

## **PERSPECTIVES ON ENGLISH IN SWITZERLAND**

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### **Abstract**

In the context of this volume, which focusses on the position of English in the context of multilingual Switzerland, the characteristics of English as an international language and lingua franca are discussed and its position in teaching and education. This introductory chapter provides background information to contextualize the contributions in the volume. To do so, it outlines key developments in research into English in Switzerland and sketches the multilingual situation in Switzerland. It then proceeds to give an overview of the development of English as a world language and the domains of its use in Switzerland. This contribution argues that, like the world-wide spread of English, the use of English in Switzerland is now motivated both by pressure from international business and by the demands of language users.

*Key-words: Multilingualism, English as an international language, Swiss English, language attitudes, majority languages, minority languages.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The English language forms an unmissable part of many areas of public and private life in Switzerland. English words and expressions, such as *sorry*, *cool* or *oh my God*, are used in all the national languages of Switzerland, large population groups are able to speak English and use it regularly in business, education or travel contexts, and the question whether English poses a threat to the national languages and national cohesion is asked repeatedly, whereas the complaint that English should have a larger part in the curricula of Swiss school and university curricula can also be heard.

Naturally, Switzerland is not alone in this respect. Similar discussions can be found in other European countries as well as all over the world, and this fact pays tribute to the status of English as a world language and to its importance in international relations and international business. The situation in Switzerland is particular, however, due to the fact that in contrast to many other countries an identification of one country equalling one language does not apply here. Instead, one of Switzerland's special characteristics is its multilinguality and this fact arguably makes it easier for the English language to gain ground in Switzerland. In how far the English language has become a feature of Swiss reality, and what this new reality entails, are the questions that the current volume wants to investigate.

The volume brings together research on different aspects of English in Switzerland and focusses on the position of English vis-à-vis Swiss multilingualism, its characteristics as an international language and *lingua franca* and its position in teaching and education. In doing so it addresses new questions concerning the use of English in relation to the national languages of Switzerland, fills lacunae and highlights recent developments. Naturally, more topic areas would have merited further close scrutiny: the use of English in the media, attitudes towards the English language in various population groups or more detailed analyses of the relationship between English and the different national languages on the one hand, or with other international varieties on the other hand. Hopefully these and further areas of research will receive further scholarly attention in the near future. This introductory chapter aims to provide the reader with background information on an outline history of the study of English in Switzerland, multilinguality in Switzerland, and the status and history of English language use in the country. The introduction will close with an outline of the contribution to this volume. In order to avoid book-length dimensions of this introduction alone, the discussion unfortunately needs to remain short and selective.

Pioneering work on the use of English in Switzerland has been carried out by Urs Dürmüller, and his first comprehensive study on the subject was published in 1986. This study has been followed by a number of books and articles on Swiss multilinguality and the status of English in this context (e.g. 1997, 2002). A researcher who has had a large impact on driving forward the topic of the English language in Switzerland is Richard J. Watts. In Andres and Watts (1993), status and domains of English in Switzerland are discussed and questions are asked that pave the way for a major research project on the English language in Switzerland. A project on English in Switzerland started in 1999 (Franzen 2001: 9, Dröschel 2011: 151-52) to determine consequences of the early introduction of English in primary schools, the spread of English in academia, its spread in multinational companies and potential formation of a normative variety. The resulting volume (Watts and Murray (eds.) 2001) gives an overview on the use of English in different societal contexts. A later research project, based at the universities of Basel, Berne and Fribourg, on the English language in Switzerland, investigated English language use and the specificities of the language used. This project has resulted, amongst a number of articles, in three doctoral dissertations and the later publication of related monographs: Rosenberger (2010), Dröschel (2011), and Durham (2014). Each places the use of English in its international as well as the Swiss contexts, but adopts different foci. Rosenberger (2010) highlights the question whether a specific focussed variety of Swiss English has developed. Dröschel (2011) emphasizes the role of simplification and transfer in the development of Swiss English learner varieties. Durham's

(2014) published volume focusses on the role of sociolinguistic competence in the Swiss learner varieties.

Work by Georges Lüdi has focussed on multilingualism in Switzerland. Lüdi and Werlen (2005) investigate in detail the results of the Swiss census of the year 2000. Particular emphasis is put on multilingual practices in the workplace in Lüdi, Höchle and Yanaprasart (2010), and in Berthoud, Grin and Lüdi (2013), which presents the results of the Dylan project on the use of multilingual practices at work from an international context. François Grin (e.g. also 2001) has repeatedly also investigated the economic value that can be assigned to languages.

Agnieszka Stepkowska has produced various studies on Swiss multilingualism (e.g. Stepkowska 2010, 2013) and focusses on individual versus societal language competences. Other valuable research has been carried out particularly on specific aspects of the presence of English in Switzerland, underlining its large presence in public life, both in communication with foreigners and in intra-national communication. While Hohl (1995) still shows deficiencies in the English language skills of employees of the Swiss Federal Railway, a growing number of studies points to the increasing importance of the language in public life. It can be found in virtually all areas of public life, as shown, amongst others, by studies on language use in the Swiss army (Berthele and Wittlin 2013), at Swiss universities (Murray and Dingwall 1997, Murray 2001, Dürmüller 2001), in advertising (Cheshire and Moser 1994, Bonhomme 2003, Strässler 2003, Schaller-Schwaner and Tschichold 2004, as well as a number of studies in the context of postgraduate theses at different universities in Switzerland).

In the following an overview of key topic areas concerning the linguistic situation of Switzerland will be given. After outlining key features of Swiss multilinguality, the history and the status of the English language will be sketched.

## **2. THE LANGUAGES IN SWITZERLAND AND THEIR STATUS**

Officially, Switzerland has four national languages, but in practice this does not mean that all Swiss people are multilingual. As various authors points out (e.g. Dürmüller 1997: 58, Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 103, Stepkowska 2010, Durham 2014: 36), while some bi- or even trilingual Swiss people are found, this is not true for the average population. In practice German speakers prevail, followed by French and Italian speakers, Romansh speakers form a small minority. According to the Federal Statistics Office of Switzerland (FSO), and the latest figures available at the time of publication of this volume, in 2013 the population of Switzerland amounted to nearly 7,945,000. Of these, 63.5% declared German to be their main

language, followed by 22.5% French speakers, 8.1% Italian speakers and 0.5% speakers of Romansh<sup>1</sup>. 21.7% of the population speak other languages as their main language, and English forms the largest subgroup of these (4.4% of the population).

Of the 26 cantons of Switzerland, 17 cantons are officially monolingual German speaking, whereas only four are French-speaking: Geneva, Vaud, Jura, Neuchâtel, the Ticino is Italian-speaking. Only three cantons are officially bilingual: Berne, Fribourg and Valais have German and French bilingualism. Grisons is an officially trilingual canton with German, Romansh and Italian-speakers (Dürmüller 1997: 9 and various other authors). In these multilingual cantons, the largest rates of multilingualism are found along the language borders. A principle of linguistic freedom means that every speaker from any of these linguistic regions should be able to use their own first language in any situation of national interaction. A territoriality principle, on the other hand, means that contacts with public authorities should take place in the language of the region (Dürmüller 1997: 12). For large numbers of the population the territorial principle means that they do not use any languages but their own (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 29). The authors argue that high levels of monolingualism may further increase the reluctance to learn other national languages and may facilitate the spread of English (*loc. cit.*: 103). Extrapolating from Federal Statistics Office data, Durham (2014: 36) shows that on average, 60% of the Swiss population do not typically use any other languages than their own. Monolingualism is generally highest in the rural, inner-Swiss, eastern cantons (Appenzell, Uri, Obwalden) and lowest in the economic and financial hubs Geneva, followed by Basel-Town, Zurich and Zug, followed by the trilingual canton of Grisons.

Generally, German speakers being significantly more numerous than the other linguistic groups, a fear of Germanisation (Dürmüller 1997: 25) has been observed. This is a particular issue for the linguistic groups that are most affected by increasing numbers of German speakers, Romansh in the Grisons and Italian in the Ticino, which can result in antipathy towards to majority language group by the minorities. Dürmüller points out that this is less the case for the Romansh speakers' attitudes towards German, however (*loc. cit.*: 29).

As indicated above, L1 speakers of German form the majority of the Swiss population. In the year 2013, they accounted for 63.5% of the Swiss population according to the FSO. Interestingly, while the population of Switzerland has seen a large increase from just over 6 million in 1970 to just under 8 million people in 2013, the percentage of German speakers has fallen from 66.1% in 1970 to its present percentage. This decrease in the share of German

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/01/05/blank/key/sprachen.html>, last accessed 03.01.2016.

speakers over these 42 years is likely to be due to the steep increase of the percentage of speakers of other languages, which show a rise from 3.7% of the population in 1970 to the above-mentioned 21.7% in 2013 according to the FSO data (FSO, *ibid.*).

A particular feature of the use of German in Switzerland is the wide-spread use of local, Alemannic-based dialects, *Schwyzerdütsch* or *Schwyzertütsch*, for oral communication in all areas of private life and in many areas of public life, except for the most formal situations of communication: thus, school and university teaching is typically carried out in Standard German, and so are the news programmes on the stations of the state broadcasting television channels, SRF, but the weather forecast is already given in Swiss German. Though Swiss German is avoided in formal writing, it can also be used in informal genres of writing, such as texting or small-ads sections of newspapers.

The number of L1 speakers of French has risen from 18.4% in 1970 to 22.5% in 2013. As also observed by Rosenberger (2010: 108), the French-speaking population of Switzerland, the Romands, are generally well-represented in federal organisations and in national politics. Thus at the time of writing, three of the seven members of the federal government are francophone, while the remaining four are germanophone. Economically, some parts of the French speaking area, the Romandie, are very strong, particularly the area bordering on Lake Geneva.

In contrast to German speaking Switzerland, dialects are less prominent in the Romandie. While certain regional varieties can be recognized, e.g. in the Canton of Vaud or around Lake Neuchâtel, traditional dialects, commonly known as *patois* are on the brink of extinction and generally described as hardly to be found (Dürmüller 1997: 26, Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 39, Rosenberger 2010: 108-9). This *patois*, which forms part of the franco-provençal dialects of French and was still spoken by large numbers of the population of the Valais in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but then receded dramatically. The dialects are still spoken by some, but also left behind a number of dialect words in contemporary local varieties of French (Grüner 2010: 9-10).

The presence of the Italian language in Switzerland has seen a steady decline between 1970, where it was given as a first language by 11% of the populations, and 2000, where it was indicated as the L1 of 6.5%. There has been a rise of Italian as a first language since then, however, and 8.1% of the Swiss population named it as their L1 in 2013 (FSO, *loc. cit.*). Italian is mainly spoken in the Ticino, but it is also the main language of parts of the southern Grisons. The presence of dialects is strong (Dürmüller 1997: 26), particularly in local and family communication, but the dialects are losing ground in comparison with standard Italian (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 40). As discussed by Deluigi (2015: 15-6), this may be due to loss of

traditional communities as well as to the presence of increasing numbers of non-dialect speaking immigrants.

As various authors point out, Italian has a less strong position in intra-national communication in Switzerland (e.g. Dürmüller 1997: 49, Rosenberger 2010: 107-8). In contrast to the population groups in German and French speaking Switzerland, the population in the canton of Ticino has to learn not only one, but two other national languages in school, German and French, and English as a third foreign language in addition (Dürmüller 1997: 74, Rosenberger 2010).

Romansh is the national language with fewest speakers in Switzerland. Numbers of L1 speaker of Romansh have decreased from 0.8% of the population in 1970 to 0.5% in 2013 (FSO, loc. cit.). Unlike German, French and Italian, which are languages that are used for federal government and administration, Romansh is not specified as a language of government, but its speakers have the right to address the authorities in their native language (Swiss Federal Constitution 1999, art. 4 and 70, cf. also Berthele, this volume). Its status is thus “semi-official” (Dröschel 2011: 116). The language is split into five main dialects with their own written traditions. In order to facilitate official communication a standard dialect, *Rumantsch Grischun*, has been created in 1982 (Rash 1998: 20, Dürmüller 1997: 26).

Romansh belongs to the Rhaeto-Romanic group of languages and, in contrast to the other national languages of Switzerland, does not possess any neighbouring countries in which the language is also spoken, even though sister languages Ladin in Italy and Friulian in Trento and Bolzano also exist as minority languages (Verra and Fäcke 2014: 433). In predominantly Romansh speaking communities, schooling is carried out in Romansh at first, but German is progressively introduced into the curriculum with the goal to ensure equal competence in both languages and over time replaces Romansh as main language of instruction (Verra and Fäcke 2014: 445). In German speaking areas of the Grisons, Italian is generally taught as a second language, rather than Romansh (loc. cit.: 446). Teacher education in Romansh is ensured in the pedagogical high-school in the cantonal capital of Chur.

In order to ensure linguistic diversity, efforts are being made not only by language activists, but also on an administrative level to maintain linguistic diversity. Rash (1998: 26) points to the efforts taken both by the government and by Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education, but cautions as well that German speaking Switzerland is dominant due to its considerably larger population numbers.

However, a problem that is repeatedly reported in the linguistic interaction of different language groups in Switzerland is the use of dialect (Dürmüller 1997: 27-8, Rosenberger

2010: 109-10, Dröschel 2011: 114-5, Durham 2014: 44). Particularly the predominating use of Swiss German dialect for oral communication, rather than Standard German, is frequently cited as a problem for learners of German from other linguistic areas of Switzerland, who acquire Standard German, rather than Swiss German, in school. The use of dialect does remain strong, however, not least because it forms a strong identification feature and marker of “Swissness” (Watts 1999: 75, Stepkowska 2013: 173-76). At the same time the prominence of Swiss German strengthens a certain clichéd cultural and political dividing line between German speakers in Switzerland and speakers of Romance languages, which, in relation to relations between speakers of French and of German, is referred to as *Röstigraben*, the *Rösti*-rift, which makes reference to a traditional Swiss German potato dish. While Dürmüller (1997: 29) mentions possible resentments of minority groups towards German speakers, he also argues (loc. cit.: 36-7) that a division corresponding to the *Rösti*-rift is not found between German- and Italian-speaking Switzerland. However, Deluigi (2015: 12) shows on the basis of 1996 FSO data and research done by Kriesi (1996) that at that time more than 70% of Swiss Italian speakers considered there to be a barrier, while more than 45% of German speakers thought there was none. These figures do indicate that there are perceived differences between the population groups in Switzerland and a certain lack of intermixture of the population groups and their cultures can and has been observed (Dürmüller 1997: 29, Stepkowska 2013: 170-71).

Thus, given the differing linguistic competences and societal pressures in Switzerland, different language choices will be made whenever languages come in contact in Switzerland. On this Dürmüller (1997) comments

Does a person from Vaud who settles in the commercial centre of Zurich communicate in German, or maybe even in Zurich dialect, or can he expect the Zurich locals to understand French? Does a Basle pensioner who wants to spend her remaining years in Ticino learn Italian, or does she expect the locals to speak German to her? Can a Ticinese student in Berne expect to get by in Italian or does she have to adjust linguistically? Does a German- or French-speaking Swiss tourist in the Lower Engadine speak Rhaeto Romanic to his or her skiing instructor? And what language do industrialists from the Ticino, the Romandie and German Switzerland opt for when they have a business meeting? Answers to such questions differ. While the Vaudois in Zurich will ordinarily be expected to adapt, the Basle pensioner in the Ticino will not. An Italian-speaking student in Berne will have no choice but to learn German, and probably even Swiss German, but the tourist in the Lower Engadine will not have to

bother with Rhaeto Romanic. And the business people may solve their dilemma by settling on English (Dürmüller 1997: 19).

What Dürmüller raises in this extract are scenarios that envisage intranational discourse on the basis of two different models. On the one hand this is a version of multilinguality, which will expect people to master the language of their interlocutor, and either demand multilingualism of each of the partners (Dürmüller 1997: 60-65, Lüdi, this volume), or expect one person adapts linguistically to their communication partner. On the other hand, a neutral *lingua franca* may be chosen, English. In how far the use of English has become an alternative is the focus of this volume, as well as of the following section.

### 3. ENGLISH IN SWITZERLAND

#### 3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the beginning of its history in 1291, the Swiss Confederation was formed of German speaking cantons and, in spite of the later association of originally French speaking cantons, the official language remained German until 1798. Then, in the wake of Napoleonic military intervention, the new Helvetic Republic was formed and with changing political fortunes, so did languages. German, French and Italian were finally given equal rights as national languages in the Constitution of 1848. These national languages were joined by Romansh in 1938 (cf. Rosenberger 2010: 102-3, Stepkowska 2013: 166-67).

English is a comparatively recent arrival on the linguistic map of Switzerland. Pre-World War II, contacts between the national languages and English were slight and mostly restricted to individual contacts with English speaking tourists, amongst which Lord Byron, Percy Shelly, Henry James or Louisa May Alcott, or to borrowing words for cultural innovations (Dürmüller 2002: 115, Durham 2014: 40). The conceptual distance between especially Swiss German English in the pre-war period is illustrated by the fact that loanwords from English were repeatedly introduced into Swiss German pronounced like French (ibid.). Interestingly, this can still be observed in standard pronunciations, e.g. on news casts, of words like *Cup*, as in *Davis-Cup*, or *lunch* with French rather than English pronunciation of the <u>. After World War II, however, the presence of English has also been increasing in Switzerland and its influence can be felt in various domains such as the economy, science and technology, or entertainment and leisure (Dürmüller 2002: 116).

The world-wide spread of English started with English expansionist policies into the Celtic countries during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. In a step of further internationalisation,



during these centuries overseas' expansions went under way into North America and trade relations were established with East Africa, with India and South East Asia. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Australia and New Zealand were claimed for England and colonization took place of the South African Cape. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Florida, Louisiana and California were acquired. These centuries present a period of massive growth of the English sphere of influence, of trade relations and of the English language.

This spread of English influence, culture and language was based on both military and economic strength. While in the countries of contact, the local languages represented cultural coherence, the English language was associated with knowledge and success. This new prestige of the English language arose, at least in part, due to the scientific and technological innovations made Britain and American during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Crystal 1997: 72-75). The ensuing acquisition of the English language by local population groups resulted in the development of foreign language and eventually second language varieties on the basis of contacts with the native speakers, and in the cases of countries where (almost) complete language shift to English took place (such as the United States of America, Ireland), to the development of first language varieties of English (Barber 1993: 234-38, Crystal 1997). The English language more and more was not only used by people who had grown up as English speakers, but also by others who adopted it as an economic tool, based at first on the power of the British Empire. More recently, however, it has increasingly been American, rather than by British, cultural and economic influence that fuelled the international success of English (Barber 1993: 238, Crystal 1997: 53, Mair 2002: 160).

Both internal developments in the English speaking countries, as well as the international spread of English exercised influence on the rise of the number of English speakers. While it is estimated that there were still less than five million speakers of English in 1600, in England alone the population tripled from nine million to thirty million during the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the industrial revolution, while in America it even rose to seventy-six million speakers of English at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Barber 1993: 234-36). Nowadays speaker numbers are more difficult to determine. Rough estimates have been posited around 1.75 billion, with non-native speakers outnumbering native speakers by 4:1 (British Council 2013: 4-5). In order to explain the phenomenal international success of the English language, two types of explanations are typically put forward (Mair 2002). On the one hand these are explanations that argue that even though there is no more imperial control, the English language is now spread by British and American language planning policies. Adoption of the English language leads to the loss of national languages and concomitant loss of self-esteem and cultural identity (Mair 2002: 160-63). An alternative point of view, the grassroots model,

focuses on the demands made by language users. The spread of the English language, it is argued, is a decentralized phenomenon and driven by language users' choices of English over other languages for its promise of modernization and globalization. Rather than being a tool of Anglo-Saxonization, it is an ideologically neutral *lingua franca*, which the communities appropriate and make their own (Mair 2002: 163-65). Evaluating the validity of the two points of view, Mair endorses a moderate version of the second, language-user driven model, arguing that language users eventually adapt the new languages to their own purposes (loc. cit.: 166-67).

### 3.2 WHAT IS THE STATUS OF ENGLISH IN SWITZERLAND?

According to the 2013 population census, 4.4% of the Swiss population use English as their main language (FSO, loc. cit.), which presents a notable increase from the 2000 census, in which the use of English as an L1 still stood at 1%. A detailed investigation of which population groups use English, and for what purposes it is used, is provided by Lüdi and Werlen (2005), based on data from the 2000 census.

Lüdi and Werlen show that English is regularly used in the working environment: it is used by 23.4% of the population in German speaking Switzerland, by 17.7% in the Romandie and by 11 % in Italian speaking Switzerland, and by 8.2% in Romansh speaking regions (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 47-57, cf. Durham 2014: 37). In all linguistic regions the main users of English at work were academics and members of the top and higher level management and independent professionals (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 68). The use of English is particularly strong in the financial hubs of the country (e.g. Zurich, Zug, Geneva) and can be seen as an urban, more than a rural phenomenon (Durham 2014: 38). Particularly multi-national companies may introduce English as a general company language, and reason of efficiency, cost-effectiveness and modernity are cited (Franzen 2001: 13-17, Stotz 2001: 126-28). This increasing anglicization changes traditional company culture and it causes higher internationalization, but at the same time puts a strain on employees with lower levels of English (Stotz 2001: 126-28). Further representative studies have shown that salary levels of employees indeed increase with higher competences in the English language (Grin 2001). This, however, is more pronounced in German speaking Switzerland than in the Romandie, where German has an even higher economic value (loc. cit.: 117). Grin interprets these findings as particularly pointing to the international, more than the local, importance of English and he cautions that this economic advantage will lessen with increasing competences in English in the general population of Switzerland (loc. cit.: 118-19).

Moving on to the use of English in the education sector, of the people undergoing education, overall 14.5% stated that they spoke English regularly, not counting classroom activities. The authors note these figures are particularly high for non-Swiss nationals (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 79), who might be attending international schools. But the status of English in school has also been strengthened by the hotly debated move of some cantons to introduce English as a first foreign language in primary school, which is seen as a threat to national coherence by some parties (compare the discussions e.g. in Aebeli 2001, Stauffer 2001, Rosenberger 2009: 125-29, Dröschel 2011: 120-22).

At third level institutions, regular use of English is indicated by 40% of the informants (Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 72, cf. Durham 2014: 38). Investigating language use at the University of Berne at the turn of the millennium, Murray (2001: 86-92, 98) finds that few courses are in fact taught or even partly taught in English. On average about 50% of the course reading is in English, however, with English being prominent in biomedical subjects and also natural sciences, but rarer in the humanities and social subjects. Similarly, less than one third of researchers from humanities and social sciences reported presenting their research in English, while about three quarters in natural science and biomedicine did so, stating that they would otherwise lose visibility. Generally the students auto-evaluated their competence levels in English to be good, better than in the French language which they had studied longer in secondary educations, but would nevertheless appreciate more English tuition at university (*loc. cit.*: 93-96). While this research focusses on Berne, it has also been observed, however, that universities in French and Italian speaking parts of the country used English less than in the German speaking part (Dürmüller 2001: 398).

The presence of English in public discourse has been studied from the point of view of its presence in politics, in the media, in the news, or in advertising. From the 1980ies onwards, Coray (2001: 162-63) identifies the increasing spread of English as a topic of complaint in Swiss discourse on languages. She points to repeated motions in Parliament, mostly from a critical point of view, to legislate for its use in different contexts. In the press, too, the topic of English is discussed more frequently, with a focus on its effect on the relationship between the population groups as well as on the question of when it should be taught in school (Coray 2001: 164-72). In the context of advertising, the use of English is seen as being cost-efficient (because one English language advertisement can be used instead of three or four in the separate language regions), and attractive because the English language in advertisements indicates high status and modernity (Cheshire and Moser 1993, Bonhomme 2003, Stüssler 2003, Schaller-Schwaneer and Tschichold 2004).

Indisputably, the English language has a strong status as a foreign language within the country. It has repeatedly been argued that English also performs certain *lingua franca* functions within Switzerland: from originally having been used with English speaking tourists only, it is now not only used by non-Swiss resident population groups and in interaction with foreigners, but under certain circumstances also when Swiss citizens with different linguistic backgrounds come together (e.g. Dröschel 2011, Dürmüller 2001, Durham 2014, Rosenberger 2010, Stepkowska 2013, Watts and Murray 2001). The rise of English in Switzerland can certainly at least partly be attributed to the rise of English as an international language and its resulting increased use in international business relations. Additionally, further specifically Swiss features make English an attractive language choice for cross-linguistic contacts within Switzerland. Durham (2014: 41-4) identifies its neutral status, its economy of expression, language learning and comprehension features, as well as the diglossic situation particularly in German speaking Switzerland as further motivating factors.

First, when using English, none of the participants of a putative conversation between speakers of different L1s would be at a disadvantage because none of the participants would be using their own native language, therefore deciding on a foreign language for everyone could be seen as fair. This point is also made by Dröschel (2011: 141-42), as well as by Deluigi (2015: 116, 121-22), who, based on a study of high-school students in Lugano, particularly underlines the importance of this point for the minority of Italian speakers in Switzerland. Second, in the situation of Swiss multilingualism, communication involving different language groups requires provision of information in all national languages. Using only one language which is understood by everyone, English, instead provides a cost- and time-efficient alternative (Grin 2001, Cheshire and Moser 1994). Third, Durham argues that language learners from different population groups consider English to be an easier language to use than the other languages, possibly partly increased by positive attitudes towards English as well as its presence in everyday life.

The question of language attitudes no doubt is a crucial one. Schwarz *et al.* (2002) investigate language attitudes of 280 informants from the German and the French speaking parts of Switzerland. They show that after the national languages, in the order French, Swiss German, Italian, their informants name the English language as being their favourite language (2002: 52). English is thus rated highest after the national languages (but before Romansh), which are also the informants' mother tongues, and it is the most favourably connotated among the non-national languages. This positive attitude to English is also confirmed for Swiss Italian high-school students in the Ticino Deluigi (2015: 118).

Durham's fourth point in favour of the English language is the prominent use of Swiss German dialect in German speaking Switzerland. This existing diglossia means that French and Italian speakers, who learn Standard German in school, suffer from comprehension problems when using German. This problem is avoided when using English.

Naturally, the increasing use of English is not welcomed unanimously. Its real and imagined dangers to Swiss multilingualism are pointed out by various authors (Dürmüller 1997, Coray 2001: 173-74, Lüdi and Werlen 2005: 103, Demont-Heinrich 2005). Clearly, Mair's (2002) discussion of the spread of English outlined in 3.1 can also be applied to Switzerland. Watts (2001) shows that English has been viewed as a threat to multilingual Switzerland. Yet he also describes a competing discourse on the status of English in Switzerland, which assigns international and especially economic importance to the language, but restricted national importance. In Switzerland, English can be seen as an imperialist language in at least two senses. First, it is seen as presenting a danger to Swiss languages and culture (Dürmüller 2002: 116). Second, it often is the language not of local, but of multinational companies (Grin 2001) and of international business. Ability to use English is a key to success in the working world, particularly but not exclusively in German speaking Switzerland (e.g. Dürmüller 1997: 71, Rash 1998: 47, Franzen 2001: 15-16, Grin 2001, Rosenberger 2010: 119-21, Dröschel 2011: 129-33), not wanting to use English, or lacking the ability to do so, would mean restricted chances both for individuals and companies. On the other hand, English is a popular and prestigious and considered to be the most useful language in Switzerland (Lüdi and Werlen 2005, Werlen and Rosenberger 2011), which language users demand to be given a chance to learn as an L2 (Dürmüller 1997: 69, Coray 2001: 169-70, Stepkowska 2013: 178). Thus, in Switzerland, too, we can identify both the widespread, popular interest in English as well as the economic demand conditioned by its status as a global language.

#### **4. CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE VOLUME**

The contributions in the current volume focus on the topic areas of multilingualism in Switzerland, English as a Lingua Franca, and language acquisition. Addressing language planning issues in multilingual Switzerland, Raphael Berthele shows that language management according to the territoriality principle disadvantages linguistic minorities. He finds that there is no status planning for immigrant languages, including English, and that multilinguality involving non-territorial languages often correlates with lower social class while multilingualism in the national languages and English is found in the most highly educated classes.

Providing examples of multilinguality from various domains of public life and from different types of economic contexts in Switzerland, Georges Lüdi investigates multilingual practices in the public domain and in the workplace and assesses the debate about English and Swiss national languages at school. He finds that, while English dominates in external business communication, internal communication often uses *lingua franca* English supplemented with and influenced by the multilingual competences of the team members to communicate efficiently.

Taking up again the issue of multilingual practices, Agnieszka Stępkowska's contribution focusses on multilingualism in the canton of Zurich. Based on the results of a telephone survey conducted in 2011, she illustrates the symbiotic relationship between the Swiss languages and English. Comparing English in Switzerland and the international growth in the status of English, she proposes a model that accounts for changes in multilingual settings if one language develops *lingua franca* functions, as is done by the English language.

In the second thematic section, two papers deal with impact and use of English as an international language and as a *lingua franca*. Mathieu Deboffe's study investigates and compares the use of English loan words in teenage language in the French of Switzerland and France. He shows that, in spite of restrictive language politics in France and no such restrictions in Switzerland, the respondents from both countries have equally favourable attitudes towards such use of *franglais* and use it extensively.

Studying forms and features of English as a *lingua franca* in Switzerland, Mercedes Durham's contribution focusses on sociolinguistic competence displayed by Swiss speakers of English. She shows that three typical outcomes can be found. While English as a *Lingua Franca* speakers may acquire typical variation patterns of the standard language, they may likewise fail to acquire such variation entirely, or they may develop new patterns on the basis of the input which they have received. Speakers of different *lingua franca* varieties may show different outcomes in the development of a feature. The likelihood of native-like acquisition of such a feature seems to be determined by its frequency and the amount of extant lexical variation.

The third thematic section of this volume deals with issues of language teaching and acquisition. Simone E. Pfenninger examines the association between starting age of language acquisition and performance in comparison with different types of instruction and motivation in order to determine the outcomes of early versus later onset of school teaching in English. She finds that instruction type and motivation levels are in fact better predictors of learning success than the starting age of language acquisition. She shows that there is a bi-directional

causal link between Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes and motivation and CLIL and learner outcomes.

Adriano Aloise investigates the impact of motivational factors on middle and high school students in Lausanne. He finds that while there are no significant differences between integrative and instrumental motivation in his informants, the students' own multilinguality, as well as previous stays abroad were important factors that had an impact on their motivation to learn English.

Adrian Pablé's study approaches the study of English from the perspective of *integrational linguistics*. Relating questions on 'Swiss English' to other international varieties of English, he urges linguists to take a broader and less structuralized view on English linguistics and on the English language, both in their research and in their university teaching, and he questions the validity of some of the normative teaching approaches in primary school teaching. He proposes that we should be looking less at abstract systems and more at why languages are 'given'.

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