Position paper for sub-project on **Language learning and motivation**

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This sub-project had a very slow start because we did not gather data as efficiently as the other sub-projects. But we are getting there now, combining the project's own data with those gathered in Japan in September 2015 in cooperation with members of the project "International business communication in offshore projects" at the University of Copenhagen, led by Mie Femø Nielsen. Our own data consist at this time of less than ten interviews with Danish and transnationally mobile members of the staff in four multilingual workplaces.

The original idea was to investigate the different trajectories of language socialization that are relevant for people working in what we in the beginning called the global corporation and later redefined as the globalized corporation. The common-sense idea was the following: on the one hand, Danes working in a globalized corporation in Denmark have to adapt to the outer world that largely does *not* speak Danish. On the other hand, their colleagues from abroad (transnationally mobile staff) will either have to learn Danish or have to improve their English since English undoubtedly is the preferred *lingua franca* of Danes (and Scandinavians in general) – or both.

Pre-Lingcorp research done by members of the team has already suggested that things are not that simple. Here we refer, among others, to research done by the CALPIU team on transnationally mobile students and to Lønsmann's study of a Danish company having adopted the idea of English as a corporate language (Lønsmann 2011)[1]. One thing we soon realized that there are two connected but by now means identical problem areas: language choices for communication with customers and suppliers outside Denmark, and language choices for internal communication. As to the first, increased globality[2] of trading connections may have affected the width of language choices, but here the corporation cannot set its own policy since it has to adapt to the other actor's linguistic affordances and preferences. If they accept the Danes' choice of their preferred lingua franca, English, everybody is happy. If not, the corporation has to cope with it. Language policy, we soon found out, was almost always understood as an internal measure to cope with the challenges of the increased globality of the labour market: how can we help inclusion of the transnationally mobile part of the workforce? This has to take its point of departure in the already existing affordances, and this means, in Scandinavia at least, using English because that is what the local workforce can provide. Often the language policy manifests itself in admonitions to speak English, as we learned from one of our interviews:

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[1] It is interesting that a manager from the very corporation studied in Lønsmann 2011 at a recent discussion rejected the term 'corporate language' and pleaded for the use of 'common language' instead.

[2] 'globality' is used in the sense of Beck (1997) as distinct from the age-old process of 'globalization' and the neo-liberal ideology of 'globalism' (cf. Haberland 2009, 2013).

155 INF ehm unser Projekt war sehr international
156   wir hatten überall Schilder wo stand hier wird nur Englisch
157   gesprochen (0.4)
158   und da im [Prinzip]
159 INT   [mhm]
160 INF eigentlich alle Nationalitäten auch fast nur ein oder
161   zweimal vertreten waren (0.4)
162   hat man tatsächlich auch nur Englisch gesprochen (0.8)

155 INF   ehm our project was very international
156   we had signs all over the place which said here only English is
157   spoken (0.4)
158   and since in [principle]
159 INT   [mhm]
160 INF   actually all nationalities also almost were only represented
161   once or twice (0.4)
162   we spoke in fact only English indeed (0.8)

This example is instructive. It does not only display the prevailing ideology of inclusion management by only speaking English, and how it shows itself in the setting up of signs saying that only English is spoken here (156f.). It also shows that this is a necessary move, as Janus Mortensen already remarked on similar signs in an international university program: "Their mere presence indexes that English is not the only language in this setting." (Mortensen 2014: 427) It furthermore shows that often using English is the only practicable move, since it is the only language shared by all, and, probably even more important, there is no competing language that is shared if not by all then by sufficiently many.

In the words of the original research application: "Two obvious accommodation routes will be that of incoming employees learning Danish and that of local staff improving their skills in English for use as a lingua franca, but the project will investigate other options (especially that of improving receptive skills in other Scandinavian languages). The main questions are
• which languages are learnt …
• what is the motivation for language learning, and
• why are some languages not learned?"

As analysis model we suggested at that time mainly one developed by François Grin (2003) which he called the 'COD model'. This was originally meant to describe the vitality of minority languages with reference to *Capacity* to speak the language, *Opportunity* to use it with others, and *Desire* of using it. Already preliminary attempts, still in the framework of CALPIU, suggested that a fourth factor was missing: the perceived or actual *Need* to use a language (Haberland 2011).

(The reason why Grin did not include the *Need* is possibly related to his interest in minority languages. Since minority languages in Europe – even large ones like Catalan – often are spoken by bilinguals, there is often no absolute necessity to use them, since one usually has at least one other alternative. This does not fit at

all the situation of, e.g., Danish in Denmark. Although English speakers (but not necessarily speakers of other languages) in Denmark can manage in an astonishingly wide range of situations without Danish, which sometimes lures them into thinking that they have no need for Danish, there are also many situations where either information in English is not provided or where attempts to speak English are not successful.[3])

Originally we considered supplementing the extended COD model by the 'Do-Think-Feel' model (practice, knowledge, subjectivity) used by Llurda et al (2009). Llurda and his team categorized languages as to what people do with them (practice), what they think about them (knowledge), and how they feel about them (subjectivity). (This model is based on Bishop, Coupland and Garrett (2003: 44)). This ran into problems, though. What worked fine in Llurda et al.'s analysis somehow didn't work with our material.)

The general point of departure is often the view that language learning is something the individual does, in the same way as the individual is the subject of "mastering" a language. There have been two main recent challenges to this, on the one hand Bonny Norton Peirce's introduction of 'investment' rather than 'motivation' as a factor in language learning – which is said to have moved language acquisition research from psychology to sociology. We have difficulties in seeing this as more than a new fad. More important to us is the move to see language use as a kind of 'distributed cognition' (Hutchins 1995) or 'collective action' (Searle 1990)): using a language is not something that the individual does on the basis of something they have acquired (Capacity), but an activity which is not just cooperative *inter*action but which essentially consists in (two or more people) doing something one cannot do on one's own. (As you can clap your hands, but cannot clap one hand, there are collective actions that are always described by verbs with a plural subject, since they cannot be performed by one person alone, like having a row or agreeing on something.) We can focus on the contribution of one person to the shared action, but only by way of reduction and abstraction. Already in an early Lingcorp working paper we wrote,

"Although languages often are ascribed to other speakers as one of their properties (like being bald, wearing glasses or being a Catholic), it is probably better to consider languages as a case of 'distributed cognition' (Hutchins 1995), a form of practice shared with other participants. Seen like that, the distribution does not have to be even – some people can accomplish a successful order of a *cafè tallat* in Catalan together with their interactants, while maybe not being able to have a conversation in that language with the same people. Languages should therefore not be considered as a kind of object one can have, but media in which one can share practices with others.
We do not consider the languages that a person uses as members of a set of his or her 'languages' with a special, designated member of this set being the language users proper language (often called mother tongue, a highly ideologically loaded term), a set that is considered the persons repertoire. Hence the term 'interlingual

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[3] Chinese students interviewed for the CALPIU project mentioned in particular two salient situations connected with public transport: loudspeaker announcements on stations (in cases of delays or platform changes) and communication with bus drivers (especially those with a migrant background).

communication' … does not necessarily make sense to us, since it assumes that people in these cases use the secondary members of their repertoire set when they meet people whom they share some of their repertoire with, but not their the designated member of that set, the language properly belonging to them. We rather think of languages as media in which participants can accomplish a task by having access to them in different ways and to different degrees.

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On the other hand, we can see that participants do exactly what we reject as analytical conceptualization. They ascribe languages to people as one of their properties and do not see them as something people can do, but never can do on their own, rather always in interaction." (Hazel and Haberland 2013: 7-8)

The latter has, of course, implications for what we can learn from our interviews. Our informants will tend to describe their linguistic socialisation trajectories in terms of languages they have acquired and either had the opportunity or the need to use to different people. While Grin's *Capacity* and *Desire* still are located in the individual (something the individual *has*), *Opportunity* to use a language is always something a person shares with others. The same goes for *Need,* which is always something that is tied to a situation involving other people (although they may not be present in the case of written communication).

We are using rather simple-minded colour coding system for analysing our interviews, marking bits of the transcripts as <mark style="background:red">Capacity</mark> <mark style="background:yellow">Opportunity</mark> <mark style="background:lime">Desire</mark> <mark style="background:cyan">Need</mark>. Our procedure was to go through the interviews looking for 'rich points' in the sense of Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland 2016, a procedure which is inspired by Michael Agar's (1996) use of this concept in a different context (that of intercultural communication). What we consider 'rich points' revealing itself in an interview are notable statements by the interviewees that expose or highlight some of the ideologies or attitudes behind the management of the language socialization trajectories of the members of what we consider a *transient setting.* 'Notable' means something that comes as a surprise, admitting that one has to train oneself to be surprised by what common sense just considers natural, since, with a nod to Gramsci, common sense is not always good sense.

After we have gone through the transcripts, they would look like this.

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20  INF  +aber ich kann auch anfangen zu erzählen welche Sprachen ich      Capacity
21        kann und was ich ⌈ gelernt hab oder ja ⌉
22  INT                     ⌊ ja ja aber am besten ⌋
23        chronologisch ⌈ nich ⌉ von Geburt an
24  INF                  ⌊ ja ⌋
25  INT  das wäre vielleicht am übersichtlichsten
26  INF  okay
27        okay also ich bin in Deutschland geboren
28  INT  mhm
29  INF  bin aufgewachsen
30        hab natürlich dann als erstes Deutsch gelernt                    Capacity
31  INT  ⌈ mhm ⌉
32  INF  ⌊ und dann habe ich in ⌋
33        in der fünften Klasse
34        so mit zehn elf
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35	angefangen Englisch zu lernen (0.5)	Capacity
36	mit (0.8) dreizehn dann Französisch	
37	und mit fünfzehn Spanisch (0.5)	
38	ich muss dazu sagen	
39	meine Mutter war Englisch- und Französischlehrerin (0.2)	Opportunity
40	INT ⌈ mhm ⌉	
41	INF ⌊ sprich ⌋ wir sind immer viel nach Frankreich und England gefahren	
42	hauptsächlich Frankreich (0.4)	
43	so dass ich eigentlich (0.4)	
44	ich hatte auch so französische Brieffreundinnen (0.3)	
45	wo wir so regelmäßig uns besucht haben (0.2)	
46	INT mhm	
47	INF so dass ich eigentlich immer so ein bisschen zweisprachig	
48	aufgewachsen bin	
49	weil wir auch oft (0.5)	
50	irgendwelche Austauschlehrer	Opportunity
51	und sonst was	
52	zu Hause zu Besuch ⌈ hatten ⌉ (0.4)	
53	INT ⌊ mhm ⌋	
54	INF ehmm (0.3)	
55	dann habe ich (0.2) Außenwirtschaft studiert	Opportunity
56	das war ein Studiengang der (0.4)	
57	teils auf Deutsch stattgefunden hat (0.4)	
58	aber auch (0.3) Lektoren hatte (0.1)	
59	die aus Frankreich oder England kamen (0.3)	
60	und da waren die Vorlesungen dann auf Englisch und Französisch	Need
61	(0.6) m ich hab nebenbei noch weiterhin Spanischkurse gemacht	Desire
62	(0.7) und (0.7)	
63	im Rahmen des Studiums war ich dann auch	
64	erst ein halbes Jahr in Frankreich (0.5)	Opportunity
65	und dann noch ein halbes Jahr in Singapur (1.4)	

…

166	INT und hab dann aber	
167	weil meine (0.1) Schwiegereltern (0.3)	Need
168	auch überhaupt weder Deutsch noch Englisch sprechen (0.3)	
169	dann (0.6)	
170	gleich als erstes mal noch angefangen (0.5)	Desire
171	Dänisch zu lernen	

…

185	INF und dann gin- ging die Zeit ins Land	
186	INT ja	
187	INF ich hab mehr und mehr Dänisch mit meinem Mann gesprochen	Opportunity

…

234	INF jaja d- die können es halt nich	Need
235	und entweder man will die ⌈ ganze ⌉ Zeit exkludiert sein	
236	INT ⌊ ja ⌋	
237	INF oder man strengt sich an lernen zu- und das ist ja auch dabei	Desire
238	ja- ja- die- die die Partner	Opportunity
239	sind nämlich meist nicht daran interessiert	

20	INF[4]	+but I can also start by telling which languages I	Capacity
21		know und what I have learnt or yes]	
22	INT	[yes yes but best]	
23		in chronological order [you know] from birth on	
24	INF	[yes]	
25	INT	that would maybe be most clear	
26	INF	okay	
27		okay well I was born in Germany	
28	INT	mhm	
29	INF	grew up	
30		did of course learn German first	Capacity
31	INT	[mhm]	
32	INF	[and then I did]	
33		in fifth grade	
34		so at ten eleven	
35		start learning English (0.5)	Capacity
36		at (0.8) thirteen French then	
37		and at fifteen Spanish (0.5)	
38		I have to add	
39		my mother was an English and French teacher (0.2)	Opportunity
40	INT	[mhm]	
41	INF	[that is] we always went a lot to France and England	
42		mainly France (0.4)	
43		so that I really (0.4)	
44		I also had such French (female) pen pals (0.3)	
45		where we so regularly have visited us (0.2)	
46	INT	mhm	
47	INF	so that I really always grew up such	
48		a bit bilingual	
49		since we also often (0.5)	
50		some sort of exchange teachers	Opportunity
51		or suchlike	
52		had on visit at [home] (0.4)	
53	INT	[mhm]	
54	INF	ehmm (0.3)	
55		then I studied (0.2) international business	Opportunity
56		that was a program which (0.4)	
57		in part took place in German (0.4)	
58		but also (0.3) had lecturers (0.1)	
59		who came from France or England (0.3)	
60		and there the lectures were in English or French	Need
61		(0.6) em I kept taking Spanish courses on the side	Desire
62		(0.7) and (0.7)	
63		as part of my studies I was also	
64		first half a year in France (0.5)	Opportunity
65		and then also half a year in Singapore (1.4)	

…

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[4] hesitation phenomena and placement of pauses and overlaps cannot be rendered adequately in a glossing; but they are part tof the representation of the data. See Haberland and Mortensen (2016: 585) and Kasper (2013) on the status of pauses and hesitation phenomena in interviews.

166	INT	but then I have	
167		because my (0.1) parents-in-law (0.3)	Need
168		also at all neither spoke German nor English (0.3)	
169		then (0.6)	
170		I for the first time started on top of it (0.5)	Desire
171		to learn Danish	
...			
185	INF	and then time pass- passed	
186	INT	ja	
187	INF	I spoke more and more Danish with my husband	Opportunity
...			
234	INF	yes yes th- they just can't manage it	Need
235		and either you want to be excluded the[whole] time	
236	INT	[ja]	
237	INF	or you make an effort to learn to and it is also the thing	Desire
238		yes- yes- the the the partners	Opportunity
239		are often not interested in it	

More of a problem than negative statements ("[they] neither spoke German nor English", 168) are implicit statements made by *not* mentioning a Capacity, Opportunity, Desire or Need at all. The informant mentions no language in connection with her stay in Singapore (65), and we can infer that she mentions her stay at a university in Singapore as an Opportunity for her as well as the Need to practice her English. But when she mentions two of the languages she has earlier claimed proficiency in, German and English, she does not mention the others, French and Spanish. Why not? What probably is at play here is a hierarchization of languages as to likelihood of being used as a *lingua franca* in a given context. Although it is perfectly possible to hear French or Spanish used as *lingue franche* in Denmark, it is not what one expects to be likely. The informant would have mentioned it, if she had had the opportunity to use French with her in-laws, as something remarkable.[5]

Some statements have to be considered as implicit; when INF says 'war ich dann auch erst ein halbes Jahr in Frankreich und dann noch ein halbes Jahr in Singapur' (63-65) she first describes an Opportunity to use her French (although she does not say explicitly that she studied in French in France). But what are we to make of her stay in Singapore? Since she gives a rather systematic chronological account of her language biography, we must assume that the mentioning of Singapore is relevant, but in which sense? Among the many languages spoken in Singapore, there are four official languages (Malay, the national language, as well as Mandarin, Tamil, and English). But since she only has mentioned English before, and since she *studied* in Singapore (63) which she probably did in English[6], we have to read this as another statement about her Opportunity to use English.

Finally, we have to allow for negative statements. When INF (in 167-168) states

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[5] Thanks to Sonja Barfod for pointing this out.
[6] Background information easily available (but which INT was not aware of at the time of the interview) is that the Singapore government since the 1980's has promoted English strongly as the language of university instruction.

that her parents-in-law had neither German nor English, this is in the first place a negative statement of opportunity: she had no opportunity to speak German nor English with them. At the same time it is a positive statement about the need to learn Danish, which leads to the Desire to actually learn the language (and ends with the Capacity to actually speak the language, which creates new Opportunities to speak Danish with her husband, 187).

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166  INT  und hab dann aber
167       weil meine (0.1) Schwiegereltern (0.3)                          Need
168       auch überhaupt weder Deutsch noch Englisch sprechen (0.3)
169       dann (0.6)
170       gleich als erstes mal noch angefangen (0.5)                     Desire
171       Dänisch zu lernen


166  INT  but then I have
167       because my (0.1) parents-in-law (0.3)                           Need
168       also at all neither spoke German nor English (0.3)
169       then (0.6)
170       I for the first time started on top of it (0.5)                 Desire
171       to learn Danish
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One might well argue that the choice of categories in our coding is rather arbitrary. Multiple colour coding could help here.

What have we found out so far? Not nearly enough, and certainly not enough to satisfy our wish to be able to make generalisations. There are of course recurrent themes that we recognize from the interviews with transnationally mobile students in the CALPIU project. The role of in-laws in the realization of the need to learn the local language seems to be quite widespread[7], while partners are less motivated to act as catalysts. The popular perception that more and more companies use English as a 'corporate language' disregards the diversity between and within companies. Hence, people can react in equally diverse way to the linguistic challenges of their workplace (and that goes for Danes and transnationally mobile staff equally). We hear both that everybody is fine with using English only and that it is impossible to do everything in English. Different companies have different corporate cultures, also when it comes to language practices.

It also seems that the more languages an employee is comfortable with, the more she will underline the advantages and even necessity of linguistic diversity. Thus linguistic capital is valued very highly by those who possess it. We have yet to meet a strictly monolingual person[8], which (we guess) would be an English speaker.

Some of the people we have interviewed have apparently been keen observers of

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[7] With the transnationally mobile students interviewed for CALPIU, there was, not surprisingly, a marked difference between those on short-term visit (exchange students) and degree-seeking students, exchange students may have partners but are probably not long enough in the country to meet the parents.

[8] Continuing a principle from the CALPIU project, we conduct interviews as far as possible in the language the interviewee prefers. In our sub-project, we have so far used English, Danish and German.

the linguistic practices at their workplace and given detailed descriptions of the roles languages play. There seems to be a great diversity also in this. Assuming a fixed set of coding categories has the advantage of self-discipline, which is, of course, the opposite of "unmotivated looking". But it can also lead to discoveries when something suddenly turns out to be unexpected and not easily dealt with.

A topic that came up in our recent interviews at an institution of higher education was the economic gain that comes from offering outsiders the affordance of another language, either Chinese (which people seem to be keen on to learn) and especially English (which is seen as a form of linguistic capital that Danish institutions can use in the competition with other institutions to be turned into economic capital).

What comes in here, is not the individual member of the organisation with her Capacity, Opportunities, Desire and Needs to speak a language (*in casu*, Chinese and English) and, as a consequence, her efforts to learn or develop this language. It is the gain that the organisation has from its members' language affordances. The organization does not use a language, it is its members that use the language. But the members can have the desire to add to the attraction of the institution for speakers of other languages than the local one (*in casu*, Danish). This is maybe another reason to de-individualize our thinking about the relationship between languages and people.

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