Importance of national language publishing in Europe

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Three eras of languages in science and humanities
Historical eras of language landscape in science

**Era of actual linga franca**, i.e. Latin which was nobody’s native tongue.

Latin was the primary language up to 19th century in science and the humanities.
Era of national languages which are native tongues for the upper classes.

Since the mid-19th century, there are a few primary national languages (English, French, German) which have served for international scholarly communication instead of one lingua franca.
Era of standard English which is not *lingua franca* because is asymmetric:

- English is native tongue and the national language for the so-called central societies.
- English is foreign language for the rest of world and most often for “peripheral societies”

The domination of English is clearly visible since the Second World War.
Proportions of languages in publications of the natural sciences worldwide 1880–2005

Figure from Ulrich Ammon’s article (2012)
2.

Publication languages across Europe
1. The choice of publication language is often a matter of choosing the recipient of scholarly communication.

2. On one hand, scholars communicate with other scholars within academia. On the other hand, scholars communicate with society. In this second case, they often argue that national languages are the best medium.

3. However, argument that scholars publish in national languages to communicate with society sometimes is too simplistic because national languages do not guarantee that recipients beyond academia can understand scholarly communication.

4. In other words: we cannot say that publications in English differs in their quality whereas publications in national languages are always good because they are devoted to the society. All those kinds of publications varies and can be evaluated.

5. However, evaluation methods should be fitted to different types and languages of publications.
1. All international databases like Web of Science or Scopus are English biased. It means that publications in national languages constitute the small share of the total volume.

2. Therefore, it is crucial to use national databases (Current Research Information System) which allow us to build a more adequate picture of publication patterns in science and humanities.

3. Since several years, this is possible in Czech Republic, Finland, Norway, Poland, among others.

4. In our network (ENRESSH), we investigate how to better design fair and balanced regulations for the evaluation of the social science and the humanities. The language issue is a crucial one.
Percentage of peer reviewed publications in English, local language(s) and other languages in the social sciences and humanities in 2014

- English publications:
  - Norway: 68.3%
  - Finland: 61.8%
  - Denmark: 63.4%
  - Flanders (Belgium): 78.7%
  - Czech Republic: 26.4%
  - Slovenia: 45.9%
  - Slovakia: 25.8%
  - Poland: 17.2%

- Local language(s):
  - Norway: 26.4%
  - Finland: 45.9%
  - Denmark: 17.2%
  - Flanders (Belgium): 72.2%
  - Czech Republic: 73.6%
  - Slovenia: 54.1%
  - Slovakia: 74.2%
  - Poland: 82.8%

- Other language(s):
  - Norway: 6.3%
  - Finland: 4.1%
  - Denmark: 2.6%
  - Flanders (Belgium): 0.5%
  - Czech Republic: 0.6%
  - Slovenia: 4.9%
  - Slovakia: 4.2%
  - Poland: 0.2%

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The share of publications in English (all publication types) in the years 2011–2014

**Economics and Business**

- Czech Republic
- Finland
- Flanders (Belgium)
- Norway
- Poland
- Slovenia

**Law**

**Philosophy & Theology**
Evaluation of national language publications

1. Publication patterns differ both across fields (e.g. law differs from economics and business in the same way in Flanders and Finland) and across countries (e.g. publication patterns for law in the Czech Republic differ from those for law in Finland).

2. Western and Northern European countries have different starting points than Central and Eastern European countries.

3. Cultural and historical heritage play an import role in publication patterns.
3. Publishing in national journals
Publishing in national languages and multilingualism is a very complex issue.

We need to investigate many dimensions of this subject to design policy recommendations.
In Poland, there are 632 researchers (at least PhD level) (of 67 thousand who were analyzed) from all fields of science who published in at least 4 languages (max. 8 languages) in the four years period (all peer-review publications types).

3,850 researchers (~5% of the total) published in at least three languages.
4.

Conclusion
Conclusion

1. The internationalization policies in non-English speaking countries should be designed with consideration of current publication patterns.

2. Publications in national languages should be documented, evaluated, and used in the funding regimes.

3. Publications in national languages are societally relevant but their scientific quality also should be assessed (not every publication in national language is societally relevant).

4. Balanced multilingualism in science (Gunnar Sivertsen’s idea) allows the policies for increasing quality, globalization, and societal responsibility in research to come together with less contradictions in practice.
References

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Thank you
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