

Newsletter of the Human Linguistics Circle

2009年10・11月例会、12月特別講演会 報告号

Special Lecture, December 2009

Local languages as the languages of internationalisation

Hartmut Haberland (Roskilde University & CALPIU Research Centre)

International (or more properly, according to Hannerz 1996, transnational) communication can happen in many languages. Focus has recently been mostly on English as the 'lingua franca of the world', but maybe unduly so; since there are alternatives. Especially when it comes to transnational student mobility, the local language of the host university can become the language of internationalization.

As a starting point, I distinguish with Beck (2000, German original 1997, Japanese translation *グローバル化の社会学* 2003) between *globalization* as a historical process from its result, viz. the ever changing degree of *globality* in world society, and from the ideology that is both the result and the bearer of globalization, viz. *globalism*. English has reached a degree of globality unprecedented by any language, but it is rather a part of the ideology of globalism to claim that it is everywhere.

Still, most universities focus in their internationalization strategy heavily on offering programs rather in English than the local language. At Copenhagen Business School, 56.4% of the students at MA level followed courses in English in 2009. Many students come to Denmark from abroad, follow the English-language programs offered, but are motivated to learn Danish, the local language. Why?

Four universities with different language ecologies are presented: Roskilde (Denmark), Lleida (Catalonia, Spain), Helsinki

(Finland), and HKIEd (Hong Kong SAR, China). For each of these universities, a specific interplay between the local language or languages, English and other international languages is characteristic. Need and opportunity to use the local language or languages vary in all these places, but many students have the desire, and develop the capacity, to do so.

Two roles that English can play in internationalization are distinguished: it can be the language appropriate to the ideology of globalism and its choice is the answer to the supposed pressures of a global language market. It can also be a pragmatic choice based on the available language resources of university students and staff.

Ironically, English as the language of globalism has no alternative and no competitor – ironically, because the neoliberal ideology of globalism sees all human relationships as relationships between competitors in a global market. As a pragmatic choice in transnational communication, the role of English is variable and alternatives exist. In my lecture, I mention at least the following alternatives: Spanish as a second world language, Esperanto, “Scandinavian” receptive multilingualism and internationalization through the local language.