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Examples of good practice:

Teaching and learning

University of Copenhagen (UCPH)

Founded in Medieval Copenhagen in 1479

Today a research-based, public university with six faculties:

- Health and Medical Sciences
- Humanities
- Law
- Science
- Social Sciences
- Theology

100 departments, more than 200 study programs

40.000 students (BA and MA), 7.000 employees
(faculty, administrative staff, PhD students)



Language policies at UCPH

No language policy document

But a mission statement (2008) on parallel language use as the guiding principle followed up by

- The setting up of the Center for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (2008) with language courses (English & Danish), consultancy, research
- The onset of a multilingual strategy for students (2013-18)
- The launch of a strategy for language use in administration (2014)

Renewal of the principle in strategy 2016 and 2023

Language Rich Europe (Extra & Yagmur 2012)

Survey on "trends in policies and practices for multilingualism in Europe"

65 European universities prioritized initiatives which may strengthen multilingualism. 3 Danish universities:

High priority: student mobility
 attract more international students
 English-medium instruction

Middle priority: foreign language programs (not English)
 languages for non-language students ("CLIL")

Low priority: Danish language support
 attract more national minority students

UCPH language policy (Destination 2012)

The basis for the language policy is the principle of **parallel language use**. English will be used to an increasing extent as the medium of instruction and of text books, and as the emerging lingua franca of research. It is also important that Danish is maintained as a complete, functional language within higher education and when communicating research (public outreach)

Destination 2012

UCPH shall [plan the language policy so that we] profit from the special opportunity of already carrying out research and teaching in a number of languages. **Students must be given easily available opportunities to acquire competence in another foreign language and another culture than the anglosaxon.**



Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy 2006

Four issues to work with:

- Language comprehension and language skills
- **The parallel use of languages**
- Multilingualism
- The Nordic countries as a linguistic pioneering region

The **use of parallel languages** refers to a situation in which two languages are considered equal in a particular domain, and where the choice of language depends on what is deemed most appropriate and efficient in a specific situation.

More parallel, please!

Recommendations on best practice for universities
(submitted to the Nordic Council of Ministers October 2017):

All universities need a **language policy**, closely linked to a policy of internationalisation, to local legislation and to the university's role in society

Dealing with

- the language(s) for administration and in-house cooperation
- the language(s) for publication
- the language(s) for public outreach
- digital language resources

Recommendations

All universities must set up a **language committee**, following up on the language policy in practice

All universities must establish a **language center**, responsible for language courses for staff (faculty and admin) and students

- Courses in the local language for teachers and researchers with an international background
- Courses in English for teachers and researchers in general
- Courses in English, foreign languages and the local language for students

Based on needs-analysis, local needs and priorities

Language goals for teachers and researchers

The aim is that all researchers and teachers have basic parallel language competences, i.e. they can read scientific texts, teach, supervise, examine and take part in administrative tasks in English as well as the local language

The ambitious goal is that all researchers can communicate their research in both languages

Recommended principles

Parallel language use may take many forms

Both teachers and students must be familiar with the medium of instruction – if not they experience uncertainty in teaching and learning difficulties

Medium of instruction can vary within a program, but the choice must always be motivated by the content or by finding the best teacher for that specific area

Language choice must be made explicit and students must be offered support if needed

Draw on student resources: International classroom

UCPH: Center for Internationalisation and Parallel language use

Opened in 2008 through a decision in the UCPH board to support the university's policy of parallel language use

2008: 3 English teachers and a secretary

2018: 25

Danish and English teachers, administrative support, PhD students, post docs, associate professors, professor

Budget: Research time and admin paid by funding from the UCPH Board
Courses paid by faculties, departments, programs, Danish state

Located at Faculty of Humanities with research connections to Dept. of English, Germanic and Romance Languages and Dept. of Nordic Studies



Mandate

Language centre offering language courses for faculty, staff and students, certification of lecturers' English, consultancy on language issues

Does not offer language translations or proofreading, but cooperates with departments and lecturers about e.g. university terminology

Develops and carries out language courses at all six faculties, is in charge of language projects across UCPH, and participates in Nordic and international networks on EMI, CLIL, parallel language use, international classrooms

Research

- Language policy issues
- Attitudes to EMI from both teacher and student perspectives
- Teacher identity
- Teaching approaches in relation to EMI
- Needs analysis
- Academic language use
- Language use in the work place
- Language assessment
- The multi-lingual and multi-cultural classroom



More Languages for More Students

Five-year research-supported project initiated by the University's Rector (2013-18)

New language activities (outside foreign language programs) aiming at improving the language skills of the students in English, Danish as L2, German, and French, or providing them with new relevant language skills in these languages plus in Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Latin, Classical Greek

Related to the internationalized labour market and study abroad, but also to study skills, access to sources, fieldwork

Needsbased and tailor-made activities

"More Languages for More Students" 2013-18

Identify students' language needs

- Surveys with students, academic faculty and advisory panels
- Dialogue with heads of departments, programmes (study boards) and curricular advisors, etc.

Improve the language skills of students **across the university**

Develop (new) language support activities for students

- Development grant has funded 36 pilot projects

– **in multiple languages**
(English, Danish as a second language, German, French, Arabic, Spanish, etc.)

Language activities

Tailor-made – based on careful needs analysis

- 11 surveys with students and lecturers (response from over 6.000 students and 800 lecturers)
- 1 survey with PhD students (N = 1213)
- 45+ meetings with study boards, directors of study programs
- Meetings with international office, student councillors etc.

Relevance in the local context

- Language choice
- Add-on course or integrated into curriculum/program
- Thematic content: choice of domain
- Priority of language dimension(s) (oral-written, receptive-productive)



Overview of activities

Developed and carried out 36 pilot projects, targeting more than 4.400 students

All six faculties are involved

18 projects in Academic English

18 projects with other languages (Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, German, French, Italian, Latin, Ancient Greek, Danish as a second language)

13 projects focus on reading comprehension

11 projects on writing

5 projects on oral interaction

7 more than one skill

Summary of language needs

There is a clear interest in acquiring relevant academic skills in a number of foreign languages among students at UCPH

- To cope with academic difficulties during their core studies
- To fully benefit from academic activities abroad
- To increase the range of study abroad options and to prepare themselves for an international labour market

There is an interest in UCPH providing language support in academic English and Danish – integrated in content classes or as an add-on.

There is an interest in developing subject specific courses in other languages (e.g. reading skills in German and French, oral skills in Spanish and Arabic, culture courses in Chinese) or allowing students to tone their profile with language.

There is a potential interest in new CLIL-like courses.

BUT: There is a widespread scepticism towards using ECTS-points on language related activities within curriculum.



Lessons learned

Development of language activities to support local needs – tailor-made rather than general courses

Policy at macro, meso and micro level of the organization

Policy "from above" or "from below" (Spolsky 2004)

Global flows and local planning (Hult & Källkvist 2016)

Initiatives taken from **above**: mission statement, strategic documents, support from University Board > onset, funding

Initiatives followed up from **below**: user driven, burning souls

Barriers: individuals with gatekeeping roles (disciplinary identity, languages not prioritized, economy)

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