

***Language policy in Denmark:
The approach to English as a lingua franca***

Paweł Korpala

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland
pkorpala@wa.amu.edu.pl

Abstract

There is no denying that English has become a global language, the so-called lingua franca (McArthur 2002; Crystal 2003; Mair 2003). It is now extensively used not only in English-speaking countries but also in countries where it has the status of a foreign language. The presence of a universal language may facilitate communication among speakers representing different language backgrounds. Nevertheless, many researchers are apprehensive of the fact that the existence of English as a lingua franca may lead to the impoverishment of local languages. The question concerning the interplay between the use of Danish and English in Denmark has been widely discussed by a great many Scandinavian linguists (Jarvad 1995, 1999; Davidsen-Nielsen and Herslund 1999; Preisler 1999; Andersen 2002; Thøgersen 2007). The main purpose of the study was to take a closer look at the approach of Danish people to English as a world language. A group of thirty Danes aged 20-27 took part in the study. They were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of questions related to linguistic globalization, international communication, foreign language education, the status of English in the Scandinavian countries and the advantages/disadvantages of the existence of a universal language. This was followed by short individual interviews which provided further input on the matters in question. The results of the study manifest general acceptance of English as a language extensively used in the domains of science, media and education. Such intriguing results may be treated as a point of reference for further discussion of the existence of a global language from a sociolinguistic and didactic point of view.

1. Introduction

The present paper represents an attempt to address the notion of the influence of English on Danish and the approach of Danish people to the extensive use of English in Denmark in the domains of science, education, media, etc. Since one can observe a growing influx of English loanwords to the Danish language, this topic has been a contentious issue which is now hotly debated among Scandinavian scholars. At the beginning of this paper, I will define a global language and discuss the prerequisites for the emergence of a lingua franca. Later on I will focus on the benefits and dangers of the existence of a language of international communication. The next section will be devoted to the impact of English on the Danish language. This will be an attempt to provide examples of the influence of English on Danish vocabulary, phonology, orthography and morphosyntax. Then I will go on to discuss the approach of Danish people to English as a lingua franca. I will formulate general conclusions on the basis of the findings of Bojsen (1989), Jarvad (1995, 1999), Preisler (1999), Andersen (2002) and Thøgersen (2007). The observations of these scholars will serve as a theoretical background for my own survey research which intended to determine whether young Danes manifest a positive or negative attitude to the increasing influence of English on their native language. The results of the study shed new light on the question of the interplay between English and Danish and may serve as an incentive to carry out further research on this issue.

2. English as a global language

The notion of English as a global language has been widely discussed among linguists involved in sociolinguistics, language typology and language contact (McArthur 2002; Crystal 2003; Mair 2003). It would be ignorant not to observe that English has emerged as a language of international communication. Several terms have been coined to define this kind of language. English is now referred to as a *lingua franca* (ELF), understood as a unifying language which enables communication among people who have different language backgrounds. The term *international language* (IE) is also used to define a simplified language used for international communication. In sociolinguistics, English is also often referred to as a *global language*, or *globish* (McCrum 2011). Globish is characterized by simplified spelling and pronunciation. Introducing such modifications aims at making international communication easier.

A question remains as to when we can perceive a given language as a global one. As pointed out by Crystal (2003: 2), “a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every

country". This may happen twofold. Firstly, a language can be made 'a second language', or an official language, in a given country. In such a situation, the language is granted an official status and is extensively used in the domains of law, politics, media, etc. (Crystal 2003: 3). Secondly, a language can develop into a global one by means of foreign language teaching (Crystal 2003: 3). If a particular language is given high priority in foreign language education, sooner or later it will become a language which is widely used among the inhabitants. Such a process has been visible in Denmark; English has become the language which children are taught in schools. This led to the fact that the majority of Danes, irrespective of their age, have a proficient command of English.

An interesting question which can be posed is why it is English which has emerged as a world's language. One could say that a lingua franca should have a set of defined structural properties and be characterized by easiness of grammatical structures. Modern English, which is practically devoid of inflections, could be perceived as a good choice. Literature and culture could possibly influence the choice of a global language as well. If a language is a vehicle for outstanding literature, it may become one used on a global scale. Important as these factors could be in the process of the emergence of a lingua franca, Crystal (2003: 7) concludes that "a language becomes an international language for one chief reason: the political power of its people – especially their military power". In other words, the political power of the people who use a given language is the main reason why it then develops into a language of international communication.

McArthur (2002: 116) presents in an illustrative way the relationship between English as a global language, other major languages and languages of lesser diffusion. By means of language categories he defines the qualities that a language has to possess in order to become a major, or a global, one:

- Category 1: English, the universalizing language, in a set of one: used by well over a billion people, being learned by millions more, distributed worldwide, and in the forefront of commerce, technology, science, and popular culture.
 - Category 2: Spanish, Chinese, and Hindi-Urdu: each complex used by hundreds of millions, Spanish widely disseminated but not as widely as English, the other two with massive population bases in single specific regions, and all three central to major world cultures and economies.
 - Category 3: Such large, culturally significant languages as Arabic, French, Russian, Malay, German and Japanese: internationally powerful languages in social, cultural, demographic, and economic terms.
- (...)
- Category 7: Very small local languages.

Categories 4-6, which have been skipped here, comprise minor national and regional languages. Based on McArthur's classification, we can conclude why it is English, and not Spanish, Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, French, Russian or German, that has emerged as a world's language. Wide dissemination is not sufficient in order for a language to become a global one; English as a lingua franca is also learned by more people than the languages from Category 2 as well as being used in the domains of politics, trade, technology, science, media and culture.

3. The benefits and dangers of the existence of a global language

At this point, it should be clear why English has become a lingua franca used on a global scale. A question remains to what extent the existence of International English has changed our lives. Some of the advantages appear to be evident. The existence of English as a lingua franca enables international communication and boosts mutual understanding. A plethora of international academic and business communities could not function if it was not for a language of global communication. English enables the exchange of knowledge at international congresses and conferences. The use of English helps reduce the costs which would be incurred for interpreters' remuneration if the speakers were allowed to use their native languages. This is related to mobility, which is another advantage of the use of a lingua franca. Thanks to the fact that more and more people all over the world have a fluent command of English as a foreign language, people can avoid communication problems when travelling abroad.

Although we can benefit from the existence of a global language, some significant disadvantages also need to be mentioned. When discussing the notion of *language power*, Crystal poses the following question: "[w]ill those who speak a global language as a mother tongue automatically be in a position of power compared with those who have to learn it as an official or foreign language?" (Crystal 2003: 14). The scholar concludes that such a risk is significant and he provides examples to bear out his claim. For instance, a researcher whose command of English leaves a lot to be desired may be dismissed from taking part in an international congress. Similarly, his or her article may not be accepted by the reviewer because it does not meet the requirement of output quality. By the same token, it is possible that a skilled manager would not be hired by an international company since his or her command of English is not sufficient (Crystal 2003: 14). Mühleisen (2003: 117) touches upon the problem of English being the almost exclusive language used in the scientific discourse and concludes that "[t]he possible negative effects are drastic and include the loss of knowledge encoded in those languages. The possible positive effects sound rather mundane in comparison". Another problem is the so-

called *linguistic complacency* (Crystal 2003: 15), which means that being a native speaker of English eliminates the motivation to study foreign languages. Given that it is English that is used for international communication, native speakers of English may feel discouraged from learning other languages which are characterized by lesser diffusion. Lastly, Crystal (2003: 17) touches upon the question of *linguistic death* by asking: “[w]ill the emergence of a global language hasten the disappearance of minority languages and cause widespread language death?”. Crystal concludes that a great many indigenous languages are being lost but it cannot be said that the emergence of a global language is a direct reason for this state of affairs. Nevertheless, the existence of a lingua franca may have an influence on the structure of other languages by being the source of numerous loanwords, some of which may not be welcomed by linguistic purists (Crystal 2003: 19). Consequently, extensive use of a global language may impoverish local languages.

4. The influence of English on Danish

The question of the interplay between the linguistic power of Danish and English in Denmark has been hotly debated among numerous Scandinavian scholars (Jarvad 1995, 1999; Davidsen-Nielsen and Herslund 1999; Preisler 1999; Andersen 2002; Thøgersen 2007). The term *Danlish* has been coined to refer to the Danish language highly influenced by English and pseudo-English vocabulary. As pointed out by Sørensen (1974), the impact of English involves not only the incorporation of English loanwords into the Danish language but it also encompasses changes at the level of phonology, morphology and syntax. This section is intended to provide and discuss examples of the influence of English on Danish.

Many people agree that “Denmark is less prone to linguistic purism than the other Nordic countries” (Hansen and Lund 1994: 39, as cited in Gottlieb 2004). It would be interesting to find out why it is the case, i.e. why English is so welcome in Scandinavian countries. Gottlieb (2004: 41) discusses the notion of Scandinavian openness to English and enumerates the features which make Scandinavians willing to use English extensively:

- the high and unchallenged prestige of English in all corners of society;
- the enormous popularity of Anglo-American media products;
- the intensive teaching of English at all age levels;
- the extensive international personal and business contacts of wide segments of the population;
- the close inter-Germanic relationship between English and the Scandinavian languages.

English is omnipresent in Danish media products. It has been made a priority in foreign language education and, thus, it has developed into a language which is now extensively used in various domains. In order to form and maintain international business contacts, it has become necessary for people to have a language used for international communication. As Gottlieb (2004) also suggests, genetic relatedness, i.e. the fact that both English and Scandinavian languages are Germanic languages, has an impact on Scandinavians' openness to English. His conclusions are compatible with my own observations. Even when a non-native speaker of Danish has an excellent command of this language, Danes have a tendency to switch into English when they realize that Danish is not this person's native language. During my stay in Denmark, I also observed that some young Danes used English even when talking to each other. The reason for that was that they felt that English is a language of international prestige, they found it attractive and they preferred to communicate in English rather than to use their native language.

In order to demonstrate that English has had a significant impact on the phonology, morphology and syntactic structures in Danish, I will discuss some of the examples provided in the literature on the language contact between Danish and English:

- *lexical borrowings* (Szubert 2003; Gottlieb 2004): 'branding', 'steak', 'cool', 'entertainer', 'windsurfer': these words were borrowed from English overtly and they function as Danish words;
- *loan translations* (Hansen and Lund 1994; Bønlykke Olsen 2002; Szubert 2003; Gottlieb 2004): 'nuclear family' > 'kernefamilie', 'bag lady' > 'posedame', 'brainwashing' > 'hjernevask', 'countdown' > 'nedtælling': these are examples of the so-called calques in the case of which the phrases were borrowed from English in the root-by-root manner; such loan translations may also function as multi-word substitutes where the structure of the whole idiomatic English phrase is retained in Danish, e.g. 'make ends meet' > 'få enderne til at mødes';
- *hybrids* (Szubert 2003; Gottlieb 2004): 'computer screen' > 'computerskærm'; 'job satisfaction' > 'jobtilfredshed': these words are not overt lexical borrowings but they consist of an element which is a loanword from English and a Danish element which was not borrowed;
- *semantic loans* (Gottlieb 2004): 'Love you!' [= goodbye] > 'Jeg elsker dig!'; this is a peculiar example of a semantic loan from English; although 'Hav det godt!' is a standard Danish structure which is used to express the English phrase 'Love you!' [= goodbye], 'Jeg elsker dig!' (lit. 'I love you') is now commonly used due to the influence of English;

- *orthographic loans* (Gottlieb 2004): 'literature' > 'litteratur'; although the Danish equivalent of literature used to be spelled with double 't' ('litteratur'), the spelling has gradually changed due to the influence of English;
- *phonetic loans* (Gottlieb 2004): following the linguistic norm, exclamations in Danish should be pronounced with a slightly rising intonation; however, because of the standard American intonational pattern, they are now often pronounced with a falling intonation;
- *morphosyntactic calques* (Gottlieb 2004): a standard Danish translation of the English phrase 'a friend of mine' is 'en af mine venner'; this phrase is, however, often replaced by 'en ven af mig' so as to copy the English structure;
- *translationese* (Gottlieb 2004): a standard Danish word for 'to announce' is 'at meddele'; there also exists a verb 'at annoncere' but it means 'to advertise'; due to the morphological similarity of the two verbs, 'at annoncere' is now often used to express the meaning of the English verb 'to announce'.

Apart from the examples mentioned above, Gottlieb (2004: 47) also touches upon the question of *total shifts*. This happens when Danish people refrain from using their native language and they choose to address each other in English, for example, when they create websites which do not have a Danish version. The question which is often posed by Scandinavian linguists is whether or not such extensive use of English in Denmark leads to *domain loss*. Writing academic papers by Danes in English may be perceived as an example of domain loss (Gottlieb 2004: 47).

As can be seen, standard Danish has been (and is getting) highly influenced by English. This impact is not limited to overt lexical borrowings but it is also noticeable at the level of phonology, spelling and morphosyntax. Bojsen (1989) refers to Danish as *dansk under engelsk-amerikansk fortryllelse* (*Danish enchanted by English*) and reports that more and more young Danes find the use of English attracting and ennobling. In the next section, I will touch upon the question of the approach of Danish people to English as a global language.

5. The approach of Danish people to English as a lingua franca: Studies

The question of the status of English in Denmark has been widely discussed among Scandinavian linguists. In this section, I will present some of the opinions on the (extensive) use of English in Denmark. The question that has been often posed in the context of the impact of English on Danish is whether English loanwords should be perceived as a threat to linguistic purism, or maybe they are an indispensable part of a constantly changing language which is in contact with other languages

(Thøgersen 2007: 25). Should Danes be afraid of the fact that the overuse of English will lead to the extinction of their native language in the nearest future?

Thøgersen (2007: 24) distinguishes between two general approaches to language policy in Denmark, mainly *purismeperspektivet* (linguistic purism) and *verdenssprogspektivet* (the acceptance of the existence of a global language). Danish purists would purport that a duty of all Danish citizens is to retain their native language and to limit the use of English to cases when it is absolutely necessary. They look at language as one of the highest values which forms a nation's identity. According to the supporters of the *verdenssprogspektivet* view, on the other hand, the process of linguistic globalization and the existence of a global language are perceived as a positive trend. The author concludes that the Danish society is divided into people who accept the growing role of English in Denmark and those who are afraid that English will take over the domain of scientific communication. When discussing the advantages of the existence of a global language, Thøgersen (2007: 28) emphasizes that linguistic unification leads to a beneficial state in which people all over the world have access to the same information which, in turn, provides more equal opportunities.

Several Danish researchers have conducted empirical studies which intended to investigate the attitude of Danish people towards English. According to Jarvad (1995: 135), those borrowings from English which identify new things and phenomena are generally accepted by Danes whereas there exists slight opposition to words that compete with well-established Danish words. A few years later, Jarvad (1999) stated explicitly that the loss of domains, such as commerce, education and science, should be regarded as a major threat to Danish. Jarvad (1999: 110) created a dictionary of new words which appeared in the Danish language in 1955-1998 and classified them in the following way:

- borrowing from languages other than English (5%);
- phrases, proper names which retain the English structure (13%);
- hybrids which include an English element (14%);
- pseudoanglicisms (2%);
- semantic loans from English (9%);
- new Danish words (57%).

Based on Jarvad's findings, we can conclude that almost 40% of new words which emerged in Danish in the second part of the 20th century have been borrowed from English. According to Jarvad, it poses a threat to the linguistic power of standard Danish (*rigsdansk*). In her article, Jarvad (1999) expresses a concern that Danish might in the future become a language which is only used in the home since English will take over the domains of media, science and commerce. Hence, Jarvad takes a firm stand as a linguistic purist and she concludes that some actions need to be taken to retain the significance of the Danish language.

Andersen (2002) carried out a study in which she aimed at verifying whether young Danish people have a positive or negative attitude towards English borrowings. The results of a questionnaire demonstrated that 48% of participants fully accept the presence of English loanwords in Danish while only 10% of them have a negative attitude towards these borrowings. One of the main findings from the study is that Danish students associate the use of English loanwords with modernity, adolescence, competence and reliability (Andersen 2002: 41). That is why they find it attractive to communicate in English even when it is not necessary. They take it for granted that the standard Danish language comprises also borrowings from English. In other words, they perceive English loanwords as an indispensable part of the Danish language and they find it attractive to use them in everyday communication. Andersen's research is crucial for this paper since the main purpose of my study, described in the final section, was also to investigate the attitude of the younger generation of Danes to the extensive use of English.

Preisler (1999) examined the use of English among the members of Danish sub-cultures. He discusses the members' favorable attitude towards the use of English borrowings and the psychological reasons for the Danish-English code-switching. Preisler concludes that use of English words results from the sub-cultures' desire to indicate their values and form their own identity (Phillipson 2001: 24). The main cause of code-switching is, thus, not the fact that English is given priority in foreign-language education in Denmark. The reason is more of a psychological nature. Fragments of in-group conversations are given below with the italicized English elements:

A: Sidder du og sletter gamle, *downloadede* ting?

[A: So you sit here and delete the old downloaded stuff?]

B: Men øh... Det er fordi, jeg fik øh... bare 100 *megabyte* af sådan noget halvnyt noget og sådan noget... (...)

[B; But, uh ... That's because I got uh ... just 100 megabytes of something half-news and also something like... (...)]

C: Uha, 30,5 time til far her.

[C: Uh, 30.5 hours to finish that]

A: 30,5 time?

[A: 30.5 hours?]

C: Ja. *No sleep*, mand.

[C: Yeah. No sleep, man.]

A: Hvad med det der *on-screen display* på din *monitor* og sådan noget, har du fået det til at virke?

[A: What about the on-screen display on your monitor or something like that, did you fix it?] (Preisler 1999: 45-46)

These are only two of the numerous examples provided by Preisler (1999). As we can see, sub-culture everyday communication is characterized by a significant level of Danish-English code-switching. It is worth mentioning that some of the English elements can be classified as sentence-shaped code shifts (e.g. 'No sleep') while other instances, such as 'downloadede', function as English loanwords the structure of which has been adapted to the Danish grammar rules (the suffix '-ed' is a grammatical marking of the past participle).

Also Bojsen (1989) gives examples of the influence of English on Danish and discusses the attitude of Danes to the emergence of English as a global language. As early as in the second part of 1980s, between 10 and 20% of Danish vocabulary consisted of words borrowed from English (Bojsen 1989: 40). The author also discusses the difference in the attitude of young and middle-aged Danes to the growing influence of English on the Danish language and culture. She concludes that middle-aged Danish citizens are frustrated with the process of Americanization. Young people, on the other hand, find the use of English attractive and they associate it with prestige (Bojsen 1989: 41). The younger generation of Danes is a part of the Danish society which is influenced by Americanization to the largest extent. Bojsen (1989: 42) provides examples of total Danish-English shifts. An increasing number of poems in Denmark is now written in English, the reason of which may be that the authors want their works to be published and become renowned world-wide. What is more, song lyrics written by Danish bands are more and more often in English. Also, the names of bands are in English with a view to gaining international renown.

The main purpose of the present section was to discuss the notion of the growing influence of English on Danish on the basis of the observations of Danish scholars. To summarize, we can conclude that English is extensively used in Denmark, especially by young people and sub-cultures. Such people accept the fact that English emerged as a world's language and it has a significant impact on Danish vocabulary. They associate the use of English with prestige and modernity. Middle-aged Danes, on the other hand, are apprehensive of the fact that Danish is now replaced by English in the domains of commerce, science and media. They feel the need for a more strict language policy in Denmark since, if appropriate action is not taken, Danish can become a minor language used in homes as a medium of communication among family members.

6. The approach of Danish people to English as a lingua franca: A survey study

The observations of the researchers discussed above served as a theoretical background for my own survey research in which I also focused on the influence of English on Danish. In this section, I will define the purpose of the

study. Later on, I will describe the process of data analysis and present the results of the questionnaire that the participants were asked to complete. Finally, I will attempt to interpret the results of the study, discuss its limitations and suggest directions for further research.

6.1. The purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to take a closer look at the approach of Danish people to English as a world language. My objective was to investigate whether young Danes perceive extensive use of English as alarming or totally acceptable. In general, previous research suggests that young Danes accept the increasing influence of English on their native language. This study intended to check the veracity of these findings. In order to be able to investigate it in a qualitative way, I adopted a method based on a questionnaire, followed by retrospective interviews in which I asked the participants some further questions related to linguistic globalization, international communication, foreign language education, the status of English in the Scandinavian countries and the advantages/disadvantages of the existence of a universal language.

6.2. Participants and materials

A group of thirty Danes aged 20-27 (15 female, 15 male) took part in the study. All of them were born in Denmark and had Danish as their only native language. Most of them had spent most of their lives in Denmark; only two of them had spent more than a year abroad. They were asked to fill in a short questionnaire in Danish which was sent to them online. Preparing the questionnaire in Danish was of crucial importance in the present study. I believed that the use of a questionnaire in English would prime the participants and encourage them to accept English as a language of international communication.

6.3. Hypotheses

The hypotheses can be formulated in the following way:

1. The participants accept the presence of English loanwords in Danish and they use them in everyday communication.
2. The participants accept English as a language extensively used in the domains of science and education.
3. English is not perceived by the participants as a threat to Danish. On the contrary, a good command of English is believed to expand their horizons.

6.4. Data analysis and results

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions. A five-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 5 meaning strong agreement with a given statement, was used in the study. The list of questions together with their translations into English is given below. The mean and median results for the group of 30 participants are given in brackets next to each question:

1. Engelsk bør betragtes som en trussel for dansk (mean: 2.00; median: 1.5).
(*English should be perceived as a threat to Danish*).
2. Jeg har en positiv holdning til engelsk som en videnskabssprog (mean: 4.13/5; median: 4.0).
(*I have a positive attitude towards English as a language of science*).
3. Jeg synes, at engelsk bruges for tit i danske medier (mean: 2.53; median: 2.0).
(*I think that English is used too often in Danish media*).
4. At tale engelsk på et højt niveau åbner døre (mean: 4.20; median: 4.0).
(*Having a proficient command of English expands one's horizons*).
5. Danskere mister deres identitet, fordi de bruger engelsk for tit (mean: 1.87; median: 2.0).
(*Danish people gradually lose their identity as they use English too often*).
6. Der er for mange engelske låneord i det danske sprog (mean: 2.40; median: 2.0).
(*There exist too many English loanwords in Danish*).
7. Jeg synes, at den sproglige globalisering er en positiv proces (mean: 3.67; median: 3.5).
(*I think that linguistic globalization/unification is a positive process*).
8. Den internordiske kommunikation bør foregå på engelsk (mean: 1.87; median: 2.0).
(*People from the Nordic countries should communicate with each other in English*).
9. At lære engelsk er en nødvendighed (mean: 4.60; median: 5.0).
(*To learn English is a must*).
10. Jeg foretrækker at bruge et ord 'bodyguard' frem for 'livvagt' (mean: 3.00; median: 3.0).
(*I prefer using the word 'bodyguard' to using 'livvagt'*).

Consistent with my predictions, I found that the participants in the study have a positive attitude towards English as a global language. The hypotheses described in the previous section were corroborated in the course of data analysis. It turned out that young Danes do not perceive extensive use of English as a

language present in the domains of science and commerce as a threat to their native language (questions 1 and 2). The answers to question 3, nevertheless, show that many participants are aware that the extent to which English is used in Danish media might be too large. Regardless of this finding, the subjects are almost unanimous in claiming that a very good command of English expands one's horizons both in education and on the job market (question 4). Young Danes are not inclined to believe that the extensive use of English may lead to identity loss among Danish people (question 5). They find no correlation between the language which they use and their identity. The answer to question 6 gives inconclusive results. When asked whether there exist too many English words in Danish, most of the participants chose the middle points on the scale indicating neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement. As for question 7, the majority of Danes who took part in the study claim that the existence of a global language and the process of linguistic globalization constitute a positive trend. Thanks to the existence of a global language, the problem of language barrier and the lack of mutual comprehensibility is limited. A question which is often discussed in the context of Scandinavian languages is the notion of inter-Nordic communication. Since native speakers of Scandinavian languages are characterized by significant mutual comprehensibility, a great many language activists postulate that people from the Scandinavian countries should communicate with each other using their native languages. If we take a look at answers given to question 8, we will conclude that the participants in the present study share this opinion. Although they do not oppose to extensive use of English in Denmark, they claim that Scandinavians should refrain from using English when talking to each other. Similar to question 4, the answers to question 9 show that young Danes think that it is not only beneficial but also necessary to know English as a foreign language in the times of linguistic globalization. The last question in the questionnaire aimed at verifying whether the participants use a Danish word 'livvagt' or they tend to use the English equivalent 'bodyguard' which has been borrowed into Danish. It transpired that the majority of young Danes who took part in the study refrain from using the Danish word and they prefer to use the English loanword.

Retrospective interviews with the participants via Skype software provided further insight into the questions of foreign language education, the status of English in the Scandinavian countries and the advantages/disadvantages of the existence of a universal language. The main findings can be summarized in the following way:

- to learn English is of utmost importance when one wishes to work in an international environment; young Danes are fully aware of the fact that a very good command of English is a substantial advantage on the job market;

- great priority is given to foreign language education in primary and high schools in Denmark;
- in general, young Danes accept English loanwords as part of the Danish language; in many cases they are not able to guess whether a given lexeme is a standard Danish word or an English borrowing;
- I did not observe any significant gender differences with regard to the general attitude towards extensive use of English as a lingua franca in Denmark;
- the majority of participants tend to code-switch into English to a larger extent when talking to members within a peer group;
- in general, the participants do not perceive English as a threat to Danish; they do not see the need to make language policy in Denmark more strict or to promote the use of Danish in the domains such as science or media.

7. Conclusions and implications

To conclude, the results of the survey research and the follow-up interviews give a comprehensive view of the attitude of young Danes towards English as a global language. The analysis of the answers given by the participants led me to believe that they are not apprehensive of the extensive use of English in Denmark and they accept the state of the emerging social diglossia. As for the limitations of the study, the involvement of a small number of participants dictates that it can provide only tentative insights into the interplay between Danish and English in Denmark. A more numerous experimental group would give a study more external validity and lead to more reliable results. Moreover, interviewing the participants remotely (via Skype) turned out to be risky; I was not able to connect to three out of thirty participants. Hence, the conclusions drawn from the retrospective interviews are based on the opinions of the majority of the subjects, but not all of them.

As for further research, it could be a good idea to include a group of middle-aged Danes in the investigated sample. In this way, we could examine whether there exists a statistically significant difference between the approach of both groups to the emergence of English as a language extensively used in various domains in Denmark. Jarvad (1995) showed that women and the elderly criticize the overuse of English in Denmark more than men and young people. She also found that people who speak English at a low level are more critical of it than those who have a perfect command of English. I believe that my study would lead to more detailed conclusions if I compared and contrasted two or more experimental groups. Another idea to extend the research could be to create a list of standard Danish words and their English equivalents which have been borrowed into Danish and to ask the participants

which words they use more frequently. In the questionnaire adopted in this study, only one such pair was used: 'livvagt' and 'bodyguard'. It could also be interesting to turn the present research into a longitudinal study. Asking the group of young Danes a set of the same questions in ten or twenty years would be likely to show whether sensitivity to language use and a kind of linguistic patriotism emerges at a later age.

Irrespective of the limitations of the study, I believe that it gives a tentative view on the notions in question and may be an incentive to further research the topic of the status of English in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. In the times of the increasing influence of English on Danish it seems reasonable to find out more about this process.

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