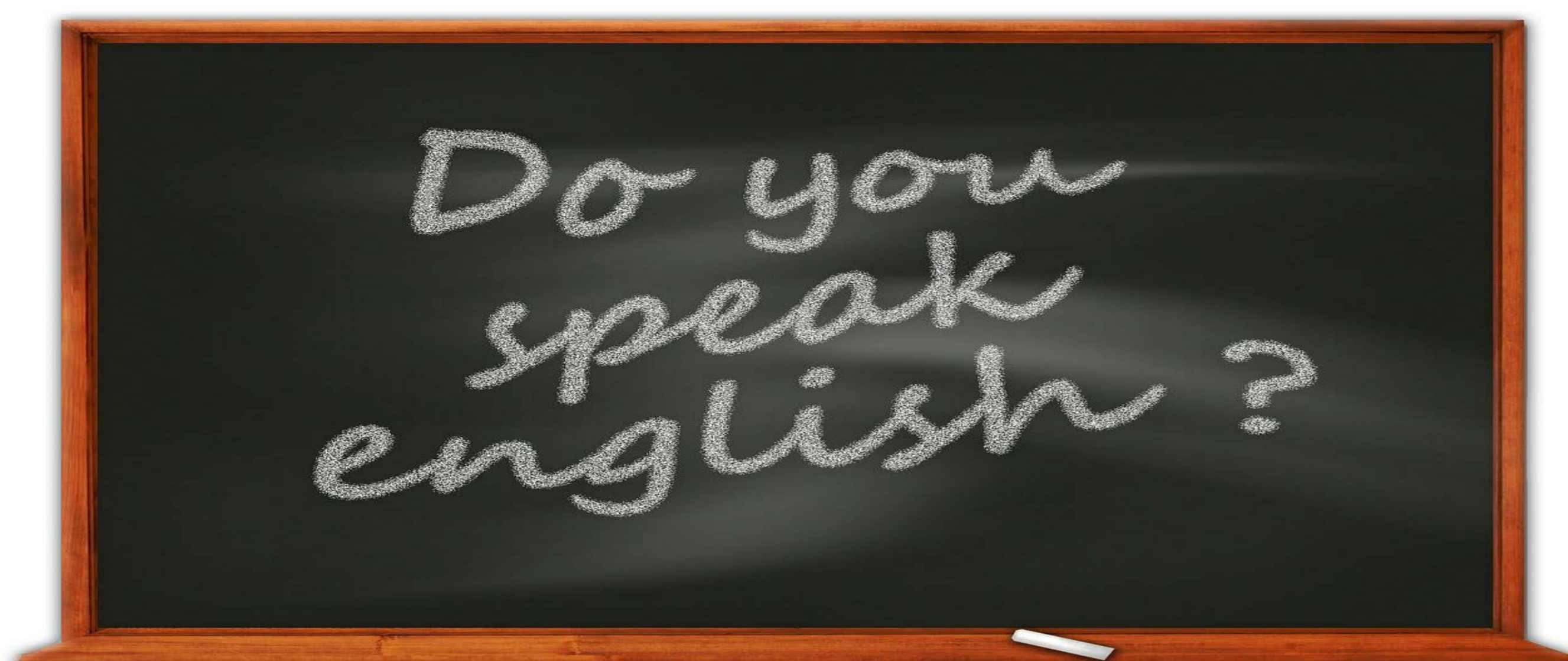


Multilingualism as a Resource of the Sustainable University

Project 3: Languages of Instruction



English in the Multilingual University

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In principle, the use of English as a lingua franca in academic contexts has been well documented. However, in the studies to date, the focus has been placed on a narrow, monolingually oriented perspective of English as the first foreign language to be learned by native speakers of a particular nationally defined language. In this way, English as a lingua franca is often juxtaposed in opposition to the national language in order to conclude that the use of English in academic settings presents either a threat to the national language or an enrichment to the universities and other institutions of higher education at which English is used.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Through an initial pilot study, how and to what degree the linguistic repertoire of the students and instructors of the University of Hamburg has an influence on English as a lingua franca will be examined. In light of the fact that the metalinguistic and multicultural competencies of multilingual speakers of English as a lingua franca have been neglected in the studies to date, these competencies have been placed in the foreground of the current study.

METHODS

In the first portion of the data collection process, with the help of an online questionnaire, information about the multilingual resources of approximately 500 students and instructors of the University of Hamburg will be gathered. After that, interviews will be conducted with about 50 students and instructors, in order to more closely examine the influences that other languages have on English as a lingua franca.

MAIN QUESTIONS

- Which role does English as a lingua franca take on in the context of instruction at the University of Hamburg?
- How do multilingual competencies influence communication in English as a lingua franca??



HYPOTHESES

We presume that multilingual speakers of English as a lingua franca possess a highly developed repertoire of grammatical structures and pragmalinguistic knowledge, as well as a heightened degree of language awareness. With the insight that we hope to gain through this study, English can be more effectively incorporated into learning and instruction by taking into consideration the entire linguistic repertoire of the students and instructors involved.

LITERATURE

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