The End of Minority Languages?
Europe's Regional Languages in Perspective

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The European Union (EU) today counts 23 national languages with as many as 65 regional and minority languages, only a few of which enjoy recognition in the EU. We assess the perspectives of regional and, particularly, endangered languages in Europe in three steps. First, we argue that current approach of nation-states, defining both national and regional/minority languages from the top down, is increasingly at odds with the idea of cross-border migration and communications. We illustrate this with the examples of Estonian and Latvian, official languages of EU member-states with around one million native speakers each. Second, we attest the end of "traditional" forms of minority language, contending that if they are to survive they cannot do so as mirror copies of majority languages. To make our point clear, we discuss regional efforts to increase the use of the Breton and the Welsh languages. We outline a research agenda that takes into account the nation-state dominated linguistic regulations and the future of an increasingly borderless Europe, and suggest how both can be accommodated.

Key words: EU; regional languages; minority languages; Welsh; Breton; Latvian; Estonian; multilingualism; language policy

Today the official languages of the European Union (EU) member-states enjoy *de jure* equality across the union, even outside the territory of the state that recognizes them as official. In a context where speakers of diverse official languages share a common European public space, there is a growing need to revisit our understanding of languages bound to particular territories and defined as state, regional, official, majority or minority languages. Increasing mobility of citizens across the EU has led to a stronger emphasis by the European Commission (EC) on the promotion of multilingualism across the European citizenry to ensure the effective communication between EU citizens, either in their native or their vehicular languages. Ultimately,

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this means that speakers of all European languages, however large the number of speakers "at home", regularly find themselves in a minority status when travelling into another EU country. Our article highlights the implications of the processes that are taking place across the EU today as a result of advanced functional integration of the European public on the one hand, and the lack of dynamic in the institutionalized relations of European states with the populations they serve.

The research programme introduced in this article advocates for the expansion of the current understanding of the "majority/minority language" dichotomy. From our point of view, the previous emphasis of scholarship on minority/majority status issues largely overestimates the territorialization of linguistic regimes without paying enough attention to linguistic heterogeneity in contemporary Europe. To clarify our point, we start with a review of the approaches to linguistic diversity visible across European nation-states. In the first section of the article, we investigate how the EU and its nation-states deal with the languages spoken on their territories, and conclude that many of these approaches are limited. This allows us to depart from traditional classifications of European languages in subsequent sections of the article. All EU languages only have a limited use beyond the geographic regions where their status is ranked as more advantageous as a result of official recognition. In the second section of the article we analyse the two state languages, Latvian and Estonian, which provide a fertile basis for reconceptualization of the idea of "Europe's regional language". We then focus our attention on linguistic situation in Brittany and in Wales and attest the end of "traditional" forms of minority language, contending that if they are to survive they cannot be mirror copies of majority languages. We conclude by highlighting the logic of linguistic territorialization inherent in all EU member states, which simultaneously reinforces the identity-based claims of speakers of state languages at the expense of speakers of all other languages and non-standard varieties. By discussing the implication of (over-)regulation of language use, we ultimately argue that the empowerment of communities with languages of limited intelligibility has a range of adverse consequences. Overall, our article engages in the debate about the future of European language communities, both large and small, which will depend on the ability of their members to access the social, economic and political resources available to all European citizens and is decreasingly bound to geographic polities.

Language policy and linguistic ideologies

The central challenge of our undertaking is related to the terms we use to describe different language communities. While languages do not exist independently of frameworks of social interaction, their speakers constantly compete among each other for symbolic privileges and prestige, but also for extension of language use into social, economic and ultimately political domains. It is from this perspective, we believe, that languages across the world are divided into state/official languages of institutions, including those of the states, and regional/minority languages of societies, including those of linguistic communities. The vast majority of European debates on linguistic diversity consider the official status of a language to be an indicator of its use and of its potential survival chances in contact situations (c.f. Goodin, 2006; Barry, 1975). As has been frequently addressed in the literature on European linguistic diversity, a focus on the status of a language requires a debate about the level of congruence between the people and the linguistic community served most often by monolingual state institutions (Irvine and Gal, 2009; Mar-Molinero and Stevenson, 2006; Nic Craith, 2006), which usually results in heated arguments about the size of a linguistic community that deserves particular protection. We have no intention in engaging in such discussions.

Instead, we focus on the opportunities available to members of linguistic communities to compete with speakers of other languages. As was (and remains) the case for minority languages across Europe, many were (or are) not allowed to be used in communication with public officials, were dismissed as inappropriate "idioms" for educated citizens, or suffered from state policies which had the effect of disrupting intergenerational transmission. Such policies rarely targeted languages *per se* but rather impacted on non-native speakers of state/official languages and projected an image of a monolingual civic community to outsiders. We rarely presume that a German citizen might not be a native speaker of that language, although Danish and Sorbian are both spoken by a considerable number of German citizens and can be used in communication with authorities. The need to establish a common means of communication within schools and with officialdom were the more pragmatic reasons for these policies, which frequently attempted to reinforce the prevailing ideologies within particular nation-states. Language competence hence determines individual chances for acquiring membership of a given linguistic community, allows for

competition with members of other linguistic communities domestically and at the European level, and enables contention for access to scarce resources. Group construction is thus the primary social function of language proficiency and is used much more often than we acknowledge, thereby excluding some individuals from access to group resources, however defined.

Like a huge range of identity markers, language is a relational reference tool (Brubaker *et al.*, 2004; Wimmer, 2003). The linguistic identity of a speaker constructs that individual's membership in a group using a particular idiom in the everyday. If we think of language as a base for linguistic identity, upon which collectivities develop their convictions about the content of culture, tradition and ethnicity, it becomes clear that language serves a particular function for social cohesion. This happens precisely when one uses language as an identity marker, through which an individual comes to identify or negate his membership in a linguistic community and can claim privileged access to group resources (Spolsky, 2005).

The arguments that start by positing a function to something can also constitute part of a valid explanation for a broader set of phenomena. In our case, we are looking at the future of regional/minority languages in Europe. This makes us consider languages in their function as identity markers, which necessarily undergo change and can vary significantly across linguistic communities. Whatever the changes in the function of a language, however, it is almost universally deployed in day-to-day communication between members of a linguistic community as a rule of thumb for navigating the cultural, social and economic world. More fundamentally, everyday interactions with a range of individuals allow us to categorize objects in our social environment through a constant problem-solving activity. In our case, linking individual members of a language group by referring to experienced and/or implied language proficiency allows individuals who are party to such an arrangement to secure personal gains in the face of competition between different linguistic communities.

Kenneth McRae (1975) was among the first to draw attention to language as a marker of identity in political contexts. McRae was primarily concerned with the principles upon which states establish their linguistic policies, leading him to distinguish policies promoting "personality" from the "territoriality" principle. Among sociolinguists, Joshua Fishman was among the first to discuss the role of language as a powerful marker of identity in a systematic, albeit inconsistent manner

(Fishman, 1968, 1980), followed by many other scholars who treated language as *the* marker of individual and group identity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Skutnabb-Kangas *et al*. 1995). Others focused on possibilities for successful intergenerational transmission and survival of language within social communities. Scholars ranging from Woolard (1985) and Trosset (1993) to Laitin (1993, 1994), all expressed a greater degree of support for territorial understanding of language regulation, by defining linguistic communities as being geographically contiguous and requiring support from territorially defined structures, namely states.

John Myhill went further, suggesting that what we observe are two competing and contradictory linguistic ideologies (Myhill, 1999, 2003, 2006). Language-as-identity emphasizes 'the inherent emotional and spiritual connection between a person and his/her native language', while language-and-territory emphasizes 'a connection such that in each territory a particular language should be the one generally used in public circumstances and intergroup communication' (Myhill, 1999: 34). Importantly, Myhill claims that sociolinguists' failure to develop a consistent take on how to treat minority languages, downplays the role of this science in developing solutions to the conflicting interests of the linguistic communities they address (Myhill 1999, 47). Myhill's observation is particularly salient if one includes languages of migrant communities within this framework. Spoken outside the territory of the state that recognizes them as official, the language-as-identity principle would necessarily apply to (native) languages used by migrants, incentivizing speakers to adopt the local language, spoken by the majority and supported by institutions pursuing language-and-territory ideology (Goodin, 2004; Kraus, 2011).

And because, as we outline above, our article *is* about regional/minority languages in general and the future of Europe's regional/minority languages in particular, we look for a way out of the impasse created by what Myhill calls the 'contradiction between ideology and ecology' (Myhill, 1999: 39). This is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is beyond the scope of any article to address the variety of competing narratives, identities and loyalties intricately connected to any one language. While we perceive many European languages as being endangered in the long-term, constraints of space do not allow us to address the problems of each language in detail here. We do however see that, in the vast majority of cases, languages face the same problems in the medium-term, because they compete for speakers, who ensure their acceptance, recognition and use. More importantly,

however, we see many language communities being consistently marginalized in the public sphere because demographically more numerous language groups control access and ensure the advantageous use of their idioms at the expense of smaller language communities.

As we demonstrate in the following sections, the status granted to languages can, but does not have to, support positive outcomes in terms of language survival. We do this first by looking at the situation of the state languages of Estonia and Latvia (section 2), and then through a review of the language situation of Welsh in the United Kingdom (UK) and Breton in France (section 3).

Language territorialization: provincializing the state language

Contemporary language policies in the Baltic States are an interesting example of how European regulations have been deployed at the level of the nation-state. While the EU perceives linguistic loyalties to be mobilized from the bottom-up to increase the competitiveness of the languages perceived as endangered by larger idioms, post-Soviet policies in the Baltics followed the established EU practice of regulating linguistic regimes from the top-down (Hogan-Brun and Ramoniene, 2004). In the process of claiming greater independence from the Soviet Union during *perestroika*, Estonia and Latvia (together with Lithuania) geared their efforts towards (re-)building cultural nations, continuing the nation building projects of the early twentieth century, and allegedly to keeping the other language communities then residing in the republics in check. In the process, language laws were the first laws passed in the bid for greater sovereignty from Moscow in the late 1980s. The laws established that only the languages of the states' titular groups were to be used for the work of the state apparatus and in communications between citizens and civil servants. Enforced in the context of the still-Soviet republics, these regulations aimed at 'containing the Russian language and monolingual Russian speakers ' (Järve, 2002: 79), effectively limiting the access of monolingual Russian speakers to key positions in the post-Soviet republics. Depending on one's point of view, this could be a good or a bad thing: it is an understandable reaction to the hardships of Soviet rule in the region, but one which has excluded sections of Estonian and Latvian residents from participation in politics, limited their opportunities for social interactions across linguistic groups, and propped up their economic marginalization.

Despite the fact that the political leadership of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania coordinated their actions in the run-up to independence, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in August 1991 each state developed its own strategy to regulate language use domestically. These strategies were determined by the social and linguistic situation in each state and reflected the perceptions of state language speakers of their languages' survival, given the heavy Russification during the period of Soviet inclusion. During the Soviet era, Estonia and Latvia experienced large-scale migration of Russian speakers from other Soviet republics, which made up around 35% and 45% of the population respectively. Russian speakers had little incentive to acquire knowledge of Estonian and Latvian, while little opportunity was provided by the Soviet authorities in the decades leading up to Soviet demise. Recent scholarship argues convincingly that although linguistic environments were initially mixed, growing numbers of Russian speakers in conurbations resulted in the emergence of monolingual Russian-speaking enclaves (Raun, 2009; Plakans, 2009; Siiner, 2006; Druviete, 2000; Kreindler, 1991). While most Russian speakers had little knowledge of local languages, the Soviet regime actively encouraged bilingualism of all non-Russian speakers. In effect, by the end of 1980s around 80% of Balts were almost fluent in Russian, although admittedly the figures differed from 94% in Latvia to 69% in Estonia (Soviet Government, 1991). Therefore, after the *de facto* independence of the state and the tightening of regulations governing language use, it was Russian speakers in Estonia and Latvia who found themselves unable to participate in state-building for the want of proficiency in the re-established state languages.

In Latvia and Estonia regulations were put in place that required all official communication to be held in the state language only, underlining that all other languages were "foreign" and thus disqualified from public use. Overnight, Russian speakers were put in the position of either having to learn the state languages, or being socially marginalized. Most of the Russian speakers were also pushed outside of the sphere of political influence in the independent Estonia and Latvia, which treated all Soviet migrants as "resident aliens". The post-Soviet sovereignty of Estonia and Latvia was constitutionally accepted as continuing the statehood tradition interrupted by the Soviet inclusion of 1940, and thus required all Soviet-era migrants to undergo a naturalization procedure to acquire post-Soviet citizenship. Proficiency in the state language was an important part of the naturalization examination that all Soviet migrants had to pass in order to acquire Estonian and Latvian citizenship. During the

1990s both Estonian and Latvian legislation was repeatedly criticized by international organizations for their parsimony in assisting Russian speakers to learn the state language, although of course state language policies are widely supported by majority language-speakers.

In 1994 the Latvian government, with the assistance of the Council of Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began a National Programme for Latvian Language Training (NPLLT) in an effort to improve knowledge of the state language among speakers of other languages. Although the NPLLT is considered a success story, regulations on language use in Latvia became stricter in the run-up to EU accession. In 1998 a revised language law confirmed the status of Latvian as the sole language of the state and in 2002 Latvian also became the sole official working language of the parliament. In Estonia the decision to support members of the Russian-speaking community in acquiring Estonian language skills did not surface until pressure mounted from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the CoE, and the EU. Although financial aid was granted to the Estonian government via the EU PHARE programme to implement nation-wide language training activities as early as 1995, it was only in 1998 that the Estonian government produced an action plan to help Russian speakers acquire knowledge of Estonian. In order to increase non-Estonian speakers' proficiency in Estonian a 'Language Teaching Strategy of Non-Estonian Population' emerged in 2002 and a 'Development Strategy of the Estonian Language' was drawn up by 2003. Primarily these sought to ensure the increasing importance of the language for the state, society and within the EU context, further marginalizing non-state languages on the territory of Estonia.

The regulations concerning training in the state languages were essentially the same in Estonia and Latvia, emerging from a background of amendments to the Estonian Language Act (June 1, 1999) and Latvian Language Law (December 9, 1999). These approved the mandatory levels of knowledge of the state language, the extent and order of examinations, and the certification procedure for speakers of other languages employed on the territory of the 'national' state.

Additionally to the comprehensive strengthening of the role of the state language, both Latvia and Estonia undertook educational reforms, discontinuing the Soviet schooling systems. Prior to 2004 in Latvia and 2007 in Estonia, speakers of the "foreign", *de facto*, Russian language, could graduate from high schools without any

knowledge of the state language despite compulsory language training in minority schools, i.e. schools where the language of instruction was Russian. Since 2008 secondary schools located on the territory of Estonia and Latvia are expected to teach at least 40% of the curriculum in the state languages, thereby ensuring that graduates have sufficient knowledge of Estonian or Latvian to continue into tertiary education, which had already switched to the state language by the end of the 1990s. This made individuals from the younger (birth) cohorts proficient in state languages to a degree that allowed them to compete with native speakers in key labour market positions. Yet, Russian speakers born before 1980 – around 50% of the group – continue to lack proficiency in the state language in both countries. However, restrictive language regulation ensured better positioning of state languages across the Baltic States *vis-à-vis* the Russian language (Metuzle-Kangere and Ozolins, 2005; Ozolins, 2003). At the same time knowledge of Russian among speakers of the state languages fell dramatically, from 79% to 58% in Estonia and 94% to 66% in Latvia (Siiner, 2006; Tammpuu, 2004; Zepa *et al.*, 2005). Nonetheless, there were few opportunities for the state to undermine the status of Russian as a widely understood means of communication in the country, and indeed internationally (Druviete *et al.*, 2001).

The territorialization of language regimes in Estonia and Latvia has been at the centre of attention for scholars of democratization because language policies resembled Soviet approaches to language institutionalization (Linz and Stepan, 1996; Martin, 1999; Tsilevich, 2001). However, it has been acknowledged that language policies in the Baltic States differ little from EU language regulations (Coulmas, 1991; Eurobarometer, 2006; Nic Craith, 2006; Ozolins, 2007; Trenz, 2007). The situation to date suggests that state and nation building in Estonia and Latvia have aimed at reversal, rather than preservation, of the linguistic *status quo* inherited from the Soviet Union. During the Soviet era, knowledge of the state language (then, Russian), was sufficient to ensure full integration within the social, political and economic processes taking place across the Soviet Union (Bjorklund 2004; Djackova 2003; Kulu and Tammaru 2004; Tsilevich 2001). In the decade preceding the Soviet demise, however, a range of political, economic and social deliberations in national republics of the Soviet Union took place in languages other than Russian. Group cohesion within ethnolinguistic communities in the late 1980s functioned as a prelude to popular mobilization, resulting in the reinstatement of a post-Soviet statehood in which Latvian and Estonian were each ascribed the status of sole state language. In so

doing, the post-Soviet state language policies overturned the privileges that had previously gone together with the dominant status of Russian speakers in the Soviet Union, prompting the regeneration and empowerment of local languages in the public domain. Both states put regulations in place determining the levels of language proficiency necessary for state employers, while there were also attempts to regulate language use in private business (Adrey, 2005; Järve, 2002). However, greater flexibility with regard to language regulations in private institutions allowed for recruitment of individuals proficient in both state and "foreign" languages.

In the Baltic context, state languages were clearly perceived as signifying state sovereignty with the policies of linguistic territorialization favouring speakers of the state languages, while simultaneously disadvantaging Russian speakers in the public domain (Antane and Tsilevich, 1999; Vetik *et al.*, 2004). State-led efforts to protect and promote official languages at all costs, however, seriously undermined the value of the state language for Russian speakers. Instead, the monitoring of linguistic competences of the group meant that Russian speakers increasingly placed emphasis on the economic motives for language acquisition (Djackova, 2003; Laitin, 1998; Pisarenko, 2006; Vihalemm, 1999). With intergenerational transmission, broader groups of bilingual Russian speakers effectively adapted to the dominance of monolingual state-language speakers in Estonia and Latvia. As a result, the percentage of Russian speakers who were fluent in the state language in Estonia rose from 67% to 80% and from 62% to 80% in Latvia between 1991 and 2004 (Eurobarometer ,2006; Evas *et al.,* 2004).

Interestingly, the linguistic regimes of these states clearly illustrate that territorial language policies stand at odds with the requirements of an increasingly multilingual Europe. Both Estonian and Latvian linguistic policies treat states as primary protectors of the official languages, espousing a tough territorialization approach. The use of the state language is promoted and monitored at all levels of state administration, despite the existence of Estonian municipalities with more than 50% of non-Estonian speakers who are long-term residents and who have repeatedly (and unsuccessfully) applied for the right to use (the officially mentioned as) "foreign" languages in communications with their electorate throughout the (predominantly Russian-speaking) North East Estonia. Prominently, in February 2012 Latvia's citizens held a referendum to elevate Russian to the level of state language, in an attempt to challenge the strict application of a territorial approach to language by

the state. Nonetheless, over the past two decades, Russian speakers have increasingly adapted to bilingual practices required for social, economic and political advancement and success, while the speakers of state languages find themselves locked in a zero-sum game between linguistic loyalties. Neither the Latvian nor the Estonian state encourages their majority populations to learn the "foreign" Russian language, despite the fact that it is spoken by around 40% of their respective country's populations (Tuul, Ugaste, and Mikser, 2011; Lindemann and Saar, 2011; Tabuns 2010; Pavlenko, 2011). At the same time, all residents of the states are encouraged to acquire a working knowledge of Western European languages, predominantly English (Grasmane and Grasmane, 2011; Toots and Idnurm, 2011; Toomet, 2011). In other words, the Baltic States have adopted centralist policies similar to those of the Soviet authorities before them, rather than reworking them to open up the space for development of non-dominant languages, including languages recognized as *de facto* minority languages, e.g. Swedish in Estonia and Liv in Latvia.

An increasing numbers of Russian speakers who are able to use Latvian and Estonian provide positive feedback on the effects of the territorialization of linguistic regimes. Indeed, by acquiring the capacity to communicate in the state language, the speakers of "foreign" languages can compete more efficiently for scarce economic resources in Latvia and Estonia, while declaring the same degree of proficiency in (Western) European languages as in Latvian and Estonian (see e.g. Toomet, 2011). It is clear that the promotion of state languages within the region might empower the status of those languages on the territory of the state, but is unlikely to make them more attractive for communication beyond the limited geographic realm of Estonia or Latvia, in the absence of native speakers of those languages. Like the promoters of many numerically smaller European languages, both the state-sponsored Estonian Language Institute and Latvian Language Centre support the studying of their languages abroad, and in doing so effectively undermine the territorial approach to the promotion of small state languages within the framework of the EU. Following such policies, the linguistic communities of Estonian- and Latvian-speakers are likely to remain highly limited in their opportunities to use their language outside their homeland countries. Naturally, communities numbering 0.8 million speakers of Estonian and 1.3 million speakers of Latvian are no more limited in their opportunities than, for instance, 15 million Hungarian speakers, 5 million Finns or 300,000 Icelanders. Indeed, we find similarities with many other monolingual

national language speakers in the EU, who migrate towards employment and education opportunities in other European states, where they are unlikely to profit from their knowledge of and use the official language of their state of citizenship. The experience of Latvia and Estonia illustrates that while language promotion has fairly good chances of succeeding on the territory where its status is protected, protectionism can easily result in provincialization of the speakers of those languages in the context of an increasingly mobile and decisively multilingual Europe, unless it is coupled to proficiency in a vehicular language. Moreover, as Edwards (2010: 69) has accurately pointed out, small state languages (such as Estonian or Latvian) do 'have an increased likelihood of survival compared to their stateless cousins [i.e. minority languages], but it would be a great mistake to assume that the acquisition of official status by a small language means that a corner has been decisively turned'. Furthermore, 'exactly the same pressures apply here' (Edwards, 2010: 69), in that small state languages are subject to the same push-and-pull factors of globalization as small and stateless languages.

In the following section, we will discuss how the centralizing monolingual policies of France and the UK have affected the linguistic loyalties of speakers of Breton and Welsh. It will also become clear that minority language-speakers increasingly come to perceive their language not as an instrument of policy, but as a marker of identity.

Language tokenism: do regional languages follow the identity principle?

Territorially defined languages were not always in a much better position than the languages lacking territorial reference today, such as Romani in Hungary or Ruthenian in Slovakia. Over the period of European enlargement, many of the varieties treated now as languages historically spoken on contiguous territory profited greatly either from interstate treaties aiming at securing diversity of languages on their territories, or came to enjoy benefits of their neighbouring states' languages becoming official EU languages. These language varieties included minority languages in any given territory and small majority languages which were territorially and demographically restricted in the past. At all times, however, languages that enjoy official EU status are framed in instrumental terms as facilitators of centre–periphery communication between the EU and the nation-state, as well as from the nation-state

centre to often peripheral minority-speaking regions. State devolution in particular greatly supported an understanding of regional languages as markers of local identity, resulting in increased popularity, if not wholesale revitalization, of frequently near-extinct languages.

Many areas of Europe where a minority language is currently or has historically been spoken are currently experiencing revitalization efforts, notable regions being Wales in the UK; Galicia, the Basque Country and Catalonia in Spain; and Friesland in the Netherlands, to name but a few obvious examples. In the majority of cases, such regions were once entities independent of the nation-state of which they now find themselves part. Under nineteenth century nationalist ideologies when monolingualism was considered the "natural" order, speakers of regional languages found themselves actively discouraged from using their tongues in public and in private, and experienced a certain amount of coercion to shift linguistically towards the state language. Ironically, state languages gained prominence with Herderian ideology, which emphasized the role of the native tongue in identifying with one's "ethnonational community", as well as with the adepts of the primordial connection of each individual with his/her ethnic group via the native tongue (Kraus, 2012).

Current thinking, however, sees political redress as being due to such communities today, and many languages that were previously pushed out of the public sphere are being granted official status at one level or another. As is the case with Welsh and Breton, the domains in which these languages are used now are expanding to include education and governance, while actual numbers of native speakers appear to be declining (Williams, 2008: 254). Other revivalist movements, particularly among regional languages in France, are used to receiving little or no support from the state and have to rely on their own resources for their own particular endeavours. Only 31,500 pupils in the whole of France are educated, either partially or totally, in a regional language. That 25% of all Basque pupils in France (the highest of all minority groups) have some exposure to Basque has little to do with the French government itself and more to do with the efforts by activists in the Spanish Basque Country (EBLUL-France, 2007). Other countries provide financial and legal support for some linguistic minorities but not for others. The United Kingdom, for example, recognizes Welsh (alongside Irish and Scottish Gaelic) as being entitled to particular consideration under Council of Europe Language Charter, while less support is provided for Cornish, Manx, Channel Island French and Scots, thereby making the

respective linguistic communities rely a great deal more on bottom-up initiatives than Welsh-speaking citizens.

The historical position occupied by certain languages in the collective psyche of a nation or regional group emerges in hierarchies that often go unquestioned. In Wales, as in many other areas where a minority language is being revitalized, the territorial principle has taken precedence over the identity principle. The Principality of Wales has benefitted from a number of initiatives over the past few decades which have improved the status of the Welsh language. The language was identified as a core curriculum subject in the 1988 Education Act, and since 1994 all secondary schools in Wales have been obliged to teach Welsh to their younger pupils. This has resulted in a growth in the number of schools using Welsh as a medium of instruction, a growth in the number of schools teaching it as a second language, and the elimination of schools that opt out of teaching it at all, with only a few exceptions (Williams, 2008: 260). The provision of an all-Welsh television station since 1982 has seen increasing television output, with associated benefits for the language (intergenerational reproduction, employment possibilities and status reversal). Most importantly, the Welsh Language Act of 1993 has secured higher status for the language in a number of arenas by requiring public bodies to treat English and Welsh equally, its chief policy instrument being the Welsh Language Board (*Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg*). The remit of the Board includes advising organizations which are preparing language schemes to meet the requirements of the Act and advising the public and central government on Welsh-language issues (Williams, 2008: 265). The Board has been given responsibility for acquisition, usage, status and corpus planning under the strategy 'The Welsh Language: A Vision and Mission for 2000-2005' (Williams, 2008: 268), which was followed up by the Welsh Assembly's policy statement, '*Dyfodol Dwyieithog*/Bilingual Future' which articulated the Assembly's stated aim of creating 'a bilingual Wales'. This was to be carried out through its action plan, '*Iaith Pawb*: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales' (2003) by:

- Increasing the proportion of the population that spoke Welsh by 5%.
- Stopping language shift in the heartland communities of Wales.
- Increasing the proportion of children in Welsh-language nursery education.
- Increasing the number of families where Welsh is used as the main language.

- Increasing the provision of Welsh-language services in the public, private and voluntary sectors. (Williams, 2008: 275)

That such policies seem to be working well reinforces the argument that a territorial-based authority is best placed to ensure successful language revitalization. To what extent, though, is language a necessary part of an ethnic identity? For parents who send their children to minority language schools in Brittany, it is important enough for them to have their children educated in Breton and to develop their own identity (partially) through the local language. The extent to which these same parents either speak or are learning the same language that their children are being educated in remains uncertain. For others, the minority language is not an essential part of their own identity. These people are thus happy to leave it to other members of their community to carry out the work of language revitalization. A Breton identity does not seem to be threatened by a lack of knowledge of Breton. Broudic's latest survey on attitudes towards Breton show that 89% of the inhabitants of Lower Brittany think that the language should be preserved, and 67% of these same inhabitants feel confident that the language will be maintained (Broudic, 2009: 153). Yet rhetoric does not match action. A Breton identity through French is a secure enough concept among these inhabitants that only 1.5% in all of Brittany feel the need to send their children to Breton-language immersion and Breton/French bilingual schools (EBLUL-France, 2007: 7; see also Edwards, 2010).

The competing language ideologies of minorities within the French state, where identity is juxtaposed against arguments of territoriality, can hinder their own positions. By attempting to compete on the same terms as those espoused by the state, and insist on the same services in local languages as provided in French (education, local government and media, for example) and by adopting what Lafont (1985) has termed the 'Sociolinguistics of the Periphery' (a centre–periphery model of political and economic relations, see Hechter, 1975), linguistic minorities within the French state play the conflict "game" by their adversary's rules. Le Nevez (2006) has proposed an alternative model, suggesting that emphasis (and the efforts of language activists) needs to be transferred to domains where Breton is currently still in a strong position, and moved away from concentrating on the perceived defects of Breton compared to French. As a consequence of the latter approach, the current linguistic conflict has resulted in a situation comparable to the one Haugen observed in Norway:

'The result of the language movement has so far been to create an image in "schizoglossia", a personality split which leaves many persons linguistically divided and uncertain' (Haugen, 1982: 276).

Activists in Brittany find themselves in an impossible position as a result of their lack of understanding of the clash between ideologies of territorialization and identity. It may make sense, given the lack of status Breton has in public life, for activists to press hard for political parity for regional languages in France. As Ó Néill (2005: 428) notes: 'Sociolinguistic planning not backed up with political clout is, in effect, impotent'. The problem is that sociolinguistic and political planning are two very different fields. However, what is appropriate or possible in one domain may not work at all well in the other. Working to change the status of Breton does not mean the corpus of the language also has to be "upgraded". Breton's lack of parity with French in territorial terms does not mean, in certain domains, that Breton does not dominate in other domains, for example in cultivating a sense of affectivity, community and local identity. Insisting on the use of Breton in exactly the same way French is currently used in Brittany today merely reinforces, albeit ironically, the idea that Breton is less useful and less prestigious than French (Le Nevez, 2006).

Brittany provides an example of 'unanticipated results in language management' (Spolsky, 2006: 87). Attempts at reviving the language have produced a hybrid variety which has been dubbed 'neo-Breton' (Jones, 1998; McDonald, 1989; Timm, 2001), which stands in marked contrast to the variety spoken by older, traditional speakers. While such hybridity has immediate and obvious advantages for language activists and others interested in the Breton language, it can and does alienate other sections of Breton society. Scholars such as Nederveen Pieterse (1995) and Joseph (1999) argue that many optimistic readings of hybridity neglect the relations of power and domination that circumscribe and form hybrid practices. Nederveen Pieterse (1995: 57) in particular suggests the need for careful consideration of 'the terms of mixture [and] the conditions of mixing' in specific instances of hybridity. Furthermore, Dirlik (1999: 109) argues that the use of the term hybridity 'blurs … significant distinctions between different differences'. In other words, conceiving of Breton (or other) identities and language varieties as hybrids may obscure the distinctiveness of each specific hybrid phenomenon.

Zuckermann points out that '"revived" languages are unlikely to have a single parent' (2008: 36), which in the case of Breton means that the new form of the

language which is gaining currency has both Breton *and* French as "parent languages", in much the same way as revived Hebrew has Hebrew, Yiddish, Polish, Russian and other languages as parent languages. This recalls Bentahila and Davies' assertion that revived languages are, for the most part, *transformed* languages (Bentahila and Davies, 1993: 372). We believe it is unrealistic to expect revitalization movements to reproduce faithfully and exactly the same form of language which is (or was) spoken by older generations, often idealized as the purest and best form of the language and to be copied at the expense of other, less ideologically charged linguistic varieties. Indeed, one wonders if such a linguistic resurrection is even possible, 'without the occurrence of cross-fertilization with revivalists' mother tongue(s)' (Zuckermann, 2006: 58). Naturally, such hybridity sits uneasily with traditional speakers of the language who use a "pre-revitalized" local vernacular for daily interactions, while a revitalized version of the language typically is a literary language used in the media, for instruction and administration, all of which reflect the changing role of language from an identity marker to an instrument of cooperation with the state. The changing role of the language undergoing revitalization additionally impacts the perceptions of revivalist speakers themselves and makes them doubt the authenticity of their language planning, without however hindering them from accepting such a hybridity as a necessary step to depart from idealistic perceptions of linguistic community and move towards a view of language as a functional tool of institutions. Yet of course many languages, and in this case Celtic languages specifically, are not usually widely accepted as genuine, and if they are it is only grudgingly.

Thus hybridity, while it can usefully be used to challenge narrow social, cultural and linguistic categories, can also ironically become a gloss that reduces all differences to a generic condition of "mixture". Not only are traditional speakers of Breton excluded in such a framework (with their own traditional hybrid form of Breton being classified as too "corrupted" by contact with French), the majority francophone population in Brittany also can be discouraged from participating in any aspect of the revitalization project. Linguistic hybridity can consequently ostracize certain speakers as much as it affirms and supports others. What such hybridity does offer, however, is a way round the deadlock that territorial- and identity-based ideologies are currently causing. Regulating languages to fixed categories, much in the same way as Latgalian and Võru have been regulated in the Baltic States

(Koreinik, 2011; Martin *et al.*, 2009), serves more to limit the possibilities for speakers of these languages, than to provide innovative opportunities. Breton-speakers (like Võru- and Latgalian-speakers) are not just confined to the same areas where they were once traditionally located, and while such areas can serve as a symbolic "heartland" for the languages in question, territorial concepts need to be accompanied by a greater understanding of transnational migration and movement across and within regions (Agarin and Hornsby, 2012). Falling back to our case study of Breton, the variation therein has produced a chaotic situation where each and every standard is contested.

More productive in such situations would be greater metalinguistic awareness, among all sections of the community in question, of the need for more realistic expectations of the end results of language planning; in the words of Zuckermann: 'When one revives a language, one should expect to end up with a hybrid' (2008: 36). If expectations in the Breton speech community were to shift more in the direction of the acceptability of new, hybrid forms, then intercommunal tensions would diminish at a moment in the history of the Breton language when it needs all the advantages it can muster. Modernization in its French form would have seen the demise of regional languages. It is only efforts at revitalization that are raising such questions in the minds of vernacular and neo-speakers at all. Such acceptability would ideally not seek to cover up the differences neo-Breton displays, but rather accept them as linguistic changes in progress. Neo-Breton, similar to Welsh in the twenty-first century, is evolving and acquiring new functions with a certain 'ecological "naturalness" to these changes, which will be hard to resist' (Coupland and Bishop, 2006: 46). As a hybrid form of Breton, the "neo" prefix does not need to be dispensed with, but accepted and indeed celebrated for its naturalness, much in the way that Zuckermann insists that revived Hebrew should really be called 'Israeli', as the title of his recent book, *Israeli, a Beautiful Language* (2008) suggests.

Hybridity in language is symptomatic of the hybrid identities which are developing, due to increased social, regional and global migration and is not, in itself, a phenomenon which exists in isolation from other modern trends. The obstacles facing acceptance of such linguistic and identity hybridity is its largely modern nature. Whereas linguistic hybridity historically has been evident in many situations of language contact, for example, the Limburg Frankish dialect in the Netherlands, which displays French linguistic influence (Millar, 2004: 7); the Kashubs' traditional

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'Catholic identity and large-scale bilingualism in Low German [which] rendered their identity highly hybrid' (Millar, 2004: 10); and the Caithness dialect of Scots, with apparent phonological and lexical interference from Gaelic (Millar, 2004: 12), identity issues were not called into question as a result of such historic hybridization. Precisely the point we are making here: the "contested hybrids" are presumably different from "uncontested hybrids", which *per definitionem* are all other languages. This is because the concept of territorialization of such minorities is never contested, while modern linguistic- and identity-based hybridity challenges the notion that language has to be inexorably linked to a particular region and/or ethnic group.

Language regulations have long encouraged citizens to shift linguistic loyalties away from the lesser-used varieties, towards state/official languages. The general acceptance of the notion of a community of language users being coterminous with at least one European municipality, region, or state was particularly decisive in the process of language shifts over the range of countries, regions and social strata. However powerful the argument, the earlier understanding of relations between linguistic, cultural and national communities needs to be reconsidered in the face of an increasingly multilingual European citizenry. Multilingual communities have long existed across Europe, but growing territorial mobility calls for a revision of individual states' technocratic approach to linguistic loyalties and challenges these states' understanding of citizenry as being monolingual.

The status of Latvian and Estonian as official languages of the EU highlights important points about the lesser-used languages in the region and beyond. Firstly, the experiences with promotion of state languages at the expense of more widely used "foreign" language in the two countries suggest more than ever that the future of multilingual Europe is heavily dependent on the equality of opportunities available to speakers of different languages, whether these are recognized as official or not. Secondly, the cost of implementing monolingual policies in the two states has been extremely high, especially with regard to the "zero-sum game" of shifting the patterns of multilingualism. The cost of acquiring multilingual skills in the course of reorientation from Russian- to English-language learning, is likely to boost levels of individual multilingualism in the short run, but prove a strain for native speakers of state languages in the long run. As many linguistic communities that speak official EU languages are dwindling in numbers, the costs of language support will need to be readjusted to the realities of an increasingly multilingual Europe. Unlike the case of

Welsh and Breton, policies regulating the use of Latvian and Estonian indicate a preference for the localization approach, which are unlikely to remain sustainable even in the short run. As with many other states that have promoted monolingual policies over the past decades, Estonia and Latvia have been fairly successful in ensuring advantages for native speakers of their state language in some public domains. However, as in the above case of the UK, monolingual speakers of the state language are usually outpaced by speakers of minority languages in areas where regional/minority languages are on an equal footing with the state/national language. Naturally, analyses of language use among the minority point to the positive impact that an external state and its institutions can have on the maintenance of language skills among minorities, such as Hungarian-speakers outside Hungary, or even support from regionally devolved governments, as in Wales or the Basque Country. However, most of Europe's regional languages lack an institutional backdrop that guarantees financial support and infrastructure, which leaves speakers of most regional languages entirely dependent on societal networks that they must activate and maintain through their own, scarce resources.

Activists promoting the use of minority, regional and/or non-standard language variations have been vocally pointing out the inherent disadvantages for speakers of non-state languages in accessing and participating in political decision-making across Europe. Those not entirely fluent in state languages are *de facto* excluded from equal opportunities for political participation at the regional, national and European levels. This draws particular attention to the limits imposed on minority language use in the public sphere across European states, which *de facto* favours state languages at the expense of minority languages. In so doing, however, both the EU and nation-states alike have already contributed to further marginalization of linguistic communities speaking non-state languages and have given space to their in-part militant, identity-driven claims. Moreover, the anticipated enlargements will add languages to the list of those that are officially recognized.

What do these indicators tell us about the long-term future of languages tied to and supported by a diverse set of European, national and regional policies? Most strikingly, the policies supporting language territorialization can have a positive impact on language use, and ultimately on its survival. As we have hinted above, without the promotion of Estonian and Latvian as the sole state languages in their respective countries, no comparable results in language acquisition would have been

achieved on the part of the Russian speakers over a relatively short period of time. On the flip side, however, state support for monolingual policies stands in sharp contrast to current European objectives earmarking the emergence of multilingual citizenry, befitting the European Commission's "native plus two languages" strategy. Whereas Western European states encourage their citizens to acquire knowledge of further languages, the Baltic States not only reject recognition of the *de facto* minority language in their country, but suggest that Russian speakers opt for more widely used languages with a European appeal such as English, rather than the state languages that ultimately guarantee access to participation and resources in the respective nation-states. In so doing, Baltic language policy planners are perpetuating the same minoritization outcomes that affected Welsh and Breton centuries earlier. This might appear particularly surprising given the fact that Russian features as the fifth most widely understood language across the EU, after English, German, French and Spanish (Eurobarometer, 2006). However, the policies make perfect sense in the context of recent state and nation building exercises. Hence, although we allude to the fact that the policies are not logical *strictu sensu*, we consider it important for reasons of balance in evaluating the reasons for such policies and for avoiding accusations of chauvinism on the part of policy makers. Efforts by these states to promote monolingual practices in official languages have already resulted in an increasing standardization of the official variety at the expense of linguistic diversity and a partial loss of non-standard varieties in the two states. The gradual decline of Southern Estonian Võru and Latgalian in Eastern Latvia are testament to just how difficult it has been for the Estonian and Latvian authorities to halt language shift in these areas.

As we have seen in this section of the article, language promotion on one particular territory can only be successful in Myhill's terms of language-and-territory insofar as speakers of other languages are not proficient in the state language. At the same time, territorialization of language in McRae's terms can be successful if the state and society that are designed to be the primary guardians of the language are impenetrable to speakers of other languages. Both these aspects are at odds with the current realities of increasing social intermixing of linguistic communities with speakers of other languages. While some might argue that the Baltic cases have limited applicability because of regional specificity (Soviet history of the states, the disputed status of the Russian speakers and difficult relations with the potentially

protective Russian state), we have observed here that the territorial approach to language regulation misfires under the given circumstances of increased individual mobility and growing importance of vehicular languages over regional languages, even if these are endowed with the status of an official language. We fall back on our case studies. Current linguistic policies of Estonia and Latvia should be read as efforts to protect the relatively small state languages from a real and powerful competitor, which to date is not even granted the status of a minority language. Being implemented at the expense of the Russian language, which is spoken by more than a third of the states' residents, results in decreasing levels of communication between the increasingly monolingual members of the titular ethnic group, local minorities, foreign nationals, and European visitors. One could further read the lack of political recognition of Russian in the region as undermining potential claims of Russian speakers for greater accommodation of their linguistic identities within the framework of the EU. Failure to sustain the level of competence in Russian among speakers of the state languages has inevitably led to the isolation of residents of the Baltic States *vis-à-vis* the locally numerical minority, marginalizing members of the minority in the political decision-making processes. Following the territorialization approach cemented in linguistic polices in these states, speakers of state languages can make unlimited use of their native languages when in "their" states, but would find it hard to communicate with speakers of any other languages abroad.

At the same time, however, our overview of the language-as-identity approach adopted in Brittany and Wales does not provide overly optimistic results either. Minority/regional languages that have undergone successful revitalization over the past decades are highly dependent on support from their "native" territorial unit in the medium and long run. More than anything, the previous successful titularization of Catalonia and the Basque Country have seen similar shifts in linguistic loyalties and the gradual reinterpretation of language policies away from identity-driven claims in favour of territorial arguments in support of the languages. Needless to say, while neither in the case of Welsh nor Breton are we likely to see the emergence of monolingual communities that are unable to use English or French, regionalization practices of language revitalization aim to increase the currency of the minoritized majority language, with the consequences for both majority and the minority languages that we can observe in the Baltic States today. As we have demonstrated, this would be a very unfortunate development primarily for the very speakers of these

languages. Although the resulting power relations between the linguistic communities appear to be straightforward, they are not in fact always clear-cut. More often than not, speakers of the state language can have much easier access to state services and are better positioned to use their "native" linguistic skills to reach further than second-language speakers. On the other hand, however, speakers of state languages are disadvantaged *vis-à-vis* the speakers of the usually bi- or multilingual regional/minority language speakers.

It is in this context that we need to consider the loyalties of different linguistic communities and the opportunities they have to use "their" language. While across the EU today, most members of minority linguistic communities, if proficient in one or several of the EU's official languages, can enjoy definite extralinguistic advantages over those who are able to use fewer languages in their everyday life. The situation today is that the speakers of Europe's regional languages are *de facto* better equipped to guarantee the survival of their languages and their claims to linguistic identity if they avoid references to language territorialization at the European, national or regional levels.

Conclusion

All of the EU's 23 official languages are Europe's regional languages in one way or another, although most enjoy a special status in the narrow geographic realm of their respective regions. Relations within the nexus are particularly problematic as one focuses on the community of language-speakers rather than on the language itself. Because political borders do not always follow the main cultural divides, in some cases Europe's regional language, our preferred term over "minority" language, is in fact an official language of the EU. The speakers of minority languages across the EU have continuously faced difficulties in reconciling the cost of linguistic transactions motivated by the EU's territorial take on language and a given linguistic community's identity-driven claims for language support. The increasing number of EU member states will inevitably result in a growing number of official EU languages and will place additional strain on languages with a comparably small number of speakers. Speakers of the languages, who lack recognition as a tool of governance, have been continuously campaigning for language support at different levels of the EU, mainly

by seeking to "territorialize" their language in order to protect the linguistic identities of its users.

Especially in the light of the presence of high numbers of multilingual speakers across the EU today, one would expect a revision of the current language policies driven by the language-in-territory ideology of most European states. On the one hand, we expect language planning to embrace active promotion of bilingualism in state and regional vehicular languages, such as Estonian and Latvian, and Russian; or French/Breton and English/Welsh respectively, precisely because languages are not living entities but require social context to be used and, as some would have it, to survive. On the other hand, what we expect to see from a review of the situation with only 4 of the EU's 65 regional languages is that greater support for acquisition of languages, spoken and understood beyond the narrow realm of state borders will be likely to increase in popularity.

In our view, the logic of linguistic territorialization espoused by the EU and the majority of nation-states worldwide dismisses the future reality of an increasingly borderless world and the importance of linguistic identity in each individual's life. Moreover, disposing of language as an identity ideology and regulating linguistic regimes according to the territoriality principle inhibits the chances of using languages with limited intelligibility beyond the region of their traditional use, thereby marginalizing them *outside* a given territory. We believe that providing better opportunities for each individual to receive education in his/her native language would support the claims to language as identity. At the same time, ensuring the ability of all citizens to communicate in one of Europe's regional languages and in an additional, possibly EU, language would pay sufficient respect to the territoriality principle. By emphasizing the importance of language as a central pillar of identity in policy making at the European level, rather than using domestic narratives of "language death" to justify the failure of accommodating multilingual practices in national curricula, will inevitably lead to a gradual decline in minority language use. Ironically, an increasingly multilingual Europe will not stop at the territorial borders of nation-states tasked with protection of Europe's state languages, as in due course these are likely to experience the same fate that current befalls minority languages.

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