

Bessie Dendrinis

Multi- and monolingualism in foreign language education in Europe¹

1. Introduction

Recent studies regarding the linguistic landscape of cities around the world today point to the multilingualism of our environment (e.g. Gorter 2006; Backhaus 2007). In its textual form, it is exhibited on shop windows, commercial signs, posters, official notices and traffic signs. It is displayed on pharmaceutical products, electrical appliances and food packages. It appears in the old and new media, and on the web. Sometimes, multilingualism appears in the form of using two or more languages to convey a single message or to convey different messages in a single text.² Other times, it takes the form of hybridized language use,³ with English making its dominant presence everywhere. These multilingual texts – like their monolingual counterparts – are by and large multimodal also. That is, meanings are shaped therein not just by one semiotic mode, such as writing, but by two modes (such as writing and sound) or more than two. Think, for example, of instructions for household appliances. In the past, we would buy a washing machine and basically had to rely mainly on the accompanying written instructions so that we'd understand how to use it. Nowadays, we buy an espresso machine, for instance, and we are likely not to be satisfied with the written instructions in the box. We'll probably go on line to find out how it works. And the information we will obtain will probably be delivered through a video via a combination of semiotic modes including oral speech and writing, still and moving image, music, sound, movement, gesture, facial expression, eye gaze, etc.

Communication around us today occurs in a multilingual and multimodal fashion, and it takes place in multicultural environments. Whether we like it or not, we are obliged to live with the 'multi' in our world, and this is one of the factors that has contributed to the need to develop a greater respect for difference, hoping to provide a forum for creating unity without denying the particular, the multiple and the specific. Such thinking lies behind the politics of multilingualism that Europe has espoused, not merely out of respect for the linguistic rights of its citizens but for economic and practical reasons, and also because there is urgent need to create conditions for social cohesion in a federation with many national languages which can neither be obliterated nor disregarded.

¹ Some of the ideas appearing in this paper were first discussed in Dendrinis (2004).

² To mention but a few examples: the television broadcaster ProSieben uses the slogan 'We love to entertain you' but then continues to speak in German while the Deutsche Telekom's newest rates, included in a brochure German, are: "Fulltime", "Freetime", "Call Plus" and "Call Time" offering additionally such features as "CountrySelect".

³ The Zurich Financial Services advertise their product with the hybrid slogan 'Because change happenz' – a hybridized form of the word 'happens', noting that hybridized language use is common in instances of everyday talk whenever languages come into contact. So, in French we have the famous defendant who 'ject un brickbat a le dit Justice, que narrowly mist' while in Spanglish we have 'Me voy a wake up' (rather than 'Me voy a levantar' or 'I am going to wake up') and the use of the English word 'so' (with the meaning of therefore: 'Tengo clase, so me voy' ('I have a class, so I'm leaving'), rather than the Spanish "porque" with different order ("me voy porque tengo clase").

However, such politics may and often do serve as ground to shift attention away from the problem of how to make Europe's linguistic and cultural diversity a political referent outside the antagonistic relations of cultural domination and subordination. The way that language policy and language education issues are discussed in and across member states arise from these antagonistic relations, creating power struggles between the 'strong' languages on the one hand, and between 'strong' and 'weak' languages on the other (cf. Dendrinis 1996). Against this background, Europe's determination to reverse European citizens' attitude toward linguistic and cultural diversity and cultivate respect for multilingualism and multiculturalism has not been realised; but, it is beginning to take shape, allowing the conception of a linguistically and culturally heterogeneous society to be viewed as normal rather than as an anomalous phenomenon. Our environment is *multi*. It is multilingual, multicultural and multimodal. The ability of citizens to view it in positive terms so that they may function effectively in such an environment, serves Europe's economic and political interests. It is for this reason that foreign language education for multilingual literacy, which is discussed in this paper, is essential.

2. Foreign language education and multi-lingualism

Accounts of multilingualism in the West have been shaped within social and theoretical discourses representing the impact of linguistic diversity and for citizenry as politically disunifying. It has been implicated in debates concerning the linguistic rights of indigenous and immigrant populations versus the obligation of all members of a society to master the national or official language, construed as an indicator of national loyalty and a means for upward social and economic mobility. Furthermore, based on commonsense assumptions about culture and on particular theories of language and culture, as two disconnected structural systems (rather than as semiotic systems inextricably linked and thus evolving together in a dialectic relationship), cultural awareness and competence have been detached from the linguistic. As a result, multilingualism is seen as distinct from multiculturalism and, thus, multilingual literacy and multicultural education are projects often pursued irrespective of one another.

A wide range of educational programmes have approached the aim of multiculturalism, mainly from a perspective of ethnic politics rather than from a critical perspective or from a cultural pluralist standpoint. Though there is some discussion about developing what Giroux (1994) has called "insurgent multiculturalism" in the form of a pedagogy, focusing on the critique of relations of power and racialised identities, current multiculturalist approaches in education are disconnected from foreign language teaching and learning in schools and university departments. Courses on culture and 'multiculturalism' are often school and college courses in their own right, separated from language teaching. Foreign language university departments in Europe have aimed primarily at preparing foreign language teachers with a native-like communicative competence in the language they will be teaching in schools and, in doing so, these departments have functioned as institutions of cultural indoctrination, promoting culturally defined disciplinary practices that favour conditions of intellectual dependency and hegemonic consciousness. To aim at multilingualism, through combined language studies programmes,

would be incongruent with their interests and practices. Therefore, they continue to reproduce the ‘mono’ ideology (monolingual, monomodal and monocultural) which has produced them.

‘Mono’ ideology serves neither the ‘multi’ reality with which we engage in our daily lives, nor with the ‘multi’ aspirations of Europe. The literacy that Europeans are to be equipped with, so as to function effectively in the multilingual and multicultural environments and handle multimodal forms of text, cannot possibly be based on the language-culture divide. On the contrary, it has to be based on the view supported also by Halliday (1978, that language and culture co-evolve in unison, moving beyond the material realisations of the mono ideology which continues to be imposed through hegemonic processes⁴) to incorporate the ‘multi’ practices into pedagogies of multiliteracies.

In such pedagogies, the ‘multi’ needs and realities of Europe would best be served by a reconceptualisation of the language user, as someone able to communicate by using all the culturally defined discursive knowledge and skills s/he has developed, as a person literate in the languages of the home, community and school, and those s/he is acquiring in foreign language education programmes. This language user should be encouraged to develop his/her potential for what Khubchandani (1997a; 1997b) calls a ‘multilingual ethos of communication’, resulting in communicative practices where boundaries between languages and codes are disrupted, as they involve the interplay of two or more languages. Education for the development of language use in such a manner is crucially different from education leading to acquiring proficiency in two or more foreign languages. It is a pedagogical project aiming at multilingual literacy.

3. Communication involving the interplay of languages

Communication involving the interplay of languages is what we can call *interlinguistic* communication (Dendrinos 2004) – a term which does not derive nor is semantically linked to the term ‘interlanguage’. The latter is a term associated with studies of second language acquisition, describing a kind of interface between first and second language (L1 and L2).⁵ Interlinguistic communication is not a transitional phase to something else; it is not a step on the way to attaining *mastery* of a second or third language. Interlinguistic communication *is* the end goal: performance which entails the use of different semiotic resources from more than one language, more than one codes and/or semiotic modes when this is required for successful communicative interaction. However, such a goal can only be derived from a reconsideration of the aims of a foreign language pedagogy oriented toward the native speaker – itself an outdated and problematic concept.⁶ It demands that language programmes view their project differently, so that learn-

⁴ Hegemony is viewed here in the Gramscian sense, as an ‘organising principle’ that is diffused by the process of socialisation into every area of daily life, to the extent that this prevailing consciousness is internalised by the population, and becomes part of what is generally seen as ‘common sense’.

⁵ Interlanguage is what some scholars have argued that foreign language learners develop as a *structured system* when they are learning a foreign language. In other words, interlanguage ‘theory’ is directly related to the transitional competence of L2 learners, in programmes aiming at the acquisition of native speaker competence.

⁶ For a problematisation regarding native-speakerism in foreign language teaching, see Dendrinos (2001a), Kramsch (1998), Pennycook (1994) and Phillipson (1992).

ing a language no longer means developing the ability to understand and produce language in ways comparable to the highly educated ‘native speaker’. To continue thinking in these terms means that language teaching will continue to mean becoming fluent in no more than one or two foreign languages at best.

Given the need for an alternative pedagogy, my interest lies in programmes designed to prepare learners to use the languages they are learning as semiotic resources aiming to increase the quantity and quality of their communication with others. I am thinking of language programmes aimed at *multi-literacy education*, which seek to help learners develop the ability to operate at the border between a number of languages, manoeuvring their way through communicative events by using the sociocultural knowledge and skills they have acquired, by making maximal use of their communication strategies, their literacy skills, their abilities to deal with the multimodality of texts.

Multi-literacy education should be distinguished from foreign language didactics for multilingualism. It is in the latter that two main tendencies have appeared (cf. Shohamy 2011). The first promotes the teaching, learning and testing of multiple languages within the same space (e.g. classrooms, schools, communities) or through the same event (e.g. a test), whereas the second promotes the use of language in the way described earlier, i.e., by disrupting the boundaries between languages, codes and semiotic modes. The two tendencies are based on two distinct views of language. According to the first one, language is a closed and homogeneous construct. According to the second one, language is a non-finite system in which it is possible to negotiate meanings characterized by hybridity, made up by fusions and language varieties that cross over in creative ways and open up to different forms of negotiation. Such experiences involve language users' *translinguistic* and *transcultural* knowledge – i.e. the knowledge people have about language use and cultural practices that traverses linguistic and cultural specificity, drawing on the concept of the *transversal*, as discussed by Foucault (1982, 780).

4. Communication involving the interplay of the ‘cultural’

In using the term ‘transcultural’ above, it is important to distinguish it from the notion of a ‘transcultural approach’ to foreign language teaching viewed as an alternative to intercultural and multicultural approaches, which seem to suggest that there is a linguistic and a cultural aspect of language that can be attended to separately when teaching a language. This disconnection turns attention away from language as socioculturally situated practice and does not create space for a foreign language pedagogy based on the understanding that linguistic and discursive practices are in fact sociocultural practices.

Alternatively, in proposing multi-literacies pedagogies, where the linguistic and cultural aspects of language use are interconnected, the aim is to facilitate the type of learning process where learners are progressively more able to be meaning-making subjects, using all the culturally marked semiotic modes and means available to them at any one point that they interact with others.

Language teaching for interlinguistic communication, based on a view of language as encoding culture and developing alongside culture, is tightly linked to *intercultural* communication – often associated with the term *intercultural* communicative compe-

tence, a term coined fashionably in foreign language teaching in the 80s and 90s but which soon lost its rigour, shaped as it was within the cultural politics and traditions of monolingual and monocultural language didactic discourses. Looking ahead, the concept of 'interculturalism' which could serve a multi-literacies pedagogy, should not be based on a rules-based view of culture, but on a concept of culture generated by an indeterminate theory, which allows the problematisation of the nature of cultural membership and politics, power relations, action and agency, rhetoric, reference and relativity. Such problematisation involves an important consideration of a social theory of communication as a dialogic activity for meaning making and of languages as semiotic systems structured in the infinite play of difference. In this light, intercultural communication can be viewed as open to an endless process of structuration, creating constant pressure for a reconsideration and relativization of sociocultural subjects' cultural background and knowledge of cultural practices. In adopting such a view, we may arrive at an understanding of intercultural communicators as social subjects *in-process* – social subjects always 'becoming', constantly involved in meaning-making and interpretation processes through direct or indirect social experience. The experience of a social subject in-process is organised and reorganised through language as a means to construing social reality and through linguistic representations and other symbolic forms, which are never static but historically dynamic and generative (cf. Voloshinov 1986, 85).

In learning about and through cultural practices, as these are 'mediated' through languages and indeed in learning languages immersed in cultures, social subjects in-process develop the capacity to redefine boundaries between the self and the Other, shaping a dialogic consciousness and ultimately a dialogic social subjectivity. The nature of the communication process is conceptualised here, in Bakhtinian terms, as a terrain of semiotic contestation in a ceaseless struggle between the forces of stasis and fixidity on the one hand, and movement, change and diversification on the other (cf. Gardiner 1992, 34).

5. Communication involving the interplay of semiotic modes

As already mentioned at the introduction of this paper, textual forms shaped with the help of computer technology are developed using several semiotic modes, such as writing, speech, image and sound, which are used simultaneously to function interactively. An example referred to was that of the espresso machine: someone interested in how it works, instead of just reading the instructions manual, is likely to visit a website for a video espresso 'tutorial' in which the video tutor will probably demonstrate how it works. Speech, image, sound and writing will undoubtedly play an important role in the meaning making process of the video and the messages conveyed will definitely be different than if they were created by speech or writing alone. Meanings, as Halliday/Hasan (1989) have shown us, are shaped not only by what we say, but also by how we say it.

Unquestionably, communication today occurs in a multimodal fashion. We may request information via speech and receive the answer on screen through writing and/or image. Meanings, in this digital age, are created in new textual forms, which are often multilingual and, by and large, multimodal. The textual forms of the past have been replaced by new ones. To mention but a few examples: LinkedIn replaced the monomodal busi-

ness card; Facebook replaced the scrapbook; blogs replaced diaries and opinion columns; interactive TV and YouTube are replacing broadcast TV; Google Docs have replaced manuscripts; Playlist podcasts and iPod are replacing broadcast radio; emails have surely replaced memos and letters and Twitter and SMSs have definitely replaced telegraphs-telegrams.

Traditional foreign language teaching does not include all these new text forms in formal syllabuses and has no genuine interest in testing multimodal communicative performance. Change is not going to be easy because the model is the product of the big market for the 'big' languages, especially English. Sophisticated methodologies for foreign language learning and attractive materials for foreign language teaching or self-access learning constitute discursive practices within the wider cultural politics of English, on sale by profit-making conglomerates which promote their package deals, promising certified foreign language users. The foreign language literacy offered through such courses still responds to a naturalised desire for expert *linguistic* knowledge, native-like communicative competence and a language proficiency certificate in languages that are supposed to ensure for learners job security and a voice in the public sphere, local and international. It does not respond to actual demands for productive participation in a post-national world made up of multimodal, multilingual and multicultural political entities. That is, the foreign language pedagogical discourse everywhere is a product of the foreign language teaching market to serve its own interests.

Actually, a few scholars have attempted ideological and genealogical critique of prevalent practices in foreign language teaching, normally approached apolitically by the majority of academics and practitioners in the field. Pennycook (1994; 1998), for example, has genealogised the cultural discourse of English as an international language, a language still laden with colonial meanings. Phillipson (1992; 1998), on the other hand, has analysed the structural conditions creating space for the linguistic imperialism of English. I myself (Dendrinis 2001a; 2001b; Macedo/Dendrinis/Gounari 2003) have historicised and critiqued European discursive practices, which have been construing linguistic and cultural homogeneity in positive terms and diversity negatively. The Enlightenment logic of a shared reason and harmony as part of the western tradition of humanism and rationality, a tradition obsessed with identity, singleness and purity has operated so effectively in shaping homogenising ideologies and discursive strategies for their legitimation that it is difficult to undo them and create a reality in which diversity and difference are valued as productive resources in cultural and social life. 'Undoing' or deconstructing them does require critique, because it is through critical analysis that we become aware of what exactly it is that we must undo. However, I do agree with Kress (1995a, 4-5; 1995b), among others, that we must not become entrapped into making critique an aim in itself; that we must move beyond critique and propose productive alternatives.

Change for multi-literacy education means rewriting language education policy so that it does not merely mean that the school curriculum includes several foreign languages and that students are required to learn at least two of them (usually English plus another hegemonic language).

6. Multi-literacies education and pedagogy

The design of programmes for multi-literacies education should be at the heart of new proposals to be experimented with in Europe. The experimentation processes can ultimately lead to differential pedagogical projects, attending to: (a) the specific needs of particular social groups of learners, (b) the conditions in different social contexts and their purposes for creating and exchanging meanings, (c) the educational and language cultural politics in operation shaping the power relations between language users and participants in the pedagogical process.

Projects, which should be seeking ways with which best to promote the ‘multi’ discussed in this paper, could be set up as fora for trialling pedagogical practices aiming at the development of learners' interlinguistic and intercultural literacy. The project plan should obviously include curriculum development, syllabus and materials design, as well as teacher education on the basis of the ideas running through this paper. All these pedagogical products ought to be guided by a conception of language not as an autonomous meaning system but as culturally meaningful social activity. Also they should be built on the awareness that understanding is made possible through what Mühlhäusler (1997) describes as ‘chains of related ways of linguistic behaviour’, as these can be a basis for a socially functional network of multilingual communication.

Following the process of planning, the aims of the overall language programmes will have to be outlined and prioritised on the basis of concrete specifications. These should include the development of syllabuses according to groups of languages, providing learners with opportunities for interlinguistic, intercultural activity and negotiation. An approach which might be useful is the language fusion approach, which is sometimes associated with the inter-comprehension of related languages and ‘partial skills’ development. The latter simply means that, for example, learners of French can be guided to make full use of the resources they have developed by studying this language to understand (but not necessarily produce) spoken or written Italian. Likewise, speakers of German, for example, can be guided to understand someone who speaks, say, Danish.

The partial-skills development approach is not only useful for communicative situations during which it would be constructive to understand a language without having to produce it, but also in situations when only one area of language use is required. A doctor, for example, may need to learn to read and understand a medical paper in English, but not necessarily to be able to write a medical paper in the language. Or, s/he may need to learn to write medical papers, but not need give lectures, or to carry out intimate conversations in English.

In order to resort to approaches for multi-literacies education, in the way described here, a redefinition of language proficiency is required so that the ultimate aim is not full mastery of a language, which is quite an unrealistic aim anyway for a foreign language learner. Multi-literacies education programmes should be built on the understanding that there can be different levels of proficiency in different languages, used in different situations and for a variety of purposes. New goals to be set should include effective use of languages in combination with one another through, for example, creative translanguag-

ing and mediation (i.e., the relaying of information and ideas from one language to the other). They should also include creative use of learners' sociocultural references so that students may be facilitated to take part in transcultural discursive practices. Realisation of such goals requires the development of new types of materials and of pedagogies for interlinguistic and intercultural negotiations of meanings through tasks that allow learners to take part in meaning-making processes.

Projects such as these proposed presently should cater to alternative modes of teacher development so that language teachers are enabled to pursue the pedagogical goals of the courses to be offered. These could have a backwash effect on mainstream foreign language teacher training programmes – an effect to be systematically researched and investigated, as would the pedagogic practices in this new kind of foreign language teaching and learning. In fact, while it is essential to have a theoretical basis upon which to design projects for multi-literacies education, it is through their implementation that we can begin to understand the nature of the communication between participants in specific pedagogic contexts, during the course of the pedagogic interaction, regulated by the pedagogic discourse generated by the aims of a specific programme.

7. Bi- and multi- educational realities and practices for multi-literacies education

As discussed earlier in this paper, there are two ways of conceptualizing multilingualism in education. The first one endorses teaching, learning and testing of multiple languages within the same space or through the same event, while the second endorses the use of language by disrupting the boundaries between languages, codes and semiotic modes.

The concept which underpins the mainstream efforts in language education and education for multilingualism is the first one, giving rise to particular types of bi- and multi-lingual schooling on the one hand, and on the other language education policy specifying that students learn at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue. The problem is that this concept is founded on monolingual ideologies, and this is responsible for educational provisions reproducing the idea of *separate monolingualisms*. This is registered in curricular practices. For instance, even if a school curriculum includes several languages, each language curriculum is distinct and the languages taught rarely ever mix with one another. This is true of most mainstream bilingual programmes which include education in several pairs of languages.

Bilingual schooling has a rather long tradition around the world. Its history shows that it is, like all language education, deeply implicated in language and language education politics. If we take a look at their history, we will realise that there is a great divide. On the one hand, there are the bilingual schools, whose purpose has been to provide education in a prestigious language (and culture) to elite groups of a society and, on the other, bilingual schools for immigrant children, whose home and community language has been construed as a factor responsible for school failure.

Success of a bilingual programme or school is contingent upon the power relations between the pairs of languages involved, as well as upon the distribution of power between the group for whom education is intended and the dominant group in the society

where schooling is offered. Because of these factors, bilingual schools or programmes are quite different from one another. Think, for example, of bilingual (English-Spanish) schools in the U.S. whose student population is mainly from Hispanic-speaking families. Compare these with the Italian-German two-way-immersion programme in schools in Frankfurt/Main targeting children of Italian ethnic background living in Germany but also German children. Or, think of bilingual schooling in Greece, involving the national language and French, German or English addressed not to ethnic minority children but to the children of privileged Greek families that can afford the fees that tuition in these schools costs. The kind of bilingual schooling offered in the elite institutions just mentioned is naturally quite different from that which is offered, for example, though a model Greek-Turkish bilingual education programme for Muslim children in Thrace (an area in the northern part of Greece). And these two cases are, by and large, different than schooling for immigrant children who are afforded the right through national language policy to access knowledge through their mother tongue in the first years of schooling. Schools that offer bilingual programmes with pairs of languages of different symbolic and functional value are different too, as for example to pair up the indigenous-autochthonous language with the national or official language of a state. There are also significant differences between all those mentioned so far and the schooling that involves more than two pairs of languages, provided by prestigious establishments such as so-called European or International schools, many of which promote Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL/ÉMILE) from which students often graduate speaking two or three languages. Needless to say, the outcomes of the language and the overall education process in these establishments are a result of *social* factors rather than the positive effect of successful language pedagogy.

The CLIL/ÉMILE ‘method’ has found its way in European school curricula. It is a rather flexible ‘system’ that can be adapted to different circumstances. Generally speaking, it involves the teaching of one or more school subjects (e.g. geography, physics, or an ICT course) in a language other than that of the official language of the school, so that learners are ‘immersed’ in this language rather than focusing on traditional aspects of language teaching. As CLIL/ÉMILE is currently being promoted as a European project of value, two problems must be resolved: the first one is how to avoid the use of CLIL/ÉMILE to further legitimate ‘Global English’ and the second is to prepare language teachers as subject teachers and subject teachers as language teachers.⁷

In recent years, we have also had access to the interesting findings resulting from a variety of experimental experimental ‘reciprocal immersion’ bilingual education programmes (*immersion réciproque*),⁸ such as the model of the State Europe School Berlin (Staatliche Europa-Schule Berlin, SESB), currently including a network of thirty one schools, offering bilingual immersion programmes in nine different language combinations, and the Hamburg programme, which includes immersion in immigrant languages as well, languages that some students use at home and in their community. Dual immer-

⁷ ALPME (Advanced Level Programme in Multilingual Education) project actually proposed the development of a European multilingual teacher training programme, which however has not, to my knowledge, materialized yet.

⁸ See, for example, Budach/Bardtenschlager (2008), Budach/Erfurt/Kunkel (2008).

sion programmes are capturing the attention of parents and educators in several European and non European countries. According to Adelman-Reyes/Crawford (2011), by bringing together children from diverse backgrounds to learn each other's languages in a natural setting has proved far more effective at cultivating fluency than traditional approaches.

The second way of conceptualizing multilingualism in education, referred to at the opening of this part of the paper is inspired by a non-separatist approach to the use of language(s), codes and semiotic modes. This concept of multilingualism is also beginning to give rise to outcomes, such as multilingual curricula, school policies aimed at social inclusion, forms of bilingual and/or multilingual teaching and testing strategies and pedagogic projects emphasizing learning rather than teaching. It also involves students purposefully in the use of more than one or two languages through intercomprehension exercise and plurilingual tasks.

The trend to develop integrated, cohesive language curricula for all languages offered in school and to provide descriptors for the different stages of language proficiency, rather than have just one end goal in mind, i.e. native speaker competence, is a relatively new development, following the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). One such example is the new integrated national languages curriculum for compulsory education in Greece. There are several other such recent examples in European schools, which must be complemented by teacher education and training programmes because European teachers are trained to think in monolingual terms, and to value native-speakerism. As Byram/Fleming (1998, 8) remind us, the best foreign language learner for teachers and many others is “the one who comes nearest to a native speaker mastery of the grammar and vocabulary of the language, and who can therefore ‘pass for’ or be identified as a native communicating on an equal footing with natives”.

Efforts to view language teaching as a space for the development of multilingualism or multi-literacies are still rather rare. Even rarer are testing systems for multilingualism. Testing, and especially language proficiency testing for certification is also exclusively monolingual, for reasons which are both political and economic and this has great ramifications because of its significant backwash effect on language teaching and learning. As discussed elsewhere (Dendrinios, forthcoming a), *international* proficiency testing is by default a monolingual project. That is, it does not involve adjustments to the cultural, linguistic or other needs of particular domestic markets. As argued by Shohamy (2011, 418), “all assessment policies and practices are based on monolingual constructs whereby test-takers are expected to demonstrate their language proficiency in one language at a time”. Test papers therefore, endorse the idea that effective communication is monolingual (Dendrinios 2001c) and that proficient users of a language do not use ‘hybrid’ forms, mix languages or codes.

Though still at their infancy, there are projects for multi-literacies education, which allow the disruption of the boundaries between languages, codes and semiotic modes and facilitate the development of interlingual strategies and intercultural performance. One such project attempts the systematic development of students' ability to be efficient inter-lingual, intra-lingual and inter-cultural mediators. Detailed descriptors of different

levels of mediation proficiency have been included in new Greek Comprehensive Foreign Languages National Curriculum⁹ which is presently being piloted in 160 schools throughout the country, so that students develop the types of multi-literacies required to relay information across languages (interlinguistic mediation), and across codes and semiotic modes (intralinguistic mediation).¹⁰

Oral and written mediation activity is viewed as an important part of someone's language proficiency in the CEFR, but it has not included detailed descriptors due to that there was lack of data in learner mediation performance. In fact, at some points, the CEFR views mediation as translation and interpretation performance. Clearly, of course, mediation is altogether different from both. Elsewhere (Dendrinos 2006), I have explained that it is a form of everyday social practice which involves meaning-making agents (that is, event participants who create social meanings during the meaning-making process), in acts of communication that require negotiation of meaning and relaying of information across the same or different languages. The negotiation especially in the latter case results in interesting hybridisations, which in fact involves student's proficiency in both the languages (cf. Stathopoulou 2009). Another related project has to do with the inclusion of mediation tasks in the Greek national foreign language exams for the certification of proficiency, discussed by Dendrinos (forthcoming b).

Another example of an educational project not based on a monolingual ideology and language separatism is one which has been carried out in schools with significant immigrant population in Cyprus. The project described by Karyolaimou (this volume), aiming at the acquisition of multiple literacy practices (i.e., digital literacy, multiple language input and multiple social participation) has as its main purpose the pupils' social inclusion. The school programme has legitimated pupils using their native language throughout the day while trilingual teaching assistants (in Georgian, Russian and Greek) were employed, offering in-class translation to pupils with no knowledge of Greek, teaching Greek as a second language to intermediate level pupils and providing occasional language assistance for advanced pupils. But the programme was structured so as to get immigrant children not just to be accepted or tolerated "but actively engaged in social activities along with different participants (parents, fellow pupils, teachers, professionals) completing a multitude of social tasks".

As this paper reaches its conclusion, it has perhaps become clear that there is an urgent need to rethink language education for multilingualism and multi-literacies education, and reject the simplistic notion that multilingualism is just about learning lots of foreign languages. We should be thinking about turning European schools (which remain monoglossic spaces of learning) into multilingual topoi – places where a single language or a single mode of semiosis does not dominate the curriculum but where several lan-

⁹ The new Greek languages curriculum, for which I am scientific project leader, is the only European curriculum I know which, having been organized in terms of the 6 level scale of language proficiency determined by the Council of Europe, and described mediation performance on the basis of *empirical* data.

¹⁰ Mediation as a concept in language education and assessment has been discussed by Dendrinos (2006).

guages and multimodality come into play and are used as resources for meaning making. We should be thinking about involving the languages that children bring to school with them, rather than crossing them out of the school language education policy. And finally, we should be thinking that education for the development of multi-literacies cannot possibly continue safeguarding a monolingual ethos of communication.

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