Sociolinguistics of language education in 2030? A collaborative project on professional language needs

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University Language Centres need to base their curriculums and teaching on workplace needs. For the Language Centre teaching, there are many challenges in keeping up with the developments (see e.g. Jalkanen, Pitkänen-Huhta & Taalas 2012), and one of these is the structural, generational and other global changes at work. Currently, there is not enough research-based knowledge of what languages are in use in Finnish working places, for what purposes and how? What kind of multilingualism is required in professional encounters, at the moment and potentially in the future? And what are the implications for the language education in University Language Centres?

The poster introduces an ongoing project which examines, through a large scale interview data, language needs and multilingualism of the present workplace contexts. The project is part of a larger research program currently under planning in FINELC (The Network of Finnish University Language Centres). The project builds on earlier findings of similar studies (e.g. Karjalainen & Lehtonen eds. 2005) but extends the perspective into a more ethnographic perspective, across the professional fields relevant to the language education of University of Helsinki LC.

Our poster shows the detailed aims and design of the project, some preliminary findings from the employee interview data, and plans of the project extensions in terms of ethnographic analysis.

References:


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