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1 Introduction

Workplaces are internationalising and this means that they often also become more multilingual. A common means of managing such linguistic diversity is to introduce language policies that privilege English or the locally dominant language(s). In contrast, managing their everyday working lives may require employees to draw on a range of multilingual and non-verbal resources. This leads to a tension between what could be conceptualised as monolingual policies and multilingual practices. We want to understand why this tension exists and what it results in. In other words, we want to understand the interests and ideologies that influence the language policies and what the outcomes of such policies are for the workers. We will argue that while policies are often anchored in the best of intentions, they miss the mark. At best they do not result in the benefits envisioned by the management, not for the company, nor for the workers. At worst, the policies may serve as an institutionalised barrier for professional mobility.

We have on purpose singled out workplaces in the production economy because language in this economy has received relatively little scholarly attention (but see Goldstein 1997, Kraft 2017, Piller and Lising 2014 and Strömmer 2015) as McElhinny (2015) points out, as opposed to e.g. the service and knowledge economies where language and communication have received considerable attention (e.g. Boussebaa et al. 2014; Duchêne 2009; Heller 2003). Nevertheless, production sites may be highly multilingual, and workers[1] face communication tasks as part of their daily work. Often, these workers are not considered in need of language training because their jobs are not considered to be language related.

Because multilingualism is characteristic of these workplaces, yet at the same time also considered not to be the ‘raw material’ of daily work (Hewitt 2015), these workplaces are interesting objects of study. We will study the tension between language policies and practices by posing the following questions:

1) How is language conceptualised in policies and enacted in practices?

2) How do these policies and practices impact on the daily working life and professional opportunities of the workers?

We here treat policy and practice as two different things to be investigated separately and subsequently compared. We acknowledge that language policy often emerges from below (Mortensen 2014), but in this study we are interested in the ‘official’ language policy that is communicated and instated by the management. Sometimes such language policies are written down and posted on the intranet, or introduced to employees in presentations, but here we also investigate how managers and the

[1] This category of workers and workplaces are also frequently referred to as ‘blue-collar’ (Lønsmann & Kraft 2018), indicating manual work in the industries. Yet, we refrain here from using this category as it renders invisible the fact that there will be people with different positions, educations and functions in a workplace regardless of what kind of work is carried out there. More importantly though, we feel that ‘blue-collar’ denotes a type of work and worker that is not only manual but also menial. We therefore stick to the categorisation ‘workplaces in the production sector’.

employees responsible for making the language policy talk about language. As such, what we are comparing is management discourse on language, which sometimes gains official status as a policy, with workers' language practices. We define language practices as the daily interactions of workers involving language in all its forms, i.e. also gestures, numbers, and a variety of written material, in addition to spoken interaction. In short, we are aware that the differentiation between policy and practice is a theoretical one. Institutionalised practices, the way things are done, can be every bit as governing and power-exerting as a formal policy. A policy may also be in place, but have no power if no one pays it any heed. The point with introducing the theoretical distinction between policy and practice in this article is that it allows us to investigate how the logics of people who have institutionally sanctioned power influence the daily lives and professional opportunities of people in comparatively less powerful positions.

2 Hegemonic and dominant languages in a migration perspective: Policies and realities

The crux of our inquiry is the tension between management discourse on language and the linguistic practices that make up daily work life. It is our point of departure that all practices and policies are informed by common sense, i.e. a set of shared ideologies about reality that makes people think and act in similar ways. Jaffe (2013) argues that as critical sociolinguists we need to investigate how what she calls models of communicative competence are linked to "particular social, cultural, political or economic interests or ideologies; the extent to which they are or are not consensual; in the case of competition, what tensions in the society they reveal; and what models prevail in particular contexts and what the consequences are for how different kinds of speakers are positioned" (2013: 451). In our study we aim to follow this call and find out how the models of communicative competence, here in the form of conceptualisations of multilingual competence, are influenced by interests and ideologies, and what their consequences are for the positioning of different types of speakers.

The existence of a set of shared ideologies about reality may explain why what we from a scholarly point-of-view identify as a tension seemingly functions in the workplace with little or no discontent from managers and staff. Gramsci (1971) described this as *hegemony* – a consensual power or common sense that enforces and reproduces hierarchies. When ideologies are hegemonic, they are accepted as the natural state of things, and as such remain hidden because oppressors and oppressed alike accept them and find them natural. In our studies of language policy and practice in linguistically diverse production workplaces, the notion of hegemony and its outcomes are relevant for two related ideologies that we will focus on in this article: 1) Ideologies that favour a monolingual approach to the world, and 2) ideologies that attribute status and value to certain languages, a status that is associated with certain attributes.

To begin with the latter point: Haberland (2009) argues that English has become the language of globalism. Where globalisation is a process that has created a growing global network, globalism is an ideology that, among other things, presents English as a hegemonic language, meaning that "by general consent, speakers of other languages choose English in a large number of situations, and consider this choice natural with respect to the existing linguistic world order" (Haberland 2009: 25). As such, English has attained a hegemonic status in many workplaces today (Park 2013), e.g. when it is the only language considered as a potential shared language for all (Angouri and Miglbauer 2014; Neeley 2013) or when it is positioned as a language of 'absolute instrumentality' in international workplaces (Nekvapil and Sherman 2013). Furthermore, English is frequently accorded a special status due to "its centrality to processes of neoliberal market expansion and its mythos as lingua franca" (Yeung 2016: 742). This linking of English with market expansion draws heavily on the hegemonic ideology of neoliberalism, i.e. "the ideology of rule by the world market" (Beck 2000: 9).

English is not the only language that obtains hegemonic status in the workplace or other social arenas. Often the 'local' language, typically the official language(s) of the nation state (Grillo, 1989, 1998) is considered as the first, and possibly only, language to be used, and often this 'local' language dominance is only challenged by English serving internationalisation purposes (Kraft and Lønsmann 2018). Yet, in many workplaces labour migration and increasing multilingualism diminish the usefulness of both dominant 'local' languages and 'international' ones like English. However, the status of these languages does not seem to dwindle as a result of this altered reality, which leads us back to the first hegemonic ideology outlined above, the one favouring a monolingual approach to a multilingual reality. Scholars (Blackledge (2000); Piller (2016) have argued that despite the multilingual realities we live in, societies are often structured to work according to monolingual ideologies. These ideologies are anchored in a view that language and society are "stable and bounded" entities (Heller, 2008, p. 509). This view can be seen as an outcome of powerful nation state forces, and is often summarised as the Herderian ideology of 'one nation, one language' (Piller 2001; Lønsmann 2014). As we will see in the workplace cases analysed below, this logic continues to be influential. In fact, even when more languages have official status as workplace languages, the ideology governing them may still be monolingual as we will demonstrate.

Because the status of languages has to do with the power of their speakers (Bourdieu, 1991; Philips, 2007), we also need to pay attention to those who do not speak the official workplace language(s). In a context of high levels of labour migration and voluntary as well as involuntary mobility (Duchêne, Moyer, & Roberts, 2013; Witteborn, 2011), those who fit the multilingual reality, but not the monolingual policy are often required to change and skill themselves to fit in, e.g. through learning the dominant language of the nation state (Allan, 2013; Roberts, 2010; Sabaté Dalmau, Garrido, & Codó, 2017). That it is these speakers that should adapt to the workplace's monolingual policies and not the policies that should be adapted to the multilingual staff appears in itself to be a hegemonic condition, one with serious professional and personal consequences for workers (Neeley 2013; Park 2013; Piekkari 2008).

3 Methodology

In the following we investigate the tensions between monolingual policies and discourses on the one hand, and multilingual practices on the other in two case studies. The case studies and the data material will be used to produce ethnographic accounts of discourses (Fairclough 2015) and interactional practices (Gumperz 1982; Rampton 2006) and their outcomes in these linguistically diverse workplaces. The two case studies have been chosen to illustrate workplaces with different language policies, one focusing on the local language, Norwegian, one on an international lingua franca, English. They complement each other by illustrating the consequences of different language policies and practices in production sector workplaces.

We will begin by analysing the policies of the workplaces. We have chosen to include both official written language policies and policies as reported in interviews. We argue that both types of data are useful for understanding why the policies are there, why they are designed in the way that they are, and who they (primarily) take into account in their demands for language competences. As such, this part of the analysis focuses on the discourses about languages and language use as presented in official policies and by managers and brings insights into the logics and ideologies they are built upon. We understand discourses as a particular set of individual and institutionalised (culturally and socially) thoughts and behaviour that allow for individuals and societies to make sense of their social realities (Tønnesson 2002: 220). It is language understood as a social process (Fairclough 2015: 7). In analysing discourses, we will pay particular attention to what is foregrounded and what is not mentioned, what is recurrent, and what is treated as atypical or deviant.

In the second part of each analysis we demonstrate how people carry out their work, and how language is a part of this work. We rely on observations, recordings of interactions and reported practices from interviews. Practices are the embodiment of discourses, things we do recurrently *in practice* in accordance with our individual and institutionalised patterns of thought and action (Bourdieu, 1977; Cicourel, 1987; Martín Rojo & Márquez Reiter, 2011; Woolard, 1998). Practices and discourses are therefore embedded into each other when their logics converge. We see policies (often written texts), representations and interactions as complementary ways to analyse these logics, the sensemaking of groups.

3.1 Data and methods

The data for the first case was generated through ethnographic fieldwork as part of a larger project on multilingual workplaces in Denmark[2]. The fieldwork took place between 2013 and 2016. The data used in this article consists of 13 ethnographic interviews with employees and management from the company here called VET, written material about the language policy in the form of meeting minutes, presentation slides and intranet documents, field notes from 12 days of observation, photos and videos of multilingual practices. The interviews are divided into five interviews with management and language policy makers, and eight interviews with warehouse workers. The interviews with the warehouse workers focused on their everyday work routines and their language use, including participation in language classes. The manager interviews focused mainly on the language policy and the company history, and in the case of the warehouse manager also on everyday routines and language use in the warehouse.

The data for the second case was generated through ethnographic fieldwork with a contractor, here called Great Buildings. The fieldwork was carried out as part of a larger project (Kraft 2017) between the spring of 2014 and summer of 2015.

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[2] The project An Ethnography of Language Encounters: Language and Interaction in the Globalized Corporation (LINGCORP) ran from 2012 until 2016 and was funded by the Danish Council for Independent Research. See more at lingcorp.ruc.dk.

Interviews conducted with managers and construction workers will be central in this article. Analysis of practices will be based on observations documented in researcher field notes or on video recordings of daily work life. These videos were primarily recorded by one of the construction workers. The interviews conducted with managers and construction workers alike were not focused on specific policies or practices but were meant to gain a better understanding of observed practices and of the common sense and ideologies of the interviewees.

4 Case 1: Warehouse workers in a transnational workplace in Denmark

VET[3] sells and distributes veterinary supplies to customers, typically veterinarians and pet shops, in 100 countries around the world. The Danish headquarters is located in a rural setting in Denmark, with the 180 employees divided between administration and logistics. VET has subsidiaries in Norway, Sweden, the UK, China and Poland. VET started as a family-owned company in the late 19th century, but was sold in 2015 to a large US-based MNC. The current CEO, here called Stefan, joined the company in 2009 and initiated a new strategy that focused on aggressive expansion into the international market and increasing internationalisation of the Danish headquarters.

4.1 Language policy: From Danish to English

Language policy was first discussed at VET in 2011 when English was made the corporate language following the establishment of subsidiaries in Poland and China. In 2012, a language policy working group was put together, headed by the executive secretary. From 2013 until 2016, the group met three to six times a year to discuss the specifics of the language policy, including what should go into the policy and how to communicate it to the employees. In material used to communicate the policy to the employees, the key notion is a shift from Danish to English as the corporate language, which is specified as the language used in correspondence that crosses national borders.

The shift to English is explicitly motivated by the company strategy of international growth and expansion, both in the interview data and in material used to communicate to the organisation. International growth is constructed as being intrinsically linked with English, e.g. in this excerpt from the interview with the CEO[4] conducted in 2014, i.e. during the language policy process:

STE: today we still say that we are an an export (.) company
I mean a Danish company with export that is what we call ourselves
to⌈day⌉
INT: ⌊yes⌋
STE: but we would like to be an international company and it requires
and that requires that change [to English] actually before we become
that

The way Stefan constructs it here, in order to become "international" as opposed to "a Danish company with export", a change of language from Danish to English is necessary. These and similar examples draw on hegemonic ideologies of English as

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[3] Names of individuals and companies alike have been anonymised.

[4] Due to the limited amount of space, the original quotes have been left out except where the analysis requires close attention to the original Danish/Norwegian. The translations in English are our own.

the language of internationalisation (Lønsmann 2015) and the language of globalism (Haberland 2009). Underlying Stefan’s construction of English as the language that will make the company international is the hegemonic neoliberal ideology which presents growth and expansion as natural and desirable. Lisbeth, the executive secretary and head of the language policy group, also links the change in corporate language with the growth logic:

1	LIS:	and you can say if if it is the export
2		that runs half of our business right (.)
3		then maybe it is the export which will have to propel (.) the larger
4		part of the growth right
5	INT:	yes
6	LIS:	then Danish won’t work
7	INT:	no
8	LIS:	that’s self-evident

Since VET already dominates the Danish market, growth equals internationalisation. Self-evidently, Danish will not work internationally, as Lisbeth claims. By using this argument as the reason why VET needs English as a corporate language, she sets up the faulty premise that for international communication the choice is between Danish and English. Following on from this premise, English is indeed the self-evident choice. But this premise is based on a monolingual logic (Blackledge 2000), presenting language choice as a matter of monolingual Danish vs. monolingual English. This logic not only overlooks other languages, but also more multilingual practices.

Drawing on these logics of growth and monolingualism, the concrete measures following from the language policy all focussed on English. The working group quickly decided that English classes would be a key component of the language policy. In order to decide who needed English classes, all employees were asked to fill in a questionnaire reporting on their own experience with, education in and current level in English. The first group of employees selected for English classes were all from the administration and management, but later warehouse workers were also included in the lessons. Participants were selected based on their existing English skills, and their need for English to do their jobs. In the latest data from 2016, the working group discusses whether all employees are now at the required level, so that they can stop the onsite language classes, and only rely on e-learning in the future. The language policy also caused a change in the language of the company intranet to English, a change that was implemented gradually between 2013-2016. From the meeting minutes, it is clear that the meetings in the language policy group revolve around English language courses, the shift to English on the intranet and the introduction of an English language IT system, i.e. the focus is solely on English. While many of the employees in the administration at VET regularly use English to interact with colleagues, customers and suppliers in other countries, and hence might benefit from English classes that focus on these types of interaction, the daily working life of one large group of employees looks very different. In the next section we turn to the language practices ‘on the ground’ in the warehouse.

4.2 Language practices in the warehouse: Danish, English, German, gestures and “grunts”

In the VET warehouse workers receive incoming goods, distribute them into the right spaces in the warehouse and retrieve goods to fill the orders of customers around the world. All the warehouse workers are Danish-speaking, and Danish is the main language used in the warehouse. As one worker says: “man taler jo dansk” [*we speak Danish, you know*], implying by the use of the Danish discourse particle *jo* that this is a shared assumption. *Jo* is often used in Danish to signal that the hearer is assumed to be aware of and accept the given description (Davidsen-Nielsen 1992), and its use here reinforces the construction of Danish as the unmarked choice. However, the workers do come into contact with a range of other languages. Which languages, how they are used, and how much depend on the worker’s job function. The workers who retrieve goods from the warehouse and ready them for loading, and the workers who load the smaller goods into the automated storage and retrieval system only interact with fellow VET employees, and mainly in Danish. Some of these employees have access to email, and occasionally receive emails in English, typically forwarded from a supplier through the purchasing department. These workers also encounter delivery notes in a variety of languages, sometimes bi- or trilingual, in e.g. Chinese, Dutch, English, German, Italian and Norwegian. They use these notes when they input data into the IT system. They do not actually use these languages, however, not even receptively. Instead the text is ignored in favour of the numbers on the page, as Marie explains when asked about the many languages she encounters on delivery notes: “but I don’t use that, I look at it a little and and (2.0) order number (1.0) external product number (0.6) and quantity (0.6) you can get by with that”. Marie focuses on finding the relevant figures, i.e. the order number, the product number, and the quantity. For this type of work, Marie does not need multilingual competences. Instead she relies on her ability to see patterns, relying on routine and on numbers.

The plan to update the storage system to an English language version which is frequently mentioned as a key reason why the warehouse workers need to improve their English competence is met with the same attitude. The workers do not feel that changing the language to English would matter much. As Niels argues, ”the spaces are probably possibly in the same places they have been all along”. Niels’ ironic use of the two adverbials “probably possibly” to indicate partial epistemic support (Mortensen 2010) underscores the irrelevance of the language here. Instead the workers rely on routine. For this group of employees, the daily work requires command of Danish. For some, English may be practical for reading the occasional email, but it is not commonly used, and it is not essential. These findings are backed up by the self-report questionnaires workers were asked to fill in in order to determine who should be included in English classes. 28 of the 33 warehouse workers who have answered the question indicate in various ways that they use English at work only rarely or not at all.

Only three workers say that they use English daily or almost daily, and those all cite interaction with truck drivers as the reason for using English. The workers who receive incoming goods and load the trucks with outgoing goods are in daily contact with non-Danish-speaking truck drivers. This includes face-to-face interaction as well as dealing with delivery notes in a variety of languages. While the majority of truck drivers who come to VET are Danish, truck drivers also come from a variety of European countries (including Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, the Netherlands and Portugal) to pick up or drop off goods. Some of them have their own regular routes between VET in Denmark and VET in Norway or Sweden, and hence established routines with the warehouse workers. For the warehouse workers, the presence of these non-Danish-speaking drivers means that their own multilingual competences come into play. As Tina explains:

> "Først så når jeg sådan er lidt fræk, så spørger jeg, om de snakker dansk, men det gør de jo sjældent jo, ha ha ha. Og så spørger jeg, om de snakker engelsk, så siger de nej. Og så spørger jeg, om de snakker tysk, og så siger de nej. Og så står jeg og slår ud med armene: Så hvad skal vi så snakke?"
>
> *"At first when I'm a bit cheeky, I ask them if they speak Danish, but they rarely do, you know ha ha ha. And then I ask them if they speak English, and they say no. And then I ask them if they speak German, and they say no. And then I open my arms wide: So what do we speak then?"*

As Tina herself points out, it is cheeky to ask them if they speak Danish because she knows they do not. As indicated by her use of *jo* in the second line, this is common-sense knowledge, and her asking them could be taken as a joke. The sequence of her asking in Danish, English and German reflects the language hierarchy among the warehouse workers. As established above, Danish is the unmarked choice in the warehouse, followed by English and German, the two languages most Danes have some competence in because they are mandatory school subjects in Denmark. According to the warehouse workers, the problem is that the Eastern European drivers "can't communicate", i.e. speak Danish, English or German. Tina's description of throwing her arms open in a kind of shrug that signals giving up and the explanation of the gesture as "so what do we speak then?" also shows that this is constructed as a problem, and as deviant. Despite the fact that they may be fluent in a range of other languages, the truck drivers are constructed as 'non-linguals' as opposed to the multilingual warehouse workers, or at least as having no useful language competences.

If no common language can be found, interactions are handled through the use of gestures or "grunts and sign language", as Erik puts it. At the same time, the warehouse worker-truck driver interactions are kept to an absolute minimum. The warehouse workers usually only need to see the order number, i.e. they need to know exactly what the truck drivers are picking up or dropping off. Frequently, the workers just reach for the papers in the drivers' hands without a greeting or eye contact. These interactions rely heavily on routine with all participants very clear on the goal of the interaction (see further elaboration in Lønsmann and Kraft 2018). The need for communication beyond gestures and one-word exchanges arises when routines are broken, e.g. when a truck driver shows up to pick up goods that have not been made ready for loading yet. In these cases, the warehouse workers find themselves challenged by the lack of a lingua franca. When the usual gesturing and short exchanges in Danish, English and German do not suffice, workers sometimes resort to the use of language brokers, e.g. another truck driver who they assume (or hope) shares a language with the one they are trying to communicate with, or they rely on Google Translate or sketches, such as drawing a clock to explain delays.

For most of the warehouse workers, the need for languages other than Danish is minimal. In contrast, the workers who interact with truck drivers draw on their multilingual resources every day. In addition to Danish, English and German, some workers make an effort to learn a few words in the drivers' language, e.g. how to say 'hi' in Czech, and they use receptive competences in e.g. French and Swedish to read the details of delivery notes. While several employees stress that their English is "not perfect", they are equally adamant in stressing that English and German are not the problem. They have the competences they need in these languages. If anything, they say, they need a list of commonly used phrases in a range of Eastern European languages in order to communicate with the truck drivers.

The language practices in the warehouse are in stark contrast to the focus on English in the language policy. The large majority of the warehouse workers do not need English to carry out their work, and those that do already have the competences they need. Despite this – and despite the fact that participants were supposed to be selected based on language needs and existing English skills - some of them are still mandated to follow English courses. In addition, the English courses focus on writing emails in English, which none of the warehouse workers do. This means that for some, the English courses are the cause of frustration. Some get stressed out because their work literally piles up while they are away for the two-hour classes. In a working environment that works on tight deadlines, this is not a trivial concern. Some feel that they have been forced to participate, while others who would have liked the opportunity have not been offered the training. For some, the main concern is over exposing their weaknesses, in the form of poor English skills, to co-workers. Still, many of the workers who have participated in the English courses are positive about the contents of the courses. They enjoy learning new things and find their English competences improved, but they agree on one thing: They do not use these new competences at work. These results highlight that while the written language policy and the discourse of the policy makers position English as not only natural, but also an inherently positive force, this contrasts with the warehouse workers' experience of the English classes as an interesting learning experience, but irrelevant to their jobs – or in some cases as stressful and exposing their weaknesses.

5 Case 2: Language and construction in Norway

The second case takes us to an equally transnational environment in a Norwegian construction site.

Great Buildings is one of the biggest contractors in Norway. The company specialises in big construction projects where they function either as the main contractor or as a sub-contractor. In the particular project reported on here, they were one of two sub-contractors that had been hired by the project's main contractor. The main contractor has the overall responsibility for all aspects of the project – production, quality, and safety. This means that they define the overall structures of the construction site, while the sub-contractors have particular tasks and areas of responsibility. To carry out this work, Great Buildings had different teams with different functions attached to the project: First of all, an on-site management team consisting of a project leader, two foremen, and a Health, Environment, Safety and Security coordinator (henceforth HESS coordinator). These were all Norwegian citizens, though one of the foremen spoke Swedish, lived in Sweden, and identified as Swedish, and second, the group of permanent workers. These were divided into several teams, each led by a team leader serving as the link between his colleagues and the management team. He was also responsible for planning daily work in the site. The working teams consisted predominantly of Swedes, but there were also some Norwegians and a few Poles. The third and final group consisted of temporary Polish workers that Great Buildings leased from a staffing agency. They made up approximately 60 % of Great Buildings' staff on this project. This group too had a more or less official team leader, yet with a clear hierarchy stating that the leased workers were controlled by the team leaders of the permanent teams, referred to as 'Great Buildings' team leaders'.

This staff composition resulted in Great Buildings' staff speaking at least three different languages: Polish, Norwegian, and Swedish. In addition, the other sub-contractor had workers speaking yet other languages, i.e. there was a fair amount of linguistic diversity in the site. All involved parties were obliged to follow the rules and policies of the main contractor as well as their own internal regulations. This meant that the language policies of the main contractor were intertwined with those of Great Buildings, and we will therefore discuss them together in the following.

5.1 Language policy: Including all workers, excluding most speakers

Facing this linguistic diversity of the workplace, Henrik, the main contractor's HESS manager, had decided on Norwegian as the site's official language, though still acknowledging that several languages would be used in daily work. He felt that Norwegian would be the best way to ensure understanding and hence uphold the strict legal demands about languages and communication (Arbeidstilsynet 2014). Moreover, he was consistent in pointing out that if sub-contractors opted to use workers who did not speak Norwegian, these contractors had to take responsibility for properly informing and communicating with these workers. It also meant that the main contractor would not work together directly with somebody who did not speak Norwegian as Henrik explained when asked about what the Norwegian language policy meant in practice:

> "In practice this means that we recognise that in principle we must have Norwegian-speaking bosses and foremen. Or rather, foremen, bosses and project leaders must be Norwegian-speaking or, Scandinavian-speaking to be completely correct. So in principle we do not communicate in English with leaders."

There are multiple messages at play here. The first one is overt, an explanation of what the actual language policy means, i.e. that all managers must be able to speak Norwegian or another Scandinavian language. The other overt message is that communication should not be conducted in English. There are also more covert messages at play: 'Norwegian-speaking' is replaced with 'Scandinavian-speaking', showing a common ideology that all Scandinavian speakers understand each other. The other covert point is that only one language, English, is mentioned as what should not be used for communication, i.e. it is the only language considered as an alternative. In other words, this statement about the language policy shows that there are considerations about what languages can be used and what languages cannot, but also that these considerations are limited to only a few languages. These only reflect the linguistic competences of Norwegian and other Scandinavian speakers, e.g. the Swedes, but not the high percentage of Polish speakers in the workplace.

Since managerial positions are policed in this way, the multilingual reality is more visible amongst the workers out in the construction site. Many of these are leased from staffing agencies that primarily provide workers from Eastern Europe. This means that sub-contractors need to uphold the site's official Norwegian language policy, including the rule that all managers must be Scandinavian-speaking, and at the same time manage a linguistically diverse staff that somehow has to be able to communicate as part of their daily work. In other words, sub-contractors need to tend to different levels of policy-making, and such a multi-scalar regulation was also visible in Great Buildings. Overall, Great Buildings subscribed to the Norwegian language policy, because "in Norway we must speak Norwegian" as their HESS coordinator stated during an interview. However, he also explained that amongst the ranks of the sub-contractors there was some dissatisfaction with the main contractor's Norwegian policy, because English as a "global language" was felt to include more workers. However, Henrik argued that there would arise too many problems if they were to start using English as the common workplace language:

> "But of course you can turn it the other way around, if you should have chosen English as a language then we would perhaps have had problems with, what is it actually I am saying in English. We can think what we want but, but English is obviously for those who are English-speaking. But we would quickly get a lot of miscommunication about what we really mean."

First of all, the quote shows how deeply entrenched the common sense about Norwegian or English is, leaving no space for other languages. Secondly, it shows Henrik's firm belief that meaning would get lost if the workers and managers would have to communicate in English. Here a logic of communication and understanding emerges – something that has been tightly connected to safety and security in the industry at large (Arbeidstilsynet 2014). What we see is that the argument is reduced to a dichotomy between the Scandinavian-speaking and the English-speaking workers, the latter being constructed as a group which it would be problematic to accommodate to in the language policy due to the risk of miscommunication or lack of understanding. But seeing English as the only alternative to Norwegian also skews the reality of this multilingual workplace, because the workers who do not speak Norwegian do not necessarily speak any English either. Hence, this discourse reduces policy concerns to Norwegian-versus-English reflections, neglecting alternative policies that might include a multilingual staff better. The multilingualism that is wholly embraced is the one represented by 'Scandinavian-speaking' where Norwegian, Swedish and Danish have equal status while for example Polish is completely invisibilised in the official policy.

In contrast with this official language policy and management discourse, everyday practices consist of much more than only Norwegian, or Scandinavian, as we shall see in the following.

5.2 Language practices in daily work: Making ends meet

While not all of the languages actively used in the workplace are part of the language policy, they surely are part of everyday work. In fact, a system of team segmentation allegedly based on language and communication needs is in function, i.e. speakers of the same language are placed in the same teams which are headed by multilingual, e.g. Norwegian-Polish-speaking, team leaders. Such team leaders facilitate communication between Polish workers and Great Buildings' 'Scandinavian-speaking' team leaders. This then means that team leaders serve as language brokers and spend considerable time on communication work (Kraft 2017). While not all of the languages involved in this system are part of the official policy, their functions are an important element of how Great Buildings organise work and workers in their different sites. Also, speaking Norwegian and/or English in addition to Polish is considered a plus when the staffing agency recruits workers, as such workers are easier to lease to the contractors due to their potential for serving as language brokers. Regardless of these benefits, none of the employers offer Norwegian courses to the Polish workers. This may also be why language brokers are a scarce resource and communication between different speakers therefore has to take place without brokers at times. In such instances, central words carrying specific work-related meaning combined with e.g. objects such as tools and technical drawings often become the combined source of communication. For example, it was observed how one day a group of Polish workers entered the on-site office building, carrying power drills. One of the managers asked, in Norwegian, what was wrong with the tools, and the workers replied *kaputt*, i.e. 'broken'. This was sufficient for the manager to suggest a course of action, namely pointing out where the tools should be placed. This shows that there is at least a certain understanding of Norwegian and a developed practice for explaining things in a way that is as simple as possible.

A similar practice was recorded on video, capturing a Polish worker (WOR) trying to explain to his Swedish foreman (FOR) that the workers were in need of a pump to get rid of water from a specific part of a building. He did this with limited and highly routinised Norwegian phrases.

1	WOR:	There's (0.6) there's lot of water perhaps (0.8) you can order:
2		(0.7)
3	FOR:	Pump?
4	WOR:	Pump
5	(ges):	Worker nods

By providing a simple account of the situation and projecting a course of action with the unfinished directive 'you can order' the worker gives enough information for his foreman to guess what is needed, namely a pump that can get the water out of the building, the standard solution to a common situation in a construction site. Even though the worker cannot himself remember or does not know the word for the item he needs, the shared professional knowledge of the two interactants is used to make meaning and reach the interactional goal. During my interviews and conversations with Swedes, Poles and Norwegians, managers and workers, there was a joint agreement that having a shared professional knowledge eases communication regardless of the language(s) being used (in line with Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice). The same representation has been observed in a new project on tunnel miners too, and fits well with the findings in case 1 above on the importance of routine.

Creating understanding through shared professional knowledge also seems to be supported by a receptive knowledge of Norwegian amongst the Polish workers, which is often better than what their Norwegian and Swedish co-workers think. Furthermore, this receptive knowledge can be used strategically. Dmitri, a Polish worker described by his Norwegian foreman as 'speaking no Norwegian at all' told me about his daily language practices during an interview. He said that he understood a fair deal of Norwegian though he was not able to speak any. He had therefore developed a practice of listening to Norwegian instructions, checking with a Polish-Norwegian speaker if he had understood correctly, and then carrying out the work. Likewise, Swedish and Norwegian managers said that they could communicate across language barriers by using technical drawings and models of the buildings to instruct Polish workers. Yet, neither of these forms of communication are recognised as 'speaking Norwegian'. They are merely considered unsatisfactory solutions to a general problem of having workers who do not 'learn the language', i.e. Norwegian. In many ways this situation is akin to the historical account (1850-1913) of transnational mine workers in the Ruhr area that Kulczycki (1989) provides. He shows how the language of migrant workers, especially their lack of German, was understood as a cause of danger for all workers in the site, even though there were no data to support that this was indeed the case. Kulczycki hence explains it as "scapegoating the foreign worker" (Kulczycki, 1989, p. 42).

There is, in other words, a stark contrast between the practices that make daily work function and the language policy that, due to concerns of understanding, favours approximately half of the workforce while excluding the other half from all managerial positions, regardless of their professional prowess. The workers 'make ends meet' by drawing on different linguistic competences, shared knowledge and objects that may cross linguistic gaps and ensure communication in the sense of mutual understanding. However, this motley of resources has a low status in the hierarchy of languages. In contrast, a specific multilingual practice, namely the inter-Scandinavian receptive multilingualism, has a high status as it is equated with the otherwise restrictive policy of Norwegian-only. While this could be considered a partially multilingual policy, it is first and foremost a partial policy as it maintains the privileges of the Scandinavian workers who already have the best conditions of employment and highest positions in the workplace. While it is hardly surprising that the policy focuses on and sees Norwegian, and perhaps English, as the only commonsensical choice of workplace language, the daily practices demonstrate that the choice is in fact not commonsensical from a perspective of use. These practices do invite the question of whether companies that employ or lease transnational staff should try to find solutions centred on the languages of all of their workers. This could include teaching Norwegian and Swedish staff some Polish that would increase their chances of creating understanding when instructing workers who only have limited and/or receptive competence in Norwegian. This would also mirror the current practice where Polish workers pick up Norwegian words and expressions in their everyday work.

6 Discussion

The above case studies reveal several tensions between conceptualisations of multilingual competence in language policies and in practices. First, there is a tension between the management's focus on one specific language and the monolingual ideology behind this focus, and the workers' actual use of multiple languages in daily work. The hegemonic statuses of English and Norwegian in the language policies reflect to a large extent the role these languages play in the work life of managers in the two sites, as well as the economic interests of managers. Our findings suggest that even though multilingual practices are crucial for the flow of everyday work interactions on the floor, the construction of linguistic competence within the workplace mirrors the repertoires and practices of managers and high-status employees, and therefore their competences are valued more highly than those of their subordinates. Arguably, the language needs of the management are projected onto the workers as imagined needs – at least in the Danish case. Furthermore, the warehouse workers who interact with the truck drivers insist that they already have the competences they need in both English and German. Against this background, the decision to force them to attend English language classes seems to rely on stereotypes about 'blue-collar workers' as uneducated. In the case of the construction workers, the hegemonic dominance of Norwegian does not lead to 'imagined needs', but rather to a strong dissatisfaction with the Polish workers' (imagined) lack of Norwegian competences, despite the fact that these workers use their linguistic repertoires in different ways to achieve communication and mutual understanding with their Norwegian- and Swedish-speaking co-workers. This tension – whether in the guise of imagined needs or dissatisfaction – reveals that there is little orientation towards actual practices in the workplace – or at least only towards the linguistic practices of the managerial workers. One reason for this is that the policies are embedded in logics of expansion, internationalisation and safety that are of relevance from a managerial point of view, but are less relevant in daily interactions on the production floor. Furthermore, because English and Norwegian are so closely associated with management in the two workplaces, these languages take on the symbolic power and status of the ruling group in the organisation (Blackledge 2000: 30), which further reinforces their hegemonic status.

Secondly, in the policies in both workplaces, 'language' and 'being able to communicate' are limited to high levels of competence in a few languages. In the Danish case, Danish and English hold hegemonic positions, while Norwegian, Swedish and to some degree English do in the Norwegian case. In both cases, the linguistic resources of speakers who do not master any of these languages at a high level remain unrecognised so that Eastern European truck drivers are positioned as people who "can't communicate", and the Polish construction workers are categorised as non-speakers of Norwegian. From the analyses of language practices we see that the workers (including the truck drivers) rely on a wide range of communicative competences to carry out their work. They do rely on resources from the hegemonic languages, but also on other languages (e.g. Polish among the Polish teams), receptive competences in a range of languages (including French and Swedish in the warehouse, and Norwegian in the construction site), gestures, drawings, and objects. These findings suggest that ideologies and discourses about what 'language' and 'communication' are (Urciuoli 2015), rarely match the multilingual and multisemiotic (Iedema 2003, 2007) resources workers (successfully) draw on to carry out their work.

Thirdly, both language policies are based on a logic of 'the greater good'. The policy of Norwegian-only in the construction site is linked with a discourse of workplace safety, and the introduction of English as a corporate language is rationalised partly by its assumed benefit for the workers as a language of equality and opportunity (Kraft and Lønsmann 2018; Lønsmann 2014; Park 2009; Seargeant 2009). Participating in English language classes is constructed as a benefit for the employees, something they can take with them if they leave their current job. This is used by management as an argument for the English classes in the face of criticism from workers. While trying to ensure opportunities for career advancement is a commendable aim, the question is whether English competences really are necessary, or beneficial, for the workers in the jobs that they aspire to. As shown in the above analysis, even in an international company such as VET, English is not necessary or even useful for the large majority of warehouse workers. The benefit of competence in English has become such a hegemonic ideology that the management is not even questioning whether this is the language that the workers in the warehouse really need for their daily work or for their future jobs. In the Norwegian case, the 'greater good' is understood as communication that ensures safety for all, while miscommunication and lack of understanding are dangerous risks that especially HESS leaders are not willing to run. While it is good and conscientious to be aware of and work with relations between communication and safety, this discourse is also legitimising a complete dismissal of the consequences that the language policy has for workers who are not, or are not perceived as, speakers of Norwegian. Overall, the hegemonic status of English and of the local language as the only legitimate languages obscures what may be best for everybody. One-size-fits-all solutions (which many corporate policies are) fit poorly into increasingly multilingual workplaces where many of the workers do not have extensive linguistic training – at least not in the same languages.

Fourth, the analysis shows that tensions between language policies and practices are not necessarily covered by the monolingual-multilingual distinction. The problem is not as simple as monolingual policies and multilingual practices. In the Danish case, the policy implicitly positions Danish as the legitimate language in the Danish site, and English as the legitimate language for communication across national borders. As such the policy itself could be said to be multilingual. The same could be said for the policy in the construction site where all Scandinavian languages seemingly have equal status. Yet, this is multilingualism that is firmly embedded in what makes sense from the perspective of Norwegian speakers, and only partially reflects the multilingualism of the entire workplace. As the analysis shows, it is necessary to look beyond the monolingual-multilingual dichotomy to focus instead on what kind of multilingualism is promoted by policies and enacted in practice, and crucially, how management policies support workers' daily tasks and their professional opportunities.

That the language policies and initiatives do not take the actual practices and needs of the workers as their point of departure may have several explanations. In the Danish logistics company the different worlds of administration and production workers are hard to miss. The former group sets the agenda and projects their own perspectives and needs onto the latter group. English is 'big business' which allows the company to expand into new markets and create surplus value (Duchêne & Heller 2012). Investing in language classes that would aid the production workers in their daily work does simply not hold the same value, especially not since the production workers do solve the linguistic challenges of their daily work. Similarly, in the construction site it is also market demands and opportunities that weigh heavily on language choices and consequences. Workers from Eastern Europe are leased because they provide a cheaper and more flexible workforce, which is allegedly necessary to be competitive in a tough and rapidly changing market. The multilingual workplace that springs from this recruitment practice results in strict regulations about language and communication in the industry, which become enacted by managers as Norwegian-only policies that aim at 'ensuring understanding'. This policy renders invisible some of the languages in the workplace along with the vital role they play in coordinating work between groups of speakers (much akin to the situation described by Duchêne (2011) in his study of Zürich airport). It is interesting how the neoliberal deregulation of work and labour market conditions seems to entail a stronger regulation of languages and speakers. Having access to a transnational market and using a transnational labour force is desirable for companies, though the subsequent multilingual reality of work life may not be. On an institutional level, the 'problem' of communication and multilingualism is solved by regulations that dictate a monolingual ideal in a multilingual reality. As reported in the above, this regulation comes with consequences for individuals' opportunities. At the same time, in the daily work lives of individuals, communication and multilingualism are lived and managed, though often without being recognised. Hence, the institutional choice of deregulation, which results in diversity and subsequent linguistic regulation but also lack of recognition, ends up requiring that individuals become more flexible and creative (Allan & McElhinny 2017) in terms of communication through multiple linguistic and semiotic resources (Urciuoli 2008). In this way, part of the responsibility for institutional choices is transferred onto the individual workers.

7 Conclusion

Language practices in the two production sector workplaces analysed here include the use of multiple languages and semiotic resources, sometimes everything but the official workplace language. Together these practices ensure that work is carried out 'on the floor'. In contrast with these multi-semiotic practices are the official language policies which are based on hegemonic language ideologies and typically also on the language needs of the people who make the policies. As such the language policies favour one reality and neglect another, that of the workers. In both cases analysed here, the policies disregard the importance of the multilingual and multi-semiotic practices that make daily work function. In the warehouse case, some workers are actually offered language training. However, the discrepancy between the policy focus on English and the linguistic realities 'on the floor' means that workers are left with a feeling of dissatisfaction with managerial decisions on language policy because the training they are offered mirrors the needs of management and administration, e.g. their need to write emails in English, rather than the language needs of the warehouse workers. In the construction case, the tension between policy and practice effectively blocks opportunities for professional mobility.

Furthermore, the visibility of the languages valorised by the language polices in the workplaces and the erasure (Irvine & Gal 2000) of the diverse resources used 'on the floor' reinforce existing language hegemonies. By making diverse language practices invisible, the communicative competences of certain groups of workers are also rendered invisible, effectively positioning them as non-linguals.

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