1. Prolegomena

The direct occasion to write this paper was a presentation I was invited to deliver at the 14th World Congress of Sociology in Montréal (30. July 1998) on the dominance of English in linguistic research in Belgium. Since it is obvious that a large portion of the effects of this dominance are related to the dominance of English in scientific research in general (Ammon 1998), I shall try to focus here on other, more specific aspects. Yet, one should be aware that even so, the fact just mentioned cannot possibly be ignored, since it is indeed the paramount factor outweighing all others.

I have no knowledge of any studies or essays previously published on this particular topic. Therefore, I largely draw on my personal experience and on my familiarity with the scene of Belgian linguistics. I am perfectly aware, though, that in so doing, I may have under- or overestimated some items, maybe neglected or forgotten others and, in general, given a too personal impression of a situation others may possibly judge differently. This also partly explains why the situation in Flanders (Dutch-speaking Belgium) is treated more extensively than the situation in Wallonia (French-speaking Belgium). Another important reason, though, is that the latter situation has been far less surveyed and that, consequently, information is simply not available.
2. Introduction

Belgium is a small country with some 10 million inhabitants, divided into various language territories: Flanders with some 5.8 million Dutch-speakers, Wallonia with some 3.2 million French-speakers, Brussels with approximately 1 million inhabitants speaking Dutch or French or both and a small German-speaking territory with some 65,000 inhabitants (Willemyns, 1988).

There is a rather close contact between Flemish linguists and their colleagues from Holland, not only because of the institutional cooperation between several of their universities, but also because all matters pertaining to language and literature in both Holland and Flanders are managed by the Nederlandse Taalunie, an intergovernmental, supranational body, to which both the Dutch and the Flemish governments have delegated their prerogatives to decide autonomously on linguistic and cultural affairs (Willemyns, 1984). Also, a special fund, created and financed by the research foundations of Holland and Flanders (NWO and FWO) succeeded in generating a considerable number of joint research projects in the fields of Dutch language and literature. This cooperation between Flemish and Dutch linguists on the basis of their common mother tongue proved to be a much more important factor in generating joint research projects than a theoretically possible cooperation of Dutch- and French-speaking Belgian linguists on the basis of citizenship. Also, the fact that there exists no institutional cooperation between the Dutch language and the French language science foundations in Belgium, makes it not easy to initiate joint research projects between Flemish and Walloon linguists.

The effects of English on linguistic research in Belgium may theoretically surface in various domains. I'll discuss what I feel to be the most important or interesting ones:

- the publication of the results of research both internationally and domestically
- the popularization and diffusing of similar results to a larger audience
- the teaching of linguistics in Belgium at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels
- the publication of textbook and other popularizing or teaching materials based on linguistic research
- the internal, i.e. domestic communication among linguists in a bi- or multilingual country.

- the consequences of the Anglo-Saxon dominance on the methodology and the concepts used in the field of linguistics as such.

In all these domains English as a matter of fact is competing with the vernacular languages and although its influence varies according to the domain under consideration, my overall impression is that “dominance” may not be the appropriate term to designate the influence of English on linguistic research in Belgium. Research as such is mostly conducted in one of the national languages, which are also used for the teaching of courses on linguistics at all levels in all universities.

3. Publication infrastructure

In Belgium's seven universities (4 Dutch speaking and 3 French speaking ones) most of the linguistic research is conducted within the so-called "language departments", the largest of which are the Dutch departments in Flanders and the French departments in Wallonia. Yet, the importance of English immediately surfaces as soon as we look at the publication of the results and conclusions of linguistic research.

As far as books are concerned, there is usually no problem to publish monographs on linguistic issues in Dutch or French respectively, albeit it that through a lack of domestic publishing companies, many of them are published in Holland or France.

As far as articles are concerned, there appears to be an acute shortage of Belgian journals and reviews on linguistics. In this field, though, the same applies to the Netherlands since the list of linguistic journals in the Low Countries at large is very short indeed. The main ones are Taal en Tongval and Nederlandse Taalkunde, the former one specializes in dialectology and sociolinguistics, the latter one, successor to De nieuwe Taalgids, on linguistics in general, though with a special focus on formalized linguistics. The journal of the Royal Academy of Dutch Language and Literature in Belgium (Verslagen en Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde) is one of the few remaining outlets for linguistic papers, yet publishes on literature as well. A wide variety of linguistic items is generally to be found in Leuvense Bijdragen, a journal which, despite its name, only occasionally publishes articles in Dutch. Apart from occasional publications (Proceedings of conferences, year books, readers, university preprints, Festschrifte etc., and a few smaller ones as Gramma or Glot) this sums up the very restricted possi-
ilities of domestic publishing on linguistics in the Low Countries. Also, it should be mentioned that, to my knowledge, there do not exist any journals abroad in which Dutch is the only or one of the possible languages of publication. Although specialized journals on Dutch linguistics and/or the culture of the Low Countries do exist abroad, their language of publication is not Dutch. Consequently, as far as journals are concerned, the Flemish linguist lacks the outlet he usually has at his disposal for the publication of monographs. French speaking Belgian linguists or Dutch speaking ones in the field of Romance languages are in a much more advantageous position since they have access to the whole publication infrastructure of the Romance languages territories.

Summarizing, the real pressure on the linguist to publish in English has to do with two well-known factors:

1. the country is too small to offer adequate opportunities for publication (in journals that is)
2. in order to reach the international linguistic community there is no alternative but to use the only language understood by all, viz. English.

The latter factor, of course, the Belgian linguist has in common with his colleagues all over the world, who are not native speakers of English. Using another language of greater circulation (e. g. German or French) is no real help, unless one specifically wants to address that part of the linguistic world. As a consequence, a considerable part of the work of Flemish linguists, anxious to be more widely known and recognized, is published outside the country and in English (there are but very few English language publication opportunities inside Belgium).

It is rather easy to list a number of considerable disadvantages in this situation. Some of them are quite specific, others are experienced all over the non-English speaking world:

(1) some specific topics appear to be of only limited interest to most journals abroad (e. g. some aspects of Middle-Dutch or of local dialects, studies in toponymy etc.)
(2) publication in journals or readers abroad is usually subject to special limitations as far as the number of pages is concerned and mostly the interest of the editors (though not necessarily of the readers) is limited to the mere outlines of the research results. The research methodology and a complete overview of the results usually have to be cut down. Consequently, they have to be published domestically as well, if an appropriate means of publication can be found. Survey articles, on the other hand, are very much appreciated, since their specific aim is to inform linguists abroad on facts or situations they're not familiar with, yet are keen to know more about. Consequently, and according to my own experience both as a contributor and as a reader, we are faced with the rather odd situation that the real scholarly articles are hard to publish abroad in extenso, whereas it is relatively easy to find a publication opportunity for the more surveying ones, including in very prestigious international journals. This is no less than a paradox, since all domestic academic and research instances and institutions value publications in foreign prestige journals very highly, very often to the detriment of those published domestically and in the indigenous languages.

(3) to write in a foreign language is always difficult and demanding and puts the non-native linguist in a disadvantaged position as compared to his native English speaking colleague. Also, the English lingua franca is often used orally in many international conferences is not suitable for use in writing and is, consequently, rejected by the editors of most English language publications, both inside and outside the English speaking world.

On the other hand, the number of publications on linguistics in Dutch or French (in monographs, textbooks and other teaching materials, vulgarizing journals etc.) continues to be considerable and, consequently, there is no danger (neither immediate nor in the long run) for the continuation of either of them as a language of science in linguistics, as we will discuss in a moment.

The next item I mentioned is the possible usefulness of English as a means of internal communication among linguists in a bi- or multilingual country. In this respect, it is interesting to observe that English is hardly ever used in order to avoid to have to choose between one of Belgium's domestic languages, the more so since, as I stated earlier, there appears to be very little contact between Flemish and Walloon linguists in the first place. The Belgian Journal of Linguistics (publisher: John Benjamins) which is the Yearbook of the Belgische Vereniging voor Linguistiek ('Belgian Association of Linguistics') is published in English. The decision to do so was taken some years ago, following a consultation of its members in writing. Although there is no way of knowing for sure, I don't suppose the majority who decided to ban Belgium's official languages (Dutch and French) did so in order to avoid domestic language problems. Rather, their main preoccupation may have been with reaching a more interna-
tional audience. Whether this has been successful I don’t know, but given its rather limited impact in Belgium itself, serious doubts are permitted.

The Belgian Association for Applied Linguistics (Belgische Vereniging voor Toegepaste Linguistik) does publish its internal communications in Dutch and in French. It occasionally also publishes short monographs or editions on specific topics, for which either English, or Dutch or French are used.

4. The linguistic publication profile

A survey carried out in 1997 by the Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad, a government body representing all Flemish universities, among Flemish scholars in linguistics revealed some interesting details about their language use or preferences as far as publications are concerned. The data relate to publications published from 1992 through 1996 and the response rate to the survey was 44.4%. The figures quoted here were published in a “draft version” of the report, dated April 26, 1999 (Moed et al., 1999).

An analysis of the publication lists of the participants reveals that, as far as all publications put together are concerned, the following languages were used to the following extent:

- Dutch: 32%
- French: 25%
- German: 7%
- English: 33%
- Other: 3%

Since the scholars were asked to differentiate between “real scholarly” publications and more popular ones for a wider audience (vulgarization), it was possible to detect a most interesting difference between these two kinds of publications.

As far as the latter category is concerned (vulgarization), the language use is as follows:

- Dutch: 64%
- French: 17%
- German: 6%
- English: 10%
- Other: 3%

Here we not only observe the predominance of the mother tongue of the authors and their intended readers, but also the fact that the use of English is not really impressive. Consequently, it may be put forward that the audience one has in mind is the paramount criterion guiding the scholars in their language choice.

The scholars qualified 77.5% of their production as “real scholarly” ones and 22.5% as publications for a wider public (vulgarization). Since they were asked to make this distinction themselves there is no way of knowing on the basis of which criteria the selection was performed nor, obviously, whether all were using more or less similar criteria.

Anyway, the difference between the two categories of scholarly publications is striking. Here, the language use is as follows:

- Dutch: 22%
- French: 27%
- German: 7%
- English: 41%
- Other: 3%

The use of Dutch is reduced by two thirds, the use of English, not surprisingly, has quadrupled and it emerges by far as the most important language in which four out of every ten scholarly items by Flemish linguists are published. This, of course, must include the so-called survey articles.

The only real surprise is the rather large number of publications in French and it is, therefore, interesting to have a closer look at the relationship between sub-disciplines and topics and language usage. First of all it appears that publications in English are rather unevenly distributed among the various sub-disciplines used in the survey. The “object language English” (i.e. a publication on some aspect of English) reveals the highest percentage of publications in English, followed by the sub-disciplines Computational and Mathematical Linguistics, Psycho- and Neuro-Linguistics and Semiotics. Dutch as a publication language is dominant in the “modules” Morphology, Toponymy and Lexicology and in the “aspects” Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and Dialectology (Moed et al. 1999, 155). As far as French as a publication language is concerned, its surprisingly large usage may, to a considerable extent, be explained by the fact that 20% of the linguists who participated in the survey are working in the field of Romance linguistics. Most of the international publications of these colleagues are directed toward French language journals in the Romance language community abroad (“The publication language French is mostly used for publications on the object languages French and Other Romance Languages” Moed et al. 1999, 155). Anyway, it is
clear that, as far as Flanders is concerned, English is the main but not the only international language of publication.

Some data seem to indicate that the publication language chosen (or felt necessary to use) may also influence the way the research results are presented or even the way in which the research is conducted. If we take the examples of publications on more than one object language or with more than one author, it appears that:

- 73% of the publications that have both Dutch and German as object languages are written in German; 90% of those with Dutch and English as object languages are written in English;
- Co-authorships, less frequent in the human than in the natural sciences, do not occur very often, as was to be expected. Yet, the sub-disciplines in which they reach the highest frequency are exactly those in which we observed the highest amount of English usage, viz. Computational and Mathematical Linguistics, Psycho- and Neuro-Linguistics. Also, as Moed et.al (1999, 161) observe: "Sub-disciplines in which English is the dominant publication language, tend to show a higher degree of collaboration as reflected in co-authorships than sub-disciplines in which English is a less prominent publication language".

5. The language of linguistic instruction

As far as the use of English as a language of instruction in Belgian universities is concerned, we have to take into account the effects of Belgian legislation on the use of the languages in education. In all school types, from kindergarten to university the law decrees that no official degrees can be delivered unless the instruction has been carried out completely in Dutch in Flanders or French in Wallonia. Consequently, only postgraduate courses and studies not leading to an official degree could possibly be carried out in English. It has to be noted, though, that this legislation has nothing to do with English and surely was never meant to constitute an obstacle for the possible use of that language. Rather, it is a consequence of the way Dutch and French speakers in Belgium decided to secure the homogeneity of their respective linguistic territories, after decades of language problems in the country. Since the group of German speakers in Belgium is too small a German language university does not exist. When, after the federalization of the country, education passed from the federal to the regional governments, the same type of legislation remained in effect. Using the example of Flanders, (the English translation of) art. 61 of the relevant decree says: "The language of teaching and administration in the universities is Dutch". The very few exceptions to this general rule are to be found in the field of postgraduate courses and in the case of visiting scholars. Yet, even in that case, students have a right to request to pass their exams in Dutch even on courses which, due to the exceptions just mentioned, should have been taught in a foreign language. Also, the number of postgraduate programs in English is very restricted. Taking the example of my own university (the Vrije Universiteit in Brussels) it appears that 33 out of the 47 postgraduate programs are conducted in Dutch (70%). Of the 14 programs offered in English, 11 (78%) are to be found in the fields of natural sciences (6 out of 7) and economics (5 out of 8). None of the postgraduates in language and literature is in English, and even in medicine and pharmacy (1 out of 9) and engineering (1 out of 6) the number of English language programs is extremely low. Also, in Law School, only 1 program out of 6 is in English. A quick survey revealed that a similar pattern is to be discerned in other universities as well. 75% of the University of Ghent's postgraduates, e.g., are in Dutch, 25% in English. Here too, most of the latter are in the same field, viz. 11 out of 19 (= 57.8%) in "Agriculture and Applied Biology" and none of the postgraduates in language and literature is in English. The overall conclusion, therefore, is that even in postgraduate education the Flemish universities overwhelmingly stick to Dutch as the language of instruction. As directly regards the scope of this paper: none of the postgraduate programs in linguistics is offered in any language but Dutch.

This decree, which came into effect on 1 October 1992 (the complete text of the decree and the implementing orders are to be found in the Internet on the following address: <http://www.ufsia.ac.be/~ingleater/>), is mirrored by a similar one valid for Belgium's French speaking community and both are the continuation of legal provisions having existed previously at the Belgian national level.

Foreign language departments, of course, are exempt from this rule, as far as their courses on those languages are concerned. There exists a very long tradition indeed that, from their very first university course onward, students of Germanic and Romance languages are taught all their courses and seminars on both literature and linguistics in the foreign language they're studying. This does, of course, not apply to the same degree for languages which haven't previously been taught in high school (e.g. Slavic or African languages). As far as linguistics is concerned, at least a reading competence in English by all students is taken for granted.
Since a considerable part of the professional literature is in English and even suitable textbooks may not always be available in Dutch, it is compulsory to (be able to) read books and articles in English, even on topics specific to Dutch linguistics. Both scholars and students, therefore, are forced to acquire the necessary proficiency in English. Usually, this is not really a problem nor does it meet with protests from the part of the students. In many other departments English reading comprehension courses form an integral part of undergraduate training, based on the belief that students should be able to consult original sources for personal work. All of this is, at least, the case in the Dutch language universities.

Consequently, the role of English seems to be limited to a language of science since it plays hardly any role at all as a language of instruction or as a language of popular publications aimed at diffusing the insights won by the scientists to a larger audience. Although this may certainly be different in other fields, it is obvious that at least in the field of linguistics English is playing a complementary role, rather than usurping functions formally performed by Dutch. Until a few decades ago, Flemish linguists, eager to publish abroad or attract an international audience, did so in German or in French. What English has done in the recent past is taking over the role of these other foreign languages, not so much taking over functions formally held by the vernacular.

On the other hand, the exploding expansion of English as a language of science certainly is the co-instigator of discussions in the Dutch speaking community in Holland and Belgium (and probably elsewhere as well) on whether English is to be considered a “threat” to the use and even the development of the mother tongue. Although, as I have demonstrated, the basis for this perception is an impression rather than a fact, it may lead to attitudes which are to be considered as harmful. Consequently, it is important to make the population at large understand that the use of English as a language of science does not constitute a threat to the status of the vernaculars nor to their continuing functioning.

6. On the use of linguistic terminology

As far as traditional grammatical terminology is concerned Dutch has a certain tradition of using its own terminology for many concepts which, in many other languages, are usually only referred to by their Latin derived counterparts. Consequently zelfstandig naamwoord ‘noun’ is used alongside with substantief, bijvoeglijk naamwoord ‘adjective’ with adjec-

tief, spraakkunst ‘grammar’ with grammatica etc. With terms like werk-
woord ‘verb’, bijwoord ‘adverb’, voorzetsel ‘preposition’, meervoud ‘plural’ or lijidend voorwerp ‘direct object’ the Latin derived counterparts are hardly ever used. As far as more recent linguistic terminology is con-
cerned, the situation is a little more complex. Terms as dieptestructuur and oppervlaktestructuur are very common for deep and surface structure. Also, the bulk of phonological terminology is Dutch (distinctieve kenmer-
ken ‘distinctive features’, gespannen ‘tense’, fonemendriehoek ‘phoneme tri-
gle’ or “international” (e.g. foneem ‘phoneme’, dentaal ‘dental’, corre-
latie ‘correlation’, etc.). Phonological space or incidence are some of the few exceptions. On the other hand originally German terms as Umlaut, Ablaut, Inlaut, Auslaut still are in frequent use, as is the case in many languages. In sociolinguistics, though, a lot of terminology is simply bor-
rowed from English, as, e.g., change in progress, code switching, communi-
cative competence, language maintenance, language shift, linguistic inse-
curity, matched guise, power and solidarity, upward social mobility, and more of the like. The use of Dutch counterparts or translations is not frequent. Interestingly, this phenomenon does not apply in the field of dialectology, probably thus stressing the Anglo-Saxon origins of sociolinguistics. Al-
though German dialectology used to have a considerable influence on the work of Flemish dialectologists, most of the relevant terminology is in Dutch, with the possible exception of a few very specific terms as das geografische Nebeneinander des historischen Nacheinanders or Vor-
dringen mit punktuellen Zielen.

7. Effects on the scientific evolution of linguistics

Although it is not specific for the situation in Belgium, one more aspect of the dominance of English cannot be left out here, viz. the potential perverse effects of English on the scientific evolution of linguistics.

The vastness of the English language scientific output means its impact on scientific thinking, its clout, is all-pervading. Good science published in other, smaller languages, leads to fragmentation and smaller diffusion. Let me quote a few examples: Ferguson is credited in most studies as the inventor of the concept diglossia (1959) when in fact the concept and its implications were known since ca 1890–1930 in French Hellenistic studies. Ferguson may be the scholar who anchored it in sociolinguistics, through publishing in English, but he was not the originator of the concept as so often stated. Similarly, Joshua Fishman is credited as the
founder of the Sociology of Language, yet G. Cohen published *Pour une sociologie du langage* a thick volume in 1964, i.e. one year before Fishman began his impressive series of publications in English. These examples do not take away any of the credit from Ferguson or Fishman but do show how other scientists tend to perceive things discovered through English as the pioneering work.

Most of the linguistic research originally produced in and on English has great impact in training future non-English linguists, merely because of numbers. This then leads to assumptions that many of the findings published in English language studies are universal and it takes more time and effort to disseminate corrective theories, produced in and on other languages, once the English based or produced publication has become widespread. This even holds true for some of the most common terms in our profession as, e.g., *dialect, continuum, diglossia, social class, language community* etc., all concepts which are very specifically different in the Anglo-Saxon world and are too often simply transferred, both by Anglo-Saxon and other linguists, to situations in other language territories where the concepts in question may refer to a very different reality. On the other hand, for concepts which apparently don't exist in the Anglo-Saxon world, we are often lacking an English counterpart or equivalent. *Umgangssprache* may be a good example of this.

8. Conclusions

By way of conclusion, I would like to formulate some hypotheses and make some recommendations.

(1) An impressionistic comparison between the situation in Flanders and in Holland leads to the conclusion that in the latter country English may be used more extensively in the academic world than is the case in Flanders, mainly as a consequence of two structural differences. The habit in Holland, that PhD dissertations have to be printed before they are defended entails that more dissertations in linguistics are published in English than is the case in Flanders, since very often the so-called "defense copies" are also used for the commercial edition. Also, the use of English in academic teaching seems to be more widespread than in Flanders, where the legislation mentioned before is a strong means of preventing the expansion of English in that particular domain. Yet, it seems not unreasonable to believe that in the future the use of English in academia in Belgium will rather increase than decrease. Also, it is worth mentioning that in other fields the use of English appears to be more widespread than in linguistics, also as far as (postgraduate) teaching is concerned.

(2) Although having to publish in English certainly presupposes a certain proficiency and particular skills, there seems to be no direct correlation between the amount of language proficiency and the extent of using English in research.

(3) The audience one has in mind is the paramount criterion guiding the scholars in their language choice or preference. Also, publications dealing with a particular object language tend to be written in that language, whereas publications on more general linguistic topics tend to be written in English.

(4) The use of English as the international lingua franca in academics does not seriously harm the use, development and functioning of the vernaculars, at least in the so-called developed world. Consequently, English has to be considered as a complementary means of expression and communication, specifically meant to enable and establish contacts with the international scientific community.

(5) In many people there seems to be a confusion between the role of English as the habitual tongue in the Anglo-Saxon world and as the lingua franca of the international scientific community. Therefore, it has to be kept in mind that English is as useful for contacts with the non-English speaking world as it is for contacts with the Anglo-Saxon world.

(6) Many negative attitudes against English as the international language of science seem to be inspired by:
- a misjudgement of the role of English as a complementary means of communication in domains where many vernaculars could not possibly function anyway;
- negative connotations in countries where domestic language conflicts in which English plays a part happen to exist in other domains than the scientific one alone;
- the fact that the international use of English gives an undeniable and often enviable advantage to native speakers of that language, as opposed to all others. Yet, since the reintroduction of Latin is not a serious alternative, this is something we have to live with.

(7) The advance of English cannot possibly be stopped. Therefore, measures to enforce its position are as unnecessary as countermeasures are doomed to fail.

(8) The effects of the dominance of English on the concepts used in linguistics may be harmful to the scientific research of the linguists…
situations in non-English speaking countries and, consequently, to the development of linguistics in general.

(9) The function of English should remain what it is right now: a complementary means of communication in a specific domain. Domestically, therefore, it should not be used in any other functions or domains.

9. Notes

1. I am grateful to my colleagues Hugo Baetens Beardsmore and Sera de Vriendt for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.
2. A similar Francophone institution does not exist.
3. Similar surveys have never been carried out in French-speaking Belgium.

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