



Convergences and divergences between multilingual policies and practices in a Catalan university

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Abstract

This paper examines various communicative events linked to the language policies of a university located in Catalonia, an EU territory in which English instruction is experiencing a rapid increase in primary, secondary and higher education (Moore, 2016; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2016). We cross-reference the underlying narrative(s) of policy documents with transcripts from two interviews and a debate with members of the university staff to analyse in which circumstances the views of the academic community collude or collide with the institutional language policy. Understanding when and why social actors ‘enact’ (Schegloff, 2006) or resist the ‘authoritative narrative’ concerning multilingualism may shed light onto what kind of language policies are necessary to become accepted by the educational community.

Our data reveals that the multilingual identity of the institution is coconstructed and accepted by all members of the community, but there is not much consensus regarding the number of languages recognised as own. For academics, multilingualism in their practical daily activities is equivalent to the need to use three languages (Catalan, Spanish and English) to communicate with their students and to publish their research. They also accept plurilingual practices in their classrooms, specially in those cases in which instruction is given through English, as they seem reluctant to accept the policy of using ‘one-language only’. Policy makers, though, advocate in favour of creating an institutional multilingual identity open to more languages (mainly French, Chinese and Korean), partly to cater for diverse language needs, partly to appeal particular groups of students. Although academics accept that the presence of more languages in the academic life of the institution can be beneficial for the whole community, they are critical with the fact that linguistic policies do not take advantage of the plurilingual competences of most lecturers but favours the use of languages that attract more students (and income).

Keywords: multilingualism; educational policy, English instruction; authoritative narrative; educational practices

Introduction

As an approach to understanding the social construction of underlying conceptions of multilingualism in policy and declared practice, the authors draw from several premises: a) representations, policies and practices of multilingualism do not happen in a vacuum. They are an integral part of a complex web of social relations, policies and practices that reflect and reify already existent implicit and explicit popular language ideologies (Gee, 1996); b) language use must be understood as an embedded, intersubjective social process (Blommaert, 2005), in which “different scale-levels of social behavior are shown to be dialectically connected” (Blommaert, 2015, p. 8); c) the participants in the study, as social actors, are situated in a nexus of discursive policies and practices in which they are not only recipients of the socio-cultural and political concepts contained within this dialogical flow, they are also acting on and modifying these same discourses through their interaction (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992; Schegloff, 2006); and d) interactional conduct displays “order at all points” (Sacks, 1984, p. 22), and its meaningful orderliness is publicly available to co-participants and analysts alike. Blommaert (2015) places emphasis on the ‘indexicality’ of individual language use. “It is the skillful deployment of specific “enregistered” forms of speech in particular social arenas that sets the tone and key of interactions and indexically projects identities onto the speakers” (Ibid., p. 8). And while there are inevitably deviances from this ‘enregistered’ forms, these “registers are part of the stuff that constructs the benchmarks of social order” (Ibid., p. 9).

Thus, this paper examines social actors’ perspectives through intersubjective ‘policy enactments’ to explore ‘the everyday contexts in which policies are interpreted and negotiated in ways that reflect local constraints and possibilities’ (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007: 447). The authors examine ‘policy enactments’ through different data sources (policy documents, recorded interviews and debates).

These are seen as ‘arenas of discourse’ (Scollon & Scollon, 2003; 2007): discourse at the level of individual language use and at the broader level of discourse as the making of meaning within a social, cultural and historic frame. By collocating ‘episodes’ of members’ policy enactments against the dialogic background of common-sense knowledge (Bakhtin, 1986), moments when the individual actors enact -or interrogate- institutional conceptions of multilingualism can be pinpointed. This in turn provides a broader view of the impact these conceptions have on language policy measures and the impact these measures may have on the individuals.

Theoretical Background

According to Schegloff (2006), interaction provides ‘the infrastructure for social institutions, the natural ecological niche for language, and the arena in which culture is enacted’ (p. 70). Knorr-Cetina, (1988), in her discussion of micro/macro and agency/structure debates, proposes that ‘descriptively adequate accounts of large-scale social phenomena [should] be grounded in statements about actual social behaviour in concrete situations’ (1988: 22). However, despite a growing acknowledgement of the reciprocal influence of individual behaviour on ‘macro’ social conceptions (and vice-versa) it is admittedly difficult to bridge the gulf between abstract representations of multilingualism and concrete instances of policies and declared practices tied to local circumstances and contexts.

Two significant difficulties that should be mentioned are, firstly, defining the context of the ‘policy enactment’ and secondly, making (individual and social) common-sense knowledge visible. Social actors are not limited to one context; they are situated within multiple frameworks and the ways in which they interpret and embody ‘authoritative narratives’ are dynamic and will change as different events unfold (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992). Secondly, as Ten Have (2002) points out, an approach based on analysing individual’s practical use of common-sense knowledge presents a methodological challenge, which he has called “the problem of the invisibility of common-sense” (p. 2).

One possible solution presented here is to turn to Sacks’ notion that humans are exposed to a plethora of input (1992) within a wide range of discursive contexts: radio, social media, television, human interaction, etc. The entire scope of human life is a dialogic process (Bakhtin, 1981). Thought and meaning are not the domains of an isolated mind of one individual; meaning occurs at the nexus of human interaction (similar to Scollon & Scollon’s arena of discourse). Thus, arguably, the examination of ‘episodes’ of these nexus can help highlight the systematic link between how participants invoke and use their common-sense knowledge (co-produced through socio-cultural and political discourses; cf. Goodwin & Duranti, 1992; Schegloff, 1972, 2006). This helps resolve the distinction between micro and macro-levels of social organization, by looking at the many different processes by which the macrosocial context is “talked [or written] into being” (Heritage, 1984: 290).

Context

The study analyses three policy documents from a public university in Catalonia (Spain) which are referred to here with the pseudonym of the Sovereign University of Catalonia (SUC): SUC language policy document 2004-2007, SUC language policy document 2008-2011 and SUC language policy document 2011-2015. The latest document serves as the current reference framework for the language policy at the institution. The document is described in the university website as “a committed pledge which aims to facilitate the management of the multilingualism that is emerging from the European Higher Education Area”. It outlines official strategies for the extension of multilingualism in three domains: teaching, research and management. Notably, the 2008-2011 document was available on the institutional website in seven languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, French, Basque, Galician, Occitan but it has now been replaced by a much shorter document that is only available in English and Catalan (2011-2015). The examples provided here are taken from the English versions.

While at the macro-level, the documents that are considered in this paper are the conventional text-based ones; at the micro-level the documents are events of interaction (oral texts), as defined by Garfinkel (1967). There are two types of events: two interviews and a debate. The interviews and debate are in Catalan and have been translated by the authors of this paper into English. Notational protocol is not used in the English versions as they no longer coincided, although the pauses were maintained.

The individuals who participate in the recorded interviews are all academics who have different roles in the institution (their names have been changed to maintain their anonymity). In one of the interviews, the interviewee is the General Secretary of the institution and in the other one, the interviewee is a Psychology teacher who teaches through English. Participants in the recorded debate belong to different faculties and were invited to take part in it for their expertise and/or experience in multilingual education. The recorded data was transcribed by various members of a research team located at the SUC institution, to which the authors belong to.

Our approach to data management and analysis is principally ethnomethodological. Our study is based on the premise that social organization can be traced through emergent achievement(s) (actions, discourse) resulting from the “concerted efforts by societal members” as they act and interact “within local situations” (Maynard & Clayman, 1991, p. 387). From an ethnomethodological perspective “‘raw’ experience is anything but chaotic, for the concrete activities of which it is composed are coeval with an intelligible organization that actors “already” provides and that is therefore available for scientific analysis” (Ibid.). At the same time, our analysis requires us to demonstrate that specific aspects of macrosocial, institutional processes are evident in the participants’ interaction at university in the study. Hilbert (1990) argued that this is possible through ethnomethodology, despite the widespread view that this approach only focuses on the ‘micro’.

Ethnomethodology is often identified as a form of microsociology. Within the terms of the micro-macro debate this is understandable since all participants tend to accept the ontological presence of structure in one form or another; that is ethnomethodology’s focus on the “local” appears to be a focus on the “micro” with an obstinate refusal to acknowledge structure at the other end of the size continuum. [...] to view ethnomethodology as microsociology is no less incorrect than to view it as macrosociology. Positively speaking, ethnomethodology’s concern with the “local” is a concern with social practices which are the methods of producing both microstructure and macrostructure as well as any presumed “linkage” between these two. Therefore, ethnomethodology transcends the terms of the micro-macro debate [...]. (p. 794)

Our ethnomethodological approach, then, consists of comparing dialogic ‘episodes’ to discern convergences and divergences between the institutional multilingual identity as presented in the legal documents and how community members construct their representation of multilingual policies at SUC. The ‘episodes’ were selected by first searching for commonalities at the macro and micro-level contexts through a preliminary filtering of the corpus. Next, variances of conceptualisations were determined. This offers an interwoven perspective of the common-sense knowledge of multilingualism at SUC, as understood and constructed by the social actors in this study.

Analysis and discussion

The starting point for the analysis is the identification of multi-level, multiple-participant instances of convergence of concepts at both macro (policy) and micro (enactment) levels. This can be seen in the coproduction of shared membership categories, as demonstrated through ‘common-sense background of knowledge’ (Sacks, 1984, 1992). This common-sense background of knowledge serves as both resource and product for sense-making practices, against which the social actors in this study reaffirm, resist or transform the features of the SUC macrostructural context (structure-in-action; cf. Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). At the same time, it must not be forgotten that this structure-in-action has been ‘talked into being’ (Heritage, 1984, p. 290) by these same social actors (and others) belonging to the institution; in other words, these categories or representations are ‘achieved’ by these social actors.

Multilingualism as an identity trait of SUC: Examples of convergences

One recurrent membership category is evident: ‘Multilingualism’ as an identity trait of SUC. This category is proposed and co-constructed at both policy level and by social actors in the institution. Consider the following fragment (extract 1) from the SUC language policy document. The use of bold letters in all fragments is to indicate the features under discussion.

Extract 1. *SUC language policy document 2008-2011*

The SUC wants to be recognised as:

An institution where multilingualism features among its principal characteristics of identity and within its organisational culture.

An institution that recognises and values the linguistic capital in the university community and **encourages plurilingualism** among the people who form part of it.

A local and international reference point in the construction and application of a management **model for multilingualism** in the university.

This multilingual feature of SUC is reaffirmed by different social actors (e.g. General Secretary and academics, extracts 2 and 3 below) and becomes part of the ongoing co-production of the institutional identity, indexed through the institution's traditions. In extract 2), the General Secretary at SUC aligns the university with the identity of being "very plurilingual", with long held international aspirations (reflecting the image of an SUC as an international model for multilingualism management seen in extract 1).

Extract 2. Interview 2 with the General Secretary of SUC

GS: [...] the general guidelines are set by the statutes of SUC and the external laws (..) apart from the fact that tradition here at SUC has always been one of (..) a very plurilingual university (..) with international aspirations since (..) at least thirty years [...]

Following the same orientation, an audience member of the debate on multilingualism (extract 3 below) makes the institutional tradition of using and accepting more than one language in the classroom an extension of the institutional identity and the conventional framework that is associated with SUC. As it can be seen, in the declared practices, the accountability of the category is associated with both language tradition and regulative policy.

Extract 3. Debate (Gloria – audience member)

Gloria: you see here in Catalonia and especially at SUC we have a tradition (..) in the university teaching (..) ehm in Catalan and Spanish (..) although there is a predominant language (..) the one commonly used by the teacher Catalan or Spanish (..) this has never meant that one language can't live with the other in the teaching this is even legally regulated isn't it and if the teacher (..) chooses to teach through Catalan or Spanish the student still has the right to intervene in Catalan or Spanish even if it does not coincide with the teacher's language (..) I think this is a value (..) good (..) isn't it

In all three extracts, multilingualism as an institutional identity is 'recognizable' to the social actors in question and is at times used by them to embody 'authoritative narrative' (Hajer, 1995) in their own language-in-action (Blommaert, 2005). On a more general level they seem to affiliate themselves with this institutional identity, but as will be seen further on, in the locally situated construct of meaning, the social actors may resist some of the attributes of this category.

Multilingualism as a sociohistorical-evolving concept: Two, three or more languages?

Another shared orientation to the institutional multilingual identity of SUC is the notion that two or more languages equal multilingual (versus bilingual or trilingual). This ongoing discourse, as a coproduction (Scollon & Scollon 2003, 2007) within a social, cultural and historic frame of SUC, has changed over time. Beginning with the notion of two languages, SUC promoted the use of Catalan and Spanish as part of its multilingual identity. For example, in SUC's previous language policy (2003-2007, extract 4), multilingualism, in the form of two languages, is made accountable by basing the argument in the socio-historic tradition of the SUC as an agent of social change. English, at this point, is mentioned in the first policy as one of several alternatives that can have a key role in a more 'globalized' language policy of SUC. English is attributed to having a 'significant role' but at this point, it is still considered a 'working language' for SUC – when necessary. This categorization of multilingualism as a 'two co-official languages' is linked to a social framework of the institution through the accounting of historic moments: moments of 'normalizing' the use of Catalan – that is promoting its use as the everyday 'norm' – and later as a means of protecting it as a minority language in the face of "growing globalization".

Extract 4. Previous SUC Language Policy

SUC has a long tradition of commitment to the university language policy. Since 1975 till now, SUC has taken different actions in this area in accordance with sociolinguistic reality and the corresponding regulative frame. Thus, **the first years were devoted to the recovery of Catalan as the language of public daily use at the University and to the promotion of the command of Catalan amongst the university community. Further on, the language policy has headed towards the objective of consolidating the use of Catalan as its own language within the context of a growing globalization and the introduction of information communication technology, all of which have radically transformed society in a short time. This same**

global milieu –which makes learning and use of diverse language both a possibility and a must- has meant that in recent years the university has set up a language policy from a multilingual perspective as a means of guaranteeing the promotion of Catalan as the university's own language and as a minority language in a world context; the recognition of language rights derived from the existence of two official languages, Catalan and Spanish, and the use of other working languages when necessary, **of which English has a significant role.**

However, in the more recent SUC policy documents, the notion of three main languages (Catalan, Spanish *and* English), along with other working languages, is fully entrenched as an attribute of the multilingual university identity and is now expected to be present in several different areas: teaching, management and research.

Extract 5. *The SUC Plan for Languages 2008-2011*

Mission

The language policy of SUC is a committed pledge to respond to the need to manage the multilingualism that exists in European knowledge society in terms of language use, quality and learning. This pledge is specifically focussed on developing a multilingual university model, which involves the **use of Catalan, Spanish and English as languages of regular use**, with the status corresponding to each, and promotes plurilingual and pluricultural skills throughout the university community. (p. 3)

(...) This should specify contexts for the use of Catalan and Spanish in cases that are not contemplated by the **legal framework** or in which the legal framework is not sufficiently well-defined, and introduce contexts for the use of **English as an institutional and working language**, the status of the **other languages that are official in Catalonia and in Spain** (Occitan/Aranese, Basque and Galician), the contexts for the use of other languages that may be **strategic for the international projection** of the SUC (**French, Mandarin Chinese, etc.**) and the contexts in which the use of other languages may be **appropriate to address the diversity of the university community** and guarantee universal accessibility (Catalan sign language; native or first languages in the university community other than those mentioned previously). (pg. 4)

In this newer document, English, as the third language, is both a 'working' language and part of the collection of 'institutional' languages, while other languages are also proposed for 'international projection' (without any specific label of their use apart from communication with students from diverse backgrounds).

Furthermore, in the 2011-2015 document, English is now a 'lingua franca of the international academic community', which is 'essential' for 'achieving the University's objectives of internationalisation and excellence' (recalling the General Secretary's words of 'international aspirations' in extract 2). Furthermore, English is not only a 'working language' for the academic community, it is a necessary part of the university students' academic development, thereby further validating the 'authoritative narrative' (Hajer, 1995) of instruction through English as exemplified in the first three extracts.

Extract 6. *The SUC Plan for Languages 2011-2015*

English has become the **lingua franca of the international academic community** and is essential for attracting and retaining talent, **achieving the University's objectives of internationalisation and excellence.** As a result of its status as the lingua franca, it is increasingly used as a **working language** in the University's activities and is an active key to the **academic development of our students.** (pp. 2-3)

The juxtaposition of the co-categorical devices of languages ('own', 'co-official', 'working', 'strategic', 'appropriate' and 'institutional') creates an uneasy balance between the accepted SUC identity as proponent of Catalan ("sine qua non" extract 7 below), the recognised "co-official" bilingualism of Catalan and Spanish (within the "legal framework" extract 5, above) and the introduction of a third language that has no socio-historic ties to the university (English). The difficulties this presents are evident in the first interview of the General Secretary, who reformulates the roles of Spanish and English at SUC. Although Spanish is still constructed as the co-official language of the institution, it shares, with English, the category of the "international language" for foreign students. These are, however, differentiated. Spanish is invoked as the language of use principally for post-graduate students from Latin America as can be seen in the next extract:

Extract 7. *Interview 1 with the General Secretary of SUC*

GS: [...] I as general secretary am (..) in charge of the language policy of the university (.) and therefore in some way the language policy has passed by here (.) in fact uh for a university like SUC (.) **we have our own language which is Catalan the language policy is that it is a requisite sine qua non** (.) ehm in fact the language policy started here (.) basically as a policy for the normalising of Catalan (.) and then later on (.) **approximately five years ago that we do EVERYTHING with a language policy (..) explicitly plurilingual (.) which expects to turn the campus into a place (.) where work is done indifferently (.) in the future (.) in Catalan Spanish and English** (.) apart from other languages but these three but as basic goals Catalan as the own language of the university (.) **Spanish as the co-official language and at the same time as the contact language for a great part of foreign postgraduate students (.) who come from Latin America and English because because (.) it is not the only language but the fact is apart from the language the culture requires it.**

This modification of the categorization of Spanish as an economic asset (post-graduate students from outside the European Union pay 2.5 times more per credit) undermines the political dimension of Spanish as a co-official university language and, instead, enhances the same economic dimension that is used for English. At the same time, English becomes an extension of the language policy and so a co-incumbent of the same identity as Spanish and Catalan.

Although the SUC General Secretary's category work at the policy level allows him to co-categorise Catalan, Spanish and English, he himself recognises it as problematic at the level of policy enactment. While he underscores English as the language to be promoted for both teaching and management, his accounting of the situation implies that students and staff alike are not sufficiently prepared. Thus, his category work entails providing economic incentives to improve general command of this language (extract 8).

Extract 8. *Interview 2 with the General Secretary of SUC*

GS: [...] that is we did a survey (.) which we also have here we can get it to you if you need it etcetera of level of english of the personnel on campus (.) **and the truth is that the results were not very good (.) there were not even good among the students (..) they are very ???? with the PAS (.) XX differences (.) and they were NOT even as good as we would like among the teachers [...]**

INT: well

GS: well that demonstrates that even no (.) in the current language plan what we have to do **one of the things that we have to do is (.) motivate help (.) economically the people who decide to teach their classes through English (..) to do LOTS of courses in English (.) practically they only exist in the faculty of economics and business XX translation XX [...]**

A further extension to the collection of 'official' languages at SUC (based on economic rationale) can be observed in the use of the predicate 'international projection' for French and Mandarin Chinese (see extract 5 above). Indeed, the local organisation of talk and the actions of contemporary governance of the SUC exemplify concrete instances of policy tied to local circumstances and contexts: The University had two sites in Asia, established an agreement with the Casa de Asia (Barcelona) to teach Mandarin Chinese and there is currently a proposal for a MA degree in Chinese Teaching Methodology. This broadening of the international strategy and its link to the language policies is openly recognized in the latest policy document.

Extract 9. *The SUC Plan for Languages 2011-2015*

In the University's internationalisation strategy, French plays an important role for geostrategic reasons, proximity and tradition. **Chinese and Korean are also important now for communication and promotion of the University given the strategic decision to engage with China and Korea.** (p. 3)

Apart from the languages for 'international projection', the multilingual identity of SUC, at policy level at least, includes a need for 'sensibility' to 'other languages' that are 'appropriate to address the diversity of the university community' (The SUC Plan for Languages 2008-2011; extract 5). The SUC General Secretary aligns himself with this notion to 'perform accountability' (Antaki et al., 2005, Housley & Fitzgerald, 2003) of the institutional collective of 'core goals and tasks' (Drew and Heritage 1992:22). The institutional goals of being a multilingual university that is sensitive to 'minority and minoritized languages' forms part of the institutional tasks and identities (Drew & Heritage, 1992) but, for the General Secretary, these categories are re-framed according to terms of 'monetary' issues.

Extract 10. *Interview 2 with the General Secretary of SUC*

INT: eh_I also wanted to ask about minority languages (.) there (.) has it been discussed or formally approached the topic of language minorities

GS: let's see_ XXXXX here there are people who are working on it (.) I know all about it and **there is a sensibility about the topic of minority and minoritized languages** (.) but for example not so far as XXXXX of course (.) one things is to have interest because these languages exist that XXX are in the study plan XXXX **but is a monetary question** etcetera etcetera etcetera (.)

Thus, in the General Secretary's 'policy enactment', certain languages are assigned to the category bound topic of 'language sensibility' (need for awareness of their existence) but their use is not mandated for the whole academic community. This is similar to the notion of multilingualism found in the latest language policy document that links the linguistic and cultural 'enrichment' of multilingualism to neoliberal notions related to globalization: research, knowledge transfer and innovation (Block & Gray, 2015).

Extract 11. *The SUC Plan for Languages 2011-2015*

Finally, one of the University's biggest assets is its linguistic capital: the concept of **the university has always been linked to multilingualism**, as an **enrichment** factor that brings together the people who produce and consume knowledge. **Languages and cultures** that exist side by side **enrich** the university community and the courses, centres, institutes, research groups and services related to those languages are a source of **research, knowledge transfer and innovation**.

From the General Secretary's micro-level perspective, this 'enrichment factor' –in the sense of language awareness of minority languages that are not necessarily common for 'research, knowledge transfer and innovation'- is limited to 'a group of different types of teachers' of 'specialised degrees' (faculty of translation, cultural studies, and philologies) with attributes of 'exaggerated ambitions' (see extract 12 of the GS' interview below).

Extract 12. *Interview 2 with the General Secretary of SUC*

GS: let's see_ XXXXX here there are people who are working on it (.) I know all about it and **there is a sensibility about the topic of minority and minoritized languages** (.) but for example not so far as XXXXX of course (.) one things is to have interest because these languages exist that XXX are in the study plan XXXX **but is a monetary question** etcetera etcetera etcetera (.) there are professors interested because XXXX **a group of different types of teachers** (.) some African specialists and others who are not African specialists who are then (.) interested in Amazic in Berber etcetera (..) XXXX has written a dictionary Catalan Amazic Catalan (.) but of course (.) **what we can't do is (.) introduce a lot of this in other study plans (.) in fact (.) we have a translation faculty (.) which has a study plan that is exaggeratedly ambitious (..) politically it is very useful XXX to consider [...]**

Resisting institutional conceptions of multilingualism

The social actors in the university community may ascribe themselves to the inferential framework of SUC (a predominantly tripartite multilingualism of Catalan, Spanish and English) but they still exert their agency by "resisting" (Kasper, 2009: 9) these situationally relevant category predicates. The common-sense understanding that serves for both the production and recognition of meaning in the inferential framework also provides the backdrop that highlights "tensions". For instance, the locally situated interaction makes a previously 'invisible' resource (a German teacher at SUC) visible, thus providing the faculty member in the following extract a means of critiquing the way in which the policy discourse is enacted on an institutional level. In extract 13 a teacher reformulates SUC's actions and challenges the institutional 'multilingual identity' and the notions of what can serve as 'working languages' by calling forth the 'un-used' language resource (the native German teacher).

Extract 13. *Interview with a teacher*

Maria: [...] by the way we have a **teacher here who is German** (.) who offered to teach through German and **they told her no (.) that SUC (.) only promoted English [...]**

A further tension in the accounting of multilingual identity often associated with courses through English can be seen in extract 14 below. An audience member of the debate challenges the commonly held notion of how subject content through English classrooms should be managed (monolingually).

She first states this common perception (lines 2 &3), then challenges it by invoking the SUC tradition of allowing bilingual (Catalan-Spanish) practices in the classroom (lines 4-7). As part of her recommendation to move away from the one-language only policy in the classroom (see also Moore, 2016), she indexes the institution's multilingual traditions of allowing 'linguistically diverse settings' in the learning spaces available for students.

Extract 14. *Debate (Gloria – audience member)*

Gloria: [...] a predisposition to other languages right because sometimes the messages given about **teaching through English I feel is like in English students have to (.) they have to do everything in English right (.)** on the other hand in subject taught in Catalan or in Spanish the student **does not have the obligation to do everything in Catalan or Spanish (.) perhaps somehow with the introduction of a third language we may lose this insight and I feel that it is important to propitiate the existence of these more linguistically diverse settings** and (.) and maintain and promote plurilingualism [...]

The acceptance of the multilingual institutional identity as shared members' knowledge does not presuppose complete affiliation to the category. Whereas, in previously discussed extract 2 the SUC General Secretary implicitly "talks-into-being" (Heritage, 1984: 290) institutional values and traditions and in extract 3 the audience member in the debate likewise affiliates herself with the traditional identity of SUC, this is not so evident in extract 15 (below). An academic from SUC (Teresa), also taking part in the debate, acknowledges the institutional policy (that is the inferential framework of being multilingual makes sense as part of the identity of SUC) but she resists the attribute of 'innovation' when considered within the parameter of teaching a class in a 'foreign language' (the use of English –not other foreign languages- is promoted within the plan of innovation of SUC and teachers are rewarded for doing so). This is followed by a softly spoken comment (line 6) of the number of "points" (and subsequent reduction in teaching load) given to the teacher for implementing classes in English.

Extract 15. *Debate (Teresa, debate participant)*

Teresa: [...] and then there is another strategy which is not mentioned but know I'll tell because maybe someone has noticed (.) which is (.) when our teaching is assessed [...] then this also counts (.) because it- you have to write ((clicks tongue)) (.) a report (.) ehm showing how innovative you are (.) right (.) among many other (.) things then that is if **you teach a lang- a- a- (.) a subject through a foreign language (.) then it is considered as (.) some points (.)** in the same way as if were a subject I don't know (.) eh (.) I mean (.) field trips and those sort of things right (.) **even if it is not innovation (.) it is considered as innovation (.)** (to Maria in soft voice) **they will give you points**

Despite these evident tensions, the social actors generally affiliate with the 'corpus of practical knowledge' (Ten Have, 2002: 2) of what comprises multilingualism at SUC. In the policy documents, English is necessary for the internationalization of the institution. For the social actors, English is 'good' for community members, for various reasons that go beyond globalization and economic benefits. In her category work in extract 16 below, a teacher (Maria) ascribes 'teaching through English' with attributes of being more 'up-to-date' and 'interesting' in her own teaching and identifies the action with a more appealing methodology.

Extract 16. *Debate (Maria, debate participant)*

Maria: [...] on the contrary **in English sub- subject in English (.)** what happens is that the **psychological variables** we study (.) **are more updated (.)** because we study them through the reading of articles (.) which are from this year or at the latest last year [...] I we don't read in French because (.) the psychology I teach is written in English (.) **if I worked in the field of psychoanalysis** o something like that (.) **I would feel obligated (.) to student French and German** because (.) they are the sources right (.) **but psychology I teach is anglophone** [...] I for me conceptually **it is more interesting the subject in English** because we **read more updated things (.) and and ah- and I can apply a methodology that is closer to the student** [...]

Conclusions

We have adopted a holistic, ethnomethodological perspective of the diverse socio-political phenomena represented in a multiple-sourced data corpus to understand how social actors in a higher educational institution both appropriate and resist the 'authoritative narrative' (Hajer, 1995) around multilingualism.

This is possible by understanding each moment presented above as being socio-historically embedded within a common-sense context, produced by diverse voices (in the Bakhtinian sense of the word). Following Blommaert's (2015) synthesis of how Bourdieu "sought to develop 'nexus concepts' such as habitus, where 'micro-' and 'macro-' features coincide" in order to address "the phenomenology of contemporary social change and the role of language therein" (p. 2), this study outlines the relations between "common-sense" knowledge of the university community members in relation to historical and authoritative narratives of that same institution. Through the juxtaposition of diverse moments or episodes, it is possible to discern the more salient categories and thus pinpoint recurrent and commonly shared member categorizations of 'multilingualism'. One such recurrent theme is 'multilingualism' as an accepted (and positive) identity trait of SUC. This concept appears to form a significant part of the constitutive practices of the social actors in the university community.

This notion of a multilingual institution can be traced back to historical moments – first as a principally two-language institution with strong aims to 'normalizing' the use of Catalan, next as a three-language institution with the introduction of English as an 'institutional' working language (despite the lack of 'geostrategic reasons, proximity and tradition', cf. extract 9). The current language policy document at SUC proposes language management strategies that originate in external socio-historical factors such as the need for universities to position themselves as competitive modern institutions in both education and research –thus the need for promoting instruction through English, along with a more recent introduction of other languages to this tripartite (mainly, French, Mandarin Chinese and Korean).

Parallel to this, the 'embodiment' of the SUC policies by individual social actors at the institution highlights the extreme complexity that makes up the university's co-constructed multilingual identity. On the one hand, diversity need not be a problem; indeed, it is categorically cast as strength, as an integral part of the role of social agent of change, thus, "multilingualism" and "diversity" can serve as the means of facing the apparent challenges of globalization, as a means of attracting students (and income), as a means of catering to diverse language needs, for knowledge production and as a means of providing students with quality education and improvement of own teaching practices.

At the same time, it is recognised that this dialogic loop of socially constructed representations is not a smoothly flowing process. These tensions result in convergences and divergences between policy and 'policy enactment' (Ramanathan & Morgan 2007, p. 447). In many ways, the participants orient themselves to these devices of multilingualism as equivalent to three languages, while also accommodating to the possibility of more languages as beneficial to the interactions within the academic community and resisting the idea of 'one-language' policies in the classroom. In short, the institutional identity is a resource for part of the 'common-sense knowledge' of the social world against which they accomplish their practical daily activities, at times orienting themselves more towards the institutional identity and at times, challenging the institute's inferential framework.

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