

Setting the Catherine wheel in motion

An exploration of “Englishization” in the German higher education system

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In today’s world, internationalisation is the key to survival for higher education institutions (HEIs). Many argue that English has become the most used language worldwide, the international language of wider communication in a variety of domains ranging from the professional to everyday life. Consequently, non-English speaking countries have entered into a process of introducing English-medium higher education as a means of overcoming any competitive disadvantage associated with their particular linguistic situation. As a result, an ideology has emerged amongst HEIs in non-English-speaking countries that internationalisation is synonymous with the introduction of English-medium degree programmes. This development has implications for the position of national languages in their higher education systems, and consequently as international languages of communication. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the extent to which the adoption of such language-in-education reforms may potentially act as an impetus to a wider language shift in the countries comprising Kachru’s “expanding circle.” This paper explores the current process of “Englishization” within the German higher education system. By means of Strubell’s “Catherine Wheel” conceptual model, a potential language shift from German to English is postulated and its ramifications for German’s status and role as an international language are discussed.

Keywords: English-medium, language shift, higher education, internationalisation, German as a foreign language

In 1996, Germany began to introduce its interpretation of English-medium degree programmes (EMDPs) at higher education institutions (HEIs) in the form of *auslandsorientierte Studiengänge*¹ on a pilot-project basis. In 2002, these pilot programmes were evaluated by the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*² (DAAD) and, having been deemed a success, were adapted, relabelled *international ausgerichtete Studiengänge*,³ and added as a permanent feature of German higher education (HE). While many domestic and international developments drove the initial introduction of EMDPs, the principal rationale behind their introduction was access to international student flows. In the 1990s in Europe, particularly in Germany, a growing awareness of steady flows of international students to English-speaking

countries, bypassing their non-English-speaking neighbours, emerged (Hellmann & Pätzold 2005:15), indicating a chronic lack of competitiveness (Walkenhorst 2005:474). This realisation impelled Germany to investigate its lack of attractiveness as a study destination. The lack of attraction was attributed mainly to the rigidity of the traditional German HE system, including strict German language requirements (Wahl 2005:33), and an array of other factors,⁴ echoing concerns highlighted as early as 1966 by the *Wissenschaftsrat*.⁵

Since their inception, EMDPs have proved increasingly popular with international and domestic students. While Hellmann and Pätzold (2005:27) and Nastansky (2004:50) suggest that the attractiveness of EMDPs for German university students remains limited, the author proposes that the dynamics and composition of EMDPs has changed significantly, a view supported by his own data collected in 2011 at three German HEIs in a comparative multi-site case study project.⁶ Data emerging from this project show that such programmes are largely dominated by German university students (accounting on average for 73% of the total population) as opposed to the 50:50 ratio desired by the DAAD. Furthermore, a high *Numerus Clausus*⁷ exists for these programmes in order to assist recruitment from the large pool of domestic applicants. These two findings highlight the current attractiveness of EMDPs to the domestic student population and indicate a substantial change in their composition and attractiveness compared to earlier studies. The provision of EMDPs in Germany has risen significantly in recent years and continues to do so. Comparing Maiworm & Wächter's 2002 and 2008 datasets⁸ on the estimated provision of such programmes in Germany and the DAAD's data on their provision in 2009 and 2011, one notes major increases, including a three-fold increase in the provision of such programmes between 2002 (65) and 2008 (214). In 2009, the DAAD recorded 505 EMDPs offered in the German HE system meeting their criteria as the monitoring organisation. This represents a doubling in the provision of such programmes from the previous year. In 2011, the DAAD recorded 748 programmes. These data suggest high levels of demand for such programmes, but also a notable acceleration in the rate at which they are developed and introduced. Although the numbers for 2011 might suggest some deceleration, with a 68% increase in the provision over two years, the DAAD discontinued its funding assistance to EMDPs between 2009 and 2011 (DAAD 2008).

In 2011, then, the total number of English-medium DAAD-certified⁹ EMDPs offered at Bachelor and Masters level in Germany stood at 748 across a range of disciplines including *Rechts-, Wirtschafts-, Sozialwissenschaften, Mathematik und Naturwissenschaften and Ingenieurwissenschaften*¹⁰ – disciplines attracting a significant majority of the total student population in Germany. Of the 103 Bachelor programmes, 54 were available exclusively through the medium of English, while the remaining 49 were offered through a combination of English and German in addition to another European language. Of the 643 Masters programmes, 615 were offered exclusively through English (DAAD 2011). There are two dominant forms in the provision of such programmes. While the provision shows large variations, currently the more dominant form is the “English-only” model, in which English is the sole

language of instruction and assessment, so that no knowledge of German is required to complete the degree programme. Such programmes, at both levels, account for 669 of the 748 DAAD-certified EMDPs – a small but rapidly growing proportion of the total number of degree programmes offered in the German HE system.¹¹

The less dominant form of such programmes is the phased English-to-German model, where students begin their degree programmes entirely in English and are provided with intensive accelerated studies in German language and culture for the first, and in some cases second, year, after which all modules are taught entirely in German for the third, and in some cases fourth, year. Such programmes account for the remaining 69 of the 748 DAAD-certified EMDPs. Such figures may seem to indicate that emphasis currently lies on a pragmatic adoption of English to attract international students with little regard for the promotion of German language and culture. Many English-only programmes, however, have been implemented with a clear acknowledgement of participants' broader need for German proficiency, manifested in the requirement that all international students attend compulsory German-as-a-foreign-language (GFL) modules.

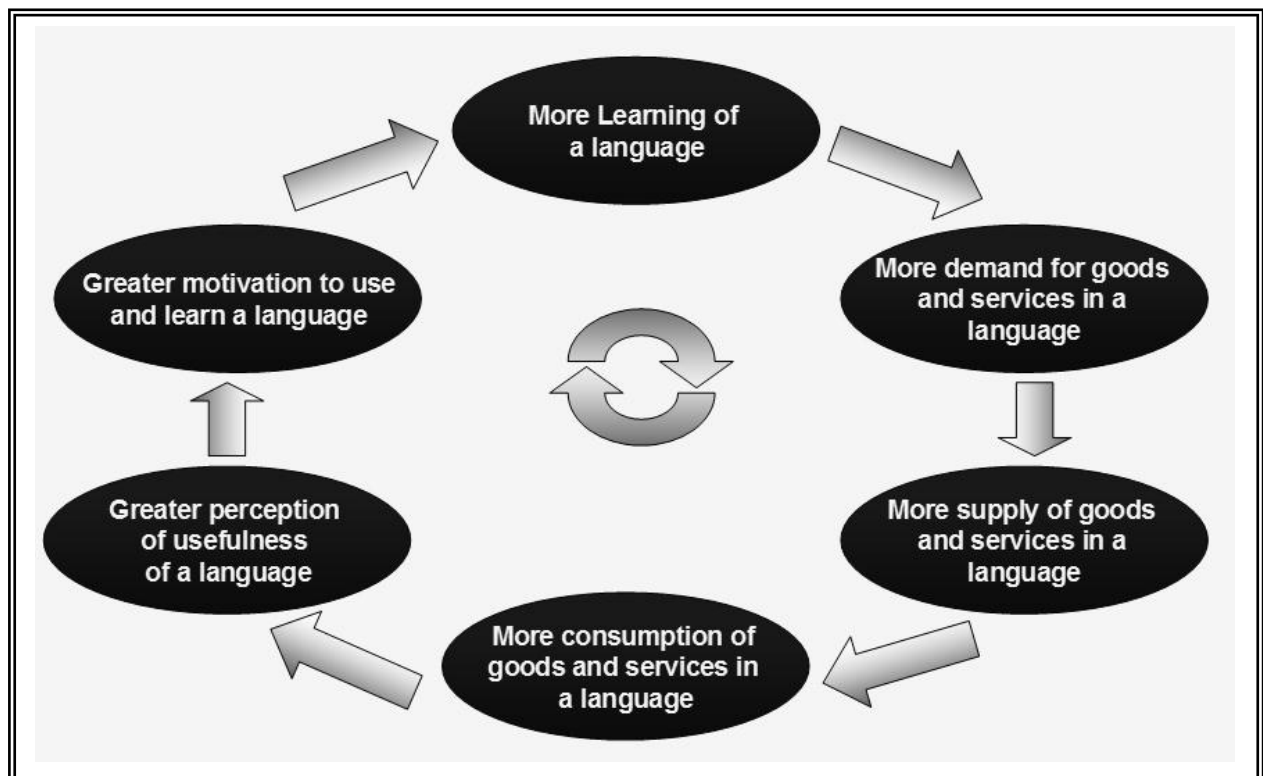
Such language-in-education planning suggests that there is growing recognition of the need for the simultaneous cultivation and promotion of German with English in such programmes. Equally, however, considering the potential that such programmes present as a trigger and/or driver of a status change in favour of English in the German HE system, a conceptual model is necessary to explore such a possibility and to theorise about the impact such a development may have on German's status in its HE system.

The Catherine Wheel model

The “Catherine Wheel”¹² model of language shift and status change (Figure 1) has been developed in three versions by Miquel Strubell: the individual as consumer (1996, 2001), the individual as worker (1999) and the individual as a social being (1999). In this article, the individual as consumer model will be used, since EMDPs emerge within reforms contributing to the active marketisation and commodification of education worldwide (Naidoo & Jamieson 2005), with the consumers of education at its core.¹³ While this model has hitherto been used almost exclusively in the case of minoritised languages,¹⁴ Strubell (2006) stresses that “the model is intended to work equally for an expanding world language, or a language acquiring a dominant position, and for attempts to recover or revive a language that is in a subordination position.” In this article, the Catherine Wheel model illustrates three interconnected factors: the growth of English in German society; the way in which the introduction and continual cultivation of EMDPs constitutes the initial stages of “Englishizing” the German HE system; and the implications for the vitality of German as an international language.

Figure 1 depicts the components of the model. It suggests a connection running from competence in a language, to its social use and desirability as linguistic

capital, to the presence and demand for products in and through the language, to the motivation to learn/use it, which consequently enhances competence, forming a cyclical process or “wheel.” This process is subject, in varying degrees, to catalysts which accelerate the process, and/or inhibitors which may decelerate or impede it. Language planning has the potential to effect changes in the presence of such catalysts or inhibitors to achieve a range of agendas (Strubell 2001:280).



(Fig 1: The Catherine Wheel Model – adapted from Strubell 1996).

The changing status of English in Germany

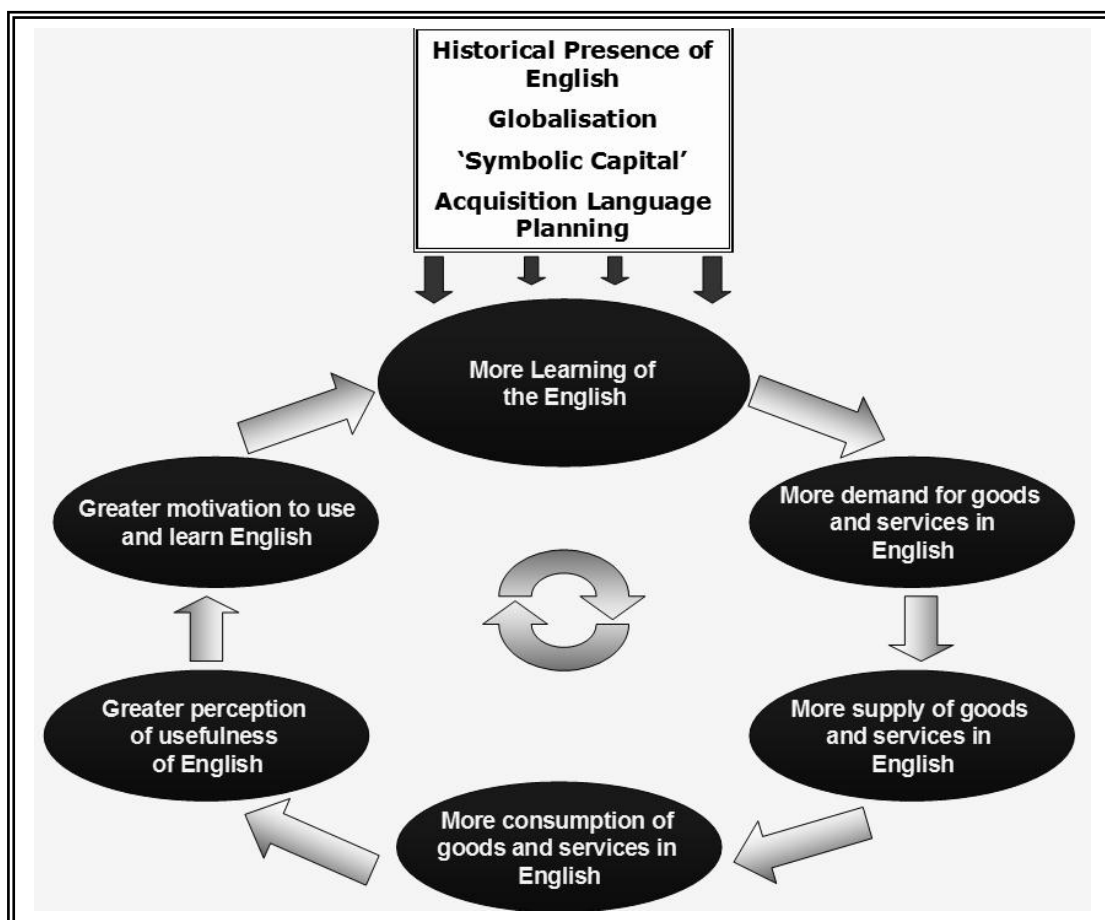
If the Catherine Wheel model is to prove useful in analysing language shift and status change, the first condition of the cycle, “More learning of the language,” must be present. A range of factors have contributed to the changing status of English in German society as a whole. Generally, the change can be attributed to two overarching factors: the historical presence of English in the country, and Germany’s involvement in globalisation, which together result in *de facto* language planning activities promoting English as the country’s first foreign language.

Historically, English has had a large presence in Germany. Ammon (1998) traces its origins to the aftermath of the First World War and the consequent decline of German’s status as the language of science.¹⁵ English was particularly well poised to fill the vacuum, considering the research capacity of the USA and the infusion of scientific knowledge through emigration from Germany (Ammon 1995:44-45).

Truchot (2002) asserts that, while the First World War was the definitive starting point for English, the end of the Second World War marked the period of its greatest gain throughout Europe. Its effects were felt most emphatically in the Federal Republic of Germany, through the presence of large English-speaking military forces and the perception amongst the general population of such forces as liberators rather than invaders (Hagège 1996:14). The post-war period was also characterised by rapid changes in linguistic needs and behaviour, with greater international dialogue, which, as Hoffmann (2000:7) contends, benefited the English language because of the USA's dominance in world economic, political and scientific affairs. Dollerup (1996:27) also attributes the positive attitudes to English amongst continental Europeans, and Germans in particular, to the emergence and development of a youth culture orientated towards the USA, considering that this segment of society has the greatest influence over societal change (Coleman 2006:10). The historical dominance of English in Germany, coupled with the positive ideology surrounding it, and its growth internationally, are the fundamental reasons for its status.

Globalisation has also played a key role. With world economies progressively more interconnected and interdependent (Graddol 1997:25), and globalisation widening, deepening and accelerating this interconnectedness (Held *et al* 1999:67), the need grew for a common language for pragmatic purposes. Britain laid the foundations through colonisation (Graddol 1997:8) and America's worldwide influence after the Second World War expanded the reach of the language. Omnipresent in world affairs and embodying the ideology of hope, material and technological advancement, and scientific development (Steiner 1975), English became a sought-after commodity, developing into the *de facto* language of international communication. English was the natural choice to fulfil this function with its anchoring in the global market as the language of the dominant economic power, with its wealth of first, second and foreign language speakers estimated at 1.5 billion people (Crystal 2003:6) and growing exponentially (Graddol 2003:152-160), and with the key geographical and political distribution of these speakers.

As the world's fourth largest economy (IMF 2011), with an export market essential to drive economic activity, Germany is heavily involved in, and dependent upon, the processes of globalisation. The changes (linguistic, cultural, societal, economic and political) that globalisation brings are, therefore, likely to have a large impact on its society. One such change with particular relevance to this discussion is that "globalization manifests itself in the increased use of English as a second language world-wide, [and] in the corresponding decrease of importance of other languages" (Gardt & Hüppauf 2004: x). This assertion highlights the risks of globalisation, with its concomitant adoption of English, for Germany's national language and its worldwide importance.



(Fig 2: The Catherine Wheel - Catalysts to English’s growth in German society)

Globalisation and the historical presence of English in Germany combine to explain the current high status of English in German society, a major precondition necessary for the Catherine Wheel model’s applicability in illustrating how EMDPs are contributing to an “Englishization” of the German HE system. Figure 2 illustrates the growth of English in German society. The numbers learning English in Germany have risen meteorically, creating a large pool of learners (*Statistisches Bundesamt*¹⁶ 2008, 2011). More learning of English, coupled with an ideologically positive view of the language, should inevitably lead to more demand for goods and services in English, at least if the learner population constitutes a critical mass or has significant economic resources at its disposal. In line with economic principles, increased demand should lead to greater supply. In fact, English-as-a-foreign-language goods and services have boomed in Germany. We could argue that, given the value of English as “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu 1986:250) and its ubiquity in the processes of globalisation (Hüppauf 2004), the German educational authorities responded to political developments by engaging in a process of “acquisition planning,” albeit with an unplanned, uncoordinated, grass-roots and haphazard approach, the way in which much language planning activity begins (Fettes 1997:14). This planning was, therefore, motivated by political and economic aims, commonly at the heart of

language policy and planning (Spolsky 2004:6). Such motivations, embodied by EMDPs, have led Ammon to assert that internationalisation of German HE through English is “considered important for the country’s economic and political future” (2001:357).

The process of internationalisation has continued unimpeded and increasingly systematically, so much so that figures obtained from the *Statistisches Bundesamt* (2008, 2011) indicate that English has attained and continues to retain its status as Germany’s first foreign language by a considerable margin from primary through to tertiary level. Hilgendorf (2005) attributes its increasing status and use in an ever expanding functional range in German society, in domains such as politics, law, business, advertising, science and research, and the media (Hilgendorf 2001), to its growth in the compulsory and higher sectors of the German education system as a result of the processes of globalisation.

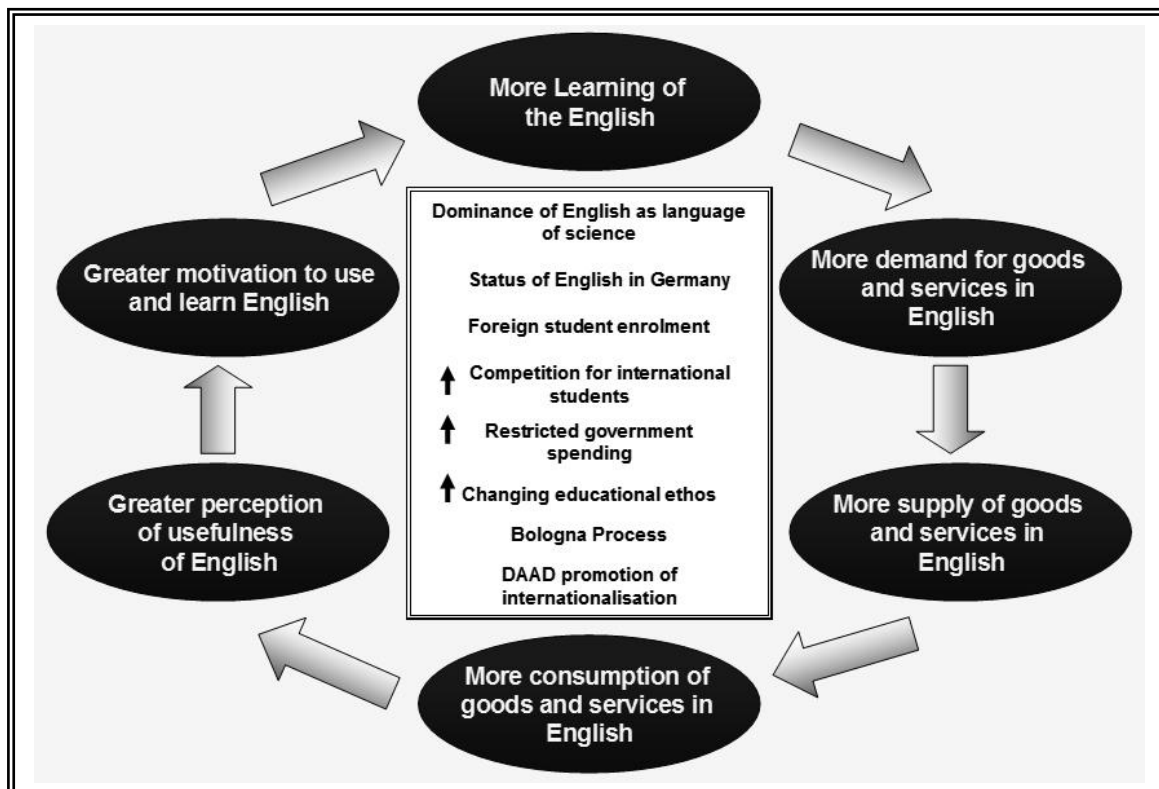
Returning to the model, the increasing supply of goods and services in English leads to more consumption, which further contributes to its perceived indispensability – which in turn bolsters motivation to learn the language, feeding back into the cycle in the form of increasing language learning. Thus the momentum of the wheel, and the speed at which English elevates its status and use, grows faster.

English in the German HE system

Having highlighted the dominance of English in German society as a whole and its promotion across Germany’s educational sector, we can now employ the model to illustrate how the introduction of EMDPs in the German HE system within a wider process of “Englishization” might trigger a shift to English as the language of instruction in the wider German HE system.

In Europe, the mainstreaming of HE internationalisation gained considerable support and momentum through the Bologna Process. Although internationalisation had already begun in many European countries, the Bologna Process hastened the drive for internationalisation on a pan-European scale (Coleman 2006:3). From the mid-1980s, a Europe-wide concern for reforming HE emerged as a result of a rapid expansion of student numbers against the backdrop of restrictive public spending and in conjunction with government aims to improve public services (Coyne 2009, Green 1994). Third-level participation rates had begun to expand rapidly, mainly through a major increase in demand for highly-skilled workers throughout Europe (Peters 2007:2). With this increasing demand, many countries identified increasing participation rates at universities as their opportunity to exploit potential competitive advantage and bolster their economies (European Commission 1991). With a growing student population and tighter controls on government spending, universities now had to prove their efficiency to the government in an emergent market-orientated environment (Molesworth, Cullion & Nixon 2010; Newman & Jahdi 2009). It was thought that by injecting market forces into HE, institutional attitudes¹⁷ conducive to greater efficiency would be fostered (Ferris 1991:94-98).

Restricted government spending and increasing student enrolments have put universities under increasing financial pressure. Having identified international students as a lucrative market, many European countries have decided to target such students with a new form of educational programme. Capitalising on the strong perception of the quality of western¹⁸ HE and adopting English for pragmatic reasons to overcome any linguistic barriers (Maiworm & Wächter 2008:15), EMDPs were introduced throughout Europe. Ammon and McConnell (2002:173) note that small-language countries have been far quicker and more willing to introduce English-medium teaching than their big-language country counterparts with established scientific traditions, such as France and Germany. By 2011, this situation has, however, changed significantly, with Germany only surpassed by the Netherlands in its provision of EMDPs¹⁹. Even though Germany only began introducing such programmes almost eighteen years after countries like the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Denmark, it has now become the second largest provider of EMDPs in Europe, despite the role of German as the dominant language of international scientific communication prior to the rise of English. In Germany, a country with a strong tradition of high quality HE, EMDPs have been adopted since 1996 by a number of HEIs in order to access the international student market (Hellmann & Pätzold 2005:22-24), and also to retain a proportion of the domestic students who leave Germany every year to study predominantly in English-speaking countries. Based on English, the current internationalisation process, given impetus by the Bologna Process, can be seen both as a product of the strong presence of English in German society and simultaneously a driver of the expansive range of domains in which English is increasingly used.



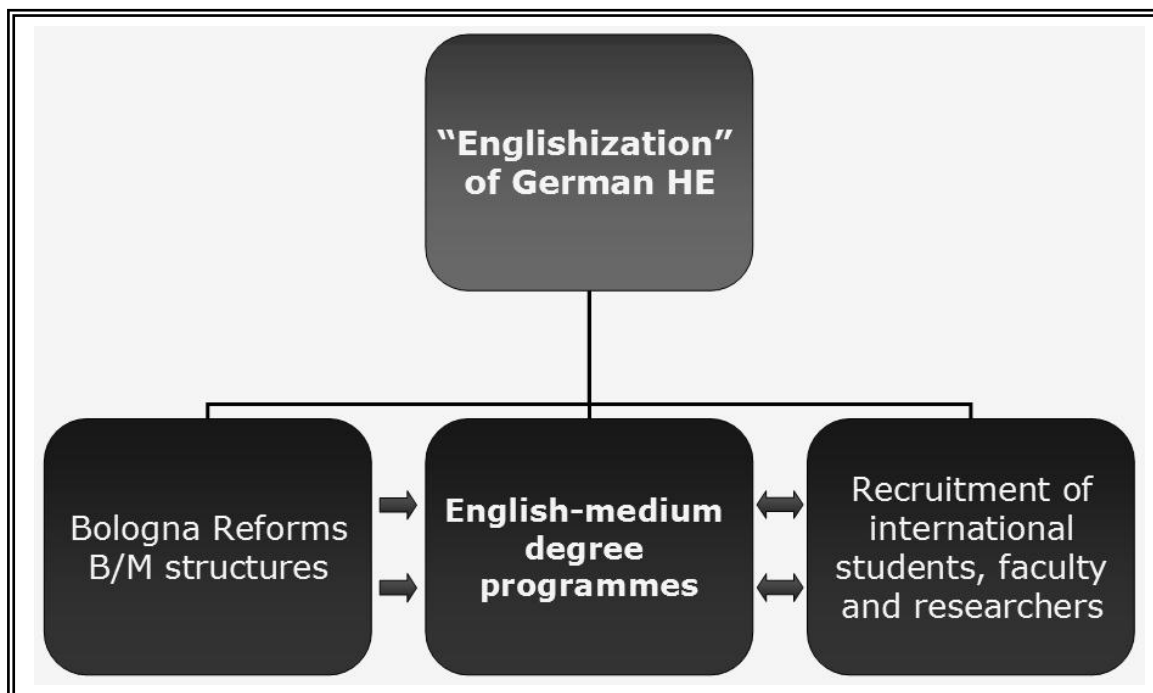
(Fig 3: The Catherine Wheel – Catalysts to English’s growth in German HE at the centre due to their influence on multiple components of the cycle)

The large pool of English learners has led to increased demand for goods and services in English. Given the language’s position in the primary and secondary sectors of Germany’s education system, this demand inevitably transferred to its HE system. As we have noted, although EMDPs were primarily developed for attracting international students to Germany, such programmes also satisfy the increasing demand for English amongst German students (DAAD 2008). Applying economic principles of demand and supply, the demand for EMDPs can be inferred from the supply of such programmes. This trend is likely to continue into the future in light of many factors which have been driving and will continue to drive the introduction of English-medium education in Germany. Students worldwide are becoming increasingly transactional in their approach to education (Rickwood & Goodwin 1999:142), favouring programmes that fulfil their career goals (Powell, McGuire & Crawford 1999:91). Considering English’s omnipresence in global business (Hilgendorf 2008), the value of English as “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu 1986:250) is currently higher than any other language (De Swaan 1998:65). More and more students, increasingly aware of its value for accessing greater resources and/or employment prospects (Heller 2010; Rahman 2009), are, therefore, seeking to develop their English skills in unison with a professional qualification. Furthermore, with exponential growth in the international student population associated with the introduction of English-medium education²⁰ and an accompanying increase in international student enrolment in German HE,²¹ it is likely that HEIs will capitalise on this increase by expanding such programmes.

As the Bologna Process continues harmonising HE structures in Europe in order to boost Europe’s capacity to attract international students and improve the mobility of its own students, it is likely that English-medium HE will continue as an important mechanism for facilitating these goals. With increasing competition in student recruitment and students more aware of their status as consumers (Verbik & Lasanowski 2007:11), EMDPs present a powerful selling point to capture some of the domestic as well as the international market (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra 2011:347, Truchot 2002:9). Consequently, in the increasingly competitive market for students, HEIs may be compelled to expand their EMDPs across disciplines in order to capture a larger proportion of the market as they compete to finance themselves in increasingly difficult economic times. EMDPs’ potential as a powerful tool for competitive advantage is exemplified by the fact that such programmes continue to prove extremely attractive to both domestic and international students, evidenced (as we have noted) by the high *Numerus Clausus* for domestic students and long waiting lists for international students. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that such programmes will be given priority over other programmes providing less competitive advantage.

Fees for EMDPs across Germany vary considerably among the *Länder*²², and between privately- and publicly-funded HEIs; generally speaking, however, fees in Germany are significantly lower than those in English-speaking countries. It is a commonly held belief in Germany that fees for EMDPs may not even be high enough to cover costs, though in the current environment of restricted funding at HE level, programmes that are unsustainable financially would surely be discontinued. Indeed, trends in the maintenance and expansion of EMDPs would suggest that such programmes are financially stable. This argument is further supported by the DAAD's decision to discontinue direct financial support to HEIs developing EMDPs and the continued growth in the development of such programmes without DAAD funding. The DAAD does, however, continue its involvement in the monitoring and promotion of EMDPs worldwide. It is also important to consider the financial contribution that increased domestic and international student enrolment at HEIs has on the immediate institutional environment and the local economy (Altbach & Knight 2007:292).

With EMDPs as a component, "Englishization," defined as "adaptation towards English" (McArthur 1992:335), is already taking place in the German HE system. It can be analysed as a three-pronged process. In accordance with the Bologna Process, Germany is undergoing HE reforms aimed at phasing Bachelor and Masters (B/M) structures into their education system, a process which has led to a dramatic decline in the number of traditional degree programmes offered (*Statistisches Bundesamt* 2009, HIS 2008). The adoption of these structures, based on the Anglo-American model, to facilitate mobility of students and improve international recognition of German degrees, represents the first prong of "Englishization." Introducing EMDPs represents a significant step towards an official role for English in Germany (Hilgendorf 2001), its acknowledgement as a necessity for Germany's economic and political future (Ammon 2001:357) and its government-supported institutionalisation as a medium of instruction at a sizeable number of HEIs (Hilgendorf 2005). This represents the second prong in the process. The final prong is directly attributable to the EMDPs: the recruitment of international students, researchers and faculty who collectively contribute to a still greater role for English in the HE system and in society as a whole.



(Fig 4: The three-pronged process of “Englishization” in German HE)

When these factors are displayed in the Catherine Wheel model, we can see that a catalyst as powerful as English-medium education is likely to have significant impact on the status and use of English, not only in the German HE system, but also in society as a whole, with all OECD countries transitioning towards knowledge-based economies (OECD 1999), where “economic success is increasingly based upon the effective utilisation of intangible assets such as knowledge, skills and innovative potential as the key resource for competitive advantage” (ESRC 2005). Considering education’s role in developing and disseminating such assets, it is playing an increasingly pivotal role in modern society, and thus has greater potential to effectuate changes directly than was previously the case.

Consequences of English-medium HE for German as an international language

According to Motz (2005:7), “der Einsatz des Englischen als zusätzliche oder alleinige Lehrsprache bringt dabei Chancen und Risiken für Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft²³”. Equally, however, “natürlich haben der Staat und auch die Hochschulen als Bildungseinrichtung eine Verantwortung für den Status der deutschen Sprache im internationalen Umfeld und dürfen diesen nicht leichtfertig gefährden²⁴” (Wahl 2005:32). Thus, a delicate balancing act needs to be struck between the adoption of English and the maintenance of German’s higher registers central to its vibrancy as a domestic and international language. The instrumentalisation of English brings an array of benefits to higher education. While it

has been variously criticised,²⁵ HE worldwide is becoming increasingly commoditised with HEIs having to function in a competitive national and international market economy (Coleman 2006:3, Naidoo & Jamieson 2005:44). In increasing participation rates, and proportions of fee-paying students, EMDPs can, therefore, assist HEIs in funding themselves, which can only contribute positively to the education which students receive and improve staff working conditions.

We have noted that EMDPs are increasingly used as a powerful tool to attract domestic students in a competitive domestic HE market (Kurtán 2004:131). In Germany, extra revenue from fee-paying students is seen as a “once in a lifetime opportunity to completely modernise the German higher education system” (Harmen & Loke 2005:1 in Erling & Hilgendorf 2006:286). Internationalisation through English also facilitates the hiring of international staff, which, combined with high levels of international student enrolment, enhances the international prestige and standing of German HEIs, bringing more success in attracting research and development funding internationally, and improving the national and international employability of domestic students (Coleman 2006:5). Furthermore, it represents the removal of potential language barriers for international students and faculty for whom German language skills may have been a major obstacle to pursuing an education or career in Germany, be it on a permanent or exchange basis. Such a situation will only serve to benefit Germany long term through strengthened cultural, scientific and economic exchange (Motz 2005:7). The adoption of English-medium education will also benefit the aims of the Bologna Process in ways ranging from improving attractiveness of the EHEA to encouraging student and faculty exchange within and without the EU. Combining sufficient funding, removing language barriers and greater exchange and ability to attract bright minds from abroad helps create a “brain gain instead of a brain drain,” identified as a major goal of the BMBF in 2000 in its efforts to reform the system.

English-medium education is also seen as a natural progression (House 2005; Ammon 1998), given the move towards English worldwide as the language of scholarly discourse under the emergent ideology of “publish in English or perish” (Viereck 1996:20), and the fact that the majority of textbooks and general teaching materials are written in English (Airey 2003:48). Furthermore, EMDPs are seen as fulfilling an important function in view of a growing perception that students, faculty and university staff require English proficiency to be successful in a globalising world which demands an international career (Wilkinson 2004, Kruseman 2003:7). Perhaps one of the greatest opportunities that EMDPs present in the German context is, paradoxically, the possibility of bolstering the position of German as a foreign language (Wahl 2005; Ammon & McConnell 2002).

However, the risks of English-medium education are also manifold. While the individual benefits of study in English may outweigh losses, a risk of language attrition and loss of cultural identity exists (Smith 2004:87). Wright (2005) finds resistance to EMDPs in ideological objections to the imposition of the Anglo-American paradigm, and Hughes (2008:2-3) points out that English-medium education has the potential to promote Anglo-Saxon values and norms unconsciously.

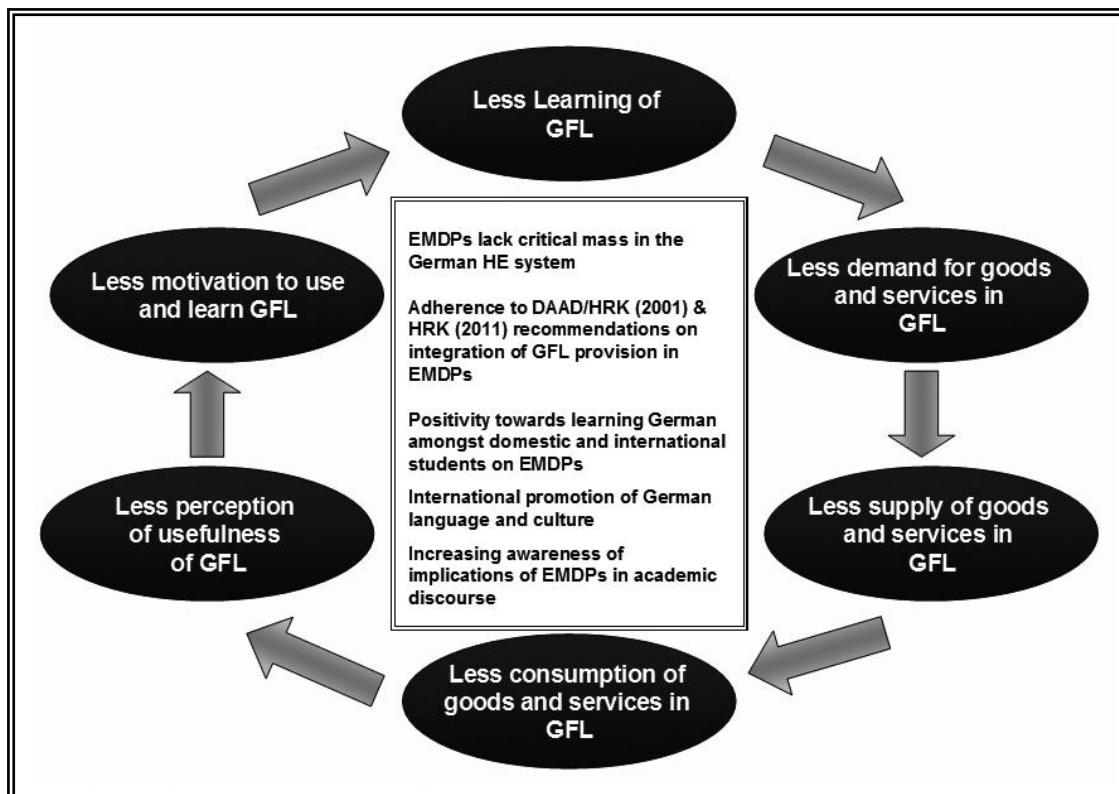
This transmission of Anglo-American norms raises issues of power, imposition and identity loss for those who are forced to use a powerful language (Shohamy 2007) and provides its native speakers with a privileged position. Sercu (2004:547) notes a decrease in the overall quality of teaching and student results as a consequence of the increased workload associated with English as the medium of instruction. A major concern highlighted by researchers is the potential for programmes based on the English-only model, and the resultant English-centred publication culture, to further strengthen the already dominant position of English as the international language of academia, the results of which may be the decline in other languages for international scholarly communication (Hamel 2007:66). This is particularly salient in the case of German, which appears to be particularly susceptible to decline in the face of English (House 2005), given its fragile status worldwide (Clyne 2006; Meyer 2004) and the decline of German as an international language of science (Ehlich 2000; Ehlich & Graefen 2001). Hamel (2007:66) argues that the move towards publishing only in English has already reduced multilingualism in the field. Consequently, Ehlich (2005) highlights the benefits to research of a plurilingual perspective in providing a broader and more complex perception of the world.

The example of Sweden offers a tangible link between the introduction of EMDPs and a resultant domain loss and, consequently, a negative effect on the language's international standing. Although a country with a long tradition of EMDPs that account for a large percentage of total degree programmes, Sweden has now begun to address concerns about the standing of its language (Airey 2004:2) resulting from domain loss. Certain subject areas have become increasingly difficult to discuss in Swedish (Airey 2004:5), particularly the areas of education, research and industry with their strong emphasis on internationalisation through English (Melander 2003:8-9). Such a situation is seen as raising issues of democracy in that it essentially bars large sections of society from participating in these areas equitably (Falk 2001 in Airey 2004). The ability of one language to progressively displace another in certain domains is seen as dependent on status (Hyltenstam & Stroud 1991 in Airey 2004:3). In the case of Sweden, the status of English in society is extremely high and continues to rise (Airey 2004). Furthermore, concerns were raised that EMDPs were pushing students' education towards surface learning rather than deep learning due to issues relating to *de facto* English language proficiency in such programmes (Airey 2004:6). In 2005, in response to these concerns, the Swedish government took action to safeguard the position of Swedish in all areas of society through its Swedish-language policy *Mål i mun*. It was, however, also acknowledged that in many contexts English was a necessity and that people needed increased proficiency in the language (*Kommittén för svenska språket* 2002 in Hult 2005). The aim of the new policy was, therefore, to ensure that Swedish continue to develop as a language capable of communicating effectively across all domains, in conjunction with improving proficiency in English amongst the general populace on pragmatic grounds (*Kommittén för svenska språket* 2002 in Hult 2005), in other words, emphasis on strengthening the position of Swedish rather than weakening the position of English (Hult 2005:76-77).

Although German has a much larger population of first, second or foreign language speakers, some of the risks identified in Sweden are applicable to Germany. Considering the high levels of English proficiency and the high status that English enjoys in Germany, the risk of domain loss is certainly high. In much the same way as in Sweden, although at lower levels, English is increasingly used in education, research and industry, and its functional range is ever expanding (Hilgendorf 2005). In fact, HE and other top-down forms of social practice are the areas in which the impact of English is most strongly felt (Sing 2007:249). Positive attitudinal factors in favour of English in the HE system further strengthen its impact. Studies conducted with university-level students show an obvious lack of any positive national identity, and indeed a rejection of such identity (Erling 2007) – a trend mirrored in 2011 in the data arising from the author’s comparative multi-site empirical study, mentioned above, in which this lack of national identity in most cases filtered through in the form of apathy or negative attitudes towards the German language on the part of both students and lecturers. In fact, McArthur (2003:160) has categorised Germany as a “moot nation” in which the role of English in certain domains such as business and technology goes uncontested and is in fact favoured, while its impinging on other domains, for example the superfluous use of Anglicisms in everyday language, is met with considerable opposition.

The displacement of German in education and research would have major implications for German as a foreign language. Much as the position allocated to regional or minority languages in education systems can play a pivotal role in their maintenance and vitality (LP Division Council of Europe 1992), German’s position in its education system serves an important signalling function to the rest of the world about the usefulness and vitality of the language. If German were to be undermined as a language of instruction, this decline would have a negative impact on perception of the usefulness of the language worldwide. Here, what the author terms an ‘Inverse Catherine Wheel’ can be used to illustrate such a situation. Starting with the “perception of the usefulness of the language,” one can trace a chain reaction: if German is no longer perceived as necessary or useful for studying in Germany, this will lead to less motivation to study the language, which in turn will lead to a decreased learner population and so to a dramatic decrease in the importance of German as an international language of communication.

While such a development is certainly possible, arguably it is rather unlikely in view of a variety of factors which can be inserted as inhibitors into an ‘Inverse Catherine Wheel’ model for illustrative purposes (see Figure 5).



(Fig 5: “Inverse Catherine Wheel” – Inhibitors to German’s declining status at the centre due to their influence on multiple components of the cycle)

First, although HE is a prime driver of language shift (Graddol 1997:45), in order for a domain loss and resulting language shift to occur, English-only degree programmes would need to attain critical mass in the system. With only 669 English-only degree programmes currently offered in the entire German education system, such a situation is unlikely to occur for some time, if at all.

Secondly, in its concomitant promotion of both the national language and English in its HE system through EMDPs, Germany has arguably taken a similar line of action as Sweden at an earlier stage without having to articulate an explicit language policy. Although some English-only EMDPs ignore the German-language component, the phased model inherently provides intensive language training in German and English for enrolled students and thus contributes to strengthening the position of German in conjunction with English. A review of the language provision in DAAD-certified EMDPs shows that many programmes offer integrated German-as-a-foreign-language (GFL) modules, suggesting that simultaneous cultivation of English and German proficiency is seen as an important aim.

However, in order for such language planning efforts to successfully guard against a potential language shift, a number of issues must be addressed. According to DAAD/HRK (2001:31) and HRK (2011:11-12) recommendations, EMDPs should be designed to include a German language and culture component. While many HEIs offer GFL services, adherence to these recommendations is far from comprehensive (Ehrling & Hilgendorf 2006:285). Even where German is promoted in tandem with

English, shortcomings occur for a number of reasons. First, such services normally aim to promote general German language skills and fail to address academic writing and presentation skills. Secondly, some GFL courses are not integrated into the programmes of study, but provided by a language centre at the HEI. A number of HEIs require students to pay for such services themselves, thus discouraging many students from availing themselves of German language and culture classes. Furthermore, credit points for such courses are sometimes not awarded to students as they are often seen as supplementary rather than a compulsory element of the programmes.

Despite these shortcomings, however, the situation can still be seen as favourable to the promotion of German in conjunction with English. The author's research data (from the aforementioned research project) confirm that the German language is actively promoted and perceived by both domestic and international students and faculty as an integral part of the study experience in Germany and forms a pivotal role in determining integration and interaction in EMDP environments. Considering the high value of German proficiency in such contexts, all efforts to improve the GFL provision would be positively viewed in the environment and would greatly benefit the promotion of German.

If such issues were redressed in the system, the assertion of researchers such as Wahl (2005) and Ammon and McConnell (2002) that EMDPs constitute an opportunity for German as a foreign language would certainly seem valid, particularly when seventy to ninety percent of international students cite learning German as a reason for wishing to study in Germany (BMBF 2002), even if as a lower priority than other motivations. The findings of the author's research project highlight a personal connection to Germany (via family, friends or partner), low tuition fees and the high reputation of Germany's HE system as the three dominant reasons in international students' decision to study in Germany, followed by a desire to learn German. Equally, however, during their studies in Germany their desire to learn German becomes central on grounds of pragmatism (day-to-day survival, part-time work, long-term desire to remain in Germany) and the desire for integration (interaction with classmates and wider campus and local communities). In fact one could argue that, while on the surface Germany could be seen as adopting English-medium education with little consideration for its own language and culture, upon closer inspection it is using the global expansion of English through internationalisation to also promote its own language indirectly. By attracting students to study in Germany by means of EMDPs, but also requiring that they attend compulsory German language and culture classes, arguably German is reaching a larger target audience than would ordinarily have been so. This development could serve to further promote German abroad, particularly if these students return to their home countries or decide to work abroad. Thus, one could argue that the German authorities are positioning German to take advantage of the global spread of English as a means of promulgating German as a foreign language in tandem with English, so that English in fact becomes an instrument of domestic and international German language policy.

While the risks associated with EMDPs are certainly very real, it could appear that fears of their detrimental effect on German's international standing are being addressed and minimised by decision-makers in the German system through a range of language policy activities. This assumption, however, requires further investigation. Furthermore, although some action has been taken to safeguard the position of German in the HE system and while the promotion of German alongside English in such programmes continues to be a goal, albeit implicit, further decisive action is necessary to create comprehensive adoption of DAAD/HRK (2001) and HRK (2011) recommendations in the design and implementation of such programmes, thus exploiting the highly desirable benefit that such programmes provide for promoting German as a foreign language to a larger target audience, along with more general economic and political benefits for Germany.

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Notes

¹ Foreign-orientated degree programmes.

² German Academic Exchange Service

³ Internationally-orientated degree programmes. The principal difference between these programmes and their pilot programme predecessors, as the titles suggest, was their respective foci, with the former targeted almost exclusively at foreign students and the latter at a mix of domestic and foreign students.

⁴ Rigidity of the German HE system was attributed to: overly lengthy study periods and high drop-out rates, lack of comparability and compatibility with international degree structures, a stagnated curriculum with little or no labour market relevance.

⁵ Science Council.

⁶ This research project produced empirical data arising from 158 questionnaires and 44 semi-structured interviews with students, teaching faculty and course directors involved in EMDPs in Germany.

⁷ The *Numerus Clausus* in conjunction with an array of selection procedures is used in Germany to choose the most appropriate applicants for a limited number of study places within a particular degree programme. It is generally based on the average grade received in the German university entry exam *Abitur* and, where applicable, suitability tests, subject requirements etc. It also ensures entry to a certain number of students on waiting lists for the programme from previous semesters (Uni-Halle 2012:1).

⁸ These data catalogue the total number of EMDPs offered within a number of HE systems across Europe. The data do not distinguish between Bachelor and Masters level nor do they distinguish English-only from mixed-language programmes.

⁹ DAAD-certification requires that the following criteria are met: the use of English as the partial or full language of instruction, an internationalised curriculum with integrated study periods abroad, and the offer of an internationally recognised qualification and support

services for students on the programme beyond their Bachelor study area, e.g. English or German as a foreign language classes.

¹⁰ Law, Business Studies, Economics and Sociology, Mathematics and Science and Engineering – these categorisations are drawn from the *Statistisches Bundesamt* in Germany who use such categories in their statistical analyses.

¹¹ According to Maiworm & Wächter (2008), EMDPs account for an estimated average 4.8% of the total number of B/M programmes offered at German HE in 2007. Analysing statistics available from the HRK's Hochschulkompass (2011), it can be estimated that EMDPs accounted for 5.6% of the total number of B/M programmes offered in German HE.

¹² The “Catherine Wheel” is interpreted within this model in the sense of a firework which once ignited is self turning.

¹³ Consumers of education are perceived to be simultaneously parents, students, industry and the government (Rickwood & Goodwin 1999:112).

¹⁴ Such as Gaeilge (Walsh & McLeod 2008) and Catalan (Strubell 2001).

¹⁵ German's decline as an international language of science occurred because of its diminished capacity to conduct scientific research and the loss of its best scientists to the USA (Ammon 1995:44-45), in addition to the banning of the language at all international scientific conferences (Ammon 2004:163).

¹⁶ Federal Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁷ This is primarily centred on competition for students and resources.

¹⁸ Here ‘western’ refers to Western European and North American (including Canada) HE.

¹⁹ In 2011, the approximate number of EMDPs offered in various Northern European countries was as follows: the Netherlands (1,500), Germany (748), Sweden (690), Finland (550) and Denmark (500).

²⁰ Increase in the international student population from 600,000 in 1975 to 2.7 million in 2005 (UNESCO 2006).

²¹ Germany has surpassed France as the second most popular international study location in Europe after the UK since introducing and rapidly expanding its provision of English-medium education (Hughes 2008: 121).

²² The Federal states that comprise Germany with autonomy in certain areas of governance such as culture and education.

²³ The use of English as an additional or sole language of instruction brings with it opportunities and risks for society and science [author's translation].

²⁴ The State and also HEIs as educational institutions certainly have a responsibility for the status of the German language in international spheres and they should not endanger this frivolously [author's translation].

²⁵ A purely market-based approach to HE has, however, been variously criticised primarily on the basis of the incompatibility of market structures with the philosophy and function of HE (see Jacobs & Van der Ploeg 2006; Van Vught 2006; Olson 2005).