13 Englishization ‘under the radar’

Facts, policies, and trends in Austrian higher education

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Abstract

Based on statistical information and policy texts, this chapter provides an overview and evaluation of the use and roles of English in traditional research universities and universities of applied sciences in Austria. While internationalization is interpreted and realized in different ways by different institutions, English functions as a central element. A factor supporting the widely unquestioned use of English might be found in the socio-economically strong position that German still enjoys in business, work-life, and higher education in Europe. This predominance is also noticeable in the utilitarian relevance awarded to both German and English in Austrian higher education, thereby failing to recognize the multi-layered relevance multilingualism could have in implementing internationalization policies that would go beyond Englishization practices.

Keywords: Austria, research universities, universities of applied sciences, language policy, internationalization

1 Introduction

English has made it into Austrian higher education institutions (HEIs), and it is here to stay. As one of many recent newspaper articles describes it:

Auf Englisch zu setzen, bringt für alle Beteiligten Vorteile. [...] Heimische Studenten können so während der Ausbildung einen Grundstein für eine Auslandskarriere legen. Aber auch die jeweilige Hochschule profitiert: Nicht nur Studierende aus anderen Ländern werden angelockt, sondern auch Gastprofessoren und Forscher. Das verschafft zusätzlich Renommee.

(The decision to use English is beneficial for everyone involved. [...] Local students can thus establish a foundation for careers abroad, but the respective universities also benefit: not only can they attract students from other countries, but also visiting professors and researchers. This also provides additional prestige.) ('Die Weltoffenheit vor der Tür', 5 April 2017, p. 4)

While such a welcoming and supportive evaluation of English-medium higher education (HE) might not be a surprising statement for 21st century Europe, it is noteworthy when put into a historical perspective. Upon its drastic rebirth after the First World War, Austria was founded as a largely monolingual country and, by acknowledging only the regional language rights of autochthonous minorities, has remained so ever since. Despite the increase of immigrant minorities and the thus growing societal multilingualism especially in urban areas, German has not only remained the main national language, but also the almost exclusive medium of all levels of education (De Cillia & Vetter, 2013). On the tertiary level, for instance, the University of Vienna prides itself on being the oldest German-medium university in the world that still offers all its bachelor-level programmes in German (see 4.3. below). Despite this continuing self-image of a mainly German speaking nation, the political developments of the 1990s, especially joining the European Union and the Bologna process, made Europeanization and internationalization into a tangible force that impacted noticeably on language policies (LPs) and language practices. Instead of an originally envisioned European multilingualism made possible through mobility and language proficiency in the respective local languages (Haberland et al., 2013), general developments moved towards an entrepreneurial understanding of education and of knowledge as a marketable good (De Costa et al., 2019) where English-medium instruction is increasingly considered common place. With such a consumerist and utilitarian view of language inherent in Austrian policies, this has led to a present-day situation of widespread 'globalized bilingualism', combining German with English as main additional language in education, but also in other spheres of public and private life (Smit & Schwarz, 2020).

For HE, this means that, even if German is still the dominant language, some form of Englishization is noticeable, in the sense that English now has an 'increased presence, importance and status' (Lanvers & Hultgren, 2018, p. 1) in Austrian HEIs, so that we can speak of 'monoglossische[r] / monovarietäre[r] Habitus plus Englisch' ('a monoglossic/monovarietal

habitus plus English') (Dannerer & Mauser, 2018, p. 21). While this fact as such is typical of European countries in the 21st century – if it was not, we would not have this very volume – the question that is still open, and yet largely unattended to, is what Englishization looks like in Austrian HEIs. How is it identified and characterized? What realizations of Englishization can be found in different HEIs? How are these realizations perceived by different social actors? And what regulations have been put in place?

In view of the situated nature of all educational phenomena, it is the aim of this chapter to approach these questions in a context-sensitive and methodologically comprehensive manner, which is made possible by recent conceptualizations of LP research. In addition to the original focus on top-down language regulations, LPs are understood 'as a multi-layered social and discursive process that involves interconnected texts, discourses and practices' (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2020, p. 5). This implies that LPs need to be investigated within their respective ecologies, as they are not only made up of policy regulations, but also encompass the social players involved and how they see, think of, and enact their language choices. In other words, and as first clarified by Spolsky (2004), LPs combine language management, the social actors' beliefs regarding their languages and how they should be used where and when, as well as the actual language practices they engage in. Not surprisingly, such a multi-dimensional understanding also recognizes and aims to cater for conflict, competition, or controversy implicated in or resulting from the various forces involved (Dannerer, 2020; Darquennes et al., 2020; Johnson, 2013).

While a comprehensive LP coverage of Englishization of HE in one country would certainly go beyond the scope of a single paper, this chapter aims to apply such an ecologically sensitive LP approach when analysing the Englishization policies of the two main HE sectors, that is, traditional research universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS). Drawing on facts gathered from HEIs and their websites as well as from previous publications, section 4 offers insights into the present Englishization of selected traditional research universities, while section 5 does the same for UAS. Based on this factual information, section 6 argues for policy trends and discusses the roles and functions of English in Austrian HE. Beforehand, however, we will first provide an overview of Austrian HE LP in the context of internationalization and sketch the HE sector from a historical perspective.

2 Language policies and internationalization in Austrian HE

While only one of many regular comments on Englishization in the Austrian HE sector (see Schwarz & Smit, 2018), the newspaper article quoted in the introduction is prototypical of the public discourse on the internationalization of HE (IoHE) in more ways than the generally positive evaluation of using English for HE: it positions English as a prerequisite for student and staff mobility, thus expecting high levels of English language proficiency and, at the same time, reinforcing the widely held ideology of the utilitarian market value of English (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2020; Liddicoat, 2016). Furthermore, it refers to this educational practice via the language as instrument – ‘English medium’ – rather than by identifying it as the process of Englishization. Although the latter point can be understood as reinforcing the instrumental ideology attached to languages, the absence of a German equivalent of this nominalized process is also indicative of the terminological preferences we find in Austria. Except for few cases of academics translating the English term, an Internet search for ‘Englischisierung’ led to no hits referring to the use of English in educational contexts: an unexpected result in view of the socio-political recency and topicality of the educational process.¹

Revealing in its absence, there seem to be two reasons for this finding, one semantic and the other discourse-related. On the semantic side, ‘Englischisierung’ comes with clearly negative connotations as shown in the online search: instances of German being used in a supposedly Englishized way are usually evaluated critically. Such a negative semantic prosody obviously clashes with the generally positive reception of English-medium education. This semantically sound reason for avoiding the nominalization, however, also reverberates well with the general IoHE discourse. In a nutshell, if language features at all in Austrian internationalization policy texts, it does so infrequently, being marginalized to its perceived role as a means to an end. While such an ‘invisibility of English’ in the IoHE has been noted in other contexts as well (Dafouz & Smit, 2020; Saarinen & Nikula, 2013), one aggravating factor in the Austrian case is that, most likely caused by the

1 A Google search on 16 February 2021 for ‘Englischisierung’ resulted in 140 hits overall and 4 hits when combined with ‘site:at’. The Austria-related hits deal almost exclusively with examples of what is identified as Anglicized German. Additionally, one blog entry criticizes Austrians for being surprisingly keen on Anglicisms (<https://www.2stroke-tuning.com/moped-forum/topic/54943-warum-fahren-%C3%B6sis-eig-so-auf-die-englische-sprache-ab/?tab=comment&comment=602214>), while a few hits refer to German-medium academic texts that introduce the search term as a translation of Englishization in the context of higher education.

monolingual ideology mentioned above, LPs are generally not attended to in the form of explicit language regulations (De Cillia & Vetter, 2013). Instead, Austrian HEIs provide very general Development Plans that sketch their goals and steps required to reach them for the upcoming three years in all domains of the institution. While such documents reveal internationalization strategies as regards education, research and administration, they might – or, more often, might not – topicalize what linguistic resources should be used when engaging in any of these core HE activities (see sections 4 & 5 below).

Such sidelining of language matters is also noticeable when turning to (wider) HE networks, two of which will be briefly touched upon here: the associations of research universities (called UNIKO) and of universities of applied sciences (called FHK). UNIKO has made internationalization into one of its main topics over the last few years (see <https://uniko.ac.at/>), discussing ways of developing and implementing matters such as international research cooperation, staff and student mobility, internationalized master's and PhD programmes, the international attractiveness of Austrian HEIs, or dimensions of Europeanization, including trans- and interculturality. The roles and functions of language(s) in these strategies, however, are not topicalized at all. Instead, the relevance of language is downsized to a handful of instances when particular HEIs introduced specific changes in their official language use, such as when new English-medium master's programmes were started at the University of Life Sciences in Vienna (Annual Report, 2017)² or when a new campus received bilingual labelling in German and English (Internationalisierungspanorama, 2013).³ In a similar vein, the current development and financing plan of the Austrian UAS sector⁴ puts little emphasis on language topics. In the section 'internationalization', the word 'English' only occurs once, namely regarding the increase of English-medium instruction (EMI). The rest is about internationalization at home, enhanced mobility, fair and transparent recognition of study periods abroad, and internationalization of the curricula. Moreover, the FHK Festschrift published on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the UAS sector contains no reference to the roles of language(s). What is foregrounded with regard to internationalization are international

2 <https://uniko.ac.at/organisation/jahresberichte/organisation/jahresberichte/dokumentation/>

3 https://uniko.ac.at/modules/download.php?key=3074_DE_O&f=1&jt=7906&cs=140A

4 <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/HS-Uni/Hochschulgovernance/Steuerungsinstrumente/FH-Entwicklungsplan.html>

networks of the sector, student mobility, and the support services provided by international offices (FHK, 2020).

Such unitary and infrequent mentions of explicit language regulations elucidate the general *laissez-faire* approach taken to LPs in Austrian HE, which stands in stark contrast with the recommendations issued by the European Language Council (2013) for all HEIs to develop their detailed language regulations. These should ‘determine the relative status and use of the languages employed in the institutions [...] [including] official language(s) [...] language(s) of communication [...] language(s) of instruction [...] [in relation to their] stakeholders / target audiences’ (p. 2).

Having sketched the present LP in Austrian HE as generally reflecting a ‘monoglossic habitus plus English’, let us now zoom in on the matter by, firstly, outlining relevant recent historical developments in this educational sector in the next section before turning to the role and functions English fulfils first in traditional research universities and then in UAS institutions.

3 Higher Education in Austria – a historical perspective

During the 1990s, numerous European countries (e.g., the Netherlands, the UK, Finland, Germany) started to gradually implement a binary HE system consisting of research-intensive universities and more vocationally-oriented institutions, frequently referred to as university colleges, polytechnics, second-tier HEIs or UAS (Gaisch & Aichinger, 2018). The latter focused primarily on teaching activities, graduate employability and their direct relevance to the local economy. Hence, they were centred on knowledge production, applied knowledge transfer and the formation of professionals (Gaisch & Aichinger, 2018; Kohoutek et al., 2017) and less involved in basic scientific research (Kyvik & Lepori, 2010). In 1993, Austria followed this trend and expanded its traditional HE system by implementing a UAS sector. The three main educational drivers for this development were diversification, deregulation, and increased permeability of the educational system (Beerens, 2003; Gaisch & Aichinger, 2018).

This contribution sheds light on the two major sectors in Austria, namely research universities and applied HEIs. Figure 13.1 provides a short overview of the 22 Austrian research universities, their intake of almost 270,000 students, 1,125 programmes and wide range of fields of study.

Figure 13.1 Overview of Austrian Research Universities

Fields of study			
		Human medicine	4.7 %
Humanities	25.8 %	Natural resources	3.5%
Natural sciences	17.1 %	Art	2.9 %
Engineering	16.4 %	Mining engineering	1.4 %
Social and economic sciences	14.6 %	Theology	0.8 %
Law	11.8 %	Veterinary medicine	0.5 %

Adapted from Statistik Austria and BMBWF, 2020

When zooming in on the Austrian UAS sector, it becomes apparent that it has steadily grown over the past 25 years since its establishment. Currently, 21 UAS institutions offer nearly 500 study programmes at 45 locations in 32 towns, with nearly as many bachelor's and master's degrees. Figure 13.2 illustrates the breadth of the UAS sector in more detail.

In sum, although small in size, Austria has a highly diversified and multifaceted system of HE, characterized by an above-average share of both new and old institutions (Niederl et al., 2014). In the academic year 2019/20, 376,050 students were enrolled at Austrian HEIs, of which 265,000 were at research universities and 55,000 at UAS. The remaining

Figure 13.2 Overview of Austrian UAS sector

Adapted from FHK, 2020

56,000 students study at private universities or teacher training colleges (Statistik Austria⁵).

The following two sections will provide an overview of the presence of English in both sectors. While this overview relies on a selection of the ‘old’ institutions, the ‘young’ UAS sector will be dealt with in its entirety.

4 English at research universities

Of the 22 Austrian research universities, we selected six institutions on the basis of purposive sampling. Three are traditional, comprehensive universities of different sizes and geographical situations: the University of Innsbruck (‘Innsbruck’; 27,000 students) in the west, the University of Salzburg (‘Salzburg’; 17,000 students) in the centre and the University of

5 https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bildung/hochschulen/studierende_belegte_studien/index.html

Vienna ('Vienna'; 89,000 students) in the east of Austria. Additionally, we included specialized universities: the Medical University of Vienna ('MED'; 8,000 students), the Technical University of Graz ('TEC'; 13,000 students) and the Vienna University of Economics and Business ('ECO'; 21,000 students). For this paper, we refer mainly to facts and figures that are available on the homepages of the universities.

4.1 Development plans

Research universities integrate remarks on their LP into the Development Plan (DP), a text of approx. 70-180 pages, which is renewed every three years and functions as the basis for negotiating public funding. Therefore, the addressee of these DPs is primarily the national Ministry of Education, but as the DPs are published also on the university homepages, the public must be considered a relevant addressee as well. While none of the universities treats the role of languages for research, teaching and administration with great emphasis, in a detailed manner or in a dedicated section, they do play a role in all DPs, except for the one of MED (DP-MED, 2017), where languages are not mentioned at all.

Although all DPs see English in the context of internationalization (DP-Innsbruck, 2017, p. 56f., V; DP-Salzburg, 2018, pp. 22, 98; DP-TEC, 2017, p. 55; DP-ECO, 2017, pp. 44, 48), they foreground four different aspects of the relation:

- a Mobility and exchange: English master's and PhD programmes are expected to make the universities attractive for incoming students and staff and facilitate the exchange of researchers and teaching staff as well as students (DP-Innsbruck, 2017, p. 56f.; DP-TEC, 2017, p. 98f.; DP-ECO, 2017, p. 28).
- b Internationalization at home: master's programmes in English are also seen as part of an internationalization at home strategy (DP-Salzburg, 2018, p. 98; DP-TEC, 2017, p. 98) without considering any other languages for this purpose. Innsbruck is the only university to briefly mention Italian besides English as an important language in the 'Euregio' Tyrol – South Tyrol – Trentino (DP-Innsbruck, 2017, p. 52).⁶
- c Employability: Although this aspect is not foregrounded, English is seen as important for preparing students for the (international) job market (DP-Vienna, 2018, p. 126; DP-TEC, 2017, p. 97f.), for improving future career steps for young as well as senior postdoctoral researchers

6 While German and Italian are indeed official languages of this region, English does obviously not have such a regional anchoring.

(DP-TEC, 2017, pp. 16, 42) and finally also for the present situation for academic and non-academic staff (DP-ECO, 2017, p. 43f., p. 48).

- d Administration: A connection to administration is mainly drawn by ECO, mentioning central documents and circulars in English and trainings for different groups of employees (DP-ECO, 2017, pp. 19, 44, 48). TEC refers to English in the context of the library without going into details (DP-TEC, 2017, p. 111).

It is noteworthy that almost all DPs refer to either English or 'language' without specifying which language(s) are in focus. Only Salzburg mentions explicitly a 'breitgefächerte[s] Sprachenangebot[s] [broad offer of languages]' in the context of internationalization and speaks of a 'englisch- bzw. mehrsprachige[s] forschungsgeleitete[s] Lehrangebot [English resp. multilingual teaching/courses]' (DP-Salzburg, 2018, pp. 22, 98, 103). But even Salzburg's DP shows clearly that languages (beyond English) and language political issues are not consistently linked to internationalization: neither the interests of philological departments nor the offering of language courses are systematically mentioned. Instead, the use of English as an academic lingua franca is tacitly assumed (DP-Salzburg, 2018, pp. 97-99).

4.2 Students

In their official web-based documents, the universities usually give only the numbers of Austrian vs. international students. Information about the students' L1s is not available. In the academic year 2019/20 the percentages of international students lie between 23% (TEC)⁷ and 44% (Innsbruck⁸).⁹ Many of them come from Germany (in Innsbruck also from Italy, mainly from the German speaking part of the population in South Tyrol), thus they do not automatically stand for linguistic plurality. ECO is the only HEI investigated that makes available their students' countries of origin, which shows that a quarter of the internationals come from Germany, followed by students from Hungary, Italy (including South Tyrol), Bulgaria (each 5-6%), Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Croatia, Poland (3-4% each, with a declining percentage).¹⁰

7 https://online.tugraz.at/tug_online/StudierendenStatistik.html

8 <https://www.uibk.ac.at/universitaet/profil/dokumente/uni-in-zahlen-2020.pdf>

9 Salzburg gives only the percentage (33.5%) and indirectly the numbers of students (PLUS Report, 2020, pp. 84, 87, 96).

10 https://www.wu.ac.at/fileadmin/wu/h/structure/about/publications/aktuelle_Broschüren/Facts-Figures_web.pdf

Figure 13.3 Numbers of bachelor’s and master’s programmes at focal HEIs

4.3 Teaching

In teaching, the role of English clearly differs between bachelor’s and master’s programmes (see Figure 13.3). At the bachelor’s level, only ECO offers one programme entirely in English.¹¹ TEC has some programmes where English is explicitly required because ‘some’ or ‘many’ courses are taught in English. Except for MED, where English programmes are restricted to the PhD level, all universities run a certain percentage of their master’s studies

11 <https://www.wu.ac.at/studium/bachelor>

in English or indicate explicitly that some programmes require language skills other than German – either for courses taught in English, or for the different philological studies. There are seemingly no relations between the percentages of international students and the percentages of master's programmes in English.

The percentages of master's programmes entirely in English range between 21% and 22% (Innsbruck, Vienna)¹² and 28% (Salzburg)¹³ for the full universities but 48% (TEC) and even 53% (ECO) for the specialized universities. TEC plans an increase to 60% by 2024 (DP-TEC, 2017, p. 57), which aligns well with their high percentage of publications in English (see next section) and the fact that all their PhD programmes are in English (DP-TEC, 2017, p. 6).

4.4 Research and publications

The DPs, just like LP documents (Darquennes et al., 2020, p. 29), do not give information about the expected languages for research-related activities, as they result from publication contexts and traditions of the specific fields. Except for MED, all universities provide the number of their yearly publications on their website, most of the time combined with the language of publication.¹⁴ In 2019 the percentage of publications in English lies between 43% (Salzburg¹⁵) and 49% (ECO) on the one hand and 55% (Vienna¹⁶) and even 84% (TEC) on the other. For all universities, publications in languages other than German and English are quantitatively of almost no importance, ranging from 1% to 3.6%.

For TEC and ECO, the available overview of the development of languages of publication over time shows how differently Englishization has gained in relevance in the various domains. Whereas TEC shows a massive growth of publications in English after 2010 (from 69% to 84%), the situation at ECO is stable during this time with English nearly as frequently used as German.

12 <https://studieren.univie.ac.at/studienangebot/masterstudien/fremdsprachige-studien/>

13 <https://www.uni-salzburg.at/index.php?id=210369>, and Plus Report (2020, p. 84).

14 ECO provided us with information on request; Innsbruck informed us that they do not collect the languages of publication systematically.

15 <https://uni-salzburg.elsevierpure.com/en/publications/>

16 https://ucris.univie.ac.at/portal/de/publications/search.html?search=&uri=&advanced=true&organisations=16849&organisationName=Universit%C3%A4t+Wien&language=%2Fdk%2Ffatira%2Fpure%2Fcore%2Flanguages%2Ffigure2Fen_GB&publicationYearsFrom=2019&publicationYearsT

5 English at universities of applied sciences (UAS)

Just like the Austrian research universities, UAS institutions are not bound to any LPs. A website analysis of all 21 institutions (Gaisch & Rammer, 2020) revealed that no significance was attached to either LP strategies or their implementation. Although it was found that importance was attributed to cultural variety and international and cross-border exchange, a commitment to linguistic diversity was not provided.

5.1 Language policy

Despite the lack of official LPs, the language of instruction policy and its practical implementation seem to be clear. English, by far the most frequently employed foreign language, is used as a *lingua franca* for all international programmes that seek to address a more (linguistically) diverse student population. This is particularly true for institutions of higher learning that are situated in urban areas. Traditionally, the majority of programmes in UAS institutions that are located in remote and rural regions are offered in German to cater for the needs of a (mainly) regional student body.

At the same time, there is little doubt that German will remain the major language of instruction in the future, not least because one substantial founding mandate of the sector was to open up HE to underrepresented (predominantly locally based) target groups (Gaisch & Aichinger, 2018). In addition, further education and lifelong learning opportunities for adult and professionally qualified learners lie in the DNA of the UAS sector and are likely to be offered in German-medium instruction, also in the future.

Further arguments that may favour German as a medium of instruction are in line with the strong ties to local industries and the location of many UAS. Since a number of Austrian campuses are situated in rather remote places, they may not have the same broad appeal for internationally mobile students as traditional universities, which are mostly located in bigger cities.

5.2 Students

Given that the internationalization of programmes and student recruitment have become the new form of entrepreneurialism (Stromquist, 2007), also the UAS sector seeks to increase the number of international degree-seeking students. Overall, 10,000 or 18.1% of all students at the 21 Austrian UAS institutions come from abroad to complete their studies entirely in Austria

(FHK, 2020). In contrast, 11% of all Austrian UAS students benefit from a study period abroad within the framework of a funded mobility programme, which totalled 6,052 students in the academic year 2018/19. During the same period, 3,902 international students completed a funded mobility stay at one of the Austrian UAS degree programmes (FHK, 2020).

Like research universities, the UAS sector hosts a high number of international students from Germany and South Tyrol, where 65% of the population speaks German as an L1.

5.3 Teaching

Figure 13.4 offers a general overview of English-taught study programmes in the Austrian UAS landscape.

In total, the Austrian UAS sector offers 80 programmes in English, which appears rather small in view of the large total number of study programmes (496). They are furthermore limited to the bachelor's and master's level, as the UAS sector does not have the right to award doctorates – a privilege still reserved for research universities.

Of the 20 bachelor's degree programmes in English, there are 15 full-time study programmes, mainly in the field of business administration. The English-taught part-time bachelor's degrees are provided in Business Administration, Banking, Innovation, Tourism, and Leisure Management. What is noticeable is the large number of master's study programmes in the STEM field (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) – 26 compared to only four on the bachelor's level. Generally, the master's programmes can be divided in the broad categorizations of business administration (25), STEM (26) and Sports (4). Of the 55 master's programmes, 33 are offered full-time, 18 part-time and one as a dual study programme. In addition, there are five programmes of a hybrid nature, combining distance learning and part-time studies in the areas of business and STEM. When comparing these figures to the sum total of UAS study programmes (see Figure 13.2), there are two important comments to make: firstly, English-medium programmes amount to 16%, and secondly, they fall mainly into the two areas of business studies and STEM.

It generally seems that the main benefits for the Austrian UAS sector in concentrating their internationalization efforts on EMI are similar to those of the UAS in the Netherlands (de Haan, 2014): providing international experience and knowledge to the local students and creating an international environment largely derived from an intensified recruitment of internationally mobile students (also see Gaisch, 2016; Wächter & Maiworm, 2014).

Figure 13.4 English-taught programmes at all Austrian UAS

Adapted from <https://www.fachhochschulen.ac.at/>.

In addition, it is expected that university-level students are proficient in English, as they often find themselves in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous groups (Smit & Dafouz, 2012). In the UAS sector, it is therefore the lecturer’s responsibility to convey the content in ways that students are sufficiently prepared for a professional future in an international setting (Gaisch, 2014). In other words, content teachers need to teach through the medium of a second language, mostly without additional or accompanying English training. Their motivations were found to go beyond the mere use of the English language. Rather, they sought to gain an intercultural understanding of an international classroom setting and train their cognitive and mental flexibility (Earls, 2016; Gaisch, 2014).

5.4 Research

At Austrian UAS institutions, (applied) research has become a crucial factor for internationalization work as it often offers added value or can even be the starting point for cooperation with cross-border partners.

Despite the regional embeddedness and practical orientation of Austrian UAS institutions in terms of student recruitment, curriculum content, and structure, some institutions of higher learning draw also on a broad

international research community and have a very high research affinity, in terms of acquisition of third-party funds as well as the accompanying research output (nearly exclusively in English). With regard to the EU framework programme Horizon 2020, there are currently 18 participating UAS institutions. As stated in the language regime of Horizon 2020, communication with experts and applicants only takes place in English and most documents are only available in English. A further financial source for UAS is the European Regional Development Fund with 29 UAS participations and from the various Interreg programmes (e.g., Austria-Bavaria 2014-2020 with nine projects, or Austria-Czech Republic 2014-2020 with six projects; see Sabbatini & Kastner, 2020).

With regard to Interreg programmes, it needs to be underlined that only those projects whose activities have a clear cross-border impact on the programme area will be supported. Frequently, these programmes draw on plurilingualism and seek to encourage linguistic diversity. For these purposes, documentation, dissemination, and research output are provided in both German and Czech. Given that there are 21 institutions at 45 locations in 32 towns, many of which are close to a cross-border region, this programme is particularly popular in the UAS sector.

6 A critical account: Englishization ‘under the radar’

The overview of language-related facts and figures for Austrian HEIs provides us with a suite of insights:

- a Practically all HEIs position themselves as (strongly) internationally oriented. While ‘internationalization’ can be interpreted differently, it is intrinsically combined with the use of English.
- b Language in general and English more particularly are rarely topicalized in policy or strategy papers, except in the context of internationalization efforts or activities.
- c Although there is no information on students’ L1s, it can be assumed that the majority of local and international students are German-speaking, followed by L1 speakers of neighbouring languages.
- d The majority of study programmes are offered in German, especially at the undergraduate level. While there are also more German-medium graduate programmes overall, English-medium master’s programmes predominate at certain HEIs. Additionally, some multilingual master’s programmes require more languages than English and German.

- e English-medium master's and PhD programmes cater for relatively small groups of students and, depending on the type of HEI, prepare for internationally oriented academic or professional expertise.
- f Research is published, and presumably undertaken, in a range of languages, although English accounts for the largest proportion, with German a strong second. When split by discipline, German is preferred in some areas, such as law, theology, and elements of the humanities. In the natural and life sciences and technical disciplines, on the other hand, English is clearly in the lead.
- g Individual multilingualism, while widely spread amongst all stakeholders, is not given any visibility at institutional level. Like individual language proficiency, it is not considered to be part of the institutional remit.

Reflecting the aim of our analysis, these points allow us to elaborate on what Englishization seems to amount to in Austrian HE. While internationalization and its local manifestations do not form the main concern of this paper, it certainly represents a fitting starting point as it is the main driving force of our HE language-scape, widened from its monolingual past to an officially recognized largely bilingual present. Irrespective of whether internationalization is associated with student and staff mobility, with research collaboration or with increasing professional employability, the respective endeavours are understood as also necessitating the use of English. The word 'also' is crucial in this context, as this generally unquestioned linguistic realization of internationalization has added English to institutional functions previously fulfilled by German exclusively. As evidenced in the facts collected from six traditional research universities and all 21 UAS, both English and German play crucial roles in financing and undertaking research and reporting its findings, in providing graduate and to a lesser extent undergraduate education, and in communicating HEI internally and, more noticeably externally (e.g., via websites). Looked at from a bird's eye perspective, Austrian HE thus engages in bilingual practices, reflecting the globalized bilingualism identified as characteristic of Austrian *de facto* LP more generally (Smit & Schwarz, 2020).

When zooming into the subject matter, however, the situation becomes less clear-cut and more diversified. Starting with administration as the least visible aspect of HE activities, legal communication is restricted to German, official exchanges within international research groups and English-medium programmes rely on English, while online communication with the internet-based public takes place in both languages, representing one of the few instances of parallel language use. Third mission activities

(e.g., knowledge and technology transfer, social engagement and the socio-economic development of the region) as the third pillar of HE next to teaching and research are predominantly carried out in German (Gaisch et al., 2019).

Such a mosaic of language choices is also noticeable in the educational activities reported above, employing German, English, and other languages in diverse constellations. German as the predominant medium of instruction at undergraduate level is complemented by English at the graduate levels, responding in varying degrees to disciplinary expectations as well as student constellations. Reflecting the socio-economic status of German in Europe, it comes with an added value, even to international students who may not be (very) proficient in it. This means that in addition to disciplinary preferences for using either English and/or German, both languages can also play a role for international students, some of whom already have or want to gain (some) proficiency in one or both languages.

When turning to research, publications come in a range of languages, depending on various factors, such as the authors' language repertoires and intended audiences, but, more importantly, the conventions and expectations of the disciplines in question. Nevertheless, no language besides English and German plays a quantitatively relevant role. While German was once the world's most important scientific language (Ammon, 2005), Austrian HEIs nowadays show different grades of Englishization in different research fields (see e.g., Dannerer, 2008). As the longitudinal analysis at TEC and ECO have shown, the technical fields seem to have moved to English almost exclusively over the last decades; business studies, however, combine both English and German. Clearly, such linguistic differences in academic publishing form a hurdle to a common Englishization strategy in this regard.

Perhaps more importantly, the meso-level overview of language choice has revealed a fundamentally utilitarian approach, in which either German or English is picked for engaging in research or education depending on perceived expectations and communicational needs. Such a pragmatically motivated language selection precludes a conscious decision for using both in, for instance, graduate programmes or research undertakings, thus reflecting a fundamentally monoglossic habitus, which draws on English in addition to German as locally established language (Dannerer & Mauser, 2018). While this ideology has traditionally privileged German over all other languages, the same now holds true for German and English, thereby making way for an increasing Englishization of certain disciplines.

Such an ideology is arguably made possible by the general absence of explicit LPs. Thus, instead of clarifying their institutional language-related

visions, Austrian HEIs miss the chance to guide language practices systematically and constructively. Development Plans remain vague as to when English or other languages should be employed, by whom, and for what. Consequently, all our analysis has brought to light are individual and somewhat haphazard references to medium of instruction or language proficiency levels, the former simply stated as a given for the respective degree programmes. Concerning the latter, the language skills of students are sometimes tested or, at least, required when entering study programmes, but they are not further developed systematically. The skills of teachers, on the other hand, are neither tested nor required before they begin to offer courses in English. Although there are English language courses for students, academic, and administrative staff, they are mainly voluntary and so limited in number that they could not support any widespread policy.

Languages besides English and German are present at universities as far as language competences of students and staff are concerned, but they are widely neglected for all programmes outside of philological studies (Dannerer, 2018, 2020). Thus, linguistic and cultural plurality in Austrian HE is not considered an asset that brings added value in terms of institutional diversity or internationalization at home. Interestingly, this holds true for both the traditional foreign languages in Austria, like French, Spanish, or Italian, as well as for frequent L1s of students, like Turkish or Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian. This circumstance is all the more remarkable as a large linguistic knowledge base may have the potential to cater to the needs of a globalized employment market and also serve the purpose of enhanced graduate employability.

Apart from few language-related regulations, the absence of LPs also reveals that Austrian HEIs fail to acknowledge the crucial role languages play in and for research, education, and knowledge construction more generally (Ehlich, 2005). The assumption that teaching in English (or any other foreign language) simply requires the use of a different linguistic medium is persistent, particularly among content teachers (Gaisch, 2014). Awareness of the manifold effects EMI can have on educational practices is only sharpened in the event of substantial cultural misunderstandings (e.g., misconceived humour, different value structures and cognitive styles, face-threatening acts, various levels of hierarchy and formality, or lacking interactions). Only when such issues arise and are perceived as problematic – such as when cohorts suffer from severe student dropout rates – does the realization follow that there is so much more to teaching in another medium than language proficiency alone (Gaisch, 2014). Such localized insights into the complexity of inter-/transcultural education, however, have so far not

had an impact on the Austrian HE landscape more generally: similar to 'language', questions of 'culture' have been largely sidelined in the context of internationalization and limited to vague statements, such as on the importance of 'international and intercultural skills' (BMBWF, 2020, p. 9). In other words, both 'culture' and 'language' are reduced to necessary and integral elements of internationalization. Except for individual moments of identifiable language-related trouble, the issue of language in general, and English in particular, remain 'under the radar' and thus out of sight. The lack of awareness of the importance of languages as well as the lack of discussion about language political issues allows for a 'non-addressed conflict' (Dannerer, 2020) between German and English, as well as a lack of awareness that EMI may undermine the status of other L1s.

This combination of positioning language as of little relevance in itself but as integral to the internationalization process shows that Austrian HEIs seem to buy into the widely held belief that language is a tool that is simple to use, leads to clearly identifiable results, and therefore does not need any further consideration. It is highly unfortunate that this one-sided view of language can also be detected in European papers on multilingualism and HE that most likely inform HEIs (Studer, 2021), since it fails to give full credit to the constitutive role language and languages fulfil in the educational and research practices we all engage in.

7 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on a selection of Austrian HEIs, six traditional research universities and all 21 UAS, with the aim to provide a critical account of the dynamically developing process of Englishization. In the absence of explicit LPs, English and other language practices are unreflectively steered by (perceived) communicative needs, thus underlining a fundamentally utilitarian approach to language that consistently downplays the constitutive role of language in education (Fairclough, 1993). Indicative of this commodified ideology, language matters are touched upon in other documents, such as Development Plans, and positioned as a means to an end, with the 'end' mainly being internationalization towards Europeanization: the global development towards a knowledge society that increasingly focuses on international dimensions in HE, and within Europe towards a Europeanization of HE policy (Huisman & Van der Wende, 2004). This change of focus is a shift from a political to a more economic rationale where cost efficiency, international marketing, and student recruitment have been increasingly

foregrounded (Gaisch, 2016). Reflecting Austria's geopolitical position, such endeavours can be undertaken advantageously by drawing on English and German, thus providing a marketable reason for why German will remain profitable and the Austrian HE sector will not Englishize completely.

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