International symposium
Language diversity management in higher education

Namur, 29 November 2018

UNamur Business & Learning Center (Room 03), Rue Godefroid 5/7, B-5000 Namur

10:00 – 10:15	Registration
10:15 – 10:30	Opening address *Jeroen Darquennes (Université de Namur)*
	Session 1 (Chair: Jeroen Darquennes)
10:30 – 11:00	The role of Language Planning Agencies in higher education in South Africa – comparing two cases *Theodorus Du Plessis (Universiteit van die Vrystaat/University of the Free State)*
11:00 – 11:30	Bilingualism at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: A question of nation-building or linguistic nationalism? *Stephanie Rudwick (University of Hradec Králové/University of KwaZulu-Natal)*
11:30 – 12:00	Massification and diversification in tertiary language education: determining the parameters for a successful outcome *Colleen Du Plessis (Universiteit van die Vrystaat/University of the Free State)*
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
	Session 2 (Chair: Luk Van Mensel)
13:30 – 14:00	Resolving tensions through language policy development in an Uzbek university *Andrew Linn (University of Westminster)*
14:00 – 14:30	Language policy and the internationalisation of universities in 'medium-sized' language contexts. Exploring the north-south divide in European higher education *Josep Soler (Stockholm University)*
14:30 – 15:00	Language sectors in Czech higher education: Differing interests in the management of multilingualism *Tamah Sherman (Charles University Prague)*
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee
	Session 3 (Chair: Theo Du Plessis)
15:30 – 16:00	The University of Luxembourg: A trilingual University? *Melanie Wagner (University of Luxembourg)*
16:00 – 16:30	University language policy in Flanders and beyond: challenges, opportunities and dreams *Wim Vandenbussche (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)*
16:30 – 17:00	Wrap-up *Jeroen Darquennes (Université de Namur)*

Venue

GARE
Place de la Station

SORTIE 12
NAMUR-OUEST
E42 CHARLEROI-LIÈGE

Boulevard Mélot

SORTIE 13
CHAMPION
E411 BRUXELLES-ARLON

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Rue de Bruxelles

Avenue de Stassart

Rempart de la Vierge

Rue Grandgagnage

Senter Thomas

Rue J. Grafé

Rue Lelièvre

Rue Blondeau

Rue Grandgagnage

Place du Palais de Justice

N 90
CHARLEROI

SAMBRE

Rue Bruno

Rue de l'Arsenal

Place St Aubain

Rue Saintraint

Passerelle

Rue Henri Lemaître

SAMBRE

Rue du Séminaire

Rue de l'Evêché

Avenue Reine Astrid

Pont de l'Evêché

Abstracts

The role of LPAs in higher education in South Africa – comparing two cases

Theodorus du Plessis, Dept. of South African Sign Language & the Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment, University of the Free State, South Africa

South African scholars writing about Language Planning Agencies (LPAs) mostly agree on their significance. Although some scepticism exist about the effectiveness of particularly government-sanctioned LPAs few evaluative studies are undertaken, also internationally, this despite calls about the need for such research.

These issues have lately become rather pertinent in the face of the rising interest in language planning in higher education worldwide, mostly in countries where universities use languages other than English as media of instruction, prompting questions about the role of LPAs in higher education.

South Africa can indeed be counted among these countries, for at least two reasons: firstly, the fact that until recently some local universities opted to use Afrikaans (initially Dutch) as alternative medium of instruction alongside English (from 1918); and secondly, the fact that since the dawn of the democratic South Africa in 1994, calls have been made to use the Sintu languages as alternative media of instruction in higher education. Notably, at the time the designated languages were not recognised languages of higher education, implying the need for a rather ambitious language planning project. The central part played by LPAs regarding specifically language intellectualisation is inevitable, presenting an opportunity for the comparative evaluative study presented here.

The role of LPAs in the relative success of establishing Afrikaans as language of higher education within a rather short period of time (about 30 years) is contrasted against the relative failure to establish a Sintu language in this domain over a similar period (the last 24 years).

Bilingualism at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: A question of nation-building or linguistic nationalism?

Stephanie Rudwick, University of Hradec Králové/University of KwaZulu-Natal

Since 2002, the South African language policy for higher education has mandated that African languages shall be developed as 'Languages of Learning and Teaching' (LoLTs) in higher education. As a result, several universities in the country have made tangible steps towards improving the status and position of one or more African language in order to foster bi- and multilingualism. The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) has been at the forefront of developing a comprehensive bilingual English-isiZulu language plan based on the optimistic premise that isiZulu would gain the institutional and academic status of English. Also, in 2013, UKZN made national and international headlines due to the unprecedented decision to make the learning of isiZulu a mandatory requirement in all undergraduate studies. While widely considered a watershed moment for African languages, there are also critical voices, claiming a 'zulu-fication' of the institution. Theoretically based on language management theory (LMT), the paper critically interrogates the perceived statuses and positions of isiZulu vis-à-vis English in local constructions of identities within this heterogeneous higher education environment. Through a complex, interdisciplinary methodological approach, the paper presents discursive evaluations of the language policy in relation to national identity and ethnicity among students and staff at the institution. The analysis sheds light unto multifaceted and sometimes contradictory attitudes that suggest that essentialist linguistic and social ideologies are at the core of polarizing identity politics in the institution.

Massification and diversification in tertiary language education: determining the parameters for a successful outcome

Colleen du Plessis, University of the Free State, South Africa

Universities in South Africa are under pressure to open their doors to as many students as possible in response to the transformation drive for a more equitable and socially just society. Although the intentions are altruistic, the indiscriminate acceptance of students across too broad a continuum of variables can be counterproductive. In addition to the challenges that accompany cultural and linguistic diversity in large class teaching, disparities relating to educational background further complicate matters. This paper examines the performance of a diverse cohort of students required to complete a course in English as part of the B.Ed programme at the University of the Free State (UFS). Course results are correlated with a number of variables and interpreted on the basis of admission criteria and academic literacy support available to students. Possible determinants of success are considered in an attempt to develop more useful admission criteria applicable to Education students.

Resolving tensions through language policy development in an Uzbek university

Andrew Linn, University of Westminster, London

Westminster International University in Tashkent is an English-medium institution offering UK degrees to students from Uzbekistan and across the Central Asia region. Two-thirds report Uzbek as their first language and one-quarter Russian, with at least fourteen further languages in use as first languages across campus. It is a complex language ecology, and lack of clarity about what languages should and could be used when and under what conditions resulted in the felt need for a language policy. Working with two local research assistants, I was asked to develop one. Kirkpatrick (2017: 7), writing about EMI in Asia, has reinforced the point that "...actual practice [and hidden realities] should inform language policy", leading to "a coherent language policy for which all stakeholders have been consulted". In this spirit we conducted a survey of all staff and students, which elicited 1100 responses, backed up by semi-structured interviews involving 27 students and 16 staff. This provided a detailed body of data on language attitudes and expectations and, more importantly, the lived reality of an English-medium multilingual higher education context rather different from the European ones which dominate the research literature.
In this paper I will present our work and key findings before exploring some striking mismatches in the view of students and staff as well as some features of the Uzbek context which present unusual challenges for language policy-makers. I will also explore some lessons learned re implementation, where university language policies in the more liberal European context tend to fall down.

Language policy and the internationalisation of universities in 'medium-sized' language contexts. Exploring the north-south divide in European higher education

Josep Soler, Stockholm University

'Medium-sized' languages (MSLs) have been recently conceptualised as languages that fall between the more commonly widespread categories of 'majority' and 'minority' languages (Bastardas et al. 2018). It has been noted that medium-sized language communities (MSLCs) across a range of different contexts share a number of common threats as well as opportunities for their linguistic sustainability (Vila 2013). One of the key contexts where MSLCs may feel more intensely the pressures for their long-term vitality

is higher education (Vila and Bretxa 2015). Indeed, it seems that in higher education, the 'globalising' discourses attached to the neoliberal free market collide with the 'nationalising' discourses linked to identity fears and anxieties (Soler and Vihman 2018). With this in mind, this paper analyses in some detail a set of explicit university language policies in two different MSLCs, namely Estonia and Catalonia (see also Soler-Carbonell and Gallego-Balsà 2016). The analysis indicates that even though each setting has its own sociohistorical dynamics, discourses around the different languages in contact are not dramatically different; on the contrary, important similarities are shared in connection to the position of the national/local language and the role(s) played by other languages of wider communication (namely English and Spanish/Russian). In light of this, the paper discusses the often cited 'north-south' divide in the internationalisation of higher education (cf. Wächter and Maiworm 2014), and it concludes that instead, more attention needs to be placed on the political-economic dimension of language policy in higher education (Block 2018; Piller and Cho 2013).

Language sectors in Czech higher education: Differing interests in the management of multilingualism

Tamah Sherman, Charles University Prague

The Czech language enjoys a strong, largely unquestioned position in the Czech higher education sphere (cf. Nekvapil 2013, Sherman 2015). In the 1990s, it was legally (re-)established that Czech-language-medium programs would be tuition-free, regardless of the nationality of students. However, Czech is not the exclusive medium of instruction in these programs, or even at the universities overall. This state reflects the following: 1) the continual need to expose local students to foreign languages, 2) the discourse of internationalization, which is often made synonymous with anglicization, 3) the presence of multiple joint-degree, Erasmus and other non-tuition paying exchange students who are generally not expected to study in Czech, and 4) the idea of English-medium programs as a potential source of income for financially-strapped Czech universities.

These circumstances, which represent the interests of different actors, frequently result in the division of students into different sectors which overlap only occasionally. Using the language management approach (Fairbrother et al 2018), particularly the concepts of noting, evaluation, and adjustment designs, I will discuss situations in which the language of instruction must be managed, both through official policy and on the more micro level, in terms of individual interactions in the classroom. I will also consider the contrast between the perspectives of sociolinguists and those of the teachers, students and university administrators by posing the question of who perceives the use of a particular language as problematic in which situations and why.

References:

Fairbrother, L., Nekvapil, J. & Sloboda. M. (eds.) (2018). The Language Management Approach: A Focus on Methodology. Berlin: Peter Lang.
Nekvapil, J. (2013). The main challenges facing Czech as a medium-sized language: The state of affairs at the beginning of the 21st century. In: F. Xavier Vila (ed.), Survival and Development of Language Communities: Prospects and Challenges. Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 18-37.
Sherman, T. (2015). The position of Czech and other Languages at universities in the Czech Republic: Some initial observations. In: F. X. Vila – V. Bretxa (eds.), *Language Policy in Higher Education: The Case of Medium-sized Languages.* Bristol – Buffalo – Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 43–63.

The University of Luxembourg: A trilingual University?

Melanie Wagner, University of Luxembourg

Luxembourg is officially a trilingual country with most indigenous Luxembourgers speaking Luxembourgish, German and French, even if not necessarily all to the same standard. A high proportion (44.5%) of the population consists of immigrants whose different linguistic repertoires add other languages to the multilingual landscape of the country. Multilingualism is a highly salient feature of Luxembourg's society and plays out differently in different domains, such as home, school, work or public institutions. The country's university, the University of Luxembourg, founded in 2003, is one of Luxembourg's multilingual institutions, with English, French and German as official languages. Study schemes and diplomas should be at least bilingual and students as well as staff should master at least two of the official languages. Neither the country's national language, Luxembourgish, nor the language of the proportionally highest migrant community, Portuguese, are part of the university's languages.

Even though Luxembourgish is not an official language of the university, the national language is present in the Institute for Luxembourgish languages and literatures and is used here as a well for teaching as for research. Moreover, communication between staff and students often takes place in the country's national language, but there is strong resistance to make it an official language of the university. In this paper, I would like to focus on the language planning and policy of the University of Luxembourg, the University's Language Centre and the section on language(s) in the recently amended University law in order to gain further insight into the presence and use of different languages in Higher Education in Luxembourg. A look at study programs and degree schemes will provide information about linguistic diversity concerning teaching, a look at the University's publication server orbi.lu will reveal what languages the University of Luxembourg's academics publish in.

University language policy in Flanders and beyond: challenges, opportunities and dreams.

Wim Vandenbussche, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

In the wake of the growing internationalisation of higher education, the Flemish parliament set out a series of restrictions on the anglicisation of university programmes. Non-native speakers teaching in English were further required to prove their language proficiency, whereas foreign staff members had to acquire a high level of Dutch for administrative and management purposes.
These measures were met with disdain from the academic community in Flanders, and consistently framed as a major impediment for the further development of an academic internationalisation policy at large.

Despite their apparent desire to expand English medium instruction - and their conviction of being more than competent to assess and master linguistic proficiency among their staff - Flemish universities have not exactly been forthcoming with the development of language policies. While each institution has embarked on this process, the actual outcome, so far, remains modest, both content- and ambition-wise.

Many European universities, at large, remain equally innocent of a 'sense of urgency' when it comes to designing and implementing explicit language policy measures. In many

cases there is no serious policy whatsoever, in others the policy vision is restricted to minimal language acquisition planning. And yet, a strategic take on language policy can offer unprecedented opportunities for universities, both at the regional and the international level.

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