MIME

Mobility and inclusion in multilingual Europe

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1 Summary

This document reports on the preparatory work done by the members of Work Package 4, nominally on “mediation” between languages.

The Work Package brings together tasks on four ways of solving communication problems that involve different languages: 1) translation technologies, 2) public-service interpreting and translation, 3) intercomprehension, and 4) lingua francas.

The overall aim of the Work Package is to identify the circumstances in which these solutions, either individually or in combination, can best enhance both mobility and inclusion in Europe.

The report outlines the current state of research on each of these four tasks, the key concepts, and the preliminary steps that the group has taken in order to collect fresh data that will enable direct comparisons between the four communication solutions.
2 Introductory remarks

WP 4 looks at the ways different modes of mediation between languages can enhance both mobility and inclusion in Europe. It studies four modes: translation technologies, public-service interpreting, intercomprehension, and the use of lingua francas, all of which may be combined. The innovative aspect of the project is that the four modes are modelled as complementary ways of solving communication problems, and are further considered to be complementary to language learning as a general underlying strategy, both “upstream” (someone must have learned something about a foreign language in order for any of these modes of mediation to take place) and “downstream” (the use of these modes may stimulate rather than replace language acquisition).

Almost all previous studies deal with these various modes in isolation, often as mutually exclusive strategies, resulting in blind policy assumptions like, for example, the notion that the provision of translation and interpreting services will curtail rather than enhance language learning, or that the use of intercomprehension or a lingua franca will lead to a lowering of language competence. We seek to uncover strategic relations that are more subtle and less antagonistic when approaching trade-offs between mobility and inclusion.

The group has determined the following initial definitions:

Mediation: Communication between speakers with different L1s.

Translation: Mediated interlingual communication. In this project, translation may be written or spoken (i.e. it can include interpreting).

Language technologies: In this project, the main language technology of interest is online statistical machine translation. Other technologies will be considered as they surface in the studies.

Interpreting: Oral forms of translation. In this project we are basically concerned with public-service or “community” interpreting, of the kind made available to migrant communities.

Lingua franca: The use of a language that is not the L1 of any of the communication participants, particularly English (although we will also look at situations when the lingua franca is the L1 of part of the participants).

Intercomprehension: Non-mediated interlingual communication where no party uses the language of the other party and all parties use their L1.

Intercommunication: Non-mediated interlingual communication where no party uses the language of the other party and the parties are not using their L1. (This could overlap with the use of a lingua franca.)

The methodological steps common to the four tasks are: 1) synthesis of data from previous research, 2) remodelling of the various solutions, with special attention to standardizing terms and concepts for the purposes of the project, 3) case studies of mobile subjects engaged in process of integration, using interviews and narrative analysis, and incorporating attention to the affective values of different languages and different communication solutions, and 4) extraction of strategic relations from these accounts, along with estimates of variable efforts, benefits and optimal solutions, which can then feed into the modelling of the MIME project as a whole.

Since previous research projects offer little empirical data that directly address these issues in an integrated way (although there is much that can be interpreted indirectly), this WP will be engaged in some gathering of primary data. This will take the form of four interrelated surveys, each of which focuses on one of the four modes of mediation at the same time as it asks about all other modes. For example, the URV will have access to the sizeable Russian-speaking community living south of Tarragona, which has many variants of one-way and two-way mobility, as well as varying degrees of inclusion. The UL will have access to a center for asylum seekers, which is another rich source of data on a different kind of mobility and inclusion. The team in Reims has access to the graduates in its courses in intercomprehension, who will be surveyed on their language background and use of different modes of mediation.

In principle, each case study will gather data on all four modes of mediation. That is, to take the example of the Russian-speaking community south of Tarragona, we will attempt to map the use of translation technologies, interpreting, intercomprehension, and lingua francas, all within the one (complex) community.
There are several models for the kind of survey we are interested in: Hlavac (2011) looked at the Iraqi community in Melbourne; Goro Christoph Kimura (2012, 2013) has studied the German-Polish border region; Brugué et al. (2013) include language variables in their report on immigrant communities in Catalonia; Renata Seredyńska-Abou Eid (2014) has surveyed Polish immigrants in the East Midlands of the United Kingdom. We have gained access to the survey instruments used in these studies, and have used them when developing our own survey instruments.
3 Language technologies and industries

Anthony Pym and Nune Ayvazyan (Universitat Rovira i Virgili)

3.1 Introduction

Recent developments in language technologies make statistical machine-translation output available to all, in both written and sometimes spoken forms, and might thus promise to solve numerous problems of multilingual communication. The great potential of translation technologies is that everyone will be able to understand written and spoken texts that are produced in foreign languages. And the truly revolutionary promise, embedded in the nature of statistical machine translation, is that the more these systems are used, the better they should become (and the better they become, the more they will be used). Thanks to this virtuous circle, what seemed utopian is now conceptually within reach.

The consequences of this change could be enormous. Instead of relying on mediation services from salaried professionals regulated by official bodies, communities in multilingual situations can potentially take charge of their own mediation needs. Just as the Internet has replaced official news and entertainment channels, its translation technologies could replace official mediation services.

Our first aim in this task is to identify the situations in which this kind of solution has a chance of prevailing. This means considering the actual uses of translation technologies in volunteer mediation (“crowdsourcing”) and new ways of incorporating professional mediation into the process (translators becoming posteditors of machine-translation output). However, it also means understanding why the utopian virtuous circle in many cases turns into a vicious circle. The more people use statistical machine translation without postediting, as if it provided immediately usable translation, the more defective equivalents flood the web; and once those outputs are automatically fed back into the bitext databases, the quality of the machine translation output starts to dwindle. That is, user ignorance is becoming one of the main reasons why translation technologies fail. This is a phenomenon that we must admit to and track.

The translation technologies will be studied at the URV in Tarragona, where a doctoral student has been contracted for the duration of the project. Our financing allows for no further hiring of personnel. The study connects with several previous and ongoing projects: a PhD thesis on the role of metalanguage in user postediting of machine-translation suggestions (Teixeira, due for completion in 2015), another on the changing behaviour patterns of novice translators using new technologies (Sannholm, begun in 2014), plus recently competed PhD theses on productivity and quality in postediting (Guerberof 2012), a comparison of postediting by professional translators as opposed to professional engineers (Temizöz 2013), and a study of the legal systems involved in language policies in the United Kingdom (González 2014). The Intercultural Studies Group in Tarragona has also prepared a MOOC seminar on postediting, designed to teach basic techniques to a wide range of non-professionals.

3.2 Towards a state of the art

Empirical studies of the use of translation technologies date from Krings (1995/2001) and are heavily weighted in favour of technical issues. Some studies (Pym 2009, García 2010) are showing that it can be more efficient to postedit machine translation output than to start from scratch, but that this is not the case in all situations. Current data tends to come not from academic publications but from industry magazine, company reports, and users’ blogs, all of which come with considerable hype. The way forward nevertheless seems to lie not in ever-larger databases, but in very controlled, specialized databases run on in-house machine translation systems. This means that machine translation may effectively operate in the same way as shared translation memories.

The research is very highly focused on issues of translator performance and increased productivity, basically because companies require criteria on which to base their pay scales (the IBM technology tracks the detailed performance of their posteditors). There are virtually no empirical studies on the non-professional use of translation technologies, although it is clear that Google and Microsoft have been collecting massive data on the issue.

Studies of non-professional translation do touch on translation technologies (for example in O’Hagan ed. 2011), giving optimistic figures for the numbers of volunteer users, exploring new combinations with professional translating, and raising ethical issues concerning copyright and the use of free labour. Another
direction in current inquiry is the nature and pedagogy of postediting, which was the topic of a seminar in Barcelona in July 2014.

Although there is a new focus of attention on the actual use of translation technologies, particularly on the user interface, none of the current work addresses the social and economic issues involved in the wider questions of mobility and inclusion.

3.3 Key concepts

The key concepts for this research are postediting (the repair of machine-translation proposals) and volunteer translation (in this context, postediting by people who are not paid for it). We seek to ascertain to what extent volunteers within mobile communities can effectively carry out postediting tasks.

The use of translation technologies, particularly by young people, is a part of general digital literacy (cf. Gillen 2014) and does not necessarily require command of entire language systems but is more on the level of field-specific sets of ‘semiotic resources’ (after Blommaert 2010).

The task will review the existing studies of situations where statistical machine translation is potentially cost-effective, both in companies and in social media. Any quantitative data, however, have a short use-by date in this fast-moving field. Our more substantial concern must be to identify deep-seated trends, leading to predictions of the ways MT mediation is likely to interact with the other forms of mediation.

The methodological steps will involve: 1) a review of concepts and terms, 2) case studies of younger subjects, who are more likely to use MT solutions in planning and negotiating mobility, 3) dialogue with stakeholders, including representatives of the language industries, on the ways in which technologies can contribute to social objectives, as well as financial profits.

Identification of logics of success, where MT is most likely to replace professional mediation, where it is an aid to the work of professionals, and where it merely diffuses false ideas of what mediation is (the abundance of mistranslations that are infiltrating many databases). Longitudinal case studies in conjunction with the other tasks in this WP may also help identify the causes of institutional resistance to MT technologies.

In principle, the development and use of statistical machine translation is only weakly dependent on language size and directionality: it can work between languages of any size, as long as a bitexts database is available or can be constituted (and the quality of the database is proving more important than raw size). This is key, since it means that the technologies serve both inclusion (socially relevant information becomes available to all) and mobility (for which information also becomes available). More than a trade-off, the technology seems to be fundamentally indifferent to the two axes.

We have no reliable data on the relation between translation and language acquisition, but we suspect that the postediting of machine translation may stimulate the learning of an L2 or L3. This is because of the imperfections of the translation suggestions, the visibility of the foreign language on the screen, and the use of simple transfer in cases of zero matches. To this extent, translation technologies should help in the learning of host languages. But this, like many other working hypotheses, remains to be tested on the basis of empirical data.
4 Public Service Interpreting and Translation

Nike Pokorn and Iva Jetvic (University of Ljubljana)

4.1 Introduction

Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) has emerged as one of the key areas of language provision, addressing the need for increased mobility and inclusion in the EU (SIGTIPS 2011). It is defined as the provision of translation and interpreting services in the context of public services; it enables people who are not fluent speakers of the official language(s) of the country to communicate with the providers of public services, so as to facilitate full and equal access to legal, health, education, government and social services (Roberts 1997: 11). Although there has been political recognition of the right of the individual to equal language access in the EU, as exemplified, for instance, by EU Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings and EU Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare, the systematic regulation of specific fields varies greatly from one area to another, both on the national level and between member states.

Improvement in PSIT is also challenged by the dynamic nature of migration patterns: traditionally emigrant countries now have considerable multilingual immigration, whereas others are facing increases in immigration from communities with lesser-known languages. The inability of training to respond adequately to these changes often leads to shortages of qualified translators and interpreters for peripheral languages (see Linn 2006). Furthermore, migrants need different types and degrees of language services at different stages of their stay, corresponding to disparate intentions and desires with regards to language acquisition.

The above issues will be examined within the setting of a detention centre in Ljubljana, Slovenia, which will provide us with first-hand data on users’ experiences of translation and interpreting services. It will also provide insight into the affective values attached to languages and communication solutions. The study will look at PSIT provision in legal, medical, and social service settings and will ask whether language assistance lessens the foreign speaker’s need to learn the national language and thus stymies integration (see Schäffner 2009).

Our study will use interviews to ensure that other modes of mediation and interlingual communication will be included in the overview of migrants’ language strategies, highlighting the complementary nature of PSIT as one of a number of communicative possibilities and demonstrating its key role in ensuring high quality translation in sensitive public service contexts that reduces the final cost of service provision by cutting the duration and number of interactions. The absence of a comprehensive PSIT policy may therefore have significant ethical, legal, and financial ramifications, effectively obscuring the ways PSIT can potentially contribute to trade-offs between mobility and inclusion.

The role of PSIT will be studied at the University of Ljubljana, where a postdoctoral student has been contracted for the project. The study is related to previous work done at the Department of Translation, namely the projects Healthcare Interpreting in Slovenia (2010-2013), MedInt, a multinational cooperation project funded by the European Commission (2007-2009), and a bilateral project on PSI in Slovenia and Finland (2011-2012).

4.2 Towards a state of the art

Language access to public services is increasingly important in view of increased migration by speakers of different language groups from both within and outside the EU. PSIT has emerged as a vital area of language provision, geared specifically towards language mediation in highly charged contexts that demand the use of qualified interpreters and translators capable of delivering precise, effective services.

However, as pointed out by Ertl and Pöllabauer (2010), the use of qualified interpreters tends to be seen as too expensive, with many countries failing to provide comprehensive language services on an institutional level. The factors affecting such provision range from social and political attitudes towards immigration, types of government (e.g. federalism vs. unitarianism), public policy models, types of interpreting, and notions of interpreting (Ozolins 2010). Previous studies demonstrate the need for a multi-factor analysis of PSIT and cross-sector policy implementation, which is especially relevant in the context of an increasing drive towards integration of public services in the EU.
The development of asylum seeker language biographies would challenge the theoretical frameworks within which the language services provider, with studies generally assuming rather than examining the relationship between language needs and the most appropriate forms of provision (Edwards et al. 2005), a case study of a detention centre promises to reveal a variety of language needs from the perspective of the service user, within an institutional framework where language provision already exists. The proposed series of repeated interviews with a number of asylum seekers is intended to create individual language biographies (see Busch 2010) that could demonstrate the development of language needs and affective values attached to the use of a particular language over time. It should thus give diachronic insight into the (linguistic) experience of a person in the asylum process.

Finally, the issue of linguistic and cultural capital, as pointed out by Bourdieu, is inherent in the interview relationship: it is the investigator who unilaterally determines the objectives and uses of the interview (1999: 608); here, the only possible corrective is self-reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Data will be obtained on the structure of the residents in the centre and interviews will be conducted with representative subjects. A questionnaire has been developed, partly based on the work done in the Iraqi language community in Melbourne (Hlavac 2011), which will serve as the basis for semi-structured interviews aimed at gathering qualitative data. Two pilot interviews have been conducted so far in a Ljubljana detention centre, testing the questionnaire; suitable amendments have been made based on the results. The overall aim of the interviews...
is to look at PSIT in view of the above dimensions, to place PSIT on a continuum of language strategies, and to examine the specific value of PSIT in light of the context which necessitates its use.
5 Intercomprehension

Eric Castagne (Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne)

5.1 Introduction

The strategy we call “intercomprehension” is the only form of intercommunication in which all participants understand foreign languages without mediation and speak their mother language (L1), thus creating asymmetrical multilingual intercommunication. In WP4, intercomprehension is considered as one way of solving language problems in conjunction with the various modes of mediation.

So far the concept of intercommunication has been studied almost always within just one language family: Romance (Jensen 1989; Conti & Grin 2008) Germanic (Haugen 1981 Braunmüller, 2007 Zeevaert, 2004), Slavic (Nabelkova 2008), Finno-Ugric (Verschik 2012), Turkic (Rehbein, Herkenrath & Karakoc 2009, Indo-Iranian and Semitic (Bahtina & ten Thijs 2010). Numerous teaching projects have been completed, specific networks of researchers have been created, and multiple trainings have been organized, all with the goal of disseminating the concept through education. However, despite those efforts, education institutions still consider intercomprehension to be an unsatisfactory solution (synthesis of the 2013 Ronjat symposium in Toulouse, proposed by Daniel Coste); they generally prefer a bi- or trilingual project (L1 plus English and sometimes L3) which pursues exhaustive goals in terms of language competences. In the workplace, except in rare cases, intercomprehension is not frequent, and the wider public is generally unaware of it as a “serious” strategy, even though intercomprehension is used intuitively in informal situations (in the context of multinational families, trips abroad, etc.). However, when we observe how intercomprehension is performed on a daily basis in some public and private sectors or in some European areas (European Union 2012: 16-25), we are convinced that it could resolve some of the multidimensional problems caused by tensions between mobility and inclusion in Europe.

This is why the MIME project chose to study intercomprehension, in conjunction with other strategies, from a sociolinguistic and policy perspective. Our in-depth analysis of the current and potential uses of intercomprehension will broaden the scope of the existing research, including the use of intercommunication between different language families (see work by the EuroCom team or the ICE team at Reims). The study, conducted in the context of the relationship between mobility and inclusion, will take into account the efficient and equitable potential of this strategy in a variety of situations and depending on multiple factors.

The intercomprehension team brings together the cognitive and technical skills to complete the project. In addition to the coordinator, the team will have a first research assistant, a lecturer at the University of Reims and member of the research seminar “Intercompréhension des langues voisines” from CIRLEP EA 4299; a second assistant has been selected as a MIME doctoral student and will start work on 1 October 2014. In addition, the theme of the 2014-2015 research seminar “Intercompréhension des langues voisines” will be “Mobility and inclusion” and Masters studies will include surveys and interviews on intercomprehension, thus training young researchers.

5.2 Towards a state of the art

Several studies conducted by Ulla Börestam of Uppsala University deserve special attention from the point of view of the use of intercomprehension in the context of mobility and inclusion. Börestam (2002) finds that 1) Scandinavian intercomprehension in writing is very good and the written mode is sometimes preferred for transmission, (2) Scandinavian intercomprehension in oral mode poses minor difficulties for Norwegians, mid-level difficulties for the Danes and major difficulties for the Swedes, and 3) the level of mutual intelligibility can be asymmetric (Danes listening to Swedish report understanding twice as much as Swedes listening to Danish). Börestam (2007) observes that in Iceland the practice of inter-Nordic communication decreased between 1983 and 2004 in favour of the use of English as a lingua franca. Börestam (2011) investigates the use of Nordic intercomprehension by non-Nordic immigrants who have acquired Danish or Swedish. She observes two strategies: that of “language-stretchers” (språktändare), who modify the already acquired L2 without being afraid of mixing it with the new L3, and that of language-shifters (språkbytare), who strive to master the new Scandinavian language and are careful not to mix the two.

Other comparative studies also deserve attention. Blees et al. (2014) show that between Dutch and German students, communication in English lingua franca is better than lingua receptiva because they are more
proficient in English than in receptive competence in the mother tongue of their partner, and the prerequisite language skills are an important factor to take into account when choosing a multilingual intercommunication. Other researchers take into account equity, justice and economic cost. Grin (2008a) does show that in addition to enhancing the logic of human rights, intercomprehension can make multilingualism more realistic than the “panarchic” system, and more manageable and less expensive than the use of English, while providing a higher level of equity. These studies in the economics of language complement the conclusions of the report on the Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise (CiLT 2006: 18, 57), which found that “the total losses to the EU economy through lack of language skills in the SME sector are in the region of €100 billion per year” and that investments in language skills “are an essential factor in enabling the EU to compete on the basis of skills and knowledge rather than on the basis of low costs”.

The analysis of the actual and potential use of intercomprehension will broaden the scope of existing research in sociolinguistics, including the conditions for a multidimensional operational practice between languages across the entire EU, including few studied cases such as Finnish-Estonian (Härmävaara 2014) and between different language families. The study will take into account the potential of intercomprehension as an efficient and equitable strategy in a variety of situations in daily life, depending on many factors (European Union, 2012, 3 - 5). Given the specificity of intercomprehension, and in agreement with the members of WP4, a first online survey is being carried out on the various uses of strategies studied by WP4 to get quantitative and qualitative data from a target group that has been trained in all strategies, including intercomprehension. The methodological approach will work from the available documents and surveys (multiparameter statistical results will be reviewed and adjusted with semi-structured interviews) constituting a corpus with both quantitative and qualitative data. This will provide for an interdisciplinary identification of the interlingual and intercultural prerequisites for an efficient, fair and economical practice of intercomprehension, facilitating both mobility and inclusion.

5.3 Key concepts

Intercomprehension has several formulations, the most common being “receptive competence” or “lingua receptiva” (Rehbein, ten Thije, and Verschik 2012, 249). However, the concept also presupposes a targeted exploitation of interlinguistic proximity, as has traditionally been the case among Scandinavian languages (Börestam 2002) or between German and Dutch (Gooskens et al. 2011). The main idea is nevertheless the same: actors are invited to develop reading and listening comprehension in a language related to their L1 (or, potentially, in relation to any language that they know well) and expressive competence in their L1 in asymmetric multilingual context (Castagne 2004; Conti and Grin 2008; European Commission 2012).

Intercomprehension is the only form of unmediated intercommunication on the model of “two speakers each using a different L1” and should be distinguished from other forms of asymmetrical multilingual intercommunication (e.g. intercommunication between one speaker using Spanish as L2 and another using Italian as L2). Comparisons between multiple uses will be useful in the investigation.

The forms of asymmetric multilingual intercommunication offer an eminently pragmatic solution in that they involve a very practical know-how (Caddé 2008) and a “responsibility-enhancing” alternative (Doyé and Meissner 2010), encouraging actors’ autonomy. Intercomprehension is also integrative in that it looks at languages in their mutual interconnections, promoting self-knowledge through the knowledge of the other. Several research and education programmes (e.g. Benveniste 2008) have shown its effectiveness in teaching. Although primarily geared for use in written contexts, it is also being developed for applications in oral communication (Martin 2013). Recent work has explored the expansion of intercomprehension beyond neighbouring languages (Castagne 2012), where Dutch has been shown to facilitate the access of French speakers to a range of Germanic languages (Caure 2009, Chazal 2010). However, the forms of asymmetrical multilingual intercommunications are considered “approximative” in the worst sense of the term by educational institutions and the very widespread workplace, and is still mostly unknown by the general public. It remains to be determined why. Some hypotheses have to be tested: natural practice of intercomprehension vs. acquired practices of intercomprehension, unawareness of the possibility of intercomprehension between two languages, historical and ideological conflicts between citizens of different countries (Portugal vs. Spain, Germany vs. Nederland, Poland vs. Russia), linguistic and cultural alignments between two different languages, asymmetry in the written and spoken natural intelligibility between two languages (the Portuguese intuitively understand spoken Spanish better than the Spanish understand spoken Portuguese). What has also remained relatively unexplored is the language policy potential of intercomprehension in different contexts, including for organisations such as the EU, which might exploit it
for the circulation of texts in their original language among civil servants and MPs who understand languages closely related to that of the original version. The MIME project will focus on the conditions for developing and implementing intercomprehension as a policy response, in various settings, to the “multilingual challenge”. The strengths and the weaknesses of intercomprehension in a sociolinguistic and policy perspective will be presented in deliverable D441.
6 Lingua Franca

Sabine Fiedler and Jan Kruse (Universität Leipzig)

6.1 Introduction

The communicative strategy we are calling “lingua franca” is understood to be the use of a language that is not the L1 of any of the communication participants. The language that is mainly used in this function today is English. In Work Package 4, lingua franca is seen as one way of solving language problems in conjunction with other strategies.

A classification by Samarin (1987: 371) includes three types of lingua francas: ‘natural’, ‘pidginized’ and ‘planned’ languages. Vikor (2004) distinguishes between four types: (1) languages of religion and culture, (2) imperial languages, (3) pidgin languages, and (4) artificial languages.

Studies on lingua francas to date have mainly focused on English. The MIME research will go beyond this. When we regard lingua franca as a strategy, a method to manage the problems of intercultural communication, there is no need to restrict its investigation to the use of only one language. As Chew (2009: 2) points out, “[a]ny language could therefore conceivably serve as a lingua franca between two groups, no matter what sort of language it is” (see also Dervin 2010; Cline 2000). This concerns in particular international languages like German and French, as well as planned languages. In addition, in today’s linguistically multileveled world the use of regional lingua francas (ReLF) (Janssens et al. 2011) and so-called niche lingua francas (NLF) (Block 2007) should be taken into account. In order to identify approaches to improve the potential of lingua francas as efficient and fair strategies, their use has to be studied in a large variety of situations (including the study of traditional forms of mobility such as twin-town communication or cross-border language use in Euroregions, as well as new types of mobility such short-time migration due to labour market developments and the role of lingua francas in internships).

As for English as a lingua franca, previous studies have focused on micro-level aspects such as the extent to which lingua franca English (i.e. the use of English by non-native speakers) differs from ordinary English. As a consequence, a number of issues have hardly been addressed, including sociological implications and psychological aspects (feelings of inferiority/superiority in decisive communicative situations; linguistic insecurity). Our in-depth analysis of the use of lingua francas will broaden the scope of the existing research in order to analyse the sociolinguistic conditions of the way lingua francas are used in work and non-work settings. One focus of research will be on migration contexts. In order to gain comparable data within the Mediation group our methodology (including the use of a suitable survey instrument) will be coordinated with the teams in Ljubljana, Tarragona and Reims.

The research team has to reflect the different kinds of lingua francas and the various constellations of their use. A research assistant (postdoc, 50%) has already been hired to join the faculty staff on 1st September 2014; it is planned that he will accompany the project until its conclusion in 2018. Further assistants (on short-term contracts), will be hired and will be responsible for case studies on the use of particular lingua francas in various contexts. The first of these (a second postdoc, 50%) has already been recruited to start his project on planned languages as lingua francas in October 2014. The individual studies are meant to flow together into a post-PhD Habilitation project on lingua francas. In addition to this, taking into consideration that one of the functions of MIME is to contribute to the training of young researchers, the lingua franca team will make every effort to involve advanced students in the project to pave the way for future investigations that might result in the production of PhDs. With this aim in mind, a Masters seminar on “Lingua franca communication” was given in the Summer term of 2014 and a further Masters seminar on “Language and mobility” has been scheduled for the Winter term 2014/15 at the University of Leipzig.

6.2 Towards a state of the art

There are a number of authors who think along our lines in that they study several lingua francas (e.g. Knapp and Meierkord 2002, Dervin 2010, Backus et al. 2011). A case in point is Christoph Goro Kimura’s (2012) project “A comparative study on interlingual strategies. Insights from the German-Polish border”. The author addresses the question of what language choices are theoretically possible and what strategies are actually used in the German-Polish border region. Among the lingua francas considered in his project we find “hegemonic languages” (English and Russian), mixed languages (Slubfurtsch or Viadrinisch), a planned language (Esperanto), a classical language (Latin), and a minority language (Sorbian).
In the field of English as a lingua franca, there are two studies that deserve special attention from the viewpoint of mobility and inclusion. Karlfried Knapp (2002) points out that lingua franca communication in English typically includes both native and non-native speakers, with the latter representing various degrees of proficiency; he describes a case of uncooperative communication that has its origin in this asymmetry. The varying constellations of lingua-franca communication involving English should be further observed in the case studies we intend to pursue.

With regard to our research methodology, Bolton and Meierkord (2013) investigation on the use of English as a lingua franca in Swedish society presents a suitable starting point. They use qualitative methodology to compile comprehensive data on the language preferences of both ethnic Swedes and immigrants. Our methodology for data collection, which is chosen in coordination with the other teams in Work Package 4, includes participant observation and semi-structured interviews.

A number of studies on the use of lingua francas have been recently conducted with regard to efficiency and fairness. For example, Gazzola and Grin (2013) show that the use of English is not necessarily cheaper than translation and interpreting. Also, the planned language Esperanto has been included in the discussions about cost-effectiveness of various linguistic approaches. Grin (2005) compares three scenarios (1) “everything in English”, (2) “multilingualism”, and (3) “Esperanto”, and calculates that continental countries are transferring to the UK and Ireland approximately €17 billion a year. The Esperanto scenario proves to be the most advantageous because the entire European Union (including Britain and Ireland) could save about €25 billion every year by adopting it. Focusing on linguistic justice, Grin (2008) discusses the advantages and drawbacks of different language regimes in European language institutions and argues in favour of a multilingual model. He presents a “synarchic” model (i.e. the use of one official and working language: Esperanto) as well as the “technocratic” model (i.e. the use of one official language such as Esperanto as a pivot language in addition to the list of the then 23 official and working languages). However, with the exception of a small group of pilot studies (Fiedler 2002; Koutny 2010), the actual use of a planned language as a lingua franca has hitherto not been under investigation. The lingua franca team intends to close this gap. Our research plan includes an investigation into the use of Esperanto in contexts such as education, travelling, migration, and the family. The study of Esperanto as a lingua franca will be an instructive counterweight to the well-documented phenomenon of English as a lingua franca.

6.3 Key concepts

As mentioned in the Introduction, we see lingua franca as the use of a language that is not the L1 of any of the communication participants. With regard to English, which is the language that has been dominant in this function, the definition is not unproblematic. The most cursory review of the literature reveals that there is limited agreement on the definition of lingua franca. The original Lingua Franca was a vernacular adopted as an auxiliary language among traders along the Mediterranean coast between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, based on a Romance tongue mixed with, above all, Arabic and Greek elements (cf. Barotchi 1994: 2211, Beneke 1995: 61). It was a pidgin and nobody’s mother tongue. Since then, ‘lingua franca’ has become a nomen appellativum and is used in a metaphorical sense. Part of the metaphorical meaning is the idea of a kind of midpoint, a combination to which different groups of people have contributed, of something that is shared by them as a neutral and fair instrument. That idea is also the basis for Firth’s (1990: 269) definition, which refers to English: “The term ‘lingua franca’ is adopted to describe the language and the setting where English is used exclusively by non-native speakers.” Clyne (2000: 83), encompassing various languages, excludes native speakers as well: “A Lingua Franca is used in inter-cultural communication between two or more people who have different L1s other than the lingua franca.”

Other authors point out that a lingua franca can have native speakers, as in Gnutzmann’s (2000) definition (“A language that is used as a medium of communication between people or groups of people each speaking a different native language is known as a lingua franca.”) and a recent publication, Lingua Franca: Chimera or reality? by the European Commission (2011: 8): “… this study will focus on the lingua franca as a vehicular language which allows intercomprehension among people speaking different mother tongues, as a neutral language or jargon of which nobody can claim ownership but also as the mother tongue of one of the parties in the exchange.”

Ammon’s (2012) theoretical framework includes a distinction between symmetric lingua francas, which are nobody’s mother tongues (e.g. Latin as the primary language of science in the past) and asymmetric lingua francas, which are the native tongues of an influential part of the speech community (e.g. English as the language of science in the era of globalisation).
The comparison between different types of lingua francas (including a planned language without native speakers in the stricter sense) will be helpful when investigating to what extent the existence of a native speaker influences effectiveness and fairness in lingua franca exchanges and thus has an impact on inclusion. This will be one of the foci in our in-depth assessment of the use of lingua francas.
7 Concluding remarks

Work on the tasks is well underway, and will gain momentum as all the grant holders begin their activities. A survey instrument has been developed and piloted for use in Ljubljana, Tarragona and possibly Leipzig, and another has been formulated for the specific purposes of researching intercomprehension.

The various case studies will be coordinated but clearly cannot be the same. The studies of translation technologies and intercomprehension, for example, require subjects with a certain initial training, which is not true to the same extent for the studies of how interpreting services and lingua francas are used. The research instruments reflect these differences: different questions are asked in different scenarios. We will nevertheless ensure that the same key questions are asked in the same way in all case studies, thus ensuring a baseline for comparisons.

The political import of these questions lends them a certain urgency and indicates the need for new research-based thinking. WP leader Anthony Pym gave two plenaries on translation policy and technology in London in 2014 at conferences organized by the United Kingdom Arts and Humanities Research Council, a body engaged in government discussions of language policy. These involved engagement in the context where the UK Secretary of State for Communities has stated that translations should not be provided to immigrants, since translation services will reduce their incentive to learn English. That is, the current UK policy does not recognize any possible trade-off between mediation and inclusion, translation and language learning. Much of the work of this WP will be to question precisely those conceptual divisions, showing that basic trade-offs are possible: mediation may assist in language-acquisition, rather than block it, and may thus favour inclusion, rather than curtail it. In this way, the reconceptualization of mediation should allow us to pinpoint wider trade-offs between mobility and inclusion. Further, since the underlying political argument in the UK was based on limited budgets, we have assembled studies showing that, for example, the provision of interpreting services and cultural training in hospitals can reduce patients' length of stay number of return visits – that is, the provision of mediation services can reduce overall costs, rather than raise them. These issues will be developed in future publications and deliverables.

In addition to reconsidered “best practices” and commented glossaries for each of our communication strategies, the deliverables will include a compendium of very readable, narrative accounts of real longitudinal experiences of mediated multilingualism, framed in such a way that they can assist in making policy-making more context-sensitive, as well as a new conceptual model of how mediation can enhance rather than hinder trade-offs between social inclusion and mobility.

The WP will work closely with WP 6, which deals with “frontiers of multilingualism” (our cases will necessarily be more restricted to mainstream situations and public services), and with WP 3 “education”, since we seek to challenge the assumption that mediation is in some way the opposite of language learning.
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