Spoken Latin in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance Revisited

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Key words: Latin, immersion, communicative, Renaissance, speaking, conversational

An article by Jerome Moran entitled 'Spoken Latin in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance' was published in the Journal of Classics Teaching in the autumn of 2019 (Moran, 2019). The author of the article contends that 'actual real-life conversations in Latin about everyday matters' never, or almost never took place among educated people in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. A long-standing familiarity with quite a few primary sources for the Latin culture of Renaissance and early modern period leads us to a rather different conclusion. The present essay, therefore, revisits the main topics treated by Moran.

We must differentiate Latin communication from vernacular communication (as Moran rightly does), and keep in mind that the majority of informal and conversational communication between moderately educated people (let alone the uneducated) living in the same country, and brought up with the same vernacular would have been in the native language. Even for a noble educated in the liberal arts, if he lived far removed from church, academic life, or scholarly conversations, conversational Latin would have been a rare event. But it does not follow from these assumptions that there were no venues in which Latin was really used for extempore spoken conversation and communication. Indeed, if we pay attention to the primary materials, we learn that Latin in the Renaissance and early modern age was quite often (in certain social groups and in certain geographical regions) a vehicle for spoken and extempore communication and there were widely differing degrees of proficiency in this spoken use.

Background

After about the sixth century Latin was no longer the native speech of any people or nation. Yet the knowledge and use of Latin was retained, partly because most of the Germanic peoples, who settled in the regions that once belonged to the western Roman empire, lacked cultures based on writing. So Latin continued to be employed for public documents. Latin, of course, was also the language of the Roman church and its administration. Latin maintained its role as the primary language by which the liberal arts and sciences were communicated throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Latin was the language of teaching and disputation in the schools and universities founded during the medieval centuries. Throughout this immensely long period of time, the literate and educated were, of course, always a small percentage of the total population. But for virtually all of the educated class Latin was an absolute necessity; and for nearly all of them Latin had to be learned in schools. Their goal was not merely to be able to read the works of Latin authors, the Latin sources of the liberal arts and theology, but also to be able to use Latin themselves as a language of communication in writing and sometimes in speaking. But, although people typically learned Latin in the Middle Ages and Renaissance in order to use it, and although new Latin words were coined for new entities, the syntactical and idiomatic norms for expression in Latin were not evolving in the same way they were evolving in French, German, and other vernacular tongues. The norms of Latin (not always observed, of course, with perfect consistency) were fixed in texts. For the Middle Ages, the normative texts were the Scriptures and Church Fathers. Since the Renaissance, the standard for prose was found in the works of Caesar, Cicero, Livy, and others of their contemporaries, or in works of later Latin writers (including Neo-Latin authors) who followed the usage of these classics.

Spoken Latin in schools

Thanks to recent historical scholarship, we know quite a lot about how Latin was taught to children in different regions throughout the medieval and early modern periods. As we might expect, training in Latin differed somewhat from region to region and changed over time (Tunberg, 2012, pp.19-46). But certain pedagogical practices existed in many different regions and remained in use for many centuries. Although training the young to express themselves in Latin was one of the primary goals of education, and although up to the middle part of the 17th century nearly all grammatical and rhetorical handbooks produced to assist this training were written entirely in Latin, the very beginning stages of learning Latin usually did not involve total immersion. These beginning stages were devoted to instruction in grammar, which was then a much simpler science than the detailed rules contained in grammar books published in a later age (from the 18th century onward). Medieval and early modern teachers made extensive use of their vernacular...
languages to help young children learn the fundamentals. But the use of Latin as the meta-language of teaching rapidly increased as children progressed. What we might call ‘immersion’ typically began after the second year of instruction (and even after this, as manuscript glosses and early printed texts show, teachers might sometimes resort to a well-known vernacular word or phrase to explain obscure Latin words). From the second year on, Latin was usually (especially in Germany, the Low Countries, France and middle Europe) the only permitted spoken language on school premises. This progression was also typical of the Jesuit schools, which began to proliferate in the late16th century: the obligatory use of Latin not only for teaching, but also for conversation on school premises is specifically and repeatedly endorsed in many parts of the famous Jesuit Ratio studiorum (Lukács, 1986, pp. 131-132, 199, 242, 245-246, 260, 418). The exclusive employment of Latin as the language of communication within the academy is commonly listed among the requirements for academic probity in school and university statutes. Violation of this requirement could be grounds for punishment or expulsion (for just a few examples: Hoven, 1979; Watson, 1908, pp. 186, 310-312, 316-318, 346). Despite these severe sanctions, as we know from many testimonies, the laws requiring Latin discourse in schools were often violated or even ignored. Nevertheless, such laws and statutes arose from a perceived need to maintain a Latinate environment. Students, of course, when they went home, used their native languages with family and friends. But they commonly spoke Latin with fellow students and teachers in the academy - and not merely in the classroom. Our sources reflect the fact that this student Latin discourse varied widely. Sometimes it was more or less correct. Often, as we might expect from young beginners, it was barbarous.

Closely allied with the obligation to speak only Latin on the premises of the academy was the horribly repressive practice, certainly widespread in France and in the German speaking areas (and probably elsewhere too), of offering rewards to a few select students, known as Corycaei, to act as informers against any fellow student who dared to use the vernacular language when out of earshot of the schoolmasters. The rationale for this tyrannical system is set forth in uncompromising terms by Ioannes Posselius, a German pedagogue who flourished in the later 16th century and spent part of his life as professor of Greek at the University of Rostock:

Just as these writing exercises must be accurate and assiduously practiced, so also the practice of speaking Latin should in no way be neglected. In order that this may be better maintained, guardians or ‘Coricaei’ must be appointed, who take note of lower level students speaking German and more advanced students employing Germanisms or solecisms or indeed barbarisms, and report them to the teacher... Each practice - that of writing in Latin and that of speaking in Latin - must thrive in Latin classes: nor can one be separated from the other.4

These Corycaei drew their nickname from the narratives of Pliny, Strabo, and other ancient writers, who described a people situated on a promontory in Cilicia named Corycus, who used to spy on shipping and give pirates intelligence about the movements of ships (Schottenius, 2007, p. 488-489; Tunberg, 2014a, pp. 23-27).

The colloquia - model dialogues for Latin conversation

During the 15th and 16th century a fundamental change in European culture affected the way Latin was taught and used; namely the revival of classical norms in all the arts. In this movement, which had its origins in Renaissance Italy and gradually spread to northern Europe, Latin was fundamental. The new cultural sensibility of humanism demanded that contemporary Latin expression be reformed to accord with the syntactical and idiomatic norms observable in the works of classical pagan Latin authors who had flourished in the period that extended from the lifetime of Cicero to that of Quintilian. The humanist teachers did not necessarily despise all of patristic and medieval Latin (indeed, some scholars, such as Erasmus, expressed admiration for the language of Lactantius and Jerome) but they rejected the specialised Latinity of scholastic law, theology, and dialectic, the most popular disciplines taught in the medieval universities (the earliest of which had been founded in the late 12th century). The Latin used in the teaching and dissemination of these academic disciplines had become a distinctive idiom, which was often very far removed in syntax, semantics and vocabulary from the norms of classical and even patristic Latin. The humanist grammarians also took aim at another target, which they considered to be closely connected with the jargon of scholastic dialectic, namely the barbarous spoken Latin of students often heard in schools. Macaronic phrases from students are ridiculed by Mathurinus Corderius, a distinguished Neo-Latin writer, teacher and reformer, in his De corrupti sermonis emendatione libellus (1535). No less scornful are the words of Franciscus Sylvius Ambianus, a 16th-century French grammarian:

… the teachers bar those students from the use of <their> native language so harshly that, if any <students> are caught speaking the <native> language by secretly planted observers, they suffer a severe punishment. Since, therefore, they are forced to speak Latin, they assume that all language is Latin that has the form of Latin. This is the reason why they invent for themselves many barbarous expressions. The teachers make no objection, provided that the language isn't the mother tongue. Students who have been enrolled in courses in dialectic add quite a bit of impetus to the faulty way of speaking Latin. These people don't worry about what kind of language, what style of conversation they use in discourse, provided there is comprehension. So in my perspective, let the native language of the students have more value than barbarous Latin speech [rusticus <sermo>]; and teachers should put more effort into enabling students to speak correct, idiomatic Latin, than into preventing them from using the vernacular language.6

The humanists adopted various strategies to counter these corrupting (as they saw it) influences on Latin. A number of celebrated Italian writers of Latin, who adopted a consciously Ciceronian style, were said to avoid the conversational use of Latin entirely, a squeamishness which Erasmus mocks mercilessly in his satiric dialogue Ciceroniam.7 In fact this fastidiousness of the Italian Ciceronians, even if perhaps distorted by rumour, seems to be consistent with a real regional difference in pedagogy. Extem-pore discourse in Latin was stressed much more in Germany, Low Countries, France, middle Europe than in Spain or Italy; and this may be because teachers in Italy and Spain feared that excessive interference from their native languages (being similar to Latin) would encourage corrupt extemporaneous student discourse (Tunberg, 2012, pp. 53-61). Perhaps as a result of this regional difference, there are repeated testimonies that northern European scholars travelling in Italy conversed in Latin much more fluently than the
Literature for about a millennium and a half after it ceased to be an active language and as the medium for an astoundingly rich dissimilar. The final real proof is Latin itself, which continued as the usage of moderns who imitated that Latinity. In fact, some- literary Latin the humanist age was to speak extempore and with a simple syntax never Romans was the colloquial and (unrecoverable) domestic speech of the ancient colloquia.

What sort of ‘colloquial’ Latin do we find in the colloquia?

Let us stress that for the authors of these early modern colloquia the colloquial (unrecoverable) domestic speech of the ancient Romans was never the target, and is hardly relevant. The goal in the humanist age was to speak extempore and with a simple syntax in a Latin that was reasonably close to the literary Latin observable in the works produced in the ‘golden’ and ‘silver’ age, and close to the usage of moderns who imitated that Latinity. In fact, something not dissimilar had begun to exist in the Roman empire, since the speech of the cultivated already differed quite a bit from vulgar Latin – hence boys training for careers among the Roman elite had to learn the right way to speak from the grammarians. But in the humanist age (as in the preceding medieval era) the vulgar speech was a totally different language. Spoken Latin, therefore, meant speaking extempore in an artificial idiom - a ‘dead’ language, if anyone wants to use that terminology - whose syntactical, grammatical, even idiomatic norms were entirely enshrined in literature and codified by well-trained teachers. New nouns and adjectives might be occasionally added, but the grammatical structure and norms of expression had to be carefully preserved. As Erasmus himself put it: ‘I want the rules to be few, but excellent - in my view the rest is to be sought from <the usage of> the very best writers, or from the conversational usage of those who speak like those authors wrote’. But there is nothing absurd or impossible about this situation, or in using a language of this kind. The situation of Sanskrit, to mention one example, was for centuries not dissimilar. The final real proof is Latin itself, which continued as an active language and as the medium for an astoundingly rich literature for about a millennium and a half after it ceased to be anyone's mother tongue.

Did the colloquia offer an alternative to grammatical instruction?

The early modern colloquia were not designed for the beginning stages of grammatical instruction. They were meant for students who had already learned the fundamentals and were deemed ready to begin some reading. Students might begin to read the colloquia along with short and simple texts from the ancient patrimony, which sometimes included a few of Cicero's letters. But the colloquia, if their language was thought to be pure, might even be preferred as a 'first reader', as the Jesuit master Iacobus Pontanus explains:

So if the language of the Dialogues is, as it should be, that of the ancient authors, well-arranged, clear, correct, polished, and seasoned with wit, since it is also discourse appropriate for friendly gatherings (familiaris), shouldn't we believe that through reading or hearing these dialogues there will be a good deal of progress towards speaking and writing?

The colloquia, moreover, according to Pontanus, deal with subjects that are easier for young students to understand than the topics treated in Cicero's letters:

One must admit that the affairs dealt with in Cicero's letters are understood by the youth and young minds with more effort and not as completely as the themes that occur in Dialogues - there is nothing more usual, better known, more apparent and familiar than the subject matter and situations treated in these dialogues.

The manifestly didactic function of these dialogues was considered to be two-fold, and this double purpose is expressed with remarkable consistency in the prefaces to various collections of colloquia: namely, to teach good Latinity, but also good morals. Erasmus, speaking of one of the earlier editions of his own colloquia, puts it this way: 'In that little book I am not presenting the tenets of religion: I'm presenting expressions for speaking Latin, even if there have been mixed in along the way certain elements that contribute to good morals...'. The colloquia familiaria could be lectured on and explained by a teacher, just like the works of any Latin author: they might be also be used as models for student conversational Latin sessions on specific themes (and one teacher explains his practice of instituting such sessions just before regular class time). Perhaps they were sometimes acted out by students like short plays.

Speaking Latin and writing in Latin

If we may generalise, the spoken use of Latin in the early modern era was closely tied to, and even ancillary to the written use. Writing
good English might justly be considered the primary purpose of
humanist education, and the relationship between written expres-
sion and extempore oral discourse was not rarely discussed by
humanist teachers. Ioachimus Fortius, a Belgian grammarians
and pedagogue, who had met Erasmus, won some notoriety by suggest-
ing that there was a significant gap between written and spoken
expression. The subjects discussed in daily conversation, argued
Fortius, typically differ from the topics about which one would write
to treatise or history. A chorus of humanists, including such eminent
 Jesuit teachers as Iacobus Pontanus and Antonius Van Torre, and the
philologist Henricus Stephanus (Henri Estienne), strongly dis-
agreed, pointing out that much writing (especially letters) is in a
simple register that is close to conversation. More importantly, they
argued, the ability to speak extempore on any subject helps one to
write faster, and to find the right word or phrase for a given topic
with much less effort (Tunberg, 2012, pp. 51-52, 57-58, 82-84). Some
teachers and grammarians, therefore, valued conversational pro-
ciciency in Latin simply because they thought it contributed to a
total and instinctive command of the language of their profession.

Spoken Latin outside schools and universities

Although Latin was conspicuous as the language of schools and
universities across Europe (and of the first academies founded in
the New World), it is clear that even outside the strictly academic
environment many humanists used Latin for spoken communica-
tion with their peers. Erasmus, to mention just one example,
although he spent years in England, seems to have learned very
little English. While he sojourned in that country, of course, he
made the most of the company of Thomas More and other Latinite
friends. Erasmus, in fact, describes Thomas More's fluency in con-
versational Latin:

You would hardly find another person more comfortable in
free conversation: to such an extent does his ready tongue
obey his ready intellect. That intellect is at the fore and every-
where ahead of the game, and his memory is well equipped:
and since that memory has all the words ready for use (i.e. as
if in ready cash), it instantly puts forth whatever the situation
or subject matter demands.

Erasmus had similar networks of friends in other lands with
whom he communicated easily, and he rarely seems to have
encountered the sort of difficulty which once arose in Italy when
Bernardus Oricellarius ( Rucellai), a scholar of Sallust and a notable
humanist, addressed Erasmus in Italian. Replied Erasmus in Latin: ‘You are
addressing a deaf man, esteemed sir, I am just as ignorant
of the vernacular tongue of your country as I am of the Indian lan-
guage’ . But try as he might, says Erasmus, ‘I could never extort a
Latin word from him’.

It is not surprising that ability to converse in Latin, the interna-
tional language of the educated, was commended by some human-
ist teachers as a useful skill for travellers wishing to communicate
with the educated residents of different linguistic regions. Latin
indeed served as a means of communication in church councils,
diplomatic circles, in meetings of academicians from different
regions. But, although several ‘restored’ pronunciations were pro-
posed by humanist scholars (including Erasmus in De recta Latini
Gracceice sermonis pronuntiatione), none of these was generally
adopted, and different national modes of vocalising Latin could
make mutual understanding initially difficult. A little time would
be needed to get used to a variant pronunciation. The problem was
often worse when French or English people (especially after the
‘great vowel shift’ in English) spoke Latin, whose habits of enunci-
ating could be so deviant from those of other Europeans as to con-
stitute a serious impediment to comprehension. A fairly common
expedient (used, for example, by John Milton) was to adopt an Ital-
ianate pronunciation of Latin, which was apparently quickly intel-
ligible in quite a wide range of regions.

Spoken Latin after the Renaissance?

The 17th and 18th centuries saw a dramatic increase in the use of
the national languages for the arts and sciences, fields of
communication in which Latin had previously been the primary
language. A new cultural reality evolved, in which the ability to
produce written texts in Latin for an international learned elite
became steadily less necessary. This cultural and intellectual
evolution, along with the social factors that contributed to it, have
been thoroughly treated by many historians. For our present
purpose, it is enough to point out that the practice of vocal
conversation in Latin, especially in schools outside the Catholic
Church, seems to have steadily eroded along with the declining
use of Latin for written publication. The national languages
were being used for lectures and classes at major universities in many
parts of Europe by the early 18th century. The new academic
environment existed even in Germany, where the use of Latin for
major publications tended to be retained longer than in France or

It is worth pointing out, however, that the spoken use of Latin
never entirely vanished (Minkova, 2014). This custom continued to
exist in many German gymnasiums and in some Dutch schools during
continued to be the language of teaching in seminaries of the Cath-
olic Church until the time of the second Vatican Council in the
1960s. But these are traditions or vestigial practices left over from
an age when Latin had been widely used as a written language for
publication in the arts and sciences.

Yet in our time, in the second half of the 20th century and the
first part of the 21st century, there has been - partly among mem-
ers of the Roman church, but also (and in large part) among edu-
cators and others unconnected with Roman Catholic circles - a
surprising revival of interest in communicative Latin. This is a story
worth telling, but it takes us beyond the parameters of the present
discussion.

Notes

1 For a selected bibliography pertaining to Latin education in the Medieval and early
modern periods, see Minkova and Tunberg (2012, p.113).
2 Modern experts in Latin pedagogy sometimes distinguish between the natu-
ral or direct method of teaching elementary language and the grammatical
approach. As shown by Van Bommel (2013), such a distinction is almost mean-
ingless if applied to the Latin pedagogy of two centuries ago - let alone the ped-
agogy of the 16th and 17th centuries.
3 In Renaissance universities conditions could range from complete adherence
 to Latin usage, such as that described by Jacob Wimpeling at Erfurt: ‘I still recall
that all students... in the splendid University of Erfurt... having been obliged to
the constant use of Latin could not utter German discourse without penalty’
(‘Memor adhuc sum in clarissimo studio Erfurdenis omnes scholasticos... ad
assiduum Latinitatis usum coactos Theutonicum sermonem impune effari non
potuisse’. Wimpeling, 1514, F. iiiiv), to the laxity observed at Salamanca at the
end of the 16th century, where Castilian was the language for some of the teach-
ing. For these and many other testimonies see Tunberg (2012, pp. 33-38).
4 ‘Ut autem haec scribendi exercititia diligentie et fideler colenda sunt, sic et
Latine loquenti exercitatio [...] nequaquam neglegi debet. Quod quo rectius fieri
possit, custodes seu ‘coriacei’ constitueendi sunt, qui et juniores Teutonice loquentes

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et grandiore vel Germanismis vel solocismis vel denique barbarismis utentes annoent et ad magistrum deferat... Ut rumorque enim exercitum Latinae scribendi et loquendi in Latinis scholis vigere debet, nec alterum ab altero separat poeta\textsuperscript{25} (Posselius, 1589, p. 145).

5 The ancient Roman prose writers who had flourished from Cicero's period to that of Quintilian were defined as exemplary by Laurentius Valla in his famous\textsuperscript{5} (Posselius, 1589, p. 145).

6 ...\textit{magisti usu sermonis vernaculi eos <disciplos> tam severe prohibet, ut, si qui observatoribus clav dispositis hoc sermeljum loqui deprehandentur, poenas graveis expeditur. Igitur quoniam Latine loqui coguntur. Latinum sermonem putant omnem eum qui Latina formam habeat. Quae casus est, ut barbara multa ipsi sibi confingant... Nihil improbo magistri, modo ne sit sermo domesticos (…) Et autem loquentibus vitae consueutudini vim non parvam adiungit ii, qui dialeticæ auditores sunt, qui quâ lingua, quâ sermeljum loquentur, modo se intelligant, secuti sunt (…) Quare apud me auditorum sermone vernaculi quam rasticus praeponderat, laborandumque praepceltorius potius est, ut proprie Latince loquian- tur discipline, quam eea ne laea uturare vernaculam…' Sylvius (1545) f. iiir.

7 Erasmus, Desiderius, \textit{Ciceronianus} http://agora.class.fh-trier.de/be/concor-dances/erasme/ciceronianus/texte.htm. The whole text of the \textit{Ciceronianus} may be conveniently consulted in this website prepared by the Université Catholique de Louvain. See section 356 of this edition for the passage alluding to ex-tempore expression in Latin.

8 Spoken Latin from the 16th to the 18th centuries was much rarer in Italy than in transalpine Europe, except (perhaps) in the coteries of the Roman church. Many, many testimonies to this regional difference are extant (Tunberg, 2012, pp. 49-59).

9 Only the very earliest of the \textit{colloquia} that might be classified as early modern, such as those composed by Paulus Navius in the 15th century, might be excepted from this statement. In these earlier dialogues the classicalising impulse is much less manifest, and their language reflects the standards of Latinity typical of medieval universities.

10 An archive of early modern \textit{colloquia}, comprising more than 600 dialogues, can be found at the following website: http://www.stoa.org/colloquia/.

11 The whole question of the interplay between colloquial and literary Latin in antiquity is highly complex. See the interesting papers on this topic edited by Dickey and Chahoud (2010). Of course, as pointed out by Moran (2019), we lack a complete knowledge of all aspects of the colloquial and domestic speech of the ancient Romans.

12 Quite different are the medieval colloquies of Aelfric, which offer phrases that apparently passed for normal Latinity in an 11th-century Anglo-Saxon monastery (Gwara, 1996). Even more different are the few surviving conversational dialogues from the Roman era, which are focused on the current idiom of popular Latin appropriate for traders, businessmen and the like. In other words, these Roman \textit{colloquia} are aimed at what was a still evolving (living, of course) language (Dickey, 2016).

13 'Præcepta volo esse paucis sed optima - quod religiam est arbitrari petendum ex optimis quibusque scripturóbus, aut ex eorum colloquio, qui sic loquuntur ut illi scripsissent' (Allen, IV, p. 209).

14 'Et si Dialogorum sermo totus fuerit (esse autem debet) antiquus, concinus, dilucidius, prolem, laetus, ac salubris conditum, cum sit etiam familiaris, nonne ad loquendum sciremus haude mediocriter iis se legendis, se audiendi profecto ut id credendum est?' (Ponsonat, 1599, B3v).

15 ...\textit{etiam edipsul <Ciceronis> inclusas laboriosius et imperfectius a pertinentia tenerius ingeniosi comprehendid, quam quae cadunt in Dialogos, quorum argumentum atque rebus nihil est usitatissim, nihil notius, nihil magis obvium atque domesticum (...' Ponsonat, 1599, B2).

16 ...' in eo libello non trado dogmati fidei, sed formulá loquendi Latine: tantumque admodum admixta sunt obiter quae faciunt ad bonos mores' (Allen, V, p. 91).

17 As indicated in the preface to Book I that we find in Corderius (1819, pp. 3-4). The preface in this late edition was perhaps composed by Corderius himself - certainly by someone accustomed to using these dialogues in teaching.

18 For more evidence indicating how the colloquia were used in early modern Latin pedagogy, see Tunberg (2020) and (2014b).

19 See also the remarks of Possellus quoted above in note 4.

20 This use of Latin as a spoken language outside academic life was more prevalent north of the Alps than in Italy itself. See note 8.


22 'Vix alium reperias qui felicius dicat ex tempore: adeo felici ingenio felix lingua subservit. Ingenium praesens et ubique praevolans, memoria parata, quae cum omnia habitur velit in numerato, prompte et incontanter suggerit quiaquid tempus aut re postulat' (Allen, IV, p. 23). Conversational Latin in these circles of literati might often be not merely correct, but even eloquent and rhetorically adept - if we accept the judgment of contemporaries. For many other testimonies, see Tunberg (2012, pp. 87-89).

23 'Surdo loquere, vir praecclare, vulgaris linguae vestratis tam sum ignarus quam Indicae...' 'Sed verbum Latinum numquam... ab eo extundere potui...' The anecdote comes from Erasmus' \textit{Apophthegmata} (LB IV 363D-E).

24 ... If a person (apparently Italian) sojourns among these peoples (meaning Germans, French and Spanish) without knowledge of their local language, unless he would use the Latin language as a go-between, he could do nothing, transact no business with them, but would be forced to be silent and entirely speechless.' (Apud has... gentes, si quis domestici et vernaculi ipsorum sermonis ignorus versatur, nisi Latino sermone interprete utatur, nihil possit agere, nihil cum ills contrahaere, sed mutus et elinguis prorsus esse cogatur). This passage is from the \textit{Epistula nunquampositoria} or Dedictory Letter to an expanded edition of Nizzoli's famous Cicero-lexicon (Nizzoli, 1576, I, A 4). For other testimonies on the value of Latin as a 'lingua Françá', see Tunberg (2012) 56, 81.

25 'How would there be discussion in the august and sacred college of Cardi- nals about serious issues - issues which is it often useful to be revealed to those \textit{officials} alone who have the right to pronounces a decision, if as many interpreters had to be employed, as are nationalities of which the assembly is composed?' ('Quomodo in illo augusto ac sacrocardinalio collegio de gravissimis rebus et quas saepe iis solis notas esse expedit, qui sententiae dicendae preter had to be employed, as are nationalities of which the assembly is composed?' (Pontanus, 1819, pp. 3-4). The preface in this late edition was perhaps composed by Corderius himself - certainly by someone accustomed to using these dialogues in teaching.

26 As indicated in the preface to Book I that we find in Corderius (1819, pp. 3-4). The preface in this late edition was perhaps composed by Corderius himself - certainly by someone accustomed to using these dialogues in teaching.

27 For many more details and sources see Tunberg (2005) and (2012), pp. 69-77. See also Sacré (2014).

28 For a summary of the cultural factors and sources, see Tunberg (2012) 91-93.

29 When Ludvig Holberg, the eminent Danish writer, visited England in the early 18th century, he was surprised to find that the custom of speaking Latin (some- thing still existing at that time in many European Universities) was moribund among faculty and students at the University of Oxford (Holberg, 1737, p. 35).

References


Erasmus, Desiderius

