TIRF

The International Research Foundation
for English Language Education

TIRF TODAY

Research Spotlight: Centre for Internationalisation & Parallel Language Use

Editor's note: In this piece, Dr. Joyce Kling Soren (left), Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use, University of Copenhagen, shares information about the Centre where she works.

CIP Staff and Advisory Board

An important aspect of the internationalization process of the University of Copenhagen (UCPH) is the implementation of a language policy which ensures consistently high standards of language use, in Danish as well as in English. To support the University's efforts in implementing a language policy based on principles of parallel language use, the UCPH Board of Directors established the Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (CIP) in 2008.

CIP's mission is to create a professional and practical foundation to support the University's parallel language policy. As an active player in the international academic community, UCPH aims to ensure that its employees possess the English language skills required to function optimally in an international setting. At the same time, UCPH is determined to continue to to serve the Danish society at the same high level, using Danish as the language of communication. However, parallel language use is not limited to Danish and English, which is why CIP also aims to include other languages in collaboration with interested partners who possess the relevant research and academic competences. In keeping with UCPH's *Strategy 2016*, CIP will strengthen its efforts to promote multilingualism among university staff and students.

CIP's central aim is to develop nuanced and robust, practical and research-based knowledge of language needs and skills in university settings, thereby contributing to qualified discussions and decision-making regarding language and its use. CIP's courses are research based, and it is upon this dimension that CIP sets itself apart from other language course providers. Designing curriculum in this way ensures that CIP's courses are of a very high quality both linguistically and pedagogically, and that they are designed to meet individual participants' skills and needs within a university context.

CIP's research activities form the basis of its language courses and help to identify and describe the linguistic challenges faced by university staff and students. CIP's research focuses on parallel language use within the university, where several languages operate side by side, and can be divided into five main areas: (1) parallel language in practice, (2) foreign- and second-language acquisition and teaching, (3) language policy, (4) language and the quality of learning outcomes, and (5) testing of language competencies in an academic context.

Internationalisation of learning environments and improvement of students' and employees' multilingual competences are two important foci of UCPH's *Strategy 2016.* Consequently, the University launched two development projects in 2013. The first, *The Language Strategy - More Languages for More Students*, is a five-year project which seeks to ensure specialized language-supporting activities in a broad range of foreign languages across the University of Copenhagen. The second project, *2016 Funds – Internationalisation and Language Skills*, focuses on the retention and preparation of international students at UCPH.

In addition to teaching and research, CIP functions as a resource center for the University as a whole. CIP offers tools, links, and advice to inspire and help members of the academic community to handle the linguistic challenges of Danish and English in an internationalized workplace. As a resource center, CIP maintains both a physical library of current books and literature and a virtual library that documents supporting materials and initiatives. One such initiative is the 'Let's dansk!' campaign at UCPH. With this campaign, CIP aims to bring into focus how important it is for the University's international employees to be prepared for a Danish language workday at the University.

Trustee Recognized for Work on Aviation English Test

Dr. Yoshida

On December 12, 2013, Professor Kensaku "Ken" Yoshida, a member of the TIRF Board of Trustees, was given the Transportation Culture Award by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism of Japan for his contributions in setting up the aviation English accreditation system. Professor Yoshida and his colleagues at the Sophia Linguistics Institute for International Communication created an aviation English test on commission from the Association of Air Transport Research and Engineering, a subsidiary organization of the Ministry of Land and Transport. Professor Yoshida implemented the test in his role as the Chairman of the Aviation English Accreditation Assessment Committee, thereby improving the safety of air transportation.

Professor Yoshida had this comment about receiving this award: "This is probably the first time in the award's 57-year history that a linguist and English teacher has received this award. It's good to know that the work we all put into developing the test has been acknowledged in this way. I feel very proud of the award, because it is the result of the cooperation between linguists, airline pilots, and bureaucrats, and it shows that language teachers and researchers can contribute to society in many different ways."

Congratulations, Ken, to you and your team!

February is Discover Languages Month

February has been designated as Discover Languages month by the ACTFL Board of Directors. ACTFL members and the wider language teaching community are encouraged to organize events and activities around this theme during the month of February.

There are several cornerstones of the Discover Languages campaign: (1) public awareness, advocacy, and policy; (2) research and practice; and (3) resources and collaboration. First, as for public awareness, advocacy, and policy, throughout the campaign there will be a focus on advocating for language education with a strong public awareness component at all levels of instruction, Pre-K through adulthood, and at all levels of influence from the local community to the national level. As part of this advocacy campaign, there will be a strategic plan to shape policy in a variety of arenas.

Second, regarding research and practice, the Discover Languages campaign includes a strategic plan for research to promote best practices to enhance the quality of language teaching and to identify both cognitive and social benefits of language learning. Finally, the Discover Languages campaign also seeks to provide a unifying effort among all language professionals by working collaboratively on projects to promote language education and to identify resources that meet the needs of the constituent groups of language professionals.

ACTFL suggests ways that Discover Languages month can be celebrated at schools and universities, as well as in one's community. For a list of ideas as to how individuals can get involved, please click here.

Pearson Grants Now Available — Applications Due Soon

Pearson is currently inviting researchers in the fields of language testing and assessment, second/foreign language education, linguistics, applied linguistics, and other related areas of research to participate in our 2014 external research program. Pearson is offering funded research, in-kind supported research, and new tender opportunities.

Funded research is offered in three different ways. First, faculty members or qualified freelance researchers may qualify; Pearson will provide test data and a maximum of £10,000. Second, doctoral students who are preparing for their PhD theses in relevant research areas may apply; Pearson will provide test data and a maximum of £2,000. Third, master's students who are preparing for their MA/MEd/MSc theses in relevant research areas can apply; Pearson will provide test data and a maximum of £1,000.

In-kind supported research is open to anyone who is interested in large-scale language test datasets, especially graduate students, faculty members, and freelance researchers. Language test data can be provided as an in-kind contribution to your research project.

For tender opportunities, Pearson invites bids from researchers willing to undertake specific projects detailed at the second link below. Interested researchers should follow the same application process as for funded research applications.

Proposals will be selected according to the following criteria: (1) sound theoretical foundation, (2) clear methodology, (3) promising contribution(s) to the field of second/foreign language testing, (4) feasibility of the research, given the budget and timeline, (5) match with Pearson's research agenda and compliance with data protection and ethics standards.

Applications are due on February 28, 2014. For more information on Pearson's grant opportunities, please click here.

BAAL TEA SIG Conference — "Technology in Language Assessment"

BAAL TEA SIG is holding a one-day conference on the theme of *Technology in Language Assessment: Challenges and Opportunities.* The conference will be held on Friday, May 2, 2014 at the University of Huddersfield, UK. Conference organizers welcome both completed and work-in-progress papers on technology in language assessment.

Prospective participants are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 250 words as a Word attachment to baalteasig@gmail.com by Friday, February 7, 2014. Accepted papers will be announced by Friday, February 21, 2014.

Presenters will be invited to publish their papers in a special online Conference Proceedings edition. For more information about the conference, please click here. For registration, please click here.

Chair's Report — Good News & Bad News about TIRF's Website

There is good news and bad news about TIRF's website.

The good news is that since we started tracking "hits" in 2008, there have been over 166,000 unique visitors to the website. The bad news is that the vast majority of those visitors (112,334) are located in the US. We very much want the website to be accessible and helpful to people everywhere.

The good news is that the 2014 call for proposals for the Doctoral Dissertation Grants (DDG) is now posted. The bad news is that we have never had an applicant from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, or Central Asia, and too few have come from South America, Northern Africa, and many countries throughout Asia. Again, we want the competition to be international.

The good news is that there are now six reports on mobile assisted language learning posted, along with responses from two invited discussants for each report. The respondents represent a range of countries. The bad news is that we have yet to generate further discussion by way of additional postings from people in the field.

Please can you help by forwarding this text to your colleagues and students and encourage them to visit TIRF's website? We are looking forward to a large DDG applicant pool, and many more comments on our MALL papers. And we need your help to realize these goals. Thank you!

Kathi Bailey