



The monolingual campus and the bilingual campus

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Introduction

- **‘Internationalization’ of the university campus**
- **New language policies...on multilingualism?**
- **Monolingual policy: Eindhoven University of Technology**
- **Bilingual policy: Tilburg University**



Problem statement

- **How is the language policy regarding English as a language on the university campus formulated and what is its social meaning?**
- **What is the uptake of this new policy work?**

Monolingual Policy

The main reason for a **monolingual** policy at Eindhoven University of Technology is **inclusivity**: universities are part of a **global network**, and language use should reflect that. A switch to English **removes barriers** for non-Dutch speaking students and employees, e.g., being able to read all policy documents and attend all meetings, and it helps to create a stronger **sense of community**



Monolingual Policy

“We would like to remind all students and staff that some of the habits we have acquired to cope with being Dutch in an English speaking university in the Netherlands although innocently motivated, have an **exclusionary** effect that, though inadvertent, is **insidious and destructive**. Students and staff **burdened** with these habits feel **excluded, wrong-footed** and placed at a **disadvantage** and that is just about the worst thing for a **healthy** institution. (...) We are striving to be an **inclusive** faculty and this means that we have to do our best to not **burden** our international students and staff with an unnecessary and quite inappropriate **guilt** when their presence forces the conversation to change from Dutch into English, especially when that conversation (...) should be in English in the first place.”

Monolingual policy

Advice to Students: “make an effort to be **inclusive** to all your fellow students. Make sure that the **diversity** of our student population is **fairly represented** in all your associations and committees. Be **open and welcoming and woke**. Make sure you are not yourself **guilty** of the language-games outlined above. And take the initiative to mingle outside of your own language group of linguistic comfort zone. We see **archipelagos** forming of all sorts of linguistic **sub-cultures**. This is not a good development, let’s not just believe that it is good to work together, let’s actually do it.” (Eindhoven University of Technology, 2022)

Discourse

Bad: insidious, destructive, exclusionary
burden, excluded, wrong-footed
archipelagos of sub-cultures

Good: inclusion, network, sense of community
removing barriers
healthy institution, open, welcoming, woke
representing diversity

Declaration ECSPM

Monolingual policy aims to achieve greater equity. It is based on the presumption that English is a means to economic development, modernization, and global communication.

Monolingual policy leads to the use of English as the sole 'lingua academica', to English Medium Instruction (EMI) and to the 'Englishisation' of Higher education.

The policy is ignoring linguistic rights of other national, regional and minority languages. This policy does not do justice to linguistic and cultural diversity.

Bilingual Policy

“The university is an international university, firmly anchored in the region and therefore **bilingual**. The language in education and research and of the academic community is English, based on the principle of “**inclusion**.” In this way, international staff and students can also fully **participate** in the communication on our campus.” (Tilburg University)

BON (*Beter Onderwijs Nederland*, Better Education Netherlands) petition 'for **language rich** education, against **language impoverishment** through Anglicization'. They warn for the '**destruction** of academic education' which because we all increasingly use the language of Shakespeare.

The aim of the petition of BON is to obligate the national government to enforce article 7.2 of the law on higher education. It states that academic universities and universities for applied sciences **in principle** should teach in Dutch unless there are circumstances **necessitating** education in another language.

Reality

- In 2019, **76%** of the MA programs and **29%** of the BA programs at academic universities in the Netherlands are taught in English
- Already in 2003 (!), the Royal Academy reported the switch to English as a language of instruction in education would lead to a **loss of quality** of 30%. At least, **all** BA-programs should be in Dutch. On campus, multilingualism (only Dutch and English are mentioned) should be **cultivated**.
- Academia might lose its connection to society

Uptake

In reply to **BON**:

- International students **enrich** our campuses with new ideas and perspectives
- English has become a global language, and a second language in the Netherlands, for many years; internationalization at universities **mirrors** our society
- Dutch and English should be treated **equally**; this calls for more attention to academic proficiency in Dutch at universities.

→ bilingual perspective

(Marc van Oostendorp, Radboud University Nijmegen, on *Neerlandistiek*, web forum for Dutch language and literature)

Uptake

In reply to the letter on policy at **Eindhoven University**:

- language policy should not be **enforced**. Languages are not as strictly **delineated** as this policy suggests; we **mix** languages all the time. Staff and students should be allowed to informally **negotiate** language use in different situations.
- higher education and science not only is important for academia, but also has a **responsibility** for society.
- Plea for English **and** Dutch, not English or Dutch.

→ multilingual (translanguaging) perspective

(Kristel Doreleijers, Tilburg University, in a newspaper)

Discussion

➤ **European humanism** as a foundation for academia:

Ideal of civilization: human **dignity** is central in a spiritual universe, cultivating arts, humanities, philosophy and theology as instruments to learn and keep the highest values of life and cherishing the **diversity of languages** and cultures.

Universities teach virtues, like tolerance and peacefulness, and values, such as freedom and social justice.

➤ The **value of language**:

communication and identification, cultural expression, the spine of culture, cultural heritage. This asks for policies and practice that treat languages with dignity and equity.

Discussion

Language categories are **never neutral**: hierarchies of power;

Language categories do not properly reflect language in interaction

Language is behavior -> languaging

Contra **linguicism**

Framework for policy

Inclusive multilingualism asks for a playground of flexibility where linguistic and cultural diversity are allowed and interlocutors themselves are responsible for language choice and language practices

Shared language knowledge, Lingua Receptiva, Code Switching, Translanguaging ... and English as a Lingua Franca (→ Dunglish, as a manifestation of global English)

Ad Backus, Durk Gorter, Karlfried Knapp, Rosita Schjerve-Rindler, Jos Swanenberg, Jan ten Thije, Eva Vetter (2013) Inclusive multilingualism: concept, modes and implications. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics* 1(2), p. 179-215.

Conclusion

The monolingual campus and the bilingual campus

Education is mainly in English

In practice, a campus population is multilingual

Dignity and respect ask for recognition of multilingualism

In education, linguistic diversity should be cherished, as a strength, but now it is ignored