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1. Introduction

English is increasingly being used as a language of instruction in a non-English speaking environment. That is, lecturers as well as students are native speakers of languages *other* than English. This also implies that different varieties of English are brought into the classroom, some of which have more prestige than others.

The context of the current research is higher education in Europe after the 1999 Bologna Declaration and the ensuing construction of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA, 2010). The irony is that, while Bologna stresses the *diversity* of languages and cultures[1], English has clearly become dominant, which may be regarded as an unintended side-effect of Bologna. Yet it may be obvious that the internationalization of higher education goes hand in hand with its commercialization (that is, education is increasingly seen as a commodity) and the concomitant marketization of English ('English sells').

The focus of my research is the Dutch language area in Europe: the Netherlands and Flanders (the northern part of Belgium). This is an interesting case as both regions have a more or less similar language policy (instigated by the Dutch Language Union) but strikingly different language practices, due to historical and political circumstances. My case study is based on an advanced master's programme in Development Studies, taught in English for an international audience at the University of Antwerp (Flanders).

While English-medium instruction (EMI) is a relatively new phenomenon in Europe, it is well established in other parts of the world, in particular in countries with a colonial past. In these countries, indigenized varieties of English have emerged, which Kachru (1985)[2] referred to as the 'Outer Circle' of English (as opposed to the 'Inner Circle', where English is used as a native language, and the 'Expanding Circle', where English is a foreign language). Most countries in Europe belong to the Expanding Circle, which has by and large adopted Inner Circle norms (even though it may be about to develop its own norms). As I will argue in this paper, a 'clash' may be observed between norms promoted by the Inner Circle and language practices in the other circles.

This paper aims to explore the complex nature of EMI in an international academic context. It is based on research data obtained from questionnaires and interviews with students and lecturers, as well as the students' coursework. Although the paper is by no means exhaustive, its purpose is to show that the use of English involves more than just *language*. The next part contextualizes the use of English as a medium of instruction in Europe

and in the Dutch language area in particular, while the last part focuses on English as a lingua franca in a non-English speaking context (Flanders). While the former is mainly concerned with language policy (and, to a certain extent, language practices), the latter focuses on actual language practices in a specific context.

2. English as a medium of instruction

2.1. Overview

The dominant position of English in Europe can be attributed to the dominant position of the United States in the world. This dominance can be traced back to the First World War, and it was consolidated after the Second World War. European integration after the Second World War led to a gradual and unplanned *Englishization* of the continent. After every enlargement of the European Community (renamed European Union after the 1993 Maastricht Treaty), English has become more dominant, even though new member-states are not English-speaking.

The use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education is clearly on the rise all over Europe (Brenn-White and Van Rest 2010: 21). Yet one may notice a north-south divide: countries in the northern part of Europe (and the Netherlands in particular) are in the vanguard of English-medium instruction. Most languages spoken in this part of Europe are 'smaller' languages lacking international appeal. Most of these languages are closely related to English, which is widely spoken as an L2. The rise of EMI is less spectacular in the rest of Europe, although it is quite considerable even in France and in the south of Europe.[3] Belgium has its own north-south divide: Flanders has more EMI than the French-speaking part of Belgium, but less than the Netherlands. The differences between the two Dutch-speaking regions can be attributed to differences in legislation, reflecting different views on language.

The Netherlands and Flanders share a language policy, as conceptualized by the Dutch Language Union[4]. The 1995 treaty, signed by the respective governments, states, inter alia, "[t]he Treaty Concluding Parties strive for mutual harmonization and coordination and, *if possible and desirable* [my emphasis], for a common policy" (Article 3). This *intended* common policy not only applies to Dutch, but also to English, in particular the use of English in higher education.[5] The Netherlands and Flanders recognize Dutch as their medium of instruction in higher education, yet allowing for the following exceptions: teaching foreign languages, teaching by foreign guest lecturers, and specific circumstances (e.g. foreign students). This seems rather vague and leaves the door open for many exceptions. Moreover, language practices do not always reflect language policy. Whereas the Netherlands appear to 'go English', Flanders is far more reluctant, reflecting the sensitive linguistic situation in Belgium. This does not mean that English-medium instruction is totally undisputed in the Netherlands[6], yet it is widely accepted and even politically encouraged, which is definitely not the case in Flanders. Overall, the Dutch and the Flemish attitude regarding

language can be summarized as *instrumentalism* (language as a tool) versus *essentialism* (language as the expression of one's identity), both of which are rooted in history[7].

As far as language policy is concerned, a stark difference may be observed between French institutionalized policy (as embodied by the Académie Française) and Anglo-Saxon privatized (i.e. laissez faire) policy. Moreover, the French normative tradition (i.e. the stress on 'standard' usage and the doctrine of linguistic correctness) contrasts sharply with Anglo-Saxon aversion to 'linguistic engineering' (e.g. Woolard 1998: 21). Quite strikingly, Flemish language policy is related to French policy, whereas in Dutch language policy (or the lack of it) an Anglo-Saxon orientation is apparent.

2.2. The Netherlands

The Dutch instrumentalist attitude may be called pragmatic and even commercial. In other words, English is seen as a tool. In economic terms, English can be regarded as an import product which has been successfully marketed in the Netherlands and abroad, for instance as a means to attract foreign students. This tendency to market imported goods can be traced back to as early as the 17th century (Prak 2005: 89). It is tempting to compare the marketization of English today with the tulip trade in the 17th century[8]. Tulips were imported from the Ottoman Empire (today's Turkey), after which they were skilfully marketed in Holland as a consequence of which they have become a major Dutch export product. Although the ensuing *tulip mania* is commonly associated with speculative transaction and crashing stock markets, tulips may be regarded as one of the most lucrative Dutch products ever. Today's marketization of English reflects the internationalization and commercialization of higher education.

There may be some irony in the fact that today the Dutch are among the staunchest supporters of English as a language of instruction at Dutch universities. Simon Stevin, a Flemish engineer to the Dutch Prince Maurice of Orange-Nassau, founded an engineering school in Leiden (1600) which adopted Dutch instead of Latin as its language of instruction. Stevin justified this decision as follows: "[...] because those who will later be engaged in the profession of engineering rarely if ever speak Latin among themselves, but use the language spoken in their respective country, it follows that their classes should be taught not in Latin, French or any other language, but only in Dutch" (quoted in De Ridder-Symoens 2005: 6). Stevin wrote on principle in Dutch, which he thought should be the language of scientific discourse in the Netherlands (Prak 2005: 224). Simon Stevin (1548-1620) 'invented' many Dutch mathematical and military terms which are still being used today. Similar examples in areas other than the Dutch language area might be Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) and Robert Boyle (1627-1691), who argued that the most obscure problems, either in astronomy or in chemistry, could be discussed in their national language (i.e. Italian or English, respectively).

Since the 1990s, many universities in Europe have adopted English as an additional language of instruction, and some have switched to English al-

together. This tendency is particularly salient in the Netherlands. Today's option for instruction in English is clearly market-driven and considered a strategic choice, as conceded by a former Dutch Education Minister (Ritzen 2003). This may explain why English is so prevalent in Dutch higher education, especially at master level, where most courses are taught in English (Oosterhof 2007).

2.3. Flanders

Flemish essentialist language attitudes can only be understood in the context of the 19th century *language struggle*. Belgium was constructed in 1830 as a French-speaking state, even though French was a minority language. Apart from being the language of power, French was also the (international) language of prestige and higher education in the whole country. It was not until a century later, after a long and bitter struggle for equal rights, that Dutch was officially recognized as the language of higher education in Flanders. The Dutchification (*vernederlandsing*) of Ghent University in 1930 is commonly seen as a milestone in Flemish linguistic and cultural emancipation (Donaldson 1983: 24-25). Even today, language remains a sensitive issue which is usually framed in a discourse of *threat* (of foreign languages, in particular French) and protection (of one's own language). English may be far more popular than French in today's Flanders, yet measures have been taken to curb the use of English in higher education.

Whereas the Dutch law regarding the medium of instruction in higher education is very concise[9], the Flemish law is very complex, reflecting conflicting discourses on language. 'Academic' discourses tend to be more pragmatic (that is, they aim to provide for more English), whereas 'political' discourses are more essentialist (aiming to protect Dutch). Academic discourses should be understood in an international or European context, while political discourses cater for the Belgian or the Flemish market.

The 2012 Flemish Higher Education decree[10] explicitly states that Dutch is the medium of instruction at all Flemish universities, and that 'another language' (interestingly, the law does not mention any languages by name) can be used in 'exceptional cases' only. At bachelor level this means a maximum of 18.33 % (30 credits), at master level a maximum of 50% is allowed.[11] In contrast to the Dutch law, Flemish legislation lists a whole series of additional requirements. To complicate matters, 'special programmes' may be taught entirely in another language (virtually always English). Although this law is more flexible than the previous law, Flanders may not be able to compete internationally. That is, a university which offers programmes which are taught entirely in English is far more attractive than a university whose programmes are only partially in English.

3. English as a Lingua Franca

3.1. From EFL to ELF

Although teaching and learning in a language which is not one's first lan-

guage is not something new (Latin and French being well-known examples), the appeal of English as a medium of instruction is unprecedented. It is a worldwide phenomenon affecting all layers of education from kindergarten onwards. In Europe, English-medium instruction is a burning issue in the 'common market' of higher education. Universities have become market-driven institutions, and education is often perceived to be some kind of consumer article.

The worldwide use of English also raises the issue of which English is to be used. It has been argued that a 'relocation of English' (Saraceni 2010) is needed. That is, in a globalizing context, English should be reconceptualised from a foreign language (EFL) into a lingua franca (ELF). ELF might be described as an emergent variety of English, although this may be too confined a term as ELF should be seen as flexible and context-dependent (see Jenkins 2007). ELF also entails a shift from the native speaker (NS) to the non-native speaker (NNS) as a norm-provider, which ties in with the shifting 'ownership of English' (Widdowson 1994). Moreover, norms are to be seen as dynamic rather than static, and the focus is on function rather than on form. In other words, competence is not just linguistic, but also pragmatic and intercultural. This may be referred to as 'languaging' (Seidlhofer 2011: 98): the use of all linguistic and other resources available. As a consequence, there is more tolerance of variation and errors than in a prescriptive tradition. Thus one might argue in favour of, for instance, Dutch English as a variety in its own right, with its own phonology and morphology (Edwards 2010). Yet the question remains whether this is feasible or desirable.

The very concept of ELF remains controversial, especially in an educational context, and it is not readily accepted by most language learners and teachers. It is often regarded as 'deficient English', which, proponents of ELF might argue, reflects a reductionist view of language based on the ideology of standardization and NS-bias. On the other hand, norms are crucial in language learning and teaching. The problem, however, is: which norms and, also, whose norms are to be adopted? Current English language teaching is firmly based on NS-norms[12], and so are curricula, textbooks, and language tests. English is a lucrative business in the Anglo-Saxon world (Phillipson 1992), which obviously promotes varieties of native English (usually British or American English). Yet the very notion of native speaker is problematic: Who exactly is a native speaker? (Is the notion confined to British or American speakers? How about NNS who can use English more 'appropriately' than some NS?) What exactly does it mean to be an 'educated native speaker'? (How 'educated' does one have to be?). Therefore the notion of 'expert speaker' might be more appropriate as it turns away from the NS-NNS distinction. Yet the term may be fuzzy as well (Who is an expert? Who decides what is 'correct'?).

Although in language teaching and learning a gradual shift may be observed from linguistic competence based on native speaker models to actual language behaviour in a multilingual context (ELF), in academia (and in academic writing in particular) there still is a strong bias towards Anglo-

American norms. This bias not only relates to language as such, but to the supporting paradigms as well (ranging from, for instance, the format of a research paper to, ultimately, the way of thinking).

Set at the crossroads where major language areas meet (English, French, German), multilingualism is very much part of life in the Dutch-speaking language area. This is also reflected in education, which pays considerable attention to foreign language learning and teaching. Yet, English has clearly become dominant as a 'natural' second language at the expense of French and German. As a result of migration and increased mobility in general, the linguistic landscape has become even more complex, and English is often used as a lingua franca. Yet, the varieties of English used may be remote from 'native' English, the use of which is often restricted to an educational context (that is, education in general). Most teachers and learners of English appear to be largely unfamiliar with the notion of ELF, and so is the educational system (curricula, textbooks, tests, etc.), which prefers 'native' English.

3.2. Case study

The case study is based on questionnaires and interviews with 16 lecturers (most of whom native speakers of Dutch) and 112 students from more than 20 countries attending an advanced master's programme in Development Studies taught at the University of Antwerp. The focus of the case study is on the students' language profile and their written English. The data obtained from the questionnaire and the interviews were set off against a 3,500 words essay they had written in English (actually the first assignment they had to write for one of their obligatory courses). The assignments were analysed in terms of content, academic conventions (especially citing and quoting), and language (with a focus on readability, appropriateness, and correctness). They were marked by content lecturers (native speakers of Dutch) as well as language lecturers (native speakers of Dutch or English). The purpose of the case study was to identify the students' linguistic and other problems when writing in English. The data obtained from the questionnaire/interviews and the assignment complemented each other in that they provided an insight in different aspects of the students' language use (self-reported vs actual writing).

Background

The current Institute[13] has its roots in the colonial legacy. Set up in the 1920s for African students from the Belgian colonies, its language of instruction was French (the then language of higher education in Flanders as well as the main colonial language). In 2000, it was decided to introduce English as an additional language of instruction (alternating with French) in order to broaden the scope and to attract students from other parts of the developing world. This led to an influx of Asian students (initially mainly from China), most of whom had not been educated through the medium of English. Although most students had learned English as a second (that is, foreign) language, many of them were not very proficient in English. Therefore, English language classes were added to the curriculum.

After a couple of years, it was decided to abandon the French-language programme and to set up an English-only programme from 2007 onwards. In the meantime, students from French-speaking countries have become a minority, and English language classes (pre-sessional as well as in-course) are provided for those in need of additional language support.

Asked to reflect on the shift from French to English as a medium of instruction, the lecturers (mostly native speakers of Dutch) came up with a number of answers. Most obviously, English is referred to as the academic lingua franca. Most lecturers (especially the younger ones; that is, roughly under forty) perceive English as their L2 and even as their academic L1 (the language in which they write and teach). However, English is more than a language. It is also regarded as the carrier of the Anglo-American paradigm which has become dominant in academia (including Development Studies). Apart from this paradigm shift, the adoption of EMI is also attributed to the shift from French-speaking countries in Africa to other countries and continents, most of whom have adopted English for their international (and sometimes even internal) communication. The language shift may be commercially and politically motivated as well. Last but not least, teaching in two foreign languages (English and French) is more difficult and complex than teaching in English only. Moreover, teaching in French has become a linguistic challenge, especially for the younger lecturers. Several of them conceded they could not teach their course in French.

Even though all students meet the admission requirements[14], some have serious problems studying and particularly writing in English. Generally speaking, the students can be divided into two distinct groups: one group from the Outer Circle and one group from the Expanding Circle. One might expect students from the Outer Circle (who studied in English) to have better English than students from the Expanding Circle (who did not study in English), yet this is by no means always true. In this research, 'good English' is defined in a utilitarian way as readable English. That is, the writer manages to make effective use of lexical, grammatical, and other features, so that the text makes sense to the reader. This approach, however, may not be entirely unproblematic, as will be pointed out later. Virtually all students come from complex multilingual countries, which is reflected in their personal multilingualism (plurilingualism).

Outer Circle students

English is very prominent in all Outer Circle countries, most of which are former British colonies. In these countries, English is either (one of) the official/national language(s)[15] or (one of) the main 'other language(s)'. English is often used as a lingua franca, as no other language may serve this purpose. Yet, most students do not speak English as their 'home language' (informal language used with family and/or friends). English is part of their repertoire, but usually it is not their first or only language. Most students perceive English as their second language, while a minority perceives English as a first language. As already indicated, most students speak several other (usually 'local') languages/dialects as well.

English is the main or exclusive medium of instruction. Yet, there are strik-

ing differences between the levels of education. In primary education, languages other than English may play a significant role (e.g. in Ethiopia and Bangladesh), whereas in secondary and higher education English is the medium of instruction. In practice, however, there may be a lot of code-switching and bilingual practices. For instance, concepts may be introduced in English, but explained in the local language. One of the students (reporting on his teaching practices in Ethiopia) conceded, "If I explain something in English, students ask me to repeat in Amharic[16]". Sometimes a course is taught in English, but the exams are in the local language. It should be noted that many students are not familiar with writing assignments or other forms of academic writing. As stated by several students, "we don't do a lot of writing at our university". This may explain why many students have considerable problems with their first assignment, as they are not familiar with the *genre* (including conventions) and the *register* (appropriate language use) of academic writing. Moreover, the varieties of English used by the students reflect Outer Circle norms (Kachru 1985 defines the Outer Circle as 'norm-developing') which may be perfectly acceptable in a 'local' context, but which may cause considerable problems in an international context. A common complaint is that the lecturers do not understand their students' written English. There may be some irony in the fact that students who were educated in English have difficulties to make themselves understood for an international audience, while their lecturers (most of whom have not studied in English) may be more successful. This may be due to the fact that the lecturers' native language is related to English, and they were taught Inner Circle norms. These norms may be called dominant in an international and academic context. The students appear not to be familiar with these norms: "I don't know if I'm speaking right or wrong", as conceded by a student from India.

Expanding Circle students

'Expanding Circle' may be regarded as a cover term for very different countries in which English is not an official/national language. Yet, even in these countries English is often referred to as the main 'other language', which may indeed reflect the current status of English in the world. This is for instance the case in Vietnam (as reported by the interviewees), in spite of the country's French colonial past and anti-American sentiments after the Vietnam War (1955-1975). Most Expanding Circle students perceive English as their second language, although they speak several other languages as well, reflecting societal and personal multilingualism. Although English is usually taught as a foreign language, it is sometimes used as a medium of instruction as well (especially in higher education). Most students have attended courses taught in English, either in their home country or abroad. For some students, however, it is their first experience with EMI. Yet, many of them have had work experience with NGOs or international organizations, in which English is commonly used as a lingua franca.

Writing in English proves to be problematic for this group as well. One of the main problems is L1 interference. Speakers sharing an L1 tend to easily understand each other's English, whereas for other speakers it may be incomprehensible. This is not only due to the language used, but also to the

way ideas and concepts are literally 'translated' into English (e.g. metaphors), as conceded by the students. This may also hold for the Outer Circle.

For some students from the Expanding Circle, English is hugely problematic. This is particularly the case for students whose L1 or medium of instruction is not related to English (e.g. Indonesian, Vietnamese). Not all students from the Expanding Circle face the same problems, and some perform quite well. This is mainly the case for students whose L1 or medium of instruction is related to English, for instance Dutch-speaking students. These students speak and write English as an L2 based on Inner Circle norms. Although they were mostly taught British English, there is more exposure to American English in their daily lives (e.g. the role of popular culture, street signs, etc.). Moreover, these students share a linguistic and cultural background with their lecturers. As for the assignment, this may imply they implicitly know what is expected. They tend to be more familiar with basic assumptions and notions (such as the 'Western' concept of critique) and with the format of a research paper. Their English tends to be quite readable for the lecturers, with whom they share the same variety of (Dutch) English. Even 'mistakes' (e.g. Dutchisms) may go unnoticed.

4. Discussion

It should be noted that there are huge individual differences between the students (Outer Circle as well as Expanding Circle), depending on one's language aptitude, socio-economic background (some have more access to English than others), the level of the school attended, the school system (e.g. public vs private), ministerial and other policies regarding English-medium instruction, etc. Some students have studied or worked in an international environment (either in their home country or abroad), which may affect their English as well. For example, a student from Kazakhstan with excellent English had actually studied at an American university in her home country, and had never lived in an English-speaking country.

Students from both Circles were asked which variety of English they preferred. Overall, there was a slight preference for American English (perhaps the variety they are most familiar with). Some also mentioned their own variety of English (sometimes generically referred to as, for instance, 'African English'). Regarding non-native varieties of English, 'northern European' English was preferred. Especially speakers of Dutch, German, and the Scandinavian languages were seen as good examples. The students' preference for speakers of English whose first language is Dutch may not come as a surprise, taking into account this is the variety which is spoken by most of their lecturers and which they hear in their daily lives while studying in Antwerp. As one student from Ecuador remarked, "I'm quite surprised by Belgian [Flemish?] people speaking English", by which he meant that most of them can get by in English quite easily, which is obviously not the case in his home country. It should also be noted that these varieties are closely related to 'native' English, which could make it easier to understand them. Interestingly, several students pointed out they find it far

more difficult to understand some Outer Circle or even Inner Circle ('native speakers') users of English.

To sum up, the students' written English appears to be determined by their linguistic, cultural and educational background as well as their ability to use English appropriately in an international academic context. The fact that students from the Outer Circle have studied in English does not necessarily mean their English is appropriate in an international context. Yet, these students are often exempted from taking English language tests and/or courses, which may be unjustified. Many students (from both Circles) are not familiar with academic writing in general and with the format of the assignment in particular. This may be less of a problem for 'Western' students who share a cultural and linguistic background with their lecturers.

5. Conclusion

Today's use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education all over Europe can be attributed to the internationalization as well as the commercialization (commodification) of higher education. English has a unique selling position in that it has become the global lingua franca. Although English may be regarded as a threat to other languages and cultures, its use has widely been accepted in academia. This is also the case in the Dutch language area, where English is firmly ingrained in education and in society at large. Yet there are striking differences between the Netherlands and language-sensitive Flanders where measures have been taken to protect Dutch.

The question remains which variety (or varieties) of English should be taught, especially in an international context. A pragmatic approach may be needed, and therefore the idea of English as a lingua franca is tempting. In the era of globalization, English can no longer be considered the exclusive property of a relatively small and ill-defined group of native speakers, but of a much larger group of English language users all of whom bring in their own varieties of English. Yet not all varieties have the same prestige, and some may be more successful than others. It appears that varieties of English which are linguistically and culturally related to native English are more successful in an academic context which is still very much dominated by the West. For instance, Dutch English may be more acceptable internationally than, say, Chinese English. This may be most obvious in phonology (pronunciation), but morphological and lexical features may be involved as well (e.g. word and sentence structure, metaphorical language), not to mention different ways of conceptualizing the world.

In an international and English-speaking academic context, the focus appears to be on communicative competence rather than on correctness. Yet, in order to communicate effectively, one cannot do without norms and models. However fuzzy the concept may be, the expert speaker can be regarded as a 'fine myth' (a term coined by Davies 1996 to refer to the native speaker) to provide the necessary norms. In a globalized educational con-

text, the expert speaker can be a native speaker or, perhaps more likely, a non-native speaker of English. Apart from linguistic competence, the expert speaker needs intercultural communicative competence as well.

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1 The Bologna Declaration stresses the need to achieve "a common space for higher education within the framework of the diversity of cultures, languages and educational systems" (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf)

2 Kachru (1985) distinguishes three circles of English: the norm-providing Inner Circle, which refers to the traditional bases of English (e.g. UK, USA), the norm-developing Outer Circle, which refers to regions where English plays an important role as a second language, often in a multilingual setting (e.g. India), and the norm-dependent Expanding Circle, where English is taught as a foreign language, and which acknowledges the importance of English as an international language (e.g. the Netherlands).

3 English has also been gaining ground in Central and Eastern Europe since the collapse of Communism and the waning influence of Russian.

4 The Dutch Language Union (*Nederlandse Taalunie*) treaty was signed by the Dutch and Belgian governments in 1980. As a result of the Belgian federalization process, a new treaty was signed by the Dutch and Flemish governments in 1995.

5 More recently (11 June 2012) the Dutch Language Union organized a public hearing in the Dutch Parliament regarding the use of Dutch and English in higher education in both regions (see http://taalunieversum.org/taalunie/hoorzitting_over_nederlands_en_engels_in_het_hoger_onderwijs/)

6 For instance, petition addressed to the Dutch Education Minister, signed by Dutch academics from various universities, 23 June 2009. Available at http://voxintro.com/overig/NederlandsVoertaalWetenschap.pdf). See also Commissie Nederlands als Wetenschapstaal (2003)

7 For a discussion of the terms instrumentalism/essentialism, see May (2008)

8 A commemorative plaque at Leiden University reminds us of the tulip mania. It can be found at Rapenburg, close to the Hortus Botanicus where the first bulbs were planted around 1593.

9 http://maxius.nl/wet-op-het-hoger-onderwijs-en-wetenschappelijk-onderzoek/artikel7.2

10 http://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/stukken/2011-2012/g1655-2.pdf

11 The Dutch law does not impose any restrictions as to the number of courses that may be taught in 'another language'.

12 For instance, the highest level of the CEFR (Common European Framework, level C2) is described as follows: "At this level, the learner is approaching the linguistic competence of an educated *native speaker* [my emphasis], and is able to use the language in a range of culturally appropriate ways."

13 See http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.IOB

14 TOEFL paper-based 500-550, internet-based 61-79; IELTS 5.0-6.0.

15 Ethnologue (http://www.ethnologue.com) does not distinguish between official and national language.

16 The main language spoken in Ethiopia as well as the lecturer's L1.