

# Luister goed

Het wordt onderschat hoe goed mensen eigenlijk een vreemde taal kunnen volgen die zij zelf niet spreken. Een pleidooi voor luistertaal.

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# Luistertaal in Academia

Jan D. ten Thije (Utrecht)

***Dat spreekt voor zich?! Taalbeleid in het hoger onderwijs.***  
Symposium ter gelegenheid van het 40-jarig bestaan van het Language Center  
Tilburg, 15 november 2013

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# Structure

1. Introduction
2. Language policy in higher education
3. Lingua Receptiva (LaRa)
  - concept, occurrences, related concepts, history, options, example
4. LaRa practices at universities
5. Limitations, applications and perspectives
6. Conclusion



**Felicitaties  
bij het  
40-jarig bestaan  
van het  
Language Center  
Tilburg University**

# 1.1 Taalbeleid in hoger onderwijs

Wim Jansen (2012)

Nederlandse universiteiten *maken zich zorgen* om

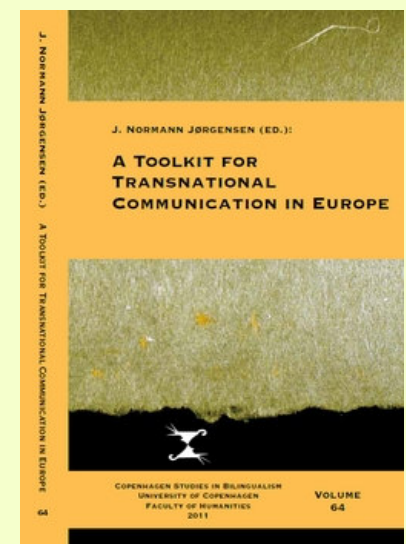
- de talige kwaliteit van hun Engelstalige opleidingen en opleiders
- eventuele aanpassingsproblemen onder Nederlandstalige studenten bij overgang naar een Engelstalig milieu

# 1.2 Taalbeleid in hoger onderwijs

Wim Jansen (2012)

Universiteiten *maken zich geen zorgen* om

- de voorbereiding op een Nederlandstalige werkkring,
- de ontwikkeling van de Nederlandstalige terminologie
- een groeiende kloof tussen wetenschappelijke en niet-wetenschappelijke staf
- de opleiding van leidinggevenden die niet meer in staat zouden zijn om verantwoording af te kunnen leggen in de taal van de burger.



## **1.3 Zorgen van Raad voor de Nederlandse Taal en Letteren**

- een afname van het gebruik van het Nederlands als instructietaal & vaktaal
- afname van de functie van het Nederlands als taal van wetenschap
- Nederlandstalige studenten kunnen de studie in het Engels niet altijd goed volgen.

## 1.4 Multilingual governance University of Luxembourg

- Law dated 12 August 2003: “the running of the University is based on (...) the multilingual nature of its teaching”.
- The University's languages are: French, English, and German.
- All degree courses must be bilingual and the secondary language should represent at least 25% of the course, except in cases where the language determines the content of the course.
- The majority of masters courses must be bilingual and a minimum of 20% will be in English,
- Each of the three languages must at least be evident in 20% of the courses.
- To have students, academic staff engaged in teaching and research and administrative staff who are trilingual, if possible.



# Wat heeft Luistertaal te bieden?

**Luister goed**

Het wordt onderschat hoe goed mensen eigenlijk een vreemde taal kunnen volgen die zij zelf niet spreken. Een pleidooi voor luistertaal.

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A cartoon illustration of a bald man with glasses wearing a yellow shirt. He is holding two sock puppets. The blue puppet on the left has a speech bubble that says "Buongiorno". The green puppet on the right has a speech bubble that says "Bonjour". The background is red.

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## 2.1 Definition *Lingua Receptiva* (*LaRa*)

Rehbein, ten Thije & Verschik 2012

(NL: 'luistertaal'; D: 'Zuhörersprache')

LaRa concerns a multilingual communication mode that can be characterised as follows

- Interactants employ a language and/or language variety different from their partner's.
- They understand each other without any additional *lingua franca*.
- The recipients activate knowledge of the language and/or variety of their interlocutor(s).

## 2.2 Related approaches

- Mutual intelligibility of closely related languages (Wolff 1966, Gooskens 2012)
- Semicommunication (Haugen 1981)
- Polyglot dialogue (Posner 1991)
- Intercompréhension (Berthele, Grin 2008)
- Plurilingual repertoire (Lüdi 2007, 2013)
- Receptive multilingualism (Braunmüller 2007, ten Thije / Zeevaert 2007)

## 2.3 Occurrences of *linguae receptivae* in Europe

- border regions
- in institutional discourse (e.g. work place, army, educational settings, health care discourse, sales talk, meetings, etc.)
- in media & digital discourse (e.g. television, websites, email, internet forums)
- in cross-generational and family discourse
- in theatre and film

## **2.4 Occurrence within and across language families**

- Romance languages
- Germanic languages
- Slavic languages
- Finno-Ugric languages
- Turkic languages
- Indo-Iranian
- Semitic languages
- Basque, Albanian

## 2.5 History of Lingua Receptiva

- Scandinavia in Middle Ages (Braunmüller 2007)
- Habsburg Empire (Rindler-Schjerve & Vetter 2007)
- With the constitution of European nation states and their policies of '*one nation, one people, one language*' lingua receptiva disappeared
- New developments within in unifying Europe

## 2.6 LaRa's quintessence

Rehbein, ten Thije & Verschik 2012

- In monolingual discourse each interactant is a speaker as well as a hearer in the string of discourse.
- In LaRa this alternation is bi-directional:
- This *turn-over*, or a *production-to-comprehension switch* of LaRa, occurs between speaking in one language (speaker's role) and understanding in the other (hearer's role).

## **3.1 Hoe scherp zijn de messen?**

Example from Dutch television report

20 januari 2010, 0.50 – 03.17

<http://www.vrt.be/taal/video/taaldag-2012-luistertaal>



## 3.2 Specific hearer's activities

- Developing a deep network of expectations of what will be said (by the speaker) based on (common) presuppositions
- Non verbal behaviour
- Monitoring L2 competence of the other (Beerkens 2010)
- Negotiation of language choice
- Meta communicative devices in order to assure understanding (Bahtina-Jantsikene 2013)

## 3.3 Options for Lingua Receptiva

<b>Interlocutor 1</b>	<b>Interlocutor 2</b>
standard language	language variety (dialect)
native language	closely related language
native language	(more) distanced language
non-native language	closely related language
non-native language	(more) distanced language

## 3.4 Results Tilburg Language Test

My personal expectations:

- Engels 99%
- Nederlands 96%
- Duits: 90%
- Spaans 60%
- Frans 35%
- Italiaans 30%
- Chinees 3%



## 4.1 Investigated cases of Lingua Receptiva in Academia

- Nordic academic professionals (Zeevaert 2004)
- Turkish-Turkmen academic counseling sessions (Sağın-Şimşek 2014)
- Trilingual teaching at Basque University (Gorter & Cenoz 2012)
- Erasmus generation 2.0 in Brussels (Messelink & ten Thije 2012)
- Exchanges of Finnish and Estonian students (Härmävaara 2014)

# 4.2 Workplace communication at University of Maastricht

De Vries 2012

	0	1	2	3
SEC1 [v]		morning!		
SEC2 [v]		hai		oh hij bedoelt die formulieren voor xxx
SEC3 [v]		hai		
DOC [v]	morning		hi ehm do you know if the forms for xxx already arrived?	

[2]

	4	5	6	7
SEC1 [v]	i don't know		i think you have to ask xxx for that	
SEC2 [v]			ja	
DOC [v]		because i was here yesterday and		oh it's always the same with

[3]

	-	8	9	10
SEC1 [v]		haha		bye
SEC2 [v]		hihi		bye
SEC3 [v]		hihi		
DOC [v]	those bloody students		well thank you ladies!	

## 4.3 Research plans at Utrecht University

- *Aanschuifonderwijs* in Department Language, Literature and Communication
  - Students History of Art attend courses Italian Culture
  - Dutch students attend courses German Culture
  - International student attend courses Dutch Culture
- Teacher training how to handle multilingualism in seminars

## 4.4 Research questions

- How can LaRa be a means for language teaching?
- How can LaRa be a phase in language teaching?
- How can LaRa facilitate academic knowledge transfer?
- How can LaRa facilitate academic reflection?

## **5.1 Limitations of LaRa**

- Not the one and only solution for multilingualism
- Setting, topic, competence, exposure, attitude
- Exclusion of the other
- Misunderstanding
- Asymmetry of languages and cultures involved



## 5.2 Potential applications

- Efficient and fair mode for communication in academic meetings, (in)formal conversations, talks, conferences, ...
- Language teaching: making use of receptive competencies
- Restricted use in seminars
- Integration in language policy of the organisation (HR & status planning)

## 5.3 Perspectives

Correspondences between English as Lingua Franca (ELF) and LaRa (Blees, Mak & ten Thije 2014; Hülmbauer 2014)

- effectiveness rather than correctness/completeness
- reciprocity of communication (speaker-hearer)
- joint negotiation of meaning

## 5.4 Perspectives

- LaRa should be integrated with use of other multilingual communicative modes
  - English as Lingua Franca
  - Regional Linguae Francae
  - Code Switching
  - (Non) professional interpreting
- European investigations on Inclusive Multilingualism (Backus et al 2013)

## 6. Conclusion

- Application of Lingua Receptiva could differentiate and strengthen the position of the Dutch language at Dutch universities
- LaRa clarifies the potential relevance of receptive competence for academia (communication, identity construction, knowledge transfer)
- Did you use Lingua Receptiva yourself?

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