Multilingualism in Strasbourg
LUCIDE city report

By Christine Hélot, Eloise Caporal Ebersold, Andrea Young
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Abstract

This report provides readers with an overview of the sociolinguistic situation of the city of Strasbourg. Although intended to be reflective of the current situation of the city, this document is not meant to be a definitive report on multilingualism in the city, but instead a succinct and brief description of language practices, capturing the dynamic and developing trends in this vibrant city. The goals of understanding and providing a first picture of the multilingual and multicultural climate will be discussed in the succeeding pages of this report.

The first part is intended to present a short history of the language diversity in the city. Five different spheres were studied and are described in this report, namely: education, the public sphere, economic life, the private sphere and urban spaces. Data and information were gathered through the collection and analyses of secondary data, direct observation in the different spheres mentioned and the conducting of direct interviews – in different forms such as face-to-face discussion, telephone conversations and email exchanges. Public documents written in different languages were gathered to reflect the choice and extent of use of different/various languages in the city.

Different individuals, representing the varied sectors, have varying views of the language situation in the city. Although most of them acknowledge the presence of multiple languages and the richness of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the city, there is no clear consensus on whether the city is truly multilingual, possibly attributed to the fact that there are varying notions and representations of multilingualism. In the interviews recurrence of the following terms have continuously emerged: integration, identity and language learning of the host language (French), languages of migration, neighbouring language, which in the case of Strasbourg is German and the widely used language, which is English.

Most of the respondents see the efforts that the local government and its services are doing towards multilingualism, but most are aware of the need to do more to meet the needs of the diverse population – the transients such as the tourists and the foreign students; the well-off migrants or migrants with high socioeconomic status who are working in the European institutions and international and multi-national companies; the immigrants coming from less privileged backgrounds who have migrated for various reasons.

Photo: orang3br3mton / CC BY-NC-SA 2.0 http://bit.ly/1jHHjd
1. Introduction

Strasbourg is a French city, situated on the border with Germany. It is the capital and principal city of the region of Alsace in Eastern France, a region which counts only two departments, the Bas-Rhin and the Haut-Rhin. Strasbourg is a city with 276,401 inhabitants, and based on the population census of 2010\(^1\) is the main city of the Bas-Rhin.

Studying multilingualism in a French city implies understanding the administrative structures of cities in relation to the state. Many decisions regarding cities are taken at the state level, for example language policy in France is decided at the national level. Other decisions are indeed taken at the regional level or the departmental level.

The city of Strasbourg is linked to its suburbs and run by a structure called the **Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg** or CUS\(^2\). Therefore, it is not easy to understand at what level different kinds of policies regarding multilingualism in Strasbourg are taken (national, regional, departmental, CUS or the city itself). For this reason, policies are somewhat of a challenge to study in the public sphere.

Some particularities of French society are important to a report such as this. For example, France has one million active “associations,” and this number is continuously growing. Associations in France play a major role in public life and in the healthy functioning of democracy and solidarity. An estimated total of 8.5% associations are dedicated to education and training. Associations that focus on Culture, Tourism and Leisure account for 23%\(^3\). Associations are considered sui generis institutions, which means that they are neither public nor private. Most of the time, these associations receive funds from the state, region, department, local government and private individuals. Much of the secondary data we gathered for this report comes from the activities of such associations, where the distinction between public and private sphere is rather blurred.

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\(^1\) This figure was published in the report of activities of the city for year 2011 and visible on the city website: http://www.strasbourg.eu/fonctionnement-ville-cus.
\(^2\) For more information on the relationship of the city and CUS: http://www.strasbourg.eu/fr/fonctionnement-ville-cus
\(^3\) http://www.associations.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/dp-conf-vie-associative_230106.pdf
2. Brief history of language diversity in Strasbourg

In terms of language diversity, France has been viewed traditionally as a monolingual country (Costa & Lambert: 2009), and in terms of language policy, French is the only official language of the country. However in 1999, a report published by Cerquiglini did acknowledge 70 other languages of France, which he referred to as "les langues de France". One of these languages is Alsatian, a variety of German, still heard today in the city and seen on public signs. However, it should be clear that French is the predominant language of the city.

Strasbourg is an interesting case study as a multilingual city because of its endogenous linguistic diversity and the exogenous linguistic variety due to immigration. The linguistic diversity of Strasbourg can be understood from different points of view. Firstly, it can be attributed naturally to its location as it is situated on the Franco-German border and separated from Germany only by the Rhine River.

2.1 Alsatian

Alsatian is spoken in Strasbourg because of its geo-linguistic situation in the Germanic sphere. Thus, Alsatian is an Alemannic dialect of Upper German. The socio-linguistic situation of Alsatian has been studied extensively at the University of Strasbourg in the department of Dialectology. This department initiated the creation of a well-known linguistic atlas of Alsace that was digitised in 2009 and is available on-line. It contains archives of researches and reports from 1953 to 2008. A 2001 survey done by DNA/ISERCO, revealed that 61% of the population claimed to be able to speak the regional language. A more recent study was carried out in 2005 by Huck, Bothorel-Witz, and Geiger-Jaillet, which gives an overview of the extent of the present use of Alsatian.

In 1994, at the initiative of the Alsace region and the departments of Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin, l'Office pour la Langue et la Culture d'Alsace (OLCA - Elsassisches Sprochàmt) was created in order to support the vitality of the regional language.

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4 Bernard Cerquiglini was the Directeur de l'Institut national de la langue française (C.N.R.S.).
5 1999 : « Les Langues de la France » is Cerquiglini's report to the Ministre de l'Éducation nationale, de la Recherche et de la Technologie.
6 Information on this atlas is found on this website : http://ala.u-strasbg.fr/
7 Published in the Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace in the article "Erosion naturelle" by Claude Keilin
8 A table of this data was also published in « L'ALSACE ET SES LANGUES. Eléments de description d'une situation sociolinguistique en zone frontalière » authored by Huck, Bothorel-Witz, and Geiger-Jaillet (2005).
9 OLCA website : http://www.olcalsace.org/fr/l-olca-c-est-quoi/missions-et-activites
10 See below an explanation of the activities carried out by OLCA.
2.2 German

German is also present in Alsace because of the unique history of the region. Germany and France exchanged control of Alsace (and Lorraine) four times in 75 years. In 1681, the troops of Louis XIV made their way into the city and successfully integrated the city into France, until 1870, when as a result of the Franco-Prussian war it became a German region again. In 1918, following WWI, Alsace once again became French, but this was short-lived as Nazi forces annexed the region in 1940 during WWII. On the 23 of November 1944 the arrival of the troops of General Leclerc liberated the city of Strasbourg. Today, German is heard a lot in the streets of Strasbourg spoken by the numerous German tourists visiting the city. As will be explained below, it is also the main language taught in the schools of Alsace.

2.3 European and World Languages

After the Second World War, the city became a symbol of reconciliation between France and Germany and in 1949 was chosen to host the Council of Europe. In 1992, Strasbourg was also chosen with Brussels to host the European Parliament. Today, it hosts more than 20 different European institutions. This political reality has led to many different European languages spoken in the city.

The region of Alsace also counts over 1000 companies with majority foreign shareholdings. These companies employ international workers who speak a variety of world languages.

The city is also home to the largest university in France, with about 43,890 students and over 4,000 researchers. It welcomes many foreign and exchange students, who make up approximately 20% of the entire student population.

Furthermore, because of its beautiful location, architecture and long history and rich cultural tradition, Strasbourg is a bustling city with tourists and visitors.

2.4 “Languages of immigration”

As statistics for the city of Strasbourg are unavailable, here we present data relevant to the region. In 2008, ‘foreigners’ accounted for 10.3% of the total population of Alsace (see diagram below). Alsace has the second highest number of immigrants out of all the regions in France, in the same rank as Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, after the region of Île-de-France.

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11 See list in Appendix 1
12 This is the latest figure as of January 15, 2013 and is available on the Université de Strasbourg website: http://www.unistra.fr/index.php?id=64.
13 The Christmas market attracts two million visitors from all over the world every year.
14 In French statistics, immigrants (immigrés) and foreigners (étrangers) are recorded separately. Immigrants are defined as people who were born abroad as foreign citizens, and they continue to be recorded as such even if they acquire French citizenship. In 2005 there were 4.93 million immigrants living in France, corresponding to 8.1% of the total population.
The diagram below shows the number of foreigners and immigrants in Alsace based on the 2008 census by INSEE (October 2012). It is remarkable to note that in Alsace, the regional percentage of immigrants is higher than the national average. It should also be noted that the foreign population is mainly present in the main urban centres of the region: Mulhouse, Colmar and Strasbourg, which welcome 45% of foreigners in the region. Immigrants to Alsace have brought numerous other languages to the region and to the city of Strasbourg such as Turkish, Arabic, Portuguese, Polish, Italian and today many others.

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16 INSEE, Chiffres pour l’Alsace – revue n°4, septembre 2001
3. Contemporary perspectives

As far as languages brought into the city of Strasbourg by immigrants, we found relevant information from three main sources:

3.1 National Statistics

The National Institute for Statistics in France, known as Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE) provides figures for the region of Alsace and the city of Strasbourg. For example between 1999 and 2008, the immigrant population in Alsace increased by 2.7% per year. The annual growth rate was 4% between 1999 and 2004 and has only been 1.2% since (INSEE, 2012).

The region is also marked by a large influx of migrants from nearby countries such as Germany and Switzerland, although this is tending to decrease. The proportion of immigrants of German nationality has lost two percentage points since 1999, from 14.2% to 12.2% (INSEE, 2012). The high intensity of Turkish immigration, which characterised Alsace between 1999 and 2004, has decreased. Nevertheless, these immigrants remain the most numerous with 29,500 people. Moreover, in the region, one out of eight immigrants is from Turkey, whereas one out of six is German.

In Strasbourg, immigrants account for nearly 14 per 100 inhabitants, a percentage similar to that of Mulhouse, which is the second largest city of Alsace. The proportion of immigrants in the total population exceeds 10% in some municipalities in the vicinity of Strasbourg.

The chart below shows the population figures by nationality in the departments of the Bas-Rhin and the Haut-Rhin, the region of Alsace and metropolitan France. No specific chart was found for the city of Strasbourg.

17 For more information about INSEE, please refer to its webpage: http://www.insee.fr/fr/
18 INSEE, Chiffrès pour l’Alsace, no°32
19 INSEE, 2012
Population by nationality (January 1, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>As of January 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bas-Rhin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1 015 927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>962 809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized French</td>
<td>53 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreigners</td>
<td>78 512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>2 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>3 308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>4 732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other EU</td>
<td>20 336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europeans</td>
<td>4 954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan</td>
<td>7 550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian</td>
<td>4 792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisian</td>
<td>1 438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Africa</td>
<td>5 835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>16 830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6 485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 094 439</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Insee, RP2009 exploitation principale.

3.2 The European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies for migrants (CLIP).

In 2011, CLIP carried out a study which succinctly reported the following about the profile of immigrants in Strasbourg:

- The countries of origin changed over time and diversified as well. In the 1960s, immigrants were mostly of European origin (Italy, Portugal and Spain) and from North African countries (Algeria and Morocco). Due to the proximity of Germany, there was also a flow originating from that country.

- In the 1970s, Moroccan migrants increased and a new stock emerged from Turkey. Moreover, the percentage of Italians in the total foreign population decreased substantially. In the 1980s, the share of Turkish migrants continued to increase, becoming the first immigrant group in Alsace and in Strasbourg as well. Algeria and Morocco decreased while Germany increased after a decrease in the 1970s.

- In the 1990s, two groups emerged as dominant: Turkish and German migrants. Data also show a relevant increase in the ‘rest of the world’ category, from 13% in the 1960s to 40% in the 1990s, pointing to increasing diversification of flows over time. This is the case, for instance, in increasing arrivals from Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, reaching 4,500 people in mid-2004, and from African countries such as Cameroon and Senegal, with a total of 12,000 migrants in 2004. Migrants from eastern European countries also appeared (especially Russia, Serbia and Ukraine)— some 7,000 individuals in 2004 – as well as migrants from new EU countries, such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Romania, with more than 8,000 people (see INSEE, 2009b).

CLIP was established by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the city of Stuttgart and Eurofound. More about CLIP network and its outputs on its website: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/populationandsociety/clipabout.htm.
3.3 L’Observatoire Régional de l’Intégration et de la Ville (ORIV)\textsuperscript{21}

ORIV is a resource centre on issues related to social and territorial cohesion, the integration of immigrant populations and the prevention of discrimination. It aims to develop and disseminate knowledge on these three themes for the key societal stakeholders such as politicians, state agencies, professional associations and communities.

This centre is based in Strasbourg and focuses its efforts on the regions of Alsace and Lorraine. Created in 1992 and organised as an association in 1996, it aims to:

- Make information and resources available through a website, publish documents, manage a documentation centre that is open to all, and develop a quantitative and qualitative monitoring and observation functions.
- Produce and capitalise knowledge from reflection, working groups, diagnoses and studies conducted by the association. This is to shed light on specific topics and provide a better understanding of the process.
- Qualify stakeholders by organizing meetings, seminars, training, and conferences, by dissemination of best practices and exchange of experience.
- Provide skills and resources (documentary, technical, methodological, practical, human) adapted to the stakeholders’ questions.

In regards to the immigration situation in Alsace, ORIV published in its bulletin of information, number 63 (February 2011) that in terms of population growth, the region has very specific characteristics that distinguishes itself from other regions in France. The coming in of foreign and migrant settlers is attributed to its growth, and because of its border situation the following are trends: a strong European presence, an over-representation from countries like Turkey, and more recently, an increase of migrants from Eastern Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. It should also be emphasised that the Alsatian immigration population is younger than the national level, and that migration growth is not only concentrated in the urban areas as is the case in other regions. However, there is a migration deficit from other departments and regions of France.\textsuperscript{22}

The changes in the region have created an impact in the two Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin department and its cities. Like most other cities in Europe and the world today, the face of Strasbourg as a cosmopolitan city is constantly changing. Attributing to the dynamic, ever-changing and growing population, going around Strasbourg has become an international visit as well. In the public places, one can see without looking any further the diversity of the population. People of different ethnic groups, origins and cultures visit, live and thrive in the city.

\textsuperscript{21} To know more about ORIV and its objectives, consult its website: \url{http://www.oriv-alsace.org/}.

\textsuperscript{22} The complete article can be read online in PDF format. It can be downloaded from the ORIV website: \url{http://www.oriv-alsace.org/}.
Below are random photos that provide a quick glimpse of the linguistic landscape of downtown Strasbourg.
4. The LUCIDE network: the case study of Strasbourg

This section outlines the research activities of the LUCIDE network in 2012. The LUCIDE network (Languages in Urban Communities: Integration and Diversity for Europe) is composed of university and civic partners from thirteen European cities, along with research teams from Ottawa and Melbourne. The aims of our network are to depict how communication occurs in multilingual cities and to develop ideas about how to manage multilingual citizen communities. In LUCIDE’s research activities, we are therefore interested in the real-life complexities faced by individuals in various spheres and aspects of city life. The five overarching topics we have set out to explore are:

1. **Good practice in the provision of language learning opportunities for immigrants**: How do immigrants learn the language of the host country and how are they helped to maintain their own languages? What happens in schools and also in adult education?

2. **Social inclusion**: How do cities support social inclusion through linguistic support in social services, health etc. and what kind of training is desirable in these areas? What happens about translation and interpreting?

3. **Neighbouring languages**: How do cities provide for communication and cultural exchange with “neighbouring languages”? What do we mean by neighbouring languages in a city context?

4. **Intercultural dialogue**: How do cities promote intercultural dialogue and understanding by celebrating community cultures in common spaces? What is the culture of a multilingual city?

5. **New patterns of migration**: Do particular challenges confront cities in countries that have traditionally been countries of emigration but are now receiving many immigrants? How do they respond to this changed perspective and what is the impact on civil society?

In defining what our network understands to be ‘multilingualism’, the distinction drawn by the work of the Council of Europe (Beacco, 2007) is helpful. We therefore employ the terms ‘multilingualism’ and ‘plurilingualism’ to distinguish between societal and individual multilingualism. Multilingualism refers to societal multilingualism: the co-existence of many languages, for the purposes of this study, within a city. Plurilingualism refers to an individual’s repertoire of languages, or “the capacity of individuals to use more than one language in social communication whatever their command of those languages” (Beacco, 2007, p. 19).

Our approach to researching multilingualism and plurilingualism in our cities considers language in its communicative processes and practice rather than from a more static perspective (e.g. counting people/languages). These communicative processes and practices may be understood within a typology of language use:

1. **Symbolic/representational use of language** (bottom-up, realities of everyday life – how we use language to send messages)

2. **Transactional/communicative** (e.g. pragmatic use/unofficial acceptance of ML/PL by authorities on the ground, for communicative efficiency)

3. **Authoritative/directive** (official, uni-directional, tends towards monolingualism)

Our network is involved in secondary data collection and primary data collection. These two phases of data collection were designed to feed into the content development of our network: *inter alia*, its seminars, workshops and city reports. We present these two phases of our research activities below.

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The research carried out for this report was done within the research group, Groupe d’Étude sur le Plurilinguisme Européen (GEPE)/LILPA EA 1339 based at the Université de Strasbourg. The research was conducted as the first stage of a dissertation leading to a doctoral degree.

The Groupe d’Étude sur le Plurilinguisme Européen conducted meta-surveys of recent secondary data on multilingualism/plurilingualism in the network’s cities. The aim of this phase of our research was to help create a multiplicity of up-to-date narratives on the multi/plurilingual realities of the cities in our network, referring to data related to multilingual practices, processes and products in local contexts, and to develop original research questions for the next phase of primary research. As well as the more traditional academic or policy documents on multilingualism, we were also interested in examples of multilingualism. These varied in each sphere, but included artefacts (printed/visual/digital) which illustrated the multilingual reality of the city, like websites, advertising campaigns, public or private documents (biographies, diaries, official correspondence). When surveying pre-existing data, we took a broad rather than a narrow approach when deciding what could be included in the first phase of our research. In this phase of our research activities, we focused on recent data, published in 2010 and onwards, or the most recent possible, in order to ensure that we created up-to-date and fresh narratives of languages in each city, and to help formulate valid research questions for the primary data collection phase. In collecting secondary data, we distinguished between:

(a) data on/about multilingualism/plurilingualism (censuses, academic reports, civic studies, etc., employing a wide variety of methodologies). These tended to be narrative documents, although are not necessarily official or academic.

(b) manifestations/examples of multilingualism/plurilingualism present in (or available from) each city. These visual examples were found in printed images and graphic design, TV/film, computer/software design, Internet, digital multimedia, advertising in all media, fine art and photography, fashion, architecture, design, and urban design.

Five key spheres were delineated in order to provide for comprehensive and systematic exploration of how languages are encountered, used and learned in city life. These spheres included the public sphere, economic life, the private lives of citizens, and urban spaces or the ‘cityscape’. It was decided to examine education as an individual sphere, given the focus of our network on language learning, although often it falls within the public remit. Below, we define each sphere, and outline the type of data collected by partners.

Reporting templates were deployed in order to simplify data recording and sharing in each of the spheres. These templates captured concise information from data on/about multilingualism and plurilingualism (narrative studies/reports etc.), and examples of multilingualism and plurilingualism. Templates collected information on (a) bibliographic information, content overview, methodology and key outcomes of empirical studies and research reports, and (b) on the authors/creators of examples and artefacts, a description of the example and its place of creation/observation. Secondary data was collected and shared via an online city survey. The data generated from this phase of the network’s research activities was employed to generate overarching research questions for the primary data collection phase (semi-structured interviews), and to feed into the content development of LUCIDE’s reports, seminars, workshops and city reports. This phase of secondary research yielded a considerable quantity of data which allowed us to generate a relevant set of research questions arising from the key areas identified in a content analysis of the recent studies and examples provided by city partners. We articulated the following research hypotheses, on language visibility (audibility), affordances and challenges:

**Visibility**

- We hypothesize that some languages are more visible than others in city life, and that this visibility/invisibility is meaningful (Which languages are most/least visible/invisible? Why? How do we figure out which languages are invisible?)

- We hypothesize that sometimes, when languages are visible, the visibility operates at a symbolic level. This symbolism is seen and understood by some, and largely ignored by others. Languages which are highly visible may not be the languages in which the various transactions and policies of city life are enacted.
**Affordances at the level of governance/policy**

- We hypothesize that when cities want to encourage multilingualism/plurilingualism, meaningful linguistic diversity (projects, examples of languages in use) will emerge (e.g. diversity of public library projects)

**Challenges/obstacles**

- We hypothesize that costs/inconvenience/lack of political will/prejudices can inhibit good communication between people in multilingual cities.

- We hypothesize that there is sometimes a mismatch between policy (as it is ‘promised’, and practice or daily reality), e.g. in health service interpretation provision

- We hypothesize that language is sometimes understood to represent cultural/economic capital; we also hypothesize that there may be contradictions in some cases (e.g. an indigenous language which is important culturally but may not seem to be important economically, or vice versa)

We collected data for the five key spheres: public sphere, educational sphere, economic sphere, private sphere and urban spaces.

- The public sphere includes local government/municipality/city council, public services (health, transport, tourism), media (television, newspapers, digital media), civic events and festivals paid from public funds.

- The educational sphere includes the public school system (from day nursery to adult education), associations involved in formal or informal education, vocational education, and lifelong learning.

- The economic sphere includes large local/national companies and multinationals, industries and manufacturing, SMEs and financial transactions.

- The private sphere includes: activities related to family, friends and social networks, local or city-wide activities (such as festivals) that are not initiated by the public sphere (although they may receive public funding) but organised instead by local community groups, services that are offered by local communities (including volunteer activities, local support networks and religious activities and organisations/structures.

- Lastly, the urban spaces encompass all publicly visible and audible aspects of a city, and include: public signage (shops, offices, public buildings, street signs); advertising (billboards, leaflets, in public transport etc.), instructions on vending machines, noticeboards and other publicly visible interfaces.

The secondary data collection phase in Strasbourg took place between October and December 2012. The kind of data we collected consisted of mainly checking the websites of the following institutions: INSEE, National statistics; academic, organizational, and association reports and analyses (ex. ORIV); flyers, brochures, magazines, newspapers; websites of associations, private companies and governmental organizations; photos of the linguistic landscape of the city; and advertising in all media.

The phase of primary data collection sought to question city respondents about the reality of multilingualism and plurilingualism in Strasbourg, specifically, language policies/practice, visibility, affordances and challenges. In gathering the data, we employed the qualitative research design with a semi-standardised research design based on stakeholders’ interviews. We used the template of interview questions provided by LUCIDE network. For the identified respondents, we tried to adhere to the “two-type respondents for each sphere” suggestion of LUCIDE: (i) policy maker/influencer, and (ii) policy-implementer/user-client-recipient. The questionnaire was adapted to the local context and translated into French. The questionnaire was piloted locally. We identified the possible respondents for each sphere, and we carried out 10 face-to-face structured interviews, all of which were audio-recorded and most transcribed, and 22 semi-structured interviews where the contents were recorded in the form of field notes.
The following table presents the respondents that we interviewed by sphere:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Sphere</th>
<th>Education Sphere</th>
<th>Economic Sphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town hall staff member</td>
<td>Kindergarten teacher</td>
<td>Manager of an international company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview length: 40 minutes</td>
<td>Interview length: 60 minutes</td>
<td>Interview length: 40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X-ray technician in a cardiology</td>
<td>Government-employed day care director</td>
<td>Small grocery shop owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department</td>
<td>Interview length: 55 minutes</td>
<td>Interview length: 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Public library employees</td>
<td>Teacher of French as a Foreign Language at a university</td>
<td>Investment bank staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 respondents)</td>
<td>Interview length: 20 minutes</td>
<td>Interview length: 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Company employees</td>
<td>English teacher in a private language company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired high school Maths teacher</td>
<td>Interview length: 15 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The asterisk (*) indicates that these interviews were conducted informally. The respondents were willing to answer the questions and give their opinions, however because of their civil service commitment, they could not agree to be recorded. Notes were taken through to ensure that the information that they provided would be properly included in this city report.

**Core Questions**

The following were the core questions that we asked our respondents, aside from the background and context questions that were included in the questionnaire to provide us a better understanding of our respondents:

- Do you think Strasbourg is a multilingual city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.
- Do you think that the issue of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.
- Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies, for example in terms of policy decisions? Explain your answer.
- Do you agree with the way that this city approaches the issue of multilingualism? Can you give an example of a recent approach that you agree and disagree with?
- Is there a language that you think deserves a boost in use or in visibility in the city?
- If you could change one thing about languages in your city, what would it be? Why?
Data Collected for the Five Spheres

The sections below present the information and pertinent data we collected and analysed with regards to the five spheres of interest.

4.1 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in education

For this section, we will first present the multilingual and plurilingual realities in the public school system by presenting the national and regional policies, briefly showing how heritage language is promoted at the departmental level and how parent participation is encouraged. Second, we will present how adult language education is being addressed in the city. The last part includes data from our formal and informal interviews in which respondents describe and show the challenges with regards to the realities of multilingualism and plurilingualism in education.

Before we go into all these details, it should be stated that historically, the French educational system has always been centralised. However, since 1982, France has committed itself to a series of decentralisation programs that have redefined the powers, roles and responsibilities of the state and local governments.24

Even with newly defined roles and responsibilities of the state public administrations and local governments, the State continues to hold a key role in education. As stated by EACEA (2009-2009) 25, the state “remains guarantor of the public service’s proper operation and of educational coherence. As such, it continues to define pedagogical framework and educational curricula, and it continues to ensure, as in the past, recruitment, training and management of the teaching staff in public education, which admits more than 80% of the pupils. It also ensures the training and management of teachers in private education under contract with the state and assumes the operating costs of private institutions within this framework”.

4.1.1 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in education: The public school system

4.1.1.1 National policy

France has always had a strong policy for the teaching of “foreign” languages with a large variety of languages offered in the curriculum – for example eight (8) languages can be taught at primary level (English, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, and Arabic) since 2002. All children in France start learning a foreign language at age 7 and a second foreign language at age 11 or 12. A third language is optional from age 14. At baccalauréate level, students can choose from among 56 languages. This does not mean however that all schools offer that many languages. This national policy is very impressive on paper, but the reality in schools is somewhat different. National statistics (RERS 2012) show that students in France study mostly English as a first foreign language and Spanish as a second foreign language.

4.1.1.2 Regional policy

Throughout the country, the implementation of the educational policies in the regions is under the jurisdiction of the regional academies. An académie is an administrative district of the Education Nationale. Each académie is structured in such a way that all the aspects of services and day-to-day operations of regional educational concern are dealt with.

In the case of Alsace, it is the académie de Strasbourg that monitors and ascertains that national directives and regional initiatives are followed and implemented. The Académie de Strasbourg covers the two départements: the Bas-Rhin (67), in which Strasbourg is the main city and the Haut-Rhin (68).

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24  Loi du 2/03/1982 (Law) : 02/03/1982, 82-213 (Law of 2/03/1982) As regards decentralisation, the law of 02/03/1982 laid down the rights and freedoms of districts, départements and regions.
25  EACEA stands for Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. It operates under supervision from its three parent Directorates-General of the European Commission: - Education and Culture (DG EAC), - Communication (DG COMM) and - EuropeAid Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO).
Furthermore, it should be cited that the recteur d'académie is the representative of the Minister of Education in the region. He ascertains that programs and policies identified at the national level are implemented at the regional level, incorporating the regional specificities and realities.

The academy has education policies with regards to languages. In the case of Alsace, the language policy is based on the historical and cultural heritage of the region. Considering the historical importance of the German language in the region and the underlying economic benefits, the teaching of German is given top priority. Therefore in Strasbourg where the regional policy is applied, all children learn German as a first language from age 7 and most of them choose English as a second language from age 11 and continue to study German. In some schools, German is also taught in kindergarten.

Another specificity of Alsace and therefore Strasbourg is the extent of bilingual education in French and German. In Alsace, over 10% of primary children can avail themselves of bilingual education which means learning half the curriculum through French and half through German. The bilingual program continues at secondary level and students can take the final exam called ABIBAC, which is recognised in Germany and in France. Other models of bilingual education are available at secondary level with bilingual streams called international section and European and Oriental sections called SELO. The pedagogical model follows the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) principles. However, this model of bilingual education is not specific to Alsace but to the whole of France. What is specific to Alsace is the extent of bilingual education through the neighbouring language German.

4.1.1.3 Teaching of Heritage Languages ELCO (Enseignement des langues et cultures d’origine)

The heritage languages despite figuring in the provision for foreign language and bilingual education traditionally do not have the same level of recognition as the dominant European languages (Zizotti, 2006).

In an attempt to address this concern, in France, any student in the elementary school, middle school or junior high (collège) and in high school (lycée) regardless of nationality or cultural background can enrol in any of the heritage language courses offered by each département. These courses are optional and free and are locally supervised by an Inspecteur de l’éducation nationale (IEN).

In the Bas-Rhin département, France has bilateral agreements concerning the teaching of heritage languages with the following countries: Algeria, Spain, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Serbia, Tunisia and Turkey. As indicated in the bilateral agreements, the courses are taught by teachers who are appointed and paid by the country of origin and are approved by the French Ministry of National Education.

To implement this program at the national level, the ideal scenario is that each year a national survey for parents is conducted to determine how the course is going to be programmed for the next school year. Each department submits a program to the Department of National Ministry, which alongside the countries of origin decides how the program is to be implemented. However, in practice this does not seem to be the case in the regions and departments. There are special arrangements at the regional and departmental levels, and the inspectors seem to have a free hand on how the program can be implemented and which languages are prioritised. At the departmental level, the inspectors provide control and regulation.

In Strasbourg, a local inspector in charge of heritage languages has implemented innovative measures regarding heritage languages. Under his supervision, there was a local effort by the inspector to inquire, gather information and inputs from all parents (not just from the heritage language speakers) of their willingness to enrol their children in any of these available language classes offered in Strasbourg. This was a new initiative. Prior to this, the head teachers of school with large ethnic minority populations asked parents to express their interest in the heritage language program.

This local inspector also implemented regular communication and consultation with the embassies with which the department has bilateral agreements.

Another interesting pilot project in Strasbourg was launched to evaluate the level of heritage language learners at the end of the school year. This evaluation was consistent with the A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment. The A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is referred to as the expected level which should be reached at the final year of elementary school. This language assessment scheme complements strongly the regional language policy signed by the state, the region and the departments. With the standardised evaluation in place, the language learners and their parents, for the first time, see their competence evaluated like European languages and recognised by school authorities.

4.1.1.4 Parental participation

Traditionally, in France there are different parent/teachers associations involved in the running of schools. In the case of non-French speaking parents, access to school information and meetings remains a problem.

However in Strasbourg, the inspector in charge of heritage languages made a special effort to address this problem. He went to meet every heritage language community in Strasbourg, had meetings with their respective embassies and ensured closer participation with them.

4.1.2 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in Education: Adult Education

This section provides an overview of the language learning opportunities available for adults in the city of Strasbourg. Through the Université Populaire Européenne (UPE), as discussed below, there is a wide range of language possibilities to choose from. Through the associations present in the city, there are language classes that are organised for their members and for the non-members as well. Through private language schools, students can have individualised training and targeted training for their specific language needs. The last part of the section tackles the subject of French as language of integration, which is a brief explanation of the process by which migrants learn the language of the host country.

4.1.2.1 Courses offered at the Université Populaire Européenne (UPE)

The most well known institution for adult education in Strasbourg and in the CUS area is the Université Populaire Européenne (UPE). All sorts of activities and classes are offered at a minimal fee. These activities and classes are of diverse range: arts, music, sports and leisure, sciences, philosophy, including language courses.

For the school year 2012-2013, UPE is offering courses in 14 languages. For each language, the institution offers different levels that conform to the Common European Framework of References for Languages that divides learners into three broad divisions that can be further divided into six levels: A (Basic User), which divided into A1 breakthrough and beginner, A2 waystage or elementary; B (Independent User), which is divided into B1 Threshold or intermediate and B2 Vantage or upper intermediate; and C (Proficient User), which is divided into C1 Effective Operational Proficiency or advanced and C2 Mastery or proficiency.

In English alone, there are more than 50 classes at UPE in Strasbourg. There are specific classes that cater for specialised courses such as conversational, writing, grammar courses. They prepare students for English language tests in which students can acquire Cambridge certificates and official diploma in TOEFL and TOEIC. In German, there are 19 classes in Strasbourg and a class to prepare students for the B2 examination. For French as a Foreign Language,
we count more than 40 classes for the different levels of proficiency and for different more specific needs such as conversation, writing, grammar and phonetics. UPE also prepares students for nationally recognised French proficiency examinations such as the DELF and the DALF.

It should be mentioned though that even with the many language courses offered in 14 languages, the website, brochures, book guide for the courses offered and the registration form are only in French. The secretariat in-charge of the enrolment process and most employees address students in French.

### 4.1.2.2 Associations’ role in the teaching of French and other foreign languages

As of 2007, France has one million active associations, and this number is continuously growing. These associations work like NGOs. They are non-profit and enable citizens to organise themselves around common aims be they cultural or social. They play major roles in the public life and the healthy functioning of democracy and solidarity. An estimated total of 8.5% are associations dedicated to education and training. Associations that focus on Culture, Tourism and Leisure account for 23%. Language courses are flagship programs for some of these associations. Most of the time, these associations may receive funds from the state, region, department, local government and private individuals.

In Strasbourg, the following are some of the known associations that provide French language courses, with varying fees and modes of language program delivery: *Accueil des Villes Françaises de Strasbourg - AVF Strasbourg, Association Culturale Franco-Kurde, Association des Parents d’Élèves Turcs de Strasbourg et environs, Comité d’Accueil pour les Solliciteurs d’Asile à Strasbourg – CASAS, Alliance Française Strasbourg Europe.*

Cultural associations that promote the learning of languages from countries of origin, preserve the use of regional dialects, contribute to the awareness of cultures and foster intercultural exchanges are also very active, such as the *Association Néerlandaise de Strasbourg et ses Environs – NVSO, Association des Palestiniens de France à Strasbourg, Association Culturelle Hongroise, Maison de l’Amérique Latine, Office pour la Langue et la Culture d’Alsace-Elsassisches Sprochàmt-OLCA, Schilick Langues, Cercle d’Amitié Franco-Syrienne,* etc.

### 4.1.2.3 Language courses offered at local private language schools in the city

As in other cosmopolitan cities, Strasbourg is home to a number of private language schools. These private language schools are flexible in that some of them provide schedules and packages to cater to the language needs of clients. There are individual and group packages as well. It should be emphasized that these language schools are often used by businesses that have international scopes and contacts to train their employees in dealing with communication abroad. Many foreign students also avail of the services offered in these private language schools as most of these schools have summer classes or especially organized programs throughout the year for tourists who come to Strasbourg for language immersion. It should be clearly said however that the enrolment fees in these private language schools are expensive and may not affordable for under-privileged migrants. Private language schools in Strasbourg include the *Centre International d’Etudes de Langues de Strasbourg (CIEL)*, *StraLang Language Institute*, *Alliance Française Strasbourg Europe*, *Gutenberg Language School*, and *Inlingua*.

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32 Ibid.
4.1.2.4 French as language of integration

Article 2 of the French Constitution states explicitly that the language of the republic is French. Learning and mastery of the host country's language are cornerstones to integration and citizenship. France has long acknowledged this, but it was not until legislation on 24th July 2006 and its enforcement on 1st January 2007 that this process became of central importance and integrally part of the contract signed between the new arrival and the state, more commonly known as Contrat d’accueil et d’intégration (CAI) and established by the Office français de l’immigration et de l’intégration (Ofii). In this contract, the new arrival must follow a mandatory course in language, civic and practical life in France. During these courses, there are language interpreters present to help the foreigners or new arrivals in the process of understanding the presentation of key concepts. The new arrivals are grouped according to their known and spoken languages and are seated side by side with interpreters.

The new arrivals lacking linguistic competence are guided and assigned to training organisations to undergo 400 hours of French classes, which are paid for by the state and are compulsory. The final evaluation of language competence is tested by an oral and written examination through which a diploma is issued, known as diplôme d’initiation à la langue française (DILF). The above-mentioned is the scenario at the state or national level. In Strasbourg, aside from the provision provided by the national government, associations are also very visible and active in helping the migrants in language and other aspects of integration.

4.1.3 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in Higher Education: Migration and Linguistic Diversity in the Higher Educational System

The report entitled Repères et références statistiques (RERS) sur les enseignements, la formation et la recherche (2011) reports that at the national level, more specifically in the French higher education (excluding institutions under the ministries in charge of agriculture, health and social affairs):

- Nearly one out of two foreign students is from the African continent in 2010, 24% of them were from North Africa and 20% from the rest of Africa. Less than a quarter (24%) came from Europe, 19% the European Union. Finally, 23% of the students are from Asia, the Middle East and Oceania and 9% from the Americas.

- Moroccan students remain the most represented foreign students in France in 2010 (32 000 people). Their number has increased by 1.6% compared to 2009. The population of Chinese students is almost stable (+0.2%) after a long period of significant increase (including 7.2% between 2008 and 2009) and constitute today the second-largest contingent of foreign students in France (29 100).

4.1.4 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in Education: Challenges

As far as multilingualism in the educational sphere, we carried out five interviews for primary data. We interviewed a kindergarten teacher, a daycare director, a retired lycée (public school) maths teacher, a teacher of French as a Foreign Language and a language teacher working privately (adult education).
The following were salient information and examples mentioned in the interviews pertaining to the conditions of language learning and teaching in Strasbourg.

1. The kindergarten teacher expressed the common belief that the best language teachers are native speakers of the language. At the same time, she also highlights her lack of confidence in German and how difficult it is for teachers like her to be responsible for foreign language teaching. She regrets the lack of language assistants who are only present at the secondary level and the obligation to teach German when she is bilingual in English. She stresses the importance of learning German in Alsace because of the proximity of Germany but acknowledges the fact that most teachers do not have the necessary competence.

2. Respondents of varying ages and educational backgrounds from the different spheres mentioned their concerns about language teaching methodology at school. The lack of opportunity to practise as lessons are taught using a traditional, grammar-based approach, for instance in the learning of German and English was cited as one of the primary reasons for lack of proficiency in oral expression. Teachers themselves were also cited as an important variable in language learning. Respondents especially felt, as mentioned in some interviews, that teachers who fail to motivate and encourage their students produce students who resent foreign language learning. As a result, the students do not learn the fundamentals of the language. Students see the French grade/mark ing system, which is based on a scale of 20, as very severe. The best students usually obtain 14 to 16, almost never a grade higher than 16. The justification behind awarding lower grades is that students can continuously improve upon their academic performance.

3. Another interesting point made by respondents was about adult female migrants, who are newcomers and have more difficulty accessing language learning due to a number of constraints. There are a number of associations, offering language learning support classes in French, which are based in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of migrants. However, because most of these women have young children, it is difficult for them to attend classes. For some of them, as they are newcomers, even if there are daycare centres that can accommodate their children, it is emotionally difficult for them to leave their children in the care of the day care workers.

4.2 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in the public sphere

4.2.1 Understanding the political structures of the City of Strasbourg and the Communauté Urbain de Strasbourg (CUS)

As mentioned earlier, it can be difficult to distinguish between services provided by the city of Strasbourg and those provided by the Communauté Urbain de Strasbourg (CUS). Thus, we deem it necessary to explain the relationship of the two political structures.

The City of Strasbourg and the CUS are two separate administrative organisations, however since 1972, they have shared the same administrative centre and service. Staff members on the CUS payroll also perform administrative work for the City of Strasbourg. The city then pays the urban community each year for the cost of its services. The urban community (CUS) has 28 member communes, including the city of Strasbourg.

To make a clear distinction between the main areas of responsibility of the two structures, the following are the main functions of the city administration: culture, schools, social action, youth, sports (except swimming pools), public lighting, the mairies de quartier (local administrative offices), civil registers, tourism and the municipal police force. The urban community shares certain areas of responsibilities in the following: culture, schools, social policy, sports and tourism. Therefore, in this report, we have also included services provided by the CUS especially in areas where both structures share responsibilities.

4.2.2 CUS and Strasbourg administration’s communication multilingual documents in three European languages: English, French and German

The city of Strasbourg publishes a magazine 10 times a year with its introduction in three languages, namely, English, French and German. The same language policy is observed with respect to the CUS magazine; the message of the urban community council’s president is translated into the same three languages. These magazines contain information about the latest updates and activities that the city government and the Communauté Urbaine choose to highlight for the month.

4.2.3 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in the public sphere: Strasbourg/CUS website in three European languages: English, French and German

The Strasbourg/CUS website has three language options, namely: English, French and German. Although not all of the pages have complete translations from the French version, one can have a comprehensive understanding of the city’s history; the services it provides; its relationship with Europe and other countries; culture, leisure and sports; transport and environment; the economy, research and development, projects; and the latest news and updates.
Below are the Strasbourg/CUS web pages in the respective languages:

**English**

![Strasbourg website](image1)

**French**

![Strasbourg website](image2)

**German**

![Strasbourg website](image3)
4.2.4 Local administration welcomes foreign students
The city hall opens its doors to welcome foreign students attending French intensive classes from various language schools such as the Université Populaire Européenne and Centre International d’Etudes de Langue de Strasbourg. Many of these visits are conducted in the summer as schools welcome foreign students who come to the city for intensive language immersion. During these events, the mayor or his representative formally hosts a welcome reception for the students. The students are given a brief orientation of what the city offers.

4.2.5 Public hospital multilingual document
A hospital flyer with vital hospital administrative instructions is posted in front of the offices of receptionists and information windows in public hospitals. One of our researchers first noticed this flyer at the Centre Médico-Churgical et Obstétrical (CMCO) Hospital and later at the CHU-Hautepierre. This document contains instructions about the necessary documents and identification papers to present for consultations. The instructions are in eight languages, namely Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Turkish.

4.2.6 Participation of foreigners and immigrants in the city’s political process
At the political level, the foreign residents of the city are represented by the Conseil résidents étrangers (CRE) de Strasbourg43. This council was created in 2009 so that foreign residents in Strasbourg can give their opinion on the policies implemented by the municipality. The CRE is a place of discussion and proposals to involve foreign residents in the decisions of the city, to help combat racism and to promote the right to political speech for all Strasbourg.

4.2.7 The role of associations in public services
As already previously explained organizations are neither public nor private. In France, these structures are somewhat in the middle in that they receive funding support from either the national, regional, departmental or city levels. In some instances, there are private benefactors who support the associations’ cause. Membership fees also sustain their operations.

Associations such as Migrations Santé Alsace44 and Parole Sans Frontière work hand-in-hand with government agencies to help migrants and refugees in specific terms. Through Migrations Santé Alsace, migrants have access to interpreters for free. The system of interpretation that this association puts in place potentially empowers the migrants to understand and know their rights and privileges.

Paroles Sans Frontière45, on the other hand, promotes and raises awareness of intercultural approaches of working with people of foreign origin living in France. This association relates to mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, psychoanalysts), social workers and other associations. On the association website, there are online reports and articles relating to different disciplines such as psychoanalysis, anthropology, sociology, etc. From the website, there are links to be able to access articles and resources in nine different languages. By clicking the links provided, the readers are directed to these webpages. The articles and resources are available in the following languages: Arabic, English, French, Hungarian, Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and Turkish.

43 http://www.cre-strasbourg.fr/#L_Actu.R
44 http://www.migrationssante.org/rubrique.php?id=2
45 http://www.p-s-f.com/psf/
4.3 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in the economic sphere

In this section, we will first present the advantages brought about by the city’s strategic location. Information provided in this first section is mostly quoted from the city’s 2011 institutional report\(^{46}\). The second section will focus on the multilingual challenges facing the city as cited by newspapers articles, interviewees and other sources.

4.3.1 Strasbourg: At the Centre of European Markets

Strasbourg is ideally located in the Rhine Valley within a catchment area of some 30 million inhabitants living within 250 km of the city. An extensive high-speed train network connects the city with London, Paris, Stuttgart, Munich and Budapest along an east-west axis, and Hamburg, Frankfurt, Lyon, Marseille and Barcelona from north to south, while the highway system links into the main European north-south and east-west routes.

The city has its own airport, while Basel-Mulhouse, Frankfurt and Zürich are under two hours away, offering easy access to all worldwide destinations. The Rhine, is, of course, one of Europe’s major waterways, and links the great North Sea ports with Central Europe and the Black Sea, via the Rhine-Main-Danube canal. The port of Strasbourg handles some 300 000 containers every year.\(^{47}\)

Some features of Strasbourg’s international business activities include:

- The region has over 1 000 companies with majority foreign shareholdings
- One Alsatian out of five works for a foreign company
- German companies are the most numerous, followed by American, Canadian, Swiss and Japanese groups
- 80% of the European market is within a 500-kilometer radius of Strasbourg
- Leading French region for exports (per capita)
- Leading region in France in terms of Direct Foreign Investment per capita

4.3.2 Strasbourg’s repositioning for the international and European scenes

Below are the seven flagship projects that have been set out to provide a framework for Strasbourg’s international and European ambition as mentioned in the city’s institutional booklet.

The city has been working on improving and developing the following:

- An international business district for boosting the city’s attractiveness and driving the development of the high-end international services sector
- A major Strasbourg-Kehl cross-border urban project to expand the metropolitan area to the Rhine
- A strategy of international transport accessibility based on inter-modality between the high-speed train system and international airports, to enhance links between Strasbourg and major European and worldwide cities
- An international innovation park to boost Strasbourg’s position in international innovation networks

\(^{46}\) A downloaded pdf format of the institutional booklet of the city of Strasbourg is found on this webpage: [http://www.en.strasbourg.eu/en/home-en/](http://www.en.strasbourg.eu/en/home-en/). This booklet is also available in three languages.

- A medical technologies centre to become the European benchmark for medical and surgical instruments and technologies

- A Franco-German company incubator to encourage and help companies develop in the two markets

- A unit for supporting new business creation to help entrepreneurs make the best use of competencies and talents and create new jobs.

4.3.3 Strasbourg as a border city is the home of border workers

There are also workers, known as travailleurs frontaliers. These are workers whose residence is in Strasbourg. They leave their homes everyday to work in Germany or Switzerland, where their employers are established. It should be stressed that these are specificities to Strasbourg being a border city and to Alsace as a region. Many people cross borders to work in Germany and Switzerland, and they do this because most of them speak German or Alsatian, which is mutually comprehensible with the variety of German spoken on the other side of border in Germany.

4.3.4 Multilingual Challenges in the Economic Sphere

1. As expressed repeatedly in the interviews, most of the time, job seekers are required to have a good proficiency in both the English and German languages to secure a job in many of these international companies. Sometimes, there is a specified level necessary for a particular job offer. For young candidates, this poses an obstacle sometimes, and is related to educational concerns about the effectiveness of language learning and teaching in France.

2. As reported by Dernière Nouvelles d’Alsace (January 18, 2013), economic cooperation in terms of apprenticeships between France and Germany within the Rhine border area, known as the Euro-district, remains difficult. Alsace and the German state of Baden-Württemberg have exchange services. There are regular “Job fairs” to allow avenues for job seekers and potential employers to meet. In fact, the Regional Directorate for Employment Research in Stuttgart is working in collaboration with the French job-seeking agency Pôle Emploi de Strasbourg to attract workers from Strasbourg and Alsace. However, there are only a dozen or so Alsatians who have availed of this opportunity because of bureaucratic hurdles. For instance, if a job seeker in Strasbourg requires training in Stuttgart, which is just a hundred kilometres away, the employment centre cannot reimburse his travel expenses. Whereas if he chooses to be trained in Toulouse, which is nearly a thousand kilometres away from the capital of Alsace, travel expenses may be reimbursed in full. Another difficulty is the language barrier. Although German is widely taught in Alsace (see education section), with many students starting German language hours at the kindergarten level (maternelle), very few young people master the language enough to feel confident to use it at a professional level.

4.4 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in the private sphere

In this section, the following are the types of data included: examples of religious activities, privately organised festivals, networks of migrant groups and other cultural activities (theatre, music, etc.).

4.4.1 Freedom in religious expression that allows cultural and linguistic diversity

The city is home to a number of places of worship, which includes mosques, synagogues etc. ranging from very traditional to more modern practices. Every Friday, the Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace, which is a daily regional newspaper in Alsace, publishes a list of churches and their masses or services. This one-page weekly announcement

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48 Information on this section was gathered from Strasbourg’s Institutional Booklet

49 Interview 3 on page 16 is a good example in which one of the respondents pointed out that because of lack in English language proficiency, one of her friends was denied a job offer.
has the following categories: Cultes catholiques, Cultes catholiques dans les Faubourgs, Cultes catholiques traditionnels, Cultes protestants, Eglises évangéliques libres, Cultes évangéliques adventistes, Churches with English Services, Cultes orthodoxies, Autres cultes, Cultes israélites, Cultes musulmans. It is noticeable that the announcement for the three English-speaking services is written in English. The services or masses for Orthodox churches are also in their language of origin, for example Russian is used in the Paroisse orthodoxe russe de Tous les Saints. Other named Orthodox churches in the city are the following: Paroisse orthodoxe grecque de Strasbourg, Paroisse orthodoxe roumaine, and Paroisse orthodoxe serbe St. Georges.

4.4.2 Diversity in celebration

La fête des peuples or Feast/Celebration of Peoples was organised by forty volunteers from a dozen associations on January 13, 2013. They welcomed a large crowd at the 21st edition of this event. The program included culinary tasting of specialties from different countries and different artistic performances from various parts of the world. All the continents were represented through songs, dances and different forms of entertainment. Although activities like this are essentially cultural in nature, they provide an avenue for migrants to also promote linguistic awareness amongst attendees.

It should be noted that there are regular activities organised by communities and cultural associations in the city that allow expressions of diversity in celebration.

4.4.3 Activities promoting linguistic diversity

A EuroStudentCafé is one of the many activities organised by the Catholic Student Home (Foyer de l’Etudiant Catholique). It aims at gathering individuals of different nationalities and providing them with an avenue through which to meet people, exchange ideas and converse on a wide array of subjects, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, using one of the following languages: English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Swedish. This takes place every second and fourth Tuesday of each month, September to June from 19h30 à 21h30. A native speaker for each language facilitates the conversation per table. There is neither fee nor reservation required. The participants only pay for whatever drinks or food they order.

4.5 Multilingualism and plurilingualism in urban spaces

In this report, we consider that urban spaces encompass all publicly visible and audible aspects of a city. Thus, we include the following: public signage (shops, offices, public buildings, street signs), advertising (billboards, leaflets in public transport etc.), and instructions on vending machines, noticeboards and other publicly visible interfaces.

Other types of data collected in this sphere included studies of the city’s linguistic landscape and visual culture, official signposting at airports, train stations, in public transport, digital media, and advertising languages.

Three languages, namely French, English and German are used in this information found in front of a department store at the heart of the city.

4.5.1 The Linguistic Landscape of le quartier Gare\textsuperscript{51}

Bogatto and Hélot’s study (2010) interestingly shows this area of Strasbourg has a substantial number of multilingual signs,\textsuperscript{52} which may also reflect the growing linguistic diversity of the whole city. There may be stark differences from one area, location, or neighbourhood to another in the city, but there are also a lot of shared characteristics.

It should be noted though that based on the initial results, focusing on the shop front “signs,” French is still dominant as an expression of local and global identity. Alsatian, the regional language is also used in the shop signs. The terms used were directly linked to the kind of service that the shops offer. Remarkably, the use of German was limited. English is very present and is the second most visible language after French. Languages of immigration, most notably from Asia and Arabic-speaking countries were used in food shops and restaurants.\textsuperscript{53}

4.5.2 The transportation company’s efforts towards expanding its language repertoire

The transportation company of the city, known as Compagnie des Transports Strasbourgeois (CTS) have printed brochures and flyers of bus and tram schedules and other important transport information in three languages namely, French, German and English. This new project was initiated by the Sales and Marketing Department of CTS in 2012. As an expansion to the already existing languages, they plan to possibly include three MORE languages, which are Spanish, Italian and Chinese no later than 2015.

City transportation in Strasbourg is served by a street level tram system that has been operational since 1994.

\textsuperscript{51} This quartier is an old area, with a multi-ethnic population of mixed socio-economic status (Bogatto and Hélot, 2010). The census figures of 1999 (INSEE) showed that among the 12000 inhabitants, almost 1700 are foreigners.

\textsuperscript{52} From Bogatto and Hélot in 2010. « Linguistic Landscape and Language Diversity in Strasbourg : The ‘Quartier Gare’ »

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
4.5.3 Bike stations information in three languages

Another possible mode of transport is the bicycle. With more than 500 km of bicycle paths, biking in the city of Strasbourg and CUS is the most convenient, economic and eco-friendly way to go around the city and the nearby communes. The Compagnie des Transports Strasbourgeois (CTS) has provided a bicycle hire service option to the public named Vélhop54, which operates as a cheap bike-sharing scheme. In all its rental centres and stations, information and instructions are in three languages, namely French, English and German.

One of the 11 automatic stations where one can rent a bike 7/7 or 24h/24.

4.5.4 Libraries expanding book collections in different languages

Adult fiction and children’s books are available in six languages, namely French, German, English, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian at André Malraux, the biggest public lending media centre which is in the heart of the city. Children’s storybooks are available in seven languages, namely Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Turkish at the Meinau area Municipal Library.

In addition, there are storytelling projects in the central library and local libraries that accommodate other languages. Most of the libraries have storytelling sessions to children of varied age groups. This is part of the regular activity of the libraries and media centres. It is during these sessions that these public libraries accommodate foreign and exotic languages. To give a more concrete example, one of the local libraries in the city featured an Asian country and its language during its story-telling session to children ages 3-7 and a handful of special needs children. The session featured a short background of the country, a dramatic storytelling with translation in French and a song in the language. The resource person who is a native speaker of the language also highlighted key terms in the language such as how to say thank you, good morning and good-bye.

54 For more information, please consult Vélhop website: http://www.velhop.strasbourg.eu/sag_accueil.html.
5. Analysis of key themes/discussion

The first emerging theme is that there are varying perceptions of multilingualism in terms of definition and expectations. On the whole, the individuals who were interviewed agree that Strasbourg is a multilingual city even if they have different perspectives of how multilingualism manifests itself in the city. This illustrates the variety of individual understandings of the notion of multilingualism.

The following are directly quoted from the transcribed sample interviews in Appendix 2.

To the question: “Do you consider Strasbourg as a multilingual city?” the interviewer gathered the following responses:

**Respondent 4:**

It is a very multilingual city. We are close to Germany. People are really familiar with German on top of French. Then from history, people are really in contact with German, the German dialect, German culture. In that case, there is no issue with German language, and then on top of that the fact that it is a big city, there are many people living in Strasbourg, not only French. I am not sure what the figure is, but I am sure that there are many people who are not French. They are working, living. They are spending time in Strasbourg because it is a European city. It is a huge city. It is an economically significant city so I would say Strasbourg is a multilingual city.  

**Respondent 2:**

... it (referring to Strasbourg) is in the border so it has been bilingual for a long time – German and French. Now, it is an international city because of the European Council, so English is very useful. The young people speak English too. Older people speak German fluently - Alsatian first and German too.

**Respondent 1:**

Strasbourg est une ville multiculturelle, multi-ethnique, et multilingue. Si on fait un tour au marché ou au centre ville, il y a beaucoup d’étrangers.

The three respondents quoted above are classified from the public and economic spheres. The three respondents stress the different justifications for their perception of Strasbourg as a multilingual city. The first and the second respondents mention just the border situation of the city, thus the presence of German and Alsatian. In other words the historical dimension of links with Germany and the presence of European institutions define the identity of the city as European, thus English is part of the languages used and heard with the economic reasons mentioned by respondent 4. Moreover, respondent 2 underlines the international dimension of Strasbourg; whereas, in the case of respondent 1, the categorisation is linked to foreigners who are viewed as central to the multicultural, multi-ethnic and multilingual dimension of the city. It should be stressed here that the terms multi-ethnic and multicultural were used by the respondent and were not formulated by the interviewer. This respondent assumes that foreigners bring a multi-ethnic and multicultural dimension to the city and thus believes that French people are culturally homogenous.

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55 Quoted from respondent 4, page 76 (Appendix 2)
56 Quoted from respondent 2, page 56 (Appendix 2)
57 Quoted from respondent 1, page 52 (Appendix 2). English translation: Strasbourg is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multilingual city. If you go around the market or downtown area, there are a lot of foreigners.
Respondent 3:

A multilingual city for me would be a city where there are multiple languages spoken.58

However, some respondents are not quite convinced about the multilingual dimension of Strasbourg, such as respondent 4 quoted above. They equate multilingualism with the use of many different languages in everyday life, thus are aware of the very dominant position of the French language. Respondent 4 further explained that she would “almost” consider Strasbourg multilingual, as it is probably more multilingual than other French cities because of ethnic and linguistic diversity. She elaborated that there are a lot of people coming from different countries that live and work in the city. Thus, the diversity of language is apparent. However, the respondent is not convinced that this is a valid criterion to call a city multilingual because not everyone speaks multiple languages. Citing a concrete example, she said that if a tourist for instance goes to a shop, not everyone in the shop, especially the shop assistants or vendors are able to speak English and German. This response implies that for the respondent, multilingualism is a personal attribute, not a societal one.

The second key theme is the place of the regional language, Alsatian which is also commonly referred to as “dialect” in Strasbourg. In the words of Respondent 5:

Well, the people living in Strasbourg, staying in Strasbourg, are not exactly multilingual so to speak. They are mostly French. They don’t speak their local language anymore. They don’t speak Alsatian, which normally people used to learn. They just speak French. They just learn foreign languages in school so it is not exactly multicultural in this sense. It’s a lot multicultural in the sense that a lot of foreign companies are around the city and foreigners come and work here, but they never stay long so is it really therefore multilingual, multicultural? I wouldn’t say so.59

This reply shows the respondent’s awareness of the state of decline of the use of the regional language (Alsatian) in the city. Based on observations, he noted that even those who have access to learning Alsatian do not take advantage of this opportunity. Furthermore, this response also indicates that foreign languages taught in more formal settings lack the cultural sensitivity of the language. For him even if there are foreigners who live and work in the city, this does not really account to multilingualism because of their transiency. This respondent shows awareness of how language practices change with time and that languages are learnt, acquired and used in different contexts.

Based on studies in the 1970s and 1980s, numerous researchers noted a dramatic decline in the use of Alsatian in the region (Vassberg, 1999). They painted a bleak picture for the future of this dialect and feared for its natural death as the fate of other languages had been eloquently voiced out.60

In the Report on the Linguistic Situation in Alsace, Huck, Dominique; Bothorel-Witz, Arlette and Geiger-Jaillet, Anemone (2005) presented data from 1945 to 2000 on the language use and transmission of dialect in the Alsace region. With regards to knowledge and use of the dialect, there had been contradictions in research results about which they concluded, “These differences draw attention to the care that must be taken in considering quantified declarations. Indeed, depending on the way the data is collected (on the one hand a census, in 1999, and on the other hand an opinion poll in 2001) and the type of question(s) asked, the answers may vary. Furthermore, the contexts in which the responses are collected may also influence the results. Finally, such figures document the major trends of the moment, that is to say subjective reality with rather loosely defined limits, but on no account can they be considered as reflecting observable linguistic practices.”61

58 Quoted from Interview 3, page 64 (Appendix 2)
59 Quoted from Interview 5, page 83 (Appendix 2)
60 Vassberg (1999) mentions researchers who undertook a similar research same study and concluded similarly that the Alsatian regional dialect was most likely in decline.
61 Translated from French by the author of this report.
At present, there are efforts and initiatives to revive the cultural, historical and linguistic relevance of the regional dialect. L’Office pour la Langue et la Culture d’Alsace (OLCA - Elsassisches Sprochàmt) was created in 1994 at the initiative of the Alsace region and the departments of Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin. According to Article 2 of its by-laws, the office intends to promote the vitality of the regional identity of Alsace and the enhancement of its heritage and its linguistic and cultural specificities. It primarily serves to support specific policies initiated by the Region and the two departments of Alsace.

With regards to the teaching and learning of Alsatian, OLCA - Elsassisches Sprochàmt organises language courses in coordination and cooperation with other associations across the region. In Strasbourg, language courses are being offered and taught. Through the Association AJFE Alsace - Junge fers Elsassische, an association founded in 1999 for young Alsatians, although it is also open to all young people and students who are not Alsatians. Another association that actively teaches the regional dialect is the Université Populaire.44

To turn to the third important theme emerging from our data, the question on whether multilingualism is a sensitive issue in the city yielded varied answers. The extracts quoted below are from our respondents in the public and economic spheres.

Oui, je pense, oui. Nous, les Alsaciens, on est très attaché à notre culture, à nos origines, et pour moi, c’est une question sensible. Non, c’est vrai. (Respondent 1)

There were respondents who openly expressed their strong resistance towards multilingualism. Respondent 1 represents this group. Multilingualism is a term that they think is inclined towards the tolerance and acceptance of the practices and language of those adherents of Islam. There is a fear that too much inclination to multilingualism would mean a loss of national and regional identity. This feeling of anxiety is consistent with the reported opinion survey published by the right-wing daily newspaper Le Figaro suggesting that 43 per cent of French people believe that the role of Islam in France is a threat to national identity.65 This is also affirmed by respondent 4 who believes that there are people who voted for the extreme right, but he also stresses that this is not the general atmosphere in Strasbourg but rather in the nearby suburban villages or rural areas.

Respondent 4:

In the countryside, they elected right, extreme right. I am not so proud of that, to be honest. I would say in the city, there is a different culture.

Other respondents approached this question by providing concrete examples from their workplaces. It is also notable that there were respondents who preferred to use the term “difficult” instead of sensitive. One respondent emphasised that this question is dependent on personal viewpoints, and that it is difficult to come up with a generalisation.

Some respondents pointed out that the city is the seat of numerous European institutions and international companies. Thus, the local administration takes pride in its identity as the capital of Europe. Having this distinction, a number of respondents believe that the city should gear towards the promotion of multilingualism. The extracts quoted below express the sentiments explained above.

Respondent 3:

I’m not sure….People are usually proud of Strasbourg being a European capital so in that sense, it would be better if one could speak more languages too. That would go with Strasbourg being a European capital. I guess it would make sense if we move towards more multilingualism.

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64 For more information see the association’s website : http://www.u-populaire-europeenne.com/.  
**Respondent 4:**

The people are open. Majority of the people are willing to welcome, to work, to spend time with other people with other languages. Anyhow, in this city, in Strasbourg, I will say it isn’t an issue…. There is a good mindset. There is acceptability to welcome foreigners.

Fourthly, it is important to note that multilingualism poses challenges to the local administration. From among the respondents, there is a consensus that the existence of multiple languages in the city, the foreigners’ and immigrants’ lack of knowledge of the French language, the administration and public service employees’ limited language repertoires contribute to the over-all difficulty of relating necessary information and administrative procedures and processes to foreigners and immigrants with no or limited knowledge of the host country’s language.

In an interview with a member of hospital staff, it was explained that there is clearly a problem when they have to deal or explain delicate medical procedures with patients who do not speak French. The X-ray technician provided concrete examples of how she and her colleagues have handled cases in which they have to make sure that the patient or their immediate family members understand the nature of the medical procedure which needs to be carried out. She explained that sometimes, within their team they are able to find someone who can serve as an interpreter. In some instances, they inquire if there is anybody in the family who can speak French, German or English as they have staff members who are fluent in these languages. However, in emergency situations or in cases when time is of the essence, they do not have a choice but to use gestures and illustrations to clarify and describe certain medical procedures. With this method, they feel an acute sense of frustration because they are not certain if the message has been understood well.

Here is an excerpt from the interview with the hospital worker.

Yes, I think so. I work in a hospital and we have a lot of Turkish people. We have a lot of Arab people and people from the East from Romania, Poland, and other countries in the Eastern bloc. We are confronted with this. We had a lot of Turkish women who do not speak any French so it is really a problem for us to communicate with them. So I think we should find a way to cope with this problem in the hospital. We have Russian, Armenian, Kosovo, people who speak Russian, and we are not equipped. I think it is really a problem.  

What is clear here is that in the public hospitals there are many patients with no or limited knowledge of French. Even with this reality, there seems to be no language policy to approach this problem that confronts hospital personnel.

The teacher who was interviewed answered this question focusing on the educational sphere. She emphasised the need for the education sector to provide a solution to this concern.

Here is the excerpt of the interview with the primary school teacher.

…if you want the whole city to be multilingual, it has to start in education and school and the way you teach. I do not think France is a leading country in that area, if I am allowed to say that. That would mean, there would be choices in that area and choices in other areas, I guess. Maybe in, I guess in all the people who are in administration should speak more than one language. People in city halls, if that is the city policy or public places people would have to speak more languages. I guess in shops too, in businesses, if that’s what we would want the city to be known for, to be, there would have to be an effort put in different areas.

The director of the Halte Garderie (French term for daycare centre) echoed the same sentiment. She believes that local

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66 from Interview 2 (Appendix 2)  
67 from Interview 3 (Appendix 2).
government employees, especially those who deal with immigrants and foreigners should be given training, access to interpretation and tools to better serve their clientele, with emphasis on those who are unable to communicate and understand French. In other words what these respondents are saying is that there is a real need for a policy of multilingualism, but it is lacking at present. It is interesting here to note that there is a certain awareness of the lack of policy and solutions to address issues surrounding the presence of multiple languages in the city and French society as a whole.

Theme five is that there is a very high expectation for foreigners and immigrants to learn French, the country's home language. This theme recurred many times in the interviews of respondents from different spheres, even amongst those with pronounced tolerance to differences in ethnicity and culture. Below is a short portion of the government employee's opinion about language learning as a means to integrate into mainstream society. The interviewee also pointed out that it would be helpful to have someone (a volunteer or a government worker), able to speak the host country's language as well as the language of the immigrants to help them, more specifically immigrant women, to integrate into mainstream society.

Interviewer: What do you mean, “integrate in the French way of living”?

AH: Yes, learn French. That is a requisite, I think. No, even to adapt. They can keep their own culture, but they are living in France and so they have to adapt to the ways in France. It would be interesting to have some people to serve as mediators to help them. People who speak French and speak their languages. I think it would be important especially for women because if you have Turkish women maybe Asian women if they are not educated, often they stay at home so they do not have any real contact or no means to become part of the mainstream society. Maybe, it would be a good thing if there were some people who could help them find a place where they can be active.

The president of the Fédération de l'Association pour l'Enseignement et la Formation des Travailleurs Immigrés (AEFTI)68, Jean Bellanger, expressed the same line of thinking when he said that the «learning of the host country’s language is somehow a passport to citizenship».69 In 2009, the former Ministre de l'immigration, de l'intégration, de l'identité nationale et du développement solidaire70, Eric Besson, also emphasised in his first speech that learning French is the cornerstone of integration and one of the three pillars of integration policy.71

Another key finding is that among the foreign languages used by the administration in the city, there is high preference for the German and English languages. This illustrated in the language choices of the City of Strasbourg and the CUS (Communauté urbaine de Strasbourg) on their official website http://www.strasbourg.eu/ and in the welcome messages of the city mayor and president of the CUS on their monthly magazines.

In the recent project of the CTS (Compagnie des Transports Strasbourgeois)72, which was completed in 2012, the transport company, through the initiative of its Sales and Marketing Department, published flyers and brochures containing bus and tram information in French, English and German.73

In the interviews, the respondents when asked about their opinion on the language or languages that deserve a boost in the city, many of them thought that with French, English and German the administration and other public services would be able to serve the majority of their clientele.

68 The Federation for Associations Education and Training of Migrant Workers and their Families (AEFTI Federation) is a network of associations Act 1901 which provides for fundamental aim the fight against illiteracy and illiteracy, promoting the right to training and qualification of the immigrant population and public integration difficulties. For further information, please refer to its website: http://www.aefti.fr/presentation/.
69 Quoted from Chapitre I0 Apprentissage de la langue du pays d’accueil... Enjeux et définitions of the ORIV Alsace – décembre 2009 publication.
70 This ministry is under the Ministère de L'Intérieur.
71 Quoted from ORIV publication of December 2009 which are statements of 21 January and 12 February 2009 - Downloadable from the website of the Ministry: www.immigration.gouv.fr.
72 CTS (Compagnie des Transports Strasbourgeois) is a transportation company that operates in the urban community of Strasbourg.
73 Please refer to Appendix 3 for the email correspondence between the researcher and the CTS.
Here are excerpts from the sample interviews which reflect the choices of city policies:

Oui, je pense que l’allemand. On est à la frontière et je pense que nos jeunes ne savent plus parler en allemand. Juste à la frontière. L’anglais c’est bien si tu peux parler, comme on est à la frontière, je pense que c’est l’allemand qui est le plus important. 74

The respondent in this quote emphasised the need to learn and speak German because of city’s border situation. To her, to learn English is good but German should take precedence.

I would say, that we should be better at German because we live next to Germany and because we are not good at German. I mean some people, but most people are not fluent in German. 75

It should be the duty of the authorities for the most important languages to be represented so you should have the papers in French, German and English. 76

I would say English as I told you. I think it should be a priority that every young person should know. 77

The final theme is related to budgetary concerns and constraints. For instance, government employees are willing to enlarge their language repertoire but there are restrictions because of budget concerns. Clearly, the civil servants who are in constant contact with foreigners and the immigrant population believe that in order to serve their clientele better, they should expand or enlarge their language repertoires. They are willing to learn new languages through in-house training. However, for the moment, a lot of training is on-hold. With the current budget crunch, they are not certain if this is a priority at the city level. 78 Budget constraints also affect decisions in language teaching in schools. This is a nationwide dilemma, which is affecting the quality of service in the educational sphere. The teachers in Strasbourg, especially at the kindergarten level (maternelle) have felt the impact and struggled enormously with the consequences of budget cut. One kindergarten teacher mentioned her difficulty teaching German because of her lack of mastery in the target language. In the past, the presence of a language assistant who is a German native speaker somehow fills this need of a language resource person. However, because of budget constraints, the teacher needs to find other strategies to teach the language, which she sometimes finds ineffective.

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74 Please refer to Interview 1 (Appendix 2).
75 Please refer to Interview 3 (Appendix 2)
76 Please refer to Interview 2 (Appendix 2)
77 Please refer to Interview 2 (Appendix 2)
78 This is an indirect quotation from one of the interviews conducted at the city hall. The employee was willing to answer the questions but was hesitant to be audio-recorded without the permission of his direct supervisor.
6. Conclusion

Whilst the data described above is undoubtedly limited in scale, this first exploration of multilingualism in the city of Strasbourg gives some indication of language practices by institutions such as public transport or hospitals or libraries. The data also comprises discourses of individuals, which give examples of their representations towards languages, language learning in schools, multilingualism, etc. In order to understand urban multilingualism in all its complexity, one cannot dispense with a pluridisciplinary approach which entails looking at the history of the city, its social make-up and its political organisations and, in the case of a border city like Strasbourg, its geographical situation. Language policies and practices do not happen in a vacuum, they are always linked to their specific contexts of production, which can be difficult to analyse comprehensively. We hope however to have given a first picture of multilingualism in the French city of Strasbourg.
References


Appendices

1. List of European Institutions in Strasbourg
2. Sample Transcribed Interviews
3. E-mail Communication with a CTS Employee

Appendix 1

European Institutions in Strasbourg

Institutions of the European Union in Strasbourg

• The European Parliament
• The European Ombudsman
• Schengen Information System

Institutions Under the Authority of the Council of Europe

• The Council of Europe
• The European Court of Human Rights
• The European Youth Centre
• The European Pharmacopoeia
• The European Audiovisual Observatory
• Eurimages

Information on the European Union

• Information Centre on European Institutions (CIIE)
• Euro-Info Centre
• MEDIA Antenna
• European Documentation Centres (EDC)

Other European Organizations

1. Eurocorps
2. Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine

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79 Complete list of European organisations in Strasbourg with their links to the websites: http://en.strasbourg-europe.eu/institutions-in-strasbourg,2082,en.html
3. European Science Foundation
4. The European Cultural Channel ARTE
5. Assembly of European Regions
6. The Institute of High European Studies

**Organizations for Cross-Frontier Cooperation**
1. Infobest Kehl-Strasbourg
2. Euro-Info-Consumers
3. Euro-Institute
Appendix 2

Sample Transcribed Interviews

INTERVIEW 1

City name: Strasbourg

Role of interviewee: Respondent 1 (owner of a small grocery store; economic sphere)

Name of the Interviewer: Eloise Caporal-Ebersold

Date: October 14, 2012

Interview Length: 20 minutes

Track Number: 811_0003

Interviewer: Pensez-vous que Strasbourg est une ville multilingue? Merci de bien vouloir préciser et expliquer votre réponse.

CE : Strasbourg est une ville multiculturelle, multi-ethnique, et multilingue.

Interviewer: Pourquoi vous avez dit ça?

CE : Si on fait un tour au marché ou au centre ville, il y a beaucoup d’étrangers.

Interviewer: Pensez-vous que la question du multilinguisme est une question sensible dans cette ville? S’il vous plaît préciser ou expliquer votre réponse.

CE : Oui, je pense, oui. Nous, les Alsaciens, on est très attachés à notre culture, à nos origines, et pour moi, c’est une question sensible. Non, c’est vrai.

Interviewer: Dans votre espace de travail, y a-t-il des langues particulièrement importantes ou visibles?


Interviewer: Il va habiter avec vous?

CE : Non, il habite sur Strasbourg. En fait, il va faire ses études pendant un an à Strasbourg pour apprendre le français. Il est logé dans une famille d’accueil. Chez nous, il travaille mardi après-midi et jeudi après-midi.

Interviewer: À votre avis, diriez-vous qu’il y a des langues qui sont ignorées ou moins visibles dans votre espace de travail? Quelles langues?

CE : Non. Trop petite pour répondre à cette question. Mon entreprise est trop petite pour répondre à cette question.

Interviewer: Pensez-vous que la coexistence de plusieurs langues dans la ville de Strasbourg est un défi pour l’administration locale?

CE : Je pense que des défis il y en a beaucoup, je pense qu’il y a quand même beaucoup comme ceux qui
parlent... ceux qui viennent du Maghreb quoi. Pour les gens qui travaillent dans l'administration, oui. Je pense que oui et que pour la langue ils devront s'adapter et parler une autre langue que le français.

Pour les gens qui travaillent dans l'administration, c'est un défi et qu'à la longue ils devront s'adapter et parler d'autres langues que le français.

Intervieweur : Etes-vous d'accord avec la façon dont la ville de Strasbourg aborde la question du multilinguisme? Oui pourquoi/non pourquoi ?

CE : Non, je ne suis pas d'accord parce que je pense que ce que mon mari [mentions her husband's name] a dit c'est qu'on va perdre notre identité quand même. Identité c'est le français. Nous, on est alsacien. L'alsacien est de que si on commence à parler d'autres langues on perd notre identité, notre culture, nos origines.

Intervieweur : Quelle action d'administration que vous n'êtes pas d'accord ? Quelle décision vous pensez apporte des conséquences négatives ?

CE : L'administration donne l'argent à tout le monde qui ne travaille pas. Si on pense à ça, on pense des musulmans, d'Islam. On pense qu'on va commencer à parler une autre langue, on perd notre identité. Je pense qu'on a peur de perdre notre identité, notre culture, nos origines si on devient trop multilingues.

Intervieweur : Pouvez-vous donner un exemple d'une approche récente qui vous a semblé intéressante. Idem avec laquelle vous n'êtiez pas d'accord.


Intervieweur : Comment gérez-vous les problèmes linguistiques lorsque vous rencontrez une langue que vous ne comprenez pas?

CE : Ca dépend avec qui.

Intervieweur : Par exemple avec vos travailleurs ?

CE : On parle avec les mains. On parle beaucoup avec des gestes. On utilise des dictionnaires aussi. Parfois, on recherche des mots sur internet. On n'arrive pas à avoir de grandes conversations, c'est vrai, mais on arrive à se comprendre pour travailler ensemble.

Intervieweur : Dans votre domaine d'expertise, utilisez-vous un outil de traduction ou un interprète?

CE : Pas avec un interprète, mais oui avec des outils de traduction comme le dictionnaire et internet.

Intervieweur : Quel site, par exemple ?

CE : J'utilise Google Traduction. C'est le plus clair et le plus rapide.

Intervieweur : Comment sont-ils utilisés? Pensez-vous que ces méthodes sont bien gérées et de manière appropriée?

CE : Pour nous, c'est suffisant. Toutes les choses qu'on veut dire a nos travailleurs. Pour pouvoir communiquer, pour nous c'est suffisant et c'est bien gérer, quoi. C'est sûr que si tu veux rentrer dans
une grande conversation, c'est pas possible. Juste pour travailler, pour moi, pour nous, c'est suffisant en effet.

Intervieweur : Avez-vous récemment été témoin de difficultés rencontrées par un individu ou un groupe en raison de leur manque de connaissance du français?

CE : J’étais à Strasbourg. J’ai acheté un pantalon pour [mentions child’s name]. Il y avait des Allemands à côté de moi et la vendeuse, la caissière n’arrivait pas à parler un seul mot en allemand. Donc, c’est moi qui ai fait l’interprète. Ça me faisait bizarre. J’étais là en train d’acheter et j’ai fait l’interprète parce que la cliente elle voulait un renseignement et ni la caissière ni la vendeuse ne parlaient absolument pas un seul mot en allemand et pourtant on est à coté de la frontière.

Intervieweur : Y a-t-il une langue que vous pensez mérite un coup de pouce à l’utilisation de la visibilité dans la ville? A votre avis, y a-t-il une langue particulière autre que le français qui mériterait d’être soutenue ou plus visible dans la ville ?

CE : Oui, je pense que l’allemand. On est à la frontière et je pense que nos jeunes ne savent plus parler en allemand. Juste à la frontière. L’anglais c’est bien si tu peux parler comme on est à la frontière, je pense que c’est l’allemand qui est le plus important.

Intervieweur : Est ce qu’il y a d’autres langues qui sont visibles dans votre espace de travail? Comment sont-elles visibles? Pourquoi sont-elles visibles?

CE : Chez nous, c’est le polonais et le roumain. Nos travailleurs viennent de l’est, pour travailler chez nous. Ca devrait être…

Intervieweur : Est-ce que vous pensez c’est nécessaire d’apprendre le polonais et le roumain ?


Intervieweur : D’autres langues sont-elles utilisées dans votre domaine professionnel? Comment sont-elles utilisées? Pourquoi sont-elles utilisées? Je pense que ça c’est la même question que la question précédente.

CE : Oui, c’est la même question.

Intervieweur : Si vous pouviez changer une chose au sujet des langues dans votre ville, que changeriez-vous ? Pourquoi?

CE : Moi, personnellement, je mettrais l’accent sur l’allemand. On est à la frontière, donc c’est important pour moi.

Intervieweur : Est-ce que vous pensez que c’est nécessaire d’apprendre l’alsacien, la langue régionale pour les jeunes?

CE : C’est bien aussi l’alsacien. Pour que les enfants réapprennent notre culture, nos origines, notre histoire en fait. L’alsacien, c’est notre histoire. Je regrette de ne pas avoir appris l’alsacien à mes enfants. Chez nous ça va disparaître complètement. C’est dommage.

Sur le répondant:

Intervieweur : Quel est votre rôle / position?

CE : Quel type de travail faites-vous? D’emploi occupez-vous ?

Dans Quel genre d’agence / institution travaillez-vous?

Interviewer : Vous considérez-vous comme unilingue / bilingue / plurilingue?

CE : Bilingue

Intervieweur : Quelles langues parlez-vous?

CE : Allemand et français. L’alsacien qui ressemble à l’allemand. J’estime que je me débrouille bien en allemand.

Interviewer : Vos parents ou grands-parents parlaient/parlent-ils des langues autres que le français? Quelles langues?

CE : Alsacien et allemand. Pareil.

Interviewer : Quelles langues parlez-vous dans votre vie personnelle?

CE : Alsacien et en français

Intervieweur : votre vie professionnelle?


Interviewer : Diriez-vous que vous êtes un bon apprenant d’une langue?

CE : Je suis en train d’apprendre et de perfectionner mon anglais. Je voudrais aussi apprendre le polonais.

Intervieweur : Comment vous décririez cette expérience?

CE : J’aime bien. Si j’avais plus de temps, je voudrais vraiment approfondir mon apprentissage de cette langue.

Interviewer : Aimeriez-vous ajouter un commentaire supplémentaire?

CE : Je voudrais vraiment avoir plus de temps pour apprendre une autre langue. C’est une richesse de connaître plusieurs langues.
Interviewer: Do you think Strasbourg is a multilingual city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

AH: It is because it is in the border so it has been bilingual for a long time – German and French. Now, it is an international city because of the European council so English is very useful. The young people speak English too. Older people speak German fluently - Alsation first and German too. Alsation is a German dialect and so they understand German. My mother for example was in a German school so most of their generation speak German. Maybe, we are multilingual oriented because we are on the border.

Interviewer: Do you think that the issue of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

AH: Yes, I think so. I work in a hospital and we have a lot of Turkish people. We have a lot of Arab people and people from the East from Romania, Poland, and other countries in the East block. We are confronted with this. We had a lot of Turkish women who do not speak any French so it is really a problem for us to communicate with them. So I think we should find something to cope with this problem in the hospital. We have Russian, Armenian, Kosovo, people who speak Russian, and we are not equipped. I think it is really a problem.

Interviewer: How have you dealt with the situation?

AH: We tried to find someone in our team. There is a doctor who is from Lebanon who speaks Russian. There is also a girl in our team who is Turkish. We try to find someone among us who could communicate, but it isn't organised. We try with German and English. If not possible, we speak with our hands. It works; although it is not so reassuring that the person gets the information. Most of the information is transferred but for us it is not satisfying to do it this way.

Interviewer: In your work area, are there any particularly important or visible languages?

AH: It is German and English. To speak French, German and English, we can already serve almost everyone. But as I said Turkish, Russian could be very useful too if we could learn these languages.

Interviewer: Are there languages that are ignored or less visible in your work area? Which languages?

AH: I do not know really. Sometimes, if we have a Chinese patient, then we couldn't really find someone to be able to speak to him.

Interviewer: Has this happened?

AH: Yes, it happens. I think it not very often. We try to involve the family or someone who speaks the
language. Then, we try to speak with them to explain and so on.

The Eastern languages would be considered as such. There are doctors who are from Romania. We can involve them to explain, to help interpret.

Interviewer: Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies, for example in terms of policy decisions? Explain your answer.

AH: It is because if there are official papers, they should be available in different languages. I think. It should be the duty of the authorities for the most important languages to be represented so you should have the papers in French, German and English.

Interviewer: Do you think those are the most important languages?

AH: I think not, maybe for the workplace, yes, but if you see the population of Strasbourg, you will see the big Turkish community, the African community, most of them do not speak French or English, but Turkish and maybe Arabic? There are also people from North Africa, maybe.

The forms should be in German and English for all, maybe, Turkish also. I think it would be interesting to have a survey of population to see which population of foreigners needs to be served.

Interviewer: In your workplace of course you deal with different nationalities, would you be able to identify the major population that you are serving?

AH: Yes, I think so. Seeing the name of the patients.

Interviewer: Would you say still German?

AH: No, we do not have German patients. They do not go to France to be served. We have some but tourists who have heart problems when they were on vacation in Strasbourg. We speak German to some of the Turkish population. We speak Alsatian to the elderly people. It is mostly, Alsatians that do not understand French, especially the older generation. That is why I speak about German in the hospital, but not Germans who come to be treated in Strasbourg. The predominant language for the older generation is still Alsatian and German.

I think it is important to have papers in German because we are on the border. I do not know if German people work in Strasbourg, they should learn French, I think.

Interviewer: Don’t you think the other population also need to learn French?

AH: Yes, they should, but it is not so easy. I think if there are forms to fill. I see it when I am in a plane, and I have to fill forms. Even if I speak English, sometimes it is difficult to understand what they really want to ask when you see the questions on the form. If you have to give a proper answer, I think it is better if you can read it in your own language or have someone to help you who understands both languages and who can help you fill your forms. That would be another possibility if you do not have the forms in the languages to have someone to help you fill the forms.

Interviewer: The same question, but this time for the businesses, do you think it is also a challenge for them – co-existence of languages in the city?

AH: It is. I think so. It is always a plus if you have people who speak several languages. If you go to a bakery or to a restaurant, if you have people who speak other languages, it is always comfortable. I think the owners can earn clients this way.
Maybe that is why some of them require their workers to be multilingual.

Interviewer: Do you think in terms of policy, of decisions, there is also a challenge?

AH: Yes, for instance in the médiathèque. Strasbourg is a university-city. There are many students from different countries. I think it is necessary to be able to serve the needs of these students. I think Strasbourg has a policy of openness to diversity. Maybe, I am not right.

Interviewer: Why do you think Strasbourg has a policy of openness to diversity?

AH: I think it is a long tradition because it is the crossroads of many cultures. It has always been. There was trading, business, exchanges, and you have the Rhine as the way of communication and transportation. So there are people from Holland, Belgium. Maybe, I am not right because I am from here and so I have a very high opinion of my city. I think it is a bit of a tradition to be open to other languages and to meet the needs of these people.

Interviewer: Do you think this policy is written? Is this legitimised?

AH: I do not know, but it is how I feel and see when I go and buy my groceries, I noticed that at the cashiers there are tags such as, “I speak Spanish, I speak French, German, English, and so on.” We have a lot of tourists and so we have to meet the needs of these tourists. I think in the hotels, they speak different languages. Maybe, even Asian languages as we now have Japanese, Koreans. I do not know if most of them speak English. I think the university should be able to meet the needs of these students. It should be official. Is it? I do not know. It is not my domain.

Interviewer: Do you agree with the way that this city approaches the issue of multilingualism? Can you give an example of a recent approach that you agree and disagree with?

AH: I do no have any idea of what they are doing or not doing. Is there a bilingual message in the tram? At the train stations, I know there are. They make the announcements in French, German, and English so that is good.

Interviewer: Is that within the jurisdiction of the city?

AH: It is SNCF. Maybe it is not the city administration. I do not really know. I think where they make effort is always related to tourism, maybe for the marché de Noel. They are doing many things. They every year invite another land/country so I find that it is very interesting to know the land’s culture. It is a kind of openness, but “c’est quelque chose de ponctuel.” It is done only once a year, but what do they do on daily basis, I do not know.

Interviewer: Do you think there is an area/aspect where they should do more with regards to the issue of multilingualism in the city?

AH: Maybe, as I said if there isn’t a translation in the trams, there should be one. It could be useful, I think in public transport, buses and tram.

Interviewer: Do you think they should extend help to those who do not speak the language?

AH: Par exemple des panneaux d’affichage, what is written in the streets to find your way, to use ticket distributor or things like that, there should be different languages so everyone will know how to use the tickets, how to use it, maybe, on the park meter too, or then to have pictograms can be useful. These are symbols that everyone can understand, maybe the signs too, some signs, yes tous qui dans la route, pictograms are easier to understand. Well that is universal, normally.
Interviewer: Do you think in your workplace, you should do more?

AH: Yes, I think we should have a team. I thought it exists that we can ask, for example, we have a Russian person, we can ask for a translator, but we had the example of the mother of (mentions somebody that the interviewer and the interviewee know). She never got one. I thought it exists, but I do not know how to make it work so it is not efficient enough.

Interview: Is Hôpital Civil under the city of Strasbourg? Is it nationally funded? Do you have dealings with the administration locale?

AH: They are part of the conseil d'administration, but I do not know if they make this kind of decisions. I do not think so.

Interviewer: Is it under the national level that they make decisions with regards to languages?

AH: No, it is more, they have their own, they have their director. I do not know if it is really this way, but Strasbourg is not Paris, it is not Bordeaux so even if it is a national, or if there are national decisions with regards to budget, or other things like that, but for the languages, I think it is local. Maybe, I am not right. Maybe, I should ask. I know in Strasbourg, it is a problem because of the many different nationalities.

Interviewer: How do you handle language barriers when you encounter a language you don’t understand?

AH: As I said, we try to find someone who could speak the language within our team, or maybe another team or department if we have the time. If not, we speak with our hands. It is sometimes difficult because it is very stressful to be in our work area because people that come are people with heart attack. They are already stressed. So we need to explain what we have to do and explain what we need to see with what is happening in their hearts, and what we try to do then is to make them feel comfortable by our attitudes. If they feel comfortable then it goes well even if they don’t really understand what we are doing. The second thing is we have to tell them what the treatment will be and so on. This is the second part, and I think the doctors can call someone to translate in the second time. It is not immediate. We are working in the emergency, and we have to do our work immediately, and so we speak with our hands. We cannot take time to find someone. The time element is very important. We have to work quickly.

Interviewer: In your area of expertise, do you use translation or interpretation? How are they handled? Do you think it is handled well and appropriately?

AH: It could be better, but we do not have the means to do it.

Interviewer: Why do you think you do not have the means to do it?

AH: As I said, when there are emergencies, we have no time. Otherwise, you can’t employ a person fulltime if it isn’t useful, if we have a Russian every month. I didn’t speak about another aspect of our work, we have to be multilingual because our “les appareils,” our equipment, most of the manuals are in English. Normally, it is obligatory to have translations, but most of the time they are not available. So we have to cope with the equipment. If we have to use, we have to read it in English. It is the same if you go to a Congress, Cardiology congress even if it is in France, most of the speakers speak English. Even the French, they make their presentation in English. I think for someone who works in the hospital, it is absolutely a must to be able to speak in English if you want to be a good worker.

Interviewer: Is it required to learn English?

AH: I think it is not required. For my colleagues who do not speak any English, it is really a difficulty. If in the
computer, there is an English message and you cannot read it, it’s really difficult.

Interviewer: An English message for whom?

AH: If you have done something wrong, and the warning is in English and you do not understand what was written, what do you do. They ask somebody else who understands English. That is what they are doing, but sometimes the person is alone so he has to cope.

Interviewer: Do you think that it should be required for everybody in the medical field to be at least well versed in English or in another language? Should it be a prerequisite?

AH: I think it should be encouraged.

Interviewer: You speak English very well. Who encouraged you to learn the language?

AH: No, it was my own choice. I learned it as an individual. I did not learn it at school because career path that I chose was a technical one, and we had only the choice of one foreign language. The second language which is English was only for two years because the first language was required in the lycée ou j’étais, it was German so only had two years of English at school, and then I learned it by enrolling and attended courses at the Université Populaire in the beginning and took some private courses at a private language school in the city. I had my English Bible. I read it everyday, and then, I bought English newspapers. It was difficult in the beginning, but I forced myself to read everyday.

Interviewer: Was there a high-ranking official in the hospital who encouraged you?

AH: It was my own will. I like this language, and some of my friends told me that if I want to be open and read good books in English that are not translated in French, then if you travel, it is the universal language so you can travel anywhere. Those were the reasons that motivated me.

Interviewer: Why do you think some of your co-workers never learned English? What hindered them?

AH: I think it was the same as it was for me. Their first foreign language was German, and maybe they did not see the need. Now, my younger colleagues could choose English as their first language so most of my younger colleagues speak English. If it is not fluently, they understand most of it even if they can’t speak fluently.

Interviewer: In the medical field, who should encourage the workers to be multilingual?

AH: I think, it should begin earlier at school. Maybe, this is a good thing. I think la ville de Strasbourg encourages international classes in schools. I think this is a very good thing - bilingual classes and things like that.

Interviewer: Should it just be English or do you suggest another language?

AH: Why not, some schools could propose other languages. That would be very good to have, you have some, certain lycées. they propose other languages. Maybe, it should be plus widespread, but for English, it should be universal. It should be compulsory. I do not think it is the case.

Interviewer: Have you recently witnessed difficulties experienced by an individual or group because of lack of proficiency in French?

Interviewer: Is there a language that you think deserves a boost in use of in visibility in the city?

AH: I would say English as I told you. I think it should be a priority that every young person should know.
AH: I think English and German. That is my point of view. Maybe, if you make a survey, there could be another language too, but I think with English, German and French, most of the people could be reached and could be helped in finding their way. As I told you, parking meters. The most essential things - for example buying a ticket, getting information on how to go about.

AH: It depends on what level. I think maybe in the neighbourhoods, maybe there is. In some areas of the city, you have mostly an African population. There should be something that should be appropriate with them.

AH: Maybe, someone who is employed and who can help them for example, fill in some forms or help them integrate in the French way of living.

AH: Yes, learn French. That is a requisite, I think. No, even to adapt. They can keep their own culture, but they are living in France and so they have to adapt to the ways in France. It would be interesting to have some people to serve as mediators to help them. People who speak French and speak their own languages. I think it would be important especially for women because if you have Turkish women maybe Asian women if they are not educated, often they stay at home so they have no real contact or no means to become part of mainstream society. Maybe, it would be a good thing if there are some people who could help them find the place where they can be active.

AH: Someone who can speak with his neighbours. Someone who is part of his neighbourhood. To find his/her place in the life of the neighbourhood more than in the city.

AH: I am an x-ray technician, and I am working in interventional cardiology so we have people who come. They have an appointment. They come with appointments and so when they come, we already know based on their names if they can speak French or not. For these people, we can ask someone to come to explain, if we have someone. The other part is the emergencies situation. Through the SAMU [French paramedic service], the patient comes who has already had a heart attack, and then they tell us that he only speaks Russian. In this situation, we can't find someone because the time is too short. So most of the time, we ask them if they could speak English or German or if they don't, we speak with our hands. We try to explain as best as we can.

AH: Plurilingual.

Interviewer: Which languages do you speak?
AH: French, German, English and a bit of Italian. I would like to learn Spanish.

Interviewer: Why?

AH: To travel to South America

Interviewer: Do your parents or grandparents speak other languages other than French? Which languages?

AH: They are bilingual. German and French

Context Questions

Interviewer: Which languages do you speak or interact with in your personal life?

AH: French, German, and English

Interviewer: your work life?

AH: German, Alsatian, and French. English sometimes is useful too.

Interviewer: Would you say that you are a keen language learner?

AH: I like learning. I couldn’t say that I am a keen language learner.

Interviewer: Have you experienced learning another language? If yes, how would you describe the experience? Was there anything significant about it?

AH: What I find essential is to communicate with other people so I am so frustrated when I cannot do so because of language barrier. I experienced this with the Russian woman and it was frustrating. That is why I would like to learn Spanish before going to South America. If you go there and can’t speak to anyone the experience is not worthwhile. If you go somewhere it is interesting to speak to people, to share, to be able to interact and so that is the main reason why I learned other languages.

Interviewer: Is there anything that we haven’t asked and you would like to add?

AH: I think multilingualism is a means to approach other people and so it should be encouraged to make a link between the different people that are living in the city – Africans, Asians, Arabs and so on. Maybe, it could be a good means to overcome the differences and to understand the cultures of others and to develop understanding among communities, not to be scared of the others and the differences but to be attracted by these differences because you can learn a lot – their way of cooking, things that they can qui pouvaient lies, connect you with others. Maybe there will be less violence. Problems among the different cultures, if there would be, if we would be interested in learning the language of others although people who come here should learn French. That is a necessity.

Interviewer: Do you think there is less effort on the part of the foreigners to learn French?

AH: I saw a German. He was in France for over 30 years, and he couldn’t speak French. I could not understand this. I know that in Alsace that you can live without speaking French because most of the people can understand Alsatian or German. I can’t understand the mentality of this person. He is in France. He is not in Germany. It is the same for English people. I think it is necessary to learn. If you go somewhere to live permanently, you should learn the language because it is the first step you take to integrate culturally.

Interviewer: Do you think a lot French people are open to the possibility of learning other languages?
AH: I heard that it is not the case. I think here as we are on the border so most of us are bilinguals and so Strasbourg maybe is special in France. I heard that most French people are not interested in learning another language. Now, as we are more on the international level, if you want to find a job and so on, it is always a plus if you speak another language. I think the younger generation is more open to learning another language. I heard someone today. He went to a university in Changji. His main purpose was to have something that he can put on his CV, which is a plus. He is learning Chinese, but the courses are in English. It is always something, a plus. If an employer sees this, it will be taken positively as he appears to be open to diversity; It is always considered as something positive.
INTERVIEW 3

City name: Strasbourg

Role of interviewee: Respondent 3 (Kindergarten or pre-school teacher; public sphere)

Name of the Interviewer: Eloise Caporal-Ebersold

Date: October 29, 2012

Interview Length: 55 minutes

Interviewer: What are your notions/perspectives of multilingualism? What does it mean to you?

EK: To me, the way I see multilingualism would be someone more than one language fluently. That is my perception, and when I think of multilingualism, it is often in the family setting. That is my first perception, but then….yes I guess.

Interviewer: Given your definition, which is in the family setting, let me invite you to think of multilingualism in the city level, would you consider Strasbourg as a multilingual city?

EK: Yes, in a way, but that is different. A multilingual city for me would be a city where there are multiple languages spoken.

Interviewer: So would you consider Strasbourg multilingual?

EK: Yeah… almost. Almost because there are a lot of people coming from different countries and different languages spoken but that doesn’t mean… I guess a multilingual city would be a place where everyone speaks multiple languages.

Interviewer: You think not everyone speaks multiple languages in Strasbourg?

EK: No. May be more than other cities but not everyone. Like you go to a shop not everyone speaks English and German.

Interviewer: Do you think that the issue of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city? Please elaborate or explain your answer. Do you think people are open to talking about multilingualism?

EK: I’m not sure. I think people know and this is a very personal point of view. People are usually proud of Strasbourg being a European capital so in that sense, it would be better could speak more languages too. That would go with Strasbourg being a European capital. I guess it would make sense if we move towards more multilingualism.

Interviewer: Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies, for example in terms of policy decisions? Explain your answer.

EK: Yes, in that way that first of all there needs to be something done in education. That is where it should get started because if you want the whole city to be multilingual, it has to start in education and school and the way you teach. I do not think France is a leading country in that area, if I am allowed to say that. That would mean, there would be choices in that area and choices in other areas, I guess. Maybe in, I guess in all the people who are in administration should speak more than one language. People in city halls, if that is the city policy or public places people would have to speak more languages. I guess
in shops too, in businesses, if that’s what we would want the city to be known for, to be, there would have to be an effort put in different areas.

Interviewer: Do you think at present, there are efforts being done in Strasbourg geared towards those you have just described?

EK: Honestly, I know in the area where I work in, in education, I do not think there are any. In the other areas, I don’t have any idea. I don’t really know. I don’t in education if there is much done. There is in a way that there are international schools. Yeah, there is. There are international schools. There is the European school, but these are schools for the children who already speak another language. I don’t think there is much done for the general population. I think not more than anywhere else.

Interviewer: For companies and businesses, in the economic sector?

EK: I guess it must be because to communicate, you have to be able to communicate with people who speak different languages, and there is no common language, it is a challenge. In this case, people need to learn at some point. Yeah, I know of some people who haven’t had jobs in Strasbourg because they weren’t fluent enough in English. That was the main language that everyone communicates in.

Interviewer: So the policy of the company is to be able to speak English?

EK: They had to speak English. I guess because there were a lot of people working there were English speaking foreigners.

Interviewer: What kind of company is this?

EK: It was “agro-alimentaire”, a food company, or food production company. It is an international company. They require their employees to speak in English. Obviously, that is the reason why he didn’t get the job. That is what they told him. He had everything except good English. He wasn’t good in English.

Interviewer: I am not really certain if you have a background, information on this. Do you agree with the way that this city approaches the issue of multilingualism? Can you give an example of a recent approach that you agree and disagree with?

EK: Honestly, I do not know. I can talk about schools. There are different partnerships. There is an effort in a way that they want to create more partnerships with Germany. There will be special finances if you do a project, which includes Germany. They are exchange programs for students, for teachers. For classes, a class in France and a class in Germany, even if it just across the border. There are efforts in that way and there are special finances, but I think that is the European parliament actually.

Interviewer: You don’t think it is in the city level?

EK: I do not know. I think it is the two, but that is the effort that’s made concerning Germany any way. There used to be language helpers or assistance. People who are native speakers, like a German speaking person who would come into the classrooms and give a lesson or help out with the lesson. They used to have them, but they have cut down on all of them now for lack of finances.

Interviewer: Is this recent?

EK: Yes, but this is national. I guess in the city, if we want to make more effort, we could bring some of those back in because at the moment, the national directives are that from CP onwards, that means from six years onwards, it is compulsory to teach a foreign language, and in Strasbourg, the foreign language is German, but it is the teachers, the class teacher who has to teach it. So if the class teacher
is not fluent in the language, like me, I am not at all fluent in German, I am not really good in German, well I have to teach the language that I do not know basically, which doesn't make sense at all to me.

Interviewer: Can you not choose another European language?

EK: No, I can't even teach English because in Strasbourg, in the schools here, in most schools, it is by school that the language is chosen, so it most schools, the language is German. I have to teach German.

Interviewer: How do you go about teaching the language?

EK: I can do the basics. They encourage us to use audio support.

Interviewer: Do you think it works?

EK: No.

Interviewer: Is there any way, you can mention this to your department chair that this is not ideal?

EK: I think they know that it is not ideal, but I think it is just a money issue, but this is nation-wide because why have they taken away the language assistants. This is in primary schools, in elementary schools. Maybe, there are still some, but there's hardly any. I haven't seen any in the past years.

Interviewer: I remember that there was somebody from the United States who came over.

EK: Yes, [mentions a name] but she wasn't in the elementary school. They have funds for high school, but none for the elementary level, when that is the age when you learn best.

Interviewer: Is there a language that you think deserves a boost in use of in visibility in the city?

EK: I would say, that we should be better at German because we live next to Germany and because we are not good at German. I mean some people, but most people are not fluent in German.

Interviewer: Is it a difficult language to learn?

EK: Yes, it is. It is not taught well. That is my point. Languages are not taught very well at school so it is normal that people do not speak it very well. Unless you’re gifted, really gifted in languages. I wish, I feel that I should speak better German because I am living in a border city or so. From Neudorf, it is just 10 minutes. It is very close.

Interviewer: If you could change one thing about languages in your city or maybe how languages are used, what would it be? Why?

EK: Will I make sense if I said, I am not really sure if I am answering your question, saying about doing something in education.

Interviewer: It is fine, my question is very general but of course you could be more specific where you are good at, in your field, in your domain.

EK: Well, I would put more accent, emphasis in languages in education in schools and give teachers the means, give students the means in learning another language with professionals, with language professionals and not just any one so that there would be a better level in languages all together, from the general population not just the people who have a special opportunity to learn. You see, I think that some people, they’ll be the immigrants, people who have come to Strasbourg, who come with another language. I mean obviously, they could speak other languages, and there are people who have been to
international schools or European schools, who’ve had a good level in the language, and who’ve had an opportunity to pursue that language in their school, and they obviously have a better level, but the general population, NOT. That is what I think so I would definitely change something in schools.

Human resources, language resources, language experts, even just assistants, yes, native speakers the ideal would be native-speaking teachers, I mean then that is difficult, I know to get native-speaking teachers or at least teachers who speak the language fluently and who special in that who go to schools giving German or English lessons or language assistants. That was their job too to come and give lessons and classes to different schools and to have that developed.

Interviewer: So the current scenario right now in the primary level is that there is a teacher in the classroom who is required to teach another language but who is not even fluent in the language.

EK: It depends on the person. It is possible that one is required to teach and does not even have a notion about the language.

Interviewer: And still is mandated?

EK: They have training for us. We can ask for training, but it is like a two-week training and in two weeks you are expected to know enough about the language to be able to teach it, which is a big challenge to me. And the other thing is the hour amount is 54-55 hours per year of teaching the language.

Interviewer: How is that distributed throughout the year?

EK: I mean you can choose. They encourage to use three times 30 minutes a week or 45 minutes in a week and that would be enough.

Interviewer: Is there somebody who checks and makes sure that the lesson plan has been done or the language has been taught?

EK: All teachers are normally inspected every three years or two or three years. That is the moment when our superior would come in and spend time to see what we have been doing or what we are doing and check and give his evaluation.

Interviewer: How do you feel as a professional, I presume, by the tone that you used that you would like to do more, but you feel that you are not the right person to deliver this lesson? How does it make you feel?

EK: O yeah, I feel frustrated because I feel like that I am not giving... At the moment, I do not have because right now, I am teaching in the pre-school, in the maternelle, and it is not compulsory in maternelle so I teach songs in the language, and I can do that. That is the most that I could do, but still if I would have to teach German lesson in elementary classes and I just feel like I’m teaching a mess. I am not teaching what I should be teaching. I feel like the children are just going to learn in a bad way. I am annoyed because I couldn’t even teach English. I am fluent in English.

Interviewer: Do you think there should be a policy to maybe not identify German as the only language to be learned at that level? Should they expand to maybe include English or other languages?

EK: Yes, I do not know how that would work. I mean the idea for the families to choose which language or the child can choose which language he would want to learn and learn that throughout elementary school at least. That is impossible. I understand why they need to have one language per school because if they do not have the means to teach even that one language, then it would even be harder to teach, but they could do and what they do encourage is that if the teacher and the school is fluent in the language, or is fluent in German, is that we exchange courses so like what happened, I used to live in Nancy, and I used to teach in a school there, and in that school, we taught English so what would
happen is I would go to other schools and teach English, and during that the time, the teacher from the other school would come and teach something else. That makes sense.

**Interviewer:** Are they doing that here?

**EK:** In some schools, it is done.

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**Background Questions:**

**Interviewer:** What is your role/position? What type of work do you do? What kind of agency/institution do you work for?

**EK:** So I am a pre-school teacher. I work for the Education Nationale. I work in a school in Strasbourg with the four to five year olds this year.

**Interviewer:** With what you have completed in the university level, would you be able to teach in the elementary level?

**EK:** Yes, with my training, I can teach from pre-school to elementary school.

**Interviewer:** That is until what grade?

**EK:** I do not know what the grades are: CM2, it would be 10 year olds.

**Interviewer:** Right now, is it your choice to be in this level?

**EK:** Yes, it is. You can choose, but normally you cannot have much of a chance to get what you want. You can ask for what you like, and then it depends on how much length of service you have. People who have been working longer will have first choice. Career means experience.

**Interviewer:** But to get this position that you have right now in Strasbourg must have been difficult.

**EK:** I got it because it is not really my position. This is not my job, not my class. I mean next year, I can’t. I am a substitute teacher. Yes, I am ‘cause what happened is if you could be “titulaire” or “non-titulaire” of a post or position then it is your class. Then, you can choose your school and no one can take your job. That is what it means, but you could only get that. You can only have that status if you get your job, it is really complicated, straight away. Let us say, if you get your job in March. Every year, you can ask for something else. You can have 30 choices. If you get what you asked for in March then you will be titulaire. There is a month before March or until March, you do your choices. You can ask for 30 different jobs, if you get one of them, and it is often in March or April, well then you will be titulaire. I do not know how you say that in English. If you do not get any of your choices, you are always guaranteed to have a job, but it won’t be yours. You can have it for a year, but they can give you something else. If you do not get something straight away, then they will give you something else, and it is often something that is not your choice.

That is what happened to me last year, I was school director and it wasn’t my choice. I did not get anything of my choice because I am too young in my profession so I did not get any of my choices, but they gave me something else that I did not wanted.

**Interviewer:** The job was huge as a school director.

**EK:** It was.
Interviewer: So if their notion is that because you are young or that your experience is not enough for a given position, and then they gave you the directorship.

EK: It is crazy. I asked something in that area, and they desperately needed someone. So they thought, she wants something in that area, then, let us give her the job, and no one else in the school wanted to handle that position.

Interviewer: Congratulations! Can you write in your resume that you worked for such position?

EK: Definitely! I moved out of it as soon as I could.

Interviewer: Was it difficult?

EK: It was! It was difficult because I did not have any notion.

Interviewer: So the teachers were under you?

EK: No, they weren’t under me. No. I was supervising them. I was ah….It was crazy. It was crazy. It was a good experience. At the end of the year, I thought, maybe I could again do it for another year, but I only thought that at the end of the year. It was a lot of, especially in that school, it was a lot of stress. It was a lot dealing with all the rubbish, all parents’ complaints, everything that went wrong. I had to deal with it, and there was a lot going on, especially that we did not have enough people. We did not have enough teacher-helpers. There were a lot of things that didn’t work out, and everything just falls on the school director basically so.

Interviewer: That is why nobody wants the job?

EK: Yeah….No. There are people who want the job, but it’s just it was a last minute situation. The old school director left at the last minute, and they were looking for someone straightaway.

Interviewer: Would you do it again if you were offered it?

EK: No.

Interviewer: What is your ideal work situation?

EK: Where I am now. This is my ideal job. Pre-school, 4-5 year olds. I really like younger kids, in an ordinary class with not too many kids. I have 26 at the moment.

Interviewer: In your work area, are there any particularly important or visible languages?

EK: Visible that does mean...

Interviewer: Something that you see in the public space or languages in those that are hanged or displayed in posters that can be seen or let us say used.

EK: We should be teaching German. Well, we sing songs in German. So there is German on the walls, and we listen to German songs, and that’s it. It is not a language that is used to communicate.

Interviewer: and French?

EK: Sorry, yeah, and French, but there are quite a lot of immigrants and children from immigrant families so there are a lot of different languages spoken at school by the parents or by the children.

Interviewer: Were you able to identify which languages?
EK: Last year there were even more. This year, there is Arab and Turkish and there is Russian. A few kids speak Russian, and the others I am not sure. I don’t really know.

Interviewer: Do you think there should be an effort for these languages to be promoted?

EK: Honestly, I do not really know if it would be possible to promote all languages. You know because that would be in the city. I think that if people want to learn their own language or the language where they come from I think there should be opportunities for them to be able to do that. I think there are, maybe not all languages.

Interviewer: …in their communities?

EK: Yes, in their communities. There are Arab lessons. You can easily take Arab lessons. I think there are different organizations who give these lessons or in the communities, Turkish too. Actually, in schools too. Now, they propose, how do you say. No, there is something that they are doing, a survey if we wanted, Arab, they had selected spoken languages, foreign languages, and they…

Interviewer: Who’s they?

EK: The ministry, the minister of education.

Interviewer: Is this in the national level?

EK: And I can remember last year, there was a survey that I had to give to the parents if they wanted, or which language they would want to be taught. So, I think it is outside of school time. I think there are five languages. There was Arab, Armenian, Turkish, maybe Russian. I can’t remember. There were like five languages. And if there were enough children in that school, they would be an effort made to teach that language, but I think it is outside of the school hours.

Interviewer: … but the teachers, will they be provided by the ministry?

EK: That is a good question. I do not know.

Interviewer: This was when?

EK: This was last year. I can remember giving the survey.

Interviewer: Were you here then?

EK: I was a school director then. I can remember.

Interviewer: Are there languages that are ignored? They are there, but they are ignored or less visible in your work area.

EK: Yeah, I mean as soon as it is a minority. I think about the parents and the children. Say there is a kid, an Armenian, no… a kid coming from Turkey…or some country that are not well-known, and he speaks an unknown language. It is a minority language, and it won’t be. I mean, it’s…it won’t have…His family will be the only people speaking it so in that way, it will be ignored, and I mean the… I think the languages that have a space, a position, or “il y a une place” how to we say, would be when there are more than two families who speak it and who get together, then you’ll hear it, then people will know they speak that language, then there will be a bit of a position, somehow, but it will still stay among them.

Interviewer: and not be recognised in the broader population.

EK: I mean in my class, I like doing that sometime in a year, a project to ask the students all the different
languages that are being spoken by the kids in the class, what they speak at home and get the parents involved and get some words translated just so that...Yes, I do that.

Interviewer: Is this a school project? Is this just your idea?

EK: It is my idea. It is not something that is compulsory or anything. It would be just to give them more value so that they can also talk about, there will be more link between the language at home and language at school. In that way, it could happen, and they can be recognised.

Interviewer: Last year, how was it? How did it go?

EK: It is interesting. I mean the children were proud. Often, they are actually shy to speak their own language, but when the mothers come in, did I say mothers. Supposedly, the mothers come in and talk and would tell a story in another language, they would really be proud because it is theirs. It is as if it is something personal that's come out into life or something and they could share and see. They are not ashamed.

Interviewer: Were the parents open?

EK: Not all of them. There were some, yeah! They were honoured, I think.

Interviewer: And those who were not open, what were their reasons?

EK: It was fear, fear, either they couldn’t speak French. They were afraid of being in school or being in a setting were they couldn’t communicate well, or it is fear of school. Parents are afraid of entering the school, the class.

Interviewer: Did you have a lot of parents who volunteered?

EK: No. I did not actually, but some yeah. I had three or four, I mean, I didn’t necessarily want because it was small intervention. I didn’t, I didn’t ask for more. I mean I might do something more on this, this year, if I have time. Even just concentrating on the children and letting them have their language have a place in the class so that they can share. I think it is important for them to have a link not just have two completely different worlds, and that others can know that they can share with others that they can from somewhere else.

Interviewer: Identity.

EK: Yeah. Exactly. Then, it is important for them.

Interviewer: How do you handle language barriers when you encounter a language you don’t understand?

EK: That is a good question. I ask for a translator. We often communicate because there are often parents who do not speak French or English, and a sign language is a good thing. I think a lot goes with the way you relate to the person. If you are open to the person, smiling, making them feel comfortable. Ahhh...What I’ve had to do sometimes when they, I would either ask if there is a brother or someone who could come to translate or I would write down, at the worst case, it would be that I would write down something, and they would find someone who could translate to them. They would write back down. That happened, yeah, that really happened.

Interviewer: If it is the other way around, if the person that you are talking to don’t have any idea. It is easier as a teacher.

EK: Yeah, I guess. No, it hasn’t happened.
Interviewer: The first thing you mentioned – a translator. Is there a way? Is there a person available?

EK: Often, there is. Even if, sometimes the child is able to do it. If it is difficult, I often ask for another person, if that is possible. Most of the time, there is, and if it is not, then that’s when. It has never happened that someone spoke to me in another language. I guess, I would just smile and say, sorry, I do not understand. You know, I mean or try and get someone else to translate.

Interviewer: So you used translation.

EK: yeah!

Interviewer: and interpretation.

EK: Yeah, interpretation.

Context Questions

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself to be monolingual/bilingual/plurilingual? Which languages do you speak? Do your parents or grandparents speak other languages other than French? Which languages?

EK: I am bilingual – English, French. My parents speak English. I was also born in England, and my grandparents. Well, yeah, my grandparents on my mother's side, they speak English, and on my father's side, French. They didn’t speak to us but they speak Alsatian, which is not a language but a dialect, but I do not speak that.

Interviewer: You understand a bit?

EK: No. My dad has never spoken really with us. He understands and can speak if you would. That's it.

Interviewer: You are bilingual. Would you say that there is one language that is more dominant?

EK: French. Yeah!

Interviewer: But you were born in England.

EK: I was six when we moved to France and so I learned French when I arrived in France, but then I learned to read in French, and I was surrounded by more French than English. We lived in the South of France, and it was only my parents who were speaking to me in English. No one else spoke it.

Interviewer: Did you attend an international school?

EK: No.

Interviewer: So mainstream schooling.

EK: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: So English was spoken to you by your mother and your father.

EK: Yeah. Mostly, my mother. My father speaks it but, yeah, he does, but if I was just speaking to my father, I would speak in French.

Interviewer: so much easier.

EK: yeah (laughs). And he would speak in French too.
Interviewer: Which languages do you speak or interact with in your personal life?

EK: I do not know if this answers your question. In church, I would speak in English. It is the language that I would like to read my Bible in and to pray, and stuff it is English. I guess, it is also because I have always done that. My mom, she had always prayed to us in English. In my work, it is mainly in French. Of course, around English speaking people, I speak, English.

Interviewer: In a week, how many hours for English and French?

EK: French all the time, and maybe, speaking or being with English speaking peoples.

Interviewer: Just on Sundays?

EK: Yeah. Wait. Do I have any English friends? Because at the moment, I don’t have. I used to have a best friend, who was American so I would speak a lot of English with her. Right now, I do not have any close friend who speaks English.

Interviewer: Are you aware when you switch from on language to another?

EK: Yeah! I am aware, but when I am with my parents, no. When we are at home no, not so much.

Interviewer: With your sisters, when you switch languages?

EK: French. But if we are at home, and we speak in English often we speak back to French and then back to English. We speak back and forth. As soon as there is a word that I can’t speak in English, then I would say it in French then English. With our mom, I switch back to English because she answers in English. And there, I am much less aware of what is happening. But outside, yeah, I am aware.

Interviewer: Have you experienced learning another language? If yes, how would you describe the experience? Was there anything significant about it?

EK: With regards to language learning, it was really difficult. People say that it should be easy because I already have two languages, but it wasn’t. I found it really difficult to learn.

Interviewer: You started when you were seven?

EK: No, I mean I had learned it for seven years, yeah for seven years. I guess I did not like my teacher.

Interviewer: And now, did you stop?

EK: No, no, no, it was during high school. I guess I just did not connect with my teachers. And I did not manage to, I did not feel speaking well. So, I just decided not to speak. Since I couldn’t do it well, so I quit. I just decided that it wasn’t for me.

Interviewer: So you would not consider yourself as a keen language learner?

EK: No, no because I had this experience.

Interviewer: If you were given, probably, another set of teachers, would it have changed anything?

EK: Maybe.

Interviewer: What were their styles?
EK: I would like to live in the country in which the language is spoken. I would be afraid to but I still would like to do this experience to go and live in a Spanish speaking country to see if I could learn another language or if it just me that I am not good at it.

Interviewer: I doubt it. You will learn if you will not have any other means to survive. Ye I already have two languages, that I am not good at it.

EK: Yeah, speaking id but it could be easy because I already have two languages,

Interviewer: You think teacher factor was really big?

EK: Probably yeah. I wasn’t really sure what went wrong. I guess I was also shy and speaking out loud in the classroom was not something I enjoyed doing. That is the only way one can really learn is to communicate. Because everything is the whole group, that was the way that we did it, the whole group, and I was not really confident in speaking in German. I did not feel that I could do it well so I dreaded speaking it in front of other people. Maybe, it if it were in smaller groups, maybe it would have been easier. And yeah, the teachers if they had been more encouraging.

Interviewer: and they were not?

EK: my first teacher, she was really, like that is good, that is not good.

Interviewer: It is either good or not good.

EK: I think she was German-Russian. She was very realistic, but when you are learning, you need, encouragement more than just the truth (laughs). That is true. I think I needed more encouragement. From then on, I thought it my mind, that I do not like German. I guess that did not help.

Interviewer: Would you still because you still have the opportunity to learn German. As you see Germany is just a neighbour country.

EK: Would I learn it? I wouldn’t mind actually taking lessons. I just have priorities. Now, I think it would be good to learn more German. I would like to now that school is over. It is just that there are other things that I would like to do. It is not on my priority list. It would take so much time and effort (laughs).

Interviewer: Is there anything that we haven’t asked and you would like to add?

EK: None that I can think of.

Interviewer: Thank you then. Thank you so much!

EK: You are welcome!
INTERVIEW 4

City name: Strasbourg

Role of interviewee: Respondent 4 (manager of a multinational telecommunications equipment company: economic and private spheres)

Name of the Interviewer: Eloise Caporal-Ebersold

Date:

Interview length: 40 minutes

Tract number: 811_0008

Interviewer: Do you have any notions of what multilingualism means? What does it mean to be multilingual?

DH: I think when we are practicing several languages, more than one, for example here, French, German, plus English and other languages. So it is about practicing two or several languages in one area, one company, one city.

Interviewer: Do you think Strasbourg is a multilingual city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

DH: Yes, I think so. It is a very multilingual city. We are close to Germany. People are really familiar with German on top of French. Then from history, people are really in contact with German, the German dialect, German culture. In that case, there is no issue with German language, and then on top of that the fact that it is a big city, there are many people living in Strasbourg, not only French. I am not sure what the figure is, but I am sure that there are many people who are not French. They are working, living. They are spending time in Strasbourg because it is a European city. It is a huge city. It is an economically significant city so I would say Strasbourg is a multilingual city.

Interviewer: Do you think that the issue of multilingualism, or the notion of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city, and if you may, please elaborate or explain your answer.

DH: Multilingualism is a sensitive matter in Strasbourg?

Interviewer: Personally, is it something sensitive, a topic that is difficult in the level of the city?

DH: No, oh… I wouldn’t say difficult. The people are open. The majority of people are willing to welcome, to work, to spend time with other people with other languages. Anyhow, in this city, in Strasbourg, I will say it isn’t an issue. It is not the same mentality with those who live in the country or globally in Alsace, but in Strasbourg, I would say, there is a good mindset. There is acceptability to welcome foreigners. We are completely in a bilingual situation. Between Germany and France, between Kehl and Strasbourg, there is a bridge. People are going there every weekend. German people are going
to Strasbourg. In Strasbourg, Germans are everywhere. I would say it is completely natural for many years, which is not the case in the countryside and in the small villages. If you take the last election, Strasbourg had 25%. In the countryside, they elected right, extreme right. I am not so proud of that, to be honest. I would say in the city, there is a different culture. Maybe the culture and the level of, not education, but I think everything helps in that kind of situation. The people are very open-minded in Strasbourg. I would say to welcome, to practice, and even in the students’ area, they are many foreigners who are in the local universities. There are many bridges with other universities and other schools in Strasbourg so it is really ah…how can I say…ah…yes, it is a good signal for the city that there is no issue. That multilingualism, this is not a difficulty for Strasbourg, I would say. The city is willing to welcome people with other culture, other languages because the city, the mayor and his team is ah…they are making a lot of ah…effort to bridge other either universities, either companies. I know that there are also links between external companies with exploitation guide, and umm… if we as a company had to welcome a Canadian, three years ago, four years ago, who was willing to work in France for three years with his family. He was from Ottawa, and question, “Do you prefer Paris?” “Do you prefer Strasbourg?” The person said, “No, I prefer Strasbourg because Paris is a so big; Strasbourg is a smaller city, and I am sure that I will be welcomed warmly in Strasbourg. That was one signal, and he was warmly welcomed in Strasbourg. There is an international school in Strasbourg as well to welcome the children from all these families. That’s all good signals to…

Interviewer: How long did he stay?

DH: He stayed three years, three years with his wife, his children. They spent a very good time here. Now, they are back in Ottawa, but they had a good time. They learned French. So, I would say Strasbourg is a good… I do not see any issue with this multilingualism in Strasbourg, but I do not have any precise example of communities, I am not sure. I know German, English, other languages, I do not have precise examples. Strasbourg is a well-known city, and people feel good. It is not too huge. It is a normal-sized city. Ah, bon! The Alsace region is maybe different, but it is not linked to Strasbourg.

Interviewer: Are you saying that Strasbourg has characteristics of its own that are not similar to Alsace at the regional level?

DH: It is not similar to the regional level. I would say there is umm… through the history because Alsace was more German than French. Ummm… Alsace was a German region. Historically, Alsace was part of Germany for 1400 years and only 300 years French so my parents never learned French at school. My grandmother talked to us in German. They cannot speak French. In history, in some cases, in some villages, it’s very difficult to welcome other people, but I would say, Strasbourg for me is a good example of a multilingual city. It is a modern city. People are well educated, are open, even if in some particular small neighbourhood, it is possibly different. But I would not say that it is an issue for me.

Interviewer: Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies? Following what you are saying that Strasbourg is a multilingual city. Do you think there are also some challenges in the administrative level, maybe also in the enterprise and the business sector? Do you think that the co-existence of all these languages is also a challenge? Do you think it is a challenge for the city? Do you think it posts a challenge for the local government?

DH: (clearing his throat) Umm. Yes, I think the co-existence of multiple languages in a city is a real challenge for the local government in the sense that they need to take into account the people in their day-to-day life. You cannot ignore these people. You need to…..if it is one per cent of the population, there is no issue, but if it 10 per cent in terms of… yes, maybe, you need to bring them all support.

Interviewer: What do you think is the kind of support that they need?
DH: Maybe you need to have…um… your employees or those who are welcoming these people in the administration need to talk maybe either English or the language of the major community in Strasbourg. At least they need to be very open. They need to understand. Maybe these people cannot speak French, which is normal when they… So maybe those who are welcoming these people need to practice English and other languages. So it is a question of training, of effort. They need probably to translate the major documents just not to provide them French written notice but bilingual, French-English.

Interviewer: Do you think all the documents should have translated…umm…versions?

DH: Of course. The major documents should be translated.

Interviewer: If you may suggest in which languages? Do you have any suggestions?

DH: No, I don’t. No, I cannot tell you what…uh… I think you should just take the population, and say, maybe 10% of the population is muslim or 5% is uh… I am not aware what is the main… It is linked to the culture. It is linked also to the language, but I would say that the local government should, cannot ignore this multilingualism in the city of Strasbourg. Even in restaurants, even if you go to the restaurant. Ok, it is a commercial topic. In the restaurant, you have a menu in French, German and English, but maybe there could be another translation or another language.

Interviewer: That is a lot of work for the restaurant.

DH: Yes, a lot of work, but it is also a sign of respect to the people. I am not sure if it should be Italian. Well, I am not aware of the major population groups in Strasbourg. Um… Even, I am not so curious to see the people when I am spending time in Strasbourg. I think the local government has to take into account this kind of co-existence in the way they are welcoming these people in the city and the way they are making their lives easier even if you will phone, the websites. Everything should be translated ha… French, English, which maybe is already the case, but….

Interviewer: Yes, in some webpages of the Strasbourg website, that is the case, for some pages but not in all pages.

DH: Yah? But not in all of the pages?

Interviewer: That brings us to the next question. Do you agree with the way that this city, as of now, approaches the issue of multilingualism, If you can provide, an example of a recent approach, if there is and if you agree or disagree with these?

DH: If I agree with how the city approaches the issue of multilingualism? Umm… I would say… umm, I agree, but I am not so familiar to be honest. I am not living in the city. I can just observe at the high level that everything is going smoothly in Strasbourg.

An example of a recent approach that I agree with or disagree with… I think there was a recent project in Strasbourg, if I remember very well on the mosque for the muslims. I think it is the right thing to do. We should respect them in their religion, in their culture. It was I think the right thing to do, to build these mosques in Strasbourg. Ah bon, even if for some people, it could be strange. It is normal. We have to be open and to respect these people. Maybe that is one example of multilingualism.

Interviewer: Yes, I think it does have to do multilingualism.

DH: Yes, maybe there is no direct link but…

Interviewer: Maybe this is a way to make them feel integrated because they are given a place in the city. Is that what you are saying?
DH: Yah! Yah! They are recognised because they have a place in the city.

Interviewer: Otherwise, can you cite an approach that you do not agree with?

DH: I am sorry. I cannot tell you. I am not familiar with Strasbourg as a big city.

Interviewer: But do you think there is more that the city could do?

DH: Ummm… In terms of multilingualism, yes, sure I would say the city of Strasbourg can do more to welcome…maybe in that kind of communication area, just to remind and to communicate better. I think Strasbourg is really open on this issue and is willing to do all effort to welcome people because I think it is ummm… It will enrich all the local people. They local people will be enriched by the other people in terms of language, in terms of habits, of openness. This maybe is not so well known, but I am sure Strasbourg is making strong effort, but maybe in the communication area, there is …

Interviewer: There is a need to…do more?

DH: There is a need to enforce. Maybe, focus on the major foreign population, but maybe I am not giving you the best example. I am not a city guy to be honest, but umm (laughs). In terms of communication, the city could do better. I am not sure if I disagree, but maybe it is a challenge for the city to enforce.

Interviewer: Is there, well I do not know if you are able to answer this question, but maybe based on your observation - Is there a language that you think deserves a boost in use of in visibility in the city? Of course we know that Alsatian is a regional language, French, and maybe there are a couple of other languages that exist because of newcomers, foreigners who are coming in the city, the students who are here, new immigrants – do you think there is a language or there are languages that need to be reinforced? As you said, that needs to be more visible in the city?

DH: If there is a language that needs to be more visible in the city?

Interviewer: or maybe used in documents for instance? Do you have any idea of which language or languages these should be?

DH: Umm. No, no… I cannot say.

Interviewer: Do you think English is…

DH: I think English is the first one that should be reinforced everywhere. It should be a priority before German.

Interviewer: So if you have to come up with a list of priority languages, which should be the very first?

DH: English should be the very first. It is a standard language. If it is not the first one today in terms of boost, then it should be, German also due to the proximity, maybe Spanish. We should take into account depending on the population, maybe Turkish, but I am not sure. I am not aware of the figures. Let us say this is the third or the fourth one.

Interviewer: So are you saying that all the documents should have translations in these languages?

DH: Yes, all official documents should have versions in English and maybe the minor documents should also be translated into German or in other languages like Spanish. It depends really on which population is the most important after French.

Interviewer: after the French? So the French version should be there?
DH: Yes, sure, but in terms of being multilingual, I think English should have the first place.

Interviewer: If you could change one thing about languages in your city, what would it be? Why?

DH: About languages? I think to communicate more. We can see everywhere French advertising, local messages, maybe these can also be translated. Put French and English. At least French and English to bring a strong signal that Strasbourg is a multilingual city, on the buses, maybe. The local government should reinforce this communication stream in the city. Currently, the effort is on German and French. Strasbourg needs to be more pro-active especially in the use of English.

Interviewer: So right now, you are not satisfied with the effort the local government is doing especially with regards to the use of English?

DH: Strasbourg could do better in terms of communication. If the foreign population is around 10%, I do not know, could be 30,000 people or 10,000 people, I am not sure. That’s a lot. They need also to be taken into account in terms of communication, in terms of… In the city, people speak English very well. The people I work with. People who work in the administration should be fluent as well.

Interviewer: Do you think they should be required to be able to speak in English?

DH: They should be required, yes. They should be trained. They should be required to be multilingual.

Interviewer: Primarily have a strong knowledge of English?

DH: Yes. A strong knowledge of English is not only for the international companies. It is also good for the city. They should have strong communication skills in English.

Interviewer: That is good for languages schools (laughs).

DH: Yes. It is good for language schools. Why not, huh? Yes, maybe in that sense, it could be changed.

Interviewer: If I may just ask you a personal question, what motivated you to study English when you can already speak it? You have a very good sense of the language. Why is it necessary for you to push yourself further? What is your motivation?

DH: Primarily, professional motivation. I need to use, to practice English in my professional life.

Interviewer: How often in a day do you use the language?

DH: One hour per day, half an hour.

Interviewer: So it is on a daily basis?

DH: Yes, it is on a daily basis. So I need to practice to be skilled in English. So first motivation is professional, which was not the case 10 years ago. I made the wrong choice to learn German in my education because I was more in the technical area so there was only one foreign language on top of French. So the choice I made when I was young on the job-on-site, because here 30% of the people working were Germans so I studied German. I learned English by myself later, but my only foreign language was German, but now, for 10 years, I sensed the need and the motivation to study, to practice English on side through my professional environment, but sure to be able to communicate, discuss with other people when traveling.

Interviewer: Do you still use German at work?
DH: No, I do not use German. I speak German with my German colleagues, ok, just for fun, but not in the professional setting.

Interviewer: Do they speak French as well?

DH: They speak French. They speak English. Ok, the standard language is English.

Interviewer: What is your role/position?

DH: I am responsible to operate the IT applications, mostly in the Finance and Supply Chain areas and to support the ALU business in an efficient manner.

Interviewer: What type of work do you do?

DH: I have to do with management of Solution Leaders and Application Managers, Governance of HP and CDC (China Delivery Centre), I am interacting with Business stakeholders.

Interviewer: What kind of agency/institution do you work for?

DH: I work for Alcatel-Lucent - IT department.

Interviewer: In your work area, are there any particularly important or visible languages? Are there languages that are ignored or less visible in your work area? Which languages? Are other languages visible in your work area? How are they visible? Why are they visible?

DH: English and French are the two languages used in ALU.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself to be monolingual/bilingual/plurilingual? Which languages do you speak?

DH: Alsatian, French, German, English.

Interviewer: Do your parents or grandparents speak other languages other than French? Which languages?

DH: Grandparents: Alsatian – no French.

Parents: Alsatian, French.

Interviewer: Which languages do you speak or interact with in your personal life?

DH: French, Alsatian, German.

Interviewer: In your work life?

DH: French, English.

Interviewer: Would you say that you are a keen language learner?

DH: I am interested in learning new languages.
INTERVIEW 5

City name: Strasbourg

Role of interviewee: Respondent 5 (language Teacher at a private language school; educational sphere, private sphere)

Name of the Interviewer: Eloise Caporal-Ebersold

Date:

Interview length: 15 minutes

Tract number: 811_0009

Interviewer: What do you think of multilingualism?

PS: It is interesting because you learn multiple languages, multiple cultures.

Interviewer: Do you think it is something beneficial for a city, for a country?

PS: Absolutely. Yeah! Of course! It is a major advantage for any child, any person to actually learn in these conditions.

Interviewer: Do you think Strasbourg is a multilingual city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

PS: That is a difficult question to answer.

Interviewer: Why?

PS: Umm... Well, the people living in Strasbourg, staying in Strasbourg are not exactly multilingual so to speak. They are mostly French. They don't speak their local language anymore. They don't speak Alsatian, which normally people used to learn. They just speak French. They just learn foreign languages in school so it is not exactly multicultural in this sense. It's very multicultural in the sense that a lot of foreign companies are around the city and foreigners come and work here, but they never stay long so is it really therefore multilingual, multicultural? I wouldn't say.

Interviewer: Do you think that the issue of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

PS: I wouldn't say so. Well, it is true that most of the people working here, they understand the difference, the cultural differences among people, between Germany and France because it is a border city but other than that, there is actually no effort in the sense that French people are welcoming.

Interviewer: Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies, for example in terms of policy decisions? Explain your answer.

PS: Absolutely.

Interviewer: In what sense? Maybe in terms of policy decisions, do you think there are challenges?
Policy maybe less than, oh well if the policies include choosing if the school should provide foreign language teaching, then there is a budget that goes well into that. Well, yeah that would be a challenge because then they will have to choose in which language, and right now, the main focus is on English and German but not really more exotic languages.

I am not sure if you are aware about the different ways in which the city approaches the issue of multilingualism. Do you agree with the way that this city approaches multilingualism? There are a lot of people from different countries that are in Strasbourg, especially that we host the University of Strasbourg with students coming from the different parts of the world and then there are migrants from Africa, from Turkey, from a lot of other countries, do you agree with the way the city approaches multilingualism?

Well, it hasn't really changed that much because well of course, France had actually as a colony. There was also, there was always a stream of foreigners coming over so but for… it's more a political problem. Multiculturalism is not exactly… It's tolerated, but I think it is not accepted because people have to integrate. People have to learn French, and although well, in schools, they don't offer Arabic as a foreign language.

Do you think it should be offered?

Umm. Well, if the children who will grow up here, they want to actually… Of course, they learn their language at home, probably, but the following generations will actually still benefit from that. If the same things happen as Alsatian, then the language of their grandparents and their origins will disappear.

Do you think languages such as those that you mentioned should be reinforced?

It should be a choice at least. Maybe not for us, but they should be given a choice.

I mean reinforced not forced.

In some schools, I think yeah! Sure. They offer Chinese, Japanese in some schools.

How do we choose the languages?

Mmm…

Which languages should be given importance for example?

Well, as far as modern society evolves, I would probably say, English. That is undeniable. It is probably the language that will weigh mostly in the balance for future education, but then again, it really depends on every, well…Mostly what the parents would like to do with their children because they would probably get the choice in the first place because they are going send their children to school. It depends on when the language will be offered, at what level in school. At six years old and they start to go to school, there are schools that provide German language, classes, meaning not really lessons but the class is in either German or in English. The children learn like that, and this stage it is the choice of the parents on whether to put them in that school or in other schools. Later on of course, if the child has the ability to express himself and say I would like to learn mostly English or German because he already has some ideas of what he wants to do, then it will be his choice later on.

I understand that you are saying English is one of the languages that we can or we should consider to boost, is there any other language that deserves to be reinforced in use because it is visible in the city?

Well, actually, English should be the first choice as a foreign language because that is what you have to do for future employment, but it is not a plus anymore, meaning it is not an advantage anymore that you have English as a second language. Everybody starts speaking in English at least if you consider
jobs that allow flexibility, and if you need to travel a lot. Another language that would be interesting and
should be offered is a non-European language.

Interviewer: Do you have an idea which language?

PS: Sure, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, ahh… well, Spanish is a European language but Spanish is spoken in a
lot of other places outside of Europe so Spanish also be a possibility or more exotic languages like Thai
or African languages.

Interviewer: If there is one thing that you could change one thing about languages in your city, what would it be?
Why?

PS: It is difficult to say. There are two possible changes either a given school should special in one exotic
language that no other school has because it would not make sense for every school to offer the same
foreign language and then have a limit in how many foreign languages would be available in the city
if everybody provides for example Russian, then who will provide any other language teaching so
that is one possibility. The other possibility is the way it is taught, not to teach the language like Latin,
like a dead language or provide teaching at an early age, if that is possible. Well, being able to get to
the French baccalaureate, keeping the language through the years and having the classes be in the
language not just having language classes, like for example, maybe if the person chooses Russian,
they will have a full day of Maths or whatever in the language.

Interviewer: Teaching the subject matter in the language.

PS: Right! These are maybe the two possibilities.
Interview 6

City name: Strasbourg

Role of interviewee: Respondent 6 (directrice de la Halte Garderie à la Meinau; public sphere)

Name of the Interviewer: Eloise Caporal-Ebersold

Date: November 8, 2012

Interview length: 30 minutes

Tract number: 811_0014

Intervieweur: Today is the 8th of November,

NK: Yes, the 8th.

Intervieweur: We are here to answer questions on the issue of multilingualism. I have prepared the questions in both English and French so I will use the two languages as we go along the interview. Qu’est-ce que c’est multilinguisme, d’après-vous ? Pensez-vous que Strasbourg est une ville multilingue? Merci de bien vouloir préciser et expliquer votre réponse.

NK: D’après-moi, qu’est-ce que c’est le multilinguisme ? C’est parler plusieurs langues. En effet c’est la capacité de parler, de comprendre plusieurs langues.

Intervieweur: Ça c’est le niveau d’individus, est-ce que vous pensez que la ville de Strasbourg est une ville multilingue ? Do you think that Strasbourg is a multilingual city?

NK: Oui, je pense que c’est multilingue la ville de Strasbourg parce qu’il y a des habitants, des Strasbourgeois qui parlent français, qui parlent alsacien. Il y a des Allemands qui habitent à Strasbourg qui veulent parler leur langue, allemand. Il y a beaucoup de gens d’autres pays qui viennent habiter à Strasbourg, quand on se promène à Strasbourg on entend les gens qui parlent une autre langue que le français.

Intervieweur: Pensez-vous que la question du multilinguisme est une question sensible dans cette ville? S’il vous plaît précisez ou expliquez votre réponse. Veuillez justifier votre réponse. Do you think that the issue of multilingualism is a sensitive matter in this city? Please elaborate or explain your answer.

NK: Une question sensible, je ne dirais pas que c’est sensible. Je dirais plutôt difficile parce que, au quotidien, um...au quotidien dans ma vie personnelle, ce n’est pas difficile parce que c’est vrai que je parle allemand, je parle anglais donc quand je croise des gens qui ne parlent pas français, on peut se comprendre mais dans ma profession c’est difficile parce que je croise des gens qui ne parlent pas du tout le français, qui ne parlent pas allemand, qui ne parlent pas anglais et la communication est très, très difficile parce que eux comprennent pas ce que moi je veux leur dire et moi je ne comprends pas non plus que leur demande à eux.

Intervieweur: Pour les gens qui sont originaires de Strasbourg, est-ce que vous pensez que c’est aussi difficile ou sensible pour eux ? Je ne sais pas si vous voulez utiliser le mot sensible.

NK: Non, je crois que les gens qui sont originaires de Strasbourg et de l’Alsace ont toujours été multilingues, bilingues du fait de l’Allemagne qui est à côté, donc Français et Allemands qui ont l’habitude de parler deux autres langues, au moins de les entendre.

Intervieweur: Pensez-vous que la coexistence de plusieurs langues dans la ville de Strasbourg est un défi pour
l’administration locale ? Do you think that the co-existence of multiple languages in the city brings with it some challenges and choices for the local government and companies, for example in terms of policy decisions? Explain your answer.

NK : C’est un grand défi parce que justement il y a des gens par exemple qui viennent des pays de l’Est pour leur faire comprendre l’administration française c’est pas évident. Il faudrait avoir un traducteur tout le temps avec nous et ces gens mettent parfois du temps à apprendre la langue française et on se trouve parfois face à des problèmes de communication ou de non-compréhension. Et de non-communication après… ben… Surtout ici, à la crèche je pense que pour l’administration aussi parce qu’ils veulent chercher les papiers si eux ne parlent pas le pas français, si les gens qui les accueillent à la mairie ne parlent pas leur langue… ben…

Intervieweur : Pour les commerces de la ville ?

NK : Ça peut être un défi. Un problème non, peut-être pas parce que les commerçants peut-être ont l’habitude de parler en anglais et dans les commerces c’est plus visuel, les objets sont visuels donc on peut parler avec les mains. Dans l’administration c’est difficile de parler avec les mains.

Intervieweur : Est-ce que c’est aussi sensible en terme des décisions politiques ?

NK : Oui, je pense que c’est sensible parce que dès que s’implique à mon avis le… Alors est-ce que… Est-ce que les gens qui ne parlent pas une autre langue quand ils viennent au territoire français, veulent s’installer en France, est-ce qu’ils apprennent le français pour pouvoir s’intégrer ou est-ce qu’on fait le choix d’avoir la possibilité d’avoir des traducteurs pour leur parler dans leur langue pour pouvoir les intégrer ? Je pense que c’est une question très sensible quand même.

Intervieweur : Je ne sais pas si vous savez comment la ville de Strasbourg aborde la question du multilinguisme, mais je vais quand même demander ça, mais si par exemple vous n’avez pas d’exemples on ne continue pas avec cette question – êtes-vous d’accord avec la façon dont la ville de Strasbourg aborde la question du multilinguisme ? Oui, pourquoi/ Non, pourquoi ? Do you agree with the way that this city approaches the issue of multilingualism? Can you give an example of a recent approach that you agree and disagree with? I do not know if you can provide examples if you do then it would be great.

NK : Alors, les exemples que j’ai moi, humm…se sont des conférences qui ont lieu pour des étudiants ou les Strasbourgeois qui ont lieu en anglais. Humm…maintenant, je vois mal comment il pourrait y avoir des conférences avec d’autres langues parce que la langue la plus connue ici c’est quand même l’anglais… ben… la « plus parlée » entre guillemets, celle qui permet aux gens de se connaître et de se comprendre ça serait l’anglais. Donc, le système de conférence en anglais ce n’est pas mal, il y a beaucoup dans la bibliothèque, on organise des cafés dans plusieurs langues, ça c’est intéressant pour comprendre, pour apprendre les autres langues, pour les pratiquer ça c’est très bien. C’est des petites choses sur Strasbourg, moi je trouve que c’est très bien justement pour qu’on pratique d’autres langues parce qu’à l’école pour apprendre d’autres langues on est très, très à la pointe en France.

Intervieweur : Il n’y a pas beaucoup d’opportunité pour pratiquer ?

NK : Oui. Il faut que si les enfants pour apprendre une langue à l’école c’est surtout avec les « native speakers » qui peuvent apprendre leur langue d’origine aux enfants. C’est plus facile pour la langue qui soit transmise.

Intervieweur : mais ce n’est pas le cas en ce moment ?

NK : Non, ce n’est pas toujours le cas.

Intervieweur : Y a-t-il une langue que vous pensez mérite un coup de pouce à l’utilisation de la visibilité dans la ville ? A
votre avis y a-t-il une langue particulière autre que le français qui mériterait d’être soutenue ou plus visible dans la ville ? Is there a language that you think deserves a boost in use or in visibility in the city?

NK : A part le français ?

Intervieweur : Oui, à part le français.

NK : Je dirais l’anglais quand même. Ça sera plus l’anglais parce que les allemands, ils parlent bien anglais si on met l’avant l’allemand, ça va bloquer les gens qui viennent d’Angleterre ou qui viennent d’Italie qui savent parler anglais. Je dirais plutôt l’anglais mis en avant sur Strasbourg.

Intervieweur : Si vous pouviez changer une chose au sujet des langues dans votre ville, que changeriez-vous ? Pourquoi ? If you could change one thing about languages in your city, what would it be? Why?

NK : Moi que j’aimerais que tous les gens qui arrivent en France, enfin à Strasbourg, qui veulent s’installer à Strasbourg et qui ne parlent pas de tout la langue française aient des possibilités faciles apprentissage de cette langue parce qu’on se trouve vraiment face à des difficultés de communication. Je ne sais pas si vous arrivez vous imaginez des gens qui parlent que russe, qui arrivent ici, ils ne parlent pas anglais, ils ne parlent pas allemand, ni français, il faut que nous leur expliquons comment inscrire leur enfants on peut les accueillir au jardin d’enfants. C’est très, très difficile. C’est des cours d’adultes, c’est vraiment l’immersion de la langue française.

Intervieweur : Est-ce que vous savez s’il y a beaucoup d’opportunité pour eux pour apprendre ?

NK : pour apprendre ? Ici, à la Meinau, il y a des associations pour apprendre le français. Oui, si, si... il y a des associations. C’est...je cherche le nom. Ça va me revenir. On a le nom…

Intervieweur : C’est gratuit ?

NK : Oui, je pense que c’est gratuit. Le problème c’est ah... c’est souvent, ça s’adresse beaucoup aux femmes, et c’est bien qu’elles apprennent le français parce que c’est elles en suite qui vont parler en français aux enfants.

L’association s’appelle APAM.

Intervieweur : Which stands for? C’est un acronyme pour Association ?

NK : Association pour

Assistant Directeur: Attends je vais chercher.

NK : Association pour l’Apprentissage… peut-être M pour à la Meinau… Tu vas chercher le nom ? (à son assistante)

Intervieweur : Je vais chercher le nom aussi.

NK : Cette association, elle est bien plantée sur notre quartier. Elle donne les cours en français aux femmes arabes, aux femmes turques, et maintenant aussi aux femmes tchétchènes.

Intervieweur : Is there a way for people to know that this association exists? Comment les gens apprennent l’existence de l’association ?

NK : Je pense que c’est le bouche à oreille dans le quartier. Il me semble, parce que je ne sais pas du tout, ou alors au centre socio-culturel peut-être. Ils font la publicité seulement pour les femme pour le cours de femmes en français, et les cours de français ont lieu dans des appartements à la Meinau et dans
des écoles.

Intervieweur : D’accord. Il y a plusieurs niveaux aussi ?

NK : Oui, il y a plusieurs niveaux, mais là on démarre vraiment à zéro pour certaines, vraiment on démarre de rien. La difficulté je dirais c’est après pour ses femmes là souvent c’est des mamans qui ont des enfants en bas âges, donc elles veulent aller au cours mais il faut faire garder des enfants. Pour faire garder les enfants souvent c’est difficile parce que comme elles viennent d’arriver, elles ne connaissent pas beaucoup de monde, les enfants, elles ont du mal à les confier. Là c’est une difficulté. Quand elles ne parlent pas encore le français quand elles viennent se renseigner pour les inscriptions, c’est difficile de leur expliquer les processus pour les inscriptions.

Intervieweur : Donc, comment vous avez géré ce problème avec les femmes qui ne parlent pas le français ?

NK : Alors, moi, j’ai...ah...parfois dans l’établissement, j’ai du personnel qui parle le turc ou du personnel qui parle arabe. Parfois, je sollicite ces personnes là pour m’aider un petit peu à traduire. Je connais maintenant des mamans qui parlent tchétchène, je peux leur demander d’être là pour faire la traduction aussi. En fait, on a des petits réseaux comme ça de connaissance pour faire les traductions lors des inscriptions. On peut aussi solliciter la ville de Strasbourg pour avoir des traducteurs.

Intervieweur : Il y a un service ?

NK : Oui, mais il y a un délai d’obtenir un traducteur, c’est parfois un peu long. Parfois, il faut attendre un mois pour avoir un traducteur. Alors, ce n’est pas toujours simple.

Intervieweur : Avec qui je peux coordonner pour avoir beaucoup d’information à propos de ce service ? Il y des informations sur le site de Strasbourg ?

NK : Il y en a, peut-être. Moi, je vais demander. C’est le centre médico-social qui…vous voyez le centre médico-social et puéricultrice?

Assistant directeur : à côté de la police à la Meinau, rue Schulmeister.

NK : Il y a Mme. Hilber, elle est puéricultrice. Elle fait appel à des traducteurs parce qu’ils ont des familles qui ne parlent pas français en consultation. C’est aussi délicat d’expliquer des choses.

Sur le répondant:


NK : En fait, je travaille pour la ville de Strasbourg. Je suis la directrice du jardin d’enfants et de la halte garderie municipale ici à la Meinau-Canardière. Donc, c’est moi qui est en charge de faire fonctionner l’établissement, d’accueillir les familles, de gérer l’équipe, faire que tous se passe bien. On accueille 85 enfants.

Intervieweur : Dans votre espace de travail, y a-t-il des langues particulièrement importantes ou visibles? Pourquoi sont-elles visibles ou importantes ?

NK : Importante, de quel sens ?

Intervieweur : Importante parce qu’utilisée.

NK : C’est la langue française. Oui, nous utilisons essentiellement le français.
Intervieweur : Est-ce qu’il y a des langues qui existent mais ignorées ? À votre avis, diriez-vous qu’il y a des langues qui sont ignorées ou moins visible dans votre espace de travail? Quelles langues?

Assistante directrice : le Tchétchène

NK : Non, ce n’est pas ignoré. Est-ce que les langues ignorées pour vous ce sont des la langues que l’on n’a jamais rencontrées ?

Intervieweur : Elle existe peut-être…mais…


Intervieweur : C’est beaucoup.

NK : Oui, c’est beaucoup.

Intervieweur : Dans votre domaine d’expertise, utilisez-vous un outil de traduction ou un interprète? Comment sont-ils utilisés? Pensez-vous que ces méthodes sont bien gérées et de manière appropriée?

NK : Je vais vous dire tout de suite, non. Je n’ai pas d’outils de traduction. Moi, je comprends l’allemand et je le parle. L’anglais, je le parle moins bien mais je le comprends. Laura parle italien couramment. Donc c’est nos connaissances à nous qui nous permettent de parler une autre langue, mais on n’a pas d’outil informatique ou dictionnaire. On a rien, pas d’outil.

Intervieweur : Est-ce que vous pensez que c’est nécessaire peut-être parce que vous rencontrez plusieurs langues.

Assistante directrice : Je pense que nous devrions proposer une formation, avoir des interprètes.

NK : Moi, je pense, j’aimerais bien pouvoir améliorer ma pratique et ma connaissance de l’anglais.

Intervieweur : Il n’y a pas de possibilité en ce moment ?

Assistant directrice : On ne propose pas de formations.

NK : Non, je pense que pour notre niveau ça serait bien qu’on ait des cours de langues. Ça c’est déjà pour parfaire les langues qu’on connait parce que je vous disais avant la langue si on ne la pratique pas on la perd. Alors, je continue à la comprendre mais pour la parler c’est difficile. Donc, il faut se replonger dans le bain de la langue pour vraiment pouvoir la parler mieux et ça sera peut-être aussi bien que dans l’autre service, il y a des gens volontaires qui peut-être acceptent d’apprendre le turc ou le tchéchène. Je ne sais pas une autre langue hors l’anglais, hors l’allemand, hors les langues traditionnelles qu’on apprend à l’école pour elle être peut-être les interprètes de service, peut-être offrir cette possibilité là aux gens qui travaillent dans l’autre service parce qu’on est de plus en plus amenés à croiser des gens qui ne parlent pas français, qui parlent pas allemand, qui parlent pas anglais, et la spécificité de notre métier c’est quand même parler de la petite enfance, donc on va pas utiliser des termes informatiques en turc mais il faudrait vraiment la terminologie de la petite enfance dans ces langues-là. Donc, c’est vraiment des choses spécifiques. Ce n’est pas la peine d’apprendre des termes médicaux. En tchéchène on vraiment…

Intervieweur : Can you possibly suggest to your direct supervisor ? Est-ce que vous pouvez suggérer ça à votre
patron, à votre chef ?

NK : On peut suggérer. Maintenant, après…

Intervieweur : C’est une question de budget ?

NK : Oui, c’est une question de budget…(laughs). Après pourquoi pas nous nous offririons la possibilité d’aller à l’université populaire pour apprendre d’autres langues. Pourquoi pas ? Je pense qu’il y a des gens qui seraient partants.

Intervieweur : Avez-vous récemment été témoin de difficultés rencontrées par un individu ou un groupe en raison de leur manque de connaissance du français ?

NK : Oui, tous les jours.

Intervieweur : How did you handle ? Well, you have partly answered that. Comment vous essayez de répondre ?

NK : Comment on essaye de répondre ? Souvent, on mélange toujours le français, l’anglais, on essaye de trouver des petits mots, petit nègre, on parle un peu en petits nègre, vous voyez les expressions pour parler des petites nègres.

Assistante directrice : On parle des petits mots.

NK : C’est peut-être pas bien parce que la personne, elle va pas apprendre à parler la langue mais

Assistante directrice : On est obligé de parler comme ça parce qu’avec les documents, on ne parle pas avec les phrases compliquées. On est obligé d’utiliser des termes simples pour comprendre, juste des mots.

Intervieweur : Vous considérez-vous comme unilingue / bilingue / plurilingue ? Quelles langues parlez-vous ? Vos parents ou grands-parents parlaient/parlent-ils des langues autres que le français ? Quelles langues ?

NK : Moi, je peux me considérer comme bilingue, allemand-français. Mes parents et mes grands parents parlaient alsacien. Ma grand-mère, elle était parfaitement bilingue – allemand et français.

Intervieweur : Quelles langues parlez-vous dans votre vie personnelle ?

NK : Français

Intervieweur : dans votre vie professionnelle ?

NK : Français

Intervieweur : Diriez-vous que vous êtes un bon apprenant d’une langue ?

NK : pour apprendre ou pour transmettre ?

Intervieweur : pour apprendre. As a language learner….

NK : Oui, quand j’étais à l’école, oui…ben…c’est un gymnastique d’esprit. Pour la reprendre, j’aurais à mon avis un peu plus de mal que quand j’avais 15 ans. Ça c’est sûr.

Intervieweur : Avez-vous une expérience d’apprentissage d’une langue étrangère ? Vécu apprendre une autre langue ?

NK : Yes.
Intervieweur : Comment décririez-vous cette expérience ? Y a-t-il quelque chose de significatif à ce sujet ?


Intervieweur : Donc, c’était plus facile ?

NK : Oui, c’était plus facile parce que c’était un bain de langage qui manque ici en France.

Intervieweur : Aimeriez-vous ajouter un commentaire supplémentaire ? Est-ce qu’il y a quelque choses que vous voulez changer dans la situation de langage à Strasbourg ? Est-ce qu’il y a quel que chose que la ville de Strasbourg doit faire plus ?

NK : Moi, personnellement, franchement… je ne sais pas si la ville de Strasbourg. Actuellement, il manque de l’argent dans certaines universités parce que j’ai une fille qui est étudiante. Il n’y a plus d’argent à l’école d’architecture, donc il n’y a plus de cours d’anglais, il n’y a plus de prof d’anglais. Les cours ont été supprimés et l’anglais est obligatoire pour obtenir le diplôme de fin d’année. Donc, si quelqu’un voulait bien un petit peu se plonger dans la question c’est important pour les étudiants de pouvoir continuer avoir des cours que se soit d’anglais ou d’une autre langue, je trouve que c’est important. C’est pas parce que c’est une langue, c’est un matiere de passer à côté.

Interviewer : So how is she coping ? Elle apprend un autre mot ?

NK : Ben, c’est qu’il y a des amis étudiants qui parlent anglais donc ils prennent un petit café en anglais, bilingue pour pratiquer la langue mais forcément, elle va manquer des choses. Je trouve ça dommage en mettre à côté…

Intervieweur : ça c’est dans le niveau national ?

NK : Oui, dans le niveau national, mais à Strasbourg on pourrait quand même prendre des petit cafés. C’est à la Médiathèque Malraux que les gens se rencontrent pour parler différentes langues mais il y a peut-être d’autres endroits ça peut-être un peu plus, c’est très cloisonné et la formation, elle passe pas bien. Je le sais parce que je n’habite pas très loin d’André Malraux et ma fille, elle est étudiante, mais je ne sais pas si tout le monde est courant des choses là qu’on peut parler d’autres langues comme ça dans les endroits publics.
Appendix 3

E-mail Communication with a CTS Employee

From: Marion WOESSNER
To: Eloise CAPORAL
Sent: Friday, November 16, 2012 5:46 PM

Dear Ms Ebersold,

The translation of our leaflets in three languages results of a desire to make information accessible to all of the customers of our transportation network. We have a desire to enroll in our network an international dimension. The Sales and Marketing Department of the CTS has initiated this project in 2012 and achieved commercial flyers trilingual. We plan to extend these translations and possibly translated into Italian, Chinese and Spanish our brochures, no later than 2015.

All of our employees are not multilingual. However, we are fortunate to have some employees who speak German and English. We do not do the hiring policy requiring the ability to speak other languages, but we are very attentive to these skills. We also offer training to employees who wish to develop these skills and improve their learning of a foreign language, especially when they have sales missions and are in regular contact with a foreign audience.

Best regards.

Marion Woessner
Chargée de communication interne et externe
Compagnie des Transports Strasbourgeois
Dear Ms. Ebersold,

Your incoming mail has been forwarded to the proper service.

Best regards,

CTS Customer Service

NOM : Ebersold
PRENOM : Eloise
SOCIETE : UDS
ADRESSE : 25 rue pfeffinger
CODE POSTAL : 67100
VILLE : Strasbourg
PAYS : France
TELEPHONE :
MESSAGE :

Attention: Mme. Woessner/To Whom It May Concern

I am a student at the Université de Strasbourg and am currently conducting research on the socio-linguistic condition of the city, more specifically on Multilingualism.

When I visited the Boutique at Homme de Fer, I was particularly amazed that the bus/tram schedules and other brochures are in three different languages. This is a wonderful effort towards multilingualism in Strasbourg. With this, I would like to know about the concept.

These are my basic questions: How did this concept come about? Who encouraged the translation of brochures into three languages? When has this project started? Are other languages being considered as of the moment?

I have spoken to a CTS representative over the phone. I started in French and asked if the person spoke French, and she said yes. With that being said, I switched to English. Are all your employees multilingual? Is it a policy to only hire people who can speak at least one foreign language?

I would sincerely appreciate your replies to the questions that I have cited above.

May I ask if there is a possibility to get in touch with someone for an interview?

Thank you so much for whatever information you can share with me for my research work. I look forward to hearing from you.
Multilingualism in Dublin: LUCIDE city report (AUGUST 2013)

By Lorna Carson, Sarah McMonagle, Deirdre Murphy