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18th and 19th Century Linguistic and Literary Criticism as a Source of Multilingual Research

A Corpus Based Approach

Abstract: The article deals with forms of hidden multilingualism in language and literary criticism of the 18th and 19th centuries. After terminological clarifications and a brief discussion of heuristic methods, different varieties of multilingualism are examined using selected examples, mainly from German discourse, but also from contemporary English discourse. A special focus is given to Goethe as a multilingual and multilingualism-friendly author. The paper concludes with the introduction of a corpus-based approach to multilingualism in 18th and 19th century linguistic and literary criticism, presenting the project of a relational database for systematic research on multilingualism in that period.

Keywords: Language Criticism, Literary Criticism, Hidden Multilingualism, Interlinguality, Goethe, Romanticism

1 Preliminary

The title of this contribution takes two subjects for granted: a) language and literary criticism and b) multilingualism. However, both must briefly be problematized before an attempt can be made to illuminate the former as a source for research into the latter. In determining the time period (18th and 19th centuries), we make a restriction for reasons of manageability. We do not treat two full centuries here, but only one: the period between approximately 1760 and 1840, for which we can draw on a balanced, sufficiently large digital corpus (see below, section 2). Our period under review is therefore the onset of modernity: almost exactly the decades that, in historiography, are often referred to as “die Sattelzeit”, to use a term coined by Reinhart Koselleck.

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2 Language and literary criticism

The first problem to be discussed is itself to some extent a multilingual one: it is not obviously multilingual in and of itself, but a multilingual perspective sheds light on it. If this article were written in German (the author's first language), the title would be "Sprach- und Literaturkritik des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts als Quelle der Mehrsprachigkeitsforschung". The German equivalent of the word *criticism* is *Kritik*. However, the German word is also used in contexts where English *criticism* is not appropriate – e.g., in the three Kantian *Kritiken*, for which the English language uses the word *critique*: *Critik der reinen Vernunft* – *Critique of pure Reason*; *Critik der praktischen Vernunft* – *Critique of Practical Reason*; *Critik der Urtheilskraft* – *Critique of Judgment*. The fact that the semantics of the two English words *criticism* and *critique* coincide in a single German heteronym leads to a different semantic concept of criticism in German than in English: In Germany, language and literary criticism of the late 18th and early 19th centuries is conceived more comprehensively; it encompasses the entire field of critical philosophy, whereas in the contemporary English discourse, the reception of Kant is of no importance (cf. Bär 2015: 109–113).

The broad concept of criticism affects our selection of primary texts. The article is based on the ZBK corpus (Zentralbegriffe der klassisch-romantischen "Kunstperiode" [Central Concepts of the Classical-Romantic "Artistic Period"]; Bär and von Consbruch 2012: 468–480), a corpus of German-language literary-artistic reflection from the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries, which takes into account all relevant text types: Treatises, monographs, essays, reviews, miscellanies, prefaces, collections of fragments, lexicographical and encyclopedic texts, reflections, semi-fiction, narrative prose, poetry and verse, lectures, talks and speeches, dramas, dialogues, libretti, drafts and fragments of treatises, notes, letters, diaries, autobiographical writings, private writings, drafts and fragments of works and sketches (Bär and von Consbruch 2012: 475–476). The corpus has a size of about 100 million tokens. Since comparably large digital full-text corpora of contemporaneous discourses in other European languages are not available, no truly comparative study can be presented here. Our corpus is only supplemented by an English-language corpus of about 10 million tokens, which is available in the Archive "Digitale Bibliothek" (www.zeno.org); see Bär (forthc.).

3 Multilingualism

In linguistic research, multilingualism in the broadest sense is defined either as the knowledge of more than one language by an individual or as the use of more than one language within a linguistic community (state, nation, institution etc). (Franceschini 2009: 29).

Interlinguality, to be distinguished from multilingualism, can be understood as the result of active multilingualism in language communities over longer periods of time. Interlinguality means that “one language interferes with another language, so that, for example, grammatical constructions typical for one language are taken over into the other” (Bär 2021: 39). Since, as mentioned, we are dealing here with language communities, not individuals, interlinguality does concern “not only [...] the single act of speech, as for example in case of bad translation [...] or in mixing up the well-known false friends” but is “incorporated in the language system” (Bär 2021: 39).

Interlinguality is, so to speak, the area in which one language overlaps with another lexically, grammatically, semantically or in pragmatic patterns; or – no longer thought of in terms of this or that individual language – it is the area (as an independent research topic) in which two or even several individual languages participate in one other. For example, the semantic commonalities of different European languages – so-called semantic Europeanisms (cf. Reichmann 1991; 1993; 2001: 54–83; 2014; 2016) – can be considered as a manifestation of interlinguality. The individual languages then appear merely as ideal types, as abstractions of multilingual realities and can only be distinguished from one another as such. This idea coincides with a point of view that has been common in language didactics for some time:

Einzelsprachen, wie z. B. Deutsch, Türkisch oder Englisch, [sind] als rein soziale Konstruktionen zu verstehen [...]. [...] Das bedeutet, die Sprachen existieren dieser Auffassung nach nicht per se als klar unterscheidbare und damit aufzählbare Einheiten, sondern werden zu solchen gemacht. Erst dadurch also, dass sie über normative Instanzen beschrieben und definiert werden, werden die Einzelsprachen für Menschen greifbar und unterscheidbar¹

¹ Here and thoroughly: my translations, jb. – an English version of the quotations is provided at the publisher's request. I collaborate but reluctantly, because the sense of affirming the dominance of English in, of all things, a contribution to multilingualism research may well be questionable – especially since in a monolingual translation of *multilingual* quotations, multilingualism falls by the wayside...

[Individual languages, such as German, Turkish or English, are to be understood purely as social constructs. This means, in this view, languages do not exist as clearly distinguishable and thus denumerable units *per se* but are instead made into such units. Only by being described and defined via normative instances do the individual languages become tangible and distinguishable] (Gantefort and Maahs 2020: 1–2)

To put things in linguistic terms: We can distinguish four perspectives on language. Firstly, human language in general, or the ability to speak it, which is referred to, according to Ferdinand de Saussure, by the term *langage*. Secondly, the system of a historical individual language such as German, English or Latin, which, also according to de Saussure, is called *langue*. Thirdly, a pattern of use of a historical individual language, which I call *usage* ([y'za:ʒə]: general or more specific norms (including exceptional rules such as that in German there is exactly one designation for each day of the week, but two alternative designations for a single one, the sixth: *Samstag* and *Sonnabend*); but also general uses of language that are actually or supposedly contrary to a norm: e.g. German *wegen* together with the dative, the common confusion of *scheinbar* (“seemingly, but probably not the case”) and *anscheinend* (“probably the case”) or the like. Fourthly and finally, the concrete single speech act, oral or written, which, again according to Ferdinand de Saussure, is called *parole*. (Just to avoid possible misunderstandings: linguists aim to describe *usages*, including deviations from norms, but do not want to postulate or establish linguistic norms, even if they as private individuals might be invested in these norms.)

3.1 Languages and speech acts

The distinction between *langue* and *usage* is related to the fact that using construction rules to form utterances is not the normal case: language is only sometimes grammatical (cf. Bunia 2014: 54). The system postulates, for example, that in German one can derive an adjective from a noun by adding the suffix *-lich*, or that one can negate an adjective by putting in front the prefix *un-*. The *usage* (here: the norm) is that only certain cases work according to this rule, for example, *Tag* ('day') + *-lich* (-ly) becomes *täglich* ('daily') and *Feier* ('celebration') + *-lich* becomes *feierlich*. In analogous cases, however, there are other rules. Adjectives like *schläglich* (< *Schlag* 'beat' + *-lich*) or *feuerlich* (*Feuer* 'fire' + *-lich*) might seem possible but are not used. Negations such as *ungesund* 'unwholesome' or *ungut* ('ungood') are standard; negations such as *unkrank* (*krank* 'ill, sick') or *unschlecht* (*schlecht* 'bad, evil'), on the other hand, are not standard; rather, completely different rules apply here, because *krank* and *ungesund* are both antonyms of *gesund*, but since two different meanings of *gesund* ('healthy',

‘wholesome’) are involved, *krank* is not a synonym of *ungesund*. The same applies to the two antonyms of *gut*, which also are not semantically equivalent.

Usage as well as *langue* always appear as abstractions formed by *parole* in a set of acts (ideally, empirically, based on a valid research corpus). The *langue* consists of several *usages* that can be complementary, but which can also contradict one another. The *langue* can therefore, as shown above, comprise over-generalised rules that state possibilities, while every *usage* always has a counterpart in the reality of the *parole*. Thus the transition from *usage* to *langue* is fluid, because a *langue*-possibility can at any time pass into the reality of the individual *parole* and also of an individual or group-specific *usage* – just as, conversely, an *usage* can fall into oblivion and then still exist as a possibility.

Langage, *langue*, *usage* and *parole* can be schematically placed in relation to each other as follows.

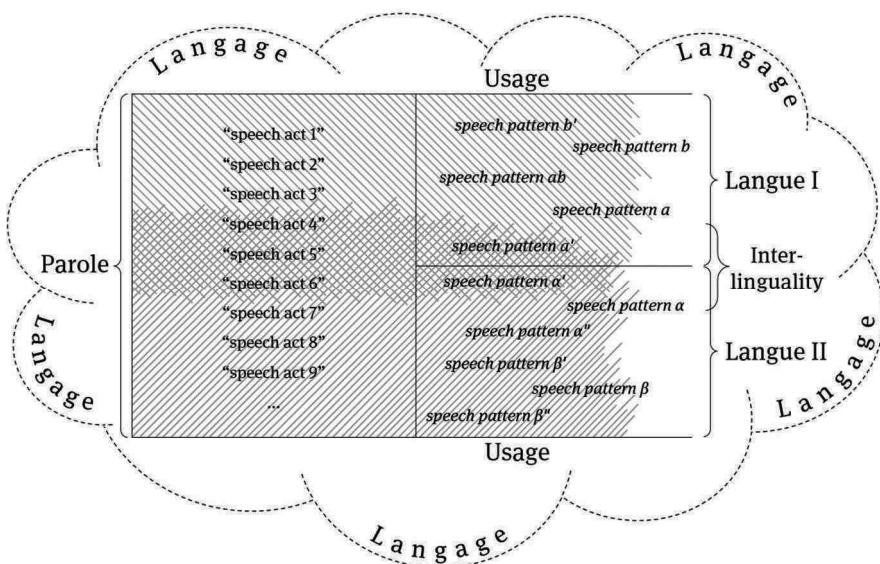


Fig. 1: Multilingual *parole*, *usage/langue* and *langage* (considering interlinguality)

Langage is the competence which is the prerequisite for every single speech act and thus for every speech pattern as well. To some extent, it forms the background of the individual speech act. The open transition between *langage* and *langue* perceivable in fig. 1 is intended to symbolize that *langage* does not only mean ‘universal language competence’ – the early childhood ability to acquire

any language as a first language – but also and even mainly the ability to speak a certain language (or several). A multilingual competence can lead to interlingual code-switching, as in Martin Luther's table talks or nowadays in every German schoolyard, but nonetheless also to speech acts that even from a lay-person's point of view are clearly specific to one individual language. Based on the French lectures of the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, Mende (2020: 33–41) has shown how complex things can be: even more complex due to multiple acts of transcription.

Speech acts are similar to each other and at the same time also different from each other, and the boundary between similarity and difference is completely fluid. The direction of the hatching in Fig. 1 represents the possibility of being assigned to a certain language. What I am hearing or reading: is it German or English, for example? – At first, it is only *parole*; whether it is German or English cannot be said exactly of individual items. Multilingualism and “translanguaging,” mutual influence of languages, has always been something completely normal (cf. Kilchmann 2019: 79–80).

The attribution of a speech act to one and only one particular language system is nothing but a cultural-ideological construct, as is the idea that there are clearly delimitable language systems. Language purity as the ideal or even the normal case, lingual interference, especially in vocabulary, as a special and problematic case: this is the ideology in which we have been so deeply rooted since the 17th century that it seems the simple and unquestionable truth (cf. Kilchmann 2019: 79, 82).

Nevertheless, it is of course undeniable that one can find certain speech acts more similar to each other than to others, so that patterns can be discerned. These patterns, if they are closer to the concrete reality of the *parole*, can be called *usage*; if they are further away from it, i.e. more abstract (shown unhatched in fig. 1), they can be called *langue*. The boundary between *usage* and *langue*, as it turns out, is again fluid; there is ideal-typical *usage* and ideal-typical *langue*, but no clear-cut distinction.

Speech acts that deviate from others to such an extent that, even with the greatest possible abstraction from their concrete quality, they cannot reasonably be subsumed together under one system, must be assigned to different systems. Since System I and System II are, as we said, abstractions, i.e. interpretative constructs, they can be clearly distinguished from each other. But it is only an ideal distinction; in the reality of the *parole*, there is always a certain fuzziness, so that the assignment of a speech act to one or another ideal-typical system ultimately appears artificial and questions both systems. In individual cases, one can indeed consider a different classification of a speech act.

3.2 The case of variation

What has been said here about *parole*, *usage* and *langue* applies not only to languages such as English, French or German, but of course also to varieties, be they dialects such as Rhine-Franconian, historiolects such as Middle High German, or even sociolects or functiolects, provided they can be reasonably regarded as linguistic systems of their own. This means that the phenomenon of “multilingualism” has to be conceived even more comprehensively. Even supposedly monolingual persons can thus be regarded as multilingual, if they have only mastered a standard variety in addition to a dialect. And there can be interlingual relations standard language and dialect, just as much as between individual languages.

This linguistic observation is quite consistent with the historical-metalinguistic knowledge of language and variety conceptions in the 18th and 19th centuries (cf. Bär 1999: 372–374). That items such as “German” or “English” are regarded as “languages” (*Sprachen*) is only one possibility. They can also be seen as “varieties” (in the 18th and 19th centuries usually referred to as *Dialekte* or likewise as *Mundarten* without further distinction). In simple words: In relation to a superordinate category, a language appears as a dialect; German, English or Danish, as languages, are at the same time dialects (namely of Germanic). The change of perspective is possible at any time and on all hierarchical levels. Thus, if we want to conduct multilingualism research based on 18th and 19th century primary texts, we have to be aware that it must not only be about the mastery of German, French or Latin, but also about dialect competences.

3.3 Hidden multilingualism

Having said all of the above, it is now evident that the topic of multilingualism is broader than at first sight. However, even if we know what to look for when searching for multilingualism, it is far from guaranteed that it will be found to a significant extent; we would need to know where to look, i.e. we would need an already annotated research-corpus. However, a corpus like this does not exist on the topic of multilingualism in the 18th and 19th centuries; in the best case, we have raw corpora at our disposal that are cleanly described with regard to the metadata on authorship and text history, such as the ZBK corpus and its supplements introduced above. But despite its size, not a single hit for the terms *mehrsprachig**/*multilingual** and *zweisprachig**/*bilingual** can be found in this supplemented corpus. In other words: If one does not want to leave it at a few anecdotes and chance finds – A.W. Schlegel asks Coleridge to speak English

because he cannot understand his German,² Thomas Campbell, on the other hand, mocks Schlegel's English³ – but aims instead at a systematic study of multilingualism, a somewhat more sophisticated heuristic method is required.

In principle, a distinction can be made between two manifestations: thematic and practiced multilingualism.

3.3.1 Multilingualism as a theme/subject

Multilingualism as a topic is prominently encountered, for example, as an explicit thematization of language skills, such as in Notes 3 and 4 or in Boswell's report on Dr. Johnson:

While Johnson was in France, he was generally very resolute in speaking Latin. It was a maxim with him that a man should not let himself down, by speaking a language which he speaks imperfectly. [...] When Sir Joshua Reynolds [...] presented him to a Frenchman of great distinction, he would not deign to speak French, but talked Latin, though his Excellency did not understand it, owing, perhaps, to Johnson's English pronunciation: yet upon another occasion he was observed to speak French to a Frenchman of high rank, who spoke English; and being asked the reason, with some expression of surprise, – he answered, 'because I think my French is as good as his English.' Though Johnson understood French perfectly, he could not speak it readily [...]. (Boswell 1791: 659–660).

Accounts of foreign language acquisition can also be subsumed under thematic multilingualism. Coleridge (1817: 201) describes how he acquired “a tolerable sufficiency in the German language”:

2 The anecdote proves Schlegel's multilingualism as well as Coleridge's: “The melody of Coleridge's verse had led me [...] to credit him with the possession of the very soul of song; and yet [...] his pronunciation of any language but his own was barbarous; and his inability to follow the simplest melody quite ludicrous. The German tongue he knew *au fond*. He had learned it grammatically, critically, and scientifically at Göttingen: yet so unintelligible was he when he tried to speak it, that I heard Schlegel say to him one evening, ‘Mein lieber Herr would you speak English? I understand it: but your German I cannot follow.’ Whether he had ever been before enlightened on his mispronunciation of German, I know not; but he was quite conscious that his pronunciation of French was execrable, for I heard him avow as much. [...] ‘I hate,’ he would say, ‘the [...] flimsiness of the French language: my very organs of speech are so anti-Gallican that they refuse to pronounce intelligibly their insipid tongue.’” (Young 1871: 115)

3 “Schlegel [...] is ludicrously fond of showing off his English to me – accounting for his fluency and exactness in speaking it by his having learnt it at thirteen. This English, at the same time, is, in point of idiom and pronunciation, what a respectable English parrot would be ashamed of.” (Beattie 1855: 109)

To those, who design to acquire the language of a country in the country itself, it may be useful, if I mention the incalculable advantage which I derived from learning all the words, that could possibly be so learnt, with the objects before me, and without the intermediation of the English terms. It was a regular part of my morning studies for the first six weeks of my residence at Ratzeburg, to accompany the good and kind old pastor, with whom I lived, from the cellar to the roof, through gardens, farmyard, &c. and to call every, the minutest, thing by its German name. Advertisements, farces, jest books, and the conversation of children while I was at play with them, contributed their share to a more home-like acquaintance with the language, than I could have acquired from works of polite literature alone, or even from polite society (Coleridge 1817: 201–202).

Implicit multilingualism can also be found, to a certain extent, as a background foil wherever the leading ideology of the 18th and 19th centuries is represented: the program of national unity and demarcation, also and especially in language.⁴ Wherever there is polemic against influences from other languages (mostly in the field of vocabulary), multilingualism can be assumed as the basis of such influences – in proportion to the stridency of the polemic. And where a unitary leading variety is propagated, other competing varieties can be assumed. Linguistic historical accounts such as the history of foreign word criticism in Germany (Kirkness 1975) or the illumination of the ‘language and nation’ concept (Reichmann 1978; Gardt 2000) can thus also be read as histories of multilingualism; compilations of language-critical textual testimonies such as Jones (1995) can be used as collections of primary texts for multilingualism research. In a foreign-word-critical text such as Karl Wilhelm Kolbe’s *Über Wortmengerei* [On Mixed-Up Words] (1809), there are explicit statements about the French skills of the author and his contemporaries. Kolbe reports of himself (1809: II–III):

Ich weis wol, daß man mit den Namen *Pedant*, *Purist*, *Silbenstecher* etc. gegen mich nicht kargen wird. Doch kan ich das Gesum an meinem Ohr ziemlich gleichgültig vorbeilassen. [...] Meine Bildung war französisch; ich bin in französischen Schulen zum Jüngling geworden; mein ästhetisches Gefühl hat sich gleichsam in französischer Luft entfaltet; und unter allen Weisen der Erziehung ist wol die französische am wenigsten geeignet, einen Pedanten hervorzurufen.

⁴ “Vor dem Horizont faktisch existierender Mehrsprachigkeit gerade der Gebildeten wird [...] die Idee eines ausschließlichen Schreibens in der Volks- und Muttersprache etabliert, die nicht zuletzt dem aufklärerischen Projekt einer Literarisierung und Bildung breiterer Bevölkerungsgruppen dient.” [Against the horizon of factually existing multilingualism, especially among the educated, the idea of writing exclusively in the vernacular and mother tongue is established, which serves not least the Enlightenment project of literarization and education of broader population groups.] (Kilchmann 2019: 81).

[I know very well that people will not be sparing with the names *pedant*, *purist*, *quibbler* etc. against me. But I can let the buzzing pass my ear quite indifferently. My education was French; I came of age in French schools; my aesthetic feeling has unfolded, as it were, in the French air; and of all modes of education, the French is probably the least apt to produce a pedant.]

From his contemporaries, we read that their knowledge of French was evidently more strongly influenced by writing than by speaking – at least in regions at a distance from the French border, where, one can assume, there would only have been occasional oral contact (excluding periods of French occupation)⁵:

Natürlich spricht der Ungeweihte alle jene Wörter so aus wie er sie geschrieben findet. Ich habe sehr gebildete, lateinisch und griechisch gelehrte Männer sogar, gekant, die Mademo-i-selle, To-i-lette lasen. Selbst Dichter trennen hier gewöhnlich die in der Grundsprache einfache Silbe; daß man ungewis ist, ob sie To-i-lette oder Tu-a-lette gemeint haben. Und das ist denn doch wol für ein Wort ein schlechter Empfehl, wenn die Kentnis der Sprache, in der es als ergänzender Teil vorkomt, zur richtigen Ausrede desselben nicht abreicht [...]

[Of course, the uninitiated pronounces all those words as he finds them written. I have known very educated men, even learned in Latin and Greek, who read Mademo-i-selle, To-i-lette. Even poets usually hyphenate here the syllable which is a single unit in the basic language; thus it remains uncertain whether they meant To-i-lette or Tu-a-lette. It is indeed a bad recommendation for a word if the knowledge of the language of which it is an integral part is not sufficient for its correct pronunciation.] (Kolbe 1809: 83).

The aim of the argument is, as we said, foreign-word purism; statements giving indications of multilingualism and its quality are just a byproduct. Foreign-word purism as such has now been well researched. However, it could be worthwhile to look through the primary texts systematically as a treasure trove of statements about multilingualism. For example, one might find assertions like this: “selbst unter den Gebildeten der höheren Klassen möchten bei weitem

⁵ For example, Bettine von Arnim reports on Madame de Staël’s visit to Goethe’s mother in Frankfurt: the former spoke no German and the latter only a little French. After a few introductory phrases, the conversation was continued through interpreting: “Sie [...] sagte [...] mit erhabener Stimme [...]: *Je suis la mère de Goethe: ah, je suis charmée* sagte die Schriftstellerin [...]. [...] Die Mutter beantwortete ihre Höflichkeiten mit einem französischen Neujahrswunsch, welchen sie mit feierlichen Verbeugungen zwischen den Zähnen murmelte [...]. Bald winkte mich die Mutter herbei, ich mußte den Dolmetscher zwischen beiden machen” [In a solemn voice she said: *I am Goethe’s mother: ah, pleased to meet you* said the writer. Mother answered the pleasantries with a French New Year’s wish, which she murmured with solemn bows between her teeth. Soon mother waved me over and I had to act as the interpreter between the two.] (Arnim 1835: 316–317). – Regarding the multilingual competences of Madame de Staël, see Jöhnk (in this volume).

mehr als die vollen drei Viertel das Französische entweder gar nicht oder nur kümmerlich verstehn” [Even among the educated of the higher classes, far more than the full three quarters either do not understand French at all or understand it only poorly.] (Kolbe 1809: 108).

3.3.2 Practiced multilingualism

Multilingual proficiency becomes apparent when an author uses different languages, be it in different texts or within one text. Regardless of the (self-)attested language skills of an author like A. W. Schlegel, he could write in more than one language (or indeed speak in more than one language – which, however, before the introduction of sound recordings cannot be directly witnessed but is accessible only as thematic multilingualism). For Schlegel, French and Latin are publication languages in addition to German, and English is a further language of correspondence.

Obvious practised multilingualism occurs when we find more or less extensive heterolingual passages untranslated. Bettine von Arnim, née Brentano, from an upper-class family in Frankfurt, reports that as a teenager she made friends with a Jewish girl and that they together swept a Jewish ghetto alley early in the morning. Later on, her aunt gave her a lengthy French moral sermon:

Das junge Mädchen was uns sticken lehrt ist eine Jüdin, sie heißt *Veilchen*, es ist ein recht liebkosender Name und ich fand lezt das erste Sträußchen ihrer Namensvettern zusammen, da ging ich ganz früh zu ihr um sie damit zu überraschen, ich fand sie auf der Treppe mit dem Besen in der Hand, sie war beschämt, ich aber gleich nahm ihr den aus der Hand und sagte, ach lassen Sie mich auch ein bischen kehren. Da kam so früh schon denn es war noch nicht sieben Uhr der Hofmeister vom Eduard Bethmann vorbei, der mußte es der Tante gesagt haben daß er mich vor der Haustür eines Juden auf offner Straße kehrend fand – [...] ich will Dir die derbsten Ausdrücke von der Tante ihrer Mercuriale ersparen, sie meinte nur ich sei [...] für ein besseres Dasein verloren, ich habe mich gänzlich weggeworfen! *Vous n'avez point de pudeur, point de respect humain, on vous trouve balayer la rue main en main avec une juive! [...] cachez vous devant le monde, qu'on ne lise point sur votre front les deshonorants signes de votre effronterie*

[The young girl who teaches us embroidery is a Jewess, her name is Violet, it is quite a lovely name and I recently found the first bunch of her namesakes, so I went to her very early to surprise her, I found her on the stairs with a broom in her hand, she was ashamed, but I immediately took it out of her hand and said, oh, let me sweep a little too. Even that early, for it was not yet seven o'clock, the majordomo of Eduard Bethmann came by, he must have told the aunt that he found me in the open street sweeping in front of a Jew's house – I will spare you the crudest expressions of aunt's reprimands: she said that I was lost for a better existence, I had completely thrown myself away! *You have no modesty, no*

human respect, you are found sweeping the street hand in hand with a Jewess! Hide yourself from the world, so that no one may read on your forehead the shameful signs of your insolence.] (Arnim 1844: 12–14).

Multilingualism is also practiced when Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, seeks an etymological explanation of fanaticism and in this context makes mention of the literal sense of the German word *Schwärmerei*:

A debility and dimness of the imaginative power, and a consequent necessity of reliance on the immediate impressions of the senses, do, we well know, render the mind liable to superstition and fanaticism. Having a deficient portion of internal and proper warmth, minds of this class seek in the crowd *circum fana* for a warmth in common, which they do not possess singly. Cold and plegmatic in their own nature, like damp hay, they heat and inflame by co-acervation; or like bees they become restless and irritable through the increased temperature of collected multitudes. Hence the German word for fanaticism (such at least was its original import) is derived from the swarming of bees, namely, *Schwärmen*, *Schwärmerey*. (Coleridge 1817: 29–30)

Instead of a single author, a collection of texts can also be regarded; the *Children's and Household Tales* by the Grimm Brothers (2 volumes, 1812; 1815) e.g. are trilingual, since in addition to the standard New High German (164 tales) German dialects – Low German (11 tales) and Alemannic (1 tale) – are also used (cf. Bär 2015: 139–140).

Multilingualism can be found in texts to varying degrees. Due to the spelling, it may not be obvious at first glance that several French words (*en-nuyant*, *douce*, *air*, *honnête homme*, *intrigue*, *filouterie*, each in a Germanized form) are hidden in the following German example:

Mehl will ich haben, enujanter Kleifresser, ihr gebt euch ein so douses Air, und wollt immer die Miene eines honnête homme annehmen, und dahinter steckt nichts als Intrigue und Filouterie.

[I want flour, you tiresome bran-eater, you give yourself such a sweet air, and always want to assume a gentleman's mien, and there is nothing behind it but deceit and trickery] (Brentano 1983 [1810/12], 290).

The superimposition of monolingualism can go even further: any lexical loan-meaning can be understood as a relic of an attempt at monolingualization. A well-known example is the scandal caused by Goethe's wife Christiane and Bettine von Arnim in 1811 when they visited the Weimar art exhibition. Frau von Goethe was apparently most annoyed by Frau von Arnim's exalted affection for Goethe; she took a few pointed comments on the work of Johann Heinrich Meyer, whom Goethe appreciated, as an opportunity to physically attack Bettine von Arnim, knocking her glasses to the ground. The latter then named her

“wahnsinnige Blutwurst” [Insane blood sausage] (Wolff and Ludwig 1832: 34). A reliable testimony for the gossip story cannot be identified (cf. the compilation in Kratzsch 2009: 127–130); all the reports are at least second-hand. The exact wording is also uncertain; as alternatives to *wahnsinnige Blutwurst*, the synonyms *wildgewordene Blutwurst* and *tollgewordene Blutwurst* are given; the expression may not even have been used in the dispute itself and indeed may have been coined afterwards (cf. Fröschle 2002: 371). In any case, there are some explicit attempts at motivation – *Blutwurst* allegedly alluded to Christiane’s corpulence and red face (Lewes 1875: 580) – which suggests that the term was perceived as unusual. However, the supposed extraordinary linguistic wit⁶ could well itself prove to be a ‘stereotypical, long-used swearword’, considering the possibility that it could be traced to Bettine von Arnim’s Frankfurt-Offenbach dialect. There, as well as in other Rhine-Franconian dialects, it is common to use the words *Blutwurst* and the largely synonymous *Blunz(e)* (‘blood sausage without or with little greaves’) also for a plump person, especially a woman (Friebertshäuser 1990: 37); the expression *dumm(e) Blunz(e)* is a common insult. At whatever point the de-dialectalisation took place, whether in Weimar gossip or already with Bettine von Arnim herself (i.e. whether the word *Blunz* or the also common language word *Blutwurst* was originally used), cannot be clarified. At any rate, dialectal semantics can be assumed and the episode could be seen as an example of hidden bilingualism ‘common German – Rhine-Franconian’.

There is a comparable case in the context of Bettine von Arnim’s German-French multilingualism referred to above. Following the quoted passage, in which she reports on her aunt’s French sermon, she regrets that she will no longer be allowed to visit her friend: “jezt wirds [...] die Tante nicht erlauben, [...] weil ich die Gass gekehrt hab” [Now aunt will not allow it, because I swept the alley.] (Arnim 1844: 15). The e-apocopes in the forms *Gass* and *hab*, the verb *kehren*, and the use of the perfect instead of the past tense are dialect markers;

⁶ “Es ist immer gefährlich Leute anzugreifen, die Meister des Worts sind. Sie haben Waffen zur Verfügung vor denen der Bürger mit seinen stereotypen, längst verbrauchten Schimpfworten wehrlos ist. Die bleiben an niemandem hängen, weil sie für alle gelten. Aber Bettinas ‚wildgewordene Blutwurst‘ blieb an der armen Christiane für alle Zeiten kleben und nur an ihr. Selbst für Frankreich blieb sie ‚le boudin enragé.‘” [It is always dangerous to attack people who are masters of the word. They have weapons at their disposal against which the bourgeois with their stereotypical, long-used swearwords are defenseless. They don’t stick to anyone because they apply to everyone. But Bettina’s ‘wild blood sausage’ stuck to poor Christiane forever and only to her. Even for France, she remained ‘le boudin enragé’] (Faber du Faur: 223).

standard language would be *weil ich die Gasse gefegt habe* (cf. Bär 2015: 141–142).

4 On methodology: how to ‘find’ multilingualism?

If it is plausible that multilingualism ‘hides’ in text corpora, it follows that the methods to find it must be considered. And if one accepts that there are forms of multilingualism which are not immediately evident (that is, that recognizing them requires a greater interpretive effort), then it is also clear that there is no sharp boundary between *Finden* (finding) and *Erfinden* (inventing). This does not mean that indirect references to multilingualism have to be excluded; taking them into account, however, requires a significantly greater amount of justification. It is also particularly true here that intuitions without concepts are blind; for this reason, it depends on the expertise of the researcher whether they are able to see multilingualism in a text (or to see multilingualism ‘into it,’ so to speak).

The “lucky find” in Max Weber’s sense (1919: 590–591), i.e., the collection of material based on prior knowledge and unsystematic research, is by no means to be despised. This contingency, which can never be completely eliminated, can of course be reduced by consulting and including available research results (e.g. Balogh and Leitgeb 2012; Dembeck and Mein 2014; Dembeck and Parr 2017; Glaser, Prinz, and Ptashnyk 2021; Havinga and Langer 2015; Hüning 2012; Joachimsthaler 2011; Mende 2021; Ptashnyk forthc.).

The lucky find can be supported in two ways by systematic corpus queries. Thematic multilingualism can be found using search terms such as
*lingu**, *langu** ...
German, *French*, *English*, *Latin* ...
*translat**, *interpret** ...
 ...

and of course heteronymous expressions, i.e. equivalents in other languages. Both thematic and practiced multilingualism can also be found to some extent using certain search formats. This is due to the fact that foreign-language expressions in texts from the 18th and 19th centuries are often (but of course not always) specifically emphasized: in Roman typesetting usually by italics, in Gothic print frequently by Roman types, sometimes also by italics. Since Gothic types are usually converted to Roman during digitization, there is a possibility of finding heterolinguual expressions by searching for italics. This requires, how-

ever, that the corpus texts are available in a file format that allows searching for formatting.

It goes without saying that such searches will always find a large number of text passages that have nothing to do with multilingualism. Therefore, each document has to be examined auto-optically, and given the sheer number of references, the expenditure of time is considerable. However, usually one can see in half a second whether it is relevant evidence or not; and the quality of the finds definitely justifies the effort.

A selected individual case is examined in the following. A complete presentation of the evidence, however, is not intended.⁷

5 Multilingualism in Johann Wolfgang Goethe's works

It is unclear how many languages Goethe mastered, especially since the precise meaning of 'mastered' is not clear. Self-statements concerning a lack of language skills should be understood to some extent as a modesty *topos* or even sometimes as irony; at the same time, the difference between active and passive mastery as well as its degree is often difficult or impossible to verify and undoubtedly also changed during the course of Goethe's life. As a child or adolescent, he received private lessons in the scholarly languages Latin and Greek as well as in English and Hebrew. He wrote Latin reasonably fluently (Goethe 1811: 57–58), and in Ancient Greek he gradually got so far "daß ich fast den Homer ohne Uebersetzung lese" [that I can almost read Homer without a translation] (Goethe WA IV.1: 258). The knowledge is at least sufficient for educated jokes; for instance, Goethe (WA IV.4: 281) invents a pseudo-Greek equivalent for the name of the Thuringian mountain *Kickelhahn* (literally: 'cock-a-rooster'): "Al-ecktrüogallonax".

Italian, Goethe learns casually, so to speak, by listening to his sister's Italian lessons (Goethe 1811: 58). His father had a good command of French, but his mother hardly any; the son acquired it more or less on his own, mediated via Latin and Italian (Goethe 1811: 202–206). In later years, he occasionally mistrusted his French skills and thought "daß ich es in dieser Sprache hätte weiter bringen sollen" [that I should have made more progress in this language] (Goethe WA IV.22: 186).

⁷ For further details see also Schreiner (1992) and Weissmann (2021).

Coming to reading a text in the “wunderliche Sprache” (“curious language”) Dutch, he was confident by contrast that he could somehow find his way through (Goethe WA.IV.6, 357). In connection with his work on the *West-östlicher Divan*, he considered learning Arabic (Goethe WA IV.25: 165). In 1821, at the age of 72, he took up Bohemian history and language (Goethe WA IV.35: 68). Serbian poetry, Serbian poetry, he only could read in German translation, so he asked his correspondent Vuk Stefanović Karadžić to translate some poems verbatim (Goethe WA IV.37: 289). Spanish, he read with difficulty; on the *Floresta de Rimas Antiguas Castellanas* by Johann Nikolaus Böhl von Faber, one of the mediators of Romanticism to Spain, which has a very brief German-language appendix, he commented:

Der Spanische Lustgarten hat mich aufgeregt, dieser herrlichen Sprache und Literatur wieder einige Stunden zu widmen; hätte der treffliche Sammler [...] nur das Doppelte oder Dreyfache an die *Fingerzeige für deutsche Leser* gewendet, so hätte er mich und alle, die ohngefähr in demselben Verhältniß gegen das Spanische sich finden, sehr gefördert und würde uns ohne Mühe viel Mühe erspart haben

[The Spanish Pleasure Garden inspired me to devote once more a few hours to this wonderful language and literature; if the excellent collector had only spent twice or three times as much on the clues for German readers, he would have helped me and all those who find themselves in roughly the same relationship to the Spanish language and would have without a lot of work saved us much work] (Goethe WA IV.34: 232).

He seems to have had a special, almost emotional relationship to Italian. He signed a letter to the German-Italian Maria Antonia von Branconi in 1780:

di Vossignoria +++++issima

il servo +++++issimo

Goethe

Ich überlasse Ihrer grösseren Kenntniß der italienischen Sprache, statt der Kreuze die schicklichsten Epithets einzusezzen, es passt eine ganze Litaney hinein

[Your most +++++ ladyship's most +++++ servant Goethe. I leave it to your greater knowledge of the Italian language, to use the most suitable epithets instead of the crosses: a whole litany fits in] (Goethe WA IV.4: 276)

However, Goethe (WA IV.5: 267) reports unironically on his “wenigen Kenntniß der italienischen Sprache” [little knowledge of the Italian language] and even complains: “Hätt ich die Italienische Sprache in meiner Gewalt wie die unglückliche Deutsche” [Had I only the Italian language in my mastery like the unfortunate German!] (Goethe WA IV.7: 217). During his trip to Italy in 1786–88 he then learned Italian fluently; crossing the language border, he notes: “Der Wirth spricht kein deutsch und ich muß nun meine Künste versuchen. Wie froh bin ich daß die Geliebte Sprache nun die Sprache des Gebrauchs wird.” [The land-

lord does not speak German and I must now try my skills. How glad I am that the beloved language is now becoming the language of use.] (Goethe WA III.1, 180–181). In later years, cut off from practical use, he no longer seemed to be quite sure of his mastery of this language: In translating, he asked for assistance of a bilingual Italian (Goethe WA IV.16: 107).

He provided own translations from French and Italian; translations of his works into English (Goethe WA.IV.15: 212) and Latin poems by contemporaries (Goethe WA.IV.25: 140) he was able to judge, in the case of English with the restriction “soweit man eine fremde Sprache beurtheilen kann” [as far as one can judge a foreign language] (Goethe WA III.12: 190). He had one of his essays translated into French for his literary contacts in Milan, since they did not speak German but were nevertheless multilingual. The fact that he did not do the translation himself and directly into Italian was probably due to other obligations and a momentary lack of an Italian-speaking assistant; he at least corrected the French text. To his friend Carl Friedrich Zelter, he wrote:

Dieß ist ein ganz eigener Spiegel wenn man sich in einer fremden Sprache wieder erblickt. [...] Will ich meine deutsche, eigentlich nur sinnlich hingeschriebene Darstellung im Französischen wieder finden; so muß ich hie und da nachhelfen, welches nicht schwer wird, da dem Übersetzer gelungen ist die logische Gelenktheit seiner Sprache zu bethätigen, ohne dem sinnlichen Eindruck Schaden zu thun.

[It is a very special mirror to behold oneself in a foreign language. If I want to find in French my German, actually only sensuously written description, I have to help it along here and there, which is not difficult, since the translator has succeeded in using his logically flexible language without interfering with the sensual impression] (Goethe WA IV.29: 91).

Against the monolingual tendencies of the 19th century, which thought and acted towards a national state, Goethe explicitly argued for multilingualism. In December 1813, Achim von Arnim had spoken out in the journal *Preußischer Correspondent* (No. 154: 4) in favour of retaining the juridical achievements of the French era. Goethe comments approvingly on this in a letter to Arnim in February 1814:

Etwas Ähnliches möchte ich wohl über das neue Bestreben vernehmen, durch welches die aus einer Knechtschaft kaum entronnenen Deutschen sich schnell wieder in die Fesseln ihrer eigenen Sprache zu schmieden gedenken

[I should like to hear something similar about the new endeavor by which the Germans, who have scarcely escaped from servitude, intend to quickly forge themselves back into the chains of their own language] (Goethe WA IV.24: 177).

For Goethe, dealing with other languages and actively mastering them has the deeper sense of mutual language formation and expansion. He compares German with French, for instance, and suggests introducing a loan meaning for the German verb *stängeln*:

Eine fremde Sprache ist hauptsächlich dann zu beneiden, wenn sie mit Einem Worte auszudrucken kann, was die andere umschreiben muß, und hierin steht jede Sprache im Vortheil und Nachtheil gegen die andere, wie man alsbald sehen kann, wenn man die gegenseitigen Wörterbücher durchläuft. Mir aber kommt vor, man könne gar manches Wort auf diesem Wege gewinnen, wenn man nachsieht, woher es in jener Sprache stammt, und alsdann versucht, ob man aus denselben etymologischen Gründen durch ähnliche Ableitung zu demselben Worte gelangen könnte.

So haben zum Beispiel, die Franzosen das Wort *perche*, *Stange*, davon das Verbum *percher*. Sie bezeugen dadurch, daß die Hühner, die Vögel sich auf eine Stange, einen Zweig setzen. Im Deutschen haben wir das Wort *stängeln*. Man sagt: *ich stänge die Bohnen*, das heißt, ich gebe den Bohnen Stangen, eben so gut kann man sagen: *die Bohnen stängeln*, sie winden sich an den Stangen hinauf, und warum sollten wir uns nicht des Ausdrucks bedienen: *die Hühner stängeln*, sie setzen sich auf den Stangen

[A foreign language is mainly to be envied when it can express in one word what the other must circumscribe, and in this each language stands at an advantage and disadvantage to the other, as one can see at once by going through both the dictionaries. It seems to me, however, that many a word could be obtained in this way if one were to see where it comes from in that language and then try to see whether one could come to the same word for the same etymological reason by a similar derivation. For example, the French have the word *perche*, *perch*, from which the verb *percher* is derived. By this they mean that chickens and birds perch on a pole or branch. In German we have the word *stängeln*. We say: *ich stänge die Bohnen*, that is, I give sticks to the beans; just as well one might say: *die Bohnen stängeln*, the beans wind themselves up the sticks, and why should we not use the expression: *die Hühner stängeln*, the chickens perch on the poles] (Goethe WA IV.23: 375).

Also with regard to the language of science, Goethe pleads for multilingualism. In *Nonnos von Panopolis der Dichter* by the Russian Count Sergei Semionovich Uvarov, published in German and dedicated to Goethe, the latter could read:

Die Wiedergeburt der Alterthums-Wissenschaft gehört den Deutschen an. Es mögen andere Völker wichtige Vorarbeiten dazu geliefert haben; sollte aber die höhere Philologie sich einst zu einem vollendeten Ganzen ausbilden, so könnte eine solche Palingenesie wohl nur in Deutschland Statt finden. Aus diesem Grunde lassen sich auch gewisse neue Ansichten kaum in einer andern neuern Sprache ausdrücken; und deswegen habe ich deutsch geschrieben. Man ist hoffentlich nunmehr von der verkehrten Idee des politischen Vorranges dieser oder jener Sprache in der Wissenschaft zurückgekommen. Es ist Zeit, dass ein Jeder, unbekümmert um das Werkzeug, immer die Sprache wähle, die am nächsten dem Ideenkreise liegt, den er zu betreten im Begriff ist

[The revival of classical studies belongs to the Germans. Other peoples may have provided important preliminary work on it; but if higher philology should one day develop into a complete whole, such palingenesis could probably only take place in Germany. For this reason, certain new views can hardly be expressed in any other modern language; and that is why I have written in German. Hopefully, we have now come back from the mistaken idea of the political primacy of this or that language in science. It is time that everyone, regardless of the tool, always chose the language that is closest to the circle of ideas he is about to enter] (Uvarov 1817: III–IV).

Goethe (WA IV.28: 41), in a letter to Uvarov, comments on this:

Ich eile meinen [...] Dank herzlich auszudrücken [...]. Denn gerade zu der jetzigen Zeit kommen diese Worte als erwünschtes Evangelium, dem Deutschen zu sagen: daß er, anstatt sich in sich selbst zu beschränken, die Welt in sich aufnehmen muß, um auf die Welt zu wirken. Ihr Beispiel ist unschätzbar

[I hurry to express my heartfelt thanks. For precisely at this time these words come as a desired gospel to tell the German: that instead of limiting himself within himself, he must absorb the world in order to have an effect on the world. Your example is inestimable!]

He then takes up the idea in a brief discussion of Uvarov's study in *Kunst und Alterthum* [Art and Antiquity] and develops it further:

Hier hört man nun doch einmal einen fähigen, talentvollen, geistreichen gewandten Mann, der, über die kümmerliche Beschränkung eines erkältenden Sprach-Patriotismus weit erhaben, gleich einem Meister der Tonkunst jedesmal die Register seiner wohl ausgestatteten Orgel zieht welche Sinn und Gefühl des Augenblicks ausdrücken. Möchten doch alle gebildete Deutsche diese zugleich ehrenvollen und belehrenden Worte sich dankbar einprägen, und geistreiche Jünglinge dadurch angefeuert werden sich mehrerer Sprachen, als beliebiger Lebens-Werkzeuge, zu bemächtigen

[Here, after all, one hears an able, talented, witty man who, raised far above the meagre limitations of a cold language patriotism, like a master of music, always draws the registers of his well-equipped organ, which express the sense and feeling of the moment. If only all educated Germans would gratefully memorise these words, which are both honourable and instructive, and witty young people would be inspired by them to master several languages as discretionary tools of life] (Goethe 1817: 64–65).

His concept of translation can be found most succinctly in an 1827 letter to Thomas Carlyle:

Eine wahrhaft allgemeine Duldung wird am sichersten erreicht, wenn man das Besondere der einzelnen Menschen und Völkerschaften auf sich beruhen läßt, bey der Überzeugung jedoch festhält, daß das wahrhaft Verdienstliche sich dadurch auszeichnet, daß es der ganzen Menschheit angehört. Zu einer solchen Vermittlung und wechselseitigen Anerkennung tragen die Deutschen seit langer Zeit schon bey.

Wer die deutsche Sprache versteht und studirt befindet sich auf dem Markte wo alle Nationen ihre Waren anbieten, er spielt den Dolmetscher indem er sich selbst bereichert.

Und so ist jeder Übersetzer anzusehen, daß er sich als Vermittler dieses allgemein geistigen Handels bemüht, und den Wechseltausch zu befördern sich zum Geschäft macht. Denn, was man auch von der Unzulänglichkeit des Übersetzens sagen mag, so ist und bleibt es doch eins der wichtigsten und würdigsten Geschäfte in dem allgemeinen Weltwesen

[A truly general acceptance is most surely achieved if one leaves the particulars of individual people and nations to themselves, while remaining convinced that what is truly meritorious is distinguished by the fact that it belongs to the whole of humanity. The Germans have been contributing to such mediation and mutual appreciation for a long time. Whoever understands and studies the German language finds himself on the market where all nations offer their wares, he plays the interpreter by enriching himself. And so every translator is to be regarded as a mediator of this general intellectual trade, and as making it his business to promote the exchange. For whatever may be said of the inadequacy of translation, it is and remains one of the most important and worthiest businesses in the general nature of the world] (Goethe WA IV.42: 270).

With such statements, one has to take into account that the late 18th and early 19th centuries often had a rather liberal understanding of translation. To translate a text completely and exactly, without additions or rearrangements of passages, was not necessarily expected. Goethe himself reacted quite patiently to very extensive translational modifications of his works. In 1805, he himself had submitted a translation of an unpublished text from the literary estate of the French Enlightenment philosopher Denis Diderot, to which he added some remarks on persons of French intellectual history as an appendix (*Anmerkungen über Personen und Gegenstände, deren in dem Dialog Rameau's Neffe erwähnt wird* [*Notes on persons and objects mentioned in the dialogue Rameau's nephew*]; Goethe 1805: 383–480). Diderot's original manuscript was missing (it was not rediscovered until 1890 and published for the first time one year later) and the copy given to Goethe by his friend Klinger through Schiller's mediation could also no longer be found after the publication of the translation – Goethe (1823b: 159) claims to have returned it. Thus, the first French edition appeared in 1821 as a “humoristische Schelmerey einer Zurückübersetzung” [a humorous joke of a back translation]. (Goethe 1823b: 160), which the authors declared as the original for a time (Goethe 1824: 145). But Goethe's translation was also a rather idiosyncratic mixture of an extremely ‘faithful’ translation in parts and a relatively free rendering (cf. Albrecht and Plack 2018: 407). Two years later, the retranslators, who partly strayed far from their German original (Albrecht and Plack 2018: 408–409), presented a ‘translation’ of Goethe's *Anmerkungen über Personen und Gegenstände* as an independent publication, which was in fact a complete reworking and expansion (Saur and Saint-Geniès 1823). Goethe (1823a: 377), however, by no means reveals this text as an impudent plagiarism, but

merely hints delicately that it has no counterpart in his oeuvre. Only a letter to Zelter shows that he is nevertheless annoyed:

Die Franzosen [...] behandeln alle unsre Kunstprodukte als rohen Stoff den sie sich erst bearbeiten müssen. Wie jämmerlich haben sie meine Noten zum Rameau durch einander entstellt und gemischt; da ist auch gar nichts an seinem Fleck stehen geblieben
[The French treat all our art products as raw material that they must first work on. How miserably they have distorted and mixed my notes to Rameau; nothing has remained in its place] (Goethe WA IV.39: 182).

All in all, it can be stated that Goethe had a very positive relationship to multilingualism. With his cosmopolitan attitude, he is admittedly not a representative of that line of ideology which became predominant in the 19th and into the middle of the 20th century and which even today cannot be regarded as having been overcome. Nevertheless, he was not an isolated case in his time. Another example is Franz Passow, a philologist who seems to have been completely ignored in the historiography of linguistic criticism. In 1813, in a review of Karl Wilhelm Kolbe's *Über Wortmengerei*, he takes up an idea that is well-known in early German Romanticism: translation, like the comparative study of language, serves to bring together different languages – as different organs and forms of representation of the human mind, which thereby comes closer to itself – and that the German language is more suited than others to adapt and assimilate peculiarities of other languages (cf. Bär 1999: 273–275; on the prehistory of the concept of language enrichment through translation, cf. Albrecht and Plack 2018: 53–56). Passow writes:

Nun aber soll jede einzelne Sprache sich möglichst der allgemeinen Idee von Sprache annähern, und dazu gehört dann auch die Verpflichtung, in sich allmählig die verschiedenen Weisen des Ausdrucks zu vereinigen, die wir in verschiedenen Sprachen zerstreut sehn. Der Franzose wird dieß läugnen, weil seine Sprache eine ungefuge Masse ist, die eben nichts anderes als französisches ausdrücken kann, weil der Franzose nichts anders zu fassen vermag. Der Deutsche wird es bejahren, weil er für jede Volksthümlichkeit reinen und empfänglichen Sinn genug hat, um sie wieder in seinem Organ darzustellen, und weil deutsche Musterwerke aller Art glänzendes Zeugniß dafür sind: es genügt hier, an die Uebersetzungen von *Schleiermacher*, *Wolf*, *Voß* und *A. W. Schlegel* zu erinnern
[But now, each individual language should, as far as possible, approach the general idea of language, and this also includes the obligation to gradually unite in itself the various modes of expression which we see scattered in different languages. The Frenchman will deny this because his language is an unstructured mass that cannot express anything but French, because the Frenchman is not able to comprehend anything else. The German will affirm it, because he has pure and receptive sense enough for every folk idiom to represent it again in his organ, and because German model works of all kinds are bright testimony to this: it will be sufficient here to recall the translations of *Schleiermacher*, *Wolf*, *Voß* and *A. W. Schlegel*] (Passow 1813: 375).

Consequently, this would mean that some language communities have more talent for multilingualism than others because they work more with it and thus achieve a higher degree of interlingualism for their own language. It could be a quite interesting task for multilingualism research to investigate this curious idea more closely. The first step would be to proceed in terms of the history of ideology: The exponents of this view would have to be identified and their arguments and motives, which are quite various, would have to be compiled. Then, however (following the guiding idea of this contribution, that historical language reflection is related to contemporaneous linguistic realities and can thus possibly serve as an indicator of these), it could be examined whether the ideology has any counterpart in different languages of the 18th and 19th centuries. For example, do German authors master significantly more languages than French? Are there more interlingualisms in German with French than vice versa? – In fact, translations that were not made directly from one language to another but were mediated via a version in a third language, were often not mediated via German at all, but rather via French (cf. Albrecht and Plack 2018: 387–388). It should therefore not go unconsidered that the (wishful) notion of German as a particularly suitable translator's language may also have been merely a reaction to the actual predominance of French in this context.

6 Outlook: an approach to multilingualism in works on linguistic and literary criticism

The main concern of this article is to raise awareness of the fact that multilingualism in linguistic and literary criticism of the 18th and 19th centuries was by no means an exception, but rather the norm. We agree unreservedly with Kilchmann's plea (219: 83–84) that analytic categories must be sought that can take account of transnational and multilingual historical realities. If we do not assume a monolingual consciousness, but instead take multilingualism as the standard, it will be then be obvious not to interpret the 18th and 19th centuries' translation theory and practice in the current way as a transfer from one language to another, but rather as an entry into a sphere of interlinguality, as Schmitz-Emans (2019: 266) considers for early German Romanticism and its 'authorship of the reader' theory

A possible research approach for the systematic evaluation of the material exemplarily illuminated above could consist in the creation of a relational database on the ZBK corpus as well as other corpora in other languages; in this case,

unlike in case of a discourse lexicographic project (cf. Bär forthc.), the size of the corpus is not initially of great importance, since it does not have to be primarily about the comparability of multilingualism in different language communities: each reference is valuable as such. One can therefore work with an open corpus without any problems.

If one annotates each individual reference by means of an input mask, as, for example, shown in Figs. 2–5 (although other/further query criteria are of course conceivable and the drop-down menus can be supplemented at any time), there will be in a reasonable amount of time an ordered set of data with the help of which valid findings of concrete multilingualisms can be obtained.

document: B 0071 001 Arnim, Bettine: Briefw. Kind I

multilingual quality: thematic

person/group: Arnim, Bettine v.

page: 54

document details: B. V. ARNIM, Briefw. Kind I (1835)
[text type: epistolary novel]

attitude:

language involved: French

aspect of multilingualism: language proficiency

time period: early 19th c.

person/group: Goethe, K. Elisabeth

language involved: German

usage: oral

aspect of language system:

text snippet:

Der Moritz Bethmann hat mir gesagt, daß die Staël mich besuchen will; [...] da wollt', ich, Du wärst hier, da wird' ich mein Französisch recht zusammen nehmen müssen.

bold italic letter-spacing Greek alphabet preview

add language involved add person/group add entry save entry

Fig. 2: Multilingualism-related excerpt (Arnim 1835: 54) as entry in the proposed database (view of possible input mask)

In this instance in which French is explicitly mentioned as the language of communication, German is implicitly involved. For instances with additional languages involved, any number of additional input fields can be added via the button 'add language involved' in the footer. The multilingualism-quality is 'thematic' (see above, 3.2.1), an attitude towards multilingualism is not discernible here (cf. however fig. 3 and 4); the multilingualism-aspect in question is

language proficiency (it could also be about the aesthetics of languages, for example, as in fig. 4, or about the cognitive value of different languages); it is about oral language use; a particular aspect of the language system such as pronunciation or speech sound (cf. figs. 4 and 5), grammar, lexics or pragmatics is not mentioned; the period in which this multilingualism-evidence falls is not identical with the publication year of the text and must therefore be indicated separately; one learns about the multilingualism of three persons (in Katharina Elisabeth Goethe's case, the French is poor; in the case of Mme de Staël, there is zero evidence). By default, one person or group is provided in the input mask; in need of more than one, further input fields can be added via the corresponding button in the footer. If the names of the persons are well-known, their life data, social background, education level and, if applicable, other relevant information are recorded in the database, which can be retrieved at any time by a special query (also in different combinations). In the case of Fig. 5, only "a German" is mentioned as a multilingual person; since he appears as a member of the circle around Dr. Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, he may well be apostrophized as 'educated'.

document: B 0072 Arnim, Bettine: Frühlingskr.	multilingual quality: thematic	person/group: Brentano, Clemens
page: 111	document details: B. v. ARNIM, Frühlingskr. (*1800–04; 1844) [text type: epistolary novel]	attitude: positive
language involved: English	aspect of multilingualism: language proficiency	time period: early 19th c.
language involved: German	usage: --	aspect of language system: --
text snippet: <input type="button" value="bold"/> <input type="button" value="italic"/> <input type="button" value="letter-spacing"/> <input type="button" value="Greek alphabet"/> <input type="button" value="preview"/> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; min-height: 60px;"> Es würde mich freuen wenn Du wolltest Dich mit dem Englischen beschäftigen. Sprachen sind ein großer Gewinn, sie enthalten außer der Verschiedenheit des Ausdrucks, auch noch ein melodisches Genie und dies erzeugt wieder auch ein tanzendes Genie im Geist. </div>		
<input type="button" value="add language involved"/> <input type="button" value="add person/group"/> <input type="button" value="add entry"/> <input type="button" value="save entry"/>		

Fig. 3: Multilingualism-related excerpt (Arnim 1844: 111) as entry in the proposed database (view of possible input mask)

document: E 0028 de Quincey, Thomas: Confess.	multilingual quality: thematic	person/group: De Quincey, Thomas
page: 395	document details: DE QUINCEY, Confess. (1821) [text type: narrative prose]	attitude: positive
language involved: Italian	aspect of multilingualism: aesthetic	time period: early 19th c.
language involved: English	usage: oral	aspect of language system: pronunciation, sound
<p>text snippet:</p> <p>bold italic letter-spacing Greek alphabet preview</p> <p>And over and above the music of the stage and the orchestra, I had all around me, in the intervals of the performance, the music of the Italian language talked by Italian women: for the gallery was usually crowded with Italians: and I listened with [...] pleasure [...]; for the less you understand of a language, the more sensible you are to the melody or harshness of its sounds: for such a purpose, therefore, it was an advantage to me that I was a poor Italian scholar, reading it but little, and not speaking it at all, nor understanding a tenth part of what I heard spoken.</p>		
<p>add language involved add person/group add entry save entry</p>		

Fig. 4: Multilingualism-related excerpt (de Quincey 1821: 395) as entry in the proposed database (view of possible input mask)

document: E 0004 Boswell, James: Johnson	multilingual quality: practised	person/group: German (educated)
page: 545	document details: BOSWELL, Johnson (1791) [text type: narrative prose]	attitude: --
language involved: English	aspect of multilingualism: language proficiency	time period: 1770s
language involved: German	usage: oral	aspect of language system: pronunciation, sound
<p>text snippet:</p> <p>bold italic letter-spacing Greek alphabet preview</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; min-height: 100px;"> He [sc. Goldsmith] was [...] mortified, when talking in a company with fluent vivacity, and, as he flattered himself, to the admiration of all who were present; a German who sat next him, and perceived Johnson rolling himself, as if about to speak, suddenly stopped him, saying, „Stay, stay, – Toctor Shonson is going to say something.“ This was, no doubt, very provoking, especially to one so irritable as Goldsmith, who frequently mentioned it with strong expressions of indignation. </div>		
add language involved add person/group add entry save entry		

Fig. 5: Multilingualism-related excerpt (Boswell 1791: 545) as entry in the proposed database (view of possible input mask)

Of course, the query categories presented only form a very general grid, and it would be the same with any other or additional category. The interesting details of each instance in their variety and diversity cannot easily be categorized. Therefore, one must still individually take note of the evidence obtained by querying for any criterion or combination of criteria. The database is merely a pre-interpretative tool that does not suspend the actual interpretation. For this, a thorough familiarity with the literary-historical facts and the corpus texts themselves is essential. A database user who cannot make sense of the name of an author or a mentioned person, who cannot comprehend intertextualities or who does not recognize literary perspective and fictionality has not much to gain from a set of references pre-sorted according to certain criteria. The plea for corpus-hermeneutic multilingualism research – which the present article makes – is therefore not a plea for quantitative methods, but for a reasonable combination of distant and close reading (Bär 2016; see also Weitin and Werber 2017).

7 References

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