Contrasting attitudes towards a bilingual institutional language policy under internationalization

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Abstract As a reflection of an increasingly multilingual landscape in the past few decades, many universities have been adopting an international language, English, as the language of instruction, in addition to or even in place of the local or national language, whether or not guided by an explicit language policy. The language of instruction may influence whether support is provided for programmes given through the chosen language, thus whether explicit language for specific purposes (LSP) teaching is provided or not. This suggests scope for an institutional language policy to guide the nature and manner of learning and teaching. This paper reports a study into the attitudes of key actors towards bilingualism, internationalization and language policy during a period when an explicit language policy was being considered at a Dutch university. The study identifies a divergence between individual attitudes and institutional practice, especially in the case of bilingualism, less so in the case of internationalization. It also unearths a marked resistance to language policy that is imposed top-down. A language policy that emerges with bottom-up agreement and does not impose specific conditions may lead to opportunities for explicit LSP teaching embedded within disciplines. An explicit language policy may be a pragmatic tool for an international university, but it is not a necessary one.

Keywords Language policy, LSP, bilingualism, internationalization, business and economics, medicine

1 Introduction

Until fairly recently, European universities have generally not felt it necessary to prescribe a language policy for the institution[1], that is, setting down a formal description of which language may be used in which circumstances. The national or regional language was the natural language for the university business of teaching and communication. However, in the past quarter of a century in particular, universities have seen themselves as international operators (Bartell 2003, Keeling 2006, Knight 2008), and have steadily established policies specifying which language or languages may be used for instruction, examination, and administration. To be sure, universities located on linguistic boundaries or with natural multilingual hinterlands have long erected bilingual or trilingual formal policies (e. g. the universities of Bolzano/Bozen [Italian/German], Fribourg [French/German], Helsinki [Finnish/Swedish], Viadrina in Frankfurt an der Oder [German/Polish], and Luxembourg [French/German/Luxembourgish], cf. Langner/Imbach 2000). For a variety of reasons other universities have been setting up programmes in languages other than their natural languages, especially as students become increasingly mobile. In most cases the language chosen is English, entailing that many, if not most European universities now function for teaching and administration in at least two languages. This development has prompted many to clarify which language may be used for

1 An earlier version of parts of this paper was presented at a conference at the University of Luxembourg in 2010, although for a different purpose.

what, for example universities such as Jyväskylä (Finland), Gothenburg (Sweden), Copenhagen (Denmark), Jaume 1 and Pompeu Fabra (Spain) to list but a few.

This drive for regulating the language use in a university as a consequence of internationalizing pressures is not restricted to examination regulations, but it can also affect the whole range of academic activity, from recruitment of teaching and research staff, through employment contracts, marketing, public documentation, the activities of representative councils, to front desk administrators as well as back office staff, and even catering and cleaning staff. While in principle there may be no requirement for a university to have an institutional language policy, beyond the national legislative or ministerial requirements (e. g. supporting Danish as an academic language in Denmark, cf. Hultgren 2014), it is likely that as an institution becomes more international (i. e. increased numbers of students from abroad), issues will increasingly arise where official decisions are required to ensure equitable handling of language practice. This paper looks at one Dutch university where the percentage of "foreign" students has exceeded forty percent, where decisions to operate most undergraduate and postgraduate educational programmes in English have been taken, where a high percentage of students take part of their studies in other countries, and where increasingly academic staff are recruited from all over the world. The paper looks into the attitudes of selected key players in the process of language practice in education at a time when a formalized institutional language policy did not exist. The aim of the study reported here was to identify the conflicting attitudes of these players towards language practice in the university setting by contrasting two faculties, which could be said to operate towards the ends of a continuum: one largely Dutch-medium, and the other almost completely English-medium.

Setting up a policy to regulate language practice in an institution entails the recognition of language use for specific purposes. The context then situates the study reported here within the field of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP), which may be seen as a branch of applied linguistics concerned with the nature of natural languages and their use in society for specific (i. e. restricted) or special ("exceptional" or "privileged") purposes (cf. Scott 1994: 13). Lerat (1998: 100) goes further by emphasizing that on the one hand it is the content that makes the language specific, but that an essential inequality in shared knowledge has consequences, notably in the specificity in vocabulary selected by users. Lerat's observations have an implication that LSP is concerned with the nature and use of specific language within communicative contexts, which themselves are specific. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the biennial European Symposia on LSP have regularly included contributions or sections on language planning and language policy (e. g. a section on language planning with seven contributions in Koskela/Lauren/Nordman/Pilke 2002: 453–532, Picht 2013). It may be concluded that the specific context (a university) in which a language policy outlining specific language use is established constitutes a domain within the general field of LSP (cf. for instance Klaassen 2002).

1.1 Concepts, theories and definitions

This study is located within an area of LSP that addresses institutional policy which informs the environment in which LSP teaching takes place. As such, the LSP teaching in question fits in with the traditional views of LSP as established nearly two decades ago by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1997), who, with reference to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), made a distinction between "absolute" characteristics and "variable" characteristics: absolute characteristics refer to ESP being defined to meet the needs of learners, using the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline in question, and being centred on language that is appropriate to these activities. As Hutchison and Waters (1987) affirmed a decade earlier, ESP with respect to teaching is commonly an approach to learning the language the learner needs for a specific purpose. However, while these earlier definitions seemed to imply that there was a specific teacher of ESP who would assess the needs of the learners and design a course to meet those needs, the changing circumstances of higher education (Knight 2008, Marginson/van de Wende 2007, Wächter/Maiworm 2008) as a consequence of globalization and harmonization (stemming partly from the Bologna Declaration, see European Commission 2012) are impelling higher education institutions to offer full programmes in other languages, especially English, where these programmes may entail little or no instruction by teachers who would primarily be considered ESP teachers, i. e. language specialists focused on teaching the language of a discipline to specific learners. Instead, the learning of the specific language of the discipline is entrusted to disciplinary experts (Jacobs 2007), who are expected to be competent speakers of the language (English), but who may lack knowledge in how to develop the learners' language competences in that discipline (cf. Räsänen/Klaassen 2006). Such a context would seem to necessitate a certain harmonization of rules and regulations for language use within the institutional context to ensure equitable standards that are transparent for learners, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders. This in turn implies some degree of institutional language policy.

Language policy has a long history, with close associations with language planning in colonial and post-colonial eras (for example Kaur Gill 2005; see also Tupas 2009), or more recently in multinational organizations such as the European Union (Studer/Kreiselmaier/Flubacher 2010). Moving away from the strictures of national policymaking, Spolsky (2004: 5) refers to three components of the language policy of a speech community: its language practices, its language beliefs or ideology, and kinds of language intervention or management. In other words, language policy is seen as broader than the intervention familiar in language planning. Shohamy (2006) takes this further, equating language practices with a form of language control. The language policy of a community thus need not rely on explicit rules or institutional or governmental regulation; it may be tacit, in the sense that it is "how we do things with language here", and so can serve inclusive roles within a community as well as exclusive ones. Shohamy sees language policy as a mix of overt regulation and covert mechanisms, which may be seen as community practices.

This study is concerned with language policy at the institutional level. Thus it relates to the explicit and tacit language practices in an institution that guide the institutional discourse. Such policy may be explicitly documented (cf. Hultgren 2014) or may arise through the attitudes, opinions, and actions of individual members of the institution. This study is concerned with both perspectives: the explicit documentation, in that at the university institution under study a written policy, however brief, had existed since 1996, and the tacit mechanisms, in that the study was conducted to elicit the opinions of selected members of the university community about language policy at a time when there was a move in the central university administration to work towards an explicit written document of language policy. The adoption of a written policy by educational institutions mirrors the practice that multinational corporations have been adopting, especially since the 1990s, which has attracted the attention of academic researchers (cf. for example Thomas 2007).

This study is informed by sociolinguistic theory, which may be described as accounting for language in relation to society. Institutional language policy reflects a desire to establish a degree of norms on the variety of language used in the institution. In this respect, institutional language policy may be described as an attempt to constrain the variability of language use that exists. Practices in the institution may involve code-switching between languages depending on circumstances. What institutional language policy may try to do is to establish boundaries for the functional varieties (Dittmar 1976: 110) of the language or languages that are used.

The context in which the policy arises concerns multiple languages in contact. It concerns individuals who may be bilingual or multilingual. However, the terms are used in different ways: to refer to individuals, or to refer to institutional practice. A 'bilingual person' is defined as someone who is functionally competent in two languages. This is necessarily vague, since the participants cannot be tested. Functionally competent means that the participant can carry out the requirements of their job (function) or study in two languages without encountering communication breakdown. It does not mean that communication problems do not occur, but that the participant can work around language problems that arise. This study is not concerned with bilinguals who have grown up with two first languages, although these individuals may be part of the university community. Similarly, multilingual speakers (plurilingual in the Council of Europe's terms, Council of Europe 2006) are those who speak more than two languages at a variety of levels.

The second use of bilingual and multilingual is to refer to the institution itself. In this sense the institution is bilingual if two languages are used for the conduct of its activities. A university may for example offer some degree programmes in one language, and other programmes in a different one: such an institution may be called "institutionally bilingual", but this does not mean that individual actors with the university are also bilingual (Beillard 2000; see also van Leeuwen 2004). Similarly, the institution could be multilingual, if parts of it function in three or more different languages. An institutional language policy would need to differentiate clearly whether it is referring to institutional or individual bilingualism or multilingualism.

1.2 The setting

The Dutch university chosen for this study, Maastricht University, is noted for its high percentage of non-Dutch students (47 %, originating from over 100 countries; figures from 2012, Hans van Ouwersloot, personal information, 25 June 2013). This makes the university the most international in the Netherlands in terms of student national origin. The vast majority of the non-Dutch students opt to study programmes through the medium of English, though a small number, mainly German or Scandinavian, do take the Dutch university entrance exam and decide to follow courses in health sciences or in psychology which are largely in Dutch. This context has led to pressure to formalize the language use, as well as the requirements for both academic and administrative staff. These considerations were behind the choice of the institution for this study.

Internationalization arose at the university not as an institutional policy, but rather incidentally as a consequence of the establishment of the first programme in a language other than Dutch. In 1987, a first-degree programme was started in International Management with the initial ideas of establishing collaboration between the local universities (Maastricht, Aachen and Liège) involving four languages (Dutch, German, French, and English) (cf. Wilkinson 2013 for a description of the programme). The intention predated the European Commission's policy of mother tongue plus two additional languages (European Commission 2003), in that students were expected to be functionally competent (i. e. have sufficient language knowledge to be able to study at two of the three universities in the local language and English) in their mother tongue, English, and in either French or German. While it was quickly noted that students' competence in French or German was often inadequate, and so courses in these languages were soon dropped, the programme itself was very successful in attracting non-Dutch students to study at Maastricht. The upshot was a broad range of new programmes offered through the medium of English in many disciplines (such as economics, business, European studies, law, health, and more recently sciences such as physics, chemistry, and biology).

Gradually, faculties realized that there was a large market of talented students who were willing to migrate from their home countries to Maastricht to begin courses which at the time comprised a four-year 'doctoraal' study (roughly the equivalent of a master's degree). There were two reasons behind the attraction: programmes were in English, and were student-centred, using problem-based learning (Schmidt 1983, Norman/Schmidt 1992, van Til/van der Heijden 1998). The small-group focus of the learning, guided by a tutor, proved so attractive that the internationalization of the university had begun almost before the institution had devised policies both to circumscribe such developments and to provide motivation and rationale for internationalization. The expansion of international programmes, especially during the early 1990s, coincided with stabilization, and even a decline, in the numbers of Dutch-speaking students wishing to study at Maastricht. However, the reduced numbers of Dutch students and the tapping of the international market for talented students does not account for the growth of international programmes in English. Such programmes could have been offered in several languages, notably German and French, the languages of Maastricht's hinterland, or even Spanish reflecting the demand for language courses among students.

Some have argued that the growth of instruction through English is a consequence of the current dominant hegemony of neoliberal ideas (Saunders 2010, Piller/Cho 2013, Wilkins 2012). Saunders indeed summarizes principal trends that have led to what he calls the 'neoliberal university' (2010: 43), notably the prioritization of revenue generation and the reliance on private sources of funding, coupled with the demand for economic efficiency, leading to a growth in part-time and adjunct faculty, and the decline of the tenure system. Wilkins relates neoliberal ideas to the growth of "personalization" (2012: 122 and 129) in education, referring to it as "the latest phase in the seizure of public education by trends of marketization" (2012: 122). In parallel, university rankings have become increasingly important as witnessed by the pride university administrators have with every rise in the rankings (Postema 2014, Baty 2013), a process that, as Piller and Cho (2013: 35) show, serves "covertly" to promote the use of English (see also Hultgren forthcoming). It is possible to draw the conclusion that Maastricht University's rise in the rankings is, at least in part, due to its adoption of English as the medium of instruction for most courses. Phillipson (2003) has long argued that both national and European policies serve to reinforce the dominant role of English in education. Nevertheless, neoliberal trends should not be held as the sole underpinning of the trend towards English-medium education at Maastricht. A major factor for some faculties to offer English-medium programmes was simply survival, due to the decline in recruitment of Dutch students.

In this environment of the internationalization of the university, issues arise concerning the quality of the language used within the academic environment. Universities have long been concerned about the language competences of students entering the academy, and often require entrants to have documented evidence, e. g. the NT2 exam – Dutch as a second language

(College voor Examens n. d.), or the IELTS (IELTS n. d.) or TOEFL (ETS 2014) exams for English. However, questions arise concerning the language that may be used for examinations or in the classroom (often regulated by institutional or faculty examination regulations), the quality of the language used by academic or administrative staff, the informational documentation published online, the service provision for student accommodation, employment contracts, and relationships with national and local authorities on behalf of international students and staff, not to mention socialization within the academic institution. By 1996, Maastricht University had declared itself to be a "bilingual university" (Maastricht University 1995, 1996), without any explication of what it meant by the word *bilingual*.

The policy was a pragmatic and practical recognition of what was occurring in the university. The use of two instructional languages albeit largely in parallel was termed *bilingualism* as a policy approach to profiling the institution. The policy was reaffirmed in a 2006 discussion paper (Zanting 2006), but with a stronger emphasis on education in English, at a time when the university clarified its path to becoming an international university (Ritzen 2004). Indeed, the reaffirmation may be seen as an attempt to bolster the position of Dutch, as much of the university's teaching had become English-medium in the meantime, though with only limited explicit attention to the specificness of the language of the discipline.

However, the policy was not widely disseminated within the university. It seemed (to the author) that while people in faculties were to some extent aware of the university policy, each faculty could decide its own language policy for its programmes and for its staff. This study was therefore set up with a view to tapping the opinions of representative members of different faculties and of the Executive Board of the university as well as members of the central administration. The research question underlying the study was to identify what key members understood by 'bilingual' and 'international' within the context of their work or study. It was expected that the responses would be divergent and unclear. The study aimed to feed into discussions that were ongoing about the need for a formal written language policy document.

2 Method

It was decided to approach representatives from two faculties that could be said to lie at opposite ends of a continuum of Dutch- and English-medium instruction. The Medical School (at the time of the study) was almost totally in Dutch, with nearly all classes conducted through the medium of Dutch, even if most of the literature was in English. The School is strongly wedded to problem-based learning (Schmidt 1983) and a core principle is that students learn from confrontation with professional practice from early in their studies. Thus students are closely engaged with direct patient encounters even in their first year, which will almost always be in Dutch or local dialect. In contrast, the School of Business and Economics is almost totally English-medium, with almost all communication taking place in English, including all the administrative and support staff. However, in the corridors and the coffee areas languages other than English can be heard. In addition, it was decided to interview members of the central university administration: these would be people responsible for deciding on any official institutional language policy as well as implementing it.

2.1 Research design

This study was a qualitative design (Hennink/Hutter/Bailey 2011) using semi-structured interviews (DiCiccio/Crabtree 2006). The paper partly follows Studer, Kreiselmaier, and Flubacher (2010), who used interviews to investigate attitudes of European Union (EU) policy-makers to language policy in the EU. Studer and colleagues' purpose focused on identifying potential clashes between respondents' institutional and personal identities. For this reason emphasis and pausing could play a key role in unraveling identity "clashes" (2010: 259). They compared in "detail" (2010: 261) two extracts which serve as examples of "typical policy-making behaviour" (Studer/Kreiselmaier/Flubacher 2010: 259, 261). In the present study the focus is rather on comparing a broader spectrum of opinion from equivalent representatives at different functional levels in two faculties and from the central administration responsible for institutional policy. It should be noted that because the design involved unraveling the opinions and experiences of participants of one single university, it is not possible to generalize to other contexts. However, similarities may exist in other erstwhile monolingual universities that are adopting a degree of English-medium instruction.

2.2 Participants

Eleven participants were recruited for the purposes of this study. The goal was to interview faculty members with closely matching positions. Thus four members from each of the Medical School (MS) and the School of Business and Economics (SBE) were selected: the dean or the faculty director, both of whom had held the position for at least two years; two educationalists with at least 15 years of experience in the design and implementation of programmes in different languages (Dutch and English); two academic teachers with at least eight years of experience teaching economics or physiology on programmes where the language of instruction was not their first language; and two representatives from the respective student associations in Economics and Business and in Medicine. Of the student representatives, one was a third-year bachelor's student (SBE), and the other in the fourth-year of medical studies. From the central administration, one member of the university Executive Board was interviewed and two members of the university office having language policy within their remit. Five respondents were male and six were female. Eight interviewees spoke Dutch as their first language, the remaining three German. All respondents except the two student representatives and one member of the central university office had considerable experience in educational institutions: at least 15 years of work in higher education. For reasons of anonymity further demographic details may not be provided.

The small number of interviewees is nevertheless a constraint. A larger number of interviews would have provided the opportunity to determine the extent to which opinions were shared. Similarly, the choice of only two faculties limits the scope. Interviews with other faculties may have yielded different opinions (e. g. law, arts and social sciences). However, the interviewees were selected to represent key positions in the university and the faculties, and to ensure a degree of representativeness (top position, experienced teacher, experienced educationalist, student representative). Moreover, the choice of the School of Business and Economics and the Medical School was deliberate in order to have two faculties at different ends of an instructional language continuum (English and Dutch respectively).

2.3 Semi-structured questionnaire

The questions in the interviews were grouped under six headings: (1) the definitions of bilingualism and internationalization (e. g. "What does bilingualism mean for you?"); (2) perceptions of language policy (e. g. "Does the university/faculty need a language policy?"); (3) strategic vision (e. g. "How do you see the university/faculty developing in the next five-ten years?"); (4) language use in educational practice (e. g. "Can you describe the language use in the programmes in your faculty?" – questions not asked of the central administration); (5) aspects relating to the quality of the education (e. g. "What should students be able to do in the languages at the end of their studies?"); and (6) personal perceptions (e. g. "How happy are you with the evolution of university/faculty policy?" – note that this question was broader than simply language policy). The duration of the interviews ranged from thirty minutes to nearly one hour. This paper confines itself to the responses related to definitions and language policy; the aspects related to strategic vision and educational quality are largely omitted from this report. The interviews were conducted in English in the autumn of 2009, and all respondents agreed to answer in English. All interviews were conducted by the same (male) interviewer over a six-week period.

The interviews were guided by a series of pre-formulated questions (Studer/Kreiselmaier/Flubacher 2010). However, the questions were rephrased as appropriate in the light of the conversation in each interview, which meant that the questions asked were not always identical, nor did they occur in the same order. Where necessary, further questions were asked for clarification or explanation. The aim was to reflect ordinary conversational dialogue among university colleagues as closely as possible, especially in one that reflects a multicultural, multilingual environment (cf. Mauranen 2010, Duff 2010, Coupland/Wiemann/Giles 1991, Lauridsen 2013).

2.4 Procedure and analysis

The interviewees were approached by email or by telephone and asked if they would be willing to participate. The interview took place in their own office, or in the case of the students in a room in the respective faculty. The interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed, and anonymized where possible. Participants gave consent to the procedure on condition of anonymity. Respondents' transcripts were coded numerically. The transcription policy deviates from that used by Studer/Kreiselmaier/Flubacher (2010) in that the transcriptions were punctuated as appropriate for ease of reading, and edited slightly to eliminate some hesitations and word repetitions (see Appendix for transcription guidelines).

In line with the purpose of the study reported here, the transcriptions were analysed by searching for the respondents' answers to the questions under the headings "bilingualism", "internationalization", and "language policy". The remaining parts of the transcriptions were scanned for additional information on these three aspects, especially the answers to the question on language use in the relevant faculty. Software such as NVivo (QSR International 2013) was not used to code the transcripts.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Bilingualism

Respondents interpreted bilingualism as meaning the use of two languages: "you are comfortable in two languages" (#2)[2], "being able to communicate in more than one language, or two languages, using two languages to [read] a topic" (#7), "the communication as well to students as to staff should be available in both languages" (#5). This could be seen as an institutional interpretation, even as an ideal. However, this dual ability is not how bilingualism is interpreted in practice in the university. According to the Executive Board respondent, bilingualism is seen as a policy to further internationalization.

> If you would like to become or to be an international university, then first of all you have to introduce the English language, because the students coming from abroad don't speak Dutch or not all of them. (#1)

It is noteworthy in this quote that the respondent distances himself slightly from the comment by referring to "you", thus avoiding "we". Moreover, the respondent went on to define bilingualism in terms of what it is not: that the policy did not mean students should be competent in both Dutch and English. A contrast, however, is immediately apparent in the view of one of the central university officers, who clearly did expect that competence in both languages.

> Bilingual means that you are comfortable with both languages, that you are able to express yourself sufficiently in two languages and on institutional level it means that there's a policy that allows people to hand in documents in both languages and that there's a certain underlying expectation that you can approach people in both languages within the institution and they will be able to understand you regardless of whether it's English or Dutch. (#2)

We see here that the officer expects complete equivalence of the two languages. However, like the Executive Board interviewee, she also distances herself by using "you". In other words, both respondents are referring to an institutional policy that is not reflected in reality. This conflict between reality and what could be termed a "desired context" recurs in the opinions of the faculty leaders. The SBE director finds bilingualism a non-issue, whereas the MS dean appreciates that the two languages are in fact necessary for medical practice in a local community, although he terms bilingualism "an ideal".

> I didn't know that the university says well ok our policy is bilingual. What I remember is that they said well it's either bilingual or English in case if Dutch isn't relevant. I think that should be the way it should be because when you look at the UM Maastricht University there's this whole diversity of entities within the university, and looking for example at our school business and economics (…) well it's ridiculous to have a bilingual policy. (#8)

> In my position that means that of course it's a Dutch university but it also has as the lingua franca of I would say the international academic community also adopted English as the second language. That means that basically if you were puritan you would have all communication in two languages all signs have to be in two languages people have to be fluent in two languages and it has been accomplished in some aspects, others not (…) so I think it's an ideal, but it's not perhaps been accomplished. (#4)

[2] See Appendix for identification of job functions.

Here both respondents adopt a personal tone ("I"). They emphasize their personal perspective, but specifically from their positions in their respective faculties. The SBE has shifted to English-medium instruction, and the director does not see a place for Dutch, a view shared by the SBE educationalist: "So the necessity to have it really bilingual in the sense that it has to be in Dutch and in English doesn't exist any more" (#9). This, one may assume, also means that the faculty does not see it as their role to promote integration within the local community. This is an issue very much in the mind of the MS dean who starts from the basis that it is a "Dutch university". This reflects the necessary relationship of a medical school to its community: medical students and staff need to interact with the local community as part of the regular medical education.

The educationalists and the teachers interviewed tend to share the opinions of the dean or director. For example, the teacher at SBE observes: "We're no longer bilingual now. We only use English, which means that the institution is monolingual or whatever it might be called" (#10). His comment "whatever it might be called" carries an undercurrent of criticism of the implementation in practice. He further qualifies this when he characterizes the impact of English-medium instruction on the staff, who are almost all not native English speakers: "the monolinguality of the institution requires bilingualism on the side of the staff members" (#10). In other words, institutional English monolingualism in a non-English-speaking country places at least a bilingual obligation on the staff.

Just as the SBE teacher sees his faculty as monolingual, so does the MS teacher, although in a different way: "I would think that we are not bilingual" (#6). She hedges her comment by stressing the personal nature of her opinion "I would think", and adds subsequently that this is because of her interpretation of what bilingual would mean for the Medical School: "bilingual means that you use two languages in each programme (…) maybe" (#6). The addition of "maybe" after a slight hesitation suggests that other interpretations are possible. This hedging contrasts with the much stronger certainty of the SBE teacher.

To a large degree, pragmatism dictates the choices of the faculties. The SBE conducts virtually all its business and teaching in English, whereas for the MS this is largely in Dutch[3]. The teaching staff do see a need to be able to function in both languages, even though one language dominates in each faculty. The student representatives tend to mirror the opinion of the dominant language in their respective faculties, but interestingly the SBE student emphasizes a need for other languages: "Of course it's not mandatory to learn Dutch, so most Germans avoid or don't learn Dutch or they say they'd rather improve their knowledge of French or any other language instead of learning Dutch" (#11). This comment illustrates the recognition that international students can learn the local language, but the lack of an obligation to do so implies that most do not. The MS student emphasizes his personal opinion that not "everything has to be bilingual", nor should "everything […] be in English", but he does "think it's important that we that you have both practices" (#7). In this sense, he seems to be suggesting that medical students should be able to function in both Dutch and English, but also to learn solely through English if that is necessary. However, he distances himself from this view by the corrective switch from "we" to "you". As was the case with other respondents, there is a distancing of personal attitudes from beliefs about what the institution should do.

3 In 2012–13 only 60.5 % of the teaching staff were Dutch. A further 8.5 % were Belgian, but it is not known how many of these were Flemish (i. e., Dutch-speaking). (Hans Ouwersloot, personal communication, 25 June 2013).

Bilingualism at the university may be interpreted as institutional bilingualism (cf. van Leeuwen 2004) where in the institution as a whole two languages function as communication and instructional media, but not necessarily in the same faculties or same programmes. Thus, the medical programme is largely monolingual Dutch, but with an obligation for students and staff to be able to master complex medical texts in English. This may be viewed as implicit language for specific purposes: there is little explicit ESP teaching per se (cf. for example Räisänen/Fortanet-Gomez 2008); the language of medicine in English is largely acquired through extensive reading. The programmes at SBE are monolingual English, with little or no obligation for students and staff to understand other languages, but most of the staff and students are required by the monolingualism to be at least bilingual at an individual level. We may term this pragmatic bilingualism, an institutional response to the situation on the ground at faculty level. However, there is also evidence of similar "clashes" between personal attitudes and institutional attitudes that Studer/Kreiselmaier/Flubacher (2010) reported among their EU policy-makers. In the present study, respondents distance themselves from their perception of institutional bilingualism, while they might hold different personal attitudes. Moreover, multilingualism scarcely arose in the interviews, despite it being an official European policy (e. g. Kryzyżanowski/Wodak 2011), although this may be a limitation of the study design: the structured questionnaire did not ask about multilingualism.

3.2 Internationalization

For the interviewees, internationalization entails many related factors: "an international classroom [consisting] of students from different nationalities different backgrounds different cultures different religions (…) if you want to (…) and also different languages" (#2), "people with many different cultural and ethnical backgrounds (…) a very diverse student inflow from various countries, worldwide basically" (#8), "international staff bringing in all kinds of cultures (…) but all kinds of cases literature or inside information about certain regions in the world" (#5), "an international perspective in research and education" (#10). Internationalization implies a mix of staff and students from different nationalities and backgrounds, and an international approach to the content of what is learned. The respondents did not expand on what they meant by an international content, which could be interpreted to include international internships, academic mobility, joint and double degrees, among other practices (Knight 2008: 3), even though such practices are regularly emphasized in Maastricht University's strategic plans (e. g. the current plan, Maastricht University 2012: 33–35).

However, it is not simply a matter of having small numbers of students from sixty different countries, where in most cases there is only one student from a particular country: that is not internationalization, according to an educationalist (#5). It is necessary to have substantial groups of students from each of a large number of countries to qualify as an international university. Otherwise, the institution is simply one with international students. This opinion is shared by the central administration, where one official (#2) describes the university as tri-national, since the largest groups of students comprise German (27.6 %), Dutch (53.7 %) and Belgian (4.5 %). UK students now form the fourth largest group with 281 in 2012–2013[4]. The Executive Board interviewee too sees the issue not in terms of "too many students" from a few national groups, but rather "not enough" from other countries (#1).

[4] Figures are from the 2012–2013 university records (Hans Ouwersloot, personal communication, 25 June 2013).

For the MS dean, internationalization is a necessity because medicine deals with global problems. For this reason, the labour market in medicine is also global.

> For example if you look at the reemergence of infectious diseases they come back from developing countries to the developed countries (…) that's why you have to have the international perspective. (#4)

Yet it is noticeable that again there is a distancing through the use of "you", not "we". It could be argued that the use of "you" is merely formulaic speech (but cf. Grover/Grundy [1996: 8] for "non-deictic deictic" use of "you"). However, the frequent switch during interviews between "I" and "you" suggests that the latter serves a distancing function. It may be that the dean recognizes this distance and that the international perspective of medicine is not shared, as evidenced by the MS student representative who cannot conceive of the medical programme as international: "I don't believe that medicine at this moment is international, I think it's Dutch. It is bilingual but it's not international." (#7). Clearly, the dean and the medical students do not share the same meaning of the word *medicine* in these extracts.

For SBE students who are likely to work in international teams after graduation, it seems most useful to practise working in the same way while studying, according to the SBE director (#8). The SBE student interviewee expands this idea: "International means that there will be more competition but at the same time there will be a greater amount of experience, (…) or different influences which contribute to the studies" (#11). The student interprets international as a benefit, arguably for all the students in the faculty, although it is noticeable that he distances himself from this by avoiding the use of "we".

3.3 Language policy

A language policy was seen as concomitant to internationalization, as evidenced by its inclusion in the internationalization policy documents of 1995 and 1996 (Maastricht University 1995, 1996). This suggests that the policy was top-down led by Executive Board decisions. However, the Board's respondent qualifies this.

> It was partly top-down since we also pushed the faculties to introduce at least the English for the masters all the master's courses, and what we see now is that the faculties themselves also developed bachelor courses in the English language because they see that also bachelor courses could be very attractive for students coming from abroad. (#1)

The respondent here aligns himself with the decisions of his predecessors through the use of "we", and it is noticeable that he accords co-responsibility to the faculties. Thus he sees the use of English as medium of instruction as a shared responsibility. At this stage though, language policy is viewed in terms of practices, in particular which language should be used for the medium of instruction. However, within the central university office, there is the feeling that a top-down approach to a language policy leads to resistance. "Top-down there's always the sense that it's not voluntary something because it's something the big bosses on top have invented and they want to force everyone to follow it." (#2) The officer goes on to emphasize her preference for a bottom-up approach:

> (…) if you do it bottom-up there's more general University of Maastricht feeling of in terms of I know that this is the policy and this is expected of me and I encounter problems

> in my daily work, so I would like to improve this for my own sake for my own benefit. So from that perspective I would like to go with the bottom-up perspective. (#2)

The use of "I" is significant here. The officer is putting herself first of all in the position of the employees, empathizing with their situation and the challenging of working through English. She sees that a bottom-up approach can generate ownership of a policy. The last "I" clearly is her personal opinion.

However, since some faculties, notably the SBE, began with programmes in English long before the university considered establishing an institutional language policy, language decisions may be seen as top-down, not at university level, but at faculty, or even programme level. By the early 1990s, the number of students studying economics in Dutch at Maastricht was declining. While the initial decision to launch an international business programme was "a very strategic choice" (#8), what followed was more often a haphazard response to how events changed on the ground, as emphasized by the SBE teacher: "I think there are phases in this which probably are not really the result of an explicitly taken decision, but more of a spontaneous haphazard process" (#10). Moreover, as the interviewee emphasizes, some decisions that promoted internationalization and contributed to a language policy (in terms of Spolsky 2004) were taken for economic reasons, "for example the decision at some point to abolish the Dutch language programmes altogether" (#10). The gradual Englishization (Kachru 1982: 6, Kirkpatrick 2011, Hultgren forthcoming) of the whole faculty (and slowly spreading to other faculties) has resulted in even the one remaining programme that is partially in Dutch, Fiscal Economics, becoming Englishized:

> (…) even nowadays their tutor is often not Dutch. So also there the discussions in tutorials are in English, and they don't complain because the literature is in English everything is in English so why (…) it's even more complex to translate everything in Dutch. So in our school it makes sense. (#9)

In the Medical School the situation is different. A clear language policy is required. However, it is not simple in practice, as the dean observes: "We have two options, having our students learn Dutch or having the patients learn English (…) but I think the language policy can look very easy like that" (#4). While he accepts that it is not in fact easy to establish a policy for the two tracks which have emerged at the Medical School (a Dutch track, and an English-speaking track), "Ideally students should be able to make a choice, do I want this block[5] to do this block in English or in Dutch?" (#4). The dean went on to stress that he did not want a policy with detailed rules, although it would have to differentiate between the bachelor's and master's phases in medical education, especially because the master's phase involves dealing with patients who, in the local environment, mostly speak Dutch or German or even only the local Limburg dialect.

The challenges of establishing a language policy in the MS is reflected in the educationalist's comments. "I don't know if there is a policy on paper though I think everybody knows the staff knows that we have to do something in English, but there is a big difference between the opinions of different people" (#5). Moreover, she perceives problems if the use of one language, for example English, is imposed from top-down; the staff would then question the decision. For instance, "we have to talk Dutch with the patients, and then I think it is very stupid if you

5 "Block" is the term at Maastricht University for a period of study lasting about eight weeks. Most blocks are thematically organized.

learn students communication skills in English" (#5). We see in these extracts the frequent use of "I": it is clear that the policy issues are very sensitive and the interviewee feels very closely concerned. The sensitivity is evident in the view of the MS teacher, who recognizes the English track in medicine as part of the internationalization policy rather than language policy: "a top-down action (…) still a painful topic" (#6). These opinions reflect those of the central policy advisor (#2) above.

At the time of this study, language policy was vague. While the choice to internationalize the university was a strategic decision, principally top-down, the impact on language policy was largely devolved to faculties or even individual departments. The university policy remains one of institutional bilingualism: two languages, Dutch and English, are used (similar to the "parallellingualism" policy at the University of Copenhagen, cf. Hultgren 2014: 74–75). Hultgren indeed sees the covert ideology in institutional policies as meaning "more English" (2014: 79). The SBE's adoption of a monolingual policy to use English reflects a similar covert ideology that has become explicit, but it is not always one that is welcomed: "So my role in this whole thing, it's a bit like a teetotaller who under pressure from the social services has to work in a bar." (#10) In contrast, both student interviewees saw the value of an explicit language policy: "it should be mandatory for students to learn Dutch because I think if you're living in a country you should be at least able to speak the language of the country at a basic level" (#11) and "Well if I could recommend something to the university there could be some stronger policy than now" (#7). The students qualify their opinions ("I think", "should", "well if I could", "there could") but their comments contrast with those of the educationalists and teachers who imply a degree of discomfort with centrally determined policy. The students seem to be urging for more explicit direction.

4 Conclusion

This study has focused on the conflicting attitudes towards bilingualism, internationalization and language policy as evidenced in a selected group of people from two faculties and the central administration of a Dutch university, where nearly half the students originate from outside the Netherlands. The aim was to reflect the attitudinal background in the university at a time when the establishment of a documented university language policy was being considered. The interviews with eleven respondents reveal a degree of conflict between perceptions of institutional policy and individual attitudes. While respondents accept the institutional policy, they tend to distance themselves from it implying that their personal attitudes do not necessarily align with official policy. This resembles the "clash of identities" reported in Studer and colleagues (2010).

For many years the university eschewed the establishment of an explicit documented language policy. Language policy remained institutionally bilingual in Dutch and English, to be pragmatically interpreted according to different circumstances applying in faculties and offices. Noticeably, centrally imposed policies do not always align with individual attitudes. If the difference becomes too great, "clash" could turn into "conflict". Issues continued to arise that a language policy could address, such as the bilingual nature of the support system for education and research. The 2006 policy document (Zanting 2006) directed the university to reach a bilingual status within three years, i. e. by 2009. The document specifies the bilingual status as entailing that all master's programmes should be in English (unless there are good reasons why not, e. g. in medicine or Dutch law), and that the instructional language in bachelor's programmes should be English if that matches the nature of the study. Furthermore, the support system and the administrative system should be bilingual. While the instructional language goals have largely been met, and indeed this was the case already in 2006, there is still a lack of evidence about the bilingual nature of the support system and the administrative structure. A call for regular internal audits of the bilingual status has largely gone unheeded, although the university has been commended for the quality of its internationalization (NVAO 2013).

Nevertheless, the 2006 policy led to a new proposal (Language Policy Working Party 2013) that details the specific linguistic requirements in Dutch and English for the university to be called "bilingual". However, the policy refrains from specifying the competences students could be expected to acquire or those that staff should possess. The institutional policy has been formally approved, and implementation is scheduled to start from 2014 (Language Policy Working Party 2013). The policy retains the devolved responsibility for language practice: faculties should decide to what extent they should be bilingual, institutionally or otherwise, and what competences may be necessary for specific staff to deliver programmes in the language or languages chosen. The policy does, however, specify that faculties should take certain actions, such as specifying the language competences students achieve as a result of following a programme. The policy does not dictate how faculties should do this, since flexibility across many different programmes is important. The absence of detailed specification in the policy is a reflection of the diversity of opinion in the university, as shown in the present study.

Besides indicating the differing attitudes towards bilingualism, internationalization, and language policy, this study has also highlighted the challenge of top-down planning. Several respondents remarked that top-down decision-making in these issues can generate resistance, which would hamper implementation. The Language Policy Working Party included twenty members, working in four specialist teams (Academic Studies, Dutch, Human Resources, and Finance). Each team consulted widely, which meant a broader basis for acceptance of the final recommendations (Language Policy Working Party 2013). It is perhaps regrettable that student input was limited to the Dutch group (including other languages), especially as the student representatives in this study both perceived the need for a stronger language policy. Nevertheless, the greater attention to bottom-up policy creation may enhance the likelihood of effective implementation. It is noteworthy that the policy is entitled "Language proficiency", not language policy, which may also serve the same goal. Sometimes subtle changes in wording may lessen resistance (cf. for example Petty/Wegener/Fabrigar 1997).

The site for this study was a Dutch university that is located near the French-German-Dutch linguistic fault lines, and atop four linguistico-cultural spaces: Dutch, German, Flemish (Dutch-speaking Belgians), and Walloon (French-speaking Belgians). It might seem an ideal location for a multilingual university, mirroring the locations of the universities of Fribourg, Bozen/Bolzano, Luxembourg, and Viadrina (Frankfurt an der Oder). However, the university has chosen not to adopt a multilingual objective. Instead, a situation of "bi-lingualism" exists for administrative purposes and to varying degrees for the teaching staff, and of "monolingual education plus" for the students, whereby students need their first language and English, and maybe on a voluntary basis an additional language.

The practices of language use in a university are influenced by many socio-political and educational factors, including the willingness of university members to use an additional language for educational and communication purposes. Economic factors may well have played a key role in the evolution of the language policy in the case examined here, in that the limitation of funds has restricted the options of dual language programmes, the provision of educating students in two languages, and the appraisal and certification of individual language competences. Learning the language within a specific discipline through the specialists of that discipline has been seen as an integral part of the process of assimilation into the disciplinary community (cf. Jacobs 2007): only in limited aspects has there been explicit LSP teaching (e. g. academic writing). However, the decision to require specification of exit competences opens up courses to analysis of how they enable students to acquire these competences. It thus potentially unbars routes to the provision of explicit LSP teaching and support, embedded within the relevant disciplines. However, one may ask, as Hultgren (2014: 81) does, why universities need a language policy at all. Hultgren surmises that the policies, however flexible, could be "a smokescreen to cover up the inherent tension between retaining the local language and intensified internationalization" (2014: 81). Indeed, an international university may need a language policy to provide a framework for regulating language practices (cf. Piller/Cho 2013), but it may not need to have a plurality of languages.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge, with grateful thanks, the very helpful and detailed comments from two anonymous reviewers as well as from the editors, almost all of whose suggestions have been incorporated. Unfortunately, due to space constraints, I was not able to elaborate on some of the points raised.

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Appendix: Transcription guidelines

Spelling:	UK spelling (Oxford)
Punctuation:	Full stops/periods inserted where an utterance marks a sentence end. Commas inserted for reading ease if necessary.
Q	Interviewer
A	Interviewee
(…)	Brief hesitations or silences
[…]	Text omission
[word]	Addition for clarity
(#[Number])	Interviewee identifier

#1	Executive Board
#2	Central University Officer
#3	Central University Officer
#4	Medical School Dean
#5	Medical School Educationalist
#6	Medical School Teacher
#7	Medical School Student Representative
#8	School of Business & Economics Director
#9	School of Business & Economics Educationalist
#10	School of Business & Economics Teacher
#11	School of Business & Economics Student Representative

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