept-store</b>. La restauration de l'hôtel de Coulanges permet de mettre en valeur ce patrimoine architectural datant du XVIIe siècle. A découvrir au printemps...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>Projet de la loi de finances 2020 pour l'enseignement supérieur - Certification en anglais</b></p> <p>Extrait du dossier de presse page 16 : "Le développement des compétences en langues étrangères, notamment en anglais, constitue l'une des actions de la stratégie du Gouvernement en matière de commerce extérieur présentée à Roubaix le 23 février 2018. « À terme, chaque étudiant [...] au plus tard en fin de licence aura passé un test de type Cambridge, IELTS, financé par...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>Multilinguisme au Sénégal : dans quelle(s) langue(s) informer et impliquer les populations ?</b></p> <p>Source : The Conversation, 13 septembre 2019 En mai 2019, The Conversation a publié un article sur la polémique suscitée par la traduction en français publiée par Wikisource du dernier rapport en anglais du Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat : « Une traduction citoyenne pour (enfin) lire le dernier rapport du GIEC sur le...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
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<p><b>Announcements and publications</b></p>	



## 1989 - 2019 : La chute du mur de Berlin a 30 ans (Spectacle de Marén Berg - 9 novembre 2019 à Paris)

Marén Berg, « Allemande par naissance, Française par amour » se souvient de sa vie d'adolescente à Berlin, avant l'érection du Mur en 1961, des 28 ans pendant lesquels ce « mur de la honte » a empêché le peuple de la RDA de vivre en liberté et de sa joie à sa chute le 9 novembre 1989 ! En 2009, Marén Berg avait créé la pièce « Mon Mur à moi... »

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## « 10 anglicismes par mois à remuer les méninges »

L'OEP et Défense de la langue française mettent en place un « Nouveau dictionnaire des anglicismes ». Le but est de dissiper les appréhensions et de renouveler le crédit de confiance des locuteurs qui ont perdu la foi en des qualifications normatives puristes, subjectives ou spéculatives et reçoivent avec une certaine méfiance toute mention de normativité.

Le but est aussi de contribuer à l'optimisation de l'emprunt à l'anglo-américain. L'emprunt doit être une source d'enrichissement du français comme de n'importe quelle autre langue. L'impact d'une langue étrangère ne peut pas être trop systématique, tournant à une domination. L'objectif de cette rubrique est donc aussi d'associer à la démarche nos partenaires allemands, italiens, roumains, croates et autres en proie aux mêmes pressions parfois au-delà du raisonnable de l'anglo-américain.

Nous essayons de démontrer aux sujets parlants que le français, parallèlement à l'adoption des anglicismes nécessaires ou non, sait réagir aussi à l'anglicisation en se purifiant progressivement des emprunts inutiles et gênants.

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Newsletter n°7 - octobre 2019



## Migrilude Spécialiste du multilinguisme

Newsletter n°7 - octobre 2019

multilinguisme, livres multilingues et bilingues, plurilinguisme, formation, français langue étrangère

Migrilude sensibilise les professionnels en contact avec des publics parlant d'autres langues que le français aux enjeux du plurilinguisme : formations, ateliers de création de livres bilingues ou multilingues, écriture, illustrations. N'hésitez pas

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## Appel à articles sur le thème "Decolonizing the Academy" ou "Décoloniser le monde académique" (EN, FR, IT, DE, ES)

<http://www.sgoki.org/no/2019/09/19/cosmopolis-calls-for-articles-decolonizing-the-academy/> EN «Cosmopolis» – call for articles: Decolonizing the AcademyPublisert 19. september 2019 The journal Cosmopolis – a journal of cosmopolitics (Brussels, Belgium) – which is published twice a year, is planning a special issue on the topic “Decolonizing the Academy” in late 2020. We are...

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	<p><b>Neuerscheinung: Handbuch Mehrsprachigkeits- und Mehrkulturalitätsdidaktik</b></p> <p>Christiane Fäcke, Franz-Joseph Meißner</p> <p>Dieses Handbuch bietet erstmals einen umfassenden Überblick über den Stand der Forschung und zur Praxis der Mehrsprachigkeits- und Mehrkulturalitätsdidaktik. Die über 120 Artikel behandeln u.a.: Sprachenpolitik (national und EU), Interkomprehension, Erst-, Zweit- und Mehrsprachenerwerb, Tertiärsprachendidaktik, lebensweltliche Vielsprachigkeit, Herkunftssprachen, bilingualen Sachfachunterricht, autochthone Mehrsprachigkeiten, Kompetenzorientierung, Didaktik der Grenzregionen, interkulturelles Lernen, Translanguaging, Unterricht an mehr- oder vielsprachigen Lerngruppen u.v.a.m.</p> <p><a href="#">Mehr Informationen... &gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</a></p>
	<p><b>Les langues du monde au quotidien, une approche interculturelle (cycle 1 et 2)</b></p> <p>Le SCÉRÉN [CNDP-CRDP] publie dans la collection Au quotidien deux ouvrages, un pour le cycle 2 et un pour le cycle 3, proposant des modules d'activités visant à aborder avec les élèves la notion de la diversité des langues. Les langues du monde au quotidien cycle 2 et Les langues du monde au quotidien cycle 3 favorisent : une forme innovante d'éducation aux langues conforme au Cadre...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>Exterminations et littérature - Les témoignages inconcevables (François Rastier, PUF, 2019)</b></p> <p>Élaboré depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale par des survivants de l'extermination, le témoignage littéraire des violences politiques de masse va, par son ambition éthique, au rebours des conceptions cyniques ou décoratives de l'art. Il bouleverse les catégories de la philosophie du langage : les faits deviennent inséparables des valeurs, le style de la recherche de la vérité. Au-delà...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>"Multilinguisme et créativité littéraire" en espagnol</b></p> <p>Nous avons le plaisir de vous annoncer que le livre collectif MULTILINGUISME ET CRÉATIVITÉ LITTÉRAIRE (2012) a été traduit en espagnol par une équipe bénévole de jeunes traducteurs latino-américains dirigée par Martha Pulido (Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín - COLOMBIA). Il est disponible gratuitement en format PDF sur le site de MutatisMutandis E-Books :...</p> <p><a href="#">Lire la suite...</a></p>
	<p><b>Repenser l'étude des langues à l'université : le défi des humanités numériques ?</b></p> <p>Ela. Études de linguistique appliquée 2019/1 (N° 193)</p> <p>Repenser l'étude des langues à l'université : le défi des humanités numériques ?</p> <p>Editeur : Klincksieck</p> <p>Mis en ligne sur Cairn.info le 30/08/2019</p> <p>ISBN 9782252042724</p> <p><a href="#">Accéder à ce numéro...&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</a></p>



Association pour le Développement  
de l'Enseignement Bilingue

## **SYMPOSIUM SUR LE BI-PLURILINGUISME DANS L'EDUCATION – Enseigner & Apprendre en plusieurs langues – Valeurs, principes didactiques, gestes professionnels, ressources**

Vendredi 22 & Samedi 23 novembre 2019 – INALCO, 65 rue des Grands Moulins, 75013 PARIS INSCRIPTION EN LIGNE OBLIGATOIRE (formulaire ci-dessous). Ce symposium émane d'un travail conjoint de plusieurs associations œuvrant à l'échelle régionale, nationale ou internationale à la documentation et au soutien de dispositifs d'enseignement bilingue ou plurilingue. Si ces dispositifs...

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