

Volume 10 Issue 4
12/2012
tamarajournal.com



Wars of Words: Management Policy and Employee Practice at the International University

Hanne Tange

University of Aarhus, Denmark
hta@asb.dk

Keywords

Internationalisation

Bourdieu

Language policy

Global English

Abstract

Using Bourdieu's economic approach to language as the focal point, the paper addresses the dilemmas arising from the co-existence of a global, English and a national, Danish discourse within the field of higher education in Denmark. The first part shows how the emergence of a global knowledge market has prompted Danish university managers to develop new policies on language, promoting the idea of 'parallel language usage' in an attempt to justify to staff and students the ongoing normalisation of English within the areas of research and teaching. The second part looks at the question of English domination from the position of the university lecturers. Drawing on qualitative research interviews collected at four Danish faculties, the analysis demonstrates how 'English-only' strategies have affected teachers' practice and how they have responded by developing idiosyncratic rules deriving from local needs rather than global principles. The paper concludes that there seems to be resistance to the normalisation of English within the Danish university system but that such behaviours tend to be hidden rather than explicit.

Introduction

[We] face a challenge similar to Holberg's, don't we? You know, in terms of what we use Danish for. And some of the things Holberg did . . . in the 18th century, was to start writing legal texts, which he had adopted from French and Latin, in Danish too. And thereby he helped [bringing into existence] the Danish educational program in 1736, which is the mother of all the social sciences, right? And this Danish education in Law, you know the one in Danish rather than Latin, which was the international one, the Danish Law exams have contributed to the creation of a Danish academy and a Danish civil society in the highest political form. So I think we are confronted with a question, which I do not think we have found an answer for. (lecturer, social science)¹

These are interesting times in Danish higher education. In recent years, we have seen a competition emerge between two discourses with an equally valid claim to power. The first is Danish, which is national in orientation and closely

¹ All interviews were originally performed in Danish and have been translated into English by the author.

linked to the institutional apparatus of the nation-state. The second is English, widely recognised as the international lingua franca and the preferred speech of university managers seeking to make the most of a global knowledge market. In consequence, one now finds at Danish universities the paradoxical situation where chemists correct their students' English grammar, whereas the English specialists are busy supervising engineers.

Using Bourdieu's (1991, 1993) economic approach to language as the conceptual foundation, the paper asks how university lecturers are affected by the ongoing struggle between a national and a global discourse within the field of higher education. The discussion takes as its point of departure the argument that recent management decisions to promote English as the principal medium for postgraduate teaching and research have changed the linguistic balance within Danish institutions, adding to the symbolic power associated with the English lingua franca. Symptomatic of such a process is the recognition across academic disciplines and faculties that English is essential to employees' mastery of everyday tasks and interaction. Related to this is the question whether policy-makers' institutionalisation of English inevitably leads to the establishment of a new linguistic norm within Danish academia. In an attempt to answer this question, the analysis examines the behaviours and attitudes described by university lecturers in a series of qualitative research interviews, asking to what extent employee practice confirms a theory of English domination.

The structure is as follows: the first part introduces Bourdieu's theory of language and power, suggesting that the possession of certain linguistic skills can be translated into symbolic capital within the field of higher education. This is followed by a section that outlines current global and national developments that have added to university employees' linguistic awareness. The analysis addresses the question whether university policies favourable to English have influenced lecturers' practice in a two-fold discussion: first, evidence is presented in support of a theory of English domination; second, examples are provided to show that in relation to classroom interaction and exams English is not always perceived as the 'natural' choice.

Language as symbolic power

Bourdieu observes in *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991: 67) that '[u]tterances receive their value (and their sense) only in their relation to a market, characterized by a particular law of price formation.' The implication is that language usage – as one example of social practice – must be assessed in relation to a particular 'field' (Jenkins 2002) and to the symbolic power or 'capital' (Bourdieu 1977, 1990) embedded therein. Bourdieu (1990: 118) characterises 'symbolic' as an economy beyond 'naked self-interest,' distinguishing between symbolic capital in the form of 'recognition, acknowledgement, in the sense of gratitude' (1990: 118) and capital as a 'network of affines and relationships' (1990: 119). In relation to the field of academia, one may add a third form of symbolic capital, the command of language, which can be defined as prestige and power awarded on the basis of agents' mastery of the written and spoken word (Bourdieu 1991, 1988).

In his theory of language Bourdieu (1991, 1993) takes for granted that academics' symbolic power is tied to their knowledge of the national language (i. e. French in France, Danish in Denmark). As his point of departure, Bourdieu chooses the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which conveniently allows him to concentrate on the institutionalisation of 'standard' speech variants such as Parisian French or Oxbridge English. However, as Blommaert (2003) notes, the process of globalisation has resulted in a complex linguistic situation where to a growing extent agents are recognised for their mastery of English as well as the national language. Within a field such as higher education, which celebrates 'global excellence' and 'international cooperation,' this prompts the speculation that status is now awarded to agents who write and teach well in English rather than those attending to the universities' traditional role as keepers of the national language. In other words, internationalisation opens the possibility that English has or will become the more prestigious language within the academic field, and powerful discourses such as standard Danish, Dutch or Swedish may eventually give way to a global norm.

Danish international universities - a site for linguistic struggle

According to Bourdieu (1977), social domination can be questioned during times of crisis. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977: 168) Bourdieu names this condition a 'universe of discourse,' which is characterised by agents' awareness of the co-existence of several possibilities as well as their capacity to use these alternatives to establish or challenge positions of symbolic power. When applied to the current discussion, this means that university lecturers must realise that different media are available to them and that their choice between English and Danish has implications for their negotiation of social power and status within the academic field. Three interrelated processes suggest that the international university does indeed constitute such a 'field of options' (Bourdieu 1977). They are 1) the emergence of a global

knowledge economy, 2) the changing nature of institutional language policies and 3) the national debate over the balance between English and Danish within higher education.

The first tendency is the growing concern with universities as stakeholders in a global knowledge economy. Although the idea of the university as ‘international’ dates back to the Middle Ages (Healey 2008), contemporary researchers stress that a different kind of internationalisation has taken place since the 1980s. Altbach and Teichler (2001: 6) name this process a ‘globalized academic system,’ which is characterised by greater student and staff mobility, the use of English as the principal medium for teaching and research, international partnership agreements, and the harmonization of degree structures, exam requirements, and credit transfer systems. Several ascribe the transformation to neoliberalism (e.g. Mundy 2005, Schapper & Mayson 2005 and Marginson 1999, 2000), which in English-speaking countries such as Australia, Britain and Canada has turned education into a ‘commodity to be freely traded’ (Altbach & Knight 2007: 291). In comparison, the main European motivation appears to be ideological with the EU sponsoring student and staff exchanges in an attempt to promote a shared understanding of European culture, citizenship and cooperation (Teichler 2004, van der Wende (2007)). The consequences of internationalisation are profound. In EU member states such as the Netherlands and Denmark the push towards ‘global’ education has thus lead to the implementation of a BA-MA degree structure, a wider provision English-medium courses, and a general encouragement of ‘international’ programs and research (Borghans & Cörvers 2009).

A second symptom of change is the re-orientation of universities’ language policies. As Bourdieu (1993, 2007) points out, institutions of higher education have played a historical role in the process of linguistic normalisation, installing in learners an understanding of the relationship between symbolic power and the mastery of specific discourses. As a result, universities became responsible for the standardisation, classification and institutionalisation of language, using academic disciplines such as Rhetoric and English to teach aspiring members of the elite to differentiate between a limited number of ‘legitimate’ speech variants and any alternative social or regional codes (Crawford 1992, Wright 2004). The main focus of such efforts was the national language and they often run parallel to the political process of nation-building (Spolsky 2004, Anderson 1991). With their recent move into the global knowledge market, however, universities have had to redefine their linguistic responsibility, adopting policies that claim Danish and English as equally valid media for teaching and research (e. g. ASB 2009, LIFE 2009). In Denmark this condition is commonly known as ‘parallel language usage’ (Davidsen-Nielsen 2008) and can be defined as follows:

What makes parallel language usage special is that it describes the use of different languages within the same domain. We recognise this from situations where members of more than one speech community share the same domain, say a family where the mother and father have different mother tongues and would like their children to acquire both languages. You may consider university education a domain, and the Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Usage exists because we have an ambition that universities can use English and Danish as parallel languages. In this case the two relevant speech communities are Denmark and the meta-unit, which we may call the international community. (Harder 2008: 1-2, author’s translation)

The third development which has drawn lecturers’ attention to their complex linguistic situation is the ongoing debate over the relationship between English and Danish within higher education. In 2008 the Danish Language Commission reported back to the Minister for Culture that they were divided on the issue of national legislation as a way to secure the future for Danish within the university sector (Sprogudvalget 2008). A similar disagreement characterises the public debate: On the one hand, advocates of an ‘internationalist’ position will argue against any suggestion that the spread of English should be controlled. Frequently they draw on the rhetoric of corporate language management (e.g. Feely & Harzing 2003, Dhir & Savage 2002), stressing that the universities need English in order to benefit from the global knowledge economy. For, as one vice-chancellor observes, ‘if the rules become too strict, this will have a negative impact on the internationalisation of the universities. It is vital that we can attract good lecturers and researchers to Denmark’ (as quoted in Ejsing 2009). In comparison, supporters of a national policy express their fear that Danish is threatened by global market mechanisms. Common reference points are linguistic rights (Skutnabb-Kangas 2006), language death (Crystal 2000), domain loss (Jarvad 2001) and linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 2006), and the overall conclusion is that universities have to accept their responsibility for the Danish language. MP Søren Krarup uses the following example to highlight the need for national language legislation:

My motivation for raising the issue was a story from an employee at the University of Aarhus. He informed me that an academic post had been announced in English alone. When he told the university about this and expressed his opinion that it was natural for a position at a Danish university to be advertised in Danish too, his request was purely denied. Obviously there was no place for the Danish language at the University of Aarhus. (Krarup 2009: 1, author's translation)

As mentioned initially, it is essential within a 'field of options' (Bourdieu 1977) that actors demonstrate an awareness of their own participation in a site of struggle. That this may indeed be the case here is suggested in the interviews with the lecturers, which contain several explicit references to key commentators and positions in the Danish language debate. The analysis will demonstrate to what extent respondents relate such national disputes to their own practice, asking what positions employees take in relation to language usage within their specific institutional and departmental setting.

Research design and methodology

The analysis draws on qualitative data collected as part of a larger study into university teachers' experiences with international education. The general purpose has been to determine to what extent lecturers learn from their encounters with a multilingual and multicultural student population, and the empirical work was initiated in spring 2007. Since then I have visited faculties at four Danish universities, conducting a total of 28 interviews with employees from the academic fields of engineering (spring 2007), business (autumn 2007 to spring 2008), life sciences (spring 2008), and social science (spring 2009).

The first stage in the enquiry was to identify possible research sites. At this point I looked up institutions' English web pages, working out their approximate number of international programs, courses and students, and a selection of faculties was made on the basis of faculties' international profile as well as the size of their non-native student population (in all cases comprising up to 15 per cent of the total). In spite of apparent similarities different interpretations of internationalisation were offered at the four institutions, which supports Bartell's (2003) claim that organizational culture influences the outcome of internationalisation processes. This became particularly evident in the second and third rounds of interviews, which were performed at institutions where a relatively recent management policy had led to a substantial increase in the number of English-medium programs. At the business faculty, most MSc programs in Economics and Business Administration were converted into English in September 2007, which meant that more lecturers were requested to teach in their second language. Three years earlier managers at the faculty of life sciences introduced a similarly all-inclusive policy for the Master programs in agriculture and natural resources, which indirectly compelled lecturers from these disciplines to accept international classes. In comparison, the faculties of engineering and social science pursue a policy of parallel international and Danish programs, which reduces the pressure on individual lecturers considerably.

The second stage in the investigation was to identify possible respondents. I contacted administrative personnel at the institutions' International Offices, specifying that I was looking for lecturers involved in international education but with no special qualifications in English (excluding any native speakers and graduates in English). The advantage of working through organisational gatekeepers (Bernard 1995) is the insider knowledge they have of institutional structures and information systems, which makes it relatively easy to gain access to key respondents. Occasionally I suspected that these contacts pointed me to lecturers, who were known to be enthusiastic about international education, and that, consciously or unconsciously, they may have ignored lecturers who were either inexperienced or critical about internationalisation. This is likely to have resulted in a positive bias within the sample. The total number of respondents is 28, including 26 lecturers and two administrators who were interviewed because of their insight into internationalisation as an organisational process. 25 respondents were Danish, two were German and one was Swedish, but all had sufficient Danish to engage in a conversation in this language.

The interviews were ethnographic in character (Spradley 1979), seeking to understand international teaching through the experiences of actors involved in the execution of this particular task. The study was designed according to Kvale's (1997) recommendations, departing from an interview guide, which consisted of open-ended questions on respondents' *organisational role, past and present experiences with international teaching, language and pedagogy, and institutional internationalisation processes*. Simultaneously with the data collection, the first analysis was carried out. Scrolling through the transcribed interviews, I would identify themes that were common to more than one respondent, and when necessary, integrate these into the guide used for subsequent interviews (Spradley 1979, Miles & Huberman 1994). Once the transcription had been completed, the 28 interviews were subjected to a second and more thorough analysis, which resulted in the identification of twenty topics relating to the overall themes of language, culture and knowledge (Spradley

1979, Bernard 1995). Prominent among these were the elements of language skills, parallel language usage, language attitudes, internationalisation processes, and responses to internationalisation, which have inspired the present discussion.

Lecturers' experiences with an English lingua franca

The analysis changes the focus from policy-making at the institutional and national levels to the implications of internationalisation for university lecturers' practice. For structural reasons, this part of the enquiry has been divided into two sections which address the questions of linguistic normalisation and practice, respectively.

Management policies and the normalisation of English

Linguistic normalisation describes the process by which one speech variant is established in the position of the dominant or standard discourse (Bourdieu 1991). From this perspective, one may expect institutional policies on internationalisation to add to the symbolic power of English within the Danish university, given that the development of a global profile requests that employees' knowledge production is accessible to the widest possible audience. Across a range of academic disciplines, including medicine, business and natural science, English has long been the default option when researchers wanted to publish their findings, and perhaps this is the reason why some managers have taken for granted lecturers' ability to teach in their second language.

The normalisation of English is most obvious at institutions where the decision to promote international education is taken at the top of the organisation. As one lecturer recalls, the vice-chancellor at his faculty announced that now 'everything would have to be in English,' while an administrator remembers how an e-mail was sent out, stating that 'now you have to teach in English.' The top-down nature of internationalisation is interesting for two reasons: First, the interviews suggest that employees were not offered an opportunity to question the management decision to implement English. One administrator recalls how the English Only policy was never discussed in the study administration, adding that she assumes the discussion took place at the departmental level. But as one lecturer reflects, this was not always the case:

Now we have been in the somewhat special situation that we have had a head of department, who really is a cosmopolite, who has lived in Hong Kong for twenty years. And Hong Kong – we are talking a city of five million people. So a truly international centre. And he has no understanding that it may be problem for some to teach in English. Add to that his style of management. This has really been something that has been sent out: this is the policy now and how it should be, and what they want from management. I think this is one of the things that has been very difficult. (lecturer, business)

An alternative debating forum is the study boards, which in the Danish university system has the overall responsibility for the planning, provision and evaluation of academic programs. However, while they frequently refer to discussions about everyday issues such as course quality or the adequacy of lecturers or students' English, none of the interviewed study board members can recall a more general debate on internationalisation and the reasonability of the management request that Danes teach and learn through a second language.

The second reason is the lack of information that seems to characterise top-down processes of internationalisation. At the faculty of business the 2007 implementation of an English-Only policy appears to have taken employees by surprise, whilst creating difficulties in their relationship with the Danish students, who might have planned to sign up for a Danish-medium program and now found that this option was no longer available. In this situation lecturers need clear-cut arguments in order to justify to the students why a change into English is necessary:

What I have been trying to say is . . . that they have wanted to create an opportunity for us to attract more international students. And I haven't really felt adequately equipped to explain why. Because I think we can all understand that there is something here that is difficult and that all courses present their own problems. But once you are offered a good explanation, which makes sense – and who cares whether this has to do with money or whatever . . . then I believe it becomes easier to accept. And I think we have lacked this [information]. (lecturer, business)

The top-down character of institutional internationalisation has been unfortunate for a number of reasons: First, it has consequences for employees' motivation and job-satisfaction. Second, it may push teachers, who have insufficient

language skills into the international programs, which explains why the question of lecturers' 'poor' English so frequently pops up in the media (e.g. Politiken 2007). Finally, it means that managers have never really engaged in a dialogue with the lecturers about the very real problems that arise as a result of the language change, and which are evident in the data.

Turning to classroom practice, the adoption of English as the main teaching medium has influenced lecturers' ability to manage everyday tasks and interaction. In the interviews even respondents who describe their language skills as adequate, note the different 'atmosphere' in their Danish and international classes, prompting one professor to describe English-medium courses as a 'loss of domain' for the academic staff. As regards interviewees' practical mastery of academic discourse, one lecturer experiences a sense of linguistic containment as he finds English cannot facilitate the kind of elaborate argumentation that he knows from his Danish classes:

I really miss teaching in Danish because I know that if I was to teach really well, then I would need to explain and to involve students in my pedagogical and didactic thinking. What is my educational philosophy and that kind of thing. And this is virtually unthinkable for even if I have developed a vocabulary that allows me to express it, then they will not have a vocabulary that enables them to receive it. The task is almost impossible. And therefore many students . . . simply do not comprehend the process and project that I am engaged in as a teacher. (lecturer, life science)

The feeling that one does not have the full command of academic discourse in English is shared by the respondents. In a field such as academia where social status is closely tied to agents' mastery of written and spoken language, this is significant since it may lead to the situation where academic staff is assessed on the basis of language skills rather than scientific knowledge. But also the quality of education is affected. One respondent characterises his international lectures as a 'linguistic shortcut,' expressing his concern that information goes missing when students and teachers work in a second language:

I have heard about a Dutch study which . . . stated that when you have a teacher lecturing in his second language, that is, not the mother tongue, then the students' learning outcome would be reduced with some twenty per cent . . . It did not say anything about the situation where you are a student, who receive teaching in a second language, but you can easily imagine a [further] reduction of some ten to fifteen per cent. So if you have a Danish student, who are taught by a Danish lecturer, and it all happens in English, then you may end up with a reduction of some thirty per cent. (lecturer, business)

There are two recurring themes in the lecturers' accounts of their linguistic situation. On the one hand, they are eager to stress that they can manage in English, even if they find it less fun or more demanding than teaching in their first language. This suggests that the employees have accepted a normalisation of English as a teaching medium, which supports the management policy on internationalisation. On the other hand, respondents are keen to provide examples that show how the nature of classroom interaction changes. In the interviews they talk about missing student-staff interaction, a lack of humour or small-talk, international students' poor English, and local learners' difficulties in accessing complex scientific concepts through their second language. Given the lecturers' apparent willingness to accept English this seems paradoxical, but one suspects that they may be using the students as an outlet for personal grievances. As the next section reveals, employees at the international university risk losing face if they are open about personal linguistic weaknesses.

The claim of a language to a position of domination within its field can be assessed by the degree of symbolic power and status attached to it (Bourdieu 1991). With reference to this, it is evident in the interviews that English has become the linguistic norm for research publications across a range of academic disciplines. Most grotesque, perhaps, is the situation described by a Modern Language specialist who finds that regardless of her research focus, she is encouraged to publish in English:

At some point I wrote an article where I was warned against writing it in Danish because it wouldn't count – it was better to write it in English. Back then it was acceptable to write in German, but it was clearly better to write in English. But as I was writing about Danish syntax, using Danish examples and Danish sources, then I found it somewhat ridiculous to write in German or English, for my audience were neither English-speaking nor others [like that]. Actually, they were some heavily Danish-speaking people. And therefore I find it is

completely over the top if that – by default – is downgraded compared to an English-medium article published in some inferior, weird magazine in Bagdad or somewhere like that. (lecturer, business)

The general acceptance of English as the default language for research has made it easier for university managers to persuade lecturing staff that they can and need to teach in English. In many departmental and institutional environments it is simply taken for granted that those who can write academic Ph.D. theses and articles in English can also manage teaching in the second language, and a no may reflect negatively on employees' status as a researcher as well as a teacher. As a result, respondents describe how colleagues will prefer to remain silent about their weaknesses rather than risk a potential loss of face:

Now I do not think there's any prestige in admitting that you think your English is inadequate, but you can always say – well, I think I can improve my English. And you can turn it around like that. I suppose nobody will want to say explicitly that they are not good enough at their job, will they? (lecturer, life sciences)

This interviewee explains how he believed that the relaxed tone within his own department makes it relatively easy for individuals to bring up the language issue. Yet his statement shows to what extent researchers' social status has become attached to their mastery of English, which suggests that the linguistic balance has shifted in favour of the global lingua franca. The institutionalisation of English would appear to be almost complete within the Danish universities.

Employee practice as a response to English domination

According to Bourdieu (1991, 1993), a speech variant will have to be recognised by all actors within the field in order to occupy a position of linguistic domination. The observations made by the lecturers in relation to research and teaching suggest that this could very well be the case, and that, consciously or unconsciously, university managers have through a policy of 'English Only' established English as the socially most powerful medium within the field of Danish academia. However, the process of normalisation has only been fulfilled when actors are no longer aware that they have other options (Bourdieu 1977). The second part of the analysis will therefore look specifically at respondents' descriptions of their own practice, asking to what extent the national language has retained a function within the universities.

A focused reading of the observations made by the lecturers indicates that Danish still plays a very visible role across all faculties and academic disciplines. This is most evident at the faculties of engineering and life sciences where the national language clearly remains the preferred medium for local students and staff. One respondent observes how his inclusion of English concepts in a Danish-medium course would lead to student protests:

I soon realised that even when I taught purely Danish classes then I would frequently use the English terms to a much greater extent than I had done previously when in Danish classes I would use a Danish terminology throughout. But then it became a habit for me to use the scientific terminology. And I got many responses to this from the Danish classes when I taught. Humorous comments asking whether Danish was no longer good enough. Then we discussed it and I said I can't – you know, I'm coming from an English-medium class so it is difficult for me to switch completely. Which they then accepted. (lecturer, engineering)

At the other extreme are people working in disciplines such as European Studies and Global Development who stress that English has always been their main working language, and that any problems will arise on the students' side. An example is offered by a social scientist who has seen how his local students disappear into parallel, Danish-medium lessons when the going gets tough.

In general, the interviews show that student behaviours can provide an indication of the limits to English domination within the Danish institutions, highlighting a number of characteristic practices: First, several respondents note the unwillingness of Danish students to work in English. One interviewee relates how in the term following the faculty decision to convert all Master programs into English, the local students would insist on using their first language in the classroom:

I remember that I started it this year – the first time ever I taught [course name] – I came into the room, and I recognise some of the students. In the spring they had me for one of the

program's obligatory components. And they immediately start to talk to me in Danish and ask about all sorts of things, when is the exam etc. , a combination of small-talk and relevant questions, even before the teaching has begun. And I then try to explain to them - I simply say in English, that now we talk English in class because there are some, I can see, who cannot understand anything. Then they shut up, like oysters, and five minutes pass and then they start talking in [Danish] again, to me and to each other. (lecturer, business)

Similarly, there are several examples of Danish students who have successfully convinced the study boards of the need for special measures that will guarantee the natives' right to use their first language for oral exams, project reports or Master theses. A second recurrent theme is the tendency among students to complain about lecturers' English. This take on internationalisation has been encouraged by the media which have hosted web debates with titles such as 'lecturers grope their way in English' (Politiken 2007), and it frequently comes up in the interviews in relation to the question of course evaluations. Yet the following example suggests that the students may be using evaluations to express a general resistance to English-medium teaching:

The Danes do not want this. . . . At the mid-term evaluations all but one lecturer were criticised for our bad English, with students complaining that parts of the message were lost when we changed languages. . . . And then they attacked the classes for being too . . . that we would use slides or power point and then just read aloud from that. I took the consequence of that, changing my teaching method from that day, but nothing happened. They claimed that this would lead to more activity and involvement in the lectures – it simply wasn't the case. There were no discussions. (lecturer, engineering)

Due to the current obsession with benchmarking, student evaluations are a constant stress factor for the lecturers, and respondents who have received negative feedback return to the issue throughout our conversation. However, in the light of Bourdieu's theory on language (1991: 63), we may interpret the students' behaviour as a strategy of dissimulation, employed by the Danes to dissociate themselves from institutional processes of internationalisation.

Moving from student behaviours to the lecturers' linguistic practice, the interviews provide a number of examples that underline respondents' awareness of the national language as an alternative to English. This is expressed most strongly at the faculty of life sciences where employees use terms such as 'civil disobedience' and 'domain loss' to communicate a distance between management policy and their own language usage. They explain how they have developed idiosyncratic rules in order to avoid situations where local students lose out because of linguistic inadequacies. Most subversive is the lecturers' behaviour in relation to the exams. During oral exams, several respondents admit that they find it 'awkward' to question a student in English when all parties have Danish as their first language, and they consequently allow the students to choose between Danish and English. As one respondent observes:

When they sit the exams, oral exams, that is, [the policy] states that everything has to be in English. Well, I can't really sit in the company of a Danish external examiner, myself, and a fellow Dane and then talk in English. Of course, if the student insists. No problem. I just find it so artificial. Even with a Swede I'd much rather use Danish than English. (lecturer, life sciences)

In principle, such practice discriminates against the international students, who will have to accept an examination in their second language, and yet many teachers regard it as the local students' right, thereby acknowledging the special position of Danish within the institution. Some respondents describe a similar practice in relation to written exams, leaving local students free to choose the language that works best for them. One lecturer observes on his own strategy of code-switching: 'Often they will have some twenty questions which they need to answer, right, and then they can just change languages as they like, possibly including a single Danish or English term if they have forgotten the Danish. . . .' (lecturer, life sciences). The respondent characterises his linguistic practice as 'common sense,' which appears to be widespread in relation to exam situations where lecturers tend to privilege students' needs above institutional policies.

On an everyday basis, respondents seem to manage most classroom interaction in English. Yet the interviews point to two situations where respondents are motivated to part from the English-Only policy of their institution. First, many lecturers accept that linguistically weak students formulate their questions in Danish, and the interviewees will then translate the queries into English. Respondents, who have adopted this practice, explain how linguistic uncertainty can

prevent students from voicing their concerns in the lectures, and that over a period of time this could prove detrimental to their learning:

But I have said, again and again, that if there are Danish students who find it difficult to ask their questions in English, then I would much rather that they raise the point in Danish, and then I will translate it for the rest of the class and so on. But it is really not acceptable if they remain silent because they feel uncertain about their English. (lecturer, life sciences)

A second practice emerges in English-medium classes where there is none or very few international students. In these situations, the Danish teacher and the local students may negotiate a balance between Danish and English, which could involve a change into the first language whenever the international students are away, or the decision to keep certain parts of the lesson in English (e. g. lectures, project presentations), while other parts are conducted in Danish (e. g. group activities or class discussions). One lecturer describes the compromise he has made with a class:

Sometimes it happens that we have classes where there are only Danish students, and they mix [languages] a bit. Meaning that when the students present something, then, as a rule, they will do so in English. But frequently the discussions are in Danish. Because we think – the students think so and I agree – that it is so strange to sit there and talk in English to Danish-speakers. And . . . I have an international class at the moment where there are really only Danes. And in that we do the discussions and talking in Danish even if we are really supposed to use English. (lecturer, life science)

Other respondents from the faculty of life science have adopted a similar strategy of code-switching, prompting one interviewee to conclude: ‘[When] I have a Danish class . . . then I will speak in Danish. . . If I discover someone who does not understand it, I can just change into English, can’t I?’ (lecturer, life sciences).

The analysis has highlighted how to university lecturers Danish and English co-exist as alternatives within the field of academia. On the paper, we find that respondents acknowledge the English-only policies adopted by their managers, but their descriptions of classroom and exam practices demonstrate to what extent they follow idiosyncratic rules derived from local needs and circumstances rather than institutional language strategies. This is interesting given that such retreats into Danish may serve as a constant reminder to native staff and students of the special position that the national language enjoys. What is equally clear from the statements above, however, is that respondents feel they need to justify a shift into Danish with references to students’ learning or participation. This suggests that they perceive English as the more prestigious medium, and that somehow the use of Danish is less legitimate. The implication is that over a period of time we may see the current field of options give way to a complete normalisation of English.

Conclusion

Starting from Bourdieu’ (1991) language theory, the analysis has looked at the consequences of the ongoing internationalisation of Danish higher education for university lecturers’ social position and status. The initial section provided an outline of global and international trends that have contributed to university lecturers’ understanding of academia as a field of linguistic alternatives. Central to this is the management attempt to benefit from a global knowledge market and the consequent adoption of English as a medium for research and teaching within Danish institutions. This development has inspired language policies promoting ‘parallel language usage,’ but such notions of linguistic cohabitation may be problematic since they ignore the differential power of language. According to Bourdieu (1991, 1993) languages are not equal, and this theoretical position is supported by the lecturer observing how ‘there is no prestige in admitting to poor English.’

The analysis has discussed how the management decision to adopt English as a teaching medium influences university teachers’ symbolic power. If, on the one hand, the lecturers refuse to partake in the international programs, this may be interpreted as a lack of linguistic confidence, which is problematic for those who wish to be seen as international players within the more prestigious field of research. If they accept international classes, on the other hand, they have to perform the language-intensive task of teaching in a second language, which leaves them with problems such as linguistic shortcuts, missing interaction and complaints from local or international students. As one respondent reflects, English-medium classes seem to have turned ‘good teachers’ into ‘bad communicators.’

Respondents’ realisation that there is a discrepancy between the management policy and their own practice suggests that with regard to language question we may be witnessing within the field of academia the condition that Bourdieu

(1977) has named a ‘universe of discourse.’ This means that Danish retains its presence as the key linguistic alternative to English, and that it is still possible to challenge through practice the principle of English domination. But the discussion has also revealed that the English language – as the preferred medium of global scholarship – carries more symbolic power, and that this has made it increasingly difficult for employees to admit to linguistic weaknesses. Accordingly, we have seen how lecturers seek to manage language problems through a discrete change of classroom or exam practices rather than officially challenge the norm of English Only. Over time this is likely to strengthen the position of the second language, prompting more and more employees to accept the taken-for-grantedness of the claim that they can all work in English.

References

- Altbach, P., & Knight, J. (2007). The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11, 290-305.
- Altbach, P., & Teichler, U. (2001). Internationalization and Exchanges in a Globalized University. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 5, (1), 5-25.
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd ed.). London and New York: Verso.
- ASB (2009). Sprogpolitik for Handelshøjskolen, Aarhus Universitet. Retrieved from www.asb.dk.
- Bartell, M. (2003). Internationalization of universities: A university culture-based framework. *Higher Education*, 45, 43-70.
- Bernard, R. (1995). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Blommaert, J. (2003). Commentary: A sociolinguistics of globalization. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 7 (4), 607-23.
- Borghans, L., & Cörvers, F. (2009). The Americanization of European Higher Education and Research. *NBER Working Paper Series* 15217.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1988). *Homo Academicus*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The Field of Cultural Production*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2007). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Crawford, R. (1992). *Devolving English Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Crystal, D. (2000). *Language Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davidson-Nielsen, N. (2008). Parallelsproglighed – begrebets oprindelse. Retrieved from www.cip.ku.dk.
- Dhir K., & Savage T. (2002). The value of a working language. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 158, 1-35.
- Ejsing, J. (2009, January 13). Universiteter og politikere slås om sprog. *Berlingske Tidende* Retrieved from www.berlingske.dk.
- Feely, A., & Harzing A-W. (2003). Language management in multinational companies. *Cross Cultural Management*, 10 (2), 37-52.
- Harder, P. (2008). Hvad er parallelsproglighed? Retrieved from www.cip.ku.dk.
- Healey, N. (2008). Is higher education in really “internationalizing”? *Higher Education* 55, 333-55.
- Jarvad, P. (2001). *Det danske sprogs status i 1990'erne med særligt henblik på domænetab*. København: Dansk Sprognævn.
- Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Krarup, S. (2009, January 19). Kampen om det danske sprog. *Berlingske Tidende* Retrieved from www.berlingske.dk.
- Kvale, S.(1997). *InterView: Introduktion til det kvalitative forskningsinterview*. København: Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- LIFE (2009). Sprogpolitik på uddannelsesområdet. Retrieved from www.life.ku.dk.
- Marginson, S. (1999). After globalization: emerging politics of education. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 14 (1), 19-31.
- Marginson, S. (2000). Rethinking Academic Work in the Global Era. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 22 (1), 23-35.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: Sage.
- Mundy, K. (2005). Globalization and Educational Change: New Policy Worlds. N. Bascia et al. (eds.). *Handbook of Educational Policy*. Dordrecht: Springer, 3-17.

- Phillipson, R. (2006). Language Policy and Linguistic Imperialism. T. Ricento (ed.). *An Introduction to Language Policy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 346-61.
- Politiken. (2007 June 29). 'Lektorer famler sig frem på engelsk.' Retrieved from www.politiken.dk.
- Schapper, J., & Mayson, S. (2005). Managerialism, Internationalization, Taylorization and the Deskilling of Academic Work: Evidence from an Australian University. Ninnes & Hellstén (eds.). *Internationalizing Higher Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 181-97.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2006). Language Policy and Linguistic Human Rights. T. Ricento (ed.). *An Introduction to Language Policy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 273-91.
- Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spradley, J. (1979). *The Ethnographic Interview*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishing.
- Sprogudvalget. (2008). *Sprog til tiden*. Copenhagen: Kulturministeriet.
- Teichler, U. (2004). The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education. *Higher Education* 48, 5-26.
- van der Wende, M. (2007). Internationalization of Higher Education in the OECD Countries: Challenges and Opportunities for the Coming Decade. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 11, 274-89.
- Wright, S. (2004). *Language Policy and Language Planning: From Nationalism to Globalisation*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.