

Language Policy in Switzerland's Educational System: A Case of Anglo Encroachment?

Debating the Anglosphere: History, Hegemony, Identity

18 October 2017

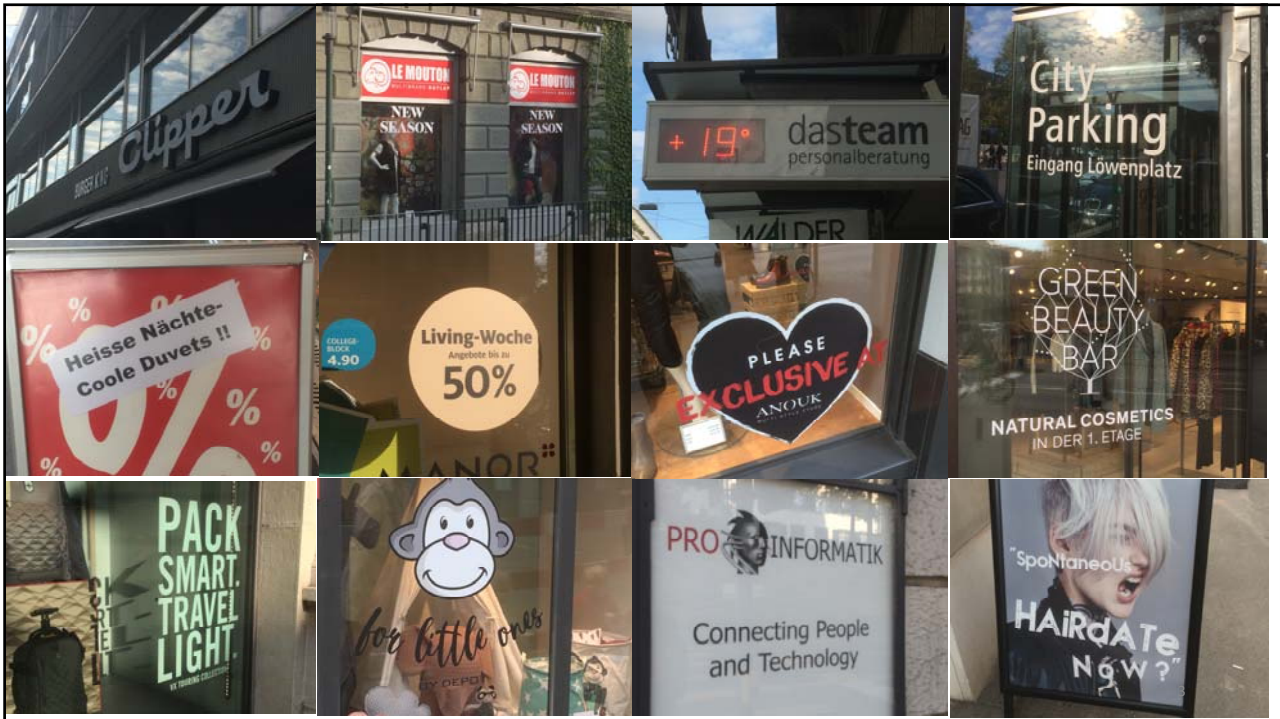
Prof. Dr. Daniel Stotz, PH Zürich

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A walk in town

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A bike ride in the countryside



Key issue

Advances of English:

- Linguistic imperialism / conspiracy of the Anglosphere?
- Self-inflicted colonisation / an encroachment into a vacuum?

Linguistic imperialism

“... language dominance dovetails with economic, political and other types of dominance. It entails unequal resource allocation and communicative rights between people defined in terms of their competence in specific languages, with unequal benefits as a result, in a system that legitimates and naturalizes such exploitation” (Phillipson, 2009:2).

“Linguistic dominance has invariably been buttressed by ideologies that glorify the dominant language: as the language of God (...), the language of reason (...), the language of modernity, technological progress, and national unity (...)” (Phillipson, 2009:3).

encroach, v.

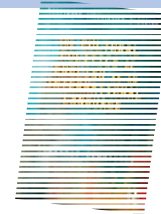
a. intr. To trench or intrude usurpingly (*esp.* by insidious or gradual advances) **on the territory**, rights, or accustomed sphere of action of others. Also *transf.* and *fig.* of things: To **make gradual inroads on, extend (its) boundaries at the expense of, something else**. Const. *on, upon* (the territory, rights, etc. invaded, or the person whose rights are infringed); also *simply*. Oxford English Dictionary

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The worldliness of English

- English = globally general and locally specific
- Colonial legacy > adopted by colonised and colonialists for resistance and social change
- Acts of language imply a position within a social order / a cultural politics

“a term intended to refer to the material existence of English in the world, its spread around the world, its worldly character as a result of being so widely used in the world, and its position not only as reflective but also as constitutive of worldly affairs.” Pennycook (1994:33)



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Overview

1. Introduction
2. **Constitutional upheaval: The Swiss confederation's struggle with multilingualism***
3. Early English at school: The normalisation of a revolution
4. The diversity of target language cultures: A look at materials design
5. Conclusion: Demystifying hegemonic tendencies

* Stotz, Daniel. Breaching the Peace: Struggles around Multilingualism in Switzerland. Language Policy (2006) 5:247–265

The imagined multilingual nation state

- Periphery of 3 large linguistic communities (F, G, I)
- Co-existence of 4 distinct communities («Willensnation»)
- Principle of territoriality with few enmeshed bi-/multilingual communities
- «Balance», «harmony» as constructs to be maintained
- Federalism, esp. in the educational domain



Source: Femina, June 1997

«Les Suisses s'entendent bien parce qu'ils ne se comprennent pas»

Changes in the Swiss constitution

STRUGGLES AROUND MULTILINGUALISM IN SWITZERLAND 251

TABLE I

Comparison of language articles in the Swiss constitution, 1996 and 2000.

1996	2000
<i>Art. 116</i>	<i>Art. 4 National languages</i>
1. German, French, Italian and Romansh are the national languages of Switzerland	The national languages are German, French, Italian and Romansh
2. The Confederation and the Cantons shall encourage understanding and exchange between the linguistic communities	<i>Art. 70 Languages</i>
3. The Confederation shall support the measures taken by the Cantons of Grisons and Ticino to maintain and to promote Romansh and Italian	1. The official languages of the Confederation are German, French, and Italian, Romansh shall be an official language for communicating with persons of Romansh language
4. The official languages of the Confederation are German, French, and Italian, Romansh shall be an official language for communicating with persons of Romansh language. The law shall regulate the particularities	2. The Cantons shall designate their official languages. In order to preserve harmony between linguistic communities, they shall respect the traditional territorial distribution of languages, and take into account the indigenous linguistic minorities
	3. The Confederation and the Cantons shall encourage understanding and exchange between the linguistic communities
	4. The Confederation shall support the plurilingual Cantons in the fulfilment of their particular tasks
	5. The Confederation shall support the measures taken by the Cantons of Grisons and Ticino to maintain and to promote Romansh and Italian

Articles pertaining to languages

- Principle of territoriality (70:2): Cantons to designate official languages
- Teleological formulation: «In order to preserve harmony...»
- «Indigenous linguistic minorities»: exclusion of immigrant minorities
- Redoubling the efforts taken by the small minority Cantons (>> \$\$\$)

Discourse formations

1. **Confederate discourse:** Building and maintaining the nation state around cultural diversity and mutual understanding.
2. **Federalist discourse:** Preserving niches and opportunities for regional and local development, anti-centralist tendencies, subsidiarity.
3. **Globalising discourse:** Participating in transnational exchanges and fulfilling the needs of citizens in new educational and occupational configurations

School-based language learning traditionally seen as a disciplining exercise in the interest of national cohesion

English as a language of intranational communication?

Confederate discourse avoids:

- questions of class and economic power
- lack of motivation for learning a second national language
- a discussion of the role of English in Switzerland

Le recours à l'anglais, langue étrangère à l'ensemble des locuteurs, est indubitablement un constat d'échec. S'il permet d'engager un dialogue d'égal à égal entre élites, il n'en est pas moins réducteur des spécificités des autres cultures. (Knüsel, 1997)

Resorting to English, a foreign language to all speakers, is undoubtedly an acknowledgement of failure. Even if it allows elites to engage in a dialogue among equals, it nevertheless reduces the specific features of the other cultures.

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* Also called Öhrli English by Pedro Lenz

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The big bang in Swiss educational language politics

- Unilateral moves by Zurich and Appenzell IR to introduce English in primary (starting in 1998)
- Cantons AI and ZH reacted to parents' demands under the guise of equality (Chancengleichheit)
- Motivation and popular demand trump federalist respect
- Anti-centralist discourse: English = language of communication society



Extract from *Zwischensprach* (2004), dir. Samir

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Translations of key statements

- E. Buschor: «We began with English because motivation for French among the young is worse than for English»
- J. Pilet: “If a young adolescent has already learnt English quite well, he will not at all be motivated to learn a difficult language such as French”
- M. Braunschwig: «The politicians’ role is not to take things at face value but to develop visions. And my vision is not to have English as a lingua franca in Switzerland»

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The aftermath of «Schulprojekt 21»



- Attacks against primary school French (cantonal initiatives)
- The Zurich decision hastened the publication of a «Comprehensive Languages Concept» (Luedi et al., 1998)
- Long-term consequences: Sequence of foreign languages left open, no attainment levels specified (>>> EDK Strategy 2004, Languages Law 2006, Lehrplan 21, Passepartout)

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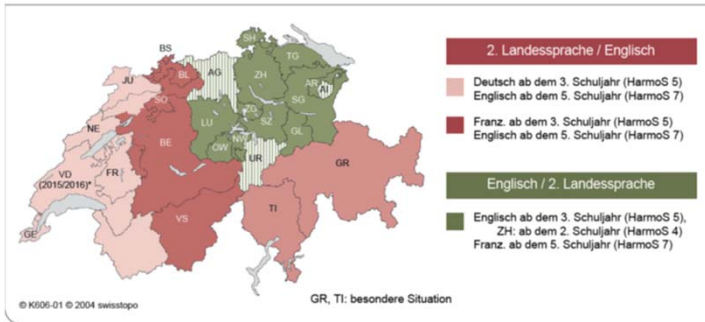
Revisiting the hypothesis

1. Immersion-type schooling violates territoriality
2. Symbolic politics yields to powers of globalisation
3. Federalism produces a patch-work map with differing set-ups
4. Tenuous compromise of comparable school-leaving competences
5. The 2006 Languages Act does nothing to shore up the national languages at school
6. Fear and loathing in the science-political discourse

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Patching up the dissonances

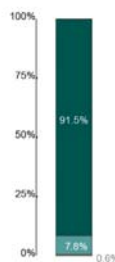
EDK Factsheet 2014



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Patching up the dissonances

EDK Factsheet 2017



www.edudoc.ch/static/web/arbeiten/sprach_unterr/ktbl_sprachen_d.pdf

* Es werden die Jahre der obligatorischen Schule CH gezählt (1- 11). Darin enthalten sind zwei Jahre Kindergarten oder die ersten beiden Jahre einer Primarstufe.

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Revisiting the hypothesis

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New law on languages (2006)

- 3. Abschnitt: Förderung der Verständigung und des Austauschs zwischen den Sprachgemeinschaften

- Art. 14 Schullischer Austausch

¹ Bund und Kantone fördern den Austausch von Schülerinnen und Schülern sowie von Lehrkräften aller Schulstufen.

² Der Bund kann den Kantonen sowie Austauschorganisationen Finanzhilfen gewähren.

- Art. 15 Unterricht

¹ Bund und Kantone sorgen im Rahmen ihrer Zuständigkeit dafür, dass die Unterrichtssprache, namentlich ihre Standardform, auf allen Unterrichtsstufen besonders gepflegt wird.

² Sie fördern im Rahmen ihrer Zuständigkeit die Mehrsprachigkeit der Lernenden und Lehrenden.

³ Sie setzen sich im Rahmen ihrer Zuständigkeit für einen Fremdsprachenunterricht ein, der gewährleistet, dass die Schülerinnen und Schüler am Ende der obligatorischen Schulzeit über Kompetenzen in mindestens einer zweiten Landessprache und einer weiteren Fremdsprache verfügen. Der Unterricht in den Landessprachen trägt den kulturellen Aspekten eines mehrsprachigen Landes Rechnung.

- Art. 16 Weitere Massnahmen zur Sprachförderung

www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20062545/index.html

Focusing on school language learning:

- Linguistic/cultural exchanges supported by national agency
- Backing for standard German
- Promoting pupils' multilingualism
- Cantonal autonomy not questioned
- No statement about the level of competence to be achieved in national L2
- English not even mentioned

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Proposal for a project within the NSF Programme 56

Quotes from the evaluation by the Leitungsgruppe (*my translation*):

...the topic is ideologically explosive and the study should not serve the purpose of paving the way argumentatively for English as the first foreign language in Swiss schools.

... The project is not constructed in a way that is 'open to results'. With a view specifically to the ideological background of the theme, the hypotheses and questions would have to be formulated with utmost caution.



Walter Haas (Hrsg.)
Do you speak Swiss?
 Sprachenvielfalt und Sprachkompetenz
 in der Schweiz – Nationales
 Forschungsprogramm NFP 56 240
 Seiten, deutsch, französisch, italienisch,
 englisch und z. T. romanisch

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Summing up

- From revolution to normalisation
- Partial vacuum in the federalist and confederate discourse clusters
- Supercharged question of the sequence and presence of languages in the school curriculum
- Passepartout cantons (BS, BL, BE, FR, SO, VS): French from 3rd grade: realistic chance of reaching B1.

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Intercultural communicative competence

- Open up differentiated panoramas
- Pathway to intercultural communicative competence
- Educationally relevant content
- Critical perspectives
- «Authentic» input materials

Le «Schulprojekt 21» a réveillé les défenseurs de l'unité nationale. Quoi? Les petits écoliers suisses alémaniques babilleront anglais avant de parler proprement le français? Le scandale a fait les gros titres. On s'est empressé d'agiter le spectre d'une «**MacDonaldisation**» alémanique, doublée d'une rupture de la communication entre francophones et germanophones. **Mais réfléchissons un peu.** (Le Temps 31/10/1998)

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Music styles and their roots



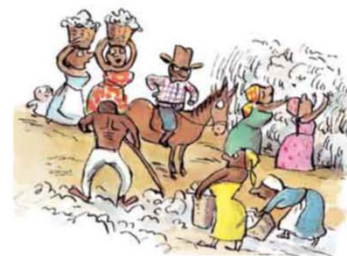
C Sarah Frances Shaw Graves, age 87

I was born on 23rd March 1850, in Kentucky. When I was six months old, I was brought to Missouri, along with my mama, because mama was rented to a man there. You see, there were slave traders in those days, just like horse traders. They bought and sold slaves and rented them out. I was never sold. My mama was sold only once, but she was rented out many times.

khaki
a light brown
colour used
for uniforms



dreadlocks
a hairstyle popular
with Rastafarians



Voices Topic File 1A

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Gone missing

In this task, you're going to read and hear about young people who went missing in the South African city of Cape Town. You will try to find out what happened to them. You are going to record an interview with a missing person.

- CD 1.38 Look at the mural of street scenes in Cape Town. Listen to the local news in the week when Rod disappeared.
 - Number the headings 1 to 4.
 - Which news item is shown in which part of the mural? Connect them with lines.

- Kidnapping suspected
- Dance extravaganza
- Graffiti ban
- Copper thief



Voices 2 Unit 6 27

What then? What now?



Restaurant Clipper: Est. 1963, first purveyor of Asian food in Zurich

Frühenglisch: Es bringt nichts

Donnerstag, 2. Juli 2016, 17:05 Uhr
Jo Siegler

28 Kommentare

Studie behauptet: Frühenglisch bringt nichts



«Englisch kann man getrost in die Oberstufe verschieben»

Eine neue Studie zum Fremdsprachenunterricht liefert ein ermüchterndes Fazit: Frühenglisch bringt nichts. Viel wichtiger ist ein anderer Faktor.

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