

Joachim Grzega

**Preface to the
Papers from the 3rd Eurolinguistics Conference
at Europäisches Haus Pappenheim**

It is quite common in musicology, arts, ethnology, history and political science including economics to choose a European approach—no matter whether you define Europe as a geographical unit, a political unit or a cultural unit. The philologies, though, have become highly national. Chairs for contrastive, comparative or general linguistics have been tremendously eliminated from universities. And some of those who worked and work as general linguists seem to be almost afraid of dealing with European languages. Therefore, the topic of the 3rd Eurolinguistics Conference at the Europäisches Haus Pappenheim (EHP), from 10 to 12 April 2015, was “Building Eurolinguistics as a Solid Subject”, establishing Eurolinguistics as a regular academic field.

The EHP aims to follow Norbert Reiter’s original definition of *Eurolinguistics*: at the 25th *Linguistisches Kolloquium* in 1990, he claimed that the term should refer to the study of the commonalities among European languages. I would like to remind readers that there are various ways to define some basic notions.

1. *Europe* can be defined geographically, politically or cultural-anthropologically.
2. *European feature* may be defined as common only in Europe (exclusively) or it may also occur in other parts of the world (inclusively).
3. *European language* may refer only to indigenous languages or also encompass migrant languages. It may refer only to varieties of these languages within Europe or also to the varieties brought to other areas. It may refer only to the standard or also to non-standard varieties.
4. In the strict sense of the word, a study that is termed *Eurolinguistic* needs to investigate the commonalities among all European languages. It may be seen as an unrealistic goal to collect comparable data from all European languages, but we should strive for coming to this goal as close as possible. A representative Eurolinguistic selection could therefore be defined as covering at least one member of each subgroup in one of the following groups of languages and (lingua-)cultures:
 - (a) referring to historical-anthropological-cultural parameters, with structures in circles: more central as well as more peripheral countries;
 - (b) referring to geography: northern, western, southern and eastern countries;
 - (c) referring to historical-linguistic parameters: members of all major Indo-European language groups (Germanic, Romance, Balto-Slavic) and the major non-Indo-European language family (Finno-Ugric);
 - (d) referring to synchronic linguistic parameters: members of Western European languages (Standard Average European), East-Central European languages, the Balkan languages, and, potentially, Russian.

At the 3rd EHP conference on Eurolinguistics, academic contributions came from people born in various European countries (Germany, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Bulgaria and the Ukraine). This volume of the *Journal for EuroLinguistiX* offers a small selection of these contributions:

- Joachim Grzega (Pappenheim/Eichstätt): “Analyzing Languages on the National, European and Global Level – Different Goals and Frames Require Different Methods”
- Bea Klüsener (Eichstätt/Pappenheim) and Joachim Grzega (Pappenheim/Eichstätt): “The Semantics of Europe in English Texts of the Late 16th and Early 17th Centuries”
- Wolfgang Pöckl (Innsbruck): “Eponyme im europäischen Vergleich”
- Polina Choparinova (Mannheim): “Der europäische Charakter des bulgarischen Wortschatzes”
- Laura Ferrarotti (Rome): “ University Web Sites in English: A Review of Some Research and Case Studies”
- Joachim Grzega (Pappenheim/Eichstätt): “Der Sprach-Not-Arzt als effiziente Methode für Deutsch-Anfänger: Grundlagen und Erfahrungen”
- Memorandum

With the Memorandum, we want to emphasize that Eurolinguistics deserves to be respected as a integral academic discipline of its own. On the one hand, Eurolinguistics requires too many long, concentrated phases of research for being only enabled through temporary funds, and on the other hand, Eurolinguistics is of concrete use for the European Union. What is the goal of the European Union? This is an extract from the Lisbon Treaty, the constitutional basis of the European Union from 2007 (boldprint by me, J.G.):

The Union’s aim is to promote **peace**, its values and the well-being of its peoples. [...] The Union shall establish an internal market. It shall work for the sustainable development of Europe based on **balanced economic growth** and price stability, a highly competitive **social market economy**, aiming at **full employment and social progress**, and a **high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment**. It shall promote scientific and technological advance. It shall **combat social exclusion and discrimination**, and shall **promote social justice and protection**, equality between women and men, **solidarity between generations** and protection of the rights of the child. It shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and **solidarity among Member States**. It shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced. [...] In its relations **with the wider world**, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall **contribute to peace**, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, **solidarity and mutual respect among peoples** [...]

Are these goals achieved? At the eve of the conference, we were watching reports on the Ukraine and Russia and realized the way Europe and NATO had been coming closer and closer to Russia’s borders, the way the west ignored Russia’s suggestions for global security strategy. Where is the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty here? We were watching reports on Greece. It was forced to keep reducing expenses, by following the austerity policy, required by the International Monetary Fund and the EU, particularly Germany—a policy chosen against empirical economic research, even research by the International Monetary Fund. The policy has brought more unemployment, more poverty, more suicides to Greece. Where is the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty here? We are witnessing Germany’s economic policy still resting on economics imbalances, which are turned into a good thing simply by labeling this *export champion*. In contrast, we were reading of the *PIGS* or *PIIGS* states (*Portugal*, *Italy*, (*Ireland*), *Greece*, *Spain*) even in quality newspapers. This may be a good way to attract readers. But: Where is the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty here? We were seeing many migrants who felt compelled to leave their country. This was already resulting in anti-migrant attitudes which some politicians were calming down by stating that migration was good for the national economy. That some people have to flee from poverty and war is good? Where is the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty here? All this had a lot to do with the way we communicate with each other. It is a language of competition where the spirit of peace-governed cooperation would be more appropriate all over Europe. We were witnessing anti-European politics – ignoring peace, solidarity and other goals. But due to the power of language, this had become a reality that got accepted by many, even those who suffer from current policies. This can be done, for instance, through semantic

inversions. The label *ideology* is given to empirically based suggestions, while ideology-based suggestions are labeled *pragmatic*. To get a better insight into the function of language, the Europäisches Haus Pappenheim as a research center for Eurolinguistics seems an appropriate place to do that. It is not just a place for an efficient start of learning a new European language or English as a European and global lingua franca, but also a place for learning about the manipulative power of communicative culture. The EHP strives for a new kind of enlightenment—addressed toward the general citizen as well as journalists and politicians. In this sense, the EHP has its share in peace education and identity-building.

The trias of language, culture and politics from a truly European perspective could also be felt by the conference participants at the evening entertainment. Here, we carried out a short version of a typical EHP Pub Quiz. Like the traditional Irish pub quizzes, teams play over three rounds with questions from various domains. However, in the EHP Pub Quiz, you are seldom asked little detail questions, but predominantly questions that highlight basic lines and principles that characterize large parts of Europe in various fields such as politics, arts, music, history, economy—lines and principles that may re-occur in a succeeding round of the quiz.

Furthermore, it is not only the goal of the Europäisches Haus Pappenheim to make Eurolinguistics an integral field in the world of researchers, but also involve students from universities and schools. Therefore, the conference participants could enjoy the EUROLINGUA Museum, an exhibition which I have created together with students from the University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt and which had been presented earlier this year for the general audience. The idea of this museum is to illustrate not the differences, but the commonalities among European languages in the fields of sounds, grammar, words, conversational strategies and language politics. People could decide whether they first wanted to observe and reflect or go directly to the answers of the different spots. In the aftermath, the students wrote academic essays based on research related to the topics they had chosen for the EUROLINGUA Museum. The EUROLINGUA Museum can still be accessed and also be set up at other venues. In addition, a flyer was presented that had been produced by college students under the auspices of the Europäisches Haus Pappenheim. The flyer illustrated, by way of a quiz on standard and non-standard designations for body-parts in European languages, how humor triggers lexical changes. Both projects require from the students to gather academically solid information, but find ways of presentation intelligible to a lay audience. Such ways are a general objective of the EHP. Therefore, the 2015 conference, just like the preceding ones, included one part reserved for the general public. Almost 30 visitors came to the house on a Saturday afternoon to hear and discuss some of the research results by the conference participants, who transferred their core findings into a style that was also accessible to laypeople. Our thanks to all conference participants who engaged in this attempt to make academic research interesting for non-experts.

In the organization of the conference, I was assisted by Wilma Vogel, whom I would like to thank for this. My thanks also go to Anne Würth for editorial assistance. Financial help came from Uwe Sinn, Mayor of Pappenheim, as well as the EU.

Pappenheim, December 2015

*Joachim Grzega
Europäisches Haus Pappenheim
Marktplatz 1
DE-91788 Pappenheim
grzega@pappenheim.de*