

President

GERHARD STICKEL

Institut für Deutsche Sprache

R5, 6-13

D-68161 Mannheim

Tel.: +49-(0)621-1581403

E-mail: stickel@ids-mannheim.de

EFNIL Secretariat

MTA NYELVTUDOMÁNYI INTÉZET

1394 Budapest, Pf.360

Hungary

Tel.: +36-1-351-04 13

Fax: +36-1-322-92 97

E-mail: efnil@nytud.hu

Announcement of
the 16th Annual Conference of EFNIL
10-12 October 2018 in Amsterdam

General theme:

Language variation in Europe

Language variation as a factor of increasing language complexity and as a challenge for language policy

Rationale:

Many of our countries have one official language or a small number of official languages. These languages tend to dominate the public space, as they are the languages of the school system, of government and public administration, of the judiciary system and of the press and the media. In many cases, however, the real language situation is much more complicated than the official language regime seems to suggest, and this complexity seems to be increasing as a result of recent phenomena such as globalisation, increasing mobility, migration and the like. This complexity is characterised by and linked to an extensive variability of language situations.

a) **Language-internal variation**, i.e. variation within what is considered to be one language (German, English, Greek, Swedish,)

- the relationship between different national standards for pluricentric languages, e.g. Austrian/German German, French/Belgian French or Swiss French, Dutch/Belgian Dutch;
- the relationship between standard and non-standard varieties of the language (dialects and regional varieties);
- the relationship between spoken and written standards, formal and informal varieties ("neostandards") of the standard language;
- differences between age groups, the sexes, social classes and various professional groups.

b) **Variation between different languages**

- the relationship between the official language(s) and traditional minority or regional languages;
- the presence of new language communities as a result of recent migrations and the resulting superdiverse nature of many large urban areas in Europe;
- the increasing status and use of English in domains such as science, commerce and the media.

The complexity caused by all these forms of variation is certainly a challenge that language policies will have to cope with if they are to meet the needs of the language communities for which they are intended, both at the national and at a European level. This increasing variability inevitably leads to an increasing complexity of communicative situations and to more complex and more demanding forms of language competence by individuals, who are obliged to master a wider range of languages and language varieties than ever before, as parts of their so-called communicative or linguistic repertoires.

This policy challenge is the theme of our conference. The EFNIL member institutions will have the opportunity to learn about the situation in other countries and language areas, to compare the results of different kinds of approach, to place these phenomena within a general political and

language-theoretical reference framework and to discuss grounds for common action.

Division into work sessions

In previous years we have often had one or two general sessions with invited keynote speakers, combined with several sessions with national reports, typically presented by regular delegates of our member institutions. This time we propose to divide the conference into a limited number of sub-topics, with both keynote speakers and national reports focusing on each of these topics.

These are the sub-topics we propose:

1) *Aspects of language-internal variation*

(See list a in previous section)

2) *Aspects of variation between different languages*

(See list b in previous section)

3) *Implications of variation for language policies and language practices*

Aspects of this sub-theme may include:

- how to cope with language variation in the school system and the class room;
- variation as a challenge for our conceptions of language competence;
- multilingual and superdiverse urban areas in relation to social cohesion, identity and community building, dynamics of bonding & bridging;
- variation as a challenge for language planning, language resources, tools and devices.

Within each of these three sub-themes we want to invite keynote speakers and national reports and then to have a concluding panel session with both keynote and national speakers. We will try to give all participants enough opportunity to take an active part in the discussion.

Call for proposals

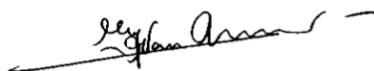
With this mail we invite our member institutions to consider a national report within one of the sub-themes mentioned above and to send a (preliminary) title with a brief explanatory note by email to:

the EFNIL Secretariat (efnil@nytud.hu), with copies to Johan Van Hoorde (jvanhoorde@taalunie.org) and Gerhard Stickel (stickel@ids-mannheim.de).

If you know experts within your country in one or more of the fields mentioned above, please let us know. We will then contact them. We would be grateful if we could have your submissions before the end of May.

Hoping for your cooperation
with best wishes
on behalf of the organising committee

6 April 2018



Johan Van Hoorde



Gerhard Stickel

P.S.: Official invitations of the two hosting institutions, the Nederlandse Taalunie (Dutch Language Union) and the Instituut voor de Nederlandse Taal (Institute for the Dutch Language), will follow soon.