English at Nordic universities: Ideologies and practices[1]

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1. Introduction

It is by now a well-documented fact that English is being used to a much greater extent at Nordic universities than was the case a couple of decades ago. With the proviso that cross-country comparisons are difficult because of differences in educational systems and methods of measurements, the proportion of academic articles which are published in English at Nordic universities is in the order of 70 to 95%; for doctoral dissertations, the order is 80–90%. The use of English as a medium of instruction differs at undergraduate and graduate level; at the former level some 10–25% of programmes are taught in English and at the latter the range is some 20–40%. The proportion of non-Nordic students is around 5–15%, though for all these areas, there are considerable differences between the disciplines, with the technical and natural sciences typically exhibiting a much greater degree of Englishization (Godenhjelm, Saarinen & Östman, 2013; Hultgren, 2013; Kristoffersen, Kristiansen & Røyneland, 2013; Kristinsson & Bernharðsson, 2013; Salö & Josephson, 2013). Universities in the Nordic countries, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, may be seen as being on the forefront in this process of Englishization, but we believe that the trend is universal and that the causes and consequences of the development are therefore relevant far beyond the region. It is against this backdrop of greater English language usage in key university activities that the present volume is set.

The purpose of this volume is to explore and contrast the ideologies and practices associated with the Englishization of Nordic universities. By *ideologies* we understand the ways in which English at Nordic universities is explicitly or implicitly talked and written about in the Nordic debate. By *practices* we understand the ways in which the phenomenon of language choice unfolds on the ground in the situated interactions of the social actors directly involved in it, i.e. primarily those who conduct their daily working lives at Nordic universities: students, faculty and other staff. As it shall be clear in the chapters to come, this dichotomy is, of course, a simplification, not least because practice and ideology influence each other. The primary difference between ideology and practice, as we use the terms, is thus that ideology is either explicitly or implicitly value-laden discourse about what ought or ought not to happen, while practices are what actually happens. Of course, nothing is ever just as it seems, so the account of practices that we offer in this book will extend only as far as the particular research methods employed. It seems to us that in the case of language choice at universities in the Nordic countries these two types of realities – ideologies and practices – have become exceptionally far removed from one another, in a way that we would suggest has become unproductive and unhelpful.

At the ideological level, two opposing discourses may be distinguished. On the one hand, we have what might be called the "internationalist" discourse. This is typically represented by politicians committed to making the nation internationally competitive. At the institutional level, the discourse may be carried on by university leaders concerned with internationalizing and advancing the rank of their universities. To these actors, language is often a non-issue (see, e.g., Phillipson, 2009; Phillipson & Skuttnabb-Kangas, 1999; Saarinen, this volume; Ljosland, this volume). In contrast to these arguments, we have what might be called the “culturalist” discourse. This is typically represented by politicians committed to safeguarding national culture and the heritage of the welfare state. Other representatives of this discourse may be characteristically Nordic institutions charged with the task of monitoring and regulating the national language, such as national language councils, or members of the cultural elite and professional linguists. To these actors, language is often highly salient. Ironically, they may be affiliated with both right and left-wing politics, albeit for different ideological reasons (see Salö, this volume). Safeguarding the national language in right-wing politics becomes a surrogate for protecting the nation state. In left-wing politics, it is a shield against commercialization and global homogenization. Thus, the ideological level is fraught with contradictions between “internationalists” and “culturalists” and even among the culturalists themselves.

As far as the practices are concerned, there has over the years been a growing body of work aimed at exploring this phenomenon (Haberland et al., 2013; Kuteeva, 2011; Mortensen & Haberland, 2012; papers in the special issue of *Iberica*, vol. 22, edited by Kuteeva, 2011). Some of the issues which have been explored at the level of practice have been how teaching and learning is affected by it taking place in a language that is not one’s first (Airey, 2009, 2010; Thøgersen & Airey, 2011), patterns of language choice (Ljosland, 2008; Söderlundh, 2010; Haberland et al., 2013), the emergence of new and non-native ways of using English (Mortensen & Fabricius, this volume) and the attitudes of students and staff to Englishization (Hellekjær, 2005; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Tange, 2010).

In the chapters to come, we shall have a more detailed look at how Englishization plays out at the level of ideologies and at the level of practices. Before we go on to consider this in more detail, we will take a step back in time and consider how the role of universities have changed over time before considering the linguistic and cultural implications of these changes.

2. The roles of universities: Then and now

We suggest that the development we are witnessing with regards to English use in Nordic universities is best understood as a consequence of certain changes in the perception of the roles of universities within the Nordic societies which we are currently experiencing. New perceptions of the roles of universities, in other words new ideals for the universities, change the very conceptualization of the universities' *raison d'être* with language political changes as unintentional outcomes.

Speaking in general terms, universities in the Nordic countries have since the late middle ages served two purposes – and universities being typically conservative institutions which cling to their traditions – these have until now largely continued to be the purposes served. The first is that of free thinking (within the limits of the particular epoch's hegemony of thinking in general), i.e. research. The second is that of educating clergy and civil servants. With the coming of the nation states and the growth of administration, universities became training sites for all kinds of practitioners, doctors and bureaucrats, who wanted to base their practice on true knowledge, whatever that was taken to be. From a language policy perspective the advent of the nation state in the 18th and 19th centuries and the development of specific national institutions (such as educational systems ranging from crib to in-service training, administration of all kinds, and legal and military systems to preserve and uphold the state in other ways) made a decisive difference for universities. Instead of serving a "universal" community like the church, universities were now construed as servants and support of the nation state. Ideologies of the specific characteristic of the nation state were developed (or invented) and one obvious feature to latch on to was language. Thus from carrying out their business in the international scientific language of Latin the universities were restructured to become national and nation-building institutions, which meant the development and eventual use of the national languages as academic languages.

For the purpose of the educational dimension of universities, this must have been a gain since it diminished the gap between the public and the public servant at least linguistically – although one should never underestimate the power of professional discourse to create new gaps of communication. For research, the gains were not as significant. Research is in many ways indifferent to national borders and hence has always needed international means of expression, Latin, French, German etc. (Mortensen & Haberland, 2012). After the second world war, there was still some competition between languages and Russian was used as an academic lingua franca in Eastern Europe, but when the iron curtain crumbled, English, which had already firmly established itself as the *primus inter pares* in Western Europe, emerged victorious: English language journals, English at conferences, English language book series published for a national (non-English) readership. It seemed, all of a sudden, as if all of the world's knowledge was available in English, and the world of academia was becoming monolingual (see e.g. Mortensen & Haberland, 2012; Saarinen, this volume).

Developments within the last decades reflect the immense change in the role of universities and the debate as to what kind of institution they are to become. On the one hand, we have witnessed a shift to a political and economic ideology based on free trade and profit generation which has put "internationalization" on the agenda of most European universities (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The student market has become a commodity, particularly in countries in which students pay tuition fees (Gürüz, 2005), and European universities seek to attract fee-paying (in reality often non-European) students through marketization strategies first identified by Fairclough (1993). Added to this are EU policies such as the Bologna Process of 1999, which seeks to facilitate mobility within the European zone of higher education and research, ultimately to increase competition vis-à-vis the United States, and the establishment of huge grant machines such as the newly accepted Horizon 2020 programme for funding of R&D within the now considerably enlarged European Union. Within this political and economic perspective it is held that the market is the best way to measure quality. One efficient and easily understood way to measure the quality of a university is through a ranking list, of which there are now many. Universities' rank on such lists is determined through quantitative measures, such as publications in high-ranking journals, citations, external grant captures, employability of graduates, and even the presence of international students and faculty (Hazelkorn 2011; Hultgren, in press). The logic is that international students, being consumers in a free market, will naturally wish to buy their education from the best supplier, i.e. be educated at top universities. Counting the number of international students is thus an objective measure of a university's teaching product. As a consequence it has become increasingly important for universities to focus on internationalization if for no other reason than to succeed in university ranking lists (Hazelkorn, 2011).

On the other hand, the track leading from the laboratory to the marketing of a product or the exploitation of a research insight in administration and/or policy has been seen to be too long, and efforts are being made to smooth the transition in order to increase the output from the boosting of basic and applied science grants, ultimately in order to increase the GNP of the nation. This means the integration of universities and the surrounding societies in far more intricate ways than existed in the "traditional" conceptualization of the university. We are witnessing an increase in research funding of which a growing proportion is "strategic", i.e. research in which the research subject and the prospective outcome are determined by politicians rather than the scientific community. One further element of the integration of the university sphere and that of the surrounding society is what is referred to in the UK as "widening participation", i.e. a shift from elite to mass universities – see further discussion of this below. This has put financial pressure on all European universities to find alternative means of funding, e.g. through external grant capturing and tuition fees from overseas students.

Both these trends, internationalization and integration with the commercial sphere, result in the autonomy of the university becoming even more of a myth than it was when Humboldt first invented it. As indications of the changing roles of the universities in the Nordic countries, it may be interesting to reflect on two political initiatives initiated by the Danish Ministry of Education in 2013. In June 2013, the ministry published an initiative to promote internationalization of higher education entitled "Øget indsigt gennem globalt udsyn" ["Expanded insight through global outlook"] (Undervisningsministeriet, 2013a). The initiative states that: "The Danish institutions of higher education will to an increasing degree participate in international collaboration and knowledge sharing on education in order to create international environments of learning for the benefit of quality and disciplinary integration between institutions in Denmark and abroad" (Undervisningsministeriet, 2013a, p. 6; here and below the translations are ours). The rationale behind this is that: "An international environment of learning promotes disciplinary quality within the individual programs and international competences in the students" (op. cit., p. 25). A further rationale is economic: "The institutions of education shall export from Denmark by attracting talented international students who are willing to pay for a Danish education, and who can simultaneously contribute to our [sic] environments of learning" (op. cit., p. 6). The ideals here are clearly international and focused on competition in an open international market for education and an open international job market for candidates after their studies. The advent of globalization has been viewed as the demise of the nation state, a theme we will also be seeing in several of the contributions to this volume. One should, however, not be blind to the national entrenchment of the international project. The rhetoric may well promote open transnational collaboration, but the ultimate goal is still the promotion of "our" institutions of higher learning and, ultimately, "our" economy. The discourse of internationalization, globalization, and free marketeering which is a prime argument for the growing use of English in higher education in non-English-dominant countries is consistently framed in *national* rhetoric: "*we* (i.e. the nation) must be able to compete in a global market", "*we* must attract the best and brightest", "*we* must increase our international ranking".

This ideology of internationalization stands in quite strong contrast to another initiative taken by the same ministry later the same year. In December 2013, a commission was established to review the quality, relevance and coherence of Danish university programs (Undervisningsministeriet, 2013b). In the brief for the commission, the ministry states first that it is the expressed policy of the government that 95% of the youth cohort should complete secondary schooling or vocational training, and that 60% should complete some form of college training; of these 25% should complete a full tertiary education, i.e. obtain a university diploma (Undervisningsministeriet, 2013b, p. 1). One rationale for these high numbers is implicit in the statement that "Each year 14 billion DKK (approximately two billion EUR) is spent on payment for university education." That is, when universities are so heavily subsidized, the government can impose a legitimate demand that universities prove their worth to society. The administration finds it important to guarantee "education relevant to later employment so that tertiary education actively contributes to growth, productivity and prosperity in Denmark" (op. cit., p. 1). With a view to this and other political aims, the goal of the commission should be to promote the idea that "the focus of tertiary education should to a greater extent be shifted from the last exam to the first job, so that (a) more graduates get jobs in the private sector, and (b) all students achieve competences which can transfer to relevant employment" (op. cit., p. 2).

These, then, are the changing roles we see emerging for universities in the Nordic countries – and we believe to some extent in the rest of the world. From a (utopian) past in which universities were autonomous institutions of learning for the elite who had the economic capacities to pursue their quest for knowledge pure and simple, universities are now receiving close attention (and considerable funding) from the nation state. In return the governments of nation states place demands on the universities -- demands which are somewhat contradictory. On the one hand universities are perceived as international businesses competing as economic agents in an open and lucrative market – and thus also promoting the brand of the nation state internationally. The ideal is international excellence in whatever field is currently the most competitive and prestigious. On the other hand, universities are perceived as essentially national public institutions, integral to the national culture and with certain obligations towards the nation state. Viewed like this, the universities are institutions to which the government and the taxpayer can legitimately present demands, given that the universities are predominantly funded through taxes.

3. Universities in change: Linguistic consequences and tensions

Naturally the changing perceptions of the roles of universities have had their effects on language use. One of the more obvious of these is, as indicated, an increased use of English. Recruiting students and faculty from overseas obviously necessitates a common language (or at least it is construed as obviously necessitating the use of a common language), as does international collaboration. The language used for these purposes tends by default to be English, though some universities, e.g. the Viadrina European University in Frankfurt an der Oder (Germany) and the University of Luxembourg, opt for more than one international language. Many universities also strategically market their courses and programs as being taught in English in a further attempt to tap into the lucrative student market. Marketing courses as English-language may be a strategy not only aimed at attracting international students, but also at attracting local students who wish to receive a more "international" education, i.e. to study in a multi-cultural environment and improve their English skills and cultural awareness (cf. the "Expanded insight through global outlook" initiative discussed above). Other recent political initiatives, e.g. rewarding institutions whose researchers publish in high-ranking de facto English-language journals also inevitably promote English (cf. Gazzola, 2012, and the references cited therein).

When discussing the Englishization of universities, it is important to acknowledge that there was and still remains a characteristic divide between the natural, technical and medical sciences and the human and social sciences (henceforth shortened, respectively, to "the sciences" and "the humanities"). Not only is English language use more widespread in the sciences than in the humanities, there is also a tendency, generally speaking, for language in the sciences to be construed instrumentally, whereas in the humanities it may be seen as inextricably intertwined with the subject matter. The role of internationalization has long been a distinctive feature of research within the natural sciences. Internationalization was a means directed at producing knowledge in a universalistic field. In the humanities the national languages have remained stronger and more pervasive as constituents of university studies as well as the media in which research is communicated to the audience (cf. Salö & Josephson, 2013).

The other overarching role required of the late-modern university -- that of fulfilling utilitarian needs for the nation state and its commercial sphere -- has less direct incentives to promote English. The universities educate larger proportions of the population and they provide input for production companies and the public sector alike. In societies which are as linguistically homogenous as the Nordic countries and in which the national languages play such fundamental roles as national and ethnic emblems, these functions are generally better performed in the local language(s) than in international languages. We can generally assume that university faculty, university students and the surrounding society in which the future candidate will be employed all share the same native language. For reasons of communicative simplicity alone, the national language would usually be preferable for the majority. Add to this the symbolic value of the national language vis-à-vis English and it is clear that the choice to use English is by no means a trivial or off-hand decision.

In conclusion, research and education have to make themselves relevant both in the international arena of scientific colleagueship and in the local arena of manifest applicability. Research has to use both the international academic lingua franca in a global academic context and the local languages and local discourses in the national context. In other words, scientific work has not only to demonstrate integrity and insight but also to prove as relevant to the national public as it is to an international audience. For evidence of this, witness the many academics used as experts in the national TV channels and the national newspapers, and the present focus on outreach and impact at funding agencies worldwide. On the other hand, the educational structures have to accommodate the many visitors coming in from countries which do not have English as their societally dominant language – and the few coming from countries which actually do. That is, education has to solve the dilemma of teaching at the highest possible quality in a language which is very rarely the first nor the best for either teachers or students. And, finally, education has to improve its quality and increase its ranking in order to keep up with the demands for efficiency at a lower cost.

Small wonder, then, that when we talk about language at universities, our discourse is fraught with contradictions. How wonderful it is to internationalize; but at the same time how frightful are the dangers of losing our national heritage language at the university, this prestigious site which once celebrated the use of the local language as a glorious achievement. How wonderful to reach the summits of research quality; but how awful to have to relearn all the tricks of the dissemination trade in a new language just when we had perfected our learning in our own language. How great to democratize wisdom – and how disturbing if quality suffers and traditions change when the masses enter the gates of learning previously exclusive to the elite.

4. Purpose of the volume: Contrasting ideologies and practices

So far, we have mainly been concerned with the level of ideology and the tensions that arise from catering for the domestic needs while being competitive in the global economy; from maintaining the national language while adopting an international language. However, this book is concerned not only with ideologies, but also with practises, i.e. the lived experiences of institutions and people (students, teachers and administrators). While we acknowledge that the distinction between ideologies and practices is in many ways untenable, we suggest that it is interesting to juxtapose these two levels for analytical purposes in order compare what is being said against what is being done. We believe that as far as the Englishization of Nordic universities is concerned, the levels of ideology and practice at times seem particularly disjointed.

To flesh out in more detail this disconnect, the level of ideology, as reflected in Nordic policy discourse, has been permeated by constructs such as “domain loss” (domænetab), “society-bearing language” (samfundsbærende) and “parallellingualism” (parallelsproglighed) (see, e.g., *Sprog til Tiden*, 2008; *Deklaration om Nordisk Sprogpolitik* [DNS], 2007; *Mål og meining*, 2008; *Mål i mun*, 2002)[2]. It is possible to think of these concepts as ideologically committed responses to the ideology of internationalization and the change in linguistic practices it has occasioned.

"Domain loss" refers to the idea that the national language may lose status and/or functionality when it is used less or not at all in a given "domain". The first part of "domain loss" ("domain") is most often attributed to the American sociologist of language, Joshua Fishman (1972), though Fishman himself credits the linguist Georg Schmidt-Rohr (1890–1945) (Haberland, 2005). (Perhaps because Schmidt-Rohr is now unfondly remembered for his scholarly contributions to Nazi "race science" (Cameron, 2007), the concept's origins are rarely acknowledged.) Dividing society into domains for analytic purposes is similar in rationale to Habermas's division of society into private vs. public spheres or Marx's into spheres of production, circulation and consumption.

In practice, however, and in empirical terms, it has proved immensely difficult to determine what constitutes a domain and where one domain begins and another one ends, and what criteria need to be fulfilled for a domain to be considered lost. For instance, while it is clear that journal articles at Nordic universities in the natural sciences are almost exclusively written in English, research from the level of practice reports that the national languages still has a crucial status and fulfill important functions (Madsen, 2008, Söderlundh, 2010).

Another and related concept which was central in the early stages of the Nordic language policy discourse is “complete and society-bearing” (“komplett och samhällsbärande” in Swedish, where this term probably originated [*Mål i mun*, 2002]). This refers to an idea of the national languages being fully functional in each register and domain, including, notably, the academic one. The connection to “domains” is obvious: for a language to be society-bearing it has to be used in “all” domains. What happened during the nationalization of universities was thus a “domain gain” by the national languages which superseded Latin. However, as Laurén, Myking & Picht put it ”[i]t is a fact that no language covers all possible domains at all LSP [language for specific purposes] levels” (2002, p. 25), thereby implicitly acknowledging that no language is ever at any one time “complete and society-bearing”.

“Parallellingualism”, finally, is a term coined, probably in 2002 (Davidsen-Nielsen, 2009; Hultgren, 2013; Höglin, 2002), for language policy purposes to ensure that “domain loss” is avoided and the national languages are “retained” (and we use this word advisedly) in their original, fully elaborated “society-bearing” state by using English not *instead of* but *in parallel with* the local language(s).[3] By now several Nordic universities have officially adopted a policy of parallellingualism, as recommended in policy documents at national and supra-national levels. Thus, the Nordic language policy declaration raises parallel language use as one of four issues for consideration, especially directed at the increasing use of English at Nordic universities and multinational workplaces:

> The parallel use of language refers to the concurrent use of several languages within one or more areas. None of the languages abolishes or replaces the other; they are used in parallel (DNS, 2007, p. 93).

While the declaration is not legally binding, the Nordic ministers are under an obligation to attempt to eventually achieve its long-term goals (DNS, 2007). The declaration may be seen as a consolidation of language policy efforts in the individual nation states, which have developed in parallel and in interaction with one another.

It is interesting to observe that universal acceptance of the term parallellingualism is followed by a certain confusion as to what the term means. In some language policies it is employed to secure a continued place for the local language (as originally intended); in other policies it is used to refer to the promotion of English in (sub)domains where an English alternative to the national language is felt to be wanting (Hultgren 2014; Thøgersen, 2010; cf. also Linn's, discussion of the term in this volume).

What the three concepts of “domain loss”, “society bearing” and “parallellingualism” share is their reliance on several unquestioned assumptions about how things currently are and how they should be in the future. These include an understanding of languages as nameable and delimitable entities (“English” on the one hand is distinguishable from “Danish”, “Icelandic” and “Finnish” on the other), having pre-designated or historically fixed territories of usage (Danish belongs in Denmark, Swedish in Sweden and English in the UK) and endowed *a priori* with the meaning-making resources required for them to be functional (mostly, it seems, in terms of register and lexical terminology).

In contrast to this view on languages as discrete entities, the level of practice often exhibits a lesser degree of essentialism and a higher degree of complexity and messiness. We have been able to obtain a glimpse into this reality through the growing body of research in the area. Thus, while the language of instruction in course catalogues may be officially designated as English, ethnographic observations have shown that there are often linguistic resources from many more languages in use in practice depending on tasks and purposes – and of course on the linguistic resources available to producer and audience – e.g. one set of resources for group work, another for text books, and a third for teacher-led instruction (Ljosland, 2008; Söderlundh, 2010; Salö, 2013). Students and teachers code-switch and draw strategically on resources associated with other languages to get their meaning across if they feel that their audiences are better able to grasp their meanings that way (Eggert Kiil, 2012; Ljosland, 2008).

For research, too, there is an emerging awareness that this activity consists of many more activities than dissemination, which has tended to be the main focus of the debate so far. As a starting point, for instance, Kyvik (2013) helpfully distinguishes between six tasks related to the academic researcher role: (1) networking; (2) collaboration; (3) managing research; (4) doing research; (5) publishing research; and (6) evaluation of research, and future investigation may shed light on the association of these activities with different language choices.

Thus, the idea of distinct, separable languages seems rather at odds with how people communicate in practice. The same goes for the idea that each domain is the "property" of one particular language and not a plethora of linguistic resources. Indeed the assumption that language choice is determined by domain or activity appears to be questioned daily in the multicultural and multilingual classroom.

Another dimension which seems to differentiate ideologies from practices is the prevalence, at the level of ideology, of particular attitudes, whether positive or negative. Researchers have often found that ideologies of language cast some languages or language varieties as better, more functional or more aesthetic than others (Cameron, 2012; Milroy & Milroy, 1985; Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskity, 1998; Spolsky 2009). In the Nordic context, it would seem that some attitudes to English are overtly positive, such as those typically held by internationalization policy writers at the national and institutional levels who uncritically, and some would say naively, embrace the many benefits of sharing a common language. The negative attitudes have typically taken the form of concerns about the future of the Nordic national languages (the "domain losses" mentioned above).

But concerns have also centred on more practical matters, such as a lowering of the quality of teaching and learning when the teachers are predominantly non-native users of English, and of the ability of graduates to pass on their knowledge to end users in society (e.g. vets passing on knowledge to farmers) when they have been trained predominantly in English. Concerns have also been expressed over publishing in English, but less so over any disadvantages this might entail for scientists than for the proportion of Nordic citizens whose English proficiency is not sufficiently high to avail themselves of new knowledge.

It is probably not a misrepresentation to say that those who have spoken loudest here are those who are uneasy about internationalization rather than its strongest proponents. This is not surprising given that internationalization and (as an allegedly natural consequence) Englishization tend to be the dominant and reigning ideologies – the direction in which Nordic universities are consciously or semi-consciously headed. Non-Englishization, or, less negatively put, parallellingualism, on the other hand, may be considered a resistance ideology, which must be actively promoted, and it is therefore often the more visible ideology, even if not the strongest.

In contrast to the predominance of voices of concern raised at the ideological level, attitudes towards English “on the ground”, e.g. among faculty and students, are on the whole more positive, though problems are also reported (Hellekjær, 2005; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Tange, 2010). Studies have shown that any initial problems associated with teaching and learning in a non-native language may be lessened or eradicated over time or by employing various compensatory strategies (Airey, 2009, 2010; Klaassen, 2001; Vinke, 1995). Thus, it has been found that if students shrink from contributing in class because they feel their English is not good enough, they may ask questions in the local language after class instead, or spend more time prearing for class (Airey, 2009). While rhetorical differences in teaching in English and Nordic languages have been documented (Thøgersen 2013; Thøgersen & Airey, 2011), no one has so far been able to document a decline in standards of teaching and learning.[4] Nor is there evidence to suggest that graduates are unable to pass on their knowledge to end users because they have been taught in English, or that the wider population will be prevented from absorbing knowledge because it was originally published in an English-medium journal.

It might seem that we are suggesting that ideologies are the misguided, ill-advised, value-based perceptions of language while the level of practice provides a research-informed, empirically based and objective account. However, we certainly do not wish to discount ideologies. Both practices and ideologies contribute to constructing our social world and both are worthy of serious inquiry. Ideological constructs are just as “real” as observed practices in the sense that they shape our world and they have real, concrete consequences. Furthermore, observations of practices can only indicate how things *are*, not how they *should be*. Any discussion of policy, therefore, is in essence ideological no matter if one’s ideology is national or international, protectionist or laissez faire, egalitarian or economic. There are even those who would favour ideology over observation by stressing that concepts such as “domain loss” and “parallellingualism” were never intended as empirical concepts and that it would be a mistake to consider them as such. Rather, they were conceived to raise awareness about language policy issues and to put such issues on the political agenda, whether they were a true reflection of actual contemporary practices or an only marginally realistic dystopia.

By devoting space in this book to both ideological representations and observations of practice, we hope to further a more holistic understanding of the ways in which both ideology and practice have their place in the intensified internationalization of Nordic universities in particular, and, more generally, in the age of globalization. Let us now consider more precisely how researchers might get access to these two types of social reality.

5. Ideologies and practices: How can they be studied?

By exploring "language ideologies", we engage in a scholarly inquiry which has its roots in North American linguistic anthropology (Johnson and Milani, 2010) as a means to understand "representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world" (Schieffelin et al., 1998, p. 3). The first volume to set the agenda for this project was the celebrated collection of papers by Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskity (1998) featuring a number of studies from a range of communities of which only one (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998) focused on Europe. The interest in ideology has since been supplemented by experimental and quantitative studies of language attitudes and folk perceptions of linguistic matters (Kristiansen, 2009; Niedzielski & Preston, 2003). Language ideologies may be studied through a range of methods: discourse analysis of policy documents and other representations, surveys, questionnaires, and interviews, all of which are aimed at eliciting representations of a given phenomenon. In the context of the Englishization of Nordic universities, such types of studies have been carried out by Bolton and Meierkord, 2013; Hellekjær, 2005; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Kuteeva & Bolton, 2012; Tange, 2010, and are also favoured in some of the contributions to this volume.

By exploring "language practices", on the other hand, we take as tenets "that the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed" and "that analysis of the internal organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic) data is essential to understanding its significance and position in the world" (Rampton, 2007, p. 585). In practice this means that even if languages, in the sense of separable entities (English versus Danish), are relevant categories at the ideological level, they may not be, or may be less so, at the level of practices. The interest in language practices is perhaps more prototypically associated with Hymes's ethnography of speaking and the school of sociolinguistics associated with Gumperz (see, e.g. Rampton, 2007). Variationist sociolinguists have also traditionally had a preference for studying the "real language use" of people through field work methods such as the sociolinguistic interview (Labov, 1984). The level of practice would typically be approached from any methodological vantage point which supports an emic commitment. This approach could be used to observe practices as they unfold on the ground or to analyse recorded and transcribed naturally occurring speech. Other methods may be register research, i.e. relying on databases of different kinds to obtain figures of language choice.

In practice, of course, the association of ideologies and practices with different research methods, which has been tentatively sketched out, is rather more complex. To name but one example, interviews sit uncomfortably between the two levels because they constitute a method that is commonly favoured by ethnographers to inform accounts of practice, yet they are essentially representations of practice and therefore belong to the level of ideology. Perhaps partly in recognition of the inseparability of the two, sociolinguists have gradually become more interested in exploring the nexus between language ideologies and linguistic practice (Coupland, 2007; Coupland & Kristiansen, 2012; Kristiansen, 2009). It is also useful to remind ourselves of the shared historical roots and objectives of the fields of language ideologies and the ethnography of speaking (Gal, 1998).

6. The Nordic countries: Similarities and differences

Kristiansen & Sandøy (2010, p. 1) have suggested that: “the Nordic area constitutes a well-suited ‘laboratory’ for research into the contexts and consequences of today’s globalization and the general advance of English” because the relatively similar societies in the Nordic countries have had quite different language policy histories. Observing the responses to similar globalization trends in different language policy contexts may elucidate the role of ideology vis-à-vis pragmatic universalities (e.g. globalization tendencies). If we apply the same idea of "the Nordic laboratory" to globalization tendencies in the universities, we will find that the Nordic countries in some respects present remarkable similarities, in others surprising dissimilarities.

The Nordic countries, collectively inhabited by 25 million people, comprise five nation states, from west to east: Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, and their associated territories: Svalbard, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland (see Figure 1).[5] The Nordic countries have a lot in common, socio-historically, culturally and politically (Vikør, 1993, 2010; Östman & Thøgersen, 2010). They have been affiliated with one another in various constellations throughout history and are based, socio-politically, on the "Nordic model" which seeks to balance capitalism and socialism through a strong state and values centred on welfare, egalitarianism and respect for human rights. In 2013, the *Economist* ran a headline declaring that the Nordic countries "are probably the best-governed in the world" (The Economist, 2013). It is partly against the stronghold of the Nordic welfare model that reactions to internationalization and Englishization need to be understood. Taxes are known to be comparatively high and university tuition is free for students from within the EU. Students are even given a state-sponsored stipend. Internationalization is often construed as synonymous with marketization, and marketization is generally construed as a threat to traditional welfare and civil rights.

@@ INSERT HUL0FIG HERE @@

Figure 1: The Nordic countries. Source: Nordregio.

Linguistically, the Nordic countries are, as most modern European nation states, fairly homogeneous, notwithstanding a large and increasing presence of minority languages, estimated at around 200 (Risager, 2006; Nordic Council of Ministers 2007). In addition to this, there are indigenous languages with official status as minority languages in parts of the Nordic Region: The Sami languages, Meänkieli (Torne Valley Finnish), Romani, Yiddish, the Kven language, German, and the various Nordic sign languages (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2007). In terms of official languages, whether de facto or de jure, the official Nordic languages are Icelandic in Iceland, Norwegian in Norway[6], Danish in Denmark, Swedish in Sweden and Finnish and Swedish in Finland (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2007). When in this volume we refer to “the national language(s)” it is these national majority languages which are being referred to. All of the national languages (except the Finno-Ugric language Finnish) are of Germanic origin, which syntactically, lexically and morphologically makes them quite similar to English. Knowledge of English is widespread and by international standards relatively high, and it has been furthered throughout the post-World War II period in the Nordic educational systems. Exposure to English in the Nordic countries is high, and some observers have attributed the comparatively high levels of English proficiency to the practice of subtitling rather than dubbing TV programmes (a point further explored by Haberland, this volume). With the current output of American and British TV series and documentaries the state and commercial TV stations are practically running a continuous course in spoken English.

In terms of openness to linguistic influence from English, studies have found significant differences between the Nordic countries, with Iceland being the most purist and Denmark the least (see special issue in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, edited by Kristiansen & Sandøy, 2010). This influence was measured empirically as cross-national comparisons in the number of loan words from English in newspaper corpora and surveys of attitudes among the general population. It is, as yet, unclear how these findings about openness to English are applicable also in a university context (but see Hultgren, forthcoming; Kristinsson, this volume). Below we will return to the language policy environment in the Nordic countries and the ideological responses we have witnessed in reaction to the political and societal changes we have come to associate with globalization.

7. Structure and outline of the book

By now it should be clear that this volume has two distinguishing features: its focus on the Nordic context and its contrastive approach to ideologies and practices. In addition to the present introduction as well as a concluding commentary chapter, the book contains ten report chapters, two from each of the five Nordic countries, namely, in order of appearance, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Denmark. In each case, one chapter focuses primarily on ideologies and the other primarily on practices. The idea is to contrast and expose, for each of the five national contexts, differences in how the phenomenon of English in Nordic universities is talked about and represented in discourse (the level of ideology) and how it unfolds on the ground, in the actual linguistic practices of the onsite actors (the level of practice).

While the chapters focus on the same topic, the volume is disciplinarily and methodologically eclectic, which allows for the issues to be illuminated from a range of perspectives. Authors write from a diverse set of disciplinary and epistemological perspectives, including the sociology of language, language policy and language planning, historical linguistics, Bourdieu-inspired discourse analysis, English as a lingua franca, second language learning, ethnography and survey research. The same diversity can be found in the stances of the various authors towards preservation and whether to adopt the role of an observer or participant in the battle. Some authors are more politically committed to multilingualism and to maintenance of the national language(s) than others who take a more agnostic view on the processes which they describe. Needless to say, the authors' perspective and individual stance is not directly correlated with the analytical scope of their papers. That is, authors who describe ideology need not be more or less ideologically committed than authors who analyse practice.

In his chapter, Linn takes a look at the history of Norwegian language policy and the fertile ground which two centuries of linguistic tension have prepared for the discussion of English in higher education. Norway, famously, deals with two different writing systems, *nynorsk* and *bokmål*. The longstanding debate over these two standards, Linn observes, has oscillated between seeing the situation as an anomaly to be eradicated or a fruitful variation integral to Norwegian identity. What happens to this debate when English is introduced as a perceived threat to Norwegian? And how is English discursively treated? Is it an anomaly to be eradicated or yet another proof that variation is integral to the Norwegian speech community?

And how is the traditional relationship between the two Norwegian writing systems shifted by the introduction of English? In his conclusion, Linn adopts a sceptical view of the viability of language policies, pointing to their undemocratic nature and failure to influence the expedience of spontaneous interaction.

Ljosland moves the lens to the level of practice and provides an overview of how status, corpus and acquisition planning activities are being enacted from the bottom up. Ljosland investigates the reasons why English is being promoted in Norwegian higher education (e.g. the rhetoric of internationalization and free markets). She argues that language is largely forgotten in these arguments. Language policy is an accidental by-product of other political decisions. Investigating statistical data and previous research, including her own, Ljosland pointedly argues that what we need more than anything is a reflective policy of internationalization in which language issues are taken seriously. Ljosland attempts to provide solutions for viable language policies in Norwegian universities. She concludes by suggesting that an urgent issue to address in policy is to resolve the tension between internationalization and nationalization.

The question of social tensions and language policy as a battle ground (or "field", in Bourdieusian terminology) is the central theme of Salö's contribution, which reports on the language policy context in Sweden. Salö conducts a Bourdieusian field analysis, arguing that debate surrounding various perceived “threats” to Swedish has the important function of legitimizing language policy and maintenance of language as academic endeavors. After delivering this poignant (self) criticism, Salö presents the various phases which the Swedish debate has gone through over the past half century; from discussing English influence primarily in terms of loan words, to largely neglecting loanwords as worthy of scrutiny and instead focusing on functional “domains”. Salö’s contribution is particularly interesting in light of the volume as a whole, given the significant influence that the Swedish debate has had on developments in the other Nordic countries. The seminal language policy publication, *Mål i Mun*, published in 2002, sparked interest in language policy and planning across the Nordic region.

Söderlundh’s contribution on Swedish practices revolves around openness to variation in interpretation and reactions. Söderlundh warns us that many of the studies that have investigated the use of English in higher education have tended to look no further than the nominal medium of instruction (a normative approach in Söderlundh’s terminology). In her work, Söderlundh suggests a dynamic approach in which the investigator submerges herself in the field with the understanding that the practical language policy is a constant negotiation between actors in the field – the field sometimes being the individual classroom. Söderlundh shows that several languages are used at the same time in both nominally English and

Swedish courses. She also argues that investigating the actions on the ground can reveal the language policies and language hierarchies which the actors orient themselves to.

Similar to Ljosland's contribution, Saarinen, analyzing the case of Finnish ideology, points to the "invisibility" of language in policies of internationalization from a historical perspective. Saarinen's paper points to the tension between the two national languages, Swedish and Finnish, which are being regulated by juridical means. The balance between the two languages is now in the process of shifting due to the growing use of English. English, like Swedish, is in some cases being challenged as something extraneous to "true" Finnishness. In line with both Linn and Salö, Saarinen points out that debates about languages are rarely *really* about languages; languages tend to be emblematic of other social tensions. Saarinen argues that language may become more visible in the near future, but that this depends on government initiatives at the national level.

The role which the introduction of English has on a precarious language policy balance is also the main theme of Lindström & Sylvin's contribution (see also Linn's). In the Finnish case, the balance is between the two national languages of Finland, the majority language, Finnish, and the minority language, Swedish. Lindström & Sylvin consider the case of the officially bilingual (in Finnish and Swedish) University of Helsinki and examine the consequences on the ground of the increasing use of English.

They document a process in which the minority language (Swedish) is relegated and marginalized in favour of English. In order for minority-language policies to be effective, the authors suggest that the languages need to be complemented with action programs and the creation of opportunities for language use.

Kristinsson's paper shows how the shift Salö documented in the Swedish debate – from loanwords to "domains" – is also making its way into the debate in the other Nordic countries, Iceland included. However, the traditional (purist) Icelandic language policy is still standing strong, Kristinsson shows, and its focus on eradicating foreign loans is still of primary concern to Icelandic language policy. This discrepancy between Icelandic and Swedish language policy is a reminder not to underestimate the national and cultural differences in the Nordic area, and that the interpretation of the growing English influence and the appropriate reactions are in fact very much open to variation.

Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörndóttir take a critical look at the language use and the language competences implicitly required of Icelandic university students. The authors argue that the situation is best described as a case of *simultaneous parallel code use* (rather than "parallel language use") because students are required and expected to be highly functional in two languages, English and Icelandic, at one and the same time. Input to students is often simultaneously presented in two codes, English in writing, Icelandic in speech. Students are expected to handle this unproblematically and without support in either language. In Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörndóttir's study the burdens of these tasks are highlighted and it is argued that students are not equipped to fulfill it with their previous language training which has tended to focus on reading literature.

Both of the Danish contributions to this volume focus on the "transnationality" of the modern Nordic universities, i.e. the universities as meeting grounds for people from different national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Mortensen & Fabricius look at multinational student cohorts at a Danish university as "transient multilingual communities". The focus is on the students' attitudes towards different ways of speaking English and how these attitudes and the underlying ideologies may be said to be emerging in the local context or draw on wider more general language ideologies. The question deserves attention as part of the overarching debate regarding the internationalization of academia in which some commentators have argued that the universal use of English promotes the free sharing of ideas whereas others have argued that increasing use of English gives unfair advantages to native speakers of English. Mortensen & Fabricius show that students in international communities attach strong ideological values to different accents of English – the international university ELF setting is anything but value free. This account of bottom-up, student-produced, ideologies adds an important layer of complexity to our understanding of ideologies, which, in foregoing chapters, have primarily been construed from the top down, i.e. in policy documents.

While Mortensen and Fabricius focus on ideologies of English reported by international students, Jürna provides an account of reported practices of Danish language use by international faculty. Jürna is concerned with a group which is deeply embedded in the process of internationalization of higher education, yet which, strangely, is often overlooked, i.e. international staff. Her contribution is a study of the needs which international academic staff in various fields and at various stages in their careers have for the national language in their country of residence. Jürna's results paint a complex picture in which most international staff argue that they do not *need* Danish for their scientific work, but are still aware of situations in which they could not fulfill requirements put on them if they knew no Danish. Interestingly, Jürna's findings also indicate that while there is no pressure from the managerial side for international staff to learn Danish, there might well be social expectations at a more local level to do so, for instance from colleagues. Jürna also echoes Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörndóttir's call for the inclusion of language skill development at the policy level, but argues more insistently for a prioritization of receptive over productive language skills.

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[2] Iceland: Language law adopted by Parliament in 2012, Norway: *Norsk i hundre* (2005), Denmark: *Sprog på spil* (2003), *Sprog til Tiden* (2008), Sweden: *Mål i mun* (2002), Finland: *Suomen kielen tulevaisuus* (2009) (for Finnish) and *Tänk om …* (2003) (for Swedish).

[3] Most often, the local language that is assumed here is the official language, but efforts have been made to include less spoken languages in the definition too (Holmen 2012).

[4] Empirically establishing a relationship between learning attainment and teaching style is notoriously difficult due to an indefinite number of variables that could affect it.

[5] In English, Scandinavia is sometimes used synonymously to refer to this region, but within the region, this term refers more commonly to Norway, Denmark and Sweden.

[6] Norway has two officially recognized written language systems: Nynorsk and Bokmål.