Monolingual Multilingualism? European Language Policy and the Role of English as a Lingua Franca.

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The European Union based on „unity in diversity“ has 27 official languages. EU language policy attempts to promote this diversity and multilingualism through the mother tongue + 2 policy and claims that “English is not enough”. However, in the age of globalization the power of English is undisputed and thus it is necessary to examine its European community.

The present study therefore investigates the effectiveness of EU language policy as well as the role of English for multilingualism in the EU. The results of the analysis of policies and studies shows that there is an immense gap between EU language policy and reality and traditional ideologies based on one nation – one language – one identity do not fulfil new demands in the EU. An alternative to overcome these ideologies and conceptualizations of English is English as a lingua franca. ELF research describes English in communicative situations where the interlocutors do not share one native language but use English instead.

The investigation on theories on ELF suggests that it is a multilingual mode that supports multilingualism, individuality and cooperation. The findings of this thesis reveal that it is necessary to adapt EU language policy to the linguistic reality in Europe and to leave ample scope to ELF in the support of multilingualism and EU language policy.

Bibliography
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