

Language marketing in Europe

History has witnessed various initiatives for language planning and policy, such as standardisation and normalisation through institutions as the *Académie Française* or the *Real Academia Española*. Recently, language scientists and planners have acknowledged that in addition to mother tongue speakers foreign language speakers also increasingly determine the importance of a language.

Acknowledging this new battlefield, EU languages try to gain more importance through language marketing efforts.

I will first discuss the concept of language marketing (Domínguez 1998) and highlight the particular difficulties of promoting a language and culture abroad in an area where the language is not supported by a legislative power or only to a limited extent, as opposed to more traditional language planning and policy initiatives which are implemented within a state's own territory (Cooper 1989, Kaplan & Baldauf 1997).

In order to concretise these differences, I will focus on the *British Council*, the *Alliance Française* and the *Instituto Cervantes* in a European context. My presentation will include a description of their structure - discussing the link with a nation-state, the type of activities organised and special attempts concerning the European Union (in its composition before and after the 2004 enlargement) programmes, officials and actors - as well as an assessment of the efficiency of the initiatives and language marketing in general.

Finally, I will present CICEB, the umbrella organisation of various language and culture organisations in Brussels. I will discuss its reason for coming into being as well as the difficulties and opportunities it presents for a language and culture promotion conglomerate at supranational level.

In my conclusion, I will highlight the particularities of the marketing of foreign languages and cultures in the European Union and I will link the difficulties of this concept to broader cultural and sociological concepts such as the concept of nation-state and consociationalist theory.