

For the conference Bi- and multilingual universities, Helsinki, Finland, Sept 2-3

Language policy for a bilingual faculty

Karin Carlson, Christer Kiselman, Ulf Danielsson, Sven Halldin, Amalia Mattsson
Uppsala University

The Faculty of Science and Technology of Uppsala University is for all practical purposes a bilingual institution, using both Swedish and English in education and research. Extensive use of English in teaching, and also in intra-university communication, permits recruitment of non-Swedish-speaking students, researchers and professors, and also prepares our students for international careers. However, the introduction of English has been somewhat haphazard, not taking into account possible negative effects on communication in Swedish, nor on students' learning.

In order to improve students' and professors' language skills, and achieve a good balance between Swedish and English, the faculty board appointed a language committee in 2003 whose task was to propose a language policy for the faculty. A first part, stating as a main goal that all communication from and within the faculty should have the highest quality possible, has been adopted by the board. A second part including language planning with respect to status, corpus, and acquisition for both Swedish and English to accomplish this goal was sent to the board of the faculty in May, 2005.

Implementation of this policy will affect all faculty activities, especially education. Suggested annual reports on language status will raise our present minimal knowledge about possible domain losses and allow for relevant countermeasures.