

## Chapter 2

### **ENGLISH IN EUROPE**

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#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A means of gaining insight into the present status, role, and functions of English in a particular social and cultural context is that of the sociolinguistic profile. Frequently used in world Englishes scholarship, following Kachru (1985) and Berns (1990), this framework takes into account both the users and the uses of the language and brings together its historical context, domains of use, role in the educational system, influence on the media, levels of proficiency, and attitudes toward it among learners and users. In the broadest sense, a profile documents the presence of the language and the breadth and depth of its presence. As these concerns in part motivated our inquiry, we have drawn a sociolinguistic profile of English in Europe to contextualize and establish a background for the empirical study described and reported on in Chapters 3-7.

Before turning to the profile of English, a look at Europe's linguistic diversity and changing language demographics is in order because it is against this backdrop that the present and future of English, which is tied to the other languages of Europe, can be better understood.

#### **2.2 EUROPEAN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY**

Europe is diverse in many aspects, and language is not the least of them. Fifty distinct languages are recognized across Europe, including Russia and Turkey - 33 as official state languages and 17 as officially recognized regional languages. This number, as reported by Trim (1994, cited in Lambert 1994), does not include spoken varieties or languages brought by immigrants. There are also over 40 "small" languages – as they are often

called – spoken by over 40 million people. France, for example, has speakers of Basque, Breton, Catalan, Corsican, and Occitan. Spoken elsewhere are Albanian, Breton, Cornish, Croatian, Danish, Franco-Provencal, Friulan, Galician, Irish, Langue d'Oc, Low German, Luxembourgian, Macedonian, Romany, Turkish, Welsh, and Yiddish, among others. Although Belgium, with Dutch, French and German as official state languages, does not confer official status on any regional or minority language, a distinction can be made among regional dialects, such as Walloon, Gaumais, and Picardy.

Patterns of immigration also contribute to the linguistic landscape across Europe. Open borders, mobility for study and work, and changes due to political and economic developments in Central and Eastern Europe and in other regions of the world have introduced new languages. A variety of immigrant languages, Italian, Arabic, Spanish, Turkish, and Portuguese, for example, are found in present-day Belgium. Industrialized France and Germany provide additional examples. In France there are now speakers of the immigrant languages found in Belgium -- Italian, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, others such as Berber, Creole, and, more recently, Turkish, in addition to a variety of African and Asian languages. In Germany, a majority of those of school age have been the children of workers who have come from Turkey, the new Balkan states, Italy, and Greece; another important group is made up of immigrants from Asian countries.

Germany's linguistic diversity is also represented by the languages used as the medium for instruction and the place of minority languages in the school curriculum. As 90 % of Germany's population is ethnic German, the language of instruction is German, the only official state language. An exception is Sorbian, a minority/regional language with official language status in the Länder of Brandenburg and Saxony. It serves as the medium in either a total immersion or partial immersion arrangement from primary to either post-compulsory or upper-secondary education (European Commission, 2001). Danish and Frisian, the other two minority languages (only Danish has official status), are offered only as a school subject – Danish in Schleswig-Holstein, and Frisian in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. Turkish, the language of 2.5% of Germany's population, is not offered as a school language, but is used in separate after school lessons for Turkish children.

The complexity and dynamics of such linguistic diversity in Europe have assigned English unique positions. The immigrant populations and minority groups, in particular, necessitate recognition of English as a third language, as discussed in Cenoz and Jessner (2000). This is the case for immigrants when English is a compulsory first foreign language in school and as such takes its place behind the official language of the new country, which serves as a second language. At the same time, their native language is used at home. English also is a third language for European speakers of such

minority autochthonous languages as Basque, Breton, Sardinian, Catalan, Frisian and Sàmi.

They also have the majority language as the second language and learn English as a third language. Such speakers include Spanish children who learn Catalan or Basque at school, native speakers of Dutch who learn Frisian at school, native speakers of Dutch in Belgium, who learn French as a second language, and native speakers of Swedish in Vaasa/Vasa who learn Finnish and English. Yet other examples are native speakers of widespread European languages whose language is a minority one at the national level and who also learn English as a third language, for example, German speakers in France, Italy, or Belgium.

## **2.2.1 Historical context of English**

The breadth and depth of the spread of English throughout Europe today belies its comparatively limited influence up to the 20th century. The language of the British Isles was little used outside its shores between 1375 and 1550, when the English were prosperous and commercially independent. This does not mean that England had no contact with the continent during that time or even earlier. Although England and France had significant points of contact prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it is in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries that English gained influence across the English Channel. In fact, it was claimed (although not the case) that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century English was almost universally understood in Holland, “kindly entertained as a relation in the most civilized parts of Germany,” and studied, “tho’ yet little spoke” as a learned language in France and Italy (Stanhope, 1777, in Bailey 1991, p. 99). For France, Britain’s development of economic and political liberalism in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in part played a role in facilitating interest in the English language. English’s earliest period of significant influence on Germany began in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century and continued into the late-18<sup>th</sup> century. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century English had gradually spread farther across Europe to the extent that it had become “esteemed an essential” in Russia and Scandinavia as well as Germany (A.C.C., 1829, cited in Bailey, 1991, p.107).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century English assumed a stronger presence in Europe, and not solely due to British influence. The United States’ part in ending the First World War and its new standing as a world power are attributed to a linguistic innovation introduced in 1919 with the Peace Treaty of Versailles. Up to that time, treaties had been written in French in keeping with its traditional role in the domain of diplomacy; the Versailles treaty had both English and French versions. The influence of the United States became more marked after 1945, and American English eventually became a significant feature of secondary education – and eventually primary

education - in Europe after the 1950's. Further developments in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also strengthened the hold of English in Europe. Among them were the influx of American and British popular music in the 1960s and more widespread use of English among scientists in the 1970s. The UK also joined the Common Market in the 1970's, thus increasing Britain's role in the displacement of French as the only official language of the Market's successor, the European Union.

Curriculum reform in Germany during this decade allotted English a larger role in the education of children of all ability levels. Previously, English instruction was reserved for the most "able," who would continue their education beyond Grade 10 and become the elite in society. Increased availability of textbooks, training manuals, and research reports in English rather than German, and contacts with English-speaking coworkers and clients meant that young Germans going into technological, industrial, or commercial fields would need English (Berns, 1990). The Netherlands followed suit in the 1980's. English was made a compulsory subject in the last two years of primary education, and the only compulsory language for all types of secondary education, including vocational training. A flashpoint in this time frame was the Dutch Minister of Education's public statement that English should be used more widely in universities, which caused a major uproar. Parliament immediately asked questions, the minister insisted that he did not intend to have Dutch replaced by English, and discussion on the role of English in academia ensued. More generally, it was in the latter half of the 1980s that English was given a larger role in multinational companies, a practice that expanded during the 1990s.

The effect of these developments was experienced differently from place to place. The impact was perhaps most dramatic in Germany after the Soviet Union closed the eastern German border to western Germany in 1952 and built the Berlin Wall in 1961. These two actions effectively cut off contact with the west for one third of the country and a sector of Berlin, thus isolating the Germans living there from western influences, including English.

Belgium's complex linguistic situation also involves the establishment of a different type of political border (Witte, Craebeckx & Meynen, 1997). Tensions among French- and Dutch-speaking Belgians going back at least to the 13<sup>th</sup> century were caused by and contributed to alternating periods of prestige and power for each language (Wils, 1992). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, two sets of laws were passed that determined the country's linguistic future from the 1960s onwards. One set fixed the linguistic border, which had been flexible; the other resulted in laws concerning the use of languages in education, administration, and justice. Flanders was most affected as there were to be no French-speaking schools; the impact was less in Wallonia, which had no Dutch-speaking schools. During this period, French was considered the language of education and culture and had become more

prestigious. Brussels, the capital, had become more French speaking. Although English is part of the language mix and is a means of international communication for contemporary Belgians, its role is less contentious and its history is relatively insignificant compared to that of either Dutch or French.

In 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe, as in most other regions of the world, English is used for a variety of purposes and serves its speakers in a range of functions and domains. It dominates in the fields of science and technology, diplomacy and international relations, sports and international competitions, media (audio, visual, electronic, print), business and commerce, design and fashion, travel and tourism, the entertainment industry, and higher education.

One of the most widespread functions of English is as an international language among those involved in cross-national and international business and affairs on a global level. At the local European level, English is a link language at the highest levels of official international communication, for example, the United Nations or the European Union. The linking function is also realized in daily personal use among colleagues over dinner after a professional or scholarly meeting, co-workers in the office of a multinational company, or families on vacation making the acquaintance of local residents or other vacationers. It is also a vehicle of creative and imaginative expression through the linguistic processes of nativization, which is observable in both spoken and written texts and in various genres. Texts in which innovative uses of English frequently appear are advertising copy, public postings and announcements, and advertising spots on television, radio, and the internet. Journalism is often a locus for innovation and play with English. It is also identified as serving a symbolic function, or a marker of status and prestige. The use of English to name firms and brands, for example, conveys an international image.

### **2.2.2 English in the workplace**

In this section we consider more generally the role of English in the workplace, one domain in which contact with and use of it are pervasive. In particular we look at the fields of business and commerce (including advertising) and of science and technology, two areas of activity where extensive contact with English is increasingly unavoidable.

English is strongly promoted in workplace Europe. Banks in Switzerland use English at the senior level; English has been adopted in Swedish boardrooms, and even though its staff is only 10% British, English is the official language of the European Central Bank located in Frankfurt, Germany. At professional meetings and conferences English is the most used working language. An estimated 99% of European organizations listed in a yearbook of international associations assign it this role as well (Crystal, 1997, cited in Graddol, 1997, p. 8).

Specialized languages have been created for various occupations. PoliceSpeak, a restricted language operational in both English and French and a set of procedures for police communication, was especially created for law enforcement officers on each side of the frontier and is used frequently as a lingua franca at meetings by police personnel at all levels and ranks, especially in countries using more than two languages. AirSpeak, an air traffic pilot training communication program, has been developed for use internationally by air traffic control, cockpit, and ground crews. SeaSpeak was created to regulate maritime communication in international waters and in port (see Johnson, 2000; Ingleton, 1994).

Evidence of the requirements for English is postings for positions in a variety of vocations and professions that call for knowledge of English where high levels of proficiency can be required for telephone and internet communications, face-to-face meetings, and written correspondence and documents. As a study by Truchot (2001) suggests, the demand for English is strong in the French workplace. He found that in the French daily paper, Le Monde, 70 % of the jobs posted on average had language requirements; ninety-five percent specified a high level of competence in English as a qualification. In Belgium, the competence called for in any language includes not only knowledge about the language, but also ability to use the language, with stress on oral communication. Flemish companies are particularly rigorous when it comes to languages. Prospective employees have to be highly proficient in Dutch first, then French, followed by English and German. In the Netherlands, job announcements implicitly assume potential employees' English skills and only mention English proficiency when very special skills or near-native command is necessary. Even more striking are job advertisements (in English) which explicitly state that proficiency in Dutch is not required.

Employees themselves, as Biersack, Dostal, Parmentier, Plicht, & Troll (1998/99) found, regard English knowledge as only modestly important. Asked for their view about personal needs for further education, employees in services and administrative sectors regarded foreign languages, by a wide margin, as second in importance. Further education in computer skills ranked first.

### **2.2.2.1 Business and commerce**

The business environment is extremely international, and English is an important part of a global participant's linguistic repertoire. Multinationals have their European headquarters in major cities in different countries. In the Netherlands, English is the daily language in most international companies, also among speakers of Dutch (Nickerson, 2000). Sometimes this is a formal policy to underscore the international flavor of the company;

other times English is used in internal communication, like email, because one individual in the communicative chain may not be a native speaker of Dutch. According to Truchot (2001), the practice of institutionalizing English as a company language was reported as early as the 1970s in the Nordic countries; yet the first well-known example in France is that of Airbus Industries in the 1980s, when English was given an official status in its branches in France and Germany as well as Britain and Spain. As Truchot reports, in what language or languages internal linguistic communication took place is not known and itself merits study (see Denis, 1999; Coppieters 't Wallant, 1997; Verluyten, Thiré & Demarest, 1999 on business needs in Belgium).

Marketers and advertisers exploit English to reach an international audience and to lend cachet to the products and services they sell. In fact, advertisers have been explicitly advised to do so because, in de Mooij's (1994) words, "the better-educated throughout Europe as well as the youth can be reached with English" (p. 288). In the Netherlands, English is present in various forms of advertising, which has been identified as the forefront of the spread of English (see Gerritsen, 1995; Gerritsen, Korziliun, van Meurs, & Gijbsers, 1999). A 1999 study by Gerritsen, van Meurs, & Gijbsers inventoried TV commercials in which English is used and found that about a third of the commercials were either partly or completely in English. Common in advertising is the use of English words for the connotative value, a fairly old practice (Truchot, 1990). The association of English with certain aesthetic qualities can transfer these desirable qualities to its users or a product. Thus, such words and phrases as "Happy Hour," "Kids," "Summertime-Playtime," and "Soft am Body" appear in clothing ads in Germany. Such use is said to convey an air of modernity and progress, to sell a lifestyle as well as a set of values and attitudes.

English lexical items are not necessarily more numerous today, but recent empirical observations of French practices do indicate that they are more elaborate, which might suggest that advertisers take it for granted that knowledge of English has risen. Martin (2002b) concluded from her study of English in media advertising in France that the use of English is still a favored strategy in print and on television. Her findings also indicate that the variety of English most often heard in French television commercials is some form of American English (see also Martin 2002a; Martin & Hilgendorf, 2001). In Germany, too, the use of English is a prevalent strategy for capitalizing on the English language's assumed association with things modern and its cachet with young people. However, this belief in the advantages of English in advertising has not been supported by empirical studies on audiences. For example, Gawlitta (2001), in an investigation on the acceptance of English-language advertising slogans, found that older target groups widely dislike English slogans and that even young people do not really like Anglicisms in advertising.

### **2.2.2.2 Science and technology**

The highly internationalized nature of such fields as science and technology is a basis for the use of English. Competence in English, both in written and spoken communication, is becoming a linguistic *sine qua non* among researchers in these fields. Truchot's (1997) study of this reality among French scientists seems representative of the situation elsewhere in Europe. The findings offer insights into the place of English in professional publications and conferences that illustrate the extent and nature of the language situation in these areas.

French scientists, like all other scientists in the world, have to use English as a language of publication if they want their research to be most widely disseminated. The nature of publishing contributes to this situation. More than 80 % of the journals that make the "hard core" of scientific communication are owned by a handful of multinational publishing companies and are issued almost entirely in English. The articles they publish are used as references everywhere and are indexed before all others in the scientific databases. The largest, most widely used and most influential of these is located in the USA, the Science Citation Index, or SCI. Some 90 % of the information recorded in these databases comes from contributions written in English; the remaining 10 % is shared among Russian, French, German, and Japanese. In European databases, the space allocated to European languages other than English is hardly larger. As a consequence, most of the scientific journals in Germany, France and Italy have turned to English as the language of publication. Lists of publications provided by applicants to professorships in the hard sciences are similarly revealing: almost all are articles placed in American, British and European journals published in English. Some 20 years ago such lists would have given equal share to English and French titles.

English is the main language used at conferences in France, too. A survey commissioned by the Délégation Générale à la Langue Française (DGLF, 1998) showed that out of 102 international scientific conferences which took place in France in 1997, 53 % had English as their only official language and 32 % English together with other languages. The organizers of these conferences generally use French together with English in publicity and external communication, a practice required by a 1994 language law. However, according to scientists, doing so appears to be a habit that serves a mostly symbolic function.

There are two settings within the French scientific community where English seems to be used less than in other countries. One is for personal communication in the places where science is produced, such as laboratories and research centers. There researchers tend to communicate in French, even



if they are from several language backgrounds. An exception is short-term visitors, with whom communication often takes place in English.

There are a number of published French language studies and summaries used by researchers to take stock of their discipline as a whole in relation to their particular specialization or to obtain information about other disciplines. Examples are the journals *Médecine-Sciences* and *Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Sciences*. English is also used less in popular scientific publications for the larger public, for example, the monthly review *La Recherche*.

In addition, efforts are made to maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive scientific and technical terminology in French, a practice not necessarily followed in Germany or the Netherlands where English names for processes, tools, and concepts are more readily adopted.

The place of English in research in other EU states has been investigated by German in the sciences. Two studies in particular that have dealt with this issue extensively are those by Skudlik (1990) and Ammon (1998). Skudlik demonstrates that all fields of inquiry are not equally dependent upon English for communication and divides them into three categories: anglophone sciences (physics, chemistry and some parts of medicine), anglophone influenced sciences (veterinary medicine, forestry, economics, psychology, linguistics) and sciences influenced by national languages and/or multilingual sciences (law, pedagogy, archeology, theology and some branches of cultural studies). Ammon (1998) considers the role of German as an international language of science and English as the medium of instruction at German in higher education and training (see also Carli & Calaresu (2003) on the language of scientific communication and the production and diffusion of specialist knowledge in Italy).

## 2.3 ENGLISH IN EDUCATION

English is the most taught language in virtually every country of the European Union (Eurydice, 2005). Formerly it was taught primarily for integrative purposes with the expectation that learners would become proficient in English solely to interact with British subjects. As this is no longer tenable in multilingual and multicultural Europe, where English is a lingua franca for interactions between and among speakers of various non-English language backgrounds, the broad and encompassing goal for classroom learning is the communicative competence that is useful with other English learners and users like themselves within and beyond Europe. This goal does not replace that of familiarity with and appreciation of the language and culture of Britain, which remains important for the purposes of

European integration. Both orientations, the instrumental and integrative, are part of the primary and secondary school curricula across Europe.

### **2.3.1 Primary and secondary education**

Foreign language instruction may be either mandatory or optional, depending upon the country. In 13 EU countries learning English is mandatory (which means that 90% of school age learners learn it ahead of other languages). When learners have a free choice, 90% of them opt for English (Eurydice, 2005). In France, the Flemish Community of Belgium, Germany, and the UK (except in Scotland), a first foreign language is compulsory for all pupils from the start of secondary education, usually at age 10, and continues for all pupils to the end of their compulsory education. A second foreign language may be required at lower secondary level, as it is in Belgium (the Flemish Community), Finland, Greece, and the Netherlands; in Portugal and Spain it is a compulsory option. In Austria, France, and Germany other criteria, such as the particular school attended, determine the learning of language (Eurydice, 2001).

Instructional hours vary across school level. In the earlier grades in Germany, for instance, English lessons are given two hours per week, then increase to an average of three and a half hours for 13-year olds, and can reach a maximum of five hours per week for 16 year-olds (European Commission, 2001a). Language instruction generally ends at Grade 10 for those who do not go on for three more years of schooling at the Gymnasium. In the Netherlands, an estimated 92% of all pupils follow English lessons with a modal number of 150 minutes a week. As a rule, most learners have a total of eight years of language instruction (including, but not limited to English).

Usually, English is required as one, if not the only, first compulsory language, or is the most frequently selected among language options. One exception is Belgium. In Flanders the first foreign language has to be French; Wallonia, however, gives choices: Dutch, English, and German; in Brussels, the first compulsory foreign language in French-speaking schools is Dutch, and vice versa in the Dutch-speaking schools.

Overall, English, French, and German are taught in Belgian primary schools starting in grade 5 and onwards; Spanish and Italian, along with English are offered at the secondary level. In Flanders, where French is their first foreign language, English is not part of primary education but is at secondary level. English classes begin at the second stage for two to three periods a week. With some exceptions, students are free to select their first foreign language from among Dutch, German or English. English is taught as a foreign language from the second year on. In the officially bilingual Brussels Region, education is monolingual – the medium is either French or

Dutch. However, instruction in either Dutch or French (the second language) is mandatory from Grade 3 onwards. At the secondary level in Wallonia a second foreign language is optional in the third year. In vocational secondary education, English is compulsory three times a week for majors in marketing and management, with English (and French) recommended for others. In the fine arts track, only some pupils have English at the second and third stages. For those on the technical track, English is compulsory twice a week, with additional one to two periods per week if they are majors in commerce and languages.

There is a steady trend in Europe toward teaching languages more widely at the primary level. The recommendations of the Barcelona Council in March, 2002 that languages should be taught at an increasingly younger age appear to be having an effect (Eurydice, 2005). At least half of all primary learners get instruction in one foreign language in the great majority of countries (Eurydice, 2005). In 1989 France introduced foreign language education in primary schools for one and one-half hours per week; today 100% of the children have foreign language classes. As of the 1994-1995 school year, 79.8% of primary learners were taking English as the second foreign language (cf. 15.2 % for German and 3% and 2% for Spanish and Italian, respectively) (Eurydice, 1997; Eurostat, 1997; Ministère de L'éducation Nationale, 2000). In the 1990s some German states began offering a few hours of language instruction per week as early as Grade 1 at all basic education schools. The majority learn English, except in the regions which border France, where French is taught. Even pre-school foreign language instruction is available on a limited basis in Germany. In the Netherlands, English is a compulsory subject in the last two years of primary education.

### **2.3.2 Bilingual education and English medium schools**

Across Europe, education through the medium of another language is available in private as well as public schools. Known variously as bilingual, multilingual, dual language, immersion, content and language integrated/CLIL depending upon the setting and the form in which it is implemented, English is well represented, serving as both a medium and a subject of instruction (see Marsh, Marsland, & Maljers, 1998, for discussion of CLIL).

In a model school in Northern Germany, pupils learn all subjects (except German and Religion) in English (see, for example, Wode, 1998a, b). The introduction of this form of language immersion, an experimental exception in German basic education, began in the 2001-2002 school year with 400 pilot schools. In some regions of Germany, immersion begins the third year in either French or English, in others as early as the first year (Otto, 2000, p.

67). No decisions have yet been made regarding the institution of this model.

Most English medium schools in Belgium are in Brussels and are attended primarily by children of expatriates. The International School of Brussels provides primary through secondary education, and French is taught daily at every level. Intensive instruction in English as an additional language is also available. These schools can be bi- or multilingual. European Schools offer bilingual education in English in the Brussels region as well (Baetens-Beardsmore, 1997). Elsewhere in Belgium, most notably in Wallonia, bilingual education has been implemented.

Foreign languages as a medium of instruction are found mostly at the upper secondary level in France. An exception is the English medium international schools with private primary and secondary education that were opened for residents coming from English-speaking countries. Some mainstream French secondary schools also offer special sections with a foreign language as a medium of instruction. In a small number of cases, international sections have been implemented. These *sections internationales* are attended primarily by foreign but also by French pupils aged 6-18. In 1992, European sections were created; the teachers and pupils are French but a foreign language is used for non-linguistic subjects, including science (Dickson & Cumming, 1996). The objective is to facilitate the integration of foreign pupils into both the French school system and that of the home country, in case they return. They likewise seek to create for French pupils an effective learning environment for the advanced study of a foreign language (Eurydice, 2001).

In Germany there are now a number of bilingual primary European schools that partner German with one of the following languages: English, French, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Greek, Portuguese, or Polish. Bilingual sections, first introduced in 1969, are predominantly German-English or French-English; at least one other subject in the foreign language is offered. A more recent development in bilingual education is bilingual “wings” or “branches” (*bilinguale Zweige*). Founded in different types of secondary schools (comprehensive, vocational, primary, college preparatory), lessons in content areas begin through the instructional medium in Grade 7. Children in Grades 5 and 6 are prepared seven to eight hours per week for this instruction in intensive foreign language courses that introduce the relevant structures and technical terms needed in subsequent years. Germany has had private international and European schools for some time. Pre-school bilingual education, while not widely available, has been free in Berlin since 1992. Its innovative design integrates bilingual European streams into normal German schools.

What is called bilingual education in the Netherlands means the Dutch-speaking pupils receive education through a foreign language. Beginning as a grass-roots movement by a number of highly-motivated teachers and parents

who convinced their schools to start this new line of teaching, it is regarded as a means of improving the efficiency of foreign language teaching in the Dutch secondary school system. Its aim is for the pupils to reach high levels of language proficiency in English. In most schools offering these programs, the second language used is English (attempts to set up bilingual streams using other languages have failed so far).

### **2.3.3 Higher education: English as subject, English as medium**

A domain in which English has an increasingly significant role is higher education, in part due to the increasing internationalization of education and mobility of students seeking advanced degrees throughout the world. It seems to dominate both as a (often required) subject and as a medium of instruction even though other languages are offered and/or are designated as the language of the institution.

In Belgium, learning foreign language continues through tertiary education for most students as language programs are frequently compulsory. In one study, Verluyten, Thiré & Demarest (1994) found that 98% of students in Flanders studied French, 95% studied English, 72% studied German, while only 14% and 3% respectively studied Spanish and Italian. Students considered French (81%) and English (80%) equally important, with these languages the first choice. In Wallonia, further study of languages appears to be limited to some faculties, such as economics and business administration. English is less common because universities are predominantly oriented toward the Francophone academic community. English language instruction is offered at the institutions' language centers, but university courses are rarely English medium. The French-speaking institutions do participate in international programs, but the partners have a mainly Roman, not an Anglo-Saxon, background. Foreign students are expected to be able to attend courses given in French and the institutions provide extensive French language training for students who need it (see Berlamont, 2002; Delbeke, 2002; Devreese, 2002 on the role of English in higher education in Belgium).

In Dutch higher education, English is taught at six universities. In addition, English is taught in various other programs, such as American Studies, European Studies, and Business Communication Studies. As in other types of education, the number of students of English exceeds those studying the other major languages.

In France, schools and universities granting diplomas in management, government, and engineering offer several language classes. Learning a foreign language tends to be compulsory for most degrees, with English usually having a privileged position although learning other languages is

also encouraged. Though the demand for English is important, the share of other languages seems to develop more quickly.

In Europe, student mobility is now of paramount importance to universities, and each wants to attract foreign students for their degree programs and possibly further research.

One particular consequence of this active recruitment of foreign students is a linguistically diverse study body that is not necessarily uniformly and highly proficient in the local language. At many institutions the presence of just one such student in class can prompt the professor to switch to a language common to all, often English. These developments are reinforced with assigned readings of research reports and scholarship that are published and available only in English. This trend extends to the collections of university libraries, which as a consequence of budget reductions have to limit the number of new acquisitions; when funding is reduced, priority is given to major international publications – thousands of which have 95% of their articles written in English (Bollag, 2000; Treanor, 2000).

The weight given publications in English is reflected in an evaluation made of psychology departments in the Netherlands some years ago by the review committee of NOW/ Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (the Dutch national science foundation). This body decided not to consider as research productivity publications written in Dutch, which remarkably did not stir the academic world at all. In contrast, action by another group, the review committee for educational research, did cause a bit of a stir: this group took the step of recognizing publications only in English, which led to (ineffective) protests because traditionally the Netherlands has always had strong relations with Germany and France on matters related to teaching and education (see also Motz, 2005 on the question of English or German as the language for courses in higher education; Ammon & McConnell, 2002 on English as an academic language in Europe in general).

### **2.3.4 The Bologna Declaration**

A development with considerable impact on the language situation in higher education is the Bologna Declaration of a European Space for Higher Education (Confederation, 2001). It aims to increase the international competitiveness of European higher education in response to changes and challenges related to the “growth and diversification of higher education” and expansion of transnational education. One strategy is the introduction of common diplomas in EU member states.

Although the Declaration stresses the need to achieve its goal within the framework of the diversity of languages, the decree, according to van Dinter and Stappaerts (2002), suggests the possibility of using English for the bachelor's and master's degrees. The special role of English has been

acknowledged in action plans from signatory countries. For example, attracting foreign students to a technical university in the Czech Republic is linked to the need for parallel English language courses (Polak, 2000), and the German Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs refers to the increasing numbers of study programs taught in English playing a role in easing the integration of foreign students into the German system.

In the Netherlands, intentions to prepare students for an international career (using English both for speaking and writing) and the popularity of student exchange programs at the European level (notably through Socrates, the European Community's action program in the field of education) inevitably enhance a trend toward an increase in the number of courses taught in English. Recognizing that students from abroad have no intention of learning Dutch to an advanced level of proficiency, Dutch universities, if they are to attract students from various countries, have to use English as a medium of instruction. This strategy has been successful in recent years to the extent that students from Southern Europe now come to the Netherlands. One reason given for their choice is that the English used there is adapted to second language learners rather than native speaker students (and is therefore easier than in English speaking countries).

A German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD/Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst) guide on opportunities for postgraduate studies in Germany asked readers to note that a good knowledge of English, and possibly French and Spanish as well, might be required in some courses, and that some postgraduate courses would be entirely run in English (DAAD, 2003). In the International Degree Program available at several German institutions of higher education, many courses are given in English. Applicants are required to have a good knowledge of English as demonstrated by internationally recognized tests of English (including the American English-based TOEFL). Basic knowledge of German is described as "helpful." Business administration is one field in which English is increasingly necessary. Although a Masters of Business Administration degree (MBA) was relatively unknown in Germany until fairly recently, it is the degree of choice with German students wishing to compete in the international marketplace and work with firms that put a premium on this degree. Of the over 40 MBA programs established in response to this need, two-thirds are taught in English.

English is a medium of instruction in French universities in the sciences, especially at the doctoral level. In other fields, such as business studies and engineering, a high level of proficiency in English is requisite, and being taught through the language is considered the best means to acquire it. Although use of English up to now in the French classroom has been more limited than in the Netherlands, or even Germany (Ammon, 2001), this may change with the Bologna process. In question is whether the linguistic impact experienced there will be similar in French universities. At present,

most of the courses offered to foreign students take place in French, a practice which does not seem to deter their enrollment. France has been the second destination (after the UK) chosen by students taking part in the Socrates program (Truchot, n.d.).

### **2.3.5 Community and workplace education and training**

In addition to the learning opportunities provided by primary, secondary, and higher education, both public and private options are available for English study outside these institutions. Many employers (including banks, insurance companies, and harbor authorities) provide special courses for their own personnel and gear the instruction towards the needs of that group. While many non-subsidized, private options for English courses often target the business sector, tuition for other groups is offered through such agencies as the British Council or community continuing education centers, such as the German Volkshochschulen, which give courses in a variety of subjects, including English, to young and old. In the Netherlands, a wide range of institutions, some sponsored by local or national authorities, some working purely on a commercial basis, offer English courses for all levels, professions and ages.

## **2.4 ENGLISH IN THE MEDIA**

In Europe, the media are well established and available in all forms – to a greater or lesser extent - to most Europeans. English appears to be equally established and available in all media forms. In the music world of Belgium, songs in English, even by Belgians, sound more “stylish” to young people (Van der Linden, 2001), and also attractive are such names of television shows such as (Blind Date, Big Brother, or Now or Never). Television news for young people in Wallonia is even called “les Niouzz” (pronounced “news”). The status English has in music is well illustrated by its dominance in the Eurovision Song Contest in 2001. In that year this event, which brings performers from all European countries together, was conducted that year exclusively in English, except for the singer representing France.

### **2.4.1 Television and film**

Exposure to English via entertainment media goes beyond music; the television and film industries contribute to opportunities for Europeans to have contact with English also. Increasingly, the world market for these cultural products is concentrated around Hollywood. According to a 1999 United Nations Development Program/UNDP, scarcely 30% of Hollywood’s



revenue in 1980 came from abroad compared with 50% nearly 20 years later (cited in *Le Monde*, 13 July 1999). In 1996, 70% of the film market in Europe was claimed by the US, 83% in Latin America, and 50% in Japan. The European Audiovisual Observatory (2001) noted that in the year 2000, the market share of American films had again risen in the 15 countries of the European Union, while that of European films had fallen to 22.5% with strong national variations.

Against the background of these figures, the following section reviews the place of television and film in and language in Europe. Particular attention is given to dubbing and subtitling practices, media markets, and linguistic requirements, language- and culture-related issues and concerns common across Europe. These three topics also provide a framework for identifying variations of the impact of English in film and television across countries.

## **2.4.2 Media market and linguistic requirements**

As in the discussions of English in other sections of this chapter, the media landscape of Europe cannot be painted with a broad brush. Germany, for example, with about 83 million people, has the largest media market in Europe. Consequently, the media landscape has a high concentration of national, German language media. In contrast to Belgium, Switzerland, or the Netherlands, for example, television programs from abroad, such as CNN or BBC World, do not attain substantial market shares. With regard to free television the German market is the most competitive in Europe. Due to high cable (57%) and satellite (30%) distribution, most German households can receive around 25 national channels. As a consequence, the audience market is quite fragmented; in recent years the market leader (RTL/Radio Télévision Luxembourg) reached a share of less than 15 %.

With multiple media landscapes, Belgium is distinguished from other countries. Of the three Belgian Communities, Flanders and Wallonia provide illustrations here (the German Community, due to its small size, will not be included). To begin with, there is a clear split between media offerings for these two parts of the country, including the most obvious difference of Dutch or French language. Each has developed a dual broadcasting system, including two public service channels and several private channels. In addition to the national channels in Belgium, which is one of the most densely cabled countries in the world, people can watch programming from neighboring countries as well as other European countries, for example, Italy or Spain. Supplementing its 25 broadcast stations are the English language programming of the BBC, CNN, or National Geographic, among others. In Flanders alone there are five English language cable stations (Goethals, 1997, p. 107). However, with regard to

market shares, the most important foreign channels are those with the respective language: French channels in Wallonia and Dutch channels in Flanders. Wallonian viewers, in particular, devote substantial parts of their viewing time to channels from France (see de Bens & Ross, 2002, pp. 217-220; Hasebrink & Herzog, 2002, p. 123).

D’Haenens (2001, p. 134) found that satellite programming in Western European countries shows an abundance of English language channels and that this continues to increase. However, the linguistic requirements for television are not the same as those for films shown in cinemas. According to Parker (1995), satellites can supply programs and advertising instantaneously in 24 western European languages, but television viewers—as market surveys on several occasions have shown—want television in their own language. This requirement probably explains why the content of TV programs has developed as it has. While U.S. TV serials dominated programs in the 1980s, nowadays quite a few successful TV films or programs are produced locally.

An example is the case of MTV Europe and its concentration on English language pop music, which at the beginning of the 1990s looked as if it were to become a trans-European channel. This perspective changed substantially in the course of the decade. One reason was the launch of the German channel VIVA, which was exclusively dedicated to the promotion of music by Germans (although not necessarily with German language lyrics!). The presenters, or VJs (video jockeys), were young Germans, speaking a German mixed with English words and idioms from the globalized world of pop music. Since the German produced VIVA proved to be more successful than American produced MTV, which changed its strategy and introduced German language programs with German presenters as well. Thus, even in this specific segment of music television for young people, it is still rather difficult to reach large audiences through the English language alone.

### **2.4.3 Dubbing and subtitling practices**

Language dubbing and subtitling are also practiced differently depending upon the country. Larger countries like France and Germany consider the investment in dubbing English-language films worthwhile. Thus, contact via television with exclusively English language offers is a rare occurrence. The countries that dub English language TV programming and films, and which have comparatively low levels of second language knowledge, consequently have a media landscape that in large part is self-referential.

Smaller countries, for example, Portugal, Sweden, and the Netherlands, subtitle films; Scandinavia and the Netherlands, as reported by Hasebrink & Herzog, regard dubbing as “cultural barbarism” (2002, p. 24-25). This means that TV is an important source of contact with foreign languages; in

the Netherlands alone, it involves the viewers of the eight million plus televisions the Dutch own. Informal counts show that 40 to 60 % of the programs on Dutch-speaking channels are actually in a foreign language, mainly English. In addition to such popular English language channels as MTV and the Discovery Channel, Dutch TV viewers will get at least one hour of English on average every day. Earlier research (de Bot, Jagt, Janssen, Kessels & Schils, 1986) has shown that watching subtitled TV programs does not mean that only the subtitles are attended to: information is drawn both from the spoken language and from the subtitles. Research by the Dutch Broadcasting Association shows that the Dutch population clearly prefers subtitling over dubbing. Keeping up or developing foreign language skills is expressly mentioned as one of the reasons.

In the Walloon Community of Belgium, however, dubbing is preferred, possibly because in Walloon media English has a place that is much less important than in Flanders. The most important reason for this is the rich French media offerings. Being part of the Francophone world, Wallonia has since the rise of cinema depended to a great extent on French productions. Since France had an intensive production of films, the public was used to French actors (and French voices when sound was added to the pictures). The Francophone market was so important that foreign films of possible interest to the Francophone audience were dubbed in spite of additional costs for doing so. In spite of the preference for dubbing in the French-speaking Community, the public broadcaster Radio-Television de la Belgique Francophone (RTBF) does sometimes show a French language dubbed version of a foreign (mostly American) film and the un-dubbed version simultaneously on public channels. Although only 10% watch the un-dubbed original, RTBF feels obliged to offer it as a public service. The commercial broadcaster, RTL, offers viewers dubbed versions only. Thus, the Walloon audience is rarely confronted with English voices, and the advent of cable television has not really changed this French monopoly. Although in the 1980s Walloon viewers gained access to foreign English-speaking channels (BBC and later, MTV and CNN) and Flemish and Dutch channels that generally subtitle their foreign programs, these newcomers could not compete with the offer of the 15 to 20 Francophone channels because the great majority of Walloons prefer watching foreign films or documentaries in a dubbed version. In Flanders, in contrast, viewers have more exposure to English because films on television (and in cinemas) are not dubbed generally, but shown with subtitles.

Music, television and film are not the only media influenced by American cultural products and by English. In the following, we consider the internet, radio, and print media, all of which are similarly rich in opportunities for contact with English, especially for teenagers, the focus of our study. As d'Haenens (2001) has noted, media availability, accessibility, and use are part of curricular and extra-curricular experience and exposure to

English among young people in particular. English-language films, television programming, computer games, music, billboards and magazines as well as newspapers all provide exposure to English outside of school and contribute to the further spread of English.

#### **2.4.4 Internet, radio and print media**

The internet is undoubtedly the fastest-growing communication tool known to the world. The personal computer has reached a high degree of prominence in Europe, particularly in northern countries (d'Haenens 2001; see also Shapiro, 1999, and Graddol, 1997). Although availability and access to the internet is uneven among Europeans, already in 1998, 37.2 million were internet users (of the 159 million users in the world). More than 10 million were in Germany (21.1 million), France (15.4 million), and Italy (10.6 million). Spain and the Netherlands at that time had fewer, with 5.7 million and 5.1 million, respectively.

This increasingly important medium is obviously an opportunity for contacts with English. Although, compared to the first years of the internet, the dominance of the English language on the web has been decreasing with other countries entering the new medium. Estimates in 2001 said that more than 50% of the internet content is in English ([http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/research\\_documents/statistics/internet/english\\_drops\\_web.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/research_documents/statistics/internet/english_drops_web.cfm)). English-language search engines (Yahoo, HOTBOT) are used widely, more so than local counterparts. However, this by no means implies that over 50 % of the actual use of the internet is devoted to English websites. In line with the concept of “glocalization” (global + local), the actual use of the internet is centered on local, regional, or national agencies which “transform” the global content into locally meaningful information. But it is also not the case that websites are in either one language or another because there are also bilingual (even multilingual) sites. Major Dutch institutions (banks, ministries, or museums), for example, typically have an English section in their homepages.

As in other western countries, radio has a large number of formatted programs broadcast for specific target groups. Those programs especially designed to attract young audiences offer mainly current popular music, a large majority of which has English lyrics. As several studies have indicated, radio programs for young audiences in Germany can offer 95 to 100 % of their music in English language (e.g., for the Berlin market, Wichert, 1997). This corresponds to audience studies which consistently show a strong preference among younger audiences for English language music, although older groups still prefer German pop among popular music in general (e.g., Steinborn, 1992; Hasebrink, 2003). In spite of these clear preferences, public debate continues on the share of German language music in radio programs.

Corresponding to rules in France, which require that 40% of broadcast music has French lyrics, the Organization of German Music Publishers has voted in favor of quotas for German language music.

While English language programs are very common on Dutch television and a host of English spoken channels are available, hardly anyone listens to English language radio stations. Intomart's 2003 measurements of listening to radio (<http://www.intomart.nl/default.asp>) show that no foreign channels reach the 0.1 % threshold. Even the BBC, which most cable providers offer as part of their package and which the majority of Dutch have access to, apparently does not attract many listeners.

Professional and scholarly publications written exclusively in English, as shown above in the sections on science and technology and on higher education, dominate these international fields. A different type of print media, namely English language press, also has a presence in Europe. For instance, shops specializing in books in English are found in many different areas of Brussels. *The Bulletin*, a "magazine for the English speaker in Brussels" was founded in 1962 by a British expatriate. Billed as "the only Belgian newsweekly magazine in English that provides news and views on the political, economical, social and cultural scene in the Capital of Europe," it counts upwards of 52,000 readers each week (*The Bulletin*, 2005). The press market in Flanders and Wallonia is mainly dominated by Belgian publishers.

International press in English is easy to find. *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Financial Times* from Britain and the *International Herald Tribune* and *The Wall Street Journal* from the U.S. are available in print as well as online versions. These newspapers are not widely influential because they are generally read by specific target groups (other than expatriates and tourists) that rely on English media, such as those in the areas of business, technology or science. Even among these target groups, the trend in Germany, at least, is towards German language editions of international newspapers, *The Financial Times Deutschland* is the German language versions of Britain's *The Financial Times*.

In France, readers of *LeMonde Diplomatique* can access an English edition via its website ([www.monde-diplomatique.fr](http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr)). This monthly publication has editions in several languages, including English. *Pariscope*, a weekly official Parisian guide to TV, cinema, theater, and museum events has a section in English. *France Now* is a monthly magazine reviewing French political, economic, financial, and legal news for the English speaker. A magazine for English-speaking Parisians is *Paris Free Voice Magazine*.

### 2.4.5 Media functions

Given the availability of local media in the local language, what purposes do English language media serve the European reader, viewer, or web surfer? Is it only to practice the language or to get information or to be entertained? Hasebrink (2001) has proposed that English also serves as a cultural bridge to the individual cultures associated with it. Users who feel that language and culture cannot be separated without losing the authenticity of the original prefer to read literature and watch English language films in the original, without dubbing or subtitling. The desire for a consistency of theme, language, and culture is one motivation for listening to songs with English lyrics among users with an interest in rock music. A means of access to and direct contact with the local culture when traveling or on vacation in an English-speaking country motivates the use of English, too.

## 2.5 LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY

As already described in the section on English in the workplace, competence in this language is a common qualification for employment in industry as well as service sectors of Europe. In the former, English is mostly required in fine mechanics, mechanical engineering, vehicle construction, plastics and iron processing, and steel and metal production. In the service sector, employees in the restaurant, hotel, and tourism business, the catering industry, transportation, wholesale and export trades, and banks need high proficiency in English. Elsewhere, adults needing English proficiency range from diplomats to company representatives to taxi drivers. The value placed on English in so many occupations is evident in position announcements in newspapers. Positions that have been advertised in leading German newspapers included those for a journalist with “perfect” English, a mechanical engineer with several years of technical English, a social worker with “good” English, and a manager in a pharmaceuticals firm with “good” knowledge of English. English is also requisite for academic positions in the Netherlands. Increasingly these ads are in English, which follows a trend not only in international newspapers but also in Dutch-language newspapers, for example, *De Volkskrant*.

These few examples of position announcements beg a question highly relevant with respect to English: To what extent are Europeans proficient in English? The European Commission has conducted surveys to determine proficiency in various languages, the results of which are published regularly in its Eurobarometer reports. Keeping in mind that the basis for these reports are self-assessments and that such data cannot be compared with demonstrations of language use in communicative situations, information

from various Eurobarometer surveys do shed light on Europeans' perceptions of their ability to use various languages, including English.

In 2001, as reported in Eurobarometer 54.1 (European Commission, 2001b), those surveyed most often claimed English as the language they could communicate in or knew better than other European languages. For European languages in general, 53% said they could speak at least one European language in addition to their mother tongue; 26% said they could speak two foreign languages. English was the language that most (41%) tended to know besides their mother tongue; French was next at 19%, followed by German (10%) and Spanish (7%). The least claimed to know Italian (3%).

A subsequent report found that among Germans 15 years of age and older, 44% claimed to be able to participate in a conversation in English (just 12% claimed to be able to speak French) (European Commission, 2001b). Compared to Eurobarometer surveys from previous years, this figure marks a steady increase in language proficiency: in 1998 it was 41% and in 1990 just 34%. In an earlier national study, Hasebrink (1997) asked adults 18 years and older for self assessments of whether they were able to roughly understand a selection of media types - a newspaper article, TV news, TV movies (without subtitles), or radio programs - in various languages. Over 31% of the respondents responded affirmatively on at least one of the four media for English. There was, however, a clear difference between respondents from western Germany (33.9%) and eastern Germany (21.9%), an outcome possibly influenced by the distinct histories of contact with English for each region.

The Netherlands present yet a different picture. In a (fairly small-scale) study, Janssen, Janssen-van Dielen, & Evers (1997) compared the English language proficiency profiles of Dutch pupils aged 15-16 with peers from France, Spain and Sweden using tests that focused on both receptive and productive grammatical and pragmatic skills. Data showed that Dutch pupils scored 68% correct on the grammatical and 62% on the productive written skills. Overall the score was 67% correct. For the other groups, mean scores correct were 37% (France), 35% (Spain) and 60% (Sweden).

The differences in the scores were only partly explained by differences in contact time in the class: as mentioned above, Dutch pupils receive on average 150 minutes of English teaching per week. French and Spanish pupils' English lessons take 180 minutes per week. Teaching time is still less for Swedish pupils at 120 minutes per week. In all countries, there were significant differences between school types. In the Netherlands, mean correct scores ranged from 46% for the lowest educational level, which prepares pupils for vocational training, 63% for the intermediate level, 76% for the more advanced level, and up to 79% for the pupils preparing for university.

The self-report data included in a 1999 Eurobarometer report showed that 62% of Belgians (age 15 or older and from Flemings and Wallons combined) claimed to be able to carry on a conversation in at least one other foreign language (European Commission, 1999). Forty-one percent claimed to be able to do this in English, 14% in German, and 38% in French, and 3% for Italian and Spanish. Complementary data is found in the anecdotal evidence from Goethals (1997), who has observed that on the whole Belgian travelers abroad, and Flemings in particular, do relatively well at the survival level when speaking to foreigners. English-speaking visitors report no problems when speaking with people on the street or in shops.

In Eurobarometer 50 (European Commission, 1999), it is reported that 45% of the French surveyed claimed to be able to take part in a conversation in a language other than their mother tongue. Thirty two per cent claimed knowledge of English as a “second language”. Spanish (11%) and German (9%) were the other most widely spoken languages apart from French. In a previous report (European Commission, 1997), 63.3% of French youth thought they knew English well enough to participate in a conversation in English, and 17.5% said they would like to speak English better if given the opportunity. Thirty-seven percent had visited the UK in the previous two years. By comparison, 24.7% thought they knew Spanish well enough to participate in a conversation and 21.6% said they would like to learn Spanish if they had the opportunity; 30% had visited Spain.

Being proficient in a language has been shown to have a link with attitudes toward that language and its speakers. Perceptions of the ease of learning a language are one dimension of attitude. Oud-de Glas (1997) found in a study of the Netherlands that among the younger generations English is considered the most easily learned foreign language. Even though no linguistic reasons can be cited for this view (because German is likely to be typologically closer than English) pupils appeared to find German more difficult. This preference, Oud-de-Glas suggests, has an attitudinal rather than a linguistic basis because the older generation in their 60s and 70s considered English more difficult than German.

In a Belgian study, Verluyten, Thiré & Demarest (1994) found that among Flemish university students the transition from language learning at the secondary level to university was perceived as being easier for English than for French: thirty per cent found the transition for English difficult and 42% for French. Flemish reaction to the dominance of English in a recent song contest illustrates another dimension of language attitude. With seven of the twelve songs in English, some Flemish listeners asked, “Do we have to become English-speaking, after we’ve been submitted for years to pressures to become French-speaking?” (p. 10).



## 2.6 ATTITUDES

According to various published reports in the last decade or so, Europeans overall seem to have a favorable attitude toward languages other than their own and rank English highly as a school subject. The European Commission (1997) found that 72% believed that knowing foreign languages was or would be useful for them, and 93% of parents with children under age 20 said it was important for their children to learn other European languages. Seventy-one per cent said that everyone in the European Union should be able to speak one European language in addition to their mother tongue. Reasons given for foreign language proficiency included an increase in employment opportunities, recognition that a particular language was widely spoken in the world, and parental desire for their children to be multilingual.

In Belgium, at least among young people, the general attitude towards English appears to be positive. In Wallonia, pupils prefer English classes to Dutch classes, because “they are more lively” (Coppieters 't Wallant, 1997). In Flanders, English classes are also more appreciated than French classes; Flemish children are more motivated to learn English than French, and they show a greater feeling of success at learning English (Sercu 2000, p. 204).

In Germany it is difficult to determine the extent and nature of beliefs about the language and its linguistic, cultural, and social impact because empirical studies of attitudes toward English among Germans are few. Yet, the extensive use of English and consumption of English language cultural products could be interpreted as indications of a positive disposition among some segments of the population. The ease with which new phenomena and trends are either given or adopt an English name, which is subsequently used and widely accepted, also suggests a positive attitude (compare French efforts to curb this practice). Examples include new sports activities such as jogging, walking, snowboarding, and inline skating. Today “faxen,” “mailen,” or “surfen” are usually used for the respective activities. A noteworthy example is “Handy,” the English word that names the ubiquitous mobile phone. Those Germans who assume this is the same name used in Britain or the U.S., which it is not, get upset when they discover English native speakers do not understand what they mean when they refer to their “Handy.” Another recent example is “Beamer”, which is used to refer to what in the US is called a power point projector.

For the Netherlands, as for Germany, there is little empirical evidence on attitudes towards English. Yet, what data there are seem to suggest that English is seen as a useful and attractive language and not a threat to the Dutch language.

Enthusiasm for using or learning English does not, however, imply widespread acceptance and positive attitudes toward the pervasive presence of English. While young people may be less critical, there are adults who –

although they recognize the need for facility in English and even strongly encourage their children to become fluent in it – have concerns about its presence in their language and its expanding role in more areas of their lives. Some fear that in time English could completely replace the native language for future generations or have serious consequences for the integrity of that language. This tension between fear of English influence and the general perception of the necessity of English is not isolated to one country or another, but is common throughout Europe. Still, each country responds individually.

Lack of empirical evidence on Dutch attitudes has not kept various academics from expressing their fear that Dutch will be replaced by English in the near future (e.g., Beheydt, 1996; de Swaan, 1991). These fears are not supported by a pilot study in which 69 immigrants from 31 different countries were questioned about their language attitudes and intentions to learn other languages (Weltens & De Bot, 1995). The main conclusion of the study, which was motivated by impressions in various immigration countries that immigrants “skip” the national language and try to learn a larger international language in order to move on, was that among immigrants in the Netherlands, at any rate, learning English, for all its attractiveness in other respects, is not seen as an alternative to learning Dutch.

The Belgian general public expressed concern about the future of the use of English in higher education as early as the 1990s. This issue is of especially keen interest in Flanders. After a long struggle for the use of Dutch rather than French in higher education, the Flemish decree aimed at protecting the Dutch language now forbids higher education in any language other than Dutch. It states that university programs can only exist in English if they also exist in Dutch. The question here is whether English – along with French – becomes a threat to Dutch.

France has a long tradition of favorable attitudes to English which dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, even though France and England were fighting fiercely against one another in North America, philosophers looked to Britain for examples of parliamentary democracy and encyclopedists for new techniques. Unfavorable attitudes are more recent and reached a peak in the 1960s with the publication of René Etiemble’s *Parlez-vous français?* in 1963. Its subsequent and considerable impact on the image of linguistic resistance to English can be observed in French attempts in the 1970s and 1990s to pass laws that would protect and preserve French from foreignisms, most especially Anglicisms and Americanisms. These efforts have had no lasting success.

Some Germans opposed to the prevalence of English words and the frequency with which they are used by their compatriots have, like their French counterparts, sought to draft a law to protect the language, and urge the government to set the example by using German words to replace now more commonly used English words. Specific examples are the use of

Treffpunkt, not Meeting-Point; Büro, not Office; and Lehrpläne, not Curricula (Lammert, 2001).

## 2.7 THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH

As is evident in this sociolinguistic profile of English in Europe, English is very present in Europe and its presence is best understood in the context of both the European Union as a whole and of countries and regions in particular. Prominent in the media, in education, in science and technology, and in the workplace, high levels of English proficiency are claimed by learners and desired by employees, and both positive and negative attitudes are held. Germany dubs films, while the Netherlands subtitles; English is used in higher education in the Netherlands more than in France; Belgium has two official state languages, but Germany only one; France attempts to control the influence of English through legislation, while Belgium focuses on the balance between Dutch and French.

The future of English in Europe depends to a large extent upon how its use and learning develops both within individual countries and within succeeding generations. As Graddol (2001), Crystal (1997), and Fishman (1998/1999), among many others have forecast, the place of English, at least for the foreseeable future, is secure. And in Europe, as elsewhere, for better or worse, it will expand within specific domains of use and increase in the number of users. Being the first foreign language in most schools and introduced at school at ever earlier stages, expanded knowledge of and higher proficiency levels in English can be anticipated as well. Similarly, its extensive use in higher education from lecture halls to libraries in response to internationalization, and the need to compete with other European institutions for the revenue that international students bring, will be additional factors in its future.

It also must be noted that the future of English is closely tied to the other languages of Europe, which begs an intriguing question: What will the kind and nature of the interplay between these languages and English be in this internationalized scenario? An example is German's position as a language of wider communication in Eastern Europe, where German, as a linguistic artifact of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, has been taught and used throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even during the Soviet era. Thus, the use of English for wider communication is limited. Yet, this may change depending to some extent upon patterns of English learning and use with the admission of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia (along with Malta) to the EU. Current political strategies in Germany could also help to tip the balance. Strategies designed to enhance the position of Germany in the areas of science and business explicitly specify that English proficiency should be improved on all levels.

This composite sociolinguistic profile of English in Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands has outlined the role of school, social background, attitudes, and contact with English, through the media in particular. But data is lacking that allows comprehensive comparison between countries, and in most countries even basic data on any one of these roles are missing. Thus, we used the roles of school, social background, attitudes and contact as a starting point for the design of the survey questionnaire and for an analysis of the findings.

In order to measure the differential impact of those factors the same set of data had to be gathered in different countries and the effect they have on language proficiency, which is ultimately the most important aspect from a language policy perspective, needed to be assessed. The next chapter describes the components and characteristics of the study of the presence of English in Europe, media, and European youth that we undertook to make up for data that has been lacking.