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**Lingua franca and multilingualism – are they incompatible concepts?**

(Panel #6: What is Multilingualism?)

The most cursory review of the literature reveals that there is limited agreement on the definition of lingua franca. We understand it, in a broader sense, as a language used as a medium of communication between people or groups of people who speak different native languages. As Clyne (2000: 84) points out, theoretically, each language might serve as a lingua franca in a specific situation. A classification by Samarin (1987: 371) includes three types of lingua francas: ‘natural’, ‘pidginized’ and ‘planned’ languages. Vikør (2004) distinguishes between four types: (1) languages of religion and culture, (2) imperial languages, (3) pidgin languages, and (4) artificial languages.

When options for language policy are discussed with the aim of finding fair and democratic approaches to international communication, these often include, among others, (variants of) multilingualism/plurilingualism, limiting the number of languages used, receptive language use (intercomprehension), and the use of a lingua franca. The various solutions are generally presented separately, often as mutually exclusive strategies (see, e.g., Ammon 1994, Christiansen 2006, Mattusch 2012). This situation presents the starting point for this talk. It will be argued, and illustrated by empirical data, that the use of a lingua franca and multilingualism are not incompatible.

The lingua francas serving as examples for this talk are very different in character. The first is English, the language that is most used in this capacity today, and that has therefore become a vibrant area of research. The second is Esperanto, whose application has so far been restricted to a relatively small speech community and which has not drawn much scholarly attention. While the former is an asymmetric lingua franca (Ammon 2012), as it is the native tongue of an influential part of the speech community, the latter represents a symmetric, or genuine, lingua franca where speakers do not decide on the linguistic norm. These distinct features have significant influence on the character of communication by means of a lingua franca. This talk addresses this topic with a focus on the use of lingua francas in the workplace, their propaedeutic role for learning other languages and their use as a medium for translation.

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