

Encyclopedia of
Language and Education
Series Editor: Stephen May

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Stephen May *Editors*

Language Policy and Political Issues in Education

Third Edition

 Springer

Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Series Editor

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Auckland, New Zealand

In this third, fully revised edition, the 10-volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* offers the newest developments, including an entirely new volume of research and scholarly content, essential to the field of language teaching and learning in the age of globalization. In the selection of topics and contributors, the *Encyclopedia* reflects the depth of disciplinary knowledge, breadth of interdisciplinary perspective, and diversity of sociogeographic experience in the language and education field.

Throughout, there is an inclusion of contributions from non-English speaking and non-Western parts of the world, providing truly global coverage. Furthermore, the authors have sought to integrate these voices fully into the whole, rather than as special cases or international perspectives in separate sections. The *Encyclopedia* is a necessary reference set for every university and college library in the world that serves a faculty or school of education, as well as being highly relevant to the fields of applied and socio-linguistics. The publication of this work charts the further deepening and broadening of the field of language and education since the publication of the first edition of the *Encyclopedia* in 1997 and the second edition in 2008.

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Language Policy and Political Issues in Education

Third Edition

With 4 Figures and 7 Tables

 Springer

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Editor in Chief's Introduction to the "Encyclopedia of Language and Education"

This is one of ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* published by Springer. The *Encyclopedia* – now in this, its 3rd edition – is undoubtedly the benchmark reference text in its field. It was first published in 1997 under the general editorship of the late David Corson and comprised eight volumes, each focused on a single, substantive topic in language and education. These included: language policy and political issues in education, literacy, oral discourse and education, second language education, bilingual education, knowledge about language, language testing and assessment, and research methods in language and education.

In his introductory remarks, David made the case for the timeliness of an overarching, state-of-the-art review of the language and education field. He argued that the publication of the *Encyclopedia* reflected both the internationalism and interdisciplinarity of those engaged in the academic analysis of language and education, confirmed the maturity and cohesion of the field, and highlighted the significance of the questions addressed within its remit. Contributors across the 1st edition's eight volumes came from every continent and from over 40 countries. This perhaps explains the subsequent impact and reach of that 1st edition – although no one (except, perhaps, the publisher!) quite predicted its extent. The *Encyclopedia* was awarded a Choice Outstanding Academic Title award by the American Library Association and was read widely by scholars and students alike around the globe.

In 2008, the 2nd edition of the *Encyclopedia* was published under the general editorship of Nancy Hornberger. It grew to ten volumes as Nancy continued to build upon the reach and influence of the *Encyclopedia*. A particular priority in the 2nd edition was the continued expansion of contributing scholars from contexts outside of English-speaking and/or developed contexts, as well as the more effective thematic integration of their regional concerns across the *Encyclopedia* as a whole. The 2nd edition also foregrounded key developments in the language and education field over the previous decade, introducing two new volumes on language socialization and language ecology.

This 3rd edition continues both the legacy and significance of the previous editions of the *Encyclopedia*. A further decade on, it consolidates, reflects, and expands (upon) the key issues in the field of language education. As with its predecessors, it overviews in substantive contributions of approximately 5000 words each, the historical development, current developments and challenges, and

future directions of a wide range of topics in language and education. The geographical focus and location of its authors, all chosen as experts in their respective topic areas, also continues to expand, as the *Encyclopedia* aims to provide the most representative international overview of the field to date.

To this end, some additional changes have been made. The emergence over the last decade of "superdiversity" as a topic of major concern in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and language education is now a major thread across all volumes – exploring the implications for language and education of rapidly changing processes of migration and transmigration in this late capitalist, globalized world. This interest in superdiversity foregrounds the burgeoning and rapidly complexifying uses of language(s), along with their concomitant deconstruction and (re)modification, across the globe, particularly (but not exclusively) in large urban environments. The allied emergence of multilingualism as an essential area of study – challenging the long-held normative ascendancy of monolingualism in relation to language acquisition, use, teaching, and learning – is similarly highlighted throughout all ten volumes, as are their pedagogical consequences (most notably, perhaps, in relation to translanguaging). This "multilingual turn" is reflected, in particular, in changes in title to two existing volumes: *Bilingual and Multilingual Education* and *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (previously, *Bilingual Education* and *Language Awareness*, respectively).

As for the composition of the volumes, while ten volumes remain overall, the *Language Ecology* volume in the 2nd edition was not included in the current edition, although many of its chapter contributions have been reincorporated and/or reworked across other volumes, particularly in light of the more recent developments in superdiversity and multilingualism, as just outlined. (And, of course, the important contribution of the *Language Ecology* volume, with Angela Creese and the late Peter Martin as principal editors, remains available as part of the 2nd edition.) Instead, this current edition has included a new volume on *Language, Education and Technology*, with Steven Thorne as principal editor. While widely discussed across the various volumes in the 2nd edition, the prominence and rapidity of developments over the last decade in academic discussions that address technology, new media, virtual environments, and multimodality, along with their wider social and educational implications, simply demanded a dedicated volume.

And speaking of multimodality, a new, essential feature of the current edition of the *Encyclopedia* is its multiplatform format. You can access individual chapters from any volume electronically, you can read individual volumes electronically and/or in print, and, of course, for libraries, the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* still constitute an indispensable overarching electronic and/or print resource.

As you might expect, bringing together ten volumes and over 325 individual chapter contributions has been a monumental task, which began for me at least in 2013 when, at Nancy Hornberger's invitation, Springer first approached me about the editor-in-chief role. All that has been accomplished since would simply not have occurred, however, without support from a range of key sources. First, to Nancy Hornberger, who, having somehow convinced me to take on the role, graciously

agreed to be consulting editor for the 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia*, providing advice, guidance, and review support throughout.

The international and interdisciplinary strengths of the *Encyclopedia* continue to be foregrounded in the wider topic and review expertise of its editorial advisory board, with several members having had direct associations with previous editions of the *Encyclopedia* in various capacities. My thanks to Suresh Canagarajah, William Cope, Viv Edwards, Rainer Enrique Hamel, Eli Hinkel, Francis Hult, Nkonko Kamwangamalu, Gregory Kamwendo, Claire Kramersch, Constant Leung, Li Wei, Luis Enrique López, Marilyn Martin-Jones, Bonny Norton, Tope Omoniyi, Alastair Pennycook, Bernard Spolsky, Lionel Wee, and Jane Zuengler for their academic and collegial support here.

The role of volume editor is, of course, a central one in shaping, updating, revising and, in some cases, resituating specific topic areas. The 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia* is a mix of existing volume editors from the previous edition (Cenoz, Duff, King, Shohamy, Street, and Van Deusen-Scholl), new principal volume editors (García, Kim, Lin, McCarty, Thorne, and Wortham), and new coeditors (Lai and Or). As principal editor of *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education*, Teresa McCarty brings to the volume her longstanding interests in language policy, language education, and linguistic anthropology, arising from her work in Native American language education and Indigenous education internationally. For *Literacies and Language Education*, Brian Street brings a background in social and cultural anthropology, and critical literacy, drawing on his work in Britain, Iran, and around the globe. As principal editors of *Discourse and Education*, Stanton Wortham has research expertise in discourse analysis, linguistic anthropology, identity and learning, narrative self-construction, and the new Latino diaspora, while Deoksoon Kim's research has focused on language learning and literacy education, and instructional technology in second language learning and teacher education. For *Second and Foreign Language Education*, Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl has academic interests in linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in the Netherlands and the United States. As principal editors of *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, Ofelia García and Angel Lin bring to the volume their internationally recognized expertise in bilingual and multilingual education, including their pioneering contributions to translanguaging, along with their own work in North America and Southeast Asia. Jasone Cenoz and Durk Gorter, principal editors of *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, bring to their volume their international expertise in language awareness, bilingual and multilingual education, linguistic landscape, and translanguaging, along with their work in the Basque Country and the Netherlands. The principal editor of *Language Testing and Assessment*, Elana Shohamy, is an applied linguist with interests in critical language policy, language testing and measurement, and linguistic landscape research, with her own work focused primarily on Israel and the United States. For *Language Socialization*, Patricia Duff has interests in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in North America, East Asia, and Central Europe. For *Language, Education and Technology*, Steven Thorne's research interests include second language acquisition, new media and online gaming environments, and theoretical and empirical investigations of language, interactivity, and

development, with his work focused primarily in the United States and Europe. And for *Research Methods in Language and Education*, principal editor, Kendall King, has research interests in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics, particularly with respect to Indigenous language education, with work in Ecuador, Sweden, and the United States. Finally, as editor-in-chief, I bring my interdisciplinary background in the sociology of language, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and educational linguistics, with particular interests in language policy, Indigenous language education, and bilingual education, along with my own work in New Zealand, North America, and the UK/Europe.

In addition to the above, my thanks go to Yi-Ju Lai, coeditor with Kendall King, and Iair Or, coeditor with Elana Shohamy. Also, to Lincoln Dam, who as editorial assistant was an essential support to me as editor-in-chief and who worked closely with volume editors and Springer staff throughout the process to ensure both its timeliness and its smooth functioning (at least, to the degree possible, given the complexities involved in this multiyear project). And, of course, my thanks too to the approximately 400 chapter contributors, who have provided the substantive content across the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* and who hail from every continent in the world and from over 50 countries.

What this all indicates is that the *Encyclopedia* is, without doubt, not only a major academic endeavor, dependent on the academic expertise and good will of all its contributors, but also still demonstrably at the cutting edge of developments in the field of language and education. It is an essential reference for every university and college library around the world that serves a faculty or school of education and is an important allied reference for those working in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. The *Encyclopedia* also continues to aim to speak to a prospective readership that is avowedly multinational and to do so as unambiguously as possible. Its ten volumes highlight its comprehensiveness, while the individual volumes provide the discrete, in-depth analysis necessary for exploring specific topic areas. These state-of-the-art volumes also thus offer highly authoritative course textbooks in the areas suggested by their titles.

This 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* continues to showcase the central role of language as both vehicle and mediator of educational processes, along with the pedagogical implications therein. This is all the more important, given the rapid demographic and technological changes we face in this increasingly globalized world and, inevitably, by extension, in education. But the cutting edge contributions within this *Encyclopedia* also, crucially, always situate these developments within their historical context, providing a necessary *diachronic* analytical framework with which to examine *critically* the language and education field. Maintaining this sense of historicity and critical reflexivity, while embracing the latest developments in our field, is indeed precisely what sets this *Encyclopedia* apart.

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Volume Editor's Introduction to "Language Policy and Political Issues in Education"

Language planning and policy is both a field of study and a site of social practice. As an informal activity, language planning and policymaking is "as old as language itself" and is integral to "the distribution of power and resources in all societies" (Wright 2004, p. 1). As a field of scholarly inquiry, language planning and policy (LPP) is highly interdisciplinary, bridging knowledge traditions in sociolinguistics, educational and applied linguistics, the sociology of language, and linguistic and educational anthropology. This volume exemplifies that interdisciplinarity, examining key LPP issues across a wide cultural, linguistic, geographic, and sociopolitical terrain.

Peruse a newspaper or online news source on any given day and you are likely to find abundant evidence of the politics of language and their socially regulating effects. "Uber Drivers Are More Likely to Cancel on Men with 'Black-sounding' Names," a 2016 multi-university investigation found, reporting that African-American passengers experience significantly longer wait times and cancellation rates than White passengers (Hartmans 2016). "A Voice for Indigenous Canadians, Finally Heard," announced the *New York Times* in a story about the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), created in 1999 "to speak for and to" the nation's nearly 2 million Indigenous people "in a country that is about 75 percent white" (Levin, p. 9). In the same newspaper, an article titled "'I Can't Show My True Self': Saudi Women Speak Up" revealed an outpouring of e-mail and Twitter posts from Saudi women disclosing culturally sanctioned gender-based silencing practices (El-Naggar 2016, p. 13). And, in the same week's news, the United States' National Public Radio reported on the hate-speech trial of the right-wing Dutch politician Geert Wilders, accused of inciting racial and religious hatred at a political rally by calling for "fewer. . .Moroccans in the Netherlands" (Kennedy 2016, para. 3).

These examples illuminate the complex ways in which language structures social, political, and economic hierarchies, operating as a mechanism of social control (Leibowitz 1974). Language is the "architecture of social behaviour," Blommaert

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writes (2009, p. 263). It follows, then, that policies regulating language practices reflect and (re)produce the distribution of power.

Language policies may be officially sanctioned, as in the many language officialization laws throughout the world. By their very nature, such policies privilege and disprivilege some languages – and speakers – over others. But equally important are the tacit, taken-for-granted policies constructed in everyday social practice: the Uber driver's regulation of services according to the "sound" of a passenger's name; gendered linguistic discrimination; the appropriation of public discursive space for the purpose of racial and ethnic exclusion; or, as in the case of APTN, to counter discursive domination by the ruling raciolinguistic class. Through such processes, explicit and implicit language policies perform a powerful, though often guised, socially regulating role.

As this discussion suggests, the perspective taken throughout this volume is of language policy as processual and dynamic: "the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people's language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (McCarty 2011a, p. xii). In their ethnographic theorization of education policy, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead (2009) liken policy to a verb, "a quality of intentional action to form normative discourse" (p. 771). From this perspective, policy is viewed as overt (*de jure*) and covert (*de facto*), explicit and implicit, top-down and bottom-up. "Language policy exists even where it has not been made explicit or established by authority," Spolsky (2004) writes, and can be inferred from people's language practices, ideologies, and beliefs (p. 8; see also Spolsky, this volume). Similarly, Shohamy (2006) stresses that language policy "can exist at all levels of decision making about languages, as small as individuals and families making decisions about the languages to be used. . .at home" as well as in "schools, cities, regions, nations, territories, or the global context" (p. 48).

The present volume spans a cross section of these types and levels of policymaking, from Leanne Hinton's and Kendall King and Lyn Fogle's discussions of family language policy (chapters 19 and 23), to Kate Menken and Ofelia García's examination of classroom teachers as language policymakers (chapter 16), to analyses of the economics of language education (François Grin), the impacts of globalization on language education practices (Christina Higgins and Bal Krishna Sharma), and international law and minority language education (Fernand de Varennes and Elzbieta Kuzborska). As this breadth of coverage suggests, recognition of the importance of unofficial language policies does not negate the significance of official, declared policies, but rather invites us to critically scrutinize the often covert ways in which official policies are constructed and become naturalized, while simultaneously attending to everyday language policymaking "on the ground."

Across all of these levels, education in and out of school is a key domain in which language policies perform their socially regulating role. As Spolsky (2008) notes, "major changes in language practices and beliefs are the result of management [i.e., language planning] activities concerning education" (p. 3). Within the education domain, the authors in this volume focus on the interactions among dominant and nondominant speakers and language communities, including those facing extreme

language endangerment as speakers shift toward dominating languages, communities caught up in global diasporization, those in postcolonial states, and those whose language practices are officially "forbidden" (cf. Gándara and Hopkins 2010). The relationship of official and unofficial policies to social, linguistic, and education inequality is a theme that rings throughout the volume. Equally significant, however, are the human interruptions of those inequalities and the transformative possibilities they represent.

It is important to say a few words about the sociopolitical and sociolinguistic contexts for the LPP issues considered in this volume. For, as Stephen May and his colleagues emphasize, language education "must always be viewed within the wider societal context and with a specific understanding of the particular circumstances of the language communities in question" (May et al. 2005, p. 9). This volume provides a broadly comparative exploration of LPP throughout the world, from political and educational issues affecting Indigenous peoples in the Americas, Africa, the Pacific, and Asia; to "new speakers" of minoritized languages in the UK and European Union; to transnational, translanguaging, and transcultural communities in rapidly expanding "superdiverse" urban centers (Arnaut et al. 2016).

Recognizing that readers may have more, or less, familiarity with language education policies and the multifarious contexts in which they operate, the remainder of this introduction lays a historical and disciplinary foundation for the chapters that follow. Readers are encouraged to examine those chapters with these questions in mind:

- How are policies constructed, negotiated, appropriated, and/or transformed in diverse social, political, cultural, and regional contexts?
- What work does policy "do" in these contexts, and how does policy do its work?
- Whose interests are served by particular policy formations?
- How are policy subjects (persons, communities, places) constructed in official and unofficial policy discourses?
- What are the social and educational consequences of particular LPP activities?
- How does policy operate as "a practice of power?" (Levinson et al. 2009)

Language Planning and Policy as a Field of Study and Practice

As a field of study, language planning and policy is relatively young, having grown out of pragmatic concerns with solving language "problems" in decolonizing, multilingual polities during the second half of the twentieth century. The principal questions were which languages to develop – colonial, Indigenous, other *lingua francas* – for which purposes in the context of nation building. With the focus on solving language "problems," early approaches to LPP were largely linear and technocratic: Identify the problem, formulate the policy, implement and evaluate it, and revise accordingly – an approach that James Tollefson (chapter 2) characterizes as "neoclassical." As Joshua Fishman (1968) remarked early in the development of the field: "A widespread problem of new nations is that their political boundaries

correspond. . . imperfectly to any pre-existing ethnic-cultural unity"; thus, language may become both a symbol of national unity and of "contranational ethnic-cultural identification" (p. 6).

Fishman's description highlights an enduring concern in LPP research and practice: how to deal with competing ideologies of "one nation/one language" versus the value of individual and societal multilingualism? Years after Fishman published his 1968 essay, Nancy Hornberger (2000), situating her analysis in the context of bilingual education policy and practice in the Andes, posed the problem as an "ideological paradox" of "constructing a national identity that is also multilingual and multicultural" (p. 173). In the present volume, Stephen May (chapter 3), building on Bullivant's (1981) work, examines this as the "pluralist dilemma," arguing that recognizing and expanding minority language rights will allow for "rethinking. . . nation-states in more culturally and linguistically diverse ways."

In line with these theoretical developments, recent scholarship interrogates the ideological, social-structural, and historical bases of LPP, emphasizing the relationships among language, power, and inequality. Drawing on the work of critical theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Anthony Giddens, and Jürgen Habermas, critical LPP scholars view policies as ideological constructs that reflect and (re)produce the distribution of power in the larger society. Tollefson (chapter 2) examines the ways in which such critical approaches engage the tension between structure and agency (see also Tollefson 2013). Alastair Pennycook (chapter 13) places such scholarship within the rubric of critical applied linguistics (CALx; see also Pennycook 2001). As we see in all the chapters, critical LPP research treats policy as a contested process that operates within intersecting planes of local, regional, national, and global influence. Such approaches show that decisions about language, whether officially sanctioned or not, are at their core struggles over access to social, political, and economic resources; equitable education; and human rights.

The critical perspective is committed to praxis: "Linguists are seen as responsible not only for understanding how dominant social groups use language for establishing and maintaining social hierarchies, but also for investigating ways to alter those hierarchies" (Tollefson 2002, p. 4). All authors in this volume exemplify this commitment, calling for culturally sustaining language education (O'Connor and González; Paris and Gutierrez); critical literacy and bi/multiliteracy development (Blackledge and Creese; Janks, Rogers, and O'Daniels); the development of gendered and sexual "symbolic competence" among multilingual learners (Rowlett and King); translanguaging pedagogies (Menken and García; O'Rourke, Pujolar, and Walsh; Makalela); support for English language teacher advocacy (Warriner); decolonizing language education (López; de León); policy clarification around heritage/community languages as resources and bi/multilingual language education programming (Wiley; Wright and Ricento); and the promotion of linguistic human rights (Skutnabb-Kangas and May; Haboud and Limerick).

Language policy has alternatively been viewed as arising *from* planning interventions or giving rise *to* language planning. For Spolsky (2004, this volume), language policy – theorized as a constellation of language practices, beliefs or

ideologies, and interventions – by definition encompasses language planning. Hornberger's (2006) integrative framework, which cross-indexes language planning *types* with language policy *goals*, is helpful in this regard. Consider, for example, three core LPP activities: (1) *status planning* – the planned use of certain languages for certain purposes in certain domains (e.g., schooling, the court system, the workplace); (2) *corpus planning* – decisions about linguistic norms and forms (e.g., creating or standardizing a writing system); and (3) *acquisition planning* – decisions about who will acquire the target language(s) and how (e.g., at home, at school, and/or through community-based activities). Each goal clearly implicates the others. Elevating the status of a language or variety via official policies – as, for instance, with the co-officialization of French and English in Canada (Patrick, chapter 28) or of Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Hawaiian in Hawaii (McCarty and Coronel-Molina, chapter 12) – has ramifications for the development of writing systems and print literacy (corpus planning), and for activities such as the preparation of language teachers (acquisition planning). Similarly, corpus and acquisition planning can exert a powerful influence on how language statuses are perceived. For example, in the late twentieth century, grass roots Indigenous corpus and acquisition planning led to the enactment of national and international policies in support of Indigenous language rights – policies which have fed back into local-level corpus and acquisition planning (for examples throughout the Americas see Coronel-Molina and McCarty 2016, and Hornberger 1996; for other international examples, see Hinton and Hale 2001; Hornberger 2008).

In a classic essay illuminating these intermeshed processes, Ricento and Hornberger (1996) use the metaphor of “unpeeling the onion.” Like an onion, LPP is a “multilayered construct,” implicating multiple agents and levels that “permeate and interact with each other in. . . complex ways” (1996, p. 419). Scholars who take such a multilayered approach, including those in this volume, examine LPP at the micro, macro, and meso levels, inspecting the interstices of the metaphoric LPP onion in order to understand how it “works” and “lives” as an organic whole.

The shift in focus to a more dynamic, process-oriented view of language policy coincides with corresponding critical-sociocultural “turns” in language and literacy studies and, more recently, second language acquisition (SLA) and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) education. The New Literacy Studies advanced by Street (1984), Gee (2008), Collins and Blot (2003), and the New London Group (1996) countered dominant views of literacy as a decontextualized, politically neutral, technical, and hence “standardizable” skill. Instead, this and subsequent research shows how multiple, hybrid, and heteroglossic literacy practices emerge within local sociocultural settings. Recent work by May (2014) and others draws attention to the “multilingual turn” challenging still prevalent notions of the unmarked “native speaker” and language education practices grounded in monolingualism as the dominant norm. Similarly, recent scholarship in the ethnography of language policy has illuminated how decontextualized reifications of static text-based policy cloak the power relations through which inequitable language education practices are naturalized and sustained (Hornberger and Johnson 2007; McCarty 2011).

In this volume, chapters by Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese on multilingualism; Hilary Janks, Rebecca Rogers, and Katherine O'Daniel on teaching language and power; Doris Warriner on English language teaching; Kate Menken and Ofelia García on classroom-based language policy; and Django Paris and Lorena Gutierrez on youth language research attest to the complex ways in which language learners cultivate and deploy heteroglossic communicative repertoires rather than discrete, bounded languages. Such understandings of multilingualism and multi-literacies require rethinking language policy in ways that place "the speaker rather than the code at the center" (Blackledge and Creese, this volume).

Exploring the Volume

Returning to the questions introduced in the opening section of this Introduction, readers will find the chapter authors' responses presented through the prism of five complementary organizing frames. Section 1 further contextualizes language education policy, beginning with Bernard Spolsky's paradigm of language policy as practices, ideology, and management, and James Tollefson's historical development of LPP as a field. Stephen May and Christina Higgins and Bal Krishna Sharma address the "pluralist dilemma" (Bullivant 1981) from the perspective of the nation state (May) and the challenges of globalization, specifically increased mobility, transnationalism, and neoliberalism (Higgins and Sharma). Brendan O'Connor and Norma González review a long history of research on the relationships among language and culture, foregrounding language education as a site for contesting dominant monolingualist regimes and positing alternative possibilities arising from newly flexible notions of linguistic competence. Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese similarly take up expanded notions of linguistic repertoires, centering their analysis on translanguaging pedagogies. The final three chapters in this section address LPP research on language education, gender, and sexuality (Benjamin Rowlett and Brian King); social class inequalities and the "continuing realities of stratification" (James Collins and Ben Rampton); and long-term "rates of return" on the development of particular languages through bilingual education (François Grin).

Section 2 provides a critical examination of rights and law for minoritized language communities, beginning with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Stephen May's assessment of current official language policies at the international level, followed by Fernand de Varennes and Elzbieta Kuzborska's comprehensive review of international language rights law. Both chapters conclude that there is little clarity and no guarantee of linguistic human rights within international law and statutes, although clear legal grounds exist for accommodating and/or promoting minoritized languages as mediums of instruction in school. In chapter 12, Teresa McCarty and Serafin Coronel-Molina place rights and law squarely within the cases of Native American language education in the USA, Quechua/Quichua corpus planning in the Andes, and Saami language revitalization in Finland. They conclude that, despite

limited support, Indigenous peoples are refusing pervasive metaphors of Indigenous-language death and opening new spaces for language reclamation in and out of schools.

Section 3 is devoted to theory, pedagogy, and practice in LPP. Alastair Pennycook opens with an examination of research, theory, and praxis in critical applied linguistics. Hilary Janks, Rebecca Rogers, and Katherine O'Daniels explore research on the teaching of language and power; Doris Warriner overviews more than three decades of scholarship on the politics of English language teaching. Focusing on LPP in classrooms and schools, Kate Menken and Ofelia García show how new understandings of translanguaging hold promise for reshaping the "next wave" of language education policy research (see also Menken and García 2010). Ron Darvin and Bonny Norton trace the development of Norton's theory of learner investment in language and literacy practices (see, e.g., Norton 2000), offering a comprehensive model that "locates investment at the intersection of identity, capital, and ideology."

Section 4 foregrounds critical contemporary issues in language education policy, beginning with Terrence G. Wiley's examination of heritage and community language policy in the USA. As Wiley notes, an enduring policy dilemma is the juxtaposition of the country's historical and contemporary multilingualism with policies that fail to build on those linguistic resources. Bernadette O'Rourke, Joan Pujolar, and John Walsh explore the "new sociolinguistic order" represented in the new speaker movement, a category referencing the growing numbers of speakers who acquire an ancestral language in adulthood and through school. Django Paris and Lorena Gutierrez trace the trajectory of youth language research, including contemporary research on youth language and literacy within Hip Hop, migrant, Latina/o, Indigenous, LGBTQ, African-American, and "intersectional" youth cultural communities. On the cusp of the bicentennial of political independence throughout Latin America, Luis Enrique López explores Indigenous decolonization initiatives reflected in intercultural bilingual education and education for language revitalization. The section concludes with Kendall A. King and Lynn W. Fogle's analysis of a growing new field of LPP research and practice: family language policy, defined as explicit and overt language planning within family homes.

Section 5 offers regional perspectives on LPP from around the world. Guus Extra begins with the new Europe, a linguistic ecology characterized by a "descending hierarchy of English as *lingua franca*, national or 'official state' languages, regional minority languages, and immigrant minority languages." He addresses three major European initiatives: the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and the European Language Portfolio. Bill Bowring and Tamara Borgoiakova explore what they characterize as the "extraordinary political, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the Russian Federation," tracing the dramatic shifts in language education policy through the Tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet state. Leena Huss overviews language policy history and research in three Nordic countries – Norway, Sweden, and Finland – focusing on the Sámi (Saami) in all three countries, the Tornedalians in Sweden,

and the Kven in Norway, all of whom have experienced long periods of school-based coercive assimilation, and whose activism over the past four decades has yielded important language protections.

Moving to the Americas, Wayne Wright and Thomas Ricento illuminate myriad policy shifts in the USA, beginning with the relatively promotion-oriented Bilingual Education Act of 1968, and including more recent strides forward for Indigenous language rights concurrently with a panoply of language-restrictionist movements. (See Heinz Kloss's 1998 *American Bilingual Tradition* on the distinction between promotion-oriented, tolerance-oriented, restriction-oriented, and repression-oriented language policies in the USA; see also Stephen May's 2011 analysis of the contested nature of promotion-oriented language rights, which entail protections for minority-language use and development in the public sphere and are thus inherently *group*-based, versus the tendency of international human rights law to favor tolerance-oriented policies that protect *individual* rights to language in the private sphere.) The lack of a coherent language policy in the USA, Wright and Ricento say, can be traced to "broader social divisions about the role of education, and especially language(s), in society." Donna Patrick presents research, policy, and practice in Canada, a nation state characterized by tremendous linguistic diversity, particularly among Aboriginal peoples, and yet granting official recognition at the national level to only two colonial languages. Lourdes de León, overviewing the social, institutional, political, and ideological processes that have shaped language policy in Mexico, situates the current "paradigm shift" in Indigenous language education within the interface of top-down colonial language policies and an Indigenous resurgence "from within and below." Marleen Haboud and Nicholas Limerick discuss research, policy, and practice on bilingual intercultural education in the central Andean region of South America, focusing on regional trends and developments in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru.

In Australasia and Asia, chapters address language education policies in Australia, Greater China, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Indian subcontinent. In Australia, a political context not unlike the USA and Canada (all are settler colonial states), Joseph Lo Bianco and Yvette Slaughter describe policy processes that have moved from the often brutal suppression of Indigenous languages and the valorization of British English, to greater assertion of Indigenous and immigrant language rights, to current economically driven language planning. Focusing on Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau, Minglang Zhou traces two major forces that have influenced language policy in Greater China for over a century: globalization and nation-state building. Within the 11 nations of Southeast Asia – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam – more than 1,200 languages are spoken. Kimmo Kosonen presents a comprehensive overview of language education policy in this highly varied sociolinguistic and political landscape, noting that, while multilingual education is increasing in Cambodia, Thailand, and Timor-Leste, the policy emphasis remains on the respective official and national languages and international languages, particularly English. In Japan, the government-adopted

standard language is *Hyojungo*. However, as Sachiyo Fujita-Round and John Maher point out, the modernist ideology of Japan as a "monolingual" and "monocultural" state stands in contradistinction to the growth of non-Japanese nationalities, minority languages, and Indigenous languages. In this national context, say these authors, linguistic and cultural hybridity is an "emerging" policy theme. Within the Indian subcontinent, more than 750 languages are spoken – 10% of all the world's languages – nearly half of which are endangered. Ajit Mohanty and Minati Panda relate this to a "double divide" between English and major regional/national languages, and between the latter languages and Indigenous/tribal languages. This multilayered linguistic hierarchy mirrors the unequal distribution of power and resources, leading, these authors say, to "disadvantage, marginalization, language shift and loss of linguistic diversity."

The final two chapters in the volume address language policy and education in the Middle East and Africa. Focusing on Southern Africa, Leketi Makalela notes that current language policies remain largely similar to former colonial ones, reflecting a "monolingual bias towards the former colonial languages to the detriment of local African languages." Makalela proposes rethinking multilingual space based on the African notion of *ubuntu* – "I am because you are" – a policy vision that eschews a one-nation-one-language ideology and embraces instead translanguaging as a strategy in which "the use of one language is incomplete without the other." Finally, Iair Or, examining language education policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), notes that language policies in this region must be understood "against a background of prolonged colonial rule and the traditional opposition to colonialism and foreign intervention." He discusses three policy themes – diglossia, the separation of "high," standard language from native, colloquial ones; Arabization, substituting Arabic for Western colonial languages; and issues of linguistic minorities and multilingualism – giving particular attention to the "ways in which language policy can become more democratic and inclusive."

Reviewing the contributions to this volume in their entirety, one cannot help but come away impressed with the sweep of history that has shaped language education policies around the world, the immense linguistic and cultural diversity those policy processes reflect, and the innovative and courageous ways in which people are working to sustain that diversity at the local, regional, national, and international levels. I express my profound gratitude to the chapter authors for their contributions to this rich and compelling treatment of language education policy. I also thank Editor-in-Chief Stephen May, the volume series editorial assistant Lincoln Dam, and this volume's editorial assistant, Lu Liu, for their invaluable expertise and support.

Each chapter contributor is a noted language policy scholar, and each embodies an engaged scholarship whereby linguistically based inequalities are not simply documented and described but challenged in critical yet proactive ways, opening new possibilities for more equitable policy constructions. It is in these spaces of tension between possibility and constraint that language policies – official and unofficial, overt and covert – are forged and take on social meaning. The authors

herein offer a multifaceted window into those spaces as they operate at the micro, meso, and macro policy levels – the multiple layers of language planning and policy so aptly represented in Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) onion metaphor described above. This work directs us toward evolving new strategies for promoting the policies and politics of inclusiveness necessary for democratic forms of education – and for sustaining linguistic and cultural diversity worldwide.

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Part I

Social, Historical, and Contexts

Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management

Bernard Spolsky

Abstract

By the middle of the twentieth century, the field of language education had moved from suggesting new methods to considering the implications of linguistics and in particular psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics to the task of developing proficiency in additional languages. Later developments in language policy, considering not just actual language practices and ideologies but also attempts to manage the practices and ideologies of others, provided a new focus by making clear the basic importance of family language policy and the complexity of agencies attempting to manage school language policies. Within the many communities that make up modern nations, ideologies concerning the relation between language and identity and religious beliefs have been recognized as major motivations. The realization that there are many putative managers, individuals, and agencies at all levels from family and nation and beyond (e.g., human rights, globalization) has made clear the complexity of negotiating an agreed language education policy and the difficulty of dealing with status and corpus problems. Part of the gap has been filled by the growth of a neighboring field of educational linguistics. But in spite of the growing evidence-based knowledge about language education, implementation of such obvious principles as teaching in a language the pupils understand continues to be blocked by ignorance and inertia.

Keywords

Language Policy • Language practices • Language beliefs • Language management

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Introduction

This chapter deals with the intersection of two recently developed fields, educational linguistics and language management. The discussion here recognizes that the various approaches to modifying the linguistic proficiency of individuals or groups depend on the formulation and evaluation of a theory of language policy relevant to the communicative and identity demands of a specific language community and the selection and implementation of empirically tested methods of language teaching, learning, and assessment. It thus challenges those approaches which focus on narrow aspects of the complex tasks involved, such as innovative methodological developments claimed to be panaceas, or those simple universal assumptions such as reliance on a popular belief that either monolingualism or bilingualism is universal or appropriate for all. Instead, this chapter opens up a wide range of relevant disciplines to explore language policy in education: sociolinguistics for its theories and techniques of studying patterns of language use, psycholinguistics for its exploration of the conditions of learning in general and language learning in particular, language pedagogy for its theoretical and practical investigation of language teaching, and language assessment for its treatment of methods of determining the nature of language proficiency.

Early Developments

While in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries language education was considered a matter of proposing new universal methods, by the middle of the twentieth century, there were claims for more scientific approaches to the field. In the early days of what was happily labeled as applied linguistics, the label tended to be taken literally, so that new linguistic theories suggested the need to change language teaching methods. Comparing grammars (contrastive analysis) was for a while the main approach of applied linguistics (Spolsky 1979); later, after the Chomskyan revolution, one scholar even proposed transformational drills to replace the minimal pair drills of the structuralist period. By the 1960s, however, psychology and psycholinguists had become the driving force, a development celebrated by

Rivers (1968). This remained the situation for several decades, so that Spolsky (1989) drew most of its 70 or so conditions from linguistics and psycholinguistics.

My introduction to the idea of language policy came during a fellowship at the National Foreign Language Center in 1990–1991, where Richard Lambert argued for the need to develop a language policy for the USA. During that year, I had long conversations with Elana Shohamy, and on our return to Israel, we proposed a language education policy for Israel, our discussions leading to a research project and a book (Spolsky and Shohamy 1999). By the time the second edition of this *Encyclopedia* was published (Corson 1997), the field had been moving from psychological to sociological and political concerns, with the *Encyclopedia's* first volume devoted to *language policy and political issues in education*. About the same time, Spolsky (1999b), after some introductory chapters, headed its first substantial section “Social Factors.” It is thus not inappropriate that the first chapter of the first volume of the third edition of the *Encyclopedia* should be charged with introducing the field of language policy in education.

The term “language policy” is ambiguous; I distinguish between language policy as a field and a language policy which is usually a document produced in the course of language management. Language policy has three interrelated components:

1. *Practices* – What is the “normal” or “practiced” language behavior of the community in different sociolinguistic domains?
2. *Beliefs and ideologies* – What do members of the community think is appropriate or desirable language behavior?
3. *Management* – How do interested parties attempt to influence the practices or beliefs of the community?

Education being one of the most important domains of language management, language education policy became a critically important issue in most multilingual polities. It shows up most clearly in choice of a language of instruction and the inclusion of additional languages in the curriculum and is made especially complex by the number of levels of managers, ranging from regional organizations such as the European Community through national governments and their interested ministries, local governments and local school boards (an estimated 15,000 in the USA alone), school administrators (principals, curriculum directors), teachers, and parents’ committees. Business groups, religious leaders, newspapers, and other media also attempt to manage or influence school language policy.

Major Contributions

The Practice of Language Education Policy

Fishman’s (1965) classic question was “who speaks what to whom where and when?” Today, most of us live in multilingual societies, and we develop appropriate language proficiencies to handle our environment. In every speech community, there

are rules about language use, when to speak and when not and which variety to use. When we can, we vary language according to our interlocutor.

At the family level, bilingual parents choose which language to speak to their children. Parents who want their children to learn a second language may hire a nanny or tutor to look after their children and provide a native-speaking model. A common and less expensive alternative is the au pair. Another solution is to send children of immigrants to family members in the home country.

Beyond the family, preschool education can be focused on language education, such as the New Zealand *kōhanga reo* (language nest). Elementary schools commonly cover the age range from six until puberty and may be under various levels of public and professional control, privately established, or under religious control, in which case they may teach the sacred language. Some schools start teaching in the language of the home; more commonly, school systems choose a language of instruction according to their governance. Public elementary education favors the national language, provided there are qualified teachers. For example, while Parisian French was required in France from the time of the French Revolution, it was not until late in the nineteenth century that there were enough teachers to implement it (Ager 1999). While most educational research supports teaching initially in the home language, this is rarely implemented (Walter 2003, 2008). In many cases, pupils and even teachers speak a dialect or vernacular other than the official language, though textbooks are seldom available in it.

Some schools follow bilingual programs. In Montreal, even before the adoption of the federal bilingual policy, parents persuaded the Protestant school board to introduce transitional French-English elementary education, importing teachers from the Caribbean and Africa (Lambert and Tucker 1972). Some Jewish schools in Montreal offered education in French, English, Hebrew, and Yiddish; a similar multilingual pattern (with Spanish instead of French) was reported in Mexico City. In China, schools are expected to teach Pǔtōnghuà (Mandarin) even when they permit the use of the topolect (e.g., Cantonese, Hokkien, Shanghainese) or a minority language such as Tibetan, Mongolian, or Uygur as language of instruction (Bessette 2005; Spolsky 2014a). Some countries (e.g., Finland, Israel, the USA) provide up to a year of instruction in the national language for new immigrant children; others assume new immigrant students will acquire the national language in everyday communicative practice outside of school.

At the secondary level (often more independent than elementary schools), the language of instruction is commonly the national language. Recently, there has been a trend to teach a foreign language (especially English) during elementary school. In much of the world, English is the favored foreign language; to counteract this, the European Union calls for the teaching of two foreign languages (Phillipson 2003). The teaching of classical languages (Latin and Greek) – typical in Europe until the twentieth century – has been reduced or has disappeared. Language proficiency is commonly tested at the end of secondary school and required for admission to

tertiary education, building up the power of the testing industry as a gatekeeper (Shohamy 1993, 2001).

At the tertiary level, classes are usually taught in the national language, but there is increasing pressure to use an international language, again typically English, especially in the sciences and business (Ammon 2001). This is largely influenced by the fact that scientific publication is now mainly in English, which students are expected to be able to read.

In some countries, governments provide classes in the national language for immigrants – for example, the *ulpan* in Israel (Spolsky 1999a) and similar programs in Canada – but usually nonacademic adult language education is in private hands. Private language teaching depends on popular demand; Berlitz, for instance, is reported to have over 500 company-owned or franchised branches in 70 countries, 75% of them teaching English.

Another major branch of language education is provided by defense agencies (Brecht and Rivers 2012). In the USA, the Defense Language Institute is reported to do more language teaching than all other institutions; its English Language Institute teaches soldiers from 100 nations, and its Monterey school teaches over 40 languages to students in intensive 24–64 week courses. The US Department of State Foreign Service Institute is responsible for teaching 70 foreign languages to employees of 40 government agencies.

Given the number of institutions and languages involved, and the varied nature of students and teachers, it is virtually impossible to describe all the many language education practices – the contexts, the time available, the age, and the commitment and learning ability of students; the expertise and experience of teachers; the availability of textbooks and media; and all the possible methods – that have been tried. This helps explain why a multivolume encyclopedia is needed to cover the topic.

Ideologies and Beliefs that Influence Language Education Policy

The learning of one or more language varieties depends on exposure to the language practices of the community, which depend in turn on the beliefs of the members of that community. Beliefs may provide motivation for language policy or reflect the power of a variety within a speech community. Fishman (2006b) describes his own home where Yiddish was the main language, though it did not offer benefits in their English-speaking environment; English was permitted only for schoolwork and guests. There is tension between benefits (such as the belief that English leads to economic success) and the beliefs of a heritage community or religious commitment, for language serves not just for communication but also to mark membership of an identity group.

The impact of language ideologies or beliefs (Fishman and Garcia 2010; Silverstein 1998) is most obvious at the family level, where the choice of a language

in which to speak to a child is determined by the values that family members assign to language varieties. In an immigrant family, members may believe in the greater value of their heritage language or of the standard language of the environment and choose to speak to babies and young children in one or (if they are not limited by a belief in the worth of monolingualism) both. For monolingual parents speaking the same language, unless their belief has been modified by an external manager (like the early childhood teachers who persuaded young Māori mothers to speak English to their children in the 1950s or the successful “Speak Hebrew campaign” to which Jewish immigrants to Israel were exposed), the normal practice will be to speak that language to their children.

For each speech community, level, or domain, there are similar ideologies that help explain practices. One of the strongest is what de Swaan (2001) labeled as the “Q-value” or communicative potential of the variety, namely, the number of people you can expect to communicate with when you speak this variety. Its Q-value refers to the number of speakers, as a first or additional language, who understand it, explaining why the number of native speakers is often not as important as the number of proficient second language speakers; thus, while there are more native speakers of German than of English in Europe, English has a higher Q-value because it is used by more Europeans as a second language. This potential usefulness is often the strongest factor in situations where communication is significant, such as in business and industry or in the military or government. A counterforce to this communicative value is the importance of identity: an emotional value assigned to a language spoken by parents or other family members. Thus, children from elite homes might pick up the languages of servants in the house for communication and the language of grandparents for the emotional connection.

In the classic study of motivation for language learning, Gardner and Lambert (1972) distinguished between what they called instrumental and integrative motivation, the former referring to learning a language in order to communicate in it and the latter to learning in order to identify with and become a member of the social group that speaks it. One of the strongest beliefs about language is its role in asserting identity with others who speak it (Wright 2004). It is one of the most obvious markers of difference between “we” and “they,” proclaiming identification with a group or defining stigmatization as an outsider. This claim is driven by the belief that as children and adults acquire communicative ability, they become more effective members of communities, a process labeled as language socialization (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986).

The belief in the close relationship of identity and language underlies the equally close relationship that is assumed between language and nation (Anderson 1991). The motto of the Indonesian national movement at its conference in 1928 was *Satu nusa, satu bangsa, satu bahasa*: one land, one nation, one language, aiming to unify the speakers of over 700 languages. This principle was at the heart of the ideology developed by Cardinal Richelieu in founding the Académie Française with its role of centralizing French culture and language, replacing the many regional varieties and languages such as Occitan, Breton, Picard, and Angevin with a single standard

language (Cooper 1989). The close relationship between language and nation became a major ideological principle of national independence movements from the nineteenth century and continues to be powerful.

The French imperial monolingual hegemonic ideology is not uncommon, although historically it has been challenged by supporters of diversity and multilingualism. Under British rule in India, there was strong pressure for education in English, but its problems and failures supported those who favored the use of local languages (Evans 2002). When India became independent, the divisions into states and the separation of Pakistan implemented the notion of territorial monolingualism, an ideology that did not recognize the enormous linguistic complexity.

Local territorial pressures help account for the limited multilingual ideology of Switzerland, where the recency of federation allowed the assignment of language policy to cantons, and in Belgium where political pressures are relieved partly by accepting local autonomy and territorial language policy. Changes of ideology also may be seen in totalitarian China and Russia. While China has long believed in the value of Putonghua as a unifying variety, there have been periods of accepting the multilingualism of the regional Han languages and even of the non-Han minority languages. A similar belief in the usefulness of recognizing some minority languages as a method of spreading socialism was prevalent in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, but reversed by Stalin. Before independence, South Africa struggled with the claims of Afrikaans and English, ignoring the 25 or so other language spoken indigenously (Malherbe 1978); in the new constitution, nine of these languages have been included in the official list, but the highest value is still given to English and Afrikaans (Heugh 2003; Kamwangamalu 2000; Mesthrie 2002). It is hard to overcome the ideology of national monolingualism.

Another powerful and relevant belief is the sacredness of a chosen religious language. Hebrew was kept alive as a language of literacy for two millennia after it was no longer a vernacular (Spolsky 2014b, c). Qur'anic Arabic as the language of Qur'an was chosen as the language of national identity where regional varieties were spoken (Suleiman 1994, 2003). For many hundreds of years, the Roman Catholic Church insisted on Latin as the language of prayer; there are many who still regret the decision of Vatican II to allow the vernacular for the mass.

There is a belief nowadays that English is and should be the language of science. A hundred years ago, however, this role tended to be filled by German and before that by French and earlier Latin.

Language Education as Language Management or Planning

Language management (called language planning by many; see Tollefson, chapter “► [Language Planning in Education](#),” this volume) developed as a field of study in the 1950s with the work of Haugen (1959) who studied a century of efforts to deal with the conflict over choice of school and official language in Norway. In the 1960s, the period that Jernudd and Nekvapil (2012) call the classical period, linguists started

to offer advice to politicians and bureaucrats who were facing similar problems in new nations, in selecting among a number of languages after independence had removed the necessity to use an imperial or colonial language.

In the period after the Second World War, as more colonial empires split and more countries became independent, language management at the national level became a matter of considerable significance. A number of linguists, though not trained in the process of language management, assumed that their knowledge of language would be relevant, and sharing the enthusiasm of social and economic planners, they began to offer advice. At this stage, the main emphasis was on national language policy.

Language management now has a wider scope. In all speech communities or in the various domains that make up a speech community, there are some who wish to modify the language practices or beliefs of others; these are the managers. There are two further useful distinctions. In *simple* language management (Neustupný 1970; Neustupný and Nekvapil 2003), the agents are individuals who are dissatisfied with their own language proficiency and take steps to modify it by taking classes or using a dictionary or in some other way. Second, in *complex* language management, the manager may also be outside the domain or community, as when a government tries to manage family language use.

In fact, commonly a number of putative managers are attempting to influence the language practices of participants in a community or domain. National language management is handicapped by this complexity, when it ignores the beliefs of members or leaders of a minority group. Educational language management controls the classroom, but besides the teachers who are participants in the domain, there is a complex set of other putative managers, including the national government, its educational agencies and bureaucrats at national and regional levels, school boards and the parents or publics they are assumed to represent, school principals, and curricular committees, all outside the domain but aiming to influence the classroom teacher who is the direct manager. This helps explain why simple “top-down, bottom-up” models fail to deal with all the forces involved.

Research in the field has generally ignored this rich array of managers and asks simple questions about the failure of implementation of national language plans and policies (Baldauf 1994; Kaplan and Baldauf 1997). But Williams (2008) has traced the Welsh case and shows activities at the various levels of government and non-governmental groups that have provided the opportunity for successful Welsh regeneration since devolution. In spite of the strength of government support, the various schemes depend on the activities of many different agencies, in the private as well as the government domains. Malaysia, where the Malay language policy was restricted to government and education leaving commerce to move from Chinese to English, reveals that non-governmental levels are critical.

In fact, some of the most interesting issues in language management occur when there is a direct conflict between managers at various levels. The maintenance of Hasidic Yiddish among followers of some rebbes shows the power of religious leadership to work against government preference for standard

national languages. Māori activists started classes and schools that required immersion in Māori. Minority language activists have a double task: to persuade their own members to continue to speak a language with less power or usefulness and to persuade majority governments to permit or even support their use of their language or variety.

Language management in the private sector typically depends on the business owners. In factories, such as those studied by Nekvapil and Nekula (2006), international firms need to find a way for communication between management and workers, with one solution being the use of bilingual foremen. A much more complex pattern emerges among multilingual employees in international banks in Luxembourg: Kingsley (2009) has shown how banks select languages according to the needs of customers or according to the nature of the group of interlocutors, with English as a common choice when native speakers of several languages are involved. Many firms also offer several languages of clients; to attract tourists, stores commonly exhibit signs proclaiming that “English is spoken here.” Answering services and call centers may choose to offer more than one language: Many government and private institutions in Israel offer Hebrew or Arabic and some add Russian or English.

Active language management typically involves one of two main processes: the choice of a language variety (called “status planning” in classical language policy) and selection of the appropriate form (called “corpus planning”). It is status planning when a government or an institution declares a language variety to be *official*, though the term needs finer definition. Official can refer to the language to be used by government offices in communicating with the public or to be used by the public communicating with the government. It may call for candidates for public office to be able to use the language; this was true of the regulations of many newly independent nations and was recently the center of a controversy over a requirement that candidates for president of the Navajo Nation in the US Southwest must be proficient in the Navajo language. Official language policy may also refer to the language of public signs, whether governmental or private. In English-speaking nations, the fact that English is official is not usually stated explicitly; thus, New Zealand passed laws making Māori and New Zealand Sign Language official languages, but the legislation does not mention English.

National government policy may also call for the use of a specific language of instruction in schools, following the model established by the Jacobins during the French Revolution. This may occasionally be written into law, but more usually it is a matter of regulation or under the authority of a ministry of education. The teaching of other languages (international or minority) is often a decision of the education ministry, although it may also be encouraged by a regional supranational organization or by laws affecting minority rights.

Language management includes not only the choice of a variety (status) but also its form. The invention of printing led to the standardization of letter forms for most languages. As Fishman (2006a) points out, corpus decisions very often have status reasons. The switch from one alphabet to another, such as the Turkish change from

Arabic to Latin (Lewis 1999) or the Soviet requirement that minority languages use the Cyrillic alphabet, had political motivations: In Turkey, Kemal Ataturk was engaged in a major campaign of modernization and Westernization, and in the Soviet Union, it was a continuation of the Russification policy of the Czars. In many cases, spelling reform is a political issue. Fishman (2006a) argues that there were four underlying principles governing most changes in the form of language. The first and most powerful of these was the search for “purity,” fighting an opposing pressure that he calls “vernacularity” or “folksiness.” Believers in purity condemn the use of foreign words. The opposite tendency is noticeable especially among linguists who favor the naturalness of African-American Vernacular English, who accept the diversity of World Englishes (Kachru 1986), or like Katz (2004), who prefer lively dynamic Hasidic Yiddish to the purity embraced and preached by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. An even more extreme version of purity is the search for what Fishman calls “uniqueness,” making sure the language includes no borrowings at all. The opposite tendency is what he calls “Westernization,” the acceptance of vocabulary for technical terms from international languages. A third approach that Fishman (2006a) recognized was the preference for the classical variety of the language, especially likely to occur when it has religious significance, as in the case of Arabic, Hebrew, and Sanskrit. For each of these, there is a traditional sacred text which that can be appealed to as the model of purity. The opposite trend Fishman (2006a) calls “panification,” the effort to unite related languages into a single variety.

Language Management and Educational Linguistics

Although I began my career as an applied linguist, I became disenchanted with the term. My solution was to propose the field of educational linguistics, defined as the juncture of studies of language and education and including aspects of linguistics relevant to education and aspects of education concerning language (Spolsky 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1985, 1990, 1999b; Spolsky and Hult 2008). The term has been picked up by a number of universities and scholars in the field (Hornberger 2001).

The field of language education is *prima facie* an example of language management, for it specifically attempts to modify the language practices and beliefs of its students. At the same time, language management is a subfield of linguistics relevant to education. Thus, the relationship is symbiotic, each forming part of the other – policy and management are a basic part of language education, and educational linguistics provides a compendium of methods to manage language practices and beliefs. Spolsky and Hult’s (2008) handbook contains 44 chapters, the major section headings being foundations, linguistically and culturally responsive education, language education and policy, literacy development, language acquisition, language assessment, and relations between research and practice.

Language policy in education can be studied as a distinct field, but as this chapter has tried to show, it is closely related to the language policy of the community as a whole. As one might expect in a complex ecological system, the components influence each other and are influenced in turn. A school language policy is not independent but influenced by the political, national, religious, economic, and ideological environments in which it is developed and which maintain a constantly changing set of pressures. This complexity helps explain the regularity of reform proposals and new plans to solve language education problems.

Future Directions

The growing academic interest in language education policy and its basis in educational linguistics and language policy have opened up the field of practice to major improvements, but they continue to be distant, as governments and educational systems ignore their lessons. A good proportion of the children of the world still suffer from instruction in language that they do not speak or understand; educational authorities assume that more testing will somehow produce better learning; and many nations wracked by famine and war cannot afford to train and select teachers or provide them with the needed conditions. Too often the main lesson of school for many children is that it is a waste of time: Too many adolescents are turned into terrorists and murderers by ignorant parents and inadequate schools. Knowledge grows (and these volumes show its major growth in critical areas), but the inability or reluctance to implement what we have learned continues to have tragic results.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Bernard Spolsky: [Investigating Language Education Policy](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
- Michel Candelier: [“Awakening to Languages” and Educational Language Policy](#). In Volume: Language Awareness and Multilingualism
- Terrence Wiley: [Bilingual Education Policy](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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Language Planning in Education

James W. Tollefson

Abstract

Language planning in education refers to a broad range of decisions affecting the structure, function, and acquisition of language in schools. This chapter reviews the history of language planning in education, major contributions of past research, current research, problems and difficulties facing the field, and future directions. Early developments are categorized into two major periods, distinguished by a focus on the role of language planning in “modernization” and “development” on the one hand and critical analysis of power and ideology on the other. Major contributions emphasize work by pioneers in language planning, such as Joshua Fishman and Charles Ferguson, who laid the foundation for subsequent work on language maintenance and shift, bilingualism and diglossia, and a host of related topics. Subsequent developments shifted attention to language and ideology, tensions between “standard” and “nonstandard” varieties, globalization and the spread of English, language maintenance/revitalization, and bilingual approaches to education. Work in progress includes new developments in research methodologies, new conceptual frameworks such as interpretive policy analysis and the ecology of language, and changing understandings of language policy and planning. These new understandings have led to increasing use of qualitative research methods such as ethnography. Important challenges facing the field include efforts to integrate language planning with other social sciences and to build more direct links between research and the practice of language planning in education. Finally, this chapter examines future directions, including the role of language planning in economic inequality, language plan-

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ning in non-state institutions such as the World Bank, and development of new research methodologies.

Keywords

Language ideology • Language planning • Language rights • Language revitalization • Language research methodology

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Introduction

Language planning refers to deliberate efforts to affect the structure, function, and acquisition of languages. Particularly important are decisions about the medium of instruction. Language planning may take place in schools and other institutions, in families and workplaces, or in any social group – including virtual communities – in which verbal communication takes place. When official bodies, such as ministries of education, undertake language planning, the result may be *explicit language policies*, which entail statements of goals and means for achieving them. In education, the most important language policy decisions are about the choice of medium of instruction. Language policies may also be *implicit*, which refers to social rules for language use that regulate language learning and language behavior in institutions and social groups. Understanding explicit and implicit policies requires attention to language ideologies, as well as the interconnections between state, institutional, and classroom policies and practices. Together, language policy and planning (LPP) constitute a field of study as well as a field of social practice (McCarty and Warhol 2011). This chapter summarizes research on the role of LPP within education, with particular emphasis on status and acquisition planning.

Early Developments

LPP emerged as a distinct field of research in the 1960s. The term “language planning,” initially used in Haugen’s (1959) study of the development of standard Norwegian, referred to both corpus planning and status planning. Corpus planning entails efforts to affect the structure of language varieties and includes processes such as standardization, graphization, purification, and terminology development. Status planning involves efforts to affect the status of language varieties, such as decisions about which varieties should be used in government, the media, the courts, schools, and elsewhere. Later, acquisition planning was identified as a third major area, involving efforts to affect language learning in schools and other institutional settings.

The initial period of development in the field of LPP took place through a series of influential publications in the 1960s and early 1970s (Fishman 1972, 1974; Fishman et al. 1968; Rubin and Jernudd 1971). Much of this early research in LPP focused attention on devising a conceptual framework for LPP and on a limited range of practical concerns, primarily involving language planning in newly emerging nation-states. Thus in its early years, LPP was closely linked with “modernization” and “development” programs in “developing” countries, and it was heavily influenced by modernization theory. Although LPP in education was not the major focus of the earliest research, it soon emerged as a central concern, because corpus planning issues such as language standardization and script reform as well as many status planning decisions necessarily involve educational institutions. Also, it was widely believed that LPP in education could play a significant role in the processes of political and sociocultural integration that were crucial for new states formed with the end of colonialism in Africa and Asia (see Fishman et al. 1968). Thus, by the mid-1970s, LPP research examined such central educational issues as the role of vernacular and standard varieties in schools, bilingualism, teacher training, and the education of linguistic minorities.

Early LPP in education shared three key assumptions with modernization and development theory. The first assumption was an optimistic belief that LPP in education would benefit ethnolinguistic minorities, for example, with policies intended to ensure they learn the language(s) used as medium of instruction. A second key assumption was that technical experts in LPP should play a central role in formulating and implementing efficient, rational plans and policies. This separation of LPP from the political process reflected a belief in the skills of LPP specialists and an emphasis on the technical aspects of corpus planning. A third assumption of early LPP in education was that the nation-state should be the focus of research and practice. The main actors in LPP were believed to be government education agencies (especially at the national level), and thus a top-down focus on state authorities dominated early LPP research.

During the 1980s and 1990s, a critique of early LPP focused on the impact of the local context on national policies and the limitations of a technical rather than

political emphasis in LPP, as well as on the failure of many language plans and policies to achieve their stated goals. Critics argued that the early approach was flawed in several ways. First, it underestimated the complexity of sociopolitical systems in which cause-effect relationships between plans and outcomes are highly complex, and social groups often have covert and competing goals. Second, by focusing on national plans and policies, early research did not fully explore the beliefs, attitudes, and practices of communities affected by LPP in education, particularly the processes by which local communities can challenge or transform national plans when they are implemented at the local level. Third, an optimistic belief in the value of LPP for integrating linguistic minorities into national political and economic systems could not be maintained in the light of research on contexts such as apartheid South Africa, where the white minority government promoted mother tongue instruction and used both status planning and corpus planning as tools of apartheid. Similarly, in other states in sub-Saharan Africa, LPP in education helped to address the immediate problem of national integration (e.g., in Tanzania), but often the outcome was a small elite in control of educational systems that largely ignored the educational needs of masses of the population with limited political power. Summarizing the impact of this critique, Blommaert (1996) stated that LPP “can no longer stand exclusively for practical issues of standardization, graphization, terminological elaboration, and so on. The link between language planning and sociopolitical developments is obviously of paramount importance” (p. 217).

Major Contributions

The early period of LPP research explored in detail the relationship between language structure and language function on the one hand and various forms of social organization (ethnic groups, nation-states) on the other (e.g., Fishman 1974; Fishman et al. 1968). This work provided an important foundation for subsequent research on language maintenance and shift, as well as on language and identity. A particular achievement was a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to the maintenance or loss of minority languages in communities in which a powerful standard variety dominates educational institutions. In addition, the connections between LPP and micro-sociolinguistics, articulated in detail in Fishman’s (1972) expansive volume on the sociology of language, demonstrated that macro-level policies of the nation-state are linked with micro-level issues such as interaction in educational settings and languages distributed in situations involving bilingualism and diglossia.

The subsequent critique of LPP shifted attention to questions of ideology, power, and inequality. Based on a growing body of empirical studies in widely varying contexts in the 1990s and early 2000s, this research made important advances in language and ideology; the role of non-standard varieties in education; globalization, the spread of English, and language maintenance and revitalization; language rights; and bilingual approaches to education.

Language and Ideology

Although the term “ideology” has many meanings in LPP, it generally refers to commonsense notions about the nature of language and communication (Woolard 1992), particularly implicit or unstated assumptions about language that determine how human beings interpret events. Various ideologies of language have been examined, including linguistic assimilation, linguistic pluralism, and internationalization. Standard language ideology, which refers to a “bias toward an abstract, idealized homogenous spoken language, which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class” (Lippi-Green 1997, p. 64), has received particular attention. In many contexts, LPP in education plays a central role in imposing standard language ideology, by rewarding users of standard varieties and imposing sanctions against those who use other varieties. Ongoing research on language ideologies demonstrates that policies and practices in education are often shaped by ideologies of planning authorities and politically powerful groups rather than by empirical research on the educational value of alternative policies and practices.

Nonstandard Varieties in Education

One consequence of standard language ideology is that nonstandard varieties, including regional dialects, varieties used by poor or working-class students, and pidgins and creoles, are often excluded from use as medium of instruction. Policies that exclude nonstandard varieties from the schools are often justified on pedagogical grounds, namely, that they allegedly interfere with effective instruction in the standard. However, research on this claim (e.g., Gándara and Hopkins 2010) has found clear evidence that the use of nonstandard varieties can have a positive effect on the acquisition of standard varieties, as well on students’ participation, self-esteem, performance on standardized tests, and overall academic achievement. Despite these research findings, however, language policies in many educational contexts continue to restrict the use of nonstandard varieties.

Globalization, the Spread of English, and Language Maintenance and Revitalization

A major concern in LPP is globalization, the unprecedented spread of English, and the associated loss of languages worldwide (Nettle and Romaine 2000). Two central questions in this research are the role of planning bodies in these processes and the possibilities for language maintenance and revitalization. Several scholars have argued that the spread of English is the direct result of LPP by UK and US authorities (Phillipson 1992), whereas others argue that English has been widely adopted for

instrumental reasons because it serves important social functions (see Spolsky 2012).

In contrast to analysis of the increasing use of English, research on language maintenance and revitalization examines the factors that contribute to language maintenance or shift and to the processes that may facilitate language revitalization (Fishman 1991, 2001). Work in the US Southwest is particularly important, as scholars have examined successful efforts to maintain Navajo and use it as a medium of instruction (McCarty 2002). Similarly, the revitalization of the Māori language in New Zealand has offered an opportunity for scholars to identify factors that facilitate successful language revitalization (May and Hill 2005).

Language Rights

Research on language rights has expanded in recent years, fueled in part by the attention to human rights in international organizations such as the United Nations and European Union. As a result, a large body of research has focused on conceptual and theoretical issues in language rights and on the challenges of implementing language rights guarantees (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Increasingly, language rights in recent years have been the focus of heated discussion. Wee (2011), for example, argues that “group rights” based on language and culture are founded on essentialist conceptions of “language” and “ethnicity” that are incommensurate with the complexities of contemporary translanguing practices (Canagarajah 2013) and identity. Even supporters of language rights have criticized the limited impact of language rights in education, in which “rights” often contribute little more than “marvelous human rights rhetoric” (Skutnabb-Kangas 2002, p. 179) that does not materially improve the lives of linguistic minorities.

More fundamentally, the past two decades of research in LPP have led to the collapse of the idealized vision of the linguistically homogenous nation-state, accompanied by a critique of the notions of “standard” and “nonstandard” varieties as fixed entities with distinct boundaries. The traditional link between one language and one identity, which is based on the belief that different languages are distinct systems with clearly demarcated boundaries, and which has frequently served as a rationale for policies to suppress minority languages, has been widely rejected in LPP. Instead, research has turned attention to heteroglossic home and community environments, hybrid linguistic repertoires that are commonplace worldwide, and plurilingual regions and contact zones where multiple varieties, often without clearly demarcated social or linguistic boundaries, are spoken by individuals and groups in complex relationships of domination and subordination.

Many case studies of such zones have appeared (e.g., the multilingual Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, the Andean region of South America, Native North America, and many urban areas worldwide), with many scholars concluding that traditional conceptions of “language” and “dialect” do not apply to the contemporary

complexities of everyday linguistic life. In response, new LPP conceptual frameworks have been proposed that incorporate the concepts of linguistic ecology, heteroglossic home-community environments, and hybrid communicative repertoires. Such approaches have been used to explain difficulties in implementing language rights in some regions. In the Caribbean Coast region of Nicaragua, for example, Freeland argues that language rights discourses “need deconstructing and reinventing. . . Indeed, it may be that. . .the idea of ‘language rights’ should be abandoned in favor of a broader concept like ‘linguistic citizenship’” (2013, p. 109). Such research demonstrates that even groups that agree on the importance of language rights may have different notions of what “rights” may mean. Research on new forms of citizenship emerging under globalization may help LPP scholars address these important issues (McGroarty 2002).

Bilingual Approaches to Education

Emphasis on the use of standard varieties in schools, grounded in standard language ideology, leads in many contexts to monolingual approaches to education, in which students’ complex linguistic repertoires are ignored and a target-language standard is imposed. As early as the mid-1990s, Phillipson (1992) and others argued that there is virtually no research supporting the claim that exclusive use of the target (standard) language is the most efficient way to promote language or subject matter learning. Moreover, research on English-only instruction exploring its impact on students’ dropout rates, social isolation, progress in subject matter instruction, and other variables finds significant advantages for the use of students’ home varieties (Gándara and Hopkins 2010; Tollefson and Tsui 2014). Nevertheless, despite such extensive research supporting multilingualism in education, policymakers and practitioners in many contexts continue to favor monolingual approaches.

Work in Progress

A major focus of current work in LPP is research methodology (Hult and Johnson 2015). This work examines such questions as: What research issues are most important? What research methodologies are appropriate for different research questions? What forms of evidence are persuasive? What are the ethical responsibilities of scholars engaged in LPP research? The focus on research methodology is in part a response to criticisms of the research process. For example, as early as 1999, Smith pointed out “from the vantage point of the colonized . . . the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, ‘research,’ is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p. 1). Thus some LPP scholars advocate a “critical method” in which an examination of their relationship to “others” who are the focus of research is at the

center of the research process (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2001). Such reflexive research is becoming the standard in the training of LPP scholars.

A related focus of current work is the effort to elaborate an emerging set of new concepts for LPP. Since its initial formative stage, LPP scholarship has developed a range of conceptual frameworks, including the distinction between formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Rubin and Jernudd 1971); status, corpus, and acquisition planning (Haugen 1959); cost-benefit analysis (Rubin and Jernudd 1971); interpretive policy analysis (Wright 2005); top-down and bottom-up policymaking (Kaplan and Baldauf 1997); and the ecology of language. In 2004, Jones and Martin-Jones (2004) argued that LPP theory should seek to integrate macro and micro perspectives, specifically state and institutional policymaking processes on the one hand and local practices in classrooms, families, and other social groups on the other: “It is by situating. . .local practices within the wider social and institutional order that we can gain the deepest insights into the processes of cultural and linguistic reproduction” (p. 67). Accordingly, work by scholars such as Canagarajah (2013) and Ramanathan (2013) have sought to build a new LPP paradigm that integrates the micro-level analysis of classrooms and other “local” institutions and groups with the macro-level analysis of power, inequality, and state/institutional processes. As more LPP scholars have taken up this effort in recent years, LPP has been increasingly characterized by attention to the implicit language policies and practices of everyday life. Indeed, a new understanding of LPP has emerged, with LPP understood as “the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people’s language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways” (McCarty 2011a, p. xii).

Thus, current research focuses less attention on the actions of state authorities, which were the primary concern during initial development of the field, and more attention on the language practices of everyday life, less on specific and defined ethnolinguistic groups and more on hybrid and multiple identities, less on nationalism and the nation-state and more on transnationalism and cosmopolitan citizenship, less on language conflict and more on networks and mobilities, and less on linguistic imperialism and more on the instrumental value of English. Indeed, LPP research increasingly rejects the traditional distinction between macro and micro social “levels,” arguing instead for a new theoretical framework that reflects the dialectical relationship between state and institutional policies on the one hand and the (often implicit) policies and practices that organize everyday language use on the other. This important change in focus has been accompanied by increasing use of ethnographic and other qualitative methods (McCarty 2011b).

Problems and Difficulties

Despite its many advances, LPP research faces several challenges, in particular integrating LPP with other social sciences and linking research with policy and practice.

Integrating LPP with Other Social Sciences

More than two decades ago, Williams (1992) articulated the disappointing failure of LPP and sociolinguistics to be sufficiently linked with other areas of the social sciences. For example, the paucity of sociological research on language is particularly striking, given the belief among LPP scholars that language is central to many social processes. Nevertheless, some theoretical work in LPP has begun to forge links with other areas in the social sciences. Particularly important is research that links LPP with political theory and political economy. Ricento et al. (2014) explicitly identify ways that LPP could benefit from cross-disciplinary collaboration with political theorists. For example, whereas LPP scholarship generally prioritizes empirical analysis of particular contexts, political theory seeks to understand normative statements and judgments that underlie the prioritization of language varieties; perhaps an emerging conceptualization of “normative language policy” will be helpful for LPP scholars to gain insight into the underlying processes of status planning. Subsequently, Ricento (2015) examines English as a “global language” within a political economic framework. One potential contribution of this approach is that it is critical of ideologically and politically motivated claims about the possible benefits of learning English or other dominant languages. Instead, a focus on the political economy of language clarifies that language skills do not substitute for material advantages, and indeed a focus on language learning may distract from more fundamental economic disparities that cannot be overcome through language study. Influenced by Marxist and other approaches to the analysis of socioeconomic class, such work potentially offers renewed understandings of the role of language in the systematic social reproduction of inequality.

A second potentially productive connection is between LPP and the legal framework for language plans and policies (Wiley 2002). For example, the body of law on free speech in the United States is crucial to understanding debates about state efforts to restrict languages other than English and other stigmatized varieties in schools. Supporters of policies favoring multilingualism and language diversity often rely on the constitutional protection of speech as a basis for promoting languages other than English in state institutions. Similarly, in the Philippines, ongoing policy debates about bilingual education must be viewed within the long history of constitutional regulation of the role of English, Filipino, and other languages. With more scholars trained in a broader range of the social sciences, there is reason to hope that LPP will increasingly influence – and be influenced by – political theory, legal theory and analysis, and other social scientific research.

Linking Research with Policy and Practice

In its infancy, LPP was widely viewed as a practical discipline with immediate application to policy and practice (see Fishman et al. 1968). Since the 1990s, however, many LPP scholars have not directly engaged with the practical application

of their research. Indeed, some scholars have been critical of the failure of LPP to influence language policies in schools (see Cummins 1999). More recently, renewed interest in engaging with policy and practice seems evident, as public engagement has become part of the training of young LPP scholars. For example, Hult and Johnson's (2015) guide to LPP research includes a section on "public engagement and the LPP scholar" that provides practical advice on interacting with schools, participating in public policy debates, communicating with political leaders and policymakers, and managing media relations. An additional factor encouraging scholars' focus on practical implications of their work is that recent reductions in university funding have led to increased applications for outside funding, which often requires explicit attention to the effects of research on policy and practice in schools.

Future Directions

With the continuing expansion in LPP research, new and unexpected directions are likely to emerge. Two areas that should receive serious attention are LPP and economic inequality and the impact of non-state institutions.

LPP and Economic Inequality

Since the 1990s, research on LPP in education has focused on its role in creating and sustaining inequality, particularly the ways in which LPP in education is used by dominant groups to sustain their systems of privilege, not only through explicit policies but also by commonsense practices that help speakers of dominant varieties achieve the highest levels of success in schools. For example, work on "governmentality," which refers to discourses, practices, and patterns of language use as techniques by which individuals and institutions shape public behavior and enact programs of government, focuses attention on the link between everyday language use and sustained inequality (see Pennycook 2002). This research, which shifts attention away from explicit policies adopted by the state, implicitly acknowledges Fishman's early recognition of the interconnections between state/institutional policies and everyday interaction. From this perspective, discourse analysis and various approaches to interaction analysis and micro-sociolinguistics should be incorporated into LPP research.

LPP also includes explicit attention to economic analysis of language, though this line of research remains underdeveloped. Grin (2015), for example, examines the economics of English using key concepts from economics, such as "value," "efficiency," resource "distribution," and "fairness." A major problem with the economics of language is that relevant data on language (e.g., speakers' language abilities, rates of language learning, and correlations between language learning and changes

in income) are often not available. A second issue, as Grin points out, is that policy decisions about language are ultimately political rather than economic issues. Nevertheless, expanding the capacity of LPP research to address issues of language and economic inequality should be a major focus of future empirical research.

The Impact of Non-state Institutions

While research on state educational institutions continues, equally important is study of the increasing role of multinational corporations and other global institutions that affect LPP in education. Work by Alidou (2002), for instance, on the World Bank's influence on education in sub-Saharan Africa, offers a model for this research. How are state education ministries constrained by policies of the World Bank and other global institutions? How are decisions of such global institutions implemented at the local level? How can local educators, students, and their families shape the policies that affect them? These are important questions for research in this direction.

Finally, any future directions for research are likely to take place against the backdrop of continuing development of new conceptual and theoretical frameworks in LPP, with the likelihood of continued expansion in the use of ethnography and other qualitative research methods.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)

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- Bernard Spolsky: [Investigating Language Education Policy](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
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- Katherine Mortimer: [Discursive Perspectives on Language Policy and Planning](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education
- Teresa L. McCarty: [Ethnography of Language Policy](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
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Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship

Stephen May

Abstract

This chapter explores the issue of language rights for ethnolinguistic minorities in modern nation-states. It examines why the nation-state system has privileged national languages at the expense of minority languages and why it continues to be preoccupied with the establishment and reinforcement of public monolingualism. Drawing on both sociolinguistics and political theory, the chapter argues that recognizing and expanding the rights of minority language speakers allow for the rethinking of nation-states in more culturally and linguistically diverse ways. This better reflects the interests of the increasingly multilingual populations of nation-states, particularly in this era of globalization, while also better acknowledging the postmodernist emphasis on multiple linguistic identities.

Keywords

Ethnolinguistic minorities • Language rights • Linguistic homogeneity • Linguistic diversity • Linguistic identities • Minority languages • Monolingualism • Multiculturalism • Multilingualism • Nation-states

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Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world marked by transmigration, transnationalism, and the apparent porosity of national borders, debates over what constitutes ongoing citizenship in modern nation-states have become increasingly contested, as has the relative status of the languages spoken therein. What rights and responsibilities ensue for national citizens in this late modern, globalized age? How should nation-states respond to rapidly changing demographic patterns that reflect the rise of what Vertovec (2007) has termed “superdiversity” – the rapid ethnic and linguistic diversification of constituent national populations via migration and transmigration, particularly in major urban areas? What distinct entitlements (if any) might be accorded minority ethnolinguistic groups with respect to protecting, recognizing, and/or supporting their language(s) within nation-states? Or should such groups simply accede to the usual national imperatives of cultural and linguistic assimilation as the inevitable price of citizenship?

When these questions are asked, it becomes immediately apparent that issues of language recognition, national identity, and state citizenship are closely intertwined and often highly contested. Following from this, ongoing debates over citizenship – particularly within modern liberal democracies – often focus on the following two key issues:

1. Whether speaking the state-mandated or national language(s) – that is, the majority or dominant language(s) of the state – is, or should be, a *requirement* of national citizenship and a demonstration of both political and social integration by its members, especially those who speak other languages as a first language (L1).
2. Whether this requirement should be at the *expense* of, or in *addition* to, the maintenance of minority or non-dominant languages within the state. Should there be public monolingualism in the state-mandated language, or a delimited form of public bi/multilingualism? Could/should states actively recognize and accommodate a much wider degree of multilingualism?

How the two issues are addressed has significant implications for the ongoing development of language policy and the provision of language education within contemporary nation-states. In particular, these issues require nation-states to address the balance between social *cohesion* – an overarching concern of such states – and the recognition (or lack thereof) of cultural and linguistic *pluralism*.

This chapter addresses this important dialectic, which has been made more salient for nation-states in this superdiverse age. However, as we shall see, nation-states have often continued to construct these two positions in opposition rather than in tandem. As a result, nation-states still regularly construct the recognition/accommodation of linguistic diversity as a *threat* to the maintenance of national cohesion and related notions of social and political stability.

Early Developments

The Pluralist Dilemma

The often-difficult balancing act between maintaining cohesion and recognizing pluralism within modern nation-states has been termed by Bullivant (1981) “the pluralist dilemma.” This dilemma is “the problem of reconciling the diverse political claims of constituent groups and individuals in a pluralist society *with the claims of the nation-state as a whole*” (Bullivant 1981, p. x; my emphasis) – what he elsewhere describes as the competing aims of “civism” and “pluralism” (for similar distinctions, see Edwards 2012).

How then can the tensions arising from the pluralist dilemma best be resolved? Drawing on political theory, two contrasting approaches have been adopted in response to this central question, particularly with respect to modern liberal democracies. Gordon (1981) has described these two approaches as “liberal pluralism” and “corporate pluralism.” Liberal pluralism, exemplified in the seminal contribution of the political philosopher John Rawls (1971), is characterized by the absence, even prohibition, of any ethnic, religious, or national minority group possessing separate standing before the law or government. Its central tenets can be traced back to the French Revolution and Rousseau’s conception of the modern polity as comprising three inseparable features: freedom (non-domination), the absence of differentiated roles, and a very tight common purpose. On this view, the margin for recognizing difference within the modern nation-state is very small (Taylor 1994). In contrast, corporate pluralism – now more commonly known by the term “multiculturalism” – involves the recognition of minority groups as legally constituted entities, on the basis of which, and depending on their size and influence, economic, social, and political awards are allocated (Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2006).

Multiculturalism as public policy enjoyed a 40-year period from the 1960s to the early 2000s where it gained some political purchase, particularly in modern liberal democracies such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the USA. During this period, public recognition and accommodation of minority groups were increasingly commonplace in discussions of democracy and representation in the civic realm, or public sphere, within these states (Kivisto 2002; Kymlicka 2001). The central concern of these discussions was the remediation of the current disadvantages facing such groups, usually as a result of past injustices arising out of colonization, confederation, or conquest, or their historical combination (Kymlicka 1995). These developments internationally, in favor of a differentiated public

politics, even led Glazer (1998), a longtime US skeptic of multiculturalism, to conclude that “we are all multiculturalists now.” It seemed, at that time at least, that the notion of a pluralized public sphere, where cultural, religious, and *linguistic* diversity could be actively and positively recognized and accommodated, was becoming an increasingly accepted part of social and political life in these states.

But this has proved to be a recent historical aberration. Since 9/11, in particular, there has been a significant retrenchment of multiculturalism as public policy in liberal democracies, most notably in the USA and across Europe (Joppke 2010; Modood 2013). Developments in both the USA and Europe have also been associated with increasingly restrictive language policies. This has included, in the USA, for example, the active delimiting of bilingual education provision, particularly for Spanish speakers (Crawford 2008). In Europe, it has been primarily expressed by increasingly punitive language testing regimes as a requirement of citizenship in individual European states (see Extra et al. 2009).

These developments accord with a widespread consensus in political theory and in political discussion of citizenship rights, which has consistently preferred liberal pluralism to a group rights or multiculturalist approach. The answer to the pluralist dilemma has been consistently to favor civism over pluralism (although for contrasting views, see the “Major Contributions” sections below). On this basis, the “claims of the nation-state as a whole,” as Bullivant describes it – emphasizing the apparently inextricable interconnections between social cohesion and national (including linguistic) homogeneity – have invariably won the day over more pluralist conceptions of the nation-state where ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences *between different groups* are accorded some degree of formal recognition. In this prevailing view, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic pluralism should be limited, at most, to the private domain: to the family, community, etc. The public recognition of such pluralism is simply not countenanced or accommodated and is also often constructed as an active threat to the state (for particularly trenchant versions of this position, see, e.g., Barry 2001; Huntington 2005; Schlesinger 1992; and below). Why is this apparent consensus so strongly in favor of cohesion at the expense of pluralism? In addressing this question with respect to linguistic pluralism, we must turn to the origins of modern nation-states and the public role of language(s) within them.

Nation-State Organization and the Role of Language

The social and political organization of nation-states is a recent historical phenomenon, deriving from the rise of political nationalism in Europe from the middle of the last millennium onward. The French Revolution of 1789 and its aftermath are often credited with establishing the archetypal modern nation-state – a form of political organization not countenanced before, a polity represented and *unified* by a culturally and linguistically homogeneous civic realm (May 2012; Wright 2000).

Previous forms of political organization had not required this degree of linguistic uniformity. While practices inevitably varied, the imperial era, which preceded the nation-state system, was much more accommodating of its populations’

multilingualism. For example, multilingual administration was the norm in the ancient empires of the Persians, Ptolemies, and Carthaginians. Similarly, the Roman Empire was remarkably unconcerned with imposing Latin as a spoken language on its subject peoples. Where it was spoken, it was almost always in conjunction with other languages rather than in their stead, an approach underpinned by the principle, *per pacem societatis* (“through a pact of society”) (Rochette 2011). This pact emphasized the primacy of the *economic* accountability of subject peoples to the Roman Empire (as long as taxes were paid, all was well). The pact did require the use of Latin by local elites for administrative purposes. However, it also allowed these local elites to maintain their own languages, while there were no restrictions imposed on the local populations with respect to their ongoing multilingual language use (Rochette 2011).

More recent imperial powers that actively accommodated multilingualism include the nineteenth century Austro-Hungarian Habsburg Empire, which adopted a strategy of political unification by deliberately seeking to avoid the uniform imposition of German upon its various ethnic groups, granting them instead considerable cultural and linguistic autonomy (Schjerve and Vetter 2007). But perhaps the clearest and most historically significant example of an imperial policy that formally protected the multilingualism of its population is that of the Ottoman Empire (c. 1300–1923). Under Mehmet II, a formal system of “millets” (nations) was established in the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century in order to accommodate the religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity of peoples within its borders. These millets were first established on the basis of the maintenance of religious freedom for the Empire’s non-Muslims. However, over time, the millet system came to foreground the latter’s linguistic protections as well, specifically fostering and sustaining regional multilingualism within the Ottoman Empire for nearly half a millennium (Dorian 1998).

In short, empires were quite happy for the most part to leave unmolested the plethora of cultures and languages subsumed within them. But in the politics of European nationalism, precipitated by the French Revolution and subsequently to spread to the rest of the world, the idea of a single, common “national” language (sometimes, albeit rarely, a number of national languages) quickly became the leitmotif of modern social and political organization.

How was this accomplished? Principally, via the political machinery of these newly emergent European states, with mass education often playing a central role. As the nationalism scholar Ernest Gellner (1983) has outlined, the nationalist principle of “one state, one culture, one language” saw the state, via its education system, increasingly identified with a specific language and culture – invariably, that of the majority ethnic group (see also Anderson 2006). The process of selecting and establishing a common *national* language as part of this wider process usually involved two key aspects: *legitimization* and *institutionalization* (Nelde et al. 1996). Legitimization, which I have since termed “legitimation” (May 2011a, 2012), is understood to mean the formal recognition accorded to the language by the nation-state – usually, by the granting of official language status. Institutionalization, perhaps the more important dimension, refers to the process by which the

language comes to be accepted or “taken for granted” in a wide range of social, cultural, and linguistic domains or contexts, both formal and informal. Both elements achieve a central requirement of the modern nation-state – that all its citizens adopt a common language and culture for use in the civic or public realm. This is often exemplified by a single national language (more rarely, a number of languages; see also below) that predominates in formal, public language domains (May 2012, 2014a).

This establishment of chosen “national” languages usually also occurred alongside an often-punitive process of “minoritizing” or “dialectalizing” potentially competing language varieties within these same nation-states. These latter language varieties were *positioned* by these newly formed states as languages of lesser political worth and value. Consequently, national languages came to be associated with modernity and progress, while their less fortunate counterparts were associated (conveniently) with tradition and obsolescence. More often than not, the latter were also specifically constructed as *obstacles* to the political project of nation-building – as threats to the “unity” of the state. The consequence of this political imperative is the establishment of an ethnically exclusive and culturally and linguistically homogeneous nation-state – a realm from which minority languages and cultures are effectively banished. Indeed, this is the “ideal” model to which most nation-states (and nationalist movements) still aspire – albeit in the face of a far more complex and contested multiethnic and multilingual reality (May 2012, 2014b; McGroarty 2006). As Dorian (1998) summarizes it: “it is the concept of the nation-state coupled with its official standard language . . . that has in modern times posed the keenest threat to both the identities and the languages of small [minority] communities” (p. 18). Coulmas (1998) observes that “the nation-state as it has evolved since the French Revolution is the natural enemy of minorities” (p. 67).

The result of the preeminence of this organizational principle of cultural and linguistic homogeneity is that there are only a very few *formal* multilingual nation-states in the world today – India and Switzerland being two notable examples. Where English is the dominant language, the prospects of formal multilingualism become even more remote, not least because of the additional position of English as the current world language or *lingua mundi*. In this respect, even nation-states such as Canada and Australia, which have adopted overtly multilingual policies in recent times, still continue to struggle to bring that multilingualism *effectively* into the public domain.

Individual Versus Collective Rights

The ongoing influence of political nationalism, with its emphasis on cultural and linguistic homogeneity, is one key reason why civism continues to be consistently favored over pluralism in modern nation-states. Another reason is an emphasis in international and national law since the establishment of the United Nations after World War II on *individual* as opposed to *collective* rights (see Kymlicka 1995; May 2011b for further discussion). In such an approach, which is described in political

theory as orthodox liberalism or liberal egalitarianism (see May 2015a for a recent overview), both citizenship and human rights are viewed only as *individual* rights, and thus one's particular cultural and linguistic (group) background, and its *significance*, is deemed irrelevant. Indeed, orthodox liberals view the claiming of collective or group-based rights – on the basis of language, for example – as problematic because, for them, it unnecessarily emphasizes our differences rather than what “unites” us as individual citizens (see, e.g., Barry 2001; Huntington 2005). The current ascendancy of orthodox liberalism thus means that most political theorists are skeptical about, and at times outright hostile toward, any notion of language rights, which are deemed to be group based rather than individual rights. For example, the right of freedom of speech is a clearly defensible individual right (applicable to everyone and thus also universal), but the right to an education in one's first language (L1), when this is not the language of the state, is seen as a group-based right and is thus far more contested (May 2011b).

This dominant orthodox liberal position contrasts starkly with a *communitarian* view of rights, which posits that the strict separation of citizenship and identity in the modern polity understates, and at times disavows, the significance of wider communal (including linguistic) affiliations to the construction of individual identity. As Sandel (1982) observes, there is no such thing as the “unencumbered self” – we are all, to some extent, *situated* within wider communities which shape and influence who we are. Likewise, Taylor in his seminal defense of French language rights in Québec argues that identity “is who we are, ‘where we’re coming from’. As such, it is the background against which our tastes and desires and opinions and aspirations make sense” (1994, pp. 33–34). Or, as Habermas has put it, “a correctly understood theory of [citizenship] rights requires a politics of recognition that protects the individual in the life contexts in which his or her identity is formed” (1994, p. 113). The language(s) one speak(s) would thus be necessarily included in any communitarian view. However, communitarian critiques have themselves been widely criticized for privileging the collective over the individual and thus essentializing group identities. In effect, communitarians are charged with operating a model of group membership that is at odds with the complexities of identity in the late modern, globalized world (Barry 2001; cf. Blommaert 2010; Heller 2011).

Consequently, an ongoing emphasis on individual rights, and a related skepticism about collective rights, continues to make it difficult for minority ethnolinguistic speakers in modern nation-states to argue for group-based language rights (such as the right to be educated in their L1). As discussed earlier, the right to continue to speak a language other than the state language may *possibly* be allowed in the private domain, but not in public, since the latter is constructed as undermining personal and political autonomy and fostering social and political fragmentation. Closely allied with this position is a view that the ongoing promotion of ethnocultural and/or ethnolinguistic difference is problematic in and of itself. As Fishman (1991) summarizes it:

Unlike “human rights” which strike Western and Westernized intellectuals as fostering wider participation in general societal benefits and interactions, “language rights” still are widely interpreted as “regressive” since they would, most probably, prolong the existence of

ethnolinguistic differences. The value of such differences and the right to value such differences have not yet generally been recognized by the modern Western sense of justice... (p. 72)

Major Contributions

Opponents of Pluralism

Given the dominance of the nation-state model of public monolingualism, allied with the ongoing ascendancy of orthodox liberalism's emphasis on individual rights, it is not surprising perhaps that opponents of multiculturalism are many and various. I focus here on the often-vituperative debates surrounding multiculturalism and bilingualism in the USA, particularly in relation to education, as broadly representative of this position.

One prominent example is Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America* (1992). Schlesinger, a noted liberal historian, has argued to much public acclaim against the "disuniting" of America by the "cult of ethnicity" which "reverses the historic theory of America as one people – the theory that has thus far managed to keep American society whole" (pp. 15–16). The result is a "multiethnic dogma [which] abandons historic purposes, replacing assimilation by fragmentation, integration by separatism" (pp. 16–17). In the face of this assault, Schlesinger gloomily wonders: "The national ideal had once been *e pluribus unum* [out of many, one]. Are we now to belittle *unum* and glorify *pluribus*? Will the centre hold? Or will the melting pot give way to the Tower of Babel?" (p. 18).

The mention of the Tower of Babel is significant here, since Schlesinger directs particular opprobrium toward the bilingual movement in the USA, along with its strong links to various Latino communities there. In so doing, Schlesinger rejects the official recognition of minority languages: "Bilingualism shuts doors. It nourishes self-ghettoization, and ghettoization nourishes racial antagonism ... using some language other than English *dooms* people to second class citizenship in American society" (1992, p. 108; my emphasis). Here, Schlesinger invokes the rhetoric of national cohesion: "A common language is a *necessary* bond of national cohesion in so heterogeneous a nation as America ... *institutionalized* bilingualism remains another source of the fragmentation of America, another threat to the dream of 'one people'" (1992, pp. 109–110; my emphases).

Other prominent US commentators have also closely echoed these arguments. Samuel Huntington (2005) rails against the apparent threat of Latinos (and Spanish) to a "cohesive" (read: English-speaking) US public culture, while the prominent political theorists Brian Barry (2001), Laitin and Reich (2003), and Pogge (2003) all pursue the line that continuing to promote Spanish in the USA, particularly via bilingual education, amounts to enforced ghettoization, terminally restricting the social mobility of its speakers. Laitin and Reich argue that the consequence of "forcing" bilingual education on children would be the curtailing of "their

opportunities to learn the language of some broader societal culture” (2003, p. 92). Pogge concludes that a public education *in* English, as opposed to a bilingual approach, is unquestionably in the “best interests of the child” in relation to developing “fluency in English” and “enabling all students to participate fully in U.S. society” (2003, p. 118).

The fact that these views contradict the well-attested research on the efficacy of bilingual education highlights how linguistically ill-informed many commentators are when discussing the role of minority languages and minority language education within modern nation-states (May 2014b). What is also apparent is a lack of cognizance that linguistic inequality is often a daily experience for minority groups, along with an implicit and often explicit assertion of the benefits, and inevitability, of linguistic modernization via dominant or majority languages. Minority languages come to be constructed in this view as irrelevant, quaint, and/or antediluvian (Barry 2001). Relatedly, there is an almost unquestioned legitimacy ascribed to majority languages – both national languages and English as a world language (for the latter, see, e.g., Brutt-Griffler 2002; Brutt-Griffler and Evan Davies 2006; Van Parijs 2011). In such discussions, there is the similarly unquestioned acceptance of their dominant social and political position and function – their normative ascendancy. This ignores the sociohistorical and sociopolitical processes by which these majority languages have come to be created and accepted as dominant and legitimate in the first place. National languages are the result of the political nationalism of the last few centuries, as discussed above (Bourdieu 1991; May 2005, 2012). The rise of English as a world language is also situated within wider historical, social, and political forces and related linguistic hierarchies (see, e.g., Ives 2004, 2010; May 2014b, 2015b; Sonntag 2003, 2009).

Proponents of Pluralism

Despite the ascendancy of arguments for civism over pluralism in much academic and political commentary on nation-state organization, there are still some dissenting voices advocating for a more inclusive, pluralist approach. One of the most prominent of these is the political theorist Will Kymlicka’s advocacy of public multiculturalism (1995, 2001, 2007; see also Modood 2013; Parekh 2006). Kymlicka’s influential thesis involves arguing from within liberal political theory for the ongoing importance of individual rights while, at the same time, developing an understanding of the importance of wider cultural (and linguistic) membership to such rights. In so doing, his aim is to dismantle the apparent dichotomization between individual and group rights that has been a feature of the post-World War II orthodox liberal consensus. Kymlicka does not endorse the communitarian advocacy of collective rights but rather argues for “group-differentiated rights.” These rights are not necessarily “collective”; they can in fact be accorded to individual members of a group, or to the group as a whole, or to a federal state/province within which the group forms a majority. For example, the group-differentiated right of Francophones in Canada to use French in federal courts is an *individual* right that may be exercised

at any time. The right of Francophones to have their children educated in French-medium schools, outside of Québec, is an individual right but one that is subject to the proviso in international law “where numbers warrant” (May 2011b). Alternatively, the right of the Québécois to preserve and promote their distinct culture in the province of Québec highlights how a minority group in a federal system may exercise group-differentiated rights in a territory where they form the majority. In short, there is no simple relationship between group-differentiated rights accorded on the basis of cultural membership and their subsequent application. As Kymlicka (1995) concludes, “most such rights are not about the primacy of communities over individuals. Rather, they are based on the idea that justice between groups requires that the members of different groups be accorded different rights” (p. 47).

Kymlicka’s second argument highlights minority rights claims as principally concerned with wanting a measure of “external protection” from larger groups. External protections relate to intergroup relations where a minority group seeks to protect its distinct identity (including a linguistic one) by limiting the impact of the decisions of the larger society. External protections are thus intended to ensure that individual members are able to maintain a distinctive way of life *if they so choose* and are not prevented from doing so by the decisions of members outside of their community. As Kymlicka argues: “[g]ranting special representation rights, land claims, or language rights to a minority . . . can be seen as putting the various groups on a more equal footing, by reducing the extent to which the smaller group is vulnerable to the larger” (1995, pp. 36–37; my emphasis).

Given this, it is possible to argue that the maintenance of a minority language constitutes a legitimate external protection (May 2012). After all, if majority group members within a nation-state typically value their own cultural and linguistic habitus, it is clearly unfair to prevent minorities from continuing to value theirs. As Kymlicka concludes, “leaving one’s culture, while possible, is best seen as renouncing something to which one is reasonably entitled” (1995, p. 90). I have applied Kymlicka’s more general theories about minority rights to argue specifically for the extension of *ethnolinguistic democracy* in modern nation-states (May 2012, 2014a). My position is that the preoccupation of modern nation-state organization with a single language and culture, and an allied public monolingualism, is both unnecessarily unjust to, and exclusive of, ethnolinguistic minority groups (see also Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Contrary to the assertion by proponents of orthodox pluralism such as Barry and Schlesinger, the public realm of nation-states is not, nor has it ever been, a neutral or equal linguistic space. Rather, as de Varennes argues, “[b]y imposing a language requirement, the state shows a definite preference towards some individuals on the basis of language” (1996, p. 86). As de Varennes proceeds to argue, this is so for two reasons:

1. The state’s chosen language becomes a condition for the full access to a number of services, resources and privileges, such as education or public employment....
2. Those for whom the chosen state speech is not the primary language are thus treated differently from those for whom it is: the latter have the advantage or benefit of receiving the state’s largesse in their primary tongue, whereas the former do not and find

themselves in a more or less disadvantaged position. . . . a person faced with not being able to use his primary language [in the public domain] *assumes a heavier burden*. (1996, pp. 86–87; my emphasis)

From this, I argue that speakers of the dominant language are immediately placed at an advantage in both accessing and benefiting from the civic culture of the nation-state. A dominant language group usually controls the crucial authority in the areas of administration, politics, education, and the economy and gives preference to those with a command of that language. Other language groups are invariably limited in their language use to specific, usually private and/or low status, domains and are left with the choice of renouncing their social ambitions, assimilating, or resisting in order to gain greater access to the public realm.

In contrast, drawing on the work of Kloss (1977), I have developed a position which defends the rights of ethnolinguistic minority groups not only to what Kloss terms “tolerance-oriented” language rights (allowing individuals to continue speaking a language unmolested in the private or familial domain) but also, where appropriate, “promotion-oriented” rights. The latter regulate the extent to which minority language rights are recognized within the *public* or civic domain, including its key public institutions such as schools. I outline two particular contexts (May 2011b, 2012) where such latter rights might be appropriate. The first is for “national minority groups” – a term drawn from Kymlicka’s work – who have always been associated historically with a particular territory but who have been subject to colonization, conquest, or confederation and now have minority status within a particular nation-state. These groups include the Welsh in Britain, Catalans and Basques in Spain, Bretons in France, Québécois in Canada, and some Latino groups (e.g., Puerto Ricans) in the USA. They also include Indigenous peoples, who have increasingly been regarded in both international and national law as a separate category of peoples (May 2013). Following Kymlicka, I argue that these groups can claim, *as of right*, at least some of the benefits that majority national languages enjoy – including publicly funded education in their languages.

A second possibility applies to ethnic minorities who have migrated from their country of origin to a new host nation-state or have been the subjects of forced relocation. Here, a promotion-oriented language right cannot be argued as of right, but can be advanced on the basis of the widely accepted principle in international law of “where numbers warrant.” In order to avoid language discrimination, where there is a sufficient number of other language speakers, these speakers should be allowed to use that language as part of their individual rights as citizens. They should have the *opportunity* to use their first language if they so choose – an opportunity which amounts to Kymlicka’s understanding of an “external protection.”

By extension, I question and discard the requirement of a singular and/or replacement approach to the issue of other linguistic identities, which arises specifically from the nationalist principle of linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Linguistic identities, and social and cultural identities more broadly, need not be constructed as irredeemably oppositional – one can clearly remain both Spanish speaking and American, Basque speaking and Spanish, or Welsh speaking and British. The same

process applies to national and international language identities, where these differ. Such a position more accurately reflects the communicative profiles of multilingual speakers and also accords with the postmodernist emphasis on multiple linguistic identities.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

The issue of granting minority languages public recognition in modern nation-states continues to remain highly controversial, particularly with respect to education. Indeed, Addis (1997) has observed that the choice of language in public domains such as education is “the most difficult question that a multicultural and multiethnic society has to address” (p. 138). An increasing number of scholars within language policy and language education are beginning to directly address exactly this question. In so doing, they are also critiquing the limits of traditional nation-state organization, along with its historical contingency, and the related exclusion of minority languages from the public domain. Most notable here are contributions by Hornberger (2008); Ives (2004, 2010), Johnson (2013); McCarty (2011); Ricento (2006), Ricento et al. (2015), Tollefson (1991, 2012), and Tollefson and Tsui (2004). These contributions also accord closely with important related research on the ideological influences of language policy (see, e.g., Blommaert 1999; Schmid 2001; Spolsky 2004).

All these contributions, along with my own and Kymlicka’s discussed above, rethink nation-states in more linguistically plural and inclusive ways. The aim is to foster more *representational* multinational and multilingual states by directly contesting the historical inequalities that have relegated minority languages and their speakers to the social and political margins. As Tollefson observed of these developments 25 years ago:

[T]he struggle to adopt minority languages within dominant institutions such as education, the law, and government, as well as the struggle over language rights, constitute efforts to legitimise the minority group itself and to alter its relationship to the state. Thus while language planning reflects relationships of power, it can also be used to transform them. (1991, p. 202)

On this basis, broadening the language preferences of the state and civil society would clearly better reflect the diverse and legitimate interests of *all* ethnolinguistic groups. This is so even if such recognition may also present new organizational challenges for nation-states unaccustomed to the public accommodation of diversity. Moreover, such changes could significantly improve the life chances of minority language individuals and groups who are presently disadvantaged by restrictive, majoritarian language policies in their access to and participation in public services, employment, and education. Finally, with traditional nation-state organization increasingly under attack – both from above, via globalization, and from below, via the increasing discontent and dissension of minority groups – rethinking the

nation-state in more culturally and linguistically plural ways may provide it with a crucial further lease of life in an increasingly globalized and superdiverse world where many think it has already passed its useful “sell-by” date.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#)
- ▶ [International Law and Language Minority Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Education and Globalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Australia](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Canada](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the Indian Subcontinent](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the New Europe](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the USA](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)
- ▶ [The Politics of English Language Teaching](#)

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Language Education and Globalization

Christina Higgins and Bal Krishna Sharma

Abstract

This chapter examines how late modernity encourages new approaches to language education as a result of increased degrees of mobility, transnationalism, and neoliberalism. As many societies become detraditionalized, links between languages, cultures, and places are no longer in reciprocal relationships. Instead, the learning and teaching of languages is increasingly related to diasporic affiliations, intercultural identities, global cosmopolitanism, and translanguaging practices, all of which challenge modernist visions of language. Research reveals that language learners who are embedded in transnational and diasporic flows often invest in language practices that are not conventionally valued in the realm of education, including language associated with popular culture and truncated communicative repertoires, rather than national, standardized varieties of languages. Heritage language learners contest monolithic representations of their heritage languages as located in their parents' or grandparents' countries of origin, and learners of English as an international language who study in center nations challenge native-speaker norms. On the other hand, Indigenous language educators and learners express a strong attachment to place as a means of self-preservation and local epistemologies in the face of globalization. The chapter ends with a brief discussion of neoliberalism in language education, noting that despite the potential emancipatory nature of late modernity, flows are still characterized by inequities since they remain governed by the Global North and enacted in ways that perpetuate center-periphery disparities reminiscent of earlier periods of modernity.

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Introduction

There are many implications for language education in the period of late modernity, a recent phase of globalization that “entails a radical unsettling of the boundaries of social life” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, p. 83) and which is characterized by the intensifying movement of images and symbols across borders and the increasing importance of global terms of reference (Castells 2000). As Blommaert (2010) reminds us, it is important to acknowledge that late modernity is simply the latest phase of geopolitical globalization, a process that has been underway for at least 600 years in the form of the “modern world system” (Wallerstein 1974) which emerged after the decline of the feudal system. The modern world system is characterized chiefly by the development of capitalism, and though the system itself has fluctuated over time, certain regions of the world have benefited more from the system through exploiting other regions. Western Europe, and later, the colonial Americas, prospered by exploiting the human and natural resources of peoples Indigenous to those lands and those on the periphery in South Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa, in the form of slavery and the development of global tea, sugar, and cotton industries. These historical differences in prosperity and development are reflected in our twenty-first century by the new nomenclature of the Global North and Global South.

Scholars who write about cultural forms of globalization generally agree that late modernity refers to heightened mobility, multiplicity, indeterminacy, and hybridity. Late modernity is characterized by greater reflexivity, where “social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character” (Giddens 1990, p. 38). While earlier forms of modernity were shaped by the industrial revolution and the production of commodities and wage labor, late modernity is characterized as *reflexive modernization* or the detraditionalization of society (Beck et al. 1994) through changes in the social, political, and economic institutions of early

modernity. Transnational financial and political relationships are increasingly significant in the form of multinational political and economic unions such as the G8, a group of eight highly industrialized nations who work toward consensus on economic growth, global security, and resources. In addition, social institutions such as the family are changing due to new attitudes toward the necessity of marriage, rising divorce rates, and transnational family arrangements such as *kirogi* families, South Korean “geese” families who live separately so that their children can receive English education abroad, thus making them competitive in Korean society.

As a consequence of detraditionalization, early modern associations between language, place, ethnicity, and culture are increasingly contested. Bauman (2000) describes the nature of these changes as *liquid modernity*, and he notes the burden of responsibility that fluid modernism places on the individual. With the detraditionalization of institutions, individuals’ choices are no longer necessarily bound by traditional roles or expectations aligned with the conventional social structures of class, religion, gender, and ethnicity. Instead, and often in the spirit of neoliberal discourse, individuals see themselves and are seen as the product of their own making, which further challenges early modernity’s associations between social structures and human agency. In language learning and language teaching, many of the ties between language, location, and ethnicity can thus be questioned, challenged, and transformed. Moreover, as language learning and teaching increasingly address the intercultural and the transcultural, rather than simply the cultural, in view of the prevalence of “global contact zones” (Pratt 1992), a more dynamic understanding of language and culture has been developed.

Early Developments

Within earlier discussions of cultural globalization, scholars often examined the tension between several “h” words: homogenization, heterogenization, and hybridity (Pennycook 2000). In language education, homogenization often refers to the concern that the widespread teaching and learning of English as the lingua franca of globalization will make less room for other languages, and minority languages in particular. Although not explicitly situated within the globalization of language, Phillipson’s (1992) *Linguistic Imperialism* drew attention to the global spread of English and its implications for learning, teaching, and use in the world’s many multilingual contexts. His book presented evidence of how the global spread of English was supported by the British Council and other Anglo-American institutions sponsoring the English teaching industry worldwide. He argued that the ELT industry was based on Anglocentric materials and methods that served the interests of those who produced them. As the key international language and a cornerstone of the global capitalist system, the dominance of English was “asserted and maintained by the continuous creation of cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (p. 47).

It is important to acknowledge that linguistic imperialism is not limited to outsiders but can equally be found in the form of self-colonization in relation to

globalization discourses. This is apparent in Tanzania, where parents consider English a more appropriate medium of instruction than Swahili due to the geographical limits on where Swahili is spoken. Although they acknowledge that teachers and students communicate more effectively in Swahili and despite many examples of countries around the world in which children successfully learn English as a foreign language, they strongly believe that English-medium instruction is the only pathway for their children to ensure their future participation in a global society (Afitska et al. 2013). Since government primary schools are taught in Swahili, an English-medium private primary school market has rapidly developed over the past two decades, producing even greater socioeconomic divisions in society.

Heterogenization refers to the multiplicity of cultural forms that result from globalization. In the case of language, this is often discussed in relation to the World Englishes (WE) paradigm (e.g., Kachru 1982), which sought to legitimize postcolonial Englishes in the face of their subordination to the center varieties largely through descriptive linguistics. This development was congruent with work by William Labov and others in the USA that showed that African American Vernacular English was not a stigmatized but a legitimate variety of English with its own grammatical rules. World Englishes researchers strived to describe the dialect differences among Indian, Nigerian, and Singaporean Englishes at the level of pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, and discourse in order to demonstrate the rule-governed and systematic nature of these new Englishes. The purpose was to reject the argument that such Englishes are fossilized interlanguages and to advocate for the acceptance of these varieties as part of the global spread of English, with special attention to contexts in the “outer circle,” that is, in nations previously colonized by the USA or Britain. One of the problems that emerged, however, was the constant selection of British and American varieties as the point of reference, which did little to detach these Englishes from their second-class citizen associations. In addition, by describing national varieties of English, a great deal of variation within the Englishes spoken in nations such as India was homogenized into singular varieties.

As an alternative to homogenization and heterogenization, hybridity was also part of early discussions with regard to the global spread of English. The concept is most often attributed to postcolonial theory and to the writings of Homi Bhabha (1994), who proposed hybridity as a space for articulating and translating cultural difference. As the Third Space of enunciation, hybridity is a space in which cultural meanings and languages “can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew” (Bhabha 1994, p. 55). Hybridity challenges the idea of primordialism, fixity, and purity with regard to language and culture and is useful for theorizing a range of educational contexts. Kramsch (1993) developed the concept of “third place” in the teaching of culture in language education, helping to demonstrate how language teachers can work toward guiding students to take on an intercultural stance toward culture differences, rather than seeing them as neatly associated with one culture or another. Thirdness is often invoked in research on the cultural aspects of international schools and the “third culture kids” they produce who often identify more with their peers than the culture(s) or homelands of their parents or even of the surrounding community where their schools are located (Pollock and Van Reken 2010).

Hybridity has also been used to examine the different forms of cultural practices and literacies that language learners engage in, as illustrated by Duff (2004) in her examination of popular culture in public school classrooms. Though the teacher's efforts to refer to the television show, *The Simpsons*, and other Western pop culture icons to teach academic material appeared to engage the English-proficient students, she found that it marginalized English learners by preventing them from participating fully in the classroom.

On the face of it, hybridity entails mixing, so the term presumes that languages and cultures must exist in pure forms prior to hybridization. This is problematic since all languages have experienced language contact and change. Moreover, linguistic hybridity is problematically associated with cultural hybridity in that by virtue of speaking a mixed language, one is inhabiting a hybrid identity. As Canagarajah (1999) notes, there is a constant reciprocity between globalization and local practices, and instead of assuming that hybridity automatically liberates or hinders people, we need to show how language users in the peripheries constantly appropriate dominant or "outsider" norms and practices for their own local purposes. Pennycook (2001) developed the concept of *postcolonial performativity* to draw attention to the need to see how people actually make use of languages without assuming that dominance or happy hybridities will result from global languages like English.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

Next, we discuss several key lines of inquiry that relate concepts from late modernity to language education. First, we discuss how language education has become spatially reconfigured through detraditionalization. As global flows of people, media, and money produce new forms of social order, we argue that new understandings of place shape language ideologies and practices on multiple levels and scales. Second, we examine the role of mobility in producing new forms of language in globalization, including truncated repertoires and translingual practices, and we consider how language educators and learners value these late modern linguistic practices. While these discussions of global flows tend to highlight the liquid nature of modernity, our last focus on neoliberalism in language education reminds us that flows are still characterized by inequities since they are still governed by the Global North and enacted in ways that perpetuate center-periphery disparities reminiscent of earlier periods of modernity.

The Spatial Reconfiguration of Language Education

Changes in language education resonate with Appadurai's (1996) spatially oriented conceptualization of globalization as a set of global cultural flows emanating from and within *scapes*, or deterritorialized and fluid understandings of how people, capital, media, technology, and politics create spaces for identification and

affiliation. Acknowledging the pervasiveness of intersecting scapes in late modernity challenges practices in language education that view language learning as a linear process in which individuals acquire additional languages and are socialized into corresponding communities. One example of this comes from Ohara's (2011) study of Japanese pedagogy at a university in Hawai'i. While introductory college courses generally introduce students only to standardized Japanese, she found that learners were more invested in the varieties of Japanese as represented in *anime* and *manga*, animated films and comic books that have a large following both in Japan and across the globe. While much of the interest in Japanese in the Global North in the 1980s was motivated by the financescape of Japan's growing economic power, learners of Japanese are now often more motivated by global flows of media in which they consume Japanese-medium *anime* and *manga*. Rather than leaving these interests to students to pursue on their own, Ohara chose to incorporate these materials into her Japanese classroom within a framework of critical pedagogy. She found that through engaging with these materials, the students acquired different vocabulary and pragmatics than they would have if they had only followed the textbook and course materials. She also found that the students expressed fluid gender identities with the nonstandard language varieties that they encountered in these media forms, and that they were highly invested language learners because of the identities that they attached to these transnational, transcultural media.

Flows of transnational people who seek out language education for the sake of social mobility also disrupt traditional linkages between place and language, but in ways that support localized scales of social hierarchization and class divisions. Clear cases of this are provided by Song (2012), who analyzed families from South Korea that seek out early English education in the USA for their children. Though the families relocate to the USA, they treat the role of English in Korea, rather than in the USA, as the basis for valuing the English dominant environment. She noted how one family who planned to return to Seoul focused almost entirely on finding ways to make their son's pronunciation more "native-like," with little concern about his development of grammatical, lexical, or pragmatic competence. The value of sounding native-like in Korean society shaped the learning trajectory they desired for their son in the USA. Ironically, in a study on Korean teachers' views of returnee students' English abilities, Song (2015) found that teachers lacked a "globalization-responsive" style and were dismissive of the students' "communicative" English skills since they did not fit well with the local curriculum, which frequently valued literacy practices over oral abilities.

Bilingual education in the Global South also perpetuates inequalities while reconfiguring spatial orientations of education. International primary and secondary schools in South America and Africa cater to wealthy urbanites and families who work for multinational organizations, and hence are seen as avenues to a transnational lifestyle beyond the borders of the home nation. With curricula informed by the British Council and L'Alliance Française, they help to perpetuate a division in society based on an unquestioning view of global transnationalism. On the other hand, in countries like Colombia that have developed bilingual education involving Indigenous languages, such programs are not often viewed as bilingualism but rather

seen as a form of political stance taking that results in the ghettoization of Indigenous children (de Mejía 2005).

Transnational flows of international students who enroll in universities in the Global North provide another example of how flows of people interact with the financescape of international tuition to produce complications in higher education. As Singh and Doherty (2004) point out, many Australian universities are best described as “global university contact zones” in which teachers must navigate various cultural orientations to Western higher education, and they must establish their expectations accordingly with reference to verbal participation in classrooms and written forms of English. Since up to 40% of college students at Australian universities are international students, this begs the question of whose norms and whose standards should apply. Singh and Doherty found that teachers sometimes chose to adapt their practices toward their international students rather than impose a West-based model for learning, while others felt uncertain how to proceed.

Beyond English, the disembedding of language and culture has implications for a number of other realms of language education, including the ethnocultural associations made between “heritage” languages and their learners. In the context of Spanish language learning in the USA, a range of responses is found regarding the ‘location’ of Spanish. Some heritage learners themselves territorialize Spanish as a language located in other countries, rather than in local Spanish-speaking communities. In their study of postsecondary heritage learners in the USA, Coryell et al. (2010) found that though the learners were often able to use Spanish alongside English to communicate in their local communities, they chose to study Spanish because they felt that the acquisition of “proper Spanish,” a variety delimited to a world in which only Spanish was spoken, was part of an idealized identity for which they all strived. On the other hand, in a study of the perceptions of Spanish textbooks in a university level Spanish class in the USA, DeFeo (2015) found that heritage learners embraced their “borderlands” identities rather than identifying with the language of Spain or Mexico. They took issue with the representation of Spanish as a language for travel and Spanish culture as located in other countries, and they found the textbooks to be inauthentic in reference to their own transcultural experiences. A struggle over where to associate one’s heritage language was also documented by Blackledge and Creese (2010), who show how one-to-one linkages between language, ethnicity, and place were presented but also challenged by Gujarati, Turkish, Chinese, and Bengali heritage learners in complementary schools in four English cities. While the teachers presented the languages and cultures as set in the ethnic homelands, the students often mocked the cultural practices being taught such as Turkish folk dances by exaggerating the movements and fusing hip hop dance styles into their performance. Though the students were clearly undermining their teachers, the point to be made is that they were not necessarily disengaged from the material but instead were reterritorializing it and layering on top of it their own, more familiar, cultural practices.

On the other hand, researchers of Indigenous language education contexts highlight the role of place in shaping language ideologies and practices in the age of globalization, but for the purpose of language maintenance. Indigenous language speakers often express a strong attachment to place as a means of self-preservation

and local epistemologies, and this is important in the face of globalization. McCarty et al. (2012), for example, examine sociolinguistic processes in three Native American ecologies: Hopi and Navajo in the Southwestern United States, and Yup'ik in the Far North. In the time of massive language shift, the researchers show that Hopi and Navajo speakers continue to have a deeper sense of responsibility with regard to their identity for its current and future generations by re-scaling and emplacing their linguistic practices in schools – the nontraditional sites for language use where English now occupies a key role. Yup'ik speakers also showed a strong connection between the language, the land, and other materials in the environment. Rather than treating place as a fixed material territory, McCarty et al. consider place as “geographies of meaning and identity” (p. 51), which, nevertheless, comes in contact with others forces, change, and yet shows continuity.

Similarly, Hornberger and Swinehart (2012) explore the use of multilingual repertoires in minority languages (Aymara and Quechua) in contemporary Bolivia in two different sites – a bilingual intercultural education program and a hip hop collective – to show that language users utilize multilingual repertoires, flexible language practices, and ideologies of Indigeneity to construct their various identities by intervening their traditionally hierarchical world. Since many of the language classrooms today are diverse and multilingual, learners possess and deploy a large amount of communicative repertoires rather than simply a bundle of separate languages. Overall, research from Indigenous language education contexts show that language speakers continue to have an enduring sense of belonging to a place, but the place is characterized by transnational connectivities and mobility. Language education contexts such as schools, thus, are sites of not only language shift but also language persistence, which nevertheless is characterized by translingual and multilingual repertoires and competences of the language users.

The Sociolinguistics of Mobility and New Linguistic Repertoires

Mobility is a central concept in studying language practices from a globalization perspective. Recent developments in the sociolinguistics of globalization have urged language education researchers and practitioners alike to reconsider and reconceptualize the concepts of language, fluency, community, and context. Following this argument, language is “a complex of specific semiotic resources . . . [that] people actually possess and deploy” (Blommaert 2010, p. 102). There is a noticeable move from a bounded notion of “language” to “repertoires” in order to loosely describe the totality of communicative resources that an individual speaker utilizes in a particular interactional event. Rather than characterizing language speakers as fully fluent in one or another language, their communicative resources are part of truncated competences that are specialized in relation to their use. Hence, fluency in one social genre or social domain does not imply fluency in another domain.

Similarly, and in line with Bauman's idea of liquid modernity, Pennycook's (2012) concept of *linguascape* highlights the mobile nature of language in late modernity and the role of transcultural flows from popular culture and beyond

which emerge in localized spaces. This concept resonates with what Blommaert (2010) calls the “sociolinguistics of mobile resources,” which emphasizes the ways that people acquire and use their sociolinguistic repertoires within new spaces and forms of cultural production afforded by globalization (p. 102). One example of the linguascope comes from the Facebook post of Otgon, a Mongolian college student (Dovchin 2015, p. 446), which uses the increasingly rare orthography of Cyrillic to underscore a nationalist sentiment about *airag*, a traditional drink. He uses very different linguistic resources to praise the Dalai Lama in “Peaz!,” echoing African American English “Peace (out)!” The point to be made is that such translingual practices in the linguascope of social media are the result of intersecting global flows from religion to politics to popular culture and are not located neatly in any one space. Practices in such changing contexts question the established notions of speech community, giving rise to various forms of communities of contact or contact zones where the context of communication is not given, but brought into existence through social and interactional practices.

Neoliberalism in Language Education

Despite all of the disembedding and unsettling of boundaries separating languages and cultures, a significant body of work in applied linguistics has demonstrated how globalization continues to make its mark in language education in the form of neoliberal homogenization. The discussion of neoliberalism in applied linguistics critiques homogenizing value systems that are being imparted to language learners, and particularly to English learners. Neoliberalism’s interdisciplinary orientation combines “branches of economics and politics in order to understand how social institutions, their activities and capitalism influence each other in various ways” (Block et al. 2012, p. 2). Neoliberalism builds on the political economy of language in which political and economic notions such as resource allocation, human capital, work and income inequality, economic globalization, and imperial power where the focus is usually on economic consequences of linguistic activities.

Neoliberal ideologies have given a more influential space for English and affected language and communication skills teaching and training. Studies from call centers across different contexts, for example, suggest that call center employees are trained with communication skills that require them to appropriate American identities, speak “without an accent,” and present themselves as cosmopolitan, caring, and hospitable. Cameron (2000) presents a compelling case of the linguistic consequence of economic globalization in call centers in the UK, where specific attention has been given to the increasing importance of language and communication as tools for the regulation of communication patterns and the performance of identities. She shows that as service workers, call center employees are intensively regulated and valorized to follow “feminized” communication styles in interacting with the customers.

The field of English for specific purposes has also been increasingly devoted to the professional language needs of preservice and inservice employees in the neoliberal market. Through specifically designed curricula and instructional

materials, such programs reproduce and reinforce neoliberal needs by teaching language and literacy skills such as expert discourses, socially valued literacies, and prestigious genres (Hyland 2006). Similarly, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has constructed the worlds of language learners through textbooks that echo neoliberal discourses. Gray (2010) has eloquently shown that the so-called global textbook industry reproduces neoliberal ideology in English language textbooks that are used in most parts of the world. He argues that bestselling textbooks immerse students in white-collar individualism in which the world of work is overwhelmingly seen as a privileged means for the full and intense realization of the self along lines determined largely by personal choice. Helpfully, Chun (2009) provides an example of not only how neoliberal discourses function to represent an EAP program but also how educators can engage in pedagogical interventions with their students to interrogate these discourses and contest the assumptions made from a neoliberal framework. After examining textbook materials that focused on self-actualization and “emotional intelligence” in workplaces with his students, Chun and his students deconstructed the idea of “caring capitalism” as depicted in the materials by drawing on examples from their own lives that challenged these depictions of the world.

Neoliberal ideology has influenced teacher education programs as well. Using the metaphor of the McDonaldisation of teacher education, Gray and Block (2012) take the case of English teacher education programs in the UK and note that given the neoliberal orientation of education, teacher education programs are also primarily motivated by a mission to produce “human capital” to compete in the global economy. Critiques of neoliberalism have noted that it promotes unequal distribution of knowledge, power, and resources while imposing scripted and so-called standardized pedagogy and literacy, often in a standardized variety of English, which ignores the grassroots literacies of ethnolinguistic minorities and working class children. There is, then, a dilemma in the emergence and practices associated with neoliberalism in that individuals and nation states are facing the need to balance local, diverse pedagogical practices and global, uniform language and literacy practices.

Problems and Difficulties

Though Blommaert’s discussion of mobility pushes us to depart from classic understandings of language in society, he also highlights how *scale* relates to inequality when people move across spaces where their linguistic resources are evaluated differently. He uses the concept of scale to draw attention to the ways that mobile linguistic repertoires are valued differently across contexts (Blommaert 2007). For example, fluent English spoken by multilingual individuals in India would be accorded high values in India and other parts of the world, but in a call center interaction with an American unused to varieties of English beyond the USA, the same English could be treated as illegitimate. Extending this idea more directly to the context of language education, Kubota (2014) wonders what good this view can do for language learners, particularly those in center contexts who are being judged against native-speaker norms. She writes, “The dominance of English and standard

varieties of English is intact both globally and within English-speaking countries, marginalizing and disadvantaging non-English-speaking or nonnative-English-speaking populations” (p. 12). Kubota draws our attention to how discourses about mobility and linguascapes avoid the hegemonic ideologies and punitive social practices that do symbolic and economic violence to people who do not speak a standard variety of a language.

Future Directions

While languages are no longer necessarily tied to specific cultures, people, or regions in primordial ways, particularly in the ways that languages are used in everyday life, major gaps remain in the field of language education in terms of taking up these ideas. The case of English as a lingua franca is paramount here in that the ELF paradigm rejects an attachment of English to any one geographic place or any particular population. Instead, ELF is a paradigm built off of the idea that norms and practices for communication develop *in situ* among people who do not share first languages (e.g., Seidlhofer 2009). In ELF, English is deterritorialized as people involved in business meetings, education, tourism, and daily interactions go about accomplishing tasks. This has many implications for language education, including challenging the notion of the White, middle-class native speaker who resides in a center country as the ideal model for language learners. However, very little exists in the way of language learning materials that privilege an ELF perspective. While one textbook on the teaching of ELF pronunciation is now available (Walker 2010), it seems unlikely that the global textbook industry will embrace these ideas any time soon. The same is largely true with regard to the teaching of heritage languages. Teachers are then left to their own devices, so to speak, if they want to challenge prevailing views that tie languages to specific places and to speakers who represent languages from monoculture perspectives.

Additional work is needed on languages other than English to more deeply engage with the ways that globalization is shaping language education in a more diverse array of contexts. While there are some signs indicating that languages such as Spanish and French are being theorized as global languages (e.g., Arteaga and Llorente 2009), the lack of research on globalization with respect to many so-called foreign languages perpetuates the idea that globalization only happens in some (mostly Global North) places, and through languages like English. Of course, this is not at all accurate, but more attention to how globalization is organizing and reorganizing language learning and language teaching in various settings will help us to see our own discourses of globalization and to deconstruct them in the process.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)

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- Joseph Sung-Yul Park: [Researching Globalization of English](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
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Language Education and Culture

Brendan H. O'Connor and Norma González

Abstract

This chapter reviews early, major, and recent developments in thinking about language education and culture and identifies prospects for future research and practice. In the past, language education was often targeted at Indigenous and immigrant peoples as a way to eradicate perceived “undesirable” cultural practices and weaken the bonds of cultural or ethnic identity. Approaches to language education premised on assimilationist political agendas resulted in widespread linguistic and cultural genocide among minority groups. Later, differences in language background were connected perniciously with so-called cultural deficits and used as a justification for language “reeducation.” More recently, the fields of anthropology, educational research, and applied linguistics have confronted the challenge of rethinking language education as a means of affirming and sustaining culture and helping language learners forge intercultural connections. This work is complicated by the fact that traditional understandings of language and culture are no longer tenable in a postcolonial, globalizing world where it is not always a straightforward matter to define what is meant by “culture” across social contexts or what the object of “language education” should be. Emerging research foregrounds the hybridity of cultural and linguistic practice in educational settings, with particular attention to learner agency, language education as a site for contesting social ideologies and beliefs, and newly flexible conceptions of linguistic competence. This research also deals with the difficulties of pursuing

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culturally sustaining language education in schools and minority language communities that are operating with the constraints of restrictive top-down language policies.

Keywords

Agency • Hegemony • Hybridity • Ideology • Language and culture • Socialization

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Introduction

In reviewing language education and culture, it is necessary to reckon with the somewhat dark history of the topic, as well as its more hopeful contemporary articulations. However, problems of precision arise almost immediately: anthropologists, educationists, and linguists are no longer entirely sure what we mean when we talk about “culture” and “language” (and anthropologists have insisted, since the very inception of the discipline, that it is an error to treat them as though they are separate categories). At the same time, educational researchers have expanded understandings of what can legitimately be called “education.” While these may seem like insignificant academic quibbles, it is the case that researchers’ relationships with all three concepts have become fraught with questions, doubts, and an overall sense of unease. This makes any discussion of language education and culture laden with pitfalls; at the same time, it holds promise for destabilizing entrenched understandings of these concepts and invigorating research and practice as new understandings and possibilities arise.

Early Developments

Siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio.

Language has always been the companion of empire.

—Antonio de Nebrija, *Gramática de la lengua Castellana* (1492; cited in de León-Portilla 1993, p. 205)

Early developments in connecting concepts of sociocultural worlds with language can arguably be traced to efforts in which language education was used to eradicate and eliminate certain forms of culture. As the above quotation indicates, projects of

colonization and conquest have appropriated language as a tool of subjugation in establishing an altered dominant order. From the burning of Mesoamerican codices to the imposition of colonial languages across the globe, “language education” has at times meant the denial, repudiation, and abolition of first languages. In the USA, a long history of repressing Native American languages was predicated on the notion of the tight interweaving of language and culture: if the language was replaced, then a new way of thinking would emerge. In the context of what has been called linguistic genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000), the language-culture connection was a means to enable colonization and “civilizing” projects of domination. While this was the case in colonial regimes around the world, as well as in countries seeking to integrate, assimilate, or isolate “culturally different” immigrant groups, the analysis here illustrates these issues with specific reference to the intertwined histories of language and empire in the USA.

Following a similar logic of the eradication of minoritized languages and, therefore, cultures, the nineteenth century in the USA saw the emergence of assimilationist policies that were aimed at immigrants who were predominantly from southern and eastern Europe. Even though linguistic pluralism and language-minority education were present in the form of German and other language schools (Crawford 2004) throughout the nineteenth century, the influx of “new immigrants” was a turning point in language education policy. As increased regulation of education by legislatures raised the issue of a common language of instruction (Malakoff and Hakuta 1990), the “loss of the national-origin language represented the abandonment of the foreign culture of origin” (Malakoff and Hakuta 1990, p. 29).

Not surprisingly, it was an easy leap to assume that linguistic and cultural differences reflected linguistic and cultural deficiencies. This “deficit” view of linguistically and culturally diverse learners gained much traction in the social science literature as it drew from work that connected social class differences to language practices. Research on social class and child socialization (including language) had been centered on “modes of parental control,” referring to the manner in which the parent molds the child’s behavior, either through reliance on reason or the use of physical punishment. The broad outlines for this distinction were elaborated by Kohn (1969), who postulated a causal link between occupational structure and the socialization role of the parent. Because of differences in work environments, two fundamentally different value orientations (cultures) surfaced: white collar workers are more likely to value self-direction, freedom, individualism, initiative, creativity, and self-actualization; blue collar workers stress conformity to external standards, orderliness, neatness, and, most of all, obedience.

This interest in social class differences in communicative practices was most famously taken up in the work of Basil Bernstein (e.g., Bernstein and Henderson 1973) concerning the use of two linguistic codes, an elaborated code being more typical of middle-class children and a restricted code characteristic of working-class children. While Bernstein denied that this distinction could be applied to differential school performance, his work came to be regarded as supporting a “verbal deficit” theory. This position, as imported into the USA, became influential as an explanatory

framework for variable academic achievement. Rather than being seen as the inevitable result of differences in innate intelligence among “racial” categories, lack of school success was now attributed to the faulty discourse practices of ethnically diverse and poor children/families and the consequent mismatch with expectations at school.

The convergence of verbal deficit perspectives with the assumptions of a “culture of poverty” framework proved to be a persuasive and insidious mechanism for explaining the school performance of poor and linguistically and culturally diverse students. This tendency has persisted in present-day efforts in the USA and elsewhere to close the “vocabulary gap” between upper-/middle-class English-speaking children and children from working-class and language-minority backgrounds (Hart and Risley 1995; Hoff 2006; for a recent critique, see Avineri et al. 2015). Valid concerns about children’s exposure to multiple linguistic repertoires and academically valued discourses have sometimes been subsumed by a reductive rhetoric that assigns primary responsibility for complex and enduring patterns of academic marginalization to parents’ “deficient” language practices. In terms of language education, verbal deficit perspectives have also provided a convenient justification for erasing home language and home culture as a prerequisite for successful schooling.

Attempts to counteract the reductionist nature of this approach came from two noted sociolinguists, William Labov and Dell Hymes. The work of Labov (1970) examined so-called nonstandard varieties of English in the USA and argued that, rather than being deficient versions of idealized speech, all language varieties and dialects exhibited systematic grammar and were valid and culturally significant within particular speech communities. Similarly, the complementary work of Hymes (1974) heralded the “ethnography of communication” as a powerful counternarrative to prescriptive and deficit-based responses to nonstandard language varieties. Hymes claimed that the meaning of language could not be understood only with reference to linguistic form; instead, a community’s diverse linguistic repertoires had to be integrated into a cohesive analysis of grammar, culture, and discourse conventions with reference to the broader social life of the community. The interventions of Labov, Hymes, and other sociolinguists and ethnographers of communication challenged prevailing assumptions about the connection between language and culture – in particular, the assumption that “deficient” cultural contexts resulted in deficient ways of speaking. These early efforts set the stage for later reconceptualizations of what language education and culture might entail.

This shift in perceptions about what constituted learning or speaking a language and using language in socially appropriate ways paved the way for groundbreaking studies that incorporated the cultural into studies of language development (Heath 1983; Philips 1983). Heath’s (1983) landmark study ethnographically examined how children were positioned in language and literacy events in three different communities in the Piedmont Carolinas: a working-class African-American community, a working-class White community, and a middle-class White community. Language education, according to this view, became associated with the “mismatch hypothesis” which maintained that community-based linguistic practices of non-dominant

students were culturally different from school-based language and literacy practices (and, again, that this apparent mismatch was relevant to differential school performance). Further evidence of the mismatch came from Phillips's (1983) study on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in the northwestern USA, as she theorized that a difference existed between visible and "invisible culture." While visible and tangible aspects of culture might change, Phillips argued that invisible aspects of culture connected to discourse norms – such as socially sanctioned assumptions about ways of speaking or not speaking – might be retained implicitly across time.

The assumption that language learning was intertwined with cultural learning became axiomatic in further studies that examined how children learned language. Studies in the language socialization of children (Ochs and Schieffelin 1986) provided the foundations for examining how children are socialized through language and to use language, emphasizing dimensions of how language both organizes and is organized by culture. Around the same time, researchers (e.g., Diaz et al. 1986) began to incorporate sociocultural perspectives on language and literacy into the analysis of language classrooms.

In the political realm, efforts at language education, especially the education of language-minority children, were endorsed through the passage of the Bilingual Education Act (1968), which was added as Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. While the Bilingual Education Act legitimized bilingual education and thus represented an important break with prior assimilationist approaches, it did not offer substantive guidelines for how these programs should be created and maintained. It should be recognized that in the original legislation (PL 90-247; Title VII Sec. 704 (c) (2)), possible programs for grants included "programs designed to impart to students a knowledge of the history and culture associated with their languages." In subsequent years, bilingual and bicultural education began to incorporate the wider scope of communities' language use in school settings.

Major Contributions and Work In Progress

A review of the place of culture in language education would not be complete without reference to the evolution of the construct of culture and its subsequent deconstruction. Although the culture concept emerged within anthropology and has a long history within the discipline (Keesing 1974), the subsequent insertion of "culture" into teaching and learning has had a profound effect on ideas about learners and learning. As the concept developed in education in the 1940s and 1950s, holistic, bounded, and integrated views of culture were assumed to be recognizable through traditions and values. Students were viewed as culture bearers in ways that were often static and essentializing. In addition, as with the verbal deficit models mentioned above, students from language-minority groups learning the dominant language were often seen as lacking in "cultural capital" or the dispositions and habits of the dominant class (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). With respect to language education, students were often seen as burdened with a culturally derived system

of mostly unconscious dispositions, or *habitus*, that limited and constrained their L1 (first language) linguistic capital as inadequate and insufficient.

Within the field of anthropology, a wholesale critique of the concept of culture spurred a revisiting of what can legitimately be called “culture,” with far-reaching implications for conceptions of culture within language education. As anthropologists wrote “against” the culture concept (Abu-Lughod 1991) and predicted its imminent demise, dynamic- or process-based views of culture as an ever-changing entity, in continual motion, began to take shape. Emerging work testified to the fact that local cultural practices trespassed beyond the traditional boundaries of cultural groups to participate in global and transnational flows of people, texts, and ideas. Faced with the emergence of hybrid identities that were often multilingual, multi-discursive, and intercultural in nature, anthropologists could no longer think of culture in the old, bounded sense. The paradigm shifts evidenced by postmodernism and poststructuralism also injected deliberations about discourse, textuality, and power into discussions of the cultural. Through this lens, culture appeared as contingent and emergent, fusing historical patterns with moment-to-moment interactions that construct discursive fields over longer periods.

Approaches to “living culturally” without recourse to typifications of homogeneous group cultures have emerged in pedagogies that attempt to know and understand the contexts of students’ lives. For example, the funds of knowledge approach (González et al. 2005) advocates a stance of teacher-as-learner in that teachers are encouraged to learn about households and communities through face-to-face contact and interaction. Rather than assuming shared and static cultural traits and understandings, this perspective focuses on “practice,” that is, what it is that people do and what they say about what they do. This processual approach to households and the knowledge within households allows teachers to move away from uniform categorizations and take into account multiple perspectives, everyday activities, and historically constituted bodies of knowledge. Like students’ cultural funds of knowledge, their linguistic funds of knowledge are also seen as resources that can be leveraged in language learning pedagogies.

In explicit and deliberate contrast to the original, language-genocidal connotations of “language education and culture,” a good deal of recent scholarship has focused on the role of language education in sustaining or shoring up culture, especially in contexts where traditional forms of cultural practice are perceived to be threatened. Particularly in communities where settler colonialism has disrupted the intergenerational transmission of language and cultural knowledge, formal language education has been embraced – albeit with ambivalence – as a way to promote cultural continuity. Ironically, the same school systems that attempted to eradicate Indigenous languages and cultures in the past are now recruited into the work of “saving” or revitalizing those same practices (Hornberger 2008). Seminal studies (e.g., McCarty 2002) explored the historical oppression of minority languages and cultures within formal schooling, while acknowledging linguistic and cultural resilience even in seemingly hopeless situations (see also Hornberger 2006; May 2005). Valuable ongoing work in this area (e.g., Wyman 2012) documents researchers’ long-term engagement with communities who seek to forward

Indigenous language education in the often unfriendly, “standards-based” world of contemporary schooling, with its focus on high-stakes testing and quantifiable, skills-based curricula.

This research, like the funds of knowledge framework, is part of a broader move toward asset pedagogies in thinking about language education and culture. While some of this work examines language education as traditionally understood, other scholars engage with “language education” in unexpected forms – for example, the potential of hip-hop language pedagogy to expand youth’s critical language awareness (Alim 2007) or the informal literacy and languaging behaviors of immigrant youth. Thus, language education can work to further community goals and sustain cultural vibrancy, inside and outside of formal school settings.

Another major strand of research focuses not on the role of language pedagogy in sustaining cultural practice, but its role in mediating language learners’ adaptation to new cultural contexts. A particularly influential approach, often employed in research with immigrants, connects language learning to participation in imagined communities, recognizing that many people conceptualize L2 (second language) learning as a pathway to possible futures and an entry point to cultural groups (Kanno and Norton 2003). This picture is complicated, however, by studies that expose a mismatch between learners’ goals – e.g., as related to social belonging and educational attainment – and those of schools, programs, or policies. It is further complicated by issues of intersectionality in language learners’ identities or the way their linguistic identities intersect with other social categories. For example, acculturation through language learning can unfold in gender-specific ways with regard to the rationale for L2 learning and opportunities to use the L2 (Menard-Warwick 2009). All of this is to underscore that language pedagogy continues to play a key role in processes of intercultural communication and adaptation to unfamiliar cultural settings, even as understandings of these processes have become more nuanced and context sensitive.

Assimilationist approaches to language education and culture treated language learners as essentially passive subjects whose cultural identities could be remade through language education. However, researchers have begun to emphasize *learner agency* as a form of creative cultural practice, calling attention to people’s ability to reframe the terms, purposes, and outcomes of language learning. Learners do this in a wide variety of ways, bringing out-of-school realities unexpectedly into classroom discourse (Baynham 2006), taking issue with the discursive production of social stereotypes in language classrooms, engaging in linguistic hybridity, and using the target language unevenly and unpredictably to create a sense of social cohesion among L2 speakers (Rampton 1999). Somewhat ironically, however, learner agency can also end up reinforcing hegemonic monolingual norms and existing language hierarchies. For example, learners’ heteroglossic language play can take the form of policing nonstandard uses of language and asserting the value of “proper” ways of speaking and being in immigrant contexts (Evaldsson and Cekaite 2010).

Likewise, while the potential of language education to support traditional cultural practice has been amply documented, other scholars highlight youth’s resistance to facile equations of linguistic competence and cultural authenticity. In the case of

heritage language learners and Indigenous youth, language education has sometimes been embraced as a way to ensure intergenerational cultural transmission in immigrant, diasporized, or postcolonial contexts where emphasizing heritage language is a means of promoting cultural continuity. Indigenous and subaltern scholars around the world have begun to document ways in which the language-culture nexus in education has been crucial to broader decolonizing projects (e.g., Jiménez Quispe 2014). Even so, language and culture connections are not necessarily taken at face value or treated unproblematically by the learners who are the ostensible targets of heritage language or language revitalization efforts. Youth may dispute taken-for-granted links between language ability and ethnic/cultural identity or use their heritage language in ways deemed surprising or inappropriate, calling essentialized notions of language and culture into question.

In fact, language education is seen more and more as a site for *contesting ideologies* about language and culture. In the past, language education – especially foreign language education – has been connected to “tourist” or transmission-based approaches to understanding culture. From this perspective, education in the other’s language has been conceived as a means to cross-cultural understanding or a way of apprehending the other’s worldview. However, language classrooms can just as easily offer opportunities to position the target language and its speakers as racially other and to further ongoing racial projects (e.g., Schwartz 2014). Language education can reinscribe nationalist paradigms connected to “one nation, one language” ideologies or, conversely, can open up space for students and teachers to challenge such entrenched ideologies. The unpredictable, emergent, and contingent nature of language socialization can also result in opportunities for language learners to challenge and resist the cultural identities that are ascribed to them in schools and other institutions (Talmy 2008).

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

As educators have had to rethink language education amid the ruins of the traditional culture concept, so they are beginning to reckon with an ever-shakier sense of what is meant by the “language” in “language education.” The object of language education is currently being contested on multiple fronts – hence the Modern Language Association’s decision in 2007 to replace “nativeness” with “translingual and transcultural competence” as the goal of (foreign) language learning. This decision echoed calls from sociolinguists and critical applied linguists to place learners’ “symbolic competence” (Kramsch and Whiteside 2008), their ability to choose nimbly among an uneven array of linguistic resources in specific contexts and situations, at the forefront of language education.

This may represent an important shift in the history of thinking about language education and culture: instead of envisioning learners moving progressively closer to the ideal of the native speaker – an ideal that has proven illusory and problematic in practice (Doerr 2009) – language education is being reconceived as a way for learners to add elements to their communicative repertoires that will enhance their

ability to live in an intercultural world. Successful language outcomes, in this version of language education, are not limited to native-like proficiency in the target language, but may encompass uneven and truncated forms of linguistic competence, as long as speakers' developing proficiency positions them to function in diverse social contexts (Blommaert 2010).

Some researchers take issue with the idea that language education should concern itself narrowly with discrete linguistic codes, arguing that the notion of "repertoire" more accurately captures the diverse, uneven, hybrid nature of students' language and literacy practices (Rymes 2014), which may include but go well beyond the use of multiple linguistic codes. This turn in educational linguistics – away from traditional notions of target language and nativeness and toward ideas of symbolic competence and communicative repertoires – builds on the efforts of applied linguists (e.g., Makoni and Pennycook 2007) who have challenged prevailing understandings of language itself. For these scholars, the idea that "languages" (like cultures) exist as separate, bounded entities is, to some degree, an artifact of colonial efforts to name and classify communicative practices that had not previously been described in such terms. This way of thinking is counterintuitive for many speakers and language teachers – and, indeed, for many linguists. However, it demands a reconsideration of deep-seated beliefs about languages, speakers, and the connection between language, place, and cultural practice. Understanding the ideological basis for imagined boundaries between languages and cultural groups points to new ways of understanding language use (and language education) in the extremely diverse postcolonial contexts characteristic of late modernity.

Researchers in the USA (García 2009) and elsewhere (Creese and Blackledge 2010) have begun to consider how language education can respond more authentically to the realities of bilingual children's lives, in which translanguaging – the flexible, interrelated, and even simultaneous use of features from multiple linguistic codes (García 2009) – is often the rule, as opposed to the model characteristic of many language classrooms, in which the L1 and L2 are supposed to be kept strictly separated. Future research on language education and culture will, no doubt, continue to explore the question of how oft-stigmatized hybrid language practices might be incorporated fruitfully into language education and what this might imply for students' academic and cultural identities.

Finally, a major problem and area of interest in recent years has been the effects of state and national language policy on the prospects for language education and culture. In a number of US states (notably, Arizona and California), restrictive state-level policies have severely curtailed teachers' and schools' ability to bring immigrant students' cultural worlds and L1 knowledge into conversation with English language education. Political debates over the "proper" way to educate English language learners have seldom incorporated scholarly perspectives on the usefulness of scaffolding students' L2 learning through L1 or connecting in-school activities to out-of-school funds of knowledge. Rather, these language panics have served as proxies for politicians and others to express less socially acceptable anxieties about ethnoracial integration, demographic change, and the place of immigrants and ethnic minority populations (particularly Latino/Latinas) in the US

society. In this, they largely resemble the xenophobic, nineteenth-century responses to language diversity discussed earlier.

However, such debates and policies have also resulted in collateral damage, as it were, to other efforts to ensure cultural vibrancy through language education: for example, American Indian communities pursuing native language education in Arizona have been adversely affected by policies aimed at promoting English-immersion pedagogy for Spanish-speaking students (Combs and Nicholas 2012). Stricter requirements on who can teach in bilingual programs and who is allowed to attend have complicated these communities' work of revitalizing heritage languages that have already survived centuries of domination and attempted eradication. Thus, as language education has changed over time in response to changes in the way anthropologists and sociolinguists understand culture and language, it will need to become ever more adaptable in an era where restrictive language policies collide with a dizzying profusion of linguistic diversity and hybridity.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language, Class, and Education](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)

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- Ofelia García: [Translanguaging in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
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Language Education and Multilingualism

Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese

Abstract

This chapter reviews developments in the language education of multilingual students. Following an account of the historical development of the field, we summarize recent research on multilingualism which has moved away from an understanding of languages as separate, bounded entities to a view of communication which puts the speaker rather than the code at the center. We show how multilingual speakers deploy repertoires rather than languages in communication and do not have separate competences for separately labeled languages. In considering the implications of these conclusions, we focus on the notion of translanguaging as pedagogy, bringing together recent and current research on multilingualism with attention to the constraints on language education classrooms and the potential for change. We reflect on challenges still to be met in the application of sociolinguistic research to language education and conclude by pointing to future developments.

Keywords

Multilingualism • Communicative repertoire • Translanguaging • Pedagogy

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Introduction

This chapter considers the limitations of an approach to language education and multilingualism that relies on the naming and separation of languages – that is, an approach that insists on the separation of languages to describe the language competence of speakers in educational settings. We reflect on what we mean by “multilingualism” and on the implications of this understanding for language education. We review early developments in the adoption of bilingual and multilingual pedagogy and examine contributions to new ways of thinking about language and languages in and beyond education. The chapter summarizes recent research on multilingualism and language education which has proposed that educators should make available to learners whatever language resources are at their disposal. In pointing to the potential of new approaches to language education and multilingualism, we consider the potential of *translanguaging* as pedagogy and practice. We also reflect on some of the limitations and challenges of this approach and consider future directions of research, practice, and pedagogy in language education in multilingual settings.

Early Developments

For many years language educators have struggled with the question of how best to teach multilingual students. Despite considerable recent progress in understanding the nature of multilingualism, there is generally still a tendency to approach the teaching and learning of languages as if monolingualism were the norm (Hélot and Ó Laoire 2011). A view persists in language education that only one language should be permitted in the classroom or at least that only one language at a time should be permitted in the classroom. In this section we briefly review developments in thinking that have led to calls for monolingual language education to be replaced with multilingual pedagogies.

García and Flores (2012) point out that language education is not the same in all multilingual contexts. They summarize four types of language education: foreign language education, second language education, bilingual education, and multilingual/heteroglossic education. In foreign language education, a language that is not predominant in society is taught as an additional language. Second language education describes the teaching of a language that is dominant in society, for example, in immigration and post-immigration contexts. In such contexts pedagogies usually pay little attention to the students’ first language, focusing instead on the target language. Bilingual education programs aim to support additive bilingualism by using two languages for instruction. Students and teachers are expected to keep the

two languages apart, teaching and learning the languages separately. García and Flores conclude that foreign language, second language, and bilingual education programs are no longer (if ever they were) sufficient for the linguistically heterogeneous classrooms of the twenty-first century. They propose as a more appropriate alternative, a heteroglossic multilingual approach that responds to the more complex, dynamic multilingualism found in many classrooms. This proposal for a shift to a multilingual approach to language education in multilingual settings is based on research in multilingual settings in and beyond education (Blackledge and Creese 2010; Creese and Blackledge 2011; García 2009).

Major Contributions

Sociolinguistic study of multilingualism has moved away from a view of languages as separate, bounded entities to a view of communication in which language users employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims as best they can (Jørgensen et al. 2011). Heller (2007) views language(s) as “sets of resources called into play by social actors, under social and historical conditions which both constrain and make possible the social reproduction of existing conventions and relations, as well as the production of new ones” (p. 15). Blommaert and Rampton (2011) point out that languages are ideological constructions, historically tied to the emergence of the nation-state in the nineteenth century. Makoni and Pennycook (2007) argue for an understanding of the relationships between what people believe about their language (or other people’s languages), the situated forms of talk they deploy, and the material effects – social, economic, and environmental – of such views and use. Recently, a number of terms have emerged, as scholars have sought to describe and analyze linguistic practices in which meaning is made using signs flexibly. These include, among others, flexible bilingualism (Creese and Blackledge 2010), code meshing (Canagarajah 2011a), polylingual languaging (Jørgensen 2010), contemporary urban vernaculars (Rampton 2011), metrolingualism (Otsuji and Pennycook 2011; Pennycook and Otsuji 2015), translingual practice (Canagarajah 2011b), and translanguaging (Creese and Blackledge 2011; García 2009). The shared perspective represented in the use of these various terms considers that meaning making is not confined to the use of “languages” as discrete, enumerable, bounded sets of linguistic resources. Rather, signs are available for meaning making in communicative repertoires (Rymes 2014) which extend across “languages” and varieties which have hitherto been associated with particular national, territorial, and social groups. These terms, different from each other yet in many ways similar, represent a view of language as a social resource without clear boundaries, which places the speaker at the heart of the interaction.

Globalization has compelled scholars to see sociolinguistic phenomena and processes as characterized by mobility. Blommaert (2014) argues that adopting mobility as a central concept creates a degree of unpredictability in what we observe, and we can only solve this unpredictability by close observation. In “superdiverse”

environments (both on- and off-line), people appear to take any linguistic and communicative resources available to them and blend them into complex linguistic and semiotic forms. Old and established terms such as “code-switching” and even “multilingualism” exhaust the limits of their descriptive and explanatory adequacy in the face of such highly complex “blends.” Taking mobility as a principle of sociolinguistic research challenges several major assumptions of mainstream sociolinguistics and invites a more complex, dynamic, and multifaceted view of sociolinguistic realities.

Blommaert (2014) points out that a sociolinguistic system is a complex system characterized by internal and external forces of perpetual change, operating simultaneously and in unpredictable mutual relationships. He therefore proposes that in addition to *mobility* we take *complexity* as a paradigmatic principle of sociolinguistic analysis. Bailey (2012) engages with the limitations of an approach to linguistic analysis which emphasizes “code-switching,” arguing that a focus on linguistic features that are officially authorized codes or languages, e.g., “English” or “Spanish,” can contribute to neglect of the diversity of socially indexical resources *within* languages. Bailey points out that if the starting point is social meanings, rather than the code or language in use, it is not crucial to ask whether a speaker is switching languages, alternating between a dialect and a national standard, register shifting, or speaking monolingually in a variety that highlights language contact.

Language, whether monolingual or multilingual, carries social meanings through phonological, lexical, grammatical, and discourse level forms: “these forms index various aspects of individuals’ and communities’ social histories, circumstances, and identities” (Bailey 2012, p. 506). Canagarajah and Liyanage (2012) have noted that even so-called monolinguals shuttle between codes, registers, and discourses and can therefore hardly be described as monolingual. Just as the traditional distinction between languages is no longer sustainable, so the distinction between “monolingual,” “bilingual,” and “multilingual” speakers may no longer be sustainable.

Canagarajah (2013) adopts the term “translingual practice” to capture the common underlying processes and orientations associated with the mobility and complexity of communicative modes. In doing so he argues that communication transcends individual languages and involves diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances. He points out that languages in contact mutually influence each other, and so labeling them as separate entities is an ideological act. Multilingual speakers deploy repertoires rather than languages in communication and do not have separate competences for separately labeled languages. Canagarajah elaborates on these points, arguing that language is only one semiotic resource among many and that all semiotic resources work together to make meaning. Separating out “language” from other semiotic resources distorts our understanding of communicative practice. Canagarajah points out that further research is needed to understand the complexity of communicative strategies that make up translingual practice, to explore the implications for meaning construction, language acquisition, and social relations. He also points out that the pedagogical implications of translingual practice warrant further attention.

Work in Progress

In this section we consider how language education has responded to these shifts in thinking about multilingualism. In doing so we discuss language education and multilingualism through the lens of “translanguaging.” García and Leiva (2014) define “translanguaging” both as an act of bilingual performance and as a bilingual pedagogy for teaching and learning. Coined initially in the 1980s (Williams 1996), and subsequently developed in response to changing linguistic phenomena in schools and communities, the term has recently gained currency in discussions of multilingualism, especially in educational contexts (Baker 2011; Blackledge and Creese 2010; Creese and Blackledge 2011; García 2009; Li Wei 2011). For García and Leiva (2014), “translanguaging” refers to the flexible use of linguistic resources by bilinguals as they make sense of their worlds. They propose that translanguaging as pedagogy has the potential to liberate the voices of language minoritized students. A translanguaging approach to teaching and learning is not about code-switching, but rather about an arrangement that normalizes bilingualism without diglossic functional separation. Baker (2011) defines translanguaging as the process of “making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages” (p. 78). In the classroom, translanguaging approaches draw on all the linguistic resources of the child to maximize understanding and achievement. Thus, both or all languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organize and mediate understanding, speaking, literacy, and learning (Lewis et al. 2012). García and Leiva argue that bilingual families and communities translanguage in order to construct meaning. They further propose that what makes translanguaging different from other fluid languaging practices is that it is transformative, with the potential to remove the hierarchy of languaging practices that deem some more valuable than others. Translanguaging, they argue, is about a new languaging reality, a new way of being, acting, and languaging in a different social, cultural, and political context, allowing fluid discourses to flow, and giving voice to new social realities (2014).

Li Wei (2011) makes a similar argument that the act of translanguaging “is transformative in nature; it creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment” (p. 12223). Hornberger and Link (2012) further conceptualize translanguaging in educational contexts, proposing that educators recognize, value, and build on the multiple, mobile communicative repertoires of students and their families. Translanguaging leads us away from a focus on “languages” as distinct codes to a focus on the agency of individuals engaged in using, creating, and interpreting signs for communication. Lewis et al. (2012) argue that the distinction between code-switching and translanguaging is ideological, in that code-switching has associations with language separation, while translanguaging approves the flexibility of learning through two or more languages: “Particularly in the bilingual classroom, translanguaging as a concept tries to move acceptable practice away from language separation, and thus has ideological – even political – associations” (p. 665).

Hélot (2014) explores the learning potential of translanguaging, as she describes the deployment of texts by translingual authors to make trainee teachers aware of new ways of understanding bilinguals' experiences and engagement with the world. Aware of the constraints inherent in restrictive language policy, Hélot argues for translanguaging as a means to counteract linguistic insecurity in the classroom, to ensure teachers understand that balanced bilingualism is a myth, and that translanguaging is a linguistic resource available to bilinguals to communicate in a creative and meaningful way. Noguerón-Liu and Warriner (2014) suggest that the notion of translanguaging expands existing theories of multilingualism by focusing on the social practices of individuals. They adopt this term to move away from a focus on abstract, idealized notions of "a language" as a set of skills and to emphasize the fact that multilingual users deploy a variety of resources while engaging in everyday practice. They explicitly link translanguaging and identity practices, saying: "For Latino communities in the USA, translanguaging practices have been an integral part of identity and belonging" (p. 183).

García and Li Wei (2014) propose that the concept of translanguaging is based on radically different notions of language and bilingualism from those espoused in the twentieth century, "an epistemological change that is the product of acting and languaging in our highly technological globalized world" (p. 20). For García and Li Wei (2014),

translanguaging does not refer to two separate languages nor to a synthesis of different language practices or to a hybrid mixture. Rather translanguaging refers to new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories, and releases histories and understandings that had been buried within fixed language identities constrained by nation-states. (p. 21)

That is, translanguaging is the enactment of language practices that use different features that had previously been independently constrained by different histories, but that now are experienced in speakers' interactions as one new whole. García (2010) points out that multilinguals translanguage to include and facilitate communication with others, but also to construct deeper understandings. Translanguaging includes but extends what others have called language use and language contact among multilinguals. García (2010) argues that rather than focusing on the language itself, translanguaging makes it apparent that there are no clear-cut boundaries between the languages of bilinguals. Furthermore, translanguaging emerges from social practices between two or more "languages" that are neither static nor linked to one national or ethnic identity. For García and Leiva (2014), "translanguaging refers to social practices and actions that enact a political process of social subjectivity transformations" (p. 204).

For García and Li Wei (2014), translanguaging differs from code-switching in that it refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language, but that make up the speakers' complete language repertoire.

Translanguaging starts from the speaker rather than the code or “language” and focuses on empirically observable practices. Translanguaging practices are not viewed as marked or unusual, but are rather taken to be the normal mode of communication that characterizes communities throughout the world. A translanguaging lens proposes that, rather than making decisions about which “language” to use in a particular social setting, people have a linguistic repertoire from which they select resources to communicate. García and Li Wei (2014) claim that translanguaging is transformative in its creative and critical potential. In its transdisciplinarity, translanguaging enables speakers to go beyond traditional academic disciplines and conventional structures, in order to gain new understandings of human relations and generate more just social structures, capable of liberating the voices of the oppressed.

Turning more explicitly to education, García and Leiva (2014) argue that translanguaging goes beyond code-switching and translation in education because it refers to the process in which students perform bilingually in the myriad multimodal ways of classrooms – reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing, and so on. In education, propose García and Kano (2014), translanguaging is a process by which students and teachers engage in complex discursive practices that include all the language practices of all students in a class. Translanguaging goes some way beyond the question of which “language” is, or should be, in use in a particular pedagogical event. Rather, it refers not only to practice but to ideology, to beliefs about the value of students and teachers deploying the full range of their linguistic repertoires in educational settings.

García and Li Wei (2014) argue that creativity and criticality are key features of the transformative potential of translanguaging. Creativity is the ability to choose between obeying and breaking the rules and norms of behavior, including the use of language. It is about challenging boundaries and making something new. Criticality refers to the ability to use available evidence to inform considered views of cultural, social, political, and linguistic phenomena, to question and problematize received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations. These two concepts are intrinsically linked: boundaries cannot be challenged without a critical orientation; and creativity is often an expression of criticality. García and Li Wei (2014) point out that translanguaging, as a socio-educational process, enables students to construct and constantly modify their sociocultural identities and values, as they respond to their historical and present conditions critically and creatively. Translanguaging in education also pays attention to the ways in which students combine different modes and media across social contexts and negotiate social identities. García and Li Wei (2014) note that translanguaging as pedagogy contributes to identity investment and positionality to engage learners.

Creese and Blackledge (2010) similarly found that student translanguaging established identity positions which were both oppositional to, and encompassing of, institutional values. In a translanguaging pedagogy language practices belong neither to the school nor to the home. Instead, languaging is situated within the practice of the learner, as it emerges through social interaction (García and Li Wei 2014). Li Wei (2011) argues that the notion of *translanguaging space* embraces the

concepts of creativity and criticality, which are fundamental but under-explored dimensions of multilingual practices. García and Li Wei (2014) point out that in producing a trans-subject, translanguaging is capable of transforming subjectivities and identities. Palmer et al. (2014) present classroom examples which demonstrate that modeling and engaging in dynamic bilingualism, celebrating hybridity and moments of metalinguistic commentary, and positioning children as competent bilinguals can be potentially powerful translanguaging pedagogies. They argue that translanguaging pedagogies open up spaces for students to engage in sensitive and important topics and take risks to express themselves in developing languages (e.g., attempting to translate).

García and Li Wei (2014) set out teachers' goals for translanguaging pedagogy. These include adapting instruction to different types of students in multilingual classrooms, building background knowledge to provide a familiar context so that students can make meaning of the content being taught, developing critical thinking and critical consciousness, extending metalinguistic awareness and cross-linguistic flexibility, and interrogating linguistic inequality to disrupt linguistic hierarchies and social structures. Translanguaging offers a pedagogy in a range of educational settings to open up transformative spaces for the performance and embodiment of identities which contribute to critical and creative learning. García and Flores (2014) describe translanguaging as an approach to bilingualism that is centered not on languages, but on the observable communicative practices of bilinguals.

García and Li Wei (2014) argue that translanguaging does not refer to two separate languages nor to a synthesis of different language practices or to a hybrid mixture. Rather translanguaging refers to new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories. Moreover, translanguaging is commonplace and everyday. These researchers view translanguaging as not only going between different linguistic structures, systems, and modalities, but going beyond them. Going beyond language refers to transforming the present, to intervening by reinscribing our human, historical commonality in the act of languaging. García and Li Wei conclude that "translanguaging enables us to imagine new ways of being and languaging so that we can begin to act differently upon the world" (p. 42). A translanguaging repertoire is shaped by biographies and learning trajectories; it includes aspects of communication not always thought of as "language," including gesture, dress, humor, posture, and so on; it is a record of mobility and experience; it includes constraints, gaps, and silences as well as potentialities; and it is responsive to the places in which, and the people with whom, semiotic resources may be deployed. García and Li Wei (2014) demonstrate the transformative potential of translanguaging in educational contexts in particular.

Problems and Difficulties

Despite the transformative potential of translanguaging and of multilingual, heteroglossic pedagogies, there is still much to be done to bring about change in education systems and policies and in classrooms. Weber and Horner (2012) review García's

description of translanguaging pedagogies and find it to be “over-optimistic” (p. 116), given that linguistic oppression and language separation still have a strong foothold in language education policy and practice in the United States and elsewhere. Weber and Horner also question whether those nation-states that appear at first sight to have multilingual education policies (Singapore, Brunei, Luxembourg) are breaking free of standard language ideology and the strict compartmentalization of languages. There is a further challenge to convince teachers that they should move outside of traditional pedagogies in language education. García and Li Wei (2014) concede that notwithstanding theoretical progress, it is rare to find schooling situations in which students’ understanding of how to do translanguaging as a legitimate practice is being developed.

Canagarajah (2011b) points out that the pedagogical side of translanguaging remains undeveloped in general. Hélot and Ó Laoire (2011) acknowledge that there have been pioneering initiatives to validate students’ multilingualism in classrooms, but conclude that the reality for many multilingual learners is that their languages are all too often silenced, unheard in the classroom, or perceived as an impediment to learning. Hélot and Ó Laoire point to the special responsibility of teacher educators to take societal multilingualism seriously and to put it at the center of their professional development agenda. García and Li Wei (2014) note that assessment of translanguaging in language education is likely to require a shift in orientation, away from standardized assessments administered in one language only. They accept that despite the potential of standardized translanguaged assessments, they do not currently exist. García and Li Wei (2014) consider that this calls into question the intentions of policy makers, “since the consequence of monolingual standardized tests becomes the highlighting of differences among those who language differently and the rendering of those differences as deficiencies” (p. 134). It is clear that challenges remain not only in the classroom but also (and perhaps more so) at the level of policy.

Future Directions

May (2014) points to the monolingual bias of language education in multilingual settings, which has often ignored multilingual repertoires of students or viewed them in deficit terms. The related linguistic competencies of multilingual groups have similarly often been viewed negatively. In proposing future directions in the language education of multilingual students, educators must engage with these powerful monolingual ideologies in society. This set of ideologies produces and reproduces education systems that privilege the few and constrain the success of the many. It might be argued that teachers are in no position to change these powerful societal discourses. However, every time a teacher introduces transformative pedagogies that enable students to imagine new ways of being and languaging, small steps are taken to nudge these ideologies away from the hegemonic and toward the transformative.

García and Flores (2014) suggest that teachers can make a difference when they hold a language philosophy that encourages voice, regardless of language features. Further areas in which ideological shifts must be made if the potential of students' linguistic resources is to be achieved are teacher education and assessment. Teacher educators are in a strong position to encourage the next generation of teachers to engage with recent research and to open up spaces in classrooms for translanguageing. Also, if assessment criteria credited, and required, translanguageing in the curriculum, it is likely that pedagogy and practice would focus on translanguageing in practice. García and Flores (2014) review emerging evidence that translanguageing builds deeper thinking, affirms multiple identities, engages bilingual students with more rigorous content, and at the same time develops language that is adequate for academic tasks. Translanguageing, they argue, "can in fact enhance cognitive, language, and literacy abilities" (p. 147). In establishing the future direction of language education in multilingual contexts, it is here that research, practice, and pedagogy must start. More evidence is required if policy makers, teacher educators, and curriculum designers are to be persuaded that the complex communicative repertoires of students are an untapped resource with immense potential for creativity, criticality, and educational success.

Cross-References

► [Language and Power in the Classroom](#)

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Ofelia García: [Translanguageing in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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Language Education, Gender, and Sexuality

Benedict Rowlett and Brian W. King

Abstract

In this chapter we provide an overview of theory and research conducted over the past few decades on language education and gender. In addition, we bring this overview of the field up to date by including more recent work on sexuality. We draw attention to some major contributions that have taken a discourse approach to language education/learning, gender, and sexuality, treating gender and sexuality as discursive constructions rather than variables. These studies have looked at how gender and sexuality impact language-learning processes in a variety of local contexts, both inside and outside of the classroom, in terms of positioning, access to linguistic resources, and learner investment and agency. We also highlight research that examines the gendered experiences of language teaching professionals, broadening our understanding of gender and sexuality in the intercultural world of language teaching. In the later sections, we focus on ongoing concerns related to the global economy and language education, especially with regard to the intersections of social class, gender, and sexuality. In these sections we also discuss the often uncomfortable position of the language, gender, and sexuality researcher in accessing and representing subjugated knowledges from the margins. In this way and in accordance with the need to focus on the largely ignored issue of social class in applied linguistics, we suggest shifting our attention to exploring the notion of gendered and sexual “symbolic competence” among multilingual learners operating in local and contingent settings.

Keywords

Gender • Sexuality • Discursive practices • Subjugated knowledges • Symbolic competence

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Introduction

The body of work on gender and language education has been steadily growing over the past few decades, and recently in this area there has been a veritable explosion of work on sexuality. This proliferation of sexuality-oriented research merits attention, for prior to about 2005, the study of sexuality and language education had struggled to find its proper place in the scholarly literature. For this reason, as we bring the topic of language education and gender up to date, research on sexuality will be accorded its due space. We will attempt to address areas that remain relatively underexplored or invisible such as the role of social class and the global economy in language education, gender, and sexuality and the need to overcome the classist assumptions of previous research. Finally we will also devote considerable space to the problem of the hegemonic marginalization of subjugated knowledges and how we might overcome our complicity as researchers in this process.

Early Developments

In their contribution to an earlier edition of this volume, Pavlenko and Piller (2008) provided a thorough outline of the early research on language education and gender, and we will not rehearse that history in detail here. Rather we will briefly summarize some key points as reminders before moving on to developments that have taken place since their chapter was written. As they have outlined, much early research into language education and gender was approached through the notions of difference, dominance, and deficit, introduced in the 1970s and 1980s. Each of these frameworks served to propagate a gender binary in which men and women were defined as separate groups of people or different cultures. The deficit framework, based on Lakoff's (1975) work, focused on how women's speech is perceived negatively and, in this way, women were regarded as inferior, powerless speakers when compared to male speakers. This was linked to the dominance framework, which highlighted the idea that women are linguistically oppressed by men, who maintain power over women in speech by interruption, overlapping, or general expressions of

degradation. As an alternative, the difference framework, which became popular through the work of Tannen (1990), sought to demonstrate that as boys and girls are socialized into same-gender peer groups, they learn to speak different “genderlects.” This was said to account for different communication styles, and therefore the frequency of misunderstandings between men and women was evaluated to be a direct result of this difference. In gender and language education research, these frameworks fed into theories suggesting that men and women have different interactive styles when learning a second language (Gass and Varonis 1986), that female learners are generally more proficient than male learners (Ellis 1994), and that women employ more successful learning strategies than men (Oxford 1993). These theories also informed much classroom-based research, in which gender differences were said in some contexts to account for teachers paying more attention to male students and male students dominating classroom discussions, effectively marginalizing and silencing female students (Holmes 1987).

The essentialist stance of much of the early research into language and gender which tended to treat men and women as homogenous categories, relegating them to the status of variables, came under much criticism in the 1990s from feminist linguists. Rather than an individual property or binary, gender was reconceptualized as a construct, produced and performed in a system of social relations and discursive practices and which has various meanings across different speech communities. In this way, gender is regarded as just one aspect of social identity that intersects with other aspects such as ethnicity, age, social status, and sexual orientation. Because of this, researchers have been encouraged to “look locally” and relate gender performances to the distinctiveness of the context rather than regarding them as expressions of behaviors like “male dominance” or “female cooperation” (Cameron 2005). In terms of language education research, there was therefore a call for a more context-sensitive approach to illuminate the ways gender and sexuality, in tandem with other facets of social identity, mediate language-learning processes, experiences, and outcomes (Pavlenko and Piller 2008).

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

In light of this theoretical shift and in answer to this call, more recent approaches to gender and sexuality in language education have been informed by the discourse turn in language studies and the performative turn in gender studies (Menard-Warwick et al. 2014). Discourses in this sense are not seen as simply linguistic but as social practices that regulate the ways in which people think, speak, interact, and behave. Individuals are therefore seen to “perform” gendered or sexual identities in interaction, drawing on discourses that are “on hand” and appropriate in their particular social contexts to accomplish certain actions. Although it has been established that positions and power relations in society are acted out through discourses, it is important to stress that this is a dynamic, ongoing process in which these performances can both reflect and contest normative discursive constructions of gender or sexual identity. In other words, there is potential for agents to

negotiate positions within the discursive and material constraints of their circumstances in order to either accomplish actions or resist marginalization. In this way, these processes have been addressed by research into learners' investment and desires in learning a second language (Norton 2000; Takahashi 2013) and how gender or sexual identity positions have mediated their access to linguistic resources. Other recent studies (Appleby 2013) have turned their attention to language teachers' gendered experiences, which are situated within broader social discourses, in order to explore how these can increase our understanding of gender and sexuality in the intercultural world of language teaching. In this section we will therefore focus on a selection of the major contributions from the last two decades that have taken a discourse approach to looking at the intersections of language education/learning, gender, and sexuality. These are studies that provide perspectives from both inside and outside the language classroom.

Gender and Sexuality in the Language Classroom and Curriculum

Recent studies that have taken place in language classrooms and educational institutions have concentrated on how gender identities influence language-learning and classroom interactions and position learners in different ways, in combination with other social identities and the discourses that surround them. These studies have contributed to revealing how discursive practices in the classroom and beyond can either empower or, conversely, marginalize or alienate students from language learning. Most of these studies have focused on highly contextualized local settings in order to distance themselves from broad, comparative research that has attempted to produce quantifiable measurements that account for males' and females' differing learning trajectories.

Carr and Pauwels (2006) sought to account for perceived differences between boys' and girls' investments in foreign language learning in secondary schools in Australia, as boys in this context were often seen to disengage from L2 learning opportunities. Rather than approaching their study from a gender difference perspective, they focused on the ideologies or social practices that construct and sustain these binaries. While their informants drew on these gender difference discourses by articulating the biological reasons why they saw language learning in this context as a feminine sphere, Carr and Pauwels make clear that other factors such as social class equally inform these attitudes. For example, middle-class boys who anticipated international business careers recognized the value of learning foreign languages, whereas boys from working-class schools explained that it was essential to avoid being seen to study in language classes because of the risk of being identified as a "nerd"; Carr and Pauwels suggest that there are, in fact, boys who contest these ideologies but also demonstrate that social sanctions often inhibit their actions.

Menard-Warwick (2008) revealed how Latina immigrants studying English in California positioned themselves and were positioned by others in classroom interactions that were elicited via gendered curricular materials in the form of a job skills worksheet. She showed how her participants drew on common discourses about

work and gender that placed immigrant women into socially recognizable roles such as homemaker or factory worker. Although drawing attention to how some of her participants showed agency in critiquing these positions, she concluded that these classroom interactions, along with the teacher's assumptions, primarily served to socialize these women into society's expectations of what a realistic career for a Latina immigrant might be. These positions effectively silenced the development of an L2 voice for some of her participants who may have wished to be positioned otherwise and therefore negatively impacted their learning.

Studies such as these highlight the ways in which gender positions are inseparable from other social identities that feed into language-learning investments and outcomes in particular educational contexts. Other studies have focused on how issues of gender and sexuality have been addressed in the classroom and curriculum. While many researchers have continued to examine biases of gender and sexuality in second language textbooks (Hall 2014; Paiz 2015), questions have repeatedly been raised as to how these representations may or may not affect learner uptakes and outcomes (Pavlenko and Piller 2008; Sunderland et al. 2000). Perhaps a more productive line of inquiry has been how teachers can engage learners in critical reflection by incorporating gender and sexuality issues into their lessons through transformative classroom practices (Moita-Lopes 2006). For example, in a course she designed at a women's junior college in Japan, Simon-Maeda (2004) introduced topics such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, sexism in textbooks and the media, and sexuality. Her students were encouraged to examine gender and sexuality by looking at the discursive practices in which they are constructed and consider why they may have come to hold certain views on how women are positioned in certain contexts.

Other recent studies have begun to apply queer theory to language education. Queer theory encompasses a poststructuralist approach to sexual identities as "processes rather than properties" (Nelson 2009, p.23) and has been used to expose, examine, and challenge the pervasiveness of heteronormative discourses in various educational settings. Nelson (2009), for example, uses queer theory to highlight the "feats" of avoidance accomplished by erasing LGBT perspectives from the second language classroom and curriculum. This, she suggests, both normalizes heterosexuality rather than desexualizing the classroom and patronizingly assumes that students from different cultures cannot handle discussing issues of sexuality. Nelson makes clear that this stance may actually limit language learning, as opportunities for meaning making are lost. Based on classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students, Nelson concludes that a "discourse inquiry" approach may be the best way to structure sexual diversity as a subject in the language class, rather than a "counseling" and "controversies" approach. Sexual diversity therefore becomes a pedagogic resource, allowing for opportunities to learn language and culture through an understanding of the *challenges* inherent in discussing sexual topics. Nelson emphasizes that teachers who engage with sexuality in the language classroom help students develop important skills in this area, given that sociosexual literacy is an important part of culture in a globalized world. Drawing on Nelson's research, Moore (2016) presents a case study of an English language class organized

by a group of LGBT learners in Japan. His main focus is on exploring how educators can address the learning needs of this group, but he also identifies how the content of this class, in reinforcing heteronormative discourses and essentialized gay identities, often excluded the voices of learners whose queer identities did not adhere to mainstream representations.

Overall, what has emerged from classroom-based inquiries is an ongoing need for educators to carefully consider how issues of gender and sexuality along with other social positions are continually manifested in classroom discourse. Finding appropriate ways to avoid both essentializing and marginalizing practices, as well as critically engaging learners with these issues in local contexts, will help to provide spaces that have the potential to facilitate learning for all.

Gender and Sexuality: Access, Investment, and Agency

Other research has moved beyond the language classroom to investigate narratives of how gender and sexual identity positions have mediated learners' investments and agency in second language learning. These studies have also explored how these positions have aided (or hindered) access to linguistic resources that enable learning to take place. Like the studies outlined in the previous section, much of this research has taken a discourse approach to examining constructions of gender and sexuality in particular learning contexts.

Earlier work on these themes, begun in the 1990s in North America, has shown how immigrant women confront a variety of gatekeeping practices that may restrict or prevent access to opportunities for interaction in English (Norton 2000; Norton-Peirce et al.1993). Some of these practices included family responsibilities, lack of previous education, and economic factors where women were forced to prioritize employment above education. Researchers working in this area have, however, made clear that these women are not passive dupes of these practices but have used their agency through the creative use of linguistic and cultural resources to challenge and negotiate their positions in society and the labor market (Norton 2000).

Other studies in East Asia have looked at how both women and self-identified gay men invest in language learning through articulations of desire. In these cases, "desire" equates with both social opportunities and romantic and sexual intent. Takahashi (2013) focuses on the agency of a group of Japanese women studying abroad in Australia who seek out opportunities to find a White boyfriend. Such a boyfriend would, in their eyes, act as both a language-learning facilitator and romantic partner. As Motha and Lin (2014) make clear, desire is not just something held by individuals but is shaped by other powerful external factors. With respect to this, Takahashi contextualizes the accounts of her participants by also analyzing public discourses drawn from Japanese media sources on learning English. These discourses promote the acquisition of English as a way of transcending traditional boundaries by entering a glamorous, liberal Western world populated by gallant and romantic White men. Studying abroad in Western countries and the way these

opportunities are represented in the media, Takahashi argues, symbolizes the acquisition of new identities and the prospects of a new and desirable way of life separate from the pressures of traditional Japanese society.

King (2008) turned his attention to the experiences of self-identified Korean gay language learners. Like Takahashi's participants, the men in King's study, who expressed their sexual desire for White men, sought out same-sex relationships by choosing to study abroad. They reported that it was mainly through their gay identity that they were able to access English-speaking social networks. This provided them with the opportunity to learn the language informally and successfully, a fact which one of his informants claimed gave them an advantage over their heterosexual counterparts. What this study also highlights is how discourses of sexuality in a globalized world – in this case a Western gay discourse that emphasizes individuality and self-expression – work to shape learners' desires and actions but can also restrict them. This can be seen in the power structures that exist between Western and Asian gay men, who often struggle to find legitimacy and a voice from which to speak within these dominant discourses. One of King's participants, for example, found it difficult to approach and speak with White men in the UK because of their powerful position in British gay society, particularly in their position as his objects of desire. He therefore found it easier to speak with Filipino gay friends because of the relatively equal power balance they shared. Finding legitimacy in the face of dominant, often hostile, discourses is also the focus of Brown's (2016) case study of an older lesbian American language learner in Korea. Finding that both her lesbian identity and her age were constraining her participation in classes, Brown explains that she was able to challenge these constraints through an exertion of agency to modulate her identity and therefore "redefine the socio-material conditions of her language learning" (p. 808). It is of course necessary to conduct further research into the lived experiences of often marginalized language learners as they negotiate positions from which to speak, and such research will continue to shed light on how discourses of gender and sexuality inform their language-learning investments and outcomes.

Gender, Sexuality, and the Language Teaching Profession

In contrast to the experiences of language learners, there have also been studies that have looked at the gendered experiences of teachers in the language teaching profession. For example, Lin et al. (2006) have collectively written of their experiences as Asian women faculty members and language teachers and theorized the ways in which ideological and institutional conditions have impacted their experiences of marginalization and discrimination in terms of gender, race, and social class. Other more recent research, such as a study conducted by Appleby (2013), has shifted the attention to masculinities in the English language teaching profession. She positions the relevance of her topic by explaining that studies of men, masculinity, and heterosexuality are the unmarked categories in language teaching research, and she raises questions as to why this may be. Her study examines the

other side of the coin to Takahashi's (2013) study by focusing on male teachers in language schools in Japan and highlights the saliency of gender, sexuality, and intercultural desire in the relationships that develop between teachers and learners. From her interviews with White Australian male teachers, Appleby identifies some of the discourses circulating in this context, in which her participants' desire to construct a professional masculine identity is disturbed by the discursive commodification of a White, extroverted, eroticized, and ideal male for female Japanese customer-students. It became apparent during the course of her research that this extreme sexualized embodiment succeeded in shaping for her male participants a desired heterosexual, masculine self, but simultaneously constrained their professional aspirations as language teachers. In this way, studies such as Appleby's are beginning to illuminate professional and intercultural practices in the global language teaching industry by encompassing diverse aspects of gendered experience that include the perspectives of male teachers as well as female.

Problems and Difficulties

Problems and difficulties in research on gender and sexuality in language education currently tend to arise from two issues previously outlined as "future directions" by Pavlenko and Piller (2008). Specifically we refer on the one hand to their call for research that attends to localized and shifting gender ideologies in communities and grapples with the difficult problem of linguistic imperialism in relation to gendered representations. On the other hand we refer to their call for investigations into the relationship between the changing global economy and language education. Current language education scholars have begun to focus more directly on these issues, and their studies have produced a more nuanced sense of the challenges yet to be addressed.

One of these challenges is how to navigate the hegemony of the center while conducting research in the global periphery, getting around the binary of "the west and the rest" in order to access subjugated knowledges (Appleby 2009, p. 105). Teachers in Appleby's study taught in East Timor in the earliest stages of its postcolonial development and found that Western feminist pedagogical practices had not equipped them sufficiently to address gender inequality in that context. Such discussions can be framed as intercultural competence building, but difficulties arise when local gender relations become an object of improvement, thus "enabling the relics of colonial hierarchy to be reinscribed in the civilising legacies of English language work" (2009, p. 109). In other words the classist legacies of language education soon reemerge. As a solution Appleby suggests active engagement with the local and contingent (cf. Ramanathan and Morgan 2009) in terms of gender and sexuality and a focus on gendered and sexual power relations as manifest in particular places. That is, teachers can share their own gendered experiences, locally situated as their personal narratives in that place, in order to position the students as experts on local, cultural, and political dynamics. In this way they might elicit gender- and sexuality-focused discussions that avoid the shortcomings of implying

that gender inequality is a “third world” problem waiting to be fixed by Western ideologies. Through such a shift in positioning, it is possible to unfetter peripheral knowledge or knowledge from “the Global South.”

At the same time, it would be all too easy to fall into a trap in which the Global South becomes essentialized in language education research. For this reason Milani (2014a) has proposed a repositioning of the Global South as “the margins,” an uncertain, uncomfortable, and vulnerable site for self-reflection as researchers. He echoes Appleby (2009) who also states that researchers must remain open and “vulnerable,” willing to work with what cannot be fully known or controlled and thereby locating themselves in a “gray area” of uncertainty and opening up a space for reflection. Such a stance might permit language education researchers to break the mold in which most language education and gender research continues to subjugate knowledge from outside the hegemonic academic center, as well as working against the neglect of social class in language education scholarship.

In accordance with Pavlenko and Piller’s (2008) suggestion, a new direction for studies of language education and gender should also be to look at the ways in which changes in the global economy have had specific effects on linguistic and educational markets. Because of the conspicuous absence of social class from discussions of applied linguistics, this call is still being made more generally (Block 2008, 2015), and it is one that still requires attention. How do we, as gender and sexuality scholars working in language education research, respond to what Ramanathan and Morgan (2009, p. 154) refer to as “the persistence and relevance of class in the post-socialist condition”? Potentially we need to look more carefully at how gendered and sexualized practices bring about social class positions. In so doing we might begin to make a contribution to filling this gap.

Future Directions

In our review so far, we have outlined contributions to research that have taken a discourse approach to investigating of the intersections of gender and sexuality with language education in classrooms and language learning in uninstructed settings outside of schools. As part of this approach, we have highlighted a growing realization that teachers can treat sexuality as a pedagogic resource in classrooms. We have also highlighted research demonstrating that sexual desires and gendered/sexual identities can interact with language learning in unexpected ways, both enabling and limiting learners and teachers. However, much of the research up until now has all too often focused on learners operating in industrialized and affluent Western or East Asian contexts or on learners who are highly globally mobile and able to visit such locales. Thus, there is still a significant gap to fill via research that focuses more on how current global movements and economic changes, together with discourses of gender and sexuality, are affecting the language-learning trajectories of people in “the Global South” or “the periphery.” These are people who often cannot afford to travel abroad and seek out language-learning opportunities in target communities but may find resources within

multilingual communities in their own countries. Then again, in what ways do globally mobile others “pass through” these communities and how do learners then agentively seize the advantage of the presence of those potential mediators of language socialization? What roles do gender and sexuality play in these social language-learning encounters, and how does power figure in these relationships?

To answer these questions, we have indicated that future research should sit uncomfortably at the margins, situated outside of affluent, industrialized, and globally mobile contexts, opening up a space for reflection (Appleby 2009). As researchers we might then gain some understanding of the subjugated knowledges required for learners to actively shape the “stayed in” and “local” context to better suit their own language-learning needs. Therefore, we suggest that future empirical research should focus on “symbolic competence” as it is a much understudied area in contemporary SLA research (De Costa 2010). Symbolic competence can be defined as “the ability to shape the multilingual game in which one invests. . . and to reframe human thought and action,” a game which involves both semiotic awareness and the ability to “actively manipulate and shape one’s environment” via language (Kramsch and Whiteside 2008, p. 667). By prompting us to consider gendered and sexual symbolic competence in the local and contingent, this retuning of the lens might permit investigations of language education, gender, and sexuality to overcome the acknowledged tendency to erase social class. It might help us to understand, as Pennycook (2015, p. 276) says, “how multilingual practices in relation to local economies, discrimination, gender, ethnicities, and types of work produce particular class positions in their unfolding interactions.” To what extent might working-class or immobile learners be manipulating the globally mobile middle class for personal gain? Where does agency lie in these language-learning interactions? And how do gender and sexuality play a role? In this way we can begin to challenge classist assumptions about agency, awareness, and competence and who can access them.

On a final note, interesting perspectives can also be gained if future research in this area can move beyond a discourse-material binary and deal with gender/sexuality “in terms of both its cultural and material dimensions” (Pennycook 2015, p. 276). In other words future research can align with calls in the broader field of language and gender/sexuality for analysts to take the materiality of the body into account as a site of identity and struggle (Milani 2014b) and treat discourse and materiality as equally consequential for gender and sexuality (Bucholtz 2014). As part of this treatment, there is room for nuanced investigations into transgender and intersex experiences of language learning, for example, Ngyuen and Yang (2015), as well as new perspectives on language learning as an embodied discursive experience for all. With regard therefore to language education policy and policy-related research, we suggest that practitioners need to take into account the recent developments we have outlined in this field in order to provide inclusive educational opportunities for a diverse spectrum of language learners in a diversity of contexts. This is especially important given the attention that has started to be paid to the experiences of gendered, classed, and sexually marginalized learners, whose subjugated knowledges have all too often been silenced in the face of hegemonic and exclusionary global educational policy processes.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language and Power in the Classroom](#)
- ▶ [Language, Identity, and Investment in the Twenty-First Century](#)
- ▶ [The Politics of English Language Teaching](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Gemma Moss: [Gender and Literacy](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
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Language, Class, and Education

James Collins and Ben Rampton

Abstract

This chapter treats class as a fundamental source and sign of inequality in the contemporary world and its historical precursors. Drawing upon sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological research, which demonstrates that language use is a highly sensitive index of social inequality and the prejudices that flow therefrom, we examine the interaction between class, race, and language hierarchies in both the developed and developing world. We discuss as well the Janus face of education: the setting in which language diversity is interpretively encountered and the institution through which language hierarchy is legitimated. A paradox runs through this chapter. In the latter decades of the twentieth century, academic attention and public discourse shifted away from the role of class inequalities in society and schooling, focusing instead on important questions of racial and gender inequities. Evidence shows, however, that economic inequality greatly increased in those very same decades, feeding processes of social polarization and crises in education systems now experienced throughout the world. Our conclusion traces this history and polarization in terms of “continuing realities of stratification.” Adequate understanding of these realities will require nuanced research approaches to their interrelated social, linguistic, and educational dimensions.

Keywords

Language education • Social class stratification • Language diversity

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Introduction

Traditionally, “class” has been a term used to define and analyze identities and relations between groups located at different levels of the national socioeconomic hierarchy. In Britain, for example, class “linked together and summarised... many aspects of any individual’s life” (Abercrombie et al. 2000, pp. 145–146): family background, main source of income, cultural tastes, and political associations. During the latter decades of the twentieth century, in spite of continued inequalities, the analytic utility and the cultural salience of social class were drawn into question by globalization and regional deindustrialization; the decline of labor unions; the emergence of gender, race, and ethnicity as political issues; and the ascendance of the individual as consumer (Abercrombie et al. 2000, p. 148). But the salience of class difference has recently emerged more sharply with the Great Recession of 2008.

This chapter focuses on the connections between class stratification, education, and language. It argues that class remains an important concept in the analysis of stratification and its effects and suggests that class analysis can be productively extended beyond the nation-state to issues of language and inequality in postcolonial settings. We begin with some comments on the definition of social class, clarifying its relation to other axes of inequality (especially race and ethnicity). Then we provide a sketch of debates about language, education, and class in recent decades and argue for similarities of the dynamics in both First and Third World countries. After that, we consider the retreat from class analysis in recent decades, the significance of the global crisis of 2008, and the continuing realities of linguistic and economic stratification.

Defining Social Class

The term “class” points to a very broad principle of organization in capitalist societies, a principle of inequality (stratification) structuring the distribution of resources, both material and symbolic, a source of domination, conflict, and

suffering. As with other principles of organization (e.g., race, gender), class is lived with varying degrees of awareness and expression. It may be mutely experienced or given full-throated articulation; it may be a key to self-understanding, group mobilization, and society-wide struggles for power, or it may be denied and displaced – personally, socially, and politically. As lived, class is always entangled with other forms of social being and social consciousness.

“Social being” and “social consciousness” – terms introduced by Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* – merit elaboration (cf. Thompson 1978, p. 18). “Social being” refers to material conditions, ordinary experience, and everyday discourses, activities, and practices – the primary realities of practical activity, as well as objective social structure and the mechanisms and processes of stratification. “Social consciousness” refers to secondary or meta-level representations developed by participants and analysts: ideologies, images, and discourses *about* social groups, as well as subjecthood and identity, and claims, attributions, and denials around groupness. In the interplay of being and consciousness, very similar experiences and conditions (“being”) may be represented with very different meta-discourses (“consciousness”). So when “class” is cited, the emphasis is on lived relations grounded in relations of production and consumption, whereas “race” and “ethnicity” refer to complex sets of territorial relationships involving conquest, the development of nation-states, and transnational migration (Bradley 1996, p.19–20). The implications of the being/consciousness distinction are threefold: (a) it provides a rationale for including class and race in the same discussion, as different ways of construing inequality and domination in (objective) social being; (b) it means that analysis is itself part of the ideological debate, as a strand of social consciousness; and (c) it reminds us that systematic inequalities in the distribution of hardship, pain, and pleasure don’t disappear just because people stop talking about them in the ways they used to.

Early Developments: Class, Language, and Education in the Developed and Developing World

Nation-States in the Developed World: The UK and USA

Nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The industrial revolution of the nineteenth century shaped the modern working classes in much of Western Europe and North America. It coincided with the heyday of nationalism, the period of building and consolidating modern nation-states and expanding colonial empires. In the nationalist toolkit, schooling and the promulgation of standard languages were important elements, especially through schooled literacy. Historically, standard languages were resources of metropolitan elites, of reforming middle classes, but in an ideological maneuver described by Marx, what was particular – the language of a literate middle class – was presented as universal, as “the” language of the nation. In Britain and the USA, schooling, literacy, and the teaching of standard English were seen by many education activists and reformers as the means to self-

improvement and social harmony: they would ameliorate social differences, replace “seditious” with “helpful” literacies, and in general serve as an equalizing and unifying influence. In actuality, the nineteenth- and twentieth-century provisioning of universal education and literacy was the product of struggle, a process of excluding and ranking more than equalizing (Collins and Blot 2003).

Universal public education was established late in Britain, in the 1870s, more than half a century after the upheavals of the industrial revolution and extensive class-based political conflict. Perhaps for this reason, the relation between standard and nonstandard language was always understood in class terms. Conversely in the USA, the common schools were one of the earliest systems of universal schooling, predating the industrializing of the nation as well as the civil war. But for the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, this system wasn’t actually universal. White supremacy used racial domination to subordinate labor (Fredrickson 1981), whether through African-American slavery and Jim Crow debt peonage or through the land seizure and racialized citizenship policy that followed the 1848 Mexican-American War, tying generations of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to field labor. In both cases, segregated school systems provided inferior education for second-class citizens (Collins and Blot 2003; Foley 2010). One result was that schooling was seen as much a project of managing ethnic and racial differences as of harmonizing social classes (Nasaw 1979), and the relationship between standard and nonstandard language, as well as the problems attributed thereto, has been understood in race and ethnic terms.

1960s–1980s. In the decades after WWII, it was clear in Britain that public education had not eradicated class difference and that nonstandard speech had not disappeared. During the 1960s and 1970s, language took over from IQ as an explanation of social stratification, and it was analyzed by sociolinguists as a constitutive element contributing to class differentiation in education. In the USA, the failure of the school-based equalizing project was equally evident but interpreted differently. There were references to “disadvantaged” and “low-income” children, but class was regularly obscured by the prominence of ethnicity and race during the era of civil rights mobilization (Rothstein 2004). Whether seeking explanation in class or race/ethnicity, there were two major approaches in research on language and inequality in education, one orienting more to social being and the other more to social consciousness.

The former emphasized the role that everyday discourse played in the cultural reproduction of class inequality. In one strand of this work, research focused on the home and argued that traditional patterns of language use produced communicative dispositions which influenced people’s performance at school and opportunities in life (Heath 1983; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). In the other strand, research focused on schools and argued that conventional classroom discourse was inhospitable to the speech styles of students from subordinated communities (Philips 1983).

The second major approach stressed the part that language ideologies and attitudes to grammar and accent played in the production of subordinate or stigmatized identities. Sociolinguists and education researchers argued that teachers picked up

on dialect features, that they held lower expectations for children with working-class accents, and that the lower achievement of these children was thus the outcome of sociolinguistically tuned “self-fulfilling prophecies” (Edwards 1976; Labov 1972). On another tack, it was argued that the schools’ standard language ideologies made working-class people think that their dominated position in society was justified because of their personal inadequacies, including their language (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

Neither of these approaches attributed much agency to the groups they studied, either recognizing, for example, the skillful ways in which people blend dominant and subordinate varieties of language (Gumperz 1982; Rampton 2006) or considering the ways in which language use was integrated with family life, morality, sense of person, and institutional encounters (Foley 2010; Lareau 2003). Statistical notions of class were ascendant in research, and informants were allocated to classes by analysts on the basis of fact-sheet variables like occupation and level of education.

Postcolonial States in the Developing World

A colonial legacy. We are trained to think of the developing and developed Third and First Worlds as distinct: the one colonized, the other colonizing; the one poor, the other rich; and the one of color (yellow, brown, red, and black), the other not (white). Economic, historical, and anthropological research shows, however, that the two are deeply interconnected. Modern colonialism began as European economic elites seized land and resources from non-European peoples, forcing those peoples to labor in emerging capitalist enterprises; thus did white become rich and brown, black, and yellow become poor (Pakenham 1991). Because white supremacy was the ideology legitimating conquest and commerce in the colonies, the attributed racial essences were taken as primary and the class conditions downplayed. Even so, miscegenation or race mixture was feared as a potential source of class demoralization and disorder, and policies of racial segregation were pursued in homelands as well as colonies (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012; Fredrickson 1981).

Colonial education systems addressed “the natives” (Indians, Negroes, etc.) rather than “the lower classes,” and to the extent that emancipatory goals were formulated, colonial education sought to “civilize the natives,” rescuing them from ignorance and sin and inserting small numbers into the emergent class of schooled workers and clerks needed to support the colonial administrative, industrial, and religious institutions. Education was not aimed at self-liberation or self-improvement nor seen as a tool for making the colonial populations less dependent on the colonial apparatuses. It was a highly selective and exclusionary add-on to the colonial enterprise. There was little formal education for the laboring majorities and tight control by the colonial authorities of higher levels of education (Mazrui 1978). This created a strongly stratified sociolinguistic market, in which control over particular linguistic resources was an immediate result of access to higher levels of education – for example, standard English or French equaled elite identity. In this way, the

colonial system established a class-sensitive linguistic pyramid, in which language pointed toward membership in particular strata in society, the more prestigious being closer to the centers of colonial power (Blommaert 1999).

The postcolonial context. Although colonial rulers have left, postcolonial nation-states still find the path to economic self-determination constrained by Western economic and political interests.¹ In the developing world, political and economic elites typically follow development agency programs, privatizing and deregulating economic sectors and often colluding with Western corporations to enrich the few and impoverish the many (Bond 2006). One commentator summarizes for Zambia, Africa, and elsewhere in recent decades: “As happened in many other African countries and throughout Eastern Europe, well-connected officials in collaboration with foreign companies robbed the Zambian people – again and again – of billions of dollars in lost taxes and royalties and undervalued privatization schemes, while the IMF and World Bank, which were supposed to be the nation’s financial advisors, did nothing” (Epstein 2014, p. 64).

In terms of language and education, political and economic elites in Africa, for example, tend to maximize the opportunities for their own children to acquire prestige varieties of languages like English and French through elite schooling and university. The majorities in such countries use non-prestigious languages, although many may access widely spoken African urban vernaculars or local varieties of the global languages by migrating en masse to the cities, where they join the low-wage sectors of the economy (Mufwene 2010). There, the schooling of their children generates new versions of the old debates on language, class, and education, though once again, the class element is normally misread or reconfigured as an ethnic issue, with the main emphasis on transition to European languages as the key to educational achievement and economic development (Spaull 2013).

Summary of Class, Language, and Education up until the 1980s

Language and class were conspicuous educational issues in countries like the UK and USA up until the mid-/late 1980s, although centuries-old racialized stratification in the USA and the legacies of colonialism and postcolonialism in the UK often camouflaged class, replacing it with a focus on equalities of race/ethnicity. In an era of a highly globalized economy, mass migration, and population mobility, analysis without a sense of class has become both increasingly common and increasingly inadequate.

¹By “postcolonial” we refer to the multitude of new nation-states that emerged after World War II, as European colonial powers were driven out of their former colonies. Our thesis is that legacies of colonial power and inequality continue to distort the development of postcolonial societies.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress: The Discursive Erasure of Class Since the 1980s

Although some researchers see the decades after the late 1970s as a time of increasing class conflict and inequality (Harvey 2005; Mishel et al. 2012), public and academic discourse turned attention away from social class. Beginning in the 1980s, Thatcherism in the UK and Reaganism in the USA were successful conservative movements that attacked social democratic (class-oriented) policies and politics (public ownership of housing and transport, social welfare provisions, trade unions) and promoted private ownership, individual choice, and ideologies of merit over concerns with equality. By arguing that social position is due to individual merit (or lack thereof) and not to advantages or disadvantages perpetrated by the institutional systems, these neoliberal movements discursively discredited the notion of class, while themselves being savvy orchestrations of ruling class power and working-class dissatisfaction (Harvey 2005). At the same time, the “politics of redistribution” was being displaced by a “politics of recognition” rooted in the feminist and antiracist movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Fraser 1995). These advanced the causes of women and ethnoracial minorities in numerous institutional and public arenas, but did not prioritize the challenge for state power. The politics of redistribution occupied the traditional terrain of class, combating economic inequalities and poverty, but the politics of recognition targeted cultural and legal evaluation structures, stigma, and discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.

These changes shaped the popular apprehension of injustice, while workplace exploitation (a basic issue in class politics) became harder to articulate and oppose. In education in the USA and UK, reports and policies since the 1980s have stressed the importance of “maintaining standards” and promoting general-purpose literacy skills but have detached these from any analysis of class inequalities (e.g., the Kingman Report on language awareness in the UK, 1988, and the Reagan-commissioned “A Nation At Risk” in the USA, 1983). More recently, the UK’s “New Literacy Strategy” and the USA’s “No Child Left Behind” program shared a belief that literacy skills in the standard language could be disseminated by formal pedagogy closely monitored by the national government, but they operated with a narrow conception of literacy and standard language and did not allocate the funding necessary for the changes they prescribed (Rothstein 2004) nor for educating the increasingly multilingual populations served by public schools (Menken 2008; Rampton 2006).

In research, class analysis has generally been less prominent in the USA than the UK, as discussed earlier. One reason is that in the USA, anthropology has been more influential in the study of education than it has been in the UK, where sociology has played a more important role: “[f]or the (American) anthropologist the classroom is the site of cultural differences, often ethnic in origin, and the teacher an agent of cultural imposition. For the (British) sociologist the frame of reference is a class-based social structure, in which teachers and pupils alike are subject to the everyday disciplines of work” (Delamont and Atkinson 1995, p. 34). During the late 1980s and 1990s in Britain, however, language and education research lost much of this

traditional interest in class (Block et al. 2012). This was partly in line with growing social scientific interest in human agency: In the 1960s and 1970s, research had emphasized the structural and normative dimensions of class, neglecting the agentic, performative, interactive aspects of class-as-lived, and as a result, class felt too deterministic as a concept for the 1990s. At the same time, sociolinguists interested in education refocused on new populations from the ex-colonies (Martin-Jones and Jones 2002), and in doing so, they drew inspiration from the ethnography of communication in North America, with its anthropological roots and preoccupation with ethnicity, rather than from the more class-focused, sociological ethnographies produced in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Willis 1977). In their socioeconomic positioning, the ethnic minority students studied might be working class, but theoretical explications tended to dwell primarily on ethnicity and race.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions: The Continuing Realities of Stratification

We suggested above that in era of increased global capital flows, mass migration, and population mobility, analyses of language and education without a sense of class will be increasingly inadequate to the task of understanding schooling as a social institution. This has been brought home by recent political and economic developments.

In 2008 worldwide class inequalities emerged vividly, part of an enduring capitalist business crisis that is now called the Great Recession. A banking crisis originating on Wall Street spread throughout the world, especially the Eurozone and particularly in the UK, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain. Trillions of dollars in wealth in stocks and bonds were lost in months. States acted to save major banks from the consequences of financial speculation and imposed austerity budgets on their citizens. Cutbacks in public sector spending accompanied massive job losses, sharply reduced wages and benefits, and bleak unemployment levels, especially for younger generations (Mishel et al. 2012). In 2011 the Occupy Movement began direct action protests in Wall Street, and occupations spread around the globe, rallying round and circulating a new signature phrase for class inequality: “the 1% and the 99%.” Ongoing reduction in social futures is now faced most bluntly by young adults, across North America and Europe, for whom the commonplace that a “good education leads to a good job” now seems questionable if not deceptive. The bleak new reality in the Global North – of economic decline, mass unemployment and social austerity – has long been familiar in the Global South (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012). Awareness of international parallels and shared conditions across national boundaries must therefore inform future investigations of language, class, and education.

What used to be called class in rather totalizing ways can be usefully seen as the patterns of stratification that emerge in social systems in which a range of differences come to mean inequality within schemes and hierarchies of value linked to the hard economy. Class in this sense is a structuring principle, tied in some way to modes of

production and divisions of labor in a social system, but with considerable room for interaction with other structuring principles (Collins 2012; Foley 2010; Shankar 2008). In this way, other widely used parameters – gender, race, ethnicity, and linguistic difference – may display processes of stratification that are similar to what was previously called class.

The ascendancy of neoliberal doctrine and governance since the 1980s may have undermined the legitimacy of discourses of class, but it has also led to dramatic increases in socioeconomic inequality within and between nations. Exactly how we think about that inequality in language and education research remains an open question, but to encourage further reflection, we conclude by listing some of the continuing realities of stratification:

- Immigrant minority populations often find themselves in run-down areas and schools and situations of relative poverty, and though the public discourse might focus on ethnicity and gender, factors traditionally associated with class still affect educational achievement in the UK and USA (Collins 2012; Gillborn and Mirza 2000).
- Survey studies of language variation may have suggested that regional difference between nonstandard dialects may have diminished in the UK and USA, and there is also evidence that British Received Pronunciation has lost quite a lot of its cultural status. But no one suggests that style-shifting between standard and vernacular speech varieties has disappeared, and it is this that displays a class habitus in Bourdieu's terms. Indeed, what evidence there is suggests that as the children and grandchildren of immigrants grow up using English, they acquire both class-marked features and a style-shifting capacity tuned to the sociolinguistic stratification traditionally linked to class hierarchy (Rampton 2006; Shankar 2008).
- There has been quite a lot of work in the UK and USA on the ways in which minority speech features are taken up by young whites (Creole, Panjabi, African American Vernacular English, etc.), but the manner and extent to which this happens are extensively influenced by actual familiarity with the inheritors of these languages, which is itself extensively shaped by socioeconomic positioning (Bucholtz 2011; Rampton 1995).
- Recent survey research on the stratifying dynamics of class and ethnicity in US education demonstrates the cognitive and noncognitive consequences of basic inequalities in resources such as income, housing, health care, and nutrition, as well as linguistic habits and personality traits (Rothstein 2004). This research is complemented by long-term in-depth ethnographic work on class, race, and language socialization, investigating interactions between language use and ideology, class conditions, and racialization (Foley 2010; Lareau 2003).
- Related studies, examining the dynamics of multilingual language practices among immigrant and nonimmigrant populations in home and school settings, show that students' language use and school response thereto are influenced by and constitutive of ideologies and identities of class and race (Collins 2012; Makoe and McKinney 2014; Shankar 2008).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#)
- ▶ [Language and Power in the Classroom](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- David Block: [Researching Language and Social Class in Education](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
- Kasper Juffermans: [Literacy and Multilingualism in Africa](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Monica Heller: [Language Choice and Symbolic Domination](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education
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- Rebecca Rogers: [Critical Discourse Analysis in Education](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education
- Stanton Wortham: [Linguistic Anthropology of Education](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education

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The Economics of Language Education

François Grin

Abstract

This chapter presents the economic approach to language, with a focus on applications to second/foreign language education. This leads to a joint emphasis on efficiency (“are scarce resources used wisely?”) and fairness (“does the resulting distribution of material and symbolic resources meet socially accepted standards of fairness?”) A distinction is made between *internal* and *external* evaluation. *Internal* evaluation focuses on the relationship between various inputs on the one hand (e.g., expenditure per pupil) and the desired output on the other hand (e.g., the skills imparted in a given school subject). *External* evaluation examines the level of material and symbolic benefits associated with the skills acquired. In both cases, a key question is that of the resulting distributions of skills (internal) or other benefits (external) among groups, which may variously be defined in terms of socioeconomic status, L1, region of residence, stream in an education system, etc. In practice, much of the economics of language education is devoted to the estimation of the private rates of return, for individuals, of investing in second or foreign language skills. These returns are reflected in earnings differentials. When data on language learning expenditure are available, social rates of return can also be computed. They estimate the value, for society as a whole, of investing in foreign or second language teaching. Further empirical research is needed in particular on the long-term evolution of rates of return and on the relative value of different languages and different perspectives on language education, including bilingual education and intercomprehensive approaches.

Keywords

Economics of language • Efficiency • Fairness • Rates of return

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Introduction

Because the economics of language education, as a field of investigation, differs somewhat from most of the scholarly work on language and education presented in this volume, this chapter does not offer a descriptive or historical account of research, but instead emphasizes the presentation of analytical concepts along with their meaning and function and the relationships between them. The following section, “[Definitions and Scope: Allocation and Distribution of Resources in Language Education](#),” provides a general framework that explains the position of the economics of language education with respect to three closely related areas: economics, language economics, and policy evaluation. The chapter then introduces key concepts and analytical distinctions. The section on “[Major Contributions](#)” presents the application of human capital theory to foreign language (FL) skills, which makes up the bulk of the literature on the economics of language education. The section on “[Problems and Difficulties: Language Education and Linguistic Justice](#)” turns to important issues of resource distribution. The section on “[Challenges](#)” addresses a set of unsolved issues in the field. The last section, on “[Future Directions](#),” discusses likely developments in the light of policy needs. We shall not examine the teaching of children’s mother tongue when the latter also is the dominant or official language (e.g., the teaching of French to children of Francophone families in France), because the corresponding economic issues are analytically very different from those that arise in the context of foreign language teaching, which is the focus of this chapter.

Definitions and Scope: Allocation and Distribution of Resources in Language Education

The economics of language education is a specific area of inquiry that may be approached from different disciplinary perspectives. Starting from mainstream economics, one would generally use the well-established conceptual and methodological apparatus of education economics as a stepping stone (Johnes and Johnes 2004). This strategy, however, may confine the examination to a relatively narrow range of issues, particularly applications of human capital theory to foreign language

(FL) learning. Nevertheless, FL education raises economic questions that go far beyond human capital investment, because it is also a key component of language policy. For this reason, this chapter approaches the economics of FL education through the distinct and less institutionally established subfield of language economics (Grin 1996; Ginsburgh and Weber 2016).

Language economics studies the mutual relationships between linguistic and economic variables. What matters, however, is not their mere co-occurrence, but the fact that they actually influence each other. From this perspective, the use of various languages at work, for example, does not per se constitute a relevant research object for language economics, unless it has an impact on the economic processes at hand or is impacted by them. The focus of attention, then, may be either an economic or a linguistic variable. For example, an economist of language may investigate whether a company can increase its profits (the dependent *economic* variable) by advertising its goods in the local language, even in a very small market. Reciprocally, she may examine language maintenance among immigrants (the dependent *linguistic* variable) and assess whether the pattern observed is influenced in one direction or another by labor market participation. However, particularly since the mid-1990s, language economics has been paying increasing attention to language policy issues (Grin 2003, 2016). Even if none of the variables involved in the selection, design, and implementation of a given language policy explicitly refers to economic activity, choosing an appropriate policy requires weighing the advantages and drawbacks of the options considered. This represents a very direct application of economic analysis because the latter is, at heart, a theory of how choices are made, and this rationale also applies to the economics of language education. Therefore, the economics of language education largely coincides with an in-depth application of policy evaluation techniques to language education, in the broader context of language policy (on the links with language policy, see also Tollefson, chapter “► [Language Planning in Education](#)”).

The rationale of policy evaluation is straightforward and can be characterized, in the case of *ex ante* evaluation, by the following steps: Define policy alternatives, identify their consequences, translate the latter into advantages and drawbacks, compute the “net value” of each alternative by subtracting drawbacks from advantages expressed in terms of a comparable unit of measurement, and select the policy with the highest net value (for a systematic approach to the application of policy evaluation techniques to language policy, see Gazzola 2014, Grin and Vaillancourt 2015 or Gazzola and Grin 2017). Policy evaluation casts the net wide and should in principle take account of advantages (or “benefits”) and drawbacks (or “costs”) in the broadest sense. More specifically, proper policy evaluation is not concerned with financial or material advantages and drawbacks only; nonmaterial and symbolic values are just as relevant. This is why the distinction often made in other disciplines between “instrumental” and “intrinsic” values or motivations has limited analytical relevance in economics, although it does make a difference at the empirical level, when these effects have to be evaluated (see Major Contributions, below).

The costs and benefits of each policy option can often be interpreted as inputs and outputs, respectively. It is safe to assume that all other things being equal, social

actors prefer efficient policies, that is, those that yield more output (benefit) per unit of input (cost). This generates a useful set of criteria for comparing options. In the field of education, however, it is essential to make a distinction between *internal* and *external* efficiency.

Internal efficiency refers to processes that occur *within* the educational sphere. In the particular case of FL education, the FL skills acquired normally play the role of the output, while the inputs comprise all the resources used to teach those skills, taking account of the way in which they are used (teacher and learner time, textbooks, pedagogical approach, etc.). Internal efficiency evaluations are not specific to education economics and are carried out in various areas of educational research; there is, however, surprisingly little quantitative empirical work focusing on the internal efficiency of FL teaching. Quantitative approaches, however, are irreplaceable as a basis for generalization.

External efficiency, by contrast, starts out from the assumption that education is not pursued for its own sake, but in order to secure benefits *outside* the education system. External efficiency evaluation is crucial because it addresses the questions “what?” (i.e., “what FLs should we teach?”) and “why?” (“for what reasons?”), whereas internal effectiveness evaluation focuses on the question “how?” (“how best to teach FLs?”). For this reason, we shall now concentrate on external efficiency evaluation.

Some of these benefits may be *market related*, such as higher earnings, access to more desirable jobs, etc.; other benefits are of the *nonmarket* kind, such as direct access, thanks to language competence, to other cultures and the people carrying them. In usual practice, however, the external efficiency of FL skills is only assessed in terms of market value (more precisely, through earnings differentials; see section on “[Major Contributions](#)”), because the necessary data can be collected relatively easily through surveys or censuses. By contrast, the data required to assess the existence and magnitude of nonmarket benefits are difficult to collect, and this has apparently never been done in large-scale surveys.

Whether of the market or of the nonmarket kind, the benefits and costs of education, and hence the more or less efficient relationship between them, may be evaluated at the *private* or *social* level. The private level reflects the conditions confronting the typical or average person or household, whereas the social level concerns benefits and costs for society as a whole. In mainstream education economics, defining social benefits and costs as the simple sum, across members of society, of individual benefits and costs is usually an acceptable simplification. In the case of FL education, however, such a procedure is less satisfactory, because of one specific feature of language, namely, the fact that language learning gives rise to what is known, in economic theory, as “externalities,” which are best explained with a hypothetical example. As more people learn a given language (say, language *L*), the value of knowing this language is affected. It is commonly assumed that this effect can only be positive (De Swan 2002; van Parijs 2004) because people who already speak *L* gain additional potential interlocutors. However, the effect can work both ways, because this amounts to an increase in the overall supply of *L*-language

skills, which would lower their value on the labor market. Which of the two effects dominates under various conditions remains an unsolved issue, and the attending theoretical difficulties this raises have not been fully explored. Consequently, empirical results on the social value of FL education must be interpreted with caution, even within the better-known market values (see section on “[Problems and Difficulties: Language Education and Linguistic Justice](#)” below).

Empirical work therefore yields estimates of the labor market value, for the average person and/or for society (under the limitations just pointed out), of competence in various FLs. The standard policy recommendation would be to prioritize the teaching of FLs that give rise to the highest returns, because these are taken as a good indicator of the usefulness of those skills. FL teaching can therefore be seen as an efficient allocation of resources by one generation that pays for it while the beneficiaries are from a younger generation.

However, policy evaluation is not confined to *allocative* efficiency. It also assesses competing scenarios in terms of their respective fairness. Since all policy choices make some people better off and other worse off, they have a *distributive* effect. One important criterion for choosing among scenarios, therefore, is whether these distributive effects are morally and socially acceptable and, if not, whether those who gain from a policy can offer appropriate compensation, in money or otherwise, to the “losers.” Such questions tie into discussions of social justice applied to language policy choices (van Parijs 2011, de Schutter 2017) and are discussed in the section on “[Problems and Difficulties: Language Education and Linguistic Justice.](#)” Combining the four analytical distinctions just made, we can use a diagram to provide of bird’s-eye view of the scope of the economics of language education (Fig. 1).

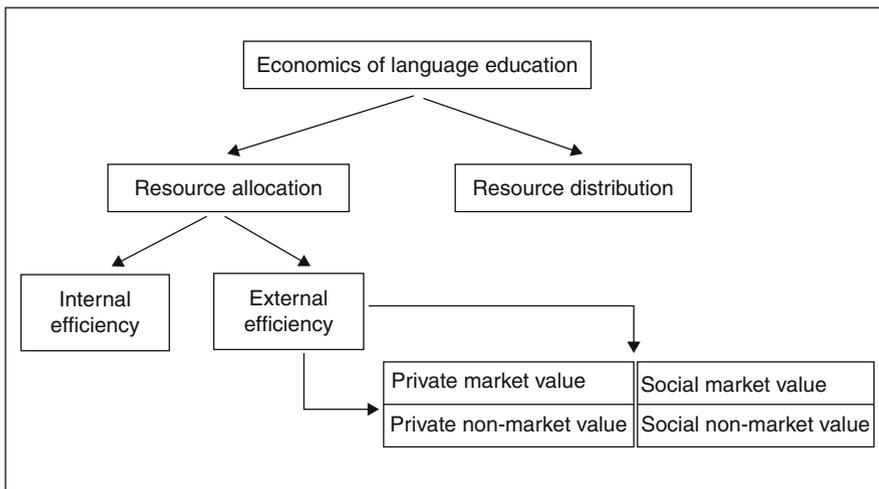


Fig. 1 The structure of the economics of foreign language education

Major Contributions: Rates of Return on Foreign Language Skills

The estimation of the market rates of return on FL skills still makes up the main part of published work in the economics of language education even though, as we have just seen, this captures only one side of their value. These rates of return may be estimated at the level of the individual or of society. In either case, two main research orientations can be identified. Let us first discuss them in the case of private returns, which accrue to individuals.

The first orientation studies the value to immigrants of learning the dominant language of their new country of residence. In this case, “FL” must be understood as a language other than the speaker’s mother tongue or L1, although it is the main and/or official language of the country of residence. Most of the empirical work uses samples of immigrants to the USA, occasionally Australia, Canada, Israel, or Germany (see e.g., Aldashev et al. 2009; Bleakley and Chin 2004; Chiswick 2002; Chiswick and Miller 2007; Dustmann and van Soest 2002). In general, their (unsurprising) finding is that competence in the country’s dominant or official language yields statistically significant advantages to immigrants, although this gain is less pronounced in so-called language enclaves where immigrants are more concentrated (Bloom and Grenier 1996).

The second line of research examines the rates of return on skills in a language which, apart from not being the actor’s mother tongue, is also other than the main language in the actor’s place of residence. This case is therefore closer to the standard notion of FL. A further distinction can be made between two types of cases. The first is that of the “other” language(s) in multilingual countries with a de facto and/or officially enshrined territorial distribution of languages, for example, English in Québec (Vaillancourt 1996; Vaillancourt et al. 2007), French in German-speaking Switzerland (Grin 1999), Welsh in Wales (Henley and Jones 2005), Irish (Gaelic) in Ireland (Borooah et al. 2009), or Russian in Western Ukraine (Kastoukievitch 2003). The second is that of truly foreign languages like English in Switzerland (Grin 1999) or Luxembourg (Klein 2004).

With increasing international mobility, the sharp distinction between immigrant and other languages is becoming more difficult to maintain, and research is slowly shifting from the study of the value of “immigrant language skills” or “foreign language skills” to the study of the value of “multilingual skills,” addressing an ever wider range of cases including, for example, China (Gao and Symth 2011), Catalonia (Di Paolo and Raymond 2012), India (Azam et al. 2013), Spain (Isphording 2013), or Kazakhstan (Aldashev and Danzer 2014).

Across these various situations, results show that FL skills can be highly valuable and significantly add to a person’s labor income, although major variations are observed depending on various elements of context and on the FL concerned. Of course, in any of the situations discussed in this section, it is essential to disentangle the effect of FL skills from that of other determinants of income, particularly when the latter are likely to be correlated with the presence of FL skills. The typical response to this challenge is to apply multivariate analysis to estimate

language-augmented earnings equations (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 2004), usually with ordinary least squares. Applying this technique generally confirms the profitability of FL skills after even controlling for (at least) education and work experience. This nevertheless requires detailed and reliable individual (as opposed to grouped) data. Suitable databases are rare, which probably explains why this has only been done for relatively few countries. The information needed includes, at the very least, each person's labor income (often using after-tax earnings), education, gender, age, and/or experience, L1, and, of course, FL skills. Depending on the degree of detail of the database, it is sometimes possible to distinguish the impact of productive versus receptive and of oral versus written skills in the language concerned and to differentiate between basic, advanced, and native-like competence. It is also desirable to include additional information, in particular individual respondents' economic sector of activity, hierarchical position at work, and geographical location. Interested readers can find more practical detail on the procedure in Grin (1999), Grin et al. (2010), or Grin and Vaillancourt (2015).

The type of estimates described so far are, in fact, *net earnings differentials*, in the sense that they attempt to single out the effect of FL skills on earnings, *net* of the effect of other variables like education. They are often called "rates of return" because FL skills can be seen, in line with human capital theory, as an investment made at a certain time and yielding a certain return in the form of higher earnings later in life. However, estimating rates of return in the strict sense requires taking account of the time lag between the investment and the reaping of the corresponding benefits. Though this is usually not done in the type of estimates presented so far, it is an essential part of the calculation of *social* rates of return, whose goal is to assess the value, for society as a whole, of teaching FLs through the education system.

Social benefits are generally assumed to be the sum of private benefits; there again, given the absence of data on nonmarket benefits, calculations are usually confined to market benefits in the form of earnings differentials. However, calculations will then be based on pre-tax instead of after-tax earnings. Furthermore, earnings differentials accruing in the distant future are worth less than those that appear immediately, and they must therefore be discounted. FL teaching costs are then deducted from the sum, over a person's lifetime, of discounted pre-tax earnings differentials. This requires additional information on public expenditure on foreign language teaching. Typically, educational statistics do not offer subject-based expenditure accounting, which means that approximations of the expenditure specifically devoted to FL teaching must be derived from data on enrolments, time endowments for FLs, and per capita spending, for successive cycles in the education system. To our knowledge, social rates of return on FL skills have only been estimated for Switzerland, where they are shown to be positive for French (in German- and Italian-speaking Switzerland), German (in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland), and English (across the country) (Grin 1999). The general policy implication of high rates of return (whether private or, if possible, social) on FL skills is that it is efficient to allocate resources to FL education.

Problems and Difficulties: Language Education and Linguistic Justice

The estimation of rates of return responds to a concern for the efficient allocation of resources (even if it focuses on the market dimensions of value, largely ignoring, for lack of data, its nonmarket dimensions). Let us now turn to matters of resource distribution, which raise questions of social justice.

Any policy choice, including in language education, will tend to make some groups better off and other groups worse off. Theorists have considered different criteria for deciding whether this redistribution of resources is just or not (Arnsperger and van Parijs 2003; Ginsburgh and Weber 2011; Van Parijs 2011; Shorten 2016). These effects can be considered socially acceptable if it improves the lot of those who were worst off, if those previously better off enjoyed unjust advantages, or if the policy gives rise to sufficient net gains in the aggregate for the winners to be *able* to offer compensation to the losers (whether such compensation is actually paid being a separate question). We shall not discuss this particular issue further here, but note that one crucial, and generally under-researched, dimension of the problem is that of the *criteria* on the basis of which we should define groups between which policies redistribute resources. Most of the literature on equity or fairness concerns socio-economic groups defined by income, education, indicators of social class, etc. (see also, from a different point of view, Rampton et al., chapter “► [Language, Class, and Education](#)”). However, it is also possible to investigate resource redistribution between age groups, men and women, ethnic groups, families and single households, etc. In the case of FL education, peoples’ L1 becomes a relevant dimension. This reflects the fact that the cost of FL learning is often borne unequally.

This point is best explained by using the example of international communication, although it could also be illustrated in terms of the respective position of speakers of minority languages who have to adopt a majority language. Consider the case of the 28-member European Union (EU) (at the time of writing, preceding the actual end of UK membership following the June 2016 referendum). For a variety of reasons (Guus Extra, chapter “► [Language Policy and Education in the New Europe](#)”; Phillipson 2003), English is currently the most frequently used language between Europeans of different mother tongues. Consequently, nonnative speakers of English devote considerable time and effort to learning the language, at a massive cost to the education systems of the countries of about 85% of Europe’s residents. By contrast, the UK has decreased its effort in FL teaching. Current public effort on FL teaching in the UK can be estimated at between one third and one fourth of that of other EU member countries. The amounts thus saved can be invested in other forms of human capital development. In other words, the non-English-speaking countries of the EU are subsidizing the UK on this plane as well. Controversy is currently ongoing over the extent of these transfers, and the identification of the best solution to this problem, taking account of both efficiency and fairness. This debate, however, raises questions that go well beyond language education and plugs into wider issues of language policy and macro-level language dynamics (see also Higgins and Bal Sharma, chapter “► [Language Education and Globalization](#)”).

Challenges

The controversies just mentioned also hark back to empirical questions. This applies to the issue of the actual magnitude of nonmarket returns to language skills as well. This type of returns has never been evaluated but could, in principle, be estimated by adapting instruments used in the evaluation of environmental assets. A number of other questions in the economics of language education, however, raise theoretical challenges.

One of the most important is that of the long-term evolution of rates of return. As we have seen, rates of return are estimated at time t , but language education policy decisions made on their basis will affect learners who already are in the education system or who will enter it in the future. Suppose, for example, that high rates of return on competence in a certain FL, say language L , have been observed at time t and that a policy decision is made to increase, from time $t + 1$, the endowment for L language teaching across the education system. Therefore, those learners who actually receive more L language training only arrive on the labor market some years later. There is no certainty that, at that time, L language skills will still be as profitable. High rates of return are therefore a relevant but not a sufficient guide for language education policy decisions.

In order to make reliable policy recommendations to education authorities, it would be necessary to have a robust predictive model of the evolution of the value of FL skills. This, in turn, requires a deeper understanding than the literature currently offers of several interconnected processes, particularly of the ways in which employees' FL skills are exploited by employers. Ethnographic accounts (often found in the applied linguistics literature) of how various languages are used in the workplace are of limited usefulness in this particular respect, because what matters is whether FL skills, when appropriately used in specific jobs within a company, have an actual impact on *economic* processes of production and distribution and can therefore contribute to increased profits, market shares, etc. Ethnographic approaches usually do not identify, let alone measure such impacts, nor do they establish a causal connection between language strategies and economic outcomes (see, however, van Mulken and Hendriks 2015). But only if such impacts do exist will firms have an incentive to recruit people with particular FL skills, thereby driving up the demand for such skills and keeping up, by way of consequence, the rate of return on them. If not, the language learning that occurs in response to the earnings differentials observed, at time t , in favor of persons who are fluent in language L , will soon erode these very differentials. The incentive to learn language L will therefore decline, and language spread will continue on a large scale only if other factors come into play – for example, the fact that the social relevance of the language keeps increasing along with the number of learners and users, thereby renewing the incentive for more actors to learn it.

This question is particularly intriguing in the case of English. The reasons for its rapid spread are only partly understood. Circumstantial evidence suggests that a plausible scenario is one of long-term decline in the labor market value of competence in English, as such skills are acquired by more people and become banal.

Competence in English, at least up to a certain level, is likely to keep spreading, but for reasons distinct from labor market value, such as social participation. Consequently, maintaining a competitive advantage in the labor market is likely to constitute an incentive for individuals to learn additional FLs, and competence in Chinese may become a significant asset for this reason (cf. Zhou, chapter “► [Language Policy and Education in Greater China](#)”).

Future Directions

The economic analysis of language addresses a wide range of questions of considerable social and political significance; many of them also tie into major language policy debates. This is reflected in recent research (Ginsburgh and Weber 2011; Grin and Gazzola 2013; Gazzola and Wickström 2016), a trend that is likely to continue. We may therefore expect future work to keep emphasizing policy issues and to address both the relative efficiency and the fairness of various forms of multilingual communication. In particular, should policies favor the emergence of one lingua franca (e.g., at the European level) or encourage a partnership between a few major languages? In the former case, is a natural language like English a suitable lingua franca despite the major equity problems that its spread generates, or should some alternative like Esperanto be actively promoted through internationally coordinated action? How extensive should social multilingualism be, given that linguistic diversity carries benefits and costs (both of the market and nonmarket kind)? All these questions clearly indicate that language education needs to be investigated, also when using economic analysis, in connection with broader social and political issues. The research needed, however, is not necessarily located entirely at the macro-level; it also requires micro-level investigation, as well as consideration of the meso-level of organizations such as companies, universities, etc. Many of the most important challenges are related to the need to ensure compatibility between the sometimes conflicting rationales encountered at these three levels.

At the same time, there is also work to be done on processes within education systems. Economics may help in the measurement of the respective contribution of school and nonschool channels of FL acquisition, by providing instruments for the systematic comparison of the performance of various forms of FL instruction, such as bilingual education (CLIL), “intercomprehension” between speakers of mutually (and closely) related languages (e.g., the Romance languages), etc., in comparison with more traditional forms of instruction. Empirical results in those areas can help design efficient yet differentiated FL education curricula appropriate for different language learning contexts.

In all cases, however, it is important to remember that the issues at hand are highly complex. It would undoubtedly be useful for them to receive more sustained attention from economists. At the same time, further research needs to be carried out with a strongly interdisciplinary ethos in order to yield policy-relevant results.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Globalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the New Europe](#)
- ▶ [Language, Class, and Education](#)

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Part II

Rights and Law for Minoritized Communities

Linguistic Human Rights in Education

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Stephen May

Abstract

In this chapter, we summarize the arguments underpinning the recognition of linguistic human rights (LHRs) as key human rights. While there is ongoing skepticism about the recognition of LHRs, particularly among individual nation-states, there is an emerging jurisprudence in international law supporting LHRs. These developments provide – at least potentially – greater LHRs for ethnolinguistic minorities, including Indigenous peoples, national minorities and other minoritized groups. The area where this is most evident, and potentially most useful, is with respect to the provision of mother tongue or first language education. We thus assess to what extent present language policies and legal instruments facilitate or undermine such rights and also discuss how various research contributions inform arguments for these language rights.

Keywords

Human rights • Language rights • Linguistic genocide • Mother tongue/first language education • Bilingual education

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Introduction

The United Nation's 2004 Human Development Report (<http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>) links cultural liberty directly to language rights and human development and argues that there is

... no more powerful means of “encouraging” individuals to assimilate to a dominant culture than having the economic, social and political returns stacked against their mother tongue. Such assimilation is not freely chosen if the choice is between one's mother tongue and one's future. (p. 33)

Such forced linguistic assimilation of speakers of minority or, more accurately, minoritized languages violates several of the United Nations main human rights (HRs) instruments (see below). Also, the apparent “choice” above “between one's mother tongue and one's future” represents false “either/or” thinking – there is no need to choose, one can have both. Supporting the mother tongues (MTs) or first languages (L1s) of children from Indigenous and Tribal peoples, national minorities – those minorities who have always been associated with a particular territory but who now find themselves minoritized through conquest, colonization or confederation, or some combination of all three – and other minoritized groups (ITMs) is not only possible but also highly valuable. Indeed, such support in formal public (and private) education has been shown to lead to high levels of bi- or multilingualism, good school achievement, and thus also better prospects for the future for minority language speakers in comparison with only using a dominant language as a teaching language (Baker 2011; García 2009; see also May, chapter “► [Bilingual Education: What the Research Tells Us](#)” in volume “Bilingual and Multilingual Education”). This support presupposes using these mother tongues (MTs) as the main teaching languages for several years, particularly in the early years of schooling, while teaching a dominant/official language initially as a second language (L2) and, later on, as a teaching language, in mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MLE). This kind of MLE can in fact be seen as a basic human right. Moreover, should a state not offer such opportunities for its minority language speakers, this can be seen as a serious violation of their right to education.

In this chapter, we summarize what human rights, especially linguistic human rights (LHRs), ITM children have in education and to what extent present language policies and legal instruments facilitate or undermine such rights. We also discuss how various research contributions inform arguments for these language rights.

Early Developments

Dominant language speakers have been able to use their mother tongue or first language, unhindered in both the private and public domain, without question for centuries but are seldom aware of, or particularly sympathetic to, these rights being extended to minority language speakers. That said, there are some countries where minority language rights are legally formalized, as in Belgium, Finland, and the autonomous regions of Spain, for example. Over the years, language rights have been formulated pragmatically, in response to particular language contexts, and mostly by lawyers within the realm of international law. The first bilateral agreements (between two countries) were about religious not linguistic minorities, but subsequently the two often coincided. The first multilateral agreement covering national minorities was the **Final Act of the Congress of Vienna 1815** (Capotorti 1979, p. 2). During the nineteenth century, several national constitutions and some multilateral instruments safeguarded some national linguistic minorities (see the historical overview in Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1994a; see also May 2011). The Peace Treaties after the First World War, and major multilateral and international conventions under the League of Nations in the inter-war period, improved the protection of linguistic minorities. After World War Two, however, the individual rights formulated by the United Nations were supposed to protect minority persons as individuals; collective minority rights were seen as unnecessary, even dangerous, in part as a response to the way Hitler used the interwar minority treaties as a pretext for war. A better protection of linguistic minorities only started to develop after Francesco Capotorti, as a UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Minorities, published his 1979 report outlining the possibilities of and prospects for more extensive language rights for linguistics minorities. Even so, these protections, as we shall see, are still far from satisfactory.

It was only in the early 1990s that the area of linguistic human rights (LHRs) started crystallizing as a multidisciplinary research area. Academic discussion of human rights within international law and language rights had, prior to that time, remained largely separate. Both academic domains were dominated by lawyers, with few if any sociolinguists involved, and driven by practical-political concerns. The research was mainly descriptive, not analytical. Even today, the interdisciplinary engagement remains nascent. Few lawyers know much about language or education, for example. Many sociolinguists and educationists, who are today writing about LHRs, know too little about international law, political theory, or economics (Grin 2005; May 2014a). Most political scientists who discuss language and citizenship actually know little about language or education, even when they profess to (May 2014b; see also below). The first multidisciplinary book about LHRs appeared in the mid-1990s (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1994). This is a fast growing area where major concept clarification (see, e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty 2008) and further transdisciplinary engagement – traversing sociolinguistics, international law, education, and political studies – is still urgently needed (see, e.g. Ives 2010, 2014; May 2014c).

LHRs can be applied at both the individual and collective levels and also in relation to languages themselves. *Individual* language rights are foregrounded in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** (Art. 30) and in the United Nations **Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities**. Language rights can be granted to *collectivities* of people (groups, peoples, organizations, or states) who may have rights to the use, development, and maintenance of languages or duties to enable the use, development, or maintenance of them. The Council of Europe's **Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities** grants rights to national minority groups, for example. Finally, *languages* themselves (rather than speakers/signers) may have rights attributed to their ongoing use, development, and maintenance. The Council of Europe's **European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages** grants rights to languages, not to the speakers of the languages concerned. "Dialects" and Sign languages are, though, explicitly excluded from it.

Major Contributions

Why are LHRs needed in education? The world's spoken languages, particularly ITM languages, are disappearing fast (Harrison 2007; Nettle and Romaine 2000). Transmission of languages from the parent generation to children is *the* most vital factor for the maintenance of both oral and sign languages (Fishman 1991). However, the impact of schooling should also not be underestimated. When more children gain access to formal education, much of their (more formal) language learning, which earlier occurred in the family and community, takes place in schools. If an alien (dominant) language is used in schools, i.e., if children do not have the right to learn and use their mother tongue or first language in schools (and, of course, later in their working life and many other domains), the language is likely not going to survive. The result of such language loss also sees a diminution in the cultural knowledge associated with particular languages. In other words, if ITM languages disappear, most of the knowledge associated with them is also lost over time (see Maffi 2005; Stibbe 2015) – it is not transferred to the replacing languages. Thus educational LHRs, especially an unconditional right to mother tongue medium (MTM) or mother-tongue-based multilingual (MLE) education, are central not only for the maintenance of languages but also for preventing wider ecocide, historicide ("historic amnesia"; see, e.g. May 2005), and linguistic and cultural genocide (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

Maintenance of ITM languages is also important for both individual and collective identity reasons, as well as for issues of social justice and inclusion. Van der Stoel, writing in his role as High Commissioner on National Minorities for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), argues, for example, that the linguistic protection of national minorities (although, this can also be extended to other linguistic minorities) rests on two key pillars of wider human rights,

the right to non-discrimination in the enjoyment of human rights; and the right to the maintenance and development of identity through the freedom to practice or use those special and unique aspects of their minority life – typically culture, religion, and language. The first protection . . . ensures that minorities receive all of the other protections without regard to their ethnic, national, or religious status; they thus enjoy a number of linguistic rights that all persons in the state enjoy, such as freedom of expression and the right in criminal proceedings to be informed of the charge against them in a language they understand, if necessary through an interpreter provided free of charge.

The second pillar, encompassing affirmative obligations beyond non-discrimination. . . . includes a number of rights pertinent to minorities simply by virtue of their minority status, such as the right to use their language. This pillar is necessary because a pure non-discrimination norm could have the effect of forcing people belonging to minorities to adhere to a majority language, effectively denying them their rights to identity. (OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe – High Commissioner on National Minorities 1999, pp. 8–9)

It is clear, though, that neither LHRs nor schools alone can guarantee the maintenance and further development of ITM languages – they are both necessary but not sufficient for this purpose. There are no miracle cures or panaceas. That said, minorities do have some support within the domain of human rights for use of their languages in areas such as public administration, courts, the media, etc. (Alfredsson 2015; Dunbar 2001; Henrard 2000). Meanwhile, the right to education is protected in the UN’s **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR), especially in Article 13. Beiter (2006) argues convincingly here for the legally binding character of the Article’s provisions and the obligations it places upon governments to ensure that education is available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable for linguistic minorities (see also Tomaševski 1996 and http://www.right-to-education.org/content/primers/_rte03.pdf for these concepts). If MTM/MLE education is not available, the child does not in fact have access to education. Even if the children’s mother tongue (MT) is used in the first few years of education, schools often see the MTs as a temporary measure to facilitate the ITM child’s learning of a dominant language. As soon as s/he is deemed in some way competent in the dominant language, the MT can be left behind, and the child has no right to maintain it and develop it further in the educational system. This denies the ITM child the right to education.

Both the right to education (Art. 28, para 1, and Art 29) and the right to use one’s MT (Art 30) are also protected in the 1989 UN **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC). By December 2016, the CRC had been ratified by all other UN member states except the USA. Art. 30 draws considerably on Article 27 of the 1966 United Nations’ **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR) – the famous “minorities” provision, which foregrounds the rights, including linguistic rights, attributable to minorities. Article 30 follows the ICCPR Article 27 formulation very closely, simply by adding Indigenous peoples and gender inclusive language, as follows:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of Indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is Indigenous shall not be denied

the right, in community with other members of *his or her* own group, to enjoy *his or her* own culture, to profess and practice *his or her* own religion, or to use *his or her* own language. (emphases added)

Earlier interpretations of ICCPR Article 27 were seen as only granting negative nondiscrimination rights, which did not place any specific obligations on states to support them (as suggested by van der Stoep above) – what the sociolinguist Heinz Kloss has described as “tolerance-oriented” language rights. In 1994, however, the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) published a General Comment on Art. 27 (4 April 1996, UN Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.5) supporting a more “promotion-oriented” language right (Kloss 1977). Promotion-oriented language rights require states to intervene actively in specific support of linguistic minorities and to facilitate the use of ITM languages in both private and, crucially, public language domains (such as education, law, and administration). The HRC also interpreted Article 27 as protecting all individuals on the state's territory or under its jurisdiction (i.e., also immigrant and refugee minorities), irrespective of whether they belong to the minorities specified in the article or not. Moreover, it stated that the existence of a minority was not up to individual states to determine but rather needed to be established by objective criteria. This is an important consideration, given that a number of countries, including France, Turkey, Greece, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Burma (Myanmar), and Bangladesh have, at various times, denied the existence of any linguistic minorities within their territories, thus obviating any state responsibility towards them. In response, the HRC recognized the existence of promotion-oriented rights for ITMs and imposed positive/active language obligations on states to recognize and provide them. The revised Human Rights Fact Sheet on ICCPR from the Committee (2005) sustains this interpretation. This interpretation must also be equally valid for CRC Article 30 (see above).

That said, other international and regional (e.g., African, European, or Inter-American) binding Covenants, Conventions, and Charters are less forthcoming, providing very little meaningful support for LHRs in education. Language as a factor is also accorded in these legal instruments much poorer treatment than other central human characteristics such as “race,” gender, and religion. Often language disappears completely in paragraphs that refer to educational provision. For instance, the (nonbinding) United Nations (UN) **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948) paragraph on education (26) does not refer to language at all. Similarly, the UN **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR), having initially mentioned language on a par with race, color, sex, religion, etc. in its general Article (2.2), explicitly refers only to “racial, ethnic, or religious groups” in its educational Article (13), specifically omitting reference to language or linguistic groups. When “language” *is* present in Articles on education, especially MTM/MLE education, the formulations are more vague and/or contain many more opt-outs, modifications, and claw-backs than other Articles. These other Articles create obligations and contain demanding formulations, whereby the states are viewed as firm duty-holders and are required to (“*shall*”) do something positive in order to ensure the rights.

These patterns of vague formulations, qualifications, and alternatives with respect to LHRa appear even in the latest binding minority or language specific international and regional instruments. In the Council of Europe's **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages** (1998), for example, a state can choose which paragraphs or subparagraphs it wishes to apply (a minimum of 35 is required). The education Article, 8, includes a range of caveats, including "as far as possible," "relevant," "appropriate," "where necessary," "pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient," "if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it," as well as a number of similar alternatives, as in "to allow, encourage **or** provide teaching in **or** of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education" (emphases added). Similar caveats and opt-outs abound in the Council of Europe's **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities** (1998):

In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in **substantial** numbers, **if there is sufficient demand**, the parties shall **endeavour** to ensure, **as far as possible** and **within the framework of their education systems**, that persons belonging to those minorities have **adequate** opportunities for being taught in the minority language **or** for receiving instruction in this language. (emphases added for modifications)

The Framework Convention has been criticized precisely for its indeterminacy with respect to these matters. Patrick Thornberry's general assessment from a legal perspective is particularly direct:

In case any of this [provisions in the Convention] should threaten the delicate sensibilities of States, the Explanatory Report makes it clear that they are under no obligation to conclude 'agreements'. . . Despite the presumed good intentions, the provision represents a low point in drafting a minority right; there is just enough substance in the formulation to prevent it becoming completely vacuous. (1997, pp. 356–357)

Of course, the balance between binding formulations and sensitivity to local conditions is a difficult one to achieve. Still, the Charter permits a reluctant state to meet the requirements in only a minimalist way. Such states can do so simply by claiming that a provision was not "possible" or "appropriate," or that numbers were not "sufficient" or did not "justify" a provision, or that it "allowed" the minority to organize teaching of their language as a subject, at their own cost. The (nonbinding) **UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities** suffers from similar vague formulations (but see the articles by lawyers in Caruso and Hofmann 2015, for some positive interpretations).

With respect to international standards, specific to Indigenous and tribal peoples, **ILO (International Labor Organization) Convention No. 169** and the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (61/295, 2007), UNDRIP, are the two most important legal instruments (see Thornberry 2002; Xanthaki 2007). ILO 169 specifically addresses the education of Indigenous and tribal peoples in Part VI (Articles 26 to 31). Article 28, para 1 asserts, for instance,

that Indigenous and tribal children *must* be taught to read and write in their own Indigenous language or in the language most commonly used by the group to which they belong. Article 29, para 2, provides that adequate measures must be taken by the State to ensure that Indigenous and tribal children also have “the opportunity to attain fluency in the national language or in one of the official languages” of the State. ILO 169, as a treaty, creates binding legal obligations for those States which ratify it. Thus far (December 2016), however, only 22 of the ILO’s 185 member states have done so (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11300:0::NO:11300:P11300_INSTRUMENT_ID:312314:NO). This is the result, principally, of a fear among many UN member states that recognition of greater Indigenous autonomy and control over education might lead, in turn, to demands for wider social and political autonomy over time (see May 2012, Chap. 8 for further discussion).

Remaining with education, UNDRIP’s Articles 13 and 14 seem to grant some positive promotion-oriented language and education rights. Specifically:

- 13.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*
- 13.2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that Indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.*
- 14.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.*
- 14.2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.*
- 14.3. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.*

The first two articles imply that the child has the right to learn their Indigenous mother tongue or first language, or even to reclaim a heritage Indigenous language. And yet, since most forms and levels of the “education of the State” (14.2) use the “state” languages as a medium of instruction, the child cannot have access to this education without first knowing the state (or dominant) language. Thus, while these quotes together might imply that achieving high levels of bilingualism in an Indigenous and state language is a primary goal in the education of an Indigenous child, the limited options that Indigenous peoples have to “choose” an education other than the “free” education offered by the state (almost always only in the dominant, state language) is, in fact, severely limited. Parents may well have an option for educating their children in an Indigenous language but it is, invariably, also at their own cost. How many Indigenous and tribal peoples can afford this? There is nothing in these

articles about the State having to allocate public resources to Indigenous-language-medium education – a promotion-oriented language right, in effect. And, in any case, a “Declaration,” such as UNDRIP, is in the end not even legally binding on states.

Another universal instrument, the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (2007) suffers from a different limitation – while it is especially important for the Deaf people and Sign languages, it contains few LHRs with respect to them, despite their centrality to issues of recognition, access, and opportunity for Deaf people (see also Bagga-Gupta, chapter “► [Signed Languages in Bilingual Education](#)” in volume “Bilingual and Multilingual Education”).

The (nonbinding) **Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities** http://www.osce.org/documents/html/pdf/html/2700_en.pdf.html from the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities is another example of a clear statement on LHRs, although the degree to which individual states adhere to it remains an open question. Developed by a small group of experts on HRs and education, it represents an authoritative interpretation of the minimum standards due national minorities (although, by extension, it could also potentially apply to all linguistic minorities) with respect to education. For example, in the section “The spirit of international instruments,” bilingualism is seen as a basic right and responsibility for persons belonging to national minorities (Art. 1), and states are reminded not to interpret their obligations in a restrictive manner (Art. 3). In the section on “Minority education at primary and secondary levels,” MTM education is recommended at all levels, including bilingual teachers in the dominant language as a second language (Articles 11–13). Teacher training is made a duty on the state (Art. 14). Finally, the Explanatory Note states that “submersion-type approaches whereby the curriculum is taught exclusively through the medium of the State language and minority children are entirely integrated into classes with children of the majority are not in line with international standards” (p. 5). UNESCO's 2003 Position paper “Education in a Multilingual World” (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001297/129728e.pdf>) follows the Hague Recommendations fairly closely.

Some multilateral instruments also include both more general and educational LHRs; Robert Phillipson outlines the following, for example, in relation to the Nordic context:

Inter-Nordic collaboration has resulted in the governments of the Nordic countries now being committed to maintaining the vitality of national languages while promoting competence in international languages, particularly English. A *Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy* was approved in 2006 by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and promulgated in Danish, Faeroese, Greenlandic, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Saami, Swedish, and English[i]. The document specifies the language rights of all residents in a Nordic country, and sets out goals for language policy. It encourages key institutions to develop long-range strategies for choice of language, the parallel use of languages, and language instruction. Since this is the first time that government-level language policy in this area has been made explicit, it is positive that language policy is not merely being left to market forces. The underlying thinking is both/and rather than either/or: not a focus on a single medium of instruction (an English-medium or local language-medium school or university) but a combination. (Phillipson 2012, p. 229)

Work in Progress

New interpretations or enlargement of the scope of older instruments and the development of nonbinding Declarations or Recommendations (e.g., **the UNDRIP** and the **Hague Recommendations**) in a more binding direction may in time improve the situation for ITMs and the languages they speak/sign. A possibility to entice states to not only grant more LHRs but also to implement them more effectively and consistently might be to bring cases to court on the basis of the **International Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** (E 793, 1948). When the United Nations did preparatory work for what became this Genocide Convention, linguistic genocide as a central aspect of cultural genocide was initially discussed alongside physical genocide as a serious crime against humanity (see Capotorti 1979, p. 37). When the UN General Assembly finally accepted the Convention, however, Article III covering linguistic and cultural genocide was voted down by 16 states (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Part I, Sixth Committee, 83rd meeting). It is thus not included in the final Convention of 1948.

The present Convention has five definitions of genocide in its Article 2. The article starts with “In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed **with intent to destroy**, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such” [emphasis added]. Two of the definitions fit most Indigenous and minority education today:

- II(e), “*forcibly transferring children of the group to another group*” and
 II(b), “*causing serious bodily **or mental** harm to members of the group*” (emphasis added)

Assimilationist submersion education, where Indigenous and minority children are forced to accept teaching through the medium of dominant languages, can cause serious mental harm and often leads to the students using the dominant language with their own children later on, i.e., over a generation or two the children are linguistically, and often in other ways too, forcibly transferred to a dominant group. This happens to millions of speakers of endangered languages all over the world (Harrison 2007; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). If there are no schools or classes teaching the children through the medium of the threatened Indigenous or minority languages (ITMs), the transfer to the majority language speaking group is not voluntary. Meaningful alternatives do not exist, and parents do not have enough reliable information about the long-term consequences of the various choices they are forced, by circumstance, to make. Because of this, disappearance of languages cannot be labelled “language death” or “language suicide” (Crystal 2000), even if it might at first seem that the speakers are themselves “voluntarily” abandoning their languages (see the initial UN quote).

Most ITM children (and their parents) obviously want in their own best interests to learn the official language of their country. This is also one of the important

LHRs principles (access to state languages) and implies for ITM speakers the right to become bilingual in their MT/L1 and the state language. Most children also want to learn English if it is not one of the official languages, given its current ascendancy as the dominant world language. But learning new languages, including dominant languages, should not occur in subtractive environments, which do not value children's bi/multilingualism or the maintenance thereof. Subtractive formal education, which teaches children (something of) a dominant language but almost always at the cost of their mother tongue or first language, is thus genocidal. This dominant language can be official (e.g., French in France) or semi-official (e.g., English in the USA); it can be the language of a numerical majority (as in France or the USA); often it is an old colonial language, spoken only by a small but powerful numerical minority (e.g., in many African countries). An allied but equally false educational philosophy claims that minority children learn the dominant language best if they have most of their education through the medium of the dominant language. Many studies have demonstrated, however, exactly the opposite. If children are taught an additional language in an additive bilingual context, which recognizes the value of bilingualism and its ongoing maintenance, and uses the students' bi/multilingual linguistic repertoire as a *basis* for learning, they are more likely to achieve academically (Baker 2011; García 2009; May and Dam 2014). Moreover, the longer the mother tongue/first language remains the main medium of education, the better ITM children learn the dominant language and other subjects, while also, of course, maintaining and developing further the languages they already know (see, e.g., Thomas and Collier 2002; McCarty 2005; Tollefson and Tsui 2003).

Some legal scholars claim that the deliberate intention of linguistic genocide required by Article 2 of the **International Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** is difficult to establish. For obvious reasons, no state or educational authority can today be expected to express *openly* an intention to “destroy” a group or even to “seriously harm” it. Instead, it can be deduced from the results of educational and wider state policies. In other words, if the state organizes educational structures which are known to lead to negative results for ITM students, this can be seen as “intent” in the sense of Art. 2. If the educational approaches adopted towards ITMs clearly run contra to the clear research evidence supporting bilingual education, and the related maintenance of ITM languages within education, and have been and are organized against what this research evidence proposes, then state authorities can and should be held accountable for continuing such policies, at the direct expense of ITM children. The ongoing prohibition of ITM languages within education, the associated mental harm caused, and the forcible transfer of ITM children from speaking their MT/L1 to speaking the dominant (state) language must be seen as deliberate and intentional acts on behalf of states *from discourse-analytical, sociolinguistic, sociological, political science, psychological and educational policy analysis perspectives* (see Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 2010, Chaps. 6 and 7 for legal details on genocide and on subtractive education as a crime against humanity).

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

A major problem in any analysis of LHRs is that even if minorities have been granted the right to found private schools with their own language as the main medium of education, individual states, as we have seen, do not have a legally enforceable duty to fund any associated costs. This was made clear in a landmark case in the 1968 Belgian Linguistic Case (<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-57525>). Few minorities can bear the full cost of primary education through the medium of their own languages, while at the same time contributing through their taxes to dominant-language-medium education. If the Human Rights Committee's reinterpretation of Article 27 of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR) starts having some effect (and new litigation would be needed to test this), the economic hurdles might be solved. After all, it hardly costs the state more to change the language in minority schools, as compared to using the dominant language (see Grin 2005 and this volume for the economics of minority protection). This is also pointed out in **The Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatures**, from a conference convened in January 2000 when demanding MTM/MLE education (see <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/none/asmara-declaration-african-languages-and-literatures>).

Meanwhile, in many language policy and political theory discussions, particularly the latter, there is an overt scepticism, and at times outright hostility, towards the ongoing maintenance of private and, especially, public multilingualism, especially when these include/incorporate the use of the ITM language as languages of educational instruction. These commentators see the ongoing bi/multilingualism of ITMs as delimiting the possibilities of their individual integration into the national society and their successful acquisition of the dominant (national) language(s), with the ongoing maintenance/support of minority languages constructed as a wilful form of communal ghettoization. Any accommodation of public (rather than private) multilingualism – via, for example, MTM/MLE – is also constructed as preventing these groups from learning the dominant state language well enough to communicate effectively in the wider society, as an obstacle to their social mobility, and as a potential threat to the wider stability of the state. These tropes are most evident in recent political theory discussions of language rights and orthodox liberal conceptions of citizenship and are often very strongly stated (see, e.g., Archibugi 2005; Barry 2001; Laitin and Reich 2003; Pogge 2003; Van Parijs 2011). However, given their ostensible concerns with language, it is surprising that the work of many of these political theory researchers remains remarkably uninformed/ill informed about relevant sociolinguistic and educational research. Stephen May has made this point in relation to both opponents of language rights, such as Pogge, Laitin and Reich, and van Parijs (May 2003, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c), as well as proponents such as Kymlicka (May 2012, Chap. 4). For a similar critique, see Ives (2010, 2014) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2009). The majority of these political theorists almost entirely

ignore the extensive literature in sociolinguistics that has, over the last 50 years, addressed in detail questions of linguistic identity, status, rights and use in the formulation of language policies at local, national, and supranational levels and, similarly, the challenges and opportunities of addressing the linguistic complexities of multilingual communities in relation to the same (see, e.g., May 2012; Ricento 2006 for useful summaries). The normative assumptions that underpin much work in political theory also remain primarily supported by hypothetical and/or abstract examples rather than actual (multilingual) contexts.

The often appalling ignorance about basic language matters in ostensibly interdisciplinary work on language rights is a serious issue, and it should be the ethical responsibility of researchers addressing LHRs, from whatever disciplinary perspective, to remedy it. As we have suggested, political theorists are particularly culpable in this regard, but they are not the sole offenders. Important language status planning decisions are often based on false information, even in situations where the correct information, based on attested research, is easily available and has in fact been offered to the decision makers. More transdisciplinary co-operation between human rights lawyers and legal scholars, sociolinguists, and educationists is urgently needed (see the Introduction in Kontra et al. 1999 and May 1999, 2012). Western researchers often suffer from ethnocentricity and lack the necessary knowledge of the languages and cultures of others (see criticism in, e.g., Hountondji 2002; Kontra 2000, Smith 2012). Arguably, most of them, even proponents of multilingualism and MLE, also often ignore, or simply do not know about, research that is not published in English.

Lack of LHRs is not (only) an information problem, however. The political will of states to grant LHRs remains the key challenge to their effective implementation. Neoliberal economic principles and market forces dovetail with dominant (normative) cultural norms to diminish ITM claims for language rights. When this is combined with subtractive dominant language medium education, often seen as the only realistic option for ITM children, it leads inevitably to the dispossession of their linguistic and cultural capital (Harvey 2005). Human rights, especially economic and social rights, are necessary, according to the legal scholar Katarina Tomaševski (1996, p. 104), to act as correctives to the free market. She claims (*ibid.*, p. 104) that the “purpose of international human rights law is [. . .] to overrule the law of supply and demand and remove price-tags from people and from necessities for their survival.” These necessities for survival include not only basic food and housing (which would come under economic and social rights) but also the necessary means for the sustenance of a dignified life, including basic civil, political, and cultural rights. Linguistic human rights can be said to form a key part of the latter – that is, cultural rights. In contrast, the generally negative attitudes behind dominant language educational state policies lead to the diminishing numbers of languages worldwide, along with their speakers, and promote a false view of individual and collective monolingualism as something:

- Normal and natural; however, most countries are multilingual.
- Desirable: more efficient and economical; however, if citizens do not understand the language they are governed (and educated) in, and if huge talent is wasted because children do not profit and are even harmed by formal education, this is inefficient and wasteful.
- Inevitable: modernization leads to linguistic homogenization and only romantics regret it; however, linguistic diversity and multilingualism enhance creativity and are necessary in information societies where the main products are diverse ideas and diverse knowledges.

In addition, states seem to see the granting of LHRs as potentially divisive – as undermining wider social cohesion and inclusion within the state (see Fenton and May 2002; Hutchinson 2005 for further discussion). The rationale here is that if minorities are able to maintain distinct ethnic identities this somehow promotes ghettoization and, even, balkanization. Moreover, as the earlier discussion of political theory highlighted, education is attributed as the key mechanism by which this ghettoization/fragmentation most often occurs. In effect, MTM/MLE education for minorities is constructed as the catalyst for wider social and political division to occur. And yet, any sensible (or even engaged) rendering of history would suggest the opposite. Ethnic conflict, where language is a factor, is almost always precipitated by the *denial* of language rights, not their *recognition*. This is true historically of conflicts in Sri Lanka, Spain, Belgium, and the Balkans, for example, and is still currently evident in Turkey (with respect to Kurdish) and China (with respect to Tibetans and Uyghurs). Indeed, it is the ongoing pursuit of prescriptive monolingual language policies within multilingual states that is demonstrably the greatest threat to social and political stability. As Fernand de Varennes rightly observes:

any policy favouring a single language to the exclusion of all others can be extremely risky . . . because it is then a factor promoting division rather than unification. Instead of integration, an ill-advised and inappropriate state language policy may have the opposite effect and cause a *levée de bouclier*. (1996, p. 91)

Thus, as we have argued, the pursuit of more extensive linguistic human rights for ITM speakers is critical for maintaining their (minority) languages and ensuring a meaningful right to education and thus avoiding linguistic genocide. However, it is equally clear that, if implemented effectively, LHRs are also a key mechanism for fostering more socially just, inclusive, stable, and plural states/societies in our demonstrably multilingual world. This is why the case for LHRs, despite ongoing opposition to it, is still such an important and compelling one to make.

Cross-References

- [International Law and Language Minority Education](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

May: [Bilingual Education: What the Research Tells Us](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Skutnabb-Kangas: [Language Rights and Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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International Law and Language Minority Education

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Abstract

While many activists, linguists, educationalists, and others often refer to a “right to language” or to a “right to be educated in one’s own language,” the purely legal point of view at the international level is not straightforward. Most international treaties are ambiguous about the actual medium of instruction in education in public schools, proposing, for example, that a minority language can be simply taught as a subject or used as the language of instruction in schools (to an unspecified degree), according to national laws. Only more recently have international legal instruments or their interpretation – those that imposed legally binding rules rather than noble aspirations – begun to acknowledge that the language of education may not simply be left to a state’s determination or discretion. Developments in the application of rights to education and non-discrimination in international law especially suggest that further clarifications as to their impact and significance on education in a minority language are emerging and will take some time before there is a fuller understanding of the role international law plays in this area. Already they signal, however, that while there may not be an absolute right to education in a minority language regardless of the number of speakers or any other consideration of feasibility, there is at the very least the possibility that a number of human rights standards can and must accommodate the use of minority languages as medium of instruction in public schools where appropriate and practicable.

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Introduction: Early Developments

International law is mainly found in treaties and international customary law. In its traditional role, it dealt with relations between states. Throughout history there have, however, been some bilateral treaties – treaties between two states – or multilateral treaties involving more than two states that provided for “rights” to individuals belonging to certain ethnic or religious communities (de Varennes 1996).

At the start of the twentieth century, there appeared the first treaties that were explicit in providing for the right to have schools teaching in a minority language. Thus, the Vlach- and German-speaking minorities’ schools were protected under the *Treaty of Peace Between Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia* of 1913 and Turkish language private schools for Muslims living in Serbia under the 1914 *Treaty Between Serbia and Turkey*.

These early developments were, however, of an ad hoc nature, which only affected a very small number of countries due to a specific bilateral treaty. It was not until the advent of the League of Nations at the end of the First World War that there emerged a slightly more systematic, though still not universal, system under which it could be said that there existed – in some situations – a right to be educated in a minority language.

There was a number of so-called minority treaties adopted and subsequently overseen by the League of Nations. Most of these contained some kind of provisions that guaranteed the right of minorities to establish and control their own institutions, including schools using their own language as medium of instruction. At that stage international law seemed to be moving toward accepting the “right of education” in a minority language, though this right would perhaps more accurately be described as including two distinct rights: In the case of private schools, minorities were seemingly to be entitled to create and operate their own schools and use their own language free from any restrictions or obstacles by state authorities, except of course for requirements relating to curriculum content. In addition, they had the right to education in their own language in “adequate facilities” provided by states, as in

state schools, though only in town and districts where the minority was present “in considerable numbers.”

That movement came to a rather abrupt stop with the disappearance of the League of Nations and its eventual replacement after the Second World War by the United Nations. Following the war, a study by the United Nations Secretariat concluded that the engagements entered into by states after the First World War under the minority system had ceased to exist, except for the Åland Islands agreement.

The rhetoric shifted after 1945 to one emphasizing universal protection of individual rights and freedoms, an approach that at least on the surface shied away from recognizing any rights to specific communities or groups such as minorities. Thus, discussions leading up to the creation of the United Nations based on a “new covenant” and a “fresh approach” (McKean 1983, p. 53) were focused on the principle of individual rights exclusively, no reference being made to the previous minority treaties.

Indeed, an initial draft outline of what was to become the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* proposed that states with “substantial numbers of persons differing in race, language, or religion from the majority of the population should give such persons the right to establish and maintain out of an equitable proportion of public funds, schools, cultural, and religious institutions, and they should be entitled to use their own language before the courts and other authorities and organs of state and in the press and in public assembly” (McKean 1983). This was ultimately rejected, partly because it was seen as inconsistent with the new individualistic approach seen as necessary to reflect the changing international mood. Thus, most of the early legal developments after the Second World War rejected any reference to minorities having specific rights in relation to education in their own language. There was therefore a fundamental shift in the treatment of the rights of minorities pre- and post-1945: The approach after that date is generally seen as only involving the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all human beings, and not to favor any measures designed especially to protect minorities (Capotorti 1979).

Major Contributions

As international law is not stagnant, the apparent *tabula rasa* in relation to the rights of minorities in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War was soon to be displaced by the gradual appearance of a number of bilateral treaty provisions. These quickly started to acknowledge that there are rights that minorities can invoke in relation to educational rights and language preferences, though there is a noteworthy evolution which can be detected in the actual content of these rights. For example, the 1946 *Treaty of Peace with Italy* specifically guaranteed the right of the German-speaking minority in the province of Bolzano/Bozen to “elementary and secondary teaching in the mother tongue.”

These localized steps would, however, only begin to extend to the global scene a decade later, first with the adoption of a treaty which provided a degree of protection for Indigenous and tribal populations (which may in some states constitute

minorities but are not necessarily so) and then with a truly international treaty dealing with discrimination in education. Furthermore, there began to be an acknowledgment that, regardless of the position of various national governments themselves, a child's own language was to be the preferred medium of instruction because it was the most efficient and inclusive pedagogical approach, particularly in the early years of formal education (UNESCO 1953, pp. 690–691).

The more significant treaty at the global level for minorities from a legal point of view would be the UNESCO *Convention Against Discrimination in Education* of 1960, which makes it clear, in Article 2(b), that it does not constitute discrimination to establish or maintain, for linguistic reasons, separate educational systems or institutions. The UNESCO *Convention* also provides in Article 5(1)(c) that it is essential to “recognise the right of members of national minorities to carry on their own educational activities, including the maintenance of schools and, depending on the educational policy of each state, the use or the teaching of their own language,” provided that “this right is not exercised in a manner which prevents the members of these minorities from understanding the culture and language of the community as a whole and from participating in its activities, or which prejudices national sovereignty” (UNESCO 1960, para. 11).

The wording of the above provisions more than half a century ago does not necessarily grant a right of minorities to be educated in their language. On the one hand, the treaty acknowledges the fundamental entitlement of minorities to have their “own” – meaning private as opposed to state operated – educational activities. On the other hand, the UNESCO *Convention* does not appear to extend this right automatically in terms of the choice of the language of instruction to be used in these private minority schools, as this choice is not left to the parents but is dependent “on the educational policy of each state.” Furthermore, even if a state's educational policy permits the use of a minority language in these schools, it must never prevent “the members of these minorities from understanding the culture and language of the community as a whole and from participating in its activities, or which prejudices national sovereignty.” It is at the very best a timid, undemanding provision in terms of the use or teaching of a minority language in education (Hastings 1988).

There is therefore some ambivalence in this treaty that impairs the usefulness of Article 5 as a basis for the right of minorities to receive education in their own language. First, Article 5 only deals with the creation of private schools and does not actually require that state authorities establish publicly funded schools for minorities. Secondly, the treaty does not guarantee that the language used in these schools actually be the language of the minority. It is permissive rather than mandatory in this regard, meaning that this will only eventuate if the state's educational policy permits the use of a minority language. While some would have thought that a minority should be entitled automatically to freely determine the language of instruction used in its own schools, this early treaty – while not rejecting outright such use – did not go so far as to actually require it of all states from a strict reading of Article 5. This is perhaps to be expected given that the treaty was drafted in the 1950s, a period in history where many governments around the world likely viewed even forceful assimilation as a desirable process. While UNESCO itself as an

organization dedicated to the advancement of education had acknowledged in 1953 the pedagogical desirability to teach children in their own language, there was not sufficient political support among many national governments to translate that into international law in a treaty. Still, the general tone of the UNESCO *Convention* is far from antagonistic to minorities being educated in their own language. Read as a whole, it could be said to actively encourage states to permit minorities to use their language in their own schools, even if not making it a strict legal obligation on states. In this sense, the UNESCO *Convention* can be seen as an early precursor to later legal developments in international law of the modern postwar period.

The main developments in the last 30 years in terms of international law need to be divided into two parts: those at the truly global level which have been in terms of legal developments more timid and restrained, and those at the regional level of the Council of Europe, which have been more committed to giving legal recognition and structure to minorities being educated in or taught their own language. At the global level, the legal instruments dealing with education in minority languages are limited to provisions such as Article 27 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (the ICCPR), which provides that “(i)n those states in which. . .linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture. . .or to use their own language” (silent on education but widely believed to at least protect private minority schools; see United National Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner 1966) and the 1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child* which asserts in Article 29 that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of respect for the child’s parents and his or her own cultural identity, language, and values. Here again, however, the wording clearly does not require directly any use of a minority language as a medium of education or even any suggestion that it should be taught: It only requires that states must direct education in a way that develops respect for his/her language, cultural identity, and values.

Other documents at the global level often referred to as proving a more direct or general “right” to education in a minority language, include the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* which is unfortunately not a legally binding instrument. While it may be indicative of a growing trend toward acceptance in international law of the principle that a right to be educated in one’s language should be guaranteed, the fact remains that there is not yet a general, unambiguous, and legally binding obligation for such a right clearly established. The limitations and vague wording of Article 27 of the ICCPR and Article 29 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and subjecting the Article 5 right in the UNESCO *Convention* to a state’s policy all suggest that there is still, in strictly legal terms at the global level, some difficulty in getting the broad international consensus in order to make this a legally binding norm.

Developments within the Council of Europe have been significantly different and offer a more solid basis for education in minority languages from a strictly legal point of view. Two legally binding treaties have given form and structure to this right: Article 14 of the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and Article 8 of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority*

Languages both indicate that “in appropriate circumstances” states must make available in schools the teaching of or in a minority language. Both treaties have been criticized for the various ways states can circumvent the impact of their provisions, such as limiting the treaties’ application to national minorities or traditional languages, the possibility for states to “opt out” from some clauses or only nominate certain minorities for protection, and the weakness of both treaties in only having a monitoring rather than an enforcement mechanism.

Some scholars have urged caution in relation to these “European” legal standards (de Varennes and Thornberry 2005, pp. 426–428). The right as expressed in the two treaties of the Council of Europe is either restricted to undefined “national minorities” under the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, a category seemingly different from the more inclusive concept of minorities contained in United Nations treaties, or to “regional or minority languages” as defined in the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. Furthermore, even in the case of either a national minority language or a regional language, education in this language is not automatic but is limited to situations where it is “justified,” “reasonable,” or where the number of students in part of a territory is “substantial” or “sufficient.” Neither of these treaties recognizes that all languages should be treated the same. It would seem that the degree to which a language should be used for the purposes of public education varies: The smaller a language is in terms of numbers of speakers, the less it is entitled to be used in the area of education.

Thus, the exact degree of use of a minority language as a medium of instruction will vary according to the particular context of each situation: the extent of demand for such instruction, the degree of use of medium of instruction, the state’s ability to respond to these demands, and so on. The most detailed treaty in this area, the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, indicates, for example, that the numbers must be “sufficient” for this purpose. This could suggest that the mere presence of one or a handful of pupils in a district would not automatically give rise to a right to be taught a minority language in a public school. However, in light of the many international and European instruments which generally refer to a state’s obligation to protect and promote the language (and culture) of minorities, it would seem that what is “sufficient” should be interpreted in a generous and flexible way and that the number of pupils required in order to be able to claim the right to be taught the minority language should be quite small if a state’s resources make it reasonably practical to accommodate them.

There are beyond these legal developments numerous political and other pronouncements that together create an impressive foundation acknowledging the validity of providing education in a minority language. Among the more prominent are of course the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, the UNESCO 2003 *Principles of Language and Education*, the *Recommendations of the First Session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues on Minorities and the Right to Education*, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s *The Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities*, to name but a few. Even the World Bank has concluded that not teaching in a child’s own language is

“the biggest challenge to achieving Education for All: a legacy of non-productive practices that lead to low levels of learning and high levels of dropout and repetition” (World Bank 2005, p. 1).

While this corpus may appear as eloquent recognition of the right to education in one’s language, these are not strictly speaking legally binding instruments and thus cannot alone form the basis for such a right in international law. Confusingly, some writers in this area tend to refer to these documents as evidence of an “implicit” right, not distinguishing the provisions which create clear legal obligations from those which may later form the basis of an emerging standard for “what the law ought to be” (*lege ferenda*) (Thornberry 1991).

Work in Progress

Much of the earlier work on education in a minority language (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1994) supposed that there was in international law an implicit right to identity which could be used to buttress claims to education in a minority language (Smith 2003), even though no treaty actually spelled this out. Most treaties, with the exception of the two more recent Council of Europe treaties, in fact appear to leave any use of a minority language as medium of instruction, outside of private schools, to the whims of state authorities’ educational policies rather than providing for such instruction as of right under specific conditions.

A “traditionalist” stream among jurists adopted the view, that there was no basis for a right to minority language instruction, at least in public schools, either because such a right was not specifically spelled out in a treaty provision or the right to education itself (see the European Court of Human Rights comments in the *Belgian Linguistics Case*; <http://cmiskp.echr.coe.int/tkp197/search.asp?skin=hudoc-en>), because the right to education does not automatically or necessarily include the right to education in a particular language), or because once a state has determined an official language, no other language could be used officially in state institutions (dissident views of the UN Human Rights Committee in *Diergaardt v. Namibia*; see <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/undocs/session69/view760.htm>).

Another understanding, somewhere in the middle, seems now to be taking shape. In Europe, specific treaties that enshrine a right to be educated in a minority language, at least where there is a sufficient critical mass to make this practical, mean that more and more work from a purely legal perspective is proceeding as to the implementation and a better understanding of these legal obligations (generally Weller 2005; Martin Estébanez et al. 1999; Wilson 2002).

At the global level, despite the lack of an international treaty clearly recognizing an unambiguous right to education in a minority language, three new trends are appearing. Firstly, the relatively rigid view that no international law is applicable in language matters once a state has chosen an official language is starting to make way for the recognition that rights such as nondiscrimination may permit the use of other languages in addition to an official one. In other words, it may be unreasonable and unjustified in some circumstances – such as where a large number of people use a

minority language – and therefore discriminatory not to provide for some use of a minority or other languages by public authorities. This is in effect the reasoning which can be extrapolated in the majority position in *Diergaardt v. Namibia* and a more considered reading of the *Belgian Linguistic Case*. It is only very recently starting to be taken up by jurists (de Varennes 2015).

Secondly, the right to education itself is being “revisited” in a way which seems to contradict more traditional views. In *Cyprus v. Turkey* (judgment of 10 May 2001, Grand Chamber, <http://cmiskp.echr.coe.int/tkp197/search.asp?skin=hudoc-en>), the linguistic policies of Northern Cyprus authorities in the area of public education were essentially described as so inadequate in view of the circumstances as to constitute a violation of Article 2, Protocol 1, which deals with the right to education. Children of Greek-speaking parents in Northern Cyprus wishing to pursue a secondary education through the medium of the Greek language were obliged to transfer to schools in the south, though they could continue their education at a Turkish or English language school in the north. On the basis of the European Court of Human Rights’ previous reasoning in the *Belgian Linguistic Case*, most jurists had assumed that once a government had determined an official language, it was within its authority not to use any other language for official purposes, including public education. The European Court, however, indicated instead that – because the children had already been educated in Greek in primary school – to continue their education at higher levels of education in either English or Turkish was not what the parents wanted and was a denial of the effective right to education. The fundamental basis for its conclusion is not absolutely clear, since on the one hand the judges seem to admit that the right of education in public schools does not have a linguistic component and, on the other, they indicate there is a linguistic component for secondary education because authorities in Northern Cyprus already provided Greek language primary education, and therefore to stop offering it after primary school “negated” the right to education: It would “be a denial of the substance” of this right. Perhaps what the European Court was trying to suggest, in line with its previous reasoning in the *Belgian Linguistic Case*, was that in light of the circumstances, the de facto linguistic obstacle that secondary education in Turkish language (and English) constituted for these particular students was a barrier to the effective application of the right to education.

Thirdly, and perhaps even more promising, is the interpretation of four international human rights treaties in recent years by UN committees on whether it is possible to have an exercisable right to education in a minority language or mother tongue in public educational institutions under certain conditions. This involves more precisely the interpretation of legal obligations under the ICCPR, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR), the CRC, and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (CERD). At times each of these committees, when considering individual complaints or examining the periodical reports of different state parties, has been willing to acknowledge a “right to be educated in the mother tongue,” mainly for Indigenous peoples but sometimes also for minorities, a right to bilingual or multilingual education, or a right to a minority’s language “in” education. There are no clear

Table 1 Frequency for apparent support for some degree of Mother Language Education (MLE), UN Committees, 1988–2014

Committee	Right to education in mother tongue	Right of education and culture	Discrimination in education	Bilingual or multilingual education	Right of an Indigenous or minority group
HRC	8	–	3	1	6
CRC	23	–	–	35	5
CERD	9	–	8	4	–
CESCR	19	19	4	5	5

indications of what is required: The Committee on the Rights of the Child, for example, will sometimes refer to one of three possible legal bases for its conclusions. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is more consistent as to the legal basis for its conclusions on language and education, since it deals only with issues of discrimination in education as per the terms of the treaty it monitors.

Although the position of each of these four committees is not always clear, Table 1 gives a rough indication as to the different interpretations favorable to a possible general claim to education in the mother tongue. The table provides an approximation only, since it is not always obvious what is the exact meaning of a committee's concluding observations, and in some cases more than one type of interpretation or basis for a committee's conclusions may exist.

Table 1 does not capture all nuances or complexities: On one hand, many of the situations of support for bilingual or multilingual education deal with Indigenous peoples and only for the first years of primary education. On the other hand, some of the concluding observations dealing with education and language even go so far as to examine the issue of the language of testing and placement for university admission – and the language used in public universities themselves. In the case of the CERD, despite on occasion a lack of direct reference to the legal basis for its comments, all of its concluding observations rest on the prohibition of racial discrimination in education (de Varennes 2015). While there is, strictly speaking, no “right to be educated in one's own language,” in practice, the four UN committees have increasingly recognized a qualified right to education in one's language under certain conditions in their own interpretation of various treaty obligations.

Problems and Difficulties

The increasing number of situations where four UN committees are willing to interpret various human rights provisions as entailing obligations to use minority languages in public education, both as medium of instruction or topic where practicable, and the changing views of the European Court of Human Rights on the right to education and the language dimension, suggest a period where the relationship between education and minority languages is still evolving in international law. Few legal experts have, however, fully considered or even acknowledged

the potential ramifications of both of these results. One of the main problems still currently facing most jurists formed along the more traditional lines of international law is that it is not easy to accept that language rights exist, sometimes on the basis of the right to nondiscrimination, and require the use of a minority language, especially if it is not permitted under a state's official language legislation (Stefanescu and Georgeault 2005, p. 313). For most of them, any language right, including the use of a minority language as medium of instruction in a public school, is a "special" or "positive" measure that can only exist if and when specific legislative "permission" is granted by state authorities.

On the other end of the spectrum, jurists who had assumed that the right to education in a minority language in international law naturally had to exist "somewhere" now have a number of human rights provisions to consider to solidify such claims. The problem here is that even if more reliance may be had on the right to education, in combination with nondiscrimination, it is not an unqualified right to education in a minority language. As shown by the *Belgian Linguistic Case*, the European Court of Human Rights' rather hesitant and contradictory position in *Cyprus v. Turkey*, and the diversity of approaches, views, and bases for various UN committees when dealing with the issue of language and education, the exact extent or parameters of a linguistic component for such a right in international law are far from crystal clear and will probably require many more cases before there is a much greater degree of certitude in this area from a legal point of view.

One of the problems with this is that, in the absence of a specific international treaty provision setting out more precisely the conditions where a right to education in a minority language in public schools is guaranteed, those two more extreme positions among jurists will probably be battling out this matter in various international forums for many years to come. It also means that, for minorities in most parts of the world, any recourse to the limited remedies and mechanisms available at the international level will likely be fraught with uncertainties and risks.

Future Directions

It was never intended in international law that the right to education includes the right to education in one's own language (Lebel 1974, pp. 231–232). While various UN and other documents would frequently laud the benefits of providing some degree of instruction in a minority language, these documents were either not treaties and therefore not a source of international legal obligations, or they contained ambiguous provisions which in the end seemed to leave the matter of choice of language of education in public schools to the discretion and determination of state authorities.

For legal traditionalists, this meant that while a state could be generous and provide for education in a minority language if state authorities decided to take "special positive measures," it was not a right that anyone could claim. For jurists seeking to protect and promote minorities and their languages, there were attempts to

construct arguments for an implicit, if somehow amorphous, right to identity, or culture, or some other bases in support of an international right to education in a minority language. While the latter methods and arguments cannot be said to have won the day, it would seem that for the most part the direction of international law may be reaching the same ultimate goals in the future.

At the level of the Council of Europe, related legal obligations are now entrenched in two treaties: State authorities in countries having ratified these treaties must provide for education in a minority language where it is practical to do so, though acquisition of the official language must also always be assured. Future clarification of these legal norms is, however, still needed and likely to focus on the circumstances where it can be said to be practical, or not, for this right to be applied.

At the global level, the absence of a clear legal provision in any international treaty for states to unambiguously having the obligation to provide education in a minority language would seem initially to hamper any further recognition of such a right. There are nevertheless two distinct trends that may have considerable impact in the future: first, the more recent development at the global level of instruments such as the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, which, while not creating directly any legal obligations, still indicates an acceptance of the validity and perhaps eventual adoption of a right to education in a minority language, and, second, the even more recent reassessment by legal scholars and adjudicative and monitoring bodies such as the European Court of Human Rights and UN Human Rights Committee, of the right to education and nondiscrimination, which may breathe new life in existing legal standards. While not necessarily a view shared by most jurists trained to consider an official language policy in education and other areas of state involvement as exclusive, it would seem that the international human rights standards such as nondiscrimination and education have not been widely understood or applied in the area of language. This therefore may be another new frontier that could be increasingly examined and clarified in the years to come and have some potential for minorities in the area of education.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)
- ▶ [The Economics of Language Education](#)

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Tove Skutnabb-Kangas: [Language Rights and Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: [Bilingual and Multilingual Education](#)

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Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples

Teresa L. McCarty and Serafín M. Coronel-Molina

Abstract

The world's 370 million Indigenous peoples represent 5% of the world's population, but they speak more than two-thirds of the world's known spoken languages. Shared histories of genocide, settler colonialism, and concomitant economic, political, and social disenfranchisement have placed virtually all Indigenous languages at risk. Thus, for Indigenous peoples, language revival, revitalization, and reversal of language shift are key language planning and policy (LPP) goals. Central to current circumstances of language endangerment is historic and ongoing raciolinguistic discrimination and medium-of-instruction policies that deny Indigenous children the right to an education in their heritage mother tongue. Thus, Indigenous struggles for language rights have been waged in tandem with the fight for cultural survival, self-determination, and social justice. This chapter begins by describing *de facto* precolonial policies of multilingualism among Indigenous communities around the world, then discusses dominant *de jure* policies designed to eradicate Indigenous languages and lifestyles that have only recently begun to be redressed through local, national, and international interventions. Major contributions include policy documents, historical-descriptive accounts, ethnographic studies, and recent work that engages the social justice dimensions of research and the perspectives of Indigenous scholars and practitioners. Work in progress is organized around three common LPP rubrics: status planning, acquisition planning, and corpus planning.

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Finally, the chapter addresses challenges, difficulties, and future directions, including the generative ways in which Indigenous peoples are refusing hegemonic metaphors of language death and reconfiguring power relations to open new spaces for language reclamation in and out of schools.

Keywords

Indigenous language education • Indigenous peoples • Language endangerment • Language revitalization/reclamation • Language planning and policy

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Introduction

The world's 370 million Indigenous peoples— also called Tribal Peoples, First Peoples, Native Peoples, and Orinary Peoples – reside in 90 countries and every continent on earth. Identified as Indigenous according to international convention because of their aboriginal occupation of lands prior to colonization, and because they retain some or all of their traditional social, economic, cultural, and political institutions, Indigenous peoples have experienced a history of genocide, the armed invasion of their homelands, and concomitant economic, political, and social disenfranchisement (see the United Nations' International Labour Organisation Convention 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, <http://www.ilo.org/indigenous/lang-en/index.htm>). Central to these assaults have been official and unofficial policies that have dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their languages and lands. A primary tool for achieving both ends has been state-sponsored schooling.

Thus, Indigenous struggles for language rights have been waged in tandem with the fight for cultural survival and self-determination. In this chapter, we analyze these processes and the research into them from a framework that views language planning and policy (LPP) not solely as official government action or texts, but as “the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people’s language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways” (McCarty 2011, p. xii). This framework enables us to examine LPP as *de facto* and *de jure*, covert and overt, “bottom-up” and “top-down,” and to illuminate cross-

cutting themes of cultural conflict and negotiation, identity, language ideology, and linguistic human rights.

Indigenous peoples represent 5% of the world's population, but they speak more than two-thirds of the world's known spoken languages. The contexts in which Indigenous languages are spoken are highly diverse, spanning language situations such as that of Quechua, spoken by eight to 12 million people in six South American countries; to Aotearoa/New Zealand, where a single Indigenous language, Māori, shares co-official status with English and New Zealand Sign Language; to diasporized communities such as the Garífuna Nation, dispersed across three Central American countries, the Caribbean, and the United States; to Papua New Guinea, where 800 languages, most spoken by less than 1,000 people, coexist in an area the size of the US state of California. With some exceptions – Guaraní in Paraguay, for example – the viability of Indigenous languages is severely threatened by legacies of language repression, ongoing raciolinguistic discrimination, and the homogenizing forces of globalization. Even languages with relatively large numbers of speakers are being displaced by dominant language policies and practices. Thus, for Indigenous peoples, language revival, revitalization, and reversal of language shift are key LPP goals.

Early Developments

Although published accounts of Indigenous language policies have focused on colonial and postcolonial developments, language policies have been operative in Indigenous communities since time immemorial. Kulick (1992), for instance, notes that Papua New Guinea's linguistic diversity has its roots in widespread language attitudes that emphasize the boundary-marking dimensions of language, cultivating linguistic differences as a means of marking communal identity (p. 2). Papua New Guinean communities also place a high value on multilingualism, with the display of foreign speech varieties viewed as "one important means of gaining prestige in traditional society" (Kulick 1992, p. 3). In Native North America, multilingualism was highly valued as a tool of trade and survival in one of the most culturally, linguistically, and ecologically diverse regions of the world (McCarty 2013). In precolonial Africa, "the different ethno-linguistic groups. . . did not have a language of instruction problem," say Brock-Utne and Hopson (2005), as "each group used its own language to educate its children" (p. 3).

Eradicating these language practices has been a prominent goal of every colonial regime. Castilian "is a tool for conquest abroad," Antonio de Nebrija, author of the first modern grammar of a European language, famously told Queen Isabella of Spain in 1492; "language has always been the consort of empire" (cited in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, p. 506). Nearly 400 years later, the same one-nation/one-language ideology justified a punitive English-only policy in American Indian boarding schools. "The Indian child. . . must be compelled to adopt the English language," wrote the US Commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price in 1881, precipitating an Indian residential school rule of "No Indian Talk" (Spack 2002, p. 24).

Linguicidal policies went hand-in-hand with physical genocide and the theft of Indigenous lands. When the British “annexed” Australia in 1770, as many as 600,000 Aboriginal people, the speakers of some 250 languages, came under British rule. By the mid-1930s, 60,000 Aboriginal people remained. Although there are now nearly 700,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia, most have been dispossessed of their heritage language; of 145 languages still spoken, fewer than 20 are spoken by members of all generations (Obato and Lee 2010). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori peoples at the time of European contact in 1769 numbered approximately 100,000. Within a century, the Māori population had been decimated to 42,113, and by 1975, only 5% of Māori school children spoke Māori (May 2005).

These human rights violations have only recently been confronted by states and international organizations. In 1919, the International Labor Organization (ILO) was created to defend the rights of ethnic minorities; this was the first international body to address Indigenous issues in a comprehensive manner. However, it was not until 1957 that the ILO adopted Convention No. 107, the first international instrument setting forth the rights of Indigenous peoples and the obligations of ratifying states. Thirty years would pass before the United Nations established its Working Group on Indigenous Populations. In 1984, the Working Group began preparing the *Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, calling for freedom from ethnocide and the “right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures” (United Nations General Assembly 2007, Article 14). It would be another 22 years of persistent efforts by Indigenous peoples worldwide before the *Draft Declaration* was ratified by the UN General Assembly (see http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf).

In addition to ratification of the *Declaration*, one hopeful international development has been a shift in discourse from “populations” to “peoples,” and the parallel creation, in 2000, of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). “The most basic right is to be recognized as peoples,” Ole Henrik Magga, first chairperson of the PFII writes; “[t]he principle of self-determination is based on the principle of peoplehood” (1995, p. 1). Contemporary LPP activities in support of Indigenous languages and speakers all flow from these principles.

Major Contributions

The published literature on Indigenous LPP includes policy documents, historical-descriptive accounts, ethnographic and demolinguiistic studies, and recent work that engages the social justice dimensions of research and the perspectives of Indigenous scholars and practitioners. In the Americas, Heath’s (1972) treatise on language policy in Mexico was the first of its kind, providing a description of the cultural contexts for language planning from the time of the Aztec Empire. La Belle and White’s (1978) work on education and colonial language policies in Latin America and the Caribbean is also a seminal contribution. An important contribution on the

Mexican case is Patthey-Chavez's (1994) study of LPP in Mexico. Massini-Cagliari's (2004) research in Brazil delves into the relationship between Portuguese and 200 other Brazilian languages, of which 170 are Indigenous languages. For a Guatemalan case study, we have Garzon et al. (1998) on Kaqchikel Maya maintenance, shift, and revitalization. Gynan's (2001) study illuminates the gains of Guaraní LPP in Paraguay since the end of Stroessner's 35 years of dictatorship, and Ito's (2012) research examines the struggles of implementation of Guaraní-Spanish bilingual education from political, attitudinal, and ideological perspectives. More recently, Coronel-Molina and McCarty (2016) provide a comprehensive treatment of LPP in the Americas.

Complementing these treatments of LPP in the Americas are ethnographic case studies such as Aikman's (1999) research on intercultural and literacy in the Amazonian region; Coronel-Molina's (2015) research on language ideology, policy, and planning in Peru; Cortina's (2014) research on the education of Indigenous citizens in Latin America; Gustafson's (2009) research on Indigenous resurgence and the politics of knowledge in Bolivia; Hornberger's (1988) research on Quechua bilingual education in southern Peru; Howard's (2007) research on language ideologies in the Andes; King's (2001) research on Quichua language revitalization in two Ecuadorian communities; Luykx's (1998) study of schooling and cultural production in Bolivia; Meek's (2010) ethnography of language revitalization in a Northern Athabaskan community; Wyman's (2012) sociolinguistic ethnography of Yup'ik youth language practices and ideologies; and McCarty and colleagues' (2011) work on ethnography and language policy.

Indigenous and non-Western scholars are leading the way in scholarship on Indigenous LPP. Notable examples include Coronel-Molina's (2015) contributions on Quechua; Hernandez-Zamora's (2010) research on decolonizing literacy in Mexico; Kamwangamalu's (2016) analysis of the economics of LPP in Southern Africa; Mohanty and colleagues' (2009) studies of multilingualism for Indigenous and tribal children; and ethnographic research on Indigenous youth and multilingualism presented by Wyman et al. (2014).

In reviewing 30+ years of literature on LPP by and for Indigenous peoples, we can clearly see the heavy boot prints of settler colonialism, even as recent research and practice highlight the resurgence of Indigenous language and education reclamation. The Navajo Reading Study at the University of New Mexico provides a case in point. From 1969 to 1979, Bernard Spolsky directed this study, surveying the language proficiencies of 6-year-old Navajo schoolchildren as a means of informing medium-of-instruction language policies. "Whereas in 1970 some 90% of the Navajo children... had no preschool experience of English," Spolsky (2002) writes, "by 1990 the situation had virtually reversed, with 6-year-old Navajo children... suspected to have little, if any knowledge of the language of their people" (p. 2). Writing about Quechua, Hornberger and Coronel-Molina (2004) describe the dilemma of many parents who "believe that bilingual education would deny students access to social mobility" (p. 14). In postcolonial Africa, Kamwangamalu (2016) outlines the LPP challenge faced by Indigenous communities worldwide: How to resolve the tension between languages of wider communication as languages

of power and international access, and the desire to maintain local languages as central to Indigenous identities and cultural survival?

These issues dominate recent contributions to the field, as Indigenous peoples carve out and work to protect Indigenous-language-only domains. The task, as Hornberger and King (1996) pointed out more than 20 years ago, is not bringing Indigenous languages “back” in some fictitious, primordial way, but rather moving language practices forward through creative language reclamation practices. Some of this includes language documentation and archiving, the development of writing systems, and dictionary making for endangered Indigenous languages. Other innovative contributions include chapters on Indigenous languages in Jones’s (2015) *Policy and Planning for Endangered Languages*, Hinton and Hale’s (2001) *Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*, Hinton and colleagues’ (2002) *How To Keep Your Language Alive*, and Hinton’s (2013) *Bringing Our Languages Home: Language Revitalization for Families*. Hornberger’s (2008) collection turns to school-based revitalization, asking, “Can schools save Indigenous languages?”; May and Aikman (2003) explore possibilities and constraints in Indigenous language education in the Amazon Basin, Norway, central India, Western Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, the USA, and Nicaragua; McCarty (2013) and Reyhner (2006) examine language planning, policy, and revitalization in Native North America; Olthuis, Kivelä, and Skutnabb-Kangas illuminate the possibilities of an adult language revitalization program for Aanaar Saami in Finland; and King and Hornberger (2004) and May (2005) address Quechua sociolinguistics and Māori bilingual/immersion education, respectively. Innovative practices in Indigenous LPP have also been explored in the series growing out of the annual international Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium (for a 15-year span of the Symposium’s activity, see Cantoni 1996, and Romero-Little et al. 2011).

This brief overview suggests the diversity and extent of recent LPP research and on-the-ground LPP efforts by and for Indigenous peoples. Yet this listing only scratches the surface: A recent Web search on the topic reveals nearly 23 million sources. While it is impossible to do justice to all of this activity, we can consider more deeply a few selective examples that illustrate the possibilities and challenges in this work.

Work in Progress

This section is organized around three commonly used LPP rubrics: *status planning*, or decisions surrounding how and where the Indigenous language will be used, particularly with respect to education; *acquisition planning*, or activities related to who will use the language and for what purposes; and *corpus planning*, or the development of linguistic norms and forms. We preface this discussion with the important acknowledgement that these processes are not discrete, but are interdependent, co-occurring, and mutually constitutive. Moreover, these LPP processes cannot be isolated from the broader social, political, economic, and historical contexts in which they operate. We use these as organizational rubrics, and for each,

we begin with a brief overview. We then focus on illustrations of each type of activity: Indigenous language legislation in the USA (status planning); Māori, Hawaiian, and Saami (Sámi) language immersion (acquisition planning); and Quechua/Quichua unification and literacy development (corpus planning).

Status Planning: How and Where Will the Indigenous Language Be Used?

At the societal level, status planning typically involves some type of official language or government-backed medium-of-instruction policy. However, status planning also involves the minute-by-minute language choices people make every day. For example, chapters in Wyman et al. (2014) document ethnographically *de facto* language policies tied to lingering legacies of colonization that effectively proscribe heritage-language use within some Native American youth peer cultures, while in other Native American settings, family- and community-based language planning has positioned youth as language reclamation activists. These *de facto* language policies interact with *de jure* policymaking in consequential ways, and both types of status planning decisions are implicated in language endangerment and revitalization.

While their effects on language use and vitality are not easy to gauge, formal, societal-level policies exist for Indigenous languages around the world. Māori has shared co-official status with English since 1987. Guaraní, co-official with Spanish in Paraguay, is spoken by more citizens than Spanish. Mexico's 2003 General Law for the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Communities represents a significant advance in Indigenous language rights in that country. In postapartheid South Africa, nine Indigenous languages enjoy co-official status with English and Afrikaans. Norway's Sámi Language Act grants Sámi co-equal status with Norwegian in core Sámi areas. Tribal language policies in the USA make certain Indigenous languages official on tribal lands.

These formal language policies are the outcome of long-term, bottom-up efforts to assert Indigenous language rights. Indigenous language policy in the USA provides a case in point. In 1990, after more than a two decades of Indigenous activism, the US Congress passed the Native American Languages Act (NALA), which vows to "preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages," including using the Native American languages as a medium of instruction in school (NALA 1990, Sec. 104[4], 104[5]; see <http://www.nabe.org/files/NALanguagesActs.pdf>). Reversing two centuries of federal Indian policy, NALA grew out of early Indigenous bilingual education programs and the grassroots networks that developed around them. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, Native American bilingual education programs proliferated. One offshoot was the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI), a university-accredited summer residential program to prepare Native teachers and Native-language teaching materials (<http://www.aildi.arizona.edu>). As Institute participants grew in number and the diversity of linguistic

and cultural groups represented, program leaders recognized the need for a national policy in support of local efforts that would also combat the growing English-only movement. The passage in Hawai'i of a state constitutional amendment granting co-official status (with English) to Hawaiian provided a model and the political muscle for a broader initiative. These interests coalesced at the 1988 AILDI, where participants from Native nations throughout the USA drafted the resolution that would become NALA. Although funding for NALA has been limited, it has supported many effective and long-lasting language revitalization efforts, including Indigenous-language immersion, master-apprentice language-learning teams, and a growing network of language planners and policy activists.

NALA has been a springboard for further coupling of bottom-up and top-down LPP efforts, such as the 2006 Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act, which funds Native American language immersion programs for young children, adult language classes, language survival schools for school-age children, and Indigenous-language teacher training (McCarty 2013, p. 62; see <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-109publ394/content-detail.html>). More recently, these efforts coalesced in unprecedented provisions within the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as “No Child Left Behind”), which includes Native American language immersion programs.

Acquisition Planning: Who Will Use the Language and for What Purposes?

In any situation of language shift and revitalization, a key goal is cultivating new speakers. In Hornberger's (1996) LPP framework, this is the “cultivation” dimension of acquisition planning. Hinton and Meek (2016) describe several strategies for achieving this goal, including bilingual education – “even at its best. . .not sufficient to keep the languages alive” (p. 63) – and Indigenous-language immersion, a more intensive (and effective) intervention, also called “revitalization-immersion” (McIvor and McCarty 2016). As May (2013) shows in a comprehensive review of Indigenous immersion education efforts around the world, within the space of just 40 years, these efforts “have been instrumental in addressing and, in some cases, actively ameliorating, a long, entrenched history of the active state-sponsored marginalization and diminution of Indigenous languages” (p. 63).

Among the most promising school-based revitalization-immersion efforts are those by the Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Hawaiians in the USA. Hawaiian and Māori are closely related Eastern Polynesian languages, and their revitalization initiatives have followed intertwined paths. In both cases, by the 1970s, use of the Indigenous language had declined to the point at which language users were primarily of the parent generation and older. And, in both cases, revitalization-immersion was sparked by grassroots ethnic revival movements that led to the recognition of the Indigenous language as co-official with English (see May's 2005 discussion of this for Māori and Wilson and Kamanā's 2011 discussion for Hawaiian).

By the early 1980s, full-immersion, parent-run Māori *Kōhanga Reo* and Hawaiian *Pūnana Leo* (“language nest”) preschools had set the stage for Indigenous-language tracks and whole-school immersion within the public school systems of New Zealand and Hawai‘i. Immersion spread horizontally to other communities and vertically by grade. Today, a multitude of Māori and Hawaiian full-immersion pre-K–12 schools exist, as well as tertiary education programs dedicated to the promotion of these languages and their respective Indigenous knowledge systems. The Māori and Hawaiian immersion efforts are widely recognized as revitalization-immersion “success stories” that have spearheaded revernacularization in their respective languages, offered viable alternatives to English-only schooling, and provided models for the exercise of Indigenous sovereignty (see May 2013, for a full discussion).

The Saami (also spelled Sámi) are the Indigenous people of present-day Norway, Sweden, Finland, and western Russia. Saami is a Finno-Ugric language with three major branches and 11 subgroups. According to Olthuis et al. (2013), the number of Saami speakers is about 22,000. In Finland, a unique approach is being used to revitalize Aanaar Saami, a language with about 350 speakers, almost half of whom are elders (Olthuis et al. 2013). Full-immersion language nest preschools are key components. While the preschools have been highly successful, the focus on young children has left what Olthuis et al. (2013) call a “missing” generation: working adults between the ages of 20–49 who straddle the child generation learning Aanaar Saami as a second language and Native-language speaking elders.

The Aanaar Saami complementary education (CASLE) project supports this generation of working adults in recovering their heritage language through formal classes, cultural activities taught by local fisher-people, reindeer herders, and cooking specialists, and master-apprentice training in workplaces and elders’ homes. Using the widely disseminated master-apprentice approach developed by Hinton and the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (Hinton et al. 2002), this practical language training involves nonformal immersion as language learner-apprentices spend time with master teacher-speakers, “talking and doing ordinary everyday things” in Aanaar Saami (Olthuis et al. 2013, p. 80). The combination of preschool and adult revitalization-immersion has brought Aanaar Saami back into family homes. Thus, Olthuis et al. (2013) proclaim, it “is possible to revitalize a seriously endangered language!” (p. 1).

Corpus Planning: What Forms and Norms Will the Language Take?

Corpus planning includes standardization, unification, modernization, and the development of practical writing systems, lexicons, grammars, and literacy materials. These activities often are described as “internal” to a language, but this reductive characterization overlooks the complex sociocultural, historical, educational, and sociolinguistic processes involved. As Wong (1999) has pointed out, “There is a constant struggle for the right to influence the language use norms of others, and in that struggle each entity . . . seeks to claim higher authority by promoting its version

as superior” (p. 96). The case of Quechua/Quichua illustrates these tensions and suggests that efforts to “standardize” may have counterproductive results.

Despite having a relatively large number of speakers and a vast geographic spread, Quechua (called Quichua in Ecuador) is seriously endangered. In the Andean regions of South America where Quechua is spoken, centuries of social, political, and linguistic oppression have created a host of unfavorable conditions (Coronel-Molina 2015). In these contexts, corpus planning has confronted two competing goals. On the one hand is the perceived need for linguistic unification – the development of language forms and norms acceptable across diverse speech communities. On the other hand are concerns for authenticity and autonomy involving the valuing and promotion of local varieties and their users.

Early work by Hornberger and King (1999) examined these tensions as reflected in the “three-vowel versus five-vowel” debate in Peru and for the case of *Quichua Unificado* (Unified Quichua) in Ecuador (King 2001). The crux of the three-vowel/five-vowel debate is the fact that Quechua has only three vowel phonemes, yet five vowel sounds are pronounced in speech. Further, five vowels have been used in written Quechua since the Spanish invasion. As Hornberger and King (1999) analyzed the standoff between Peruvian linguists and bilingual education personnel (three-vowel advocates) and the Peruvian Academy of the Quechua Language (five-vowel proponents), two deeper issues surfaced: Who has the right to make language planning decisions – linguists and bilingual education practitioners who are not fluent speakers of Quechua, or Academy members who are? And what constitutes language “purity”? Similar questions surfaced in King’s (2001) ethnographic study of Saraguro communities in southern Ecuador, where two varieties, *Quichua Unificado* (Unified Quichua) and *Quichua Auténtico* (Authentic Quichua), were pitted against each other.

Coronel-Molina’s (2015) case study of the High Academy of the Quechua Language (HAQL) in Cuzco, Peru, updates this work, documenting ethnographically the ways in which such corpus planning dilemmas reflect ideological rifts along social class lines. Although in theory the role of language academies such as the HAQL is to “linguistically unite” speakers of diverse language varieties, in practice, formal language planning entities may have a “hidden agenda” that privileges the “linguistic, political, and sociocultural ideologies of the upper cases that have...carried out their work” (Coronel-Molina 2015, pp. 4–5). These tensions can paralyze language revitalization. A more fruitful strategy, say Hornberger and King (1999) and Coronel-Molina (2015), is a transformative approach that acknowledges the value of different language varieties and brings diverse stakeholders and expertise into a collaborative language planning process.

Coronel-Molina (2015) also argues that the advantages of technology in Quechua language planning “should not be overlooked” (p. 255). This includes new technologies used to produce interactive textbooks, the online publication of specialized Quechua dictionaries, and Internet sites with Quechua-language resources such as Cultures of the Andes (Culturas de los Andes), Quechua Language and Linguistics, Runasimi-Kuchu.com (Cyberquechua), and Runasimipi Qespiq Software (Project to Create Free Software for Quechua) (Coronel-Molina and McCarty 2011, p. 366). While these resources promise to aid Quechua status, acquisition, and corpus

planning, the great obstacle lies in connectivity related to the topography of the Andean countries where Quechua/Quichua is spoken. Evolving developments in satellite and wireless technologies are beginning to overcome these difficulties.

Problems and Difficulties

Status, acquisition, and corpus planning by and for Indigenous peoples faces the daunting challenges of ongoing raciolinguistic discrimination, disjuncts between official policy and local practice, and the hard reality of dwindling numbers of speakers. As Iokepa-Guerrero (2016) sums up the challenges: “Among the many hurdles are the challenges of resources in time, money, human capital, and workforce; materials, facilities, and training; institutionalization, population mobility, and educating and garnering support from ‘outsiders’ who may not understand nor agree with language and cultural revitalization, yet have influential power” (p. 236). As Fishman (1991) wrote more than 25 years ago, sustaining an endangered language is difficult precisely because it entails rebuilding and defending linguistic and cultural community in the face of domination. By necessity, then, reclaiming and sustaining threatened Indigenous languages encompasses the political work of power sharing and asserting “cultural autonomy” in an unequal environment (Fishman 2012).

These struggles expose core issues of social justice that underlie LPP decisions and outcomes. Language is “the ‘canary in the coal mine’ with regard to the democratic atmosphere in general,” Luykx (2004) points out; “rather than flog the canary back to life, we might turn our attention to the air quality in the mine” (p. 156). Attending to that “air quality” reminds us that the real challenges in our work lie in dismantling the inequities that impede parents and grandparents from imparting mother tongues to their children in the first place. In this sense, language planning and medium-of-instruction policies are one part of a larger social justice project to assess and redress the multiple injustices that disable intergenerational language transmission.

Future Directions

As we enter the second decade of the 2007 *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, we are reminded of the words of David Corson (1997), in the first edition of this *Encyclopedia*, that all nation-states should “designate their aboriginal languages as official” (p. 85). LPP by and for Indigenous peoples, Corson stressed, should undertake appropriate activities in pursuit of this goal.

Recent research in support of these recommendations has addressed the interface between the local and the global – the interstices of micro-, macro-, and meso-sociolinguistic processes – described by Hornberger and McCarty and their associates (2012) as “globalization from the bottom-up.” This entails critically analyzing the actions and responsibilities of dominant national and international agents in promoting linguistic, educational, and social justice, as well as the development

and impacts of local LPP processes. At the national and regional levels, Kamwangamalu (2016) proposes “prestige planning” aimed at raising the status of minoritized languages “so that members of the targeted speech community develop a positive attitude toward it” (p. 158). This can be achieved, he suggests, by requiring the Indigenous language for participation in desirable labor markets, providing dual-medium schooling in local languages and the language(s) of wider communication and heightening “speakers’ awareness about what [Indigenous languages] can do for them in terms of upward social mobility” (pp. 163–169). Makalela (2015) proposes rethinking multilingual space to accommodate an “integrated plural vision” of sociolinguistic ecologies (p. 575), including pedagogies that valorize trans-languageing (García 2009) – a strategy noted as promising in revitalizing Native American languages as well (Wyman et al. 2014).

Future directions in research and praxis also include the uses of media and technology for language revitalization. The presence of Indigenous languages in cyberspace is considerable, and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous agents have carved out virtual communities that are contributing to Indigenous language reclamation. Hermes et al. (2016) provide compelling exemplars of such processes for Hawaiian, Cherokee, Ojibwe, and Mohave in Native America. Galla’s (2016) research also reveals the important role of digital technology in language revitalization for Indigenous peoples in the US Aotearoa/New Zealand, Greenland, South America, Russia, Latin America, Australasia, and the Pacific, which also includes the multifarious ways in which media and technology can be employed as tools for language revitalization.

Also needed is greater attention to the academic impacts of LPP decisions, as exemplified by May et al.’s (2004) investigation of “good practices” for Māori immersion education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Iokepa-Guerrero (2016) similarly points to the benefits of revitalization-immersion for students’ biliteracy, cognitive, and social-emotional development. We need a much fuller understanding of these potential impacts and benefits. In this regard, an emerging literature on Indigenous youth bi/multilingualism is encouraging (e.g., Wyman et al. 2014). A key element of this research is its praxis potential, as nuanced understandings of youth language ideologies and practices suggest new strategies for involving youth directly in LPP endeavors. The increasing contributions of Indigenous scholars and practitioners to this and related research are crucial.

Throughout the field of Indigenous LPP, there is irrefutable evidence of the generative ways in which Indigenous peoples are challenging hegemonic metaphors of language death and extinction and reconfiguring power relations to wedge open new spaces for language reclamation in and out of schools (see, e.g., Leonard 2011; Perley 2011). This includes family language policymaking (Hinton 2013; Romero-Little et al. 2011), as well as assertions of educational sovereignty that promote language reclamation via decolonizing, culturally revitalizing and sustaining pedagogies (Lee and McCarty 2017; López and García 2016). Efforts such as these are under way around the world, connecting the local with the global and bottom-up with top-down and refusing grim prognostications of “failing” Indigenous languages (Meek 2011). It is to these efforts that LPP scholars and practitioners should look, as

they direct us toward ever-new strategies for dismantling sociolinguistic hierarchies and the unequal power relations those hierarchies reflect and produce.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Language Policy and Education in Mexico](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the Andes](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Policies and the Indigenous and Minority Languages of Northernmost Scandinavia and Finland](#)
- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Australia](#)
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Part III

Theory, Pedagogy, and Practice

Critical Applied Linguistics and Education

Alastair Pennycook

Abstract

Critical applied linguistics (CALx) is an approach to language use and education that connects the local conditions of language to broader social formations. Critical applied linguistics in its contemporary forms can best be understood as the intersection of various domains of applied linguistic work that operate under an explicit critical label, including critical discourse analysis, critical literacy, critical pedagogy, or critical language testing, as well as areas that operate on related critical principles but do not carry the same label, such as feminist or antiracist pedagogy. In the following sections I provide an overview of this work before discussing various problems and difficulties, including struggles over the meaning of the term *critical*, the need for work beyond only critique, and the question of its applicability to the majority (non-Western) world. Finally I discuss ways in which CALx opens up many new ways of thinking about applied linguistics, and thus presents to applied linguistics more broadly a fresh array of concerns about language, politics, identity, ethics, and difference.

Keywords

Power • Politics • Critical • Applied linguistics

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Introduction

Bringing together different critical approaches to language studies and language education – from critical, feminist, postcolonial, or queer discourse studies to critical language testing and pedagogy – critical applied linguistics provides a way of both drawing together political and ethical work in the field and showing its implications for language education. It has emerged from concerns that work in applied linguistics all too often follows a narrow and normative agenda that fails to engage with the broader social and political concerns that are inevitably linked to questions of language policy, sexual identity, class, or mobility. While many have challenged critical applied linguistics for upsetting the more restrained world of applied linguistics, suggesting that such political concerns should not be allowed to sully the neutral work of language analysis and its applications, others have embraced the chance to engage more fully with the complex, uneven, and inequitable world of which language is inevitably a part. As applied linguistics has shifted from its narrower concerns of the past, critical applied linguistics has become a key area for epistemological and political change, urging linguists and educators to engage in more profound ways with the changing world around us, and insisting that what we do always has far wider implications.

Early Developments

The term *critical applied linguistics* (CALx) itself appears to date from the beginning of the 1990s, an era when the label *critical* was very much in vogue. From critical discourse analysis to critical literacy or critical pedagogy, there was a call to arms to develop critical approaches to areas of language and education. All shared a concern to connect questions of language to broader issues of power and inequality, to insist that literacy, education, discourse, and applied linguistics required more than just a focus on “social” or “applied” domains; also at stake were wider political and transformative agendas. For an area of work already oriented towards change, the role of applied linguistics was not merely to apply knowledge of language to improve education or forms of professional communication but to take up “moral and political projects” to change circumstances of inequality, to cease “to operate with modes of intellectual inquiry that are asocial, apolitical or ahistorical” (Pennycook 1990, p. 25), and “to start developing a means of pursuing applied linguistics as a critical project” (p. 26).

Critical approaches to applied linguistics nonetheless draw on a critical tradition around language and pedagogy that has earlier origins. Indeed, Crookes (2013) suggests that teachers “have been doing something called ‘critical pedagogy’ for

50 years (using that term) and for hundreds of years, or perhaps always, under a range of related terms” (p. 1). Critical language analysis can trace its roots back to the work of Vološinov in the 1920s, and more recently to writers like Foucault (1926–1984). Critical literacy and pedagogy have been greatly influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1921–1997), while postcolonial critics such as Frantz Fanon (1925–61) have been influential for the development of an understanding of language, identity, race, and colonialism.

Of the areas of critical work that intersect with CALx, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is probably the best known. Fairclough (1995, p. 132) explained the CDA agenda as systematically exploring the relationships between discursive practices and wider social structures “to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power.” Critical literacy, which in some ways may be seen as a form of applied CDA – critical discourse analysis for the classroom – also came to the fore in the 1990s with its focus on literacy in social contexts and practices of writing. Critical literacy “marks out a coalition of educational interests committed to engaging with the possibilities that the technologies of writing and other modes of inscription offer for social change, cultural diversity, economic equity, and political enfranchisement” (Luke and Freebody 1997, p. 1). CDA and critical literacy can also be seen as two approaches to critical language awareness, the aim of which is to “empower learners by providing them with a critical analytical framework to help them reflect on their own language experiences and practices and on the language practices of others in the institutions of which they are a part and in the wider society within which they live” (Clark and Ivanic 1997, p. 217).

While sociolinguistics might have been a candidate for bringing critical questions of language and power to the fore, it has been hampered by liberal social theory and sociologically deficient conceptions of class, gender, and race. Sociolinguistics was taken to task for lacking a critical dimension, Mey (1985) calling for a “critical sociolinguistics” that can “establish a connection between people’s place in the societal hierarchy, and the linguistic and other kinds of oppression that they are subjected to at different levels” (p. 342). Mindful of these concerns, critical analyses of workplace settings, such as Wodak’s (1996) study of hospital encounters looked not only at the ways in which “doctors exercise power over their patients” (p. 170) but also at ways of intervening in this relationship. The more recent critical sociolinguistic work of Eades (2010) sheds light on and attempts to change discriminatory aspects of the legal system, particularly in relation to Indigenous Australians.

A focus on the inequitable conditions of language learning produced approaches such as Walsh’s (1991) *critical bilingualism*: “the ability to not just speak two languages, but to be conscious of the sociocultural, political, and ideological contexts in which the languages (and therefore the speakers) are positioned and function, and the multiple meanings that are fostered in each” (Walsh 1991, p. 127). Morgan (1998) and others focused on how critical pedagogy in the classroom may address issues of power and inequality both within and outside the educational context, and how potential for change and resistance may be developed. By and large, critical applied linguistic work can be characterized as starting with the perspective that

language is, as Joseph (2006) puts it, political from top to bottom. CALx therefore deals with applied linguistic concerns (broadly defined) from a perspective that is always mindful of the interrelationships among (adapting Janks 2000) *dominion* (the contingent and contextual effects of power), *disparity* (inequitable access to material and cultural goods), *desire* (the interlocking operations of ideology, agency, and identity), and *difference* (an engagement with diversity and an ambition to transform).

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

The different strands of critical applied linguistic work seek to draw connections between the micropolitics of language use (classroom discourse, conversations, textbooks, tests, and so on) and broader macropolitical concerns (gender, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, politics, and ideology). While some areas have retained their “critical” label, other areas that inform critical applied linguistics operate under a variety of labels. In the introduction to the journal *Critical Discourse Studies*, Fairclough et al. (2004) locate their work within a broader field of critical social research and the growing awareness that major social issues such as the effects of global capitalism, issues of gender and sexuality, differential relations of power between languages, the need for critical citizenship, discrimination in terms of age or race, changing identities in relation to new transnational structures, and changes to new communication media are “to some significant degree, problems of discourse” (p. 2). Critical discourse analysis has become both a means to study discourse generally and a common methodological tool used across areas of applied linguistics and language education for analysing data.

A focus on the global hegemony of English, drawing on a critical approach to language policy and planning, has opened up new perspectives on language and globalization. Debates around the negative effects of the global spread of English and the destruction of the world’s linguistic diversity have been at the forefront of this critical agenda. Important here has been Phillipson’s (1992) concept of (English) linguistic imperialism, an argument that English has been spread for the economic and political advantage of the core English-speaking nations. Focusing on the unequal distribution and benefits of the global spread of English, Phillipson (2009) has continued to argue not only that access to and the use of English constantly reproduce unequal linguistic relations but also, more broadly, that English is bound up with inequitable forms of globalization, neoliberal ideology, and the destruction of diversity. Phillipson’s dystopian and deterministic vision has, not surprisingly, engendered considerable debate, including calls for a more complex vision of the ways in which English is resisted and appropriated (Canagarajah 1999, 2013).

An appreciation of the complicities of power – the ways in which *English language teaching (ELT)* is tied up not only with neoliberal economic relations but also other forms of power and prejudice – sheds light on the ways in which assumptions of native speaker authority privilege not only a particular version of

language ideology but are also often tied to particular racial formations: “The problem lies in the tendency to equate the native speaker with White and the nonnative speaker with nonwhite. These equations certainly explain discrimination against nonnative professionals, many of whom are people of colour” (Kubota and Lin 2009, p. 8). Indeed the whole field of language education needs to be explored in relation to questions of race (Motha 2014) as well as gender and sexuality, raising questions about how textbooks, classrooms, as well as the field more broadly embrace both racial and heteronormative stances. Queer approaches to language education challenge the centrality of heterosexual normativity and ask what language education and research might look like if the strange and narrow “monosexual version of the world” (Nelson 2009, p. 218) that prevails could be overcome.

Morgan and Ramanathan (2005) describe the contemporary educational task of critical literacy as “cultivating a citizenry that is able to negotiate and critically engage with the numerous texts, modalities, and technologies coming at learners” (p. 152). Critical multimodal discourse analysis has also recently emerged, combining the general trend towards multimodal semiotic analysis with approaches to critical discourse analysis. CDA and critical literacy also come together in the critical analysis of textbooks, showing, for example, how images of gender and race are reproduced in educational contexts. Recent critical analysis (Gray 2010) has shown how a new generation of textbooks has come to reflect, and thus potentially reproduce, neoliberal images of a globalized world, promoting ideologies of individualized self-help literature, consumerism, and privileged sites of global mobility and consumption.

Kumaravadivelu (1999) offers a framework for *critical classroom discourse analysis* that draws on critical ethnography as a research tool, and “seeks to play a reflective role, enabling practitioners to reflect on and cope with sociocultural and sociopolitical structures that directly or indirectly shape the character and content of classroom discourse” (p. 473). A critical turn in second language teacher education has suggested that the notion of *praxis* – the integration of critical reflection and action – can help transform the teaching practicum from a reproduction of prior practice into the teaching *praxicum* as an incessant problematizing of pedagogical thought and practice (Pennycook 2004). Kubota’s (2004) *critical multiculturalism* “critically examines how inequality and injustice are produced and perpetuated in relation to power and privilege” (p. 37). Based on a “a critical understanding of culture” (p. 38), such an approach is also both a research tool and a pedagogical approach, involving students “in critical inquiry into how taken-for-granted knowledge, such as history, geography, and lives of other people, is produced, legitimated, and contested in power struggles” (p. 40).

From a critical pedagogical perspective, everything in the classroom, from how we teach, what we teach, how we respond to students to the materials we use and the way we assess the students, needs to be seen as social and cultural practices that have broader implications. Critical pedagogical approaches to language education “are interested in relationships between language learning and social change” (Norton and Toohey 2004, p. 1). For Crookes, *critical language pedagogy* connects language

learning with improving aspects of students' lives, as "seen from a critical perspective on society" (2013, p. 8). Dealing with the more specific domain of teaching English for academic purposes, Benesch's (2001) *critical English for academic purposes* "assumes that current conditions should be interrogated in the interests of greater equity and democratic participation in and out of educational institutions" (p. 64). Taking up Benesch's work but refocusing on specific concerns under conditions of neoliberalism, Chun (2015) provides a detailed and localized perspective on how such critical EAP work gets done.

In the related domain of language testing, Spolsky's (1995) history of the development of the TOEFL exam is clear from the outset that "testing has been exploited also as a method of control and power – as a way to select, to motivate, to punish." So-called objective tests, he points out, by virtue of their claims to scientific backing and impartiality, are "even more brutally effective in exercising this authority" (p. 1). These concerns have been pursued furthest by Shohamy (2001) in her notion of *critical language testing* (CLT) which "implies the need to develop critical strategies to examine the uses and consequences of tests, to monitor their power, minimize their detrimental force, reveal the misuses, and empower the test takers" (p. 131). Shohamy's proposal for critical language testing clearly matches many of the principles that define CALx more generally: Language testing cannot be separated from social, cultural, and political concerns; we need greater awareness and an ethical understanding of the effects and uses of tests, and a critical practice that seeks transformative action. Seen from a CALx perspective, language education needs to engage with dominion, disparity, desire, and difference in relation to language, learners, texts, tests, classrooms, and the broader contexts in which this all occurs.

Problems and Difficulties

Some have lamented the development of CALx as being "dismissive totally of the attempt since the 1950s to develop a coherent applied linguistics" (Davies 1999, p. 141). Davies (1999) defines CALx as "a judgemental approach by some applied linguists to 'normal' applied linguistics on the grounds that it is not concerned with the transformation of society" (p. 145). This critique rather misses the point: While CALx may necessarily engage in critiques of normative applied linguistics, this would be a very narrow enterprise if it were its main project. The defense of "normal" applied linguistics on the grounds that a lot of work was done to establish its disciplinary coherence also overlooks the particular inclusionary and exclusionary interests of such disciplinarity (particularly as embedded in conservative institutions of the West) as well as the importance of critique for the robustness of any area of academic work: "the very existence of a transgressive critical applied linguistics which attacks the foundations and goals of applied linguistics is perhaps a sign that applied linguistics is a discipline which has come of age" (Elder 2004, p. 430).

It is certainly important for CALx to go beyond a stance that is only critical of what is deemed noncritical and to ensure that any interventions are not seen as purely partisan. As Luke (2004) warns, CDA needs to move beyond a mode of critique

“towards a reconstructive agenda, one designed towards redress, reconciliation and the rebuilding of social structure, institutional lives and identities.” (p. 151). To the extent that CDA locates itself as a project of consciousness raising (critical language awareness) it may fall into this trap of only having an agenda of critique. It is when this becomes a more active project of critical writing – and thus goes beyond ideology critique – that it becomes a project aimed at active engagement rather than awareness.

Critical pedagogy and other domains of CALx are similarly divided between domains that critique pedagogy, multiculturalism or EAP, and action-oriented domains that seek processes of change and engagement. Although Davies (2005) oddly asserts that CALx “refrains from proposing interventions and explanations” (p. 32), CALx has also paradoxically been taken to task for proposing too many explanations and partisan interventions. This is why, as Luke (2013) reminds us, “unpacking the relationship between discourse representation and reality remains *the* core question of critical literacy as theory and practice” (p. 146). There is always a challenge to move beyond critique towards transformative and reconstitutive action. Here CALx needs to ensure that the quality and reflexivity of its research, politics, epistemology, and agendas for reform are more responsible than those in normative applied linguistics.

A significant concern is that CALx’s overt political stance on issues of inequality, racism, sexism, or homophobia unacceptably “prejudges outcomes” (Davies 2005, p. 32). As Widdowson (2001) argues, by taking an a priori critical stance (rather than maintaining a critical distance – to use a different sense of the critical), CALx may impose its own views on the objects of inquiry, taking inappropriate stances on the social world that may be hypocritical because of the impossibility of choosing between different ethical and political concerns. A CALx standpoint, by contrast, while mindful precisely of the ethical dilemmas it opens up, suggests that such views overlook their own *locus of enunciation*: It is mainstream ALx that is hypocritical if it seeks to maintain a belief in critical distance while suggesting it is impossible to take a moral or political stance, or simply ignores the very real social, political, and ethical concerns that inevitably come to bear on any applied linguistic context. Similar concerns have arisen in the domain of language education: The classroom should, from some perspectives, be a neutral place for language learning, and to teach critically is to impose one’s views on others. Such a view both misses the larger political context of the classroom and also underestimates the capacity of students to resist and evaluate what is before them (Benesch 2001). Given the power and politics of ELT, a politically acquiescent position as an English language educator is an equally political position.

Critiques reinforcing a normative vision of the politics and epistemologies of applied linguistics unfortunately obscure more important concerns that CALx does indeed need to be more wary of its own politics. There is a tendency for CALx research to operate with a normative, static politics based on various forms of neo-Marxian analyses of inequality and emancipation, and an equally static applied linguistic epistemology. To move forward, CALx needs a more reflexive politics, a form of *problematizing practice* (Pennycook 2001). CALx is not only about relating

micro-relations of applied linguistics to macro-relations of social and political power (indeed it also questions such frameworks); nor is it only concerned with relating such questions to a prior critical analysis of inequality. A problematizing practice, by contrast, suggests a need to develop both a critical political stance and a critical epistemological stance, so that both inform each other, leaving neither the political nor the applied linguistic as static. From this point of view, CALx maintains a consistent focus on issues of dominion, disparity, desire, and difference while at the same time maintaining a constant skepticism towards cherished concepts of applied linguistics, from language and ethnicity to identity and discourse.

Finally, CALx is only useful insofar as it is applicable in diverse parts of the world. While applied linguistics generally has been challenged for its relevance to different contexts of global language use, CALx is equally open to such a challenge, in terms of both its critical and its applied linguistic epistemology. The concern here is that since much of the work that comes under the rubric of CALx is based on minority (“First”/ “Western”) world contexts and theories, CALx is simply not readily usable in the majority (“Third”) world. As Makoni (2003) has argued, CALx does not have adequately contextualized strategies for engaging with local communities.

Remaining aware of the diverse contexts in which it may hope to be applicable, CALx needs to be cautious lest the very terms and concepts of any critical project at the same time inflict damage on the communities with which critical applied linguists wish to work. The challenge here is to ensure that “the research agenda is formulated in collaboration and consultation with local communities” (Makoni 2003, p. 135) in order not only to develop a relationship between this field of critical scholarship and local knowledge and practice but also to encourage the development of CALx as localized practice. The collaborative relations now being developed – from Colombia to Iran (to name but two contexts of vibrant critical activity) – to establish local forms of critical practice, and the fact that the first International Congress on Critical Applied Linguistics was held in Brazil in 2015, allow for cautious optimism here.

Future Directions

CALx has to face changing political conditions and changing epistemologies. As the overview of recent work suggested, the rise of neoliberal ideology has become a necessary focus in recent times (Chun 2015), bringing a renewed emphasis on social class as the trends towards greater social and economic equality after the second world war (the era from which much of the focus on the “critical” emerged) have been gradually eroded in the direction of deeper inequalities. CALx needs to engage with the new emergent class formations of mobile yet fragile migrant workers, from cleaners to construction site workers. Globalization has fragmented national class structures and produced instead mobile, insecure workforces, alongside the many changing conditions of communication, new media, and changing formations of

religion and opposition. All this CALx needs to deal with without becoming subject to all and any social change.

Equally important – and equally subject to caution lest CALx becomes too easily influenced by intellectual trends – is the need to engage with shifting epistemologies. On the one hand this means a constant skeptical stance towards current frameworks since even critically oriented ideas become normative once incorporated into the conservative frameworks of normative applied linguistics. On the other hand this means taking up and developing – again with a cautious skepticism – new and emerging frameworks of applied linguistic work. Second language education, for example, as May (2014) notes, has undergone a “multilingual turn”; indeed multilingualism, he suggests, “is the topic du jour, at least in critical applied linguistics” (p. 1). The “critical perspective” on multilingualism developed by Blackledge and Creese (2010) take a stance against “powerful repeated discourses” that “minority languages, and multilingualism, are the cause of problems in society” (p. 6), arguing instead for an understanding of the complexity of multilingual practices.

While CALx should be equally skeptical about such turns – the linguistic, discursive, ecological, performative, somatic and sensory turns (to name a few) have come and gone over the last few years – there is clearly change going on, especially in the challenges to the idea of multilingualism itself in notions such as translanguaging. “What would language education look like,” asks García (2007, p. xiii), “if we no longer posited the existence of separate languages?” García and Li Wei (2014) explain translanguaging as “an approach to the use of language, bilingualism and the education of bilinguals that considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous language systems as has been traditionally the case but as one linguistic repertoire with features that have been societally constructed as belonging to two separate languages” (p. 2). Canagarajah (2013) has argued along similar lines for a need to look at *translingual practices* where communication transcends both “individual languages” and words, thus involving “diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances” (p. 6).

The emergence of a different, alternative, transgressive CALx has far wider implications than merely adding a political dimension to applied linguistics. It has become both a gateway through which new theories and ways of thinking about applied linguistics are entering and changing the discipline, as well as a developing domain that speaks to contemporary work in the social sciences. A newly emergent CALx that is going beyond the normative politics and epistemologies of emancipatory modernist critical approaches is responsive not only to shifts in mainstream linguistic and applied linguistic theory but also to the many changes elsewhere. The current era, we might say, is one where the idea of practices is central (Canagarajah 2013) – whether literacy practices, multilingual practices, translingual practices, or multimodal practices – giving us a means to look critically at local, grounded activity and to relate this to wider combinations of action. This emergent form of CALx, responsive to and influential towards both changing political and theoretical domains, remains more than just a critique of or corrective to the normative domains of Alx; rather it is the place to look for renewal, the place to seek out current thinking on language, education, politics, and ethics.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Gender, and Sexuality](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language, Class, and Education](#)
- ▶ [The Politics of English Language Teaching](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Arlette Ingram Willis: [Critical Race Theory](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Bonny Norton: [Identity, Language Learning and Critical Pedagogies in Digital Times](#). In Volume: Language Awareness and Multilingualism
- Deborah Palmer: [Critical Ethnography](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
- Elana Shohamy: [Critical Language Testing](#). In Volume: Language Testing and Assessment
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- Gemma Moss: [Gender and Literacy](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Helen Sauntson: [Language, sexuality and education](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education
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- Nelson Flores: [Sociopolitical Issues in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
- Ofelia Garcia: [Translanguaging in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
- Peter Freebody: [Critical Literacy Education](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
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Language and Power in the Classroom

Hilary Janks, Rebecca Rogers, and Katherine O'Daniels

Abstract

Language pedagogies that attend to the teaching of language and power are collectively captured through the term critical literacy. Although the field is diverse, the word “critical” signals a stance toward deconstructing oppression and advocating for emancipation, as well as an understanding of power as discursive and material. This chapter traces developments in linguistics that attend to issues of knowledge, power, and identities within literacy education. Building on work of sociolinguists, critical linguists turned to systemic functional linguistics and critical language awareness, both of which posit that one’s communicative choices and “appropriate” use are dependent on social contexts and issues of power. This understanding gave rise to genre studies, New Literacy Studies, critical applied linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and multiliteracies, all of which undergird critical literacy in its varied approaches. The chapter outlines the recognized global “hotspots” where critical literacy education has developed and the influential scholars who have contributed to the field. After a discussion of the systems of distribution that have impacted critical literacy practices, the chapter reviews current

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scholarship that spans locations, disciplines, contexts, and educational levels. Finally, in a discussion of future directions in the teaching of language and power, the chapter addresses issues of equity and access and the strong local and global networks that are required to sustain teachers' work. The chapter also contends with the various tensions that arise as the field continues to shift and change.

Keywords

Critical literacy • Linguistics • Critical language awareness • Genre studies • New literacy studies

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Introduction

The teaching of language and power is a recognized approach to language education in primary, secondary, and schools of teacher education. In Australia, Canada, Cyprus, and South Africa, it is included in curricular policy. Critical literacy is an umbrella term for language pedagogies that grew out of the discipline of linguistics (including critical linguistics, critical language awareness (CLA), genre theory, critical discourse analysis) and work in the field of adult literacy. This use of the word “critical” signals a stance toward deconstructing oppression and advocating for emancipation. Critical literacy practices invite students to engage critically with representational systems to ask and answer the questions – Whose interests are served by the way in which language is used? Who benefits? Who is disadvantaged? – so that out of this understanding, possibilities for change can emerge. Critical literacy is underpinned by a strong equity and social justice agenda.

Practicing critical literacy depends on understanding that language is not a neutral tool for communication but is everywhere implicated in the ways in which we read and write the world, the ways in which knowledge is produced and legitimated, and the ways in which a human subject is constructed as a complex set of identities based on, amongst other things, race, class, gender, ability, age, nationality, and sexual orientation. Critical literacy practitioners engage with the dialectic of domination and emancipation, which requires an understanding of power as discursive and material.

Early Developments

The questioning of knowledge, power, and identities within the context of literacy education can be traced across time to Greek philosophers, movements of intellectual enlightenment, and revolutionary struggles across time and place. In more recent history, we can look to examples of how literacy campaigns were used to inspire proficiency with the written word and awaken a revolutionary consciousness. Dialogic teaching, text/social analysis, and social action are all hallmark features of critical literacy education, which relies on critical social theory and linguistics for its roots.

Hymes (1972) brought about a fundamental change in language education, arguing that in addition to acquiring linguistic competence, children also had to acquire communicative competence. He established that language use is a fundamentally social activity and that communicative competence requires an ability to use language appropriately given the sociolinguistic context. Such competence includes knowing which language variety and register is most suited to a social occasion; for multilingual children, it requires strategically selecting features of their language repertoires and the complicated social understandings necessary for trans-language. His work made space for the social in language education and paved the way for contemporary scholarship on language ideology (e.g., McKinney 2016).

At the same time, Labov was conducting important research on language varieties. His work demonstrated conclusively that the so-called non-standard varieties of English are fully systematic, rule-governed languages as capable of abstract logical reasoning as so-called standard varieties (Labov 1972). What sets these varieties apart is their social status, not any inherent linguistic superiority or inferiority. Bernstein's (1971) work, although widely misinterpreted at the time, drew attention to the cultural capital that was necessary for success in schools. Part of that cultural capital included having access to both the linguistic and communicative competencies valued uncritically by the school.

The communicative approach was the pedagogic realization of these theories in second language education. Emphasis was placed on effective communication and, for the first time, fluency and appropriateness were seen to be as important as accuracy, which had dominated earlier structural approaches to language teaching. Clark et al. (1987), in a paper that gave birth to critical language awareness (CLA), provided the first challenge to approaches to language education that did not question existing social structures. "Appropriateness," the concept at the heart of the social in language education, came under their critical scrutiny because what is appropriate is decided by social norms, which, in contexts of power (institutions, prestigious job interviews, media), are inevitably the naturalized cultural practices of social élites. This was related to the pioneering work on critical linguistics developed by Fowler et al. (1979). *Critical Language Awareness*, edited by Fairclough (1992), was the first edited collection of CLA as practice. It raised and began to answer some of the key questions on the teaching of language and power. How are students to be given access to the discourses of power in their educational institutions so that these

are not simply reproduced? How much language competence do students need before CLA can be taught in second or foreign language classes? When does CLA become emancipatory?

These developments would not have been possible without systemic functional linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday (1985). SFL established a foundation for understanding language as a “social semiotic” and for mapping the relationship between language, text, and context. This grammar, which is “a theory of meaning as choice” (Halliday 1985, p. xiv), has provided the tools for critical discourse analysis, genre theory, and multimodal analysis. It creates the opportunity to include the power-meaning potential when teaching linguistic structures. Students learning grammar can simultaneously learn about the relationship between modality and authority or about the connection between “us” and “them” pronouns and othering discourses, and they can learn to recognize who is a “doer” and who is a “done-to” when they are taught transitivity and voice. This critical approach to linguistic structures has also been effectively applied to the teaching of critical writing as can be seen in the work of Kamler (2001).

Once Halliday moved to Australia, the University of Sydney became the center for SFL. Using SFL, genre theorists described the generic and linguistic features of six dominant factual genres – reports, recounts, procedures, explanations, expositions, and discussions – to be able to teach them to students. Genre pedagogy was specifically designed to give marginalized students in Australia access to dominant forms of language, and the Disadvantaged Schools Project developed both classroom materials and an explicit pedagogy. Likewise, Delpit (1995), working with African American students in the USA, recognized the importance of both access, critique, and reconstruction of dominant genres. Primary English Teachers’ Association Australia (PETAA) publications have made both Hallidayan grammar and genre theory widely accessible to teachers (<http://www.petaa.edu.au/>).

The work of educational linguists such as Courtney Cazden, James Gee, Nancy Hornberger, David Corson, and Bonny Norton on discourse analysis, language and diversity, and language and identity forged links between North American versions of critical literacy and developments elsewhere. Freire’s (1970) work was extended by ethnographic research on literacy, which generated the New Literacy Studies (Gee 1990; Street 1984). Some of the classroom work it gave rise to focuses on situated literacy practices in contexts of power (e.g., Pahl and Rowsell 2005). Likewise, Pennycook’s (2001) *Critical Applied Linguistics* has provided a theoretical base for considering the political economy of languages.

Changes in the communication landscape prompted theorists to rethink literacy in a digital age. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) focused attention on multimodal forms of communication, which increasingly use forms of semiosis (image, gesture, sound) in addition to or other than language. Under the leadership of Cope and Kalantzis (2000), the multiliteracies project has explicated the literacies needed for changes in both semiosis and technologies and made links across specialist interests such as: genre theory, discourse theory, language learning in multilingual and Indigenous communities, social and citizenship education, feminist linguistics, and learning in a neoliberal work order.

Research on diversity, difference, and othering, often from a feminist, neo-Marxist, critical race theory, postcolonial, or gay and lesbian perspective, has included careful work on language and its power to construct and delimit the ways in which we think the other and ourselves. Although this work has played a formative role in the development of critical literacy, a full review of this literature is outside the scope of this chapter (for more on this, see Rowlett and King, chapter “► [Language Education, Gender, and Sexuality](#),” this volume).

Major Contributions

Published accounts of critical literacy practice can be found in all continents except Antarctica, representing at least forty-five countries. However, recognized “hotspots” for critical literacy education have developed. It is within these areas that well-formed traditions have emerged.

Freire’s (1970) work in Brazil shows how, in the process of critically learning to read both the word and the world, adult literacy learners regain a sense of themselves as agents who can act to transform social situations. Freire continues to be the main influence on critical literacy in North America, as seen, for example, in the work of Antonia Darder, Carol Edelsky, Donaldo Macedo, Peter McLaren, Brian Morgan, Ernest Morrell, Ira Shor, Roger Simon, and Mariana Souto-Manning. Founded by Miles Horton and influenced by the work of Freire, Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee (USA) continues to be an active center for popular education (<http://highlandercenter.org/>).

Australia was at the forefront of developing theorized classroom practice in the area of critical literacy. The theoretical contributions of Allan and Carmen Luke; Carolyn Baker and Peter Freebody; Bronwyn Mellor and Annette Patterson; and Pam Gilbert, Bill Green, Barbara Comber, Barbara Kamler, and the New Zealander Colin Lankshear laid the foundations for classroom practice. Freebody and Luke’s (1990) four resources model is an approach that attends to both the cognitive and social dimensions of literacy learning. The model includes four social practices that students take up (code breakers, text participants, text analysts/critics, and text users) as they become critically literate. This model was incorporated into Queensland’s *New Basics* curriculum. Comber and colleagues (2015) have for two decades theorized, supported, and showcased the work of classroom teachers who have made a difference to the lives of marginal students. Bronwyn Mellor, with colleagues in Western Australia, led the early development of classroom materials through the founding of Chalkface Press (<http://www.chalkface.net.au/>).

In South Africa, Janks (2010) developed a critical literacy framework in response to the struggles against apartheid. She proposed four concepts central to understanding language and power: *domination*, *access*, *diversity*, and *design*. *Domination* refers to the idea that discourse plays an important role in the maintenance of power relationships. *Access* focuses on providing students with the tools of dominant discourses, without devaluing primary discourses. *Diversity* embraces engagement with various literacies and a range of modalities, which facilitates experimentation

with social identities. *Design* – or the productive and creative potential of power – is conceptualized as a way to challenge and change existing discourses. Janks points out that these concepts are interdependent. The *CLA Series* (Janks 1993; Janks et al. 2014) situates itself across the first language/second language divide and is written in English that is accessible to students who speak African languages. This series is the only set of classroom materials specifically designed to translate CLA into classroom practice. The apartheid context in which they were written gives a political edge to these workbooks, which make it clear that language is both a site and a stake in struggles for a more humane and just world.

In the United States, Jerome Harste and colleagues at Indiana University cultivated university-school partnerships with critical literacy as a central part of curriculum at both levels. Their approach to critical literacy has been synthesized into a model often used by practitioners (Lewison et al. 2008). The model includes instructional practices including *disrupting the common place*, *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, *considering the sociopolitical*, and *taking action for social justice*. The goal of such instruction is to promote meaningful inquiry through student-teacher partnerships, while giving voice to marginalized groups of people. The influence of this tradition can be seen through the critical literacy work of Deborah Rowe (young children's authoring practices), Gerald Campano (immigrant literacies), Kathy Short (inquiry and social justice in children's literature), Tasha Tropp Laman (teacher education), Katie van Sluys (multilingual classrooms), and Lee Heffernan (writing), all prolific and influential scholar-practitioners in this area. Indeed, Vivian Vasquez's (2004) book, *Negotiating Critical Literacies with Young Children*, featuring Vasquez's work as a teacher-researcher, is now in its 10th year anniversary edition.

Systems of distribution play a major role in the impact of critical literacy practices. Foundational and emerging critical literacy work has been published in anthologies, monographs, and handbooks. Thus, publishing companies and editors have influenced the growth of critical collections. Through Senior Editor Naomi Silverman's stewardship, Routledge has a well-developed list of critical literacy titles, including work by JuliAna Avila, Richard Beach, Barbara Comber, Hilary Janks, Cynthia Lewis, Ernest Morrell, Kate Pahl, Jessica Pandya, Jennifer Rowsell, Rebecca Rogers, Vivian Vasquez, and Melissa Mosley Wetzell (see, for example, <https://www.routledge.com/Language-Culture-and-Teaching-Series/book-series/LEALCTS>). Peter Lang has a sizable collection of critical media literacy texts edited by Colin Lankshear. Teachers College Press has a series focused on critical issues in educational leadership, multiculturalism, and teaching for social justice. This includes work by Alma Flora Ada, Deborah Appleman, Catherine Compton-Lily, Kris Gutiérrez, Valerie Kinloch, Candace Kuby, Michele Lazar, Carmen Mercado, Jamie Myers, and many others (see <http://www.teacherscollegepress.com/browse.html>). Stenhouse, under the editorial guidance of Philippia Stratton, offers accessible and critically oriented accounts of language and literacy practice geared for teachers. Peer-reviewed journals have also contributed to the circulation of research-based accounts. Major sources of critical literacy scholarship appear in general education journals (e.g., *Teachers College Record*), curriculum

journals (e.g., *Curriculum Inquiry*; *Journal of Curriculum Studies*), critical education journals (e.g., *Critical Studies in Education*; *Journal of Critical Pedagogy*; *Critical Inquiry into Language Studies*; *Pedagogies*), multilingual/multicultural journals (e.g., *International Journal of Multilingual Studies*; *Journal of Second Language Writing*; *TESOL Quarterly*), discourse analytic journals (e.g., *Critical Discourse Studies*; *Discourse*; *Linguistics and Education*), and journals devoted to literacy studies (e.g., *Journal of Literacy Research*; *Language Arts*; *Literacy*). Some journals such as *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Language Arts*, *Literacy* and *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy* have wide rates of circulation to teachers and have a more direct influence on classroom practice. For example, under the editorship of Luke and Elkins, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* (1997–2002) made critical approaches more available to teachers in North America. There have also been a number of themed issues devoted to critical literacy scholarship: *Primary Voices* (2000); *Language Arts* (2002); *New England Reading Association Journal* (2007); *Voices from the Middle* (2009); *English Education* (2009); *Theory into Practice* (2011); and *English Teaching: Practice and Critique* (2012). This list is not exhaustive because of the geopolitics of database vendors and critical scholarship being conducted in places such as Southeast Asia with more covert names.

Early efforts by publishing companies to develop curriculum materials included The Chalkface Press workbooks (<http://www.chalkface.net.au/>), which introduced students to post-structuralist theory for textual deconstruction focusing on literary texts and used innovative activities that taught an understanding of reading positions. The US edition of these workbooks, published in 2002 by the National Council for Teachers of English, increased their influence. Janks developed the Critical Language Awareness Series that has been updated and is now called *Doing Critical Literacy* (Janks et al. 2014). The Rethinking Schools project has produced cross-curricular guides on gender and sexuality, globalization, the environmental crisis, war, and media (<http://www.rethinkingschools.org/>). Rethinking Schools is part of the Network of Teacher Activist Groups (TAG), a coalition of grassroots teacher organizations that provide curricular materials and support teachers as agents of change at both local and national levels (<http://www.teacheractivistgroups.org>).

Work in Progress

The field of critical literacy is diverse, spanning locations, disciplines, contexts, and educational levels. Across approaches, different emphases are placed on deconstructing texts or creating alternatives and the role of social action. Some approaches have a greater socio-cognitive focus (e.g., Dozier et al. 2006). These efforts are often reported as individual published accounts but, when taken together, create a cumulative effect in particular sociopolitical areas of interest (Rogers and O’Daniels 2015).

Issues of diversity and discrimination related to race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture often arise within the context of language and literacy teaching. There is a great deal of work in this area supported theoretically by the scholarship of Bonny Norton, Ryuko Kubota, and Allan Luke. Alford and Jetnikoff (2011), working in an Australian context, described exemplar cases of secondary teachers who effectively used critical literacy practices with their English as an additional language/dialect students. Likewise, Sepulveda (2011) demonstrated how young Latino men narrated their experiences as transmigrants through poetry and autobiographical writing.

There are also good examples of teachers taking on issues of social class, gentrification, and neoliberalism. Barbara Comber and colleagues out of Australia have worked extensively with students in a low socioeconomic area in South Australia that has undergone massive urban renewal. Through various collaborative teacher-research projects, they have documented how students respond to the gentrification efforts and how they take up various literacy practices, both in and out of school (Comber 2015). Analysis and critical readings of social class and consumerism have been conducted with learners across the lifespan, from educators (e.g., Albers and Harste 2013) to kindergartners (e.g., Labadie et al. 2013). Jones and Vagle's (2013) scholarship focused on social class and poverty with the goal of building toward a theory of social class-sensitive pedagogy. Poverty is one of the pressing issues that teacher-scholars must continue to address.

Critical literacy has been applied across the school curriculum to the analysis of school history textbooks in Austria, to the exploration of the construction of gendered discourses in school geography, and to citizenship education. For example, McClune et al. (2012), working in the United Kingdom, studied the intersection of critical literacy with science media. Practitioners have combined critical literacy practices with environmental education and ecology (Clayton 2015). Other cross-disciplinary initiatives include the incorporation of CLA into a business communications course at a Singaporean university (Weninger and Kan 2013) and the use of mathematics as a tool for social critique (Wayne 2009).

How criticality is taught and learned by novice and experienced educators is essential to the deep integration of critical literacy in schools. Allen and Alexander (2013) illustrated how teachers use a human rights framework to engage students in critical inquiry into pressing social issues such as immigration rights, religious tolerance, racial equality, countering the effects of poverty, and respect for people with disabilities. Dozier et al. (2006) and Rogers and Mosley Wetzel (2014) demonstrated the integration of critical and accelerative literacy with novice and more experienced literacy teachers in literacy clinics. Vasquez et al. (2013) delineated the conditions that lead teachers to accept or resist the critical teaching of language and power.

Contemporary work in critical genre studies shows that serious attention to genre is not antithetical to the aims of critical literacy, provided that genres are not reified and taught as static conventions reduced, in some of the more rigid genre positions, to formulae operating according to fixed rules. Studies in this area suggest that students can both access dominant genres and reconstruct them; what students need is an understanding of the historical and social determinants of these forms, an ability

to adapt these forms as the conditions change, and efforts to change these conditions (e.g., O'Hallaron et al. 2015).

There is also a coalescing body of work in performative and dramatized forms of critical literacy practice. For a decade or more, Carol Rozansky has worked in Augusto Boal's tradition of Image Theatre, inviting youth and educators to use theatre to deconstruct and reconstruct power relations. (e.g., Rozansky and Aagesen 2010). Spoken word poetry is another performance art that has captured the attention of critical literacy practitioners (e.g., Scarbrough and Allen 2014). Patricia Enciso and Brian Edmiston are well known in the USA and UK for work in drama and storytelling. Embodied literacies give attention to how students use their bodies, clothings, gestures, and affective responses to perform critical literacy (e.g., Johnson 2011; Lewis and Tierney 2011).

Critical literacy is beginning to contend with the criticism that it is fundamentally a rationalist activity that does not address the nonrational investments that readers bring with them to texts and tasks. Pioneer work in this area included Norton's (2000) theory of "investment" in relation to language acquisition and identity, Janks' (2002) work on identification, and Lillis' (2001) work on writing and desire. Benesch (2012) offers new insights on the emotional labor that critical pedagogues perform, including emotion management and the explicit teaching of emotions.

Around the globe, critical media literacy has grown in prominence. Some projects focus on deconstructing media and popular culture texts, whereas others have a greater focus on designing new practices. For example, Ernest Morrell and colleagues (2013) focused on critical media pedagogies and how they can be harnessed for deep learning, achievement, and building democratic communities. Merchant contributes scholarship focused on interaction, collaboration, and learning in online environments, including virtual 3-D worlds and social media (Burnett and Merchant 2011). Ávila and Pandya (2013) offer a rich account of critical digital literacies, engaging with issues such as ethics, the market economy, and collective intelligence.

Future Directions: Difficulties and Promises

The teaching of language and power has deepened and solidified in many areas of the world. We have many descriptive accounts coalescing into knowledge domains, developed theoretical frameworks, and policy efforts. Critical literacy is being carried out with very young children and adults, in classrooms and communities. The issue of "readiness" that haunted early critical literacy has been overturned. We know from a decade of research that an understanding of textual positioning requires an understanding of the subtlety and nuances of words; however, there are texts of different degrees of linguistic complexity, and any text that is suitable for the level of learners to read is suitable for critical analysis at that level. The principles of critical literacy can be translated across time and contexts; yet, the vast majority of children, youth, and families do not have deep and prolonged exposure to the social analysis,

cultural critique, and relationships necessary for creating a more humane world. This is an issue of equity and access.

To truly radicalize practice, both in classrooms and communities, critical literacy cannot rely on published accounts in journals and books. Vasquez created *Critical Literacy in Practice Podcast* (CLIP) (<http://www.clippodcast.com/>) as a way to distribute examples of teaching and learning. *Global Conversations in Literacy Research* (GCLR), conceived of by Margaret Albers, is a series of interactive, open-access web seminars that features timely critical literacy research and shows the potential of creating a global network devoted to critical literacy practices (<https://globalconversationsinliteracy.wordpress.com>).

Critical literacy is a continual process of challenging and establishing standpoints, intervening, and creating more favorable social conditions (in discussions, in schools, in policies). Program-level efforts are needed to infuse critical literacy across disciplinary areas, courses in a program, and grade levels. Luke et al.'s (2013) book offers pioneering work in this kind of integrated and longitudinal effort. To spread and consolidate the material effects of this curricular work, both local and global networks are needed to support and sustain teachers' work. Grassroots groups such as Educators for Social Justice provide local accounts of how this is possible (Rogers et al. 2009).

Critical scholar-practitioners must also contend with a number of tensions that have arisen. What are the material consequences of critical literacy, for example? This is a question of how changing practices result in changes in material conditions within schools (e.g., achievement records, placement decisions) and more broadly (e.g., meaningful relationships, engagement in the community, life satisfaction, and even happiness). There are many accounts of children and youth gaining access to dominant texts, critiquing and reconstructing them, *and* achieving academic excellence. These accounts can be levers for advocating for deep changes in curriculum policies. However, we have fewer accounts of what difference critical literacy makes over the long haul. We might also approach the critical project from a different angle and try to understand how people across communities accomplish important goals using language (broadly construed) and power.

Emancipation involves both discursive and material conditions. Critical literacy has to take seriously the ways in which meaning systems are implicated in reproducing domination, and it has to provide access to dominant languages, literacies, and genres, while simultaneously using diversity as a productive resource for redesigning social futures and for changing the horizons of possibility. This includes both changing dominant discourses as well as changing which discourses are dominant. Most important is the recognition that critical literacy is not static. In this realm, post-humanist theory is again shifting the ground.

In her book, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, Karen Barad (2007) argues that human subjects, like other phenomena, are part of the material world and that knowing comes from material intra-actions with the world. Every intra-action reconfigures the world and the possibilities for being as a part of it. Knowing, acting, and being are "entangled" material practices that affect matter in and across time and space –

timespacematterings. In addition to having responsibilities to the societies we inhabit, we also have responsibilities to the world in all its materiality and all its diversity.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)
- ▶ [The Politics of English Language Teaching](#)

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The Politics of English Language Teaching

Doris S. Warriner

Abstract

This chapter summarizes more than three decades of scholarship on the politics of English language teaching (ELT) by outlining and describing early developments, major contributions, selected works in progress, some current problems and difficulties, and potential future directions for research. The chapter endeavors to introduce those who are new to the topic to key scholars and their work while also providing an overview to those more familiar with the research. The work discussed here has facilitated English language teachers' critical understanding of the social, political, ideological, historical, and economic dimensions of the various processes, policies, and practices associated with ELT. It has also inspired a good amount of research, productive debate, and theory building among both scholars and practitioners. The chapter concludes by urging English language teachers, applied linguists, and educational researchers to continue advancing our collective knowledge and critical understanding of the complicated dynamics involved in ELT in order to pursue advocacy on behalf of individuals, families, and communities who are engaged with English language teaching or learning.

Keywords

English language teaching/learning • Political • Ideological • Practices • Policies

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Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to and overview of scholarship that views English language teaching (ELT) as an inherently political process. The work discussed here has facilitated English language teachers' critical understanding of the social, political, ideological, historical, and economic dimensions of the various processes, policies, and practices associated with English language teaching. With a focus on social, ideological, and economic factors, the chapter raises questions about the reasons for teaching English as a second/foreign language, the methods used, the different circumstances under which this occurs, and how this all might influence learners' lived experiences – whether those learners are immigrants, refugees, or members of Indigenous groups. For a number of reasons, it is difficult to describe or analyze English language teaching (ELT) without also taking into account who is being taught, for what purposes English is being taught/learned, and the circumstances under which this teaching and learning takes place. Greater attention to the many different kinds of political and ideological factors that shape ELT has already enhanced the understanding and practice of ELT professionals and researchers. More research is needed to continue advancing theoretical claims, implications for practice, and advocacy efforts on behalf of marginalized communities and learners.

Early Developments

In the early 1980s, Elsa Auerbach and her colleague Denise Burgess (1985) began to question the reasons for and contexts of English language teaching and learning and to critique the short-sighted goals and disempowering consequences – or the “hidden curriculum” – of curricula focused on teaching what was then called “survival English.” Examining the relationship between what takes place in the classroom and what students were experiencing outside the classroom, they argued that these curricula “often prepare students for subservient social roles and reinforce hierarchical relations” (p. 475), and they invited practitioners and researchers alike to consider modes of instruction that would be more empowering. Later, building on these insights and observations, Auerbach (1993) questioned the use of English as the only language of instruction (see also Tollefson 2000; Wiley and Lukes 1996). Collectively, such work raises a number of critical questions about the goals and purposes of existing but untested policies and the fact that “the rationale used to justify English only in the

classroom is neither conclusive or pedagogically sound” (Auerbach 1993, p. 9; see also Valdés 1998). Auerbach (1993) noted the ironic fact that “many of those who may oppose the English Only movement [in the USA] on a policy level insist that their students use English as the sole medium of communication” (p. 10). Citing second language acquisition research as well as her experiences as a teacher of adult immigrants and refugees, Auerbach (1993) argued that it is far more productive to allow learners to use their first language and that teachers’ resistance to this practice was at least partly influenced by the influence of ideology, power, and teacher-student roles (p. 23).

Other researchers examined how the work of English language teaching professionals might be influenced by ideologies of language and language learning (Ricento and Hornberger 1996), the influence of standard language ideologies on policies and practice (Wiley and Lukes 1996), and the uncritical acceptance of Standard American English (SAE) by the general population and among ELT professionals (Lippi-Green 1997/2011). Ricento and Hornberger (1996), for instance, described how English language teachers are actively (though sometimes inadvertently) involved in policymaking – with consequences for students’ learning and also for the “vibrancy” of particular languages (p. 401). Wiley and Lukes (1996) and Lippi-Green (1997/2011) examined standard English language ideologies and ideologies of English monolingualism (both of which are dominant ideologies of language in the USA and in other contexts once colonized by the British) to show that assumptions about language (and the “right” way to speak) shape what counts as learning and therefore what is prioritized in the classroom. By examining ideologies of language from a historical-structural perspective (Tollefson 2002) and interrogating the relationship between language ideologies and other paradigms (e.g., those promoting individualism and meritocracy), this research furthered our understanding of the situated and context-driven nature of policies and pedagogical practices. Together with Alim et al. (2008), Baugh (2000), and Ibrahim (1999), such scholarship has raised our awareness about the values attached to “unaccented” English – and the consequences for processes of teaching, learning, and moving across political contexts.

These and other examinations of the ideological dimensions of ELT highlighted the importance of taking into account the stances taken by teachers, the goals of their students, and the assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning circulating in the local context. Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996) explained that forces that emerge out of deficit-oriented views of bi-/multilingualism and a “diffusion-of-English” paradigm are at odds with an “ecology-of-language” paradigm (Mühlhäusler 1996) – which values languages and speakers of languages as resources or components of a larger ecological system – and that there are consequences of such views for language maintenance, language spread, and language shift. According to Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996), “hierarchies of language substantially influence social reproduction and intercultural communication in a world characterized by the contradictory pressures of vigorous ethnolinguistic identities and strong global homogenizing tendencies” (p. 432).

Major Contributions

Pennycook (1994, 2000) has theorized what he called the “cultural politics” of ELT and offered a critical perspective on teaching English as a second language to speakers of other languages (TESOL) (Pennycook 1999). Arguing that language classrooms are much more than “methods, competencies, strategies, grammar, tasks, exercises, drills, activities, and so on,” Pennycook (2000) examined the ways that ELT classrooms are “complex social and cultural spaces” as well as “sites of struggle over preferred social and cultural worlds” (pp. 89, 91). Emphasizing how the social world influences classroom relations and practices, Pennycook urged ELT teachers to understand how schools function in society, how social relations play out in classrooms, and the potential for a critically minded teacher to engage in resistance, advocacy, and action. Citing Auerbach (1995, 2000) and others (e.g., Norton 2000), Pennycook (1999) showed that critical approaches were needed in order to counter the imperialist tendencies of the ELT profession.

Valdés (1998) described the politics of ELT by exploring the challenges involved in educating immigrant and refugee children who arrive at school not speaking the language of instruction. Valdés (1998) observed that, for many teachers, debates about what constitutes effective instruction are difficult to separate from questions about identity, belonging, and membership:

In the current context in which anti-immigrant sentiment is at an all-time high, newly arrived children are routinely accused by the general public of not wanting to learn English and of failing to profit from the education that the state is giving them at great cost. Among policymakers and administrators, debates center around ideologies concerning the English language and its place in educational institutions. (p. 13)

Like Auerbach and Pennycook, Valdés (1998) observed that ESL classrooms are sites of struggle, usually because the goals and priorities of ELT are impossible to disentangle from larger questions about “the role and the future of immigrants in our society” (p. 16). Unfortunately, debates about what language(s) to use in the classroom continue to be uninformed by research-based findings. Opinions about what language(s) should be used (or not) in the classroom have rarely been supported by research on how languages are learned or what immigrant students need (Valdés 1998, p. 14).

Ricento’s (2000) edited volume, *Ideology, Politics and Language Policies: Focus on English*, drew attention to the case of English language dominance and illustrated the complicated interconnections between ideology, politics, and language policies. Similar to Lippi-Green (1997/2011), Tollefson (2000) explores the ideological and political hierarchies that value “native” over “nonnative” varieties of a language as a paradox: “at a time when English is widely seen as a key to the economic success of nations and the economic well-being of individuals, the spread of English also contributes to significant social, political, and economic inequalities” (p. 8). As Kubota (1998), Park (2011), Ricento (2000), Tollefson (2000), and Wiley (2000) describe and illustrate, language ideologies in the USA and elsewhere (and the

policies and practices they influence) have repercussions that are political, pedagogical, and lasting.

Reflecting on the ideologies of English that exert influence over policies, practices, and pedagogical priorities in Japan, Kubota (1998) recommended critical pedagogy and critical awareness in order to facilitate greater awareness and appreciation of multiple (“nonnative”) varieties of English and their value: “Perhaps the most troubling way English exerts influence in Japan is in affecting the formation of people’s views of language, culture, race, ethnicity, and their identity” (Kubota 1998, p. 287). In order to resist the stereotypical views of English speakers and Japanese speakers promoted by dominant ideologies of language as well as the ELT curriculum, Kubota (1998) recommends critical pedagogy and language awareness: “In the Japanese context, to raise critical consciousness means first of all to notice the linguistic and cultural imbalance and contradictions in everyday social and cultural practices that are taken for granted, and to critically reflect on the values attached to those practices” (p. 303).

In the South Korean context, Park (2011) describes and analyzes how English is positioned as the key to advancement economically, politically, culturally, and socially and where “the promise of English” drives practices across realms. Canagarajah (1999) has also advanced our understanding of the imperialistic dimensions of ELT and the power that teachers have to resist those forces and put new ones into play. He proposes resisting the linguistic imperialism often associated with ELT with ethnographies of ELT that highlight and examine the views and experiences of language teachers and learners across contexts.

Research on how English language learners and their teachers are constructed discursively (e.g., Park 2011; Warriner 2007a, b, 2015; Wiley 2000) shows that ideologies of language and language learning significantly influence the policies, practices, circumstances, and consequences of ELT in many contexts. The imperialist tendencies that often accompany ELT initiatives have adversely influenced efforts to learn second languages while also inhibiting initiatives designed to maintain native languages and literacies. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) has framed this as a case of linguicism and an issue of linguistic human rights, where “ideologies, structures, and practices [...] are used to legitimate, effectuate, and produce an unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (p. 40).

Other critical perspectives on ELT have focused on questions of language and language learning in relation to gender (Norton 2000; Warriner 2007), race (Ibrahim 1999), and class (Lin 1999; see also chapter “► [Language, Class, and Education](#),” by Collins and Rampton, this volume). Norton (2000) examined the lived experiences of immigrant women living in Canada to understand the conditions under which language learners speak, the learners’ changing identities and how those changes were influenced by processes of language learning, and whether/how language teachers might engage with the historical or social backgrounds of these language learners. With attention to the ways that relations of power influence opportunities for language learning and use, Norton (2000) analyzed identity as multiple, a site of struggle, and always in flux. This work has influenced research in a number of ways.

For instance, in a study of the politics of belonging (Warriner 2007), I examined the language learning experiences of women refugees to understand how ideologies of language that prioritize English language learning align and do not align with the women's lived experiences outside of the classroom. Drawing on Norton's theories of identity and Pennycook's view of the ESL classroom as a site of cultural politics, I questioned the short-sighted goals often involved in adult immigrant education and argued that ELT professionals need "to transform band-aid approaches into teaching and learning practices that facilitate the transformations required for genuine educational access and inclusion, long-term economic self-sufficiency and stability, and social mobility for all groups historically marginalized in the United States, including recently arrived refugees from war-torn contexts" (p. 356). In related work focusing on the relationship between processes of social identification and language learning, Ibrahim (1999) advanced our understanding of the role of the social imaginary in the practices and affiliations of immigrant and refugee African youth and the language and literacy practices they accessed and learned. His critical ethnography showed that the desire to learn English as a second language was often infused with political and ideological goals, with implications for theories of investment, identity, and language learning. Alim et al. (2008) later edited a volume that examined the politics of language in relation to youth identities and hip hop culture, featuring ethnographic investigations of language choice, mixing, stylization, and variation in order to examine and understand complex processes of globalization and transnationalism in relation to power, politics, language, and identity.

In an article on critical perspectives on ELT, Lin (1999) asks whether teachers and students' responses to "classroom dilemmas" reproduce unequal social and economic relationships or offer opportunities for transforming them. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1991) notions of cultural capital, habitus, and symbolic violence, Lin shows that while most ELT contexts are reproductive, there are possibilities for transformation and agentive resistance. Baugh, too, has examined "socially stratified linguistic diversity" and posited that existing policies and practices constitute a form of educational malpractice when minority students cannot access educational opportunity due to language difference – which are often associated with race and class difference (Baugh 2000). Calling this "the miseducation of language minority students," Baugh recommends that conscientious teachers be invited to take more "leading roles in finding solutions to eliminating potential or real sources of malpractice in their midst" (p. 314).

A number of researchers have shown that the political and ideological dimensions of ELT are intensified in the context of national conversations about assessment, accountability, and standardization (e.g., Avineri et al. 2015; Menken 2008; Menken and Garcia 2010; Wiley and Wright 2004; Warriner 2007b). Examining the rhetoric around assessment and accountability that permeates language-minority education initiatives (Wiley and Wright 2004), the use of standardized tests in adult ESL contexts as a "bureaucratic sorting mechanism" that prepare adult immigrants for low-wage, entry-level employment (Warriner 2007b), or the ways that the policy of "No Child Left Behind" has severely constrained the learning opportunities available

to English language learners (ELLs) enrolled in US schools (Menken 2008), researchers have raised a number of critical questions about the long-term implications of raising already high-stake measures of so-called learning and progress for those already marginalized. Fortunately, as the work of Avineri et al. (2015), Hornberger (2006), and Menken and Garcia (2010) demonstrate, in the midst of constraints, there are possibilities for resistance, reconsideration, and reinvention. Educators can act as *de facto* policymakers in ways that further constrain learners' opportunities, but they can also act in ways that open up possibilities for change and social justice.

Although many researchers have offered critiques of the social, political, economic, and ideological dimensions of ELT over the past few decades, a good number have also proposed alternative perspectives and approaches that promise to improve the theoretical and methodological perspectives that will inform research and practice. Creese and Martin (2003), for instance, argue that viewing classrooms from an ecological perspective (see also Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1996; Tollefson 2000) allows researchers to understand how interactions, ideologies, and relationships between teachers and students are dynamic, connected, and mutually informing. A number of researchers have also begun to raise questions about what we mean by "language" and how working definitions influence not only what phenomena we see and investigate but how, when, where, under what circumstances, and for what purposes we see and investigate those phenomena. Makoni and Pennycook (2006), for instance, examine conceptions of language to understand the ways that "all languages are social constructions, artifacts analogous to other constructions such as time" (p. 1) and, more importantly, to move beyond critique. They propose a project of reconstruction which would involve "rethinking the ways we look at all languages and their relation to identity and geographical location, so that we move beyond notions of linguistic territorialization in which language is linked to geographical space" (p. 3). As with decades of research in linguistic anthropology, the move suggested here is toward understanding local perspectives on language(s) as well as the relationship between those ideas, cultural systems of beliefs, social relationships, and political interests (p. 20). Similarly, Jacquemet (2005) proposes an analytic focus on the communicative environment and suggests we consider the role of transidiomatic practices or the complex communicative practices that emerge in contexts of globalization and mobility (e.g., mixing, creolization, hybridity). Nero (2005) has also raised questions about what counts as a language (vs. what counts as a dialect, a creole, etc.) and the implications for ELT – with a focus on English speakers from the Caribbean.

In contrast to scholarship on linguistic imperialism, language death, and endangered languages, the examination of transidiomatic practices is considered more descriptive and therefore as a more nuanced and accurate way to analyze language contact and change over time (and not just with regret). Canagarajah's (2011, 2013) notion of translanguaging practice and Garcia and Wei's (2014) work on translanguaging are additional ways scholars have theorized the complicated language practices that accompany globalization and bilingualism without compartmentalizing language and/or other communicative repertoires. As recent work (e.g., Creese and

Blackledge 2010; Hornberger and Link 2012) demonstrates, the notion of translinguaging has inspired new ways of considering language policies, classroom pedagogies, interactional dynamics, and the learning opportunities made available to English language learners.

Work in Progress

Building on the work of those who have contributed important insights about the social, political, and ideological dimensions of ELT, researchers are currently investigating the politics of teaching English as an International Language (EIL) (Kubota 2012), the construction of native speakers of English as monolinguals (Matsuda and Duran 2013), the ways in which language policies and pedagogical practices might inadvertently contribute to or exacerbate discitizenship for learners of English (Ramanathan 2013), the language policy challenges and pedagogical possibilities associated with refugee resettlement in the USA (Feuerherm and Ramanathan 2015), and what principles and strategies might be needed to create participatory learning communities in ELT contexts (Auerbach et al. 2013). Current work also continues to explore and interrogate the notions of translingual practice and translinguaging in the fields of applied linguistics, rhetoric and composition, and education.

Finally, the idea that looking closely at local practices and beliefs to understand the dynamics and particulars of larger, global, transnational processes has reemerged as a critical source of inspiration for scholars across fields of inquiry and disciplines. Park (2011), for instance, has examined how ideologies about “the promise of English” are intertwined with assumptions about what counts as linguistic capital in today’s marketplace (a marketplace that is increasingly international and influenced by US economic trends). Shin and Park (2015) ask how language works as a social and political process and how language learning and teaching, increasingly influenced by the logic of the market, both reflects and reinforces neoliberal social transformations. In a special issue of the *International Multilingual Research Journal*, Warriner and Wyman (2013) examine what kinds of practices (and policies) emerge in “complex linguistic ecologies” and propose ways that our theories and approaches to inquiry might advance in order to better capture the various phenomena involved.

More than 15 years ago, Warschauer (2000) predicted significant changes in the ELT profession as a result of globalization, increased language spread, changes in the market value of nonnative varieties of English, and the increased use of information and communication technologies. He advocated project-based learning to promote engagement in critical inquiry and situated practice as one way for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, competencies, and literacies required by the emerging society and economy. Asking ELT professionals to pay attention to the ways that English will become a tool of global networks and local entities, Warschauer (2000) observed that “L2 speakers of English will use the language less as an object of foreign study and more as an additional language of their own to have an impact on and change the world” (p. 530).

Problems and Difficulties

As researchers and practitioners, we are still working to understand what recent theoretical contributions and advances might mean for our theories, methods, and pedagogical practices. We are still trying to understand, for instance, whether and when we might use translingual or transidiomatic practices in the classroom, what counts as translanguaging, and how to manage the desires and needs of diverse students in the ELT classroom. How is translanguaging the same as or different from other forms of mixing or creolization? What is the value of the new label – are we describing something new?

Additionally, we are still grappling with questions about our role as teachers and researchers, how to incorporate and value other languages and literacies, how and when to include learners in the design and delivery of the curriculum, and questions about assessment and accountability. If English is indeed still the language of power, prestige, and international communication, what role do proficiency and literacy in languages other than English have in ELT? We are not sure how teachers' relationships with students or with the curriculum might need to be changed, how to manage dynamics of power when they enter the classroom, what kinds of interactional routines might need to emerge, and when/how to include learners in curriculum design and/or delivery. What does participatory actually mean? How might it be accomplished? Under what circumstances?

Future Directions

The politics of ELT has been a fruitful area of inquiry and debate for at least three decades and continues to attract interest and enthusiasm from researchers and practitioners involved in language learning and language teaching. Whether the focus is on ideologies of language and language learning, the economic dimensions of transnational movement, or questions about how to enhance the learning opportunities provided to immigrants and refugees across global contexts, existing scholarship contributes important insights with significant implications for theory and practice. As applied linguists, literacy scholars, and educational researchers endeavor to address the various remaining questions, challenges, and quandaries that have been referenced in this chapter, there are a rich body of scholarship and set of ideas to draw on. By keeping the lived experiences of English language learners as a priority, future research will make important contributions to theory, practice, advocacy, and social justice initiatives. English language teachers, applied linguists, and educational researchers have much to contribute to the continued examination of the politics of ELT. By advancing our collective knowledge and critical understanding of the complicated dynamics involved in ELT, we will all be better prepared to engage in advocacy on behalf of individuals, families, and communities who are engaged with English language teaching or learning.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#)
- ▶ [Language and Power in the Classroom](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the USA](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)

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Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools

Kate Menken and Ofelia García

Abstract

Schools are crucial sites for the implementation of language policies. After gaining recognition within the broader field of language policy in the 1980s, language education policy has grown swiftly. While earlier work in language policy focused on the resolution of language “problems” in colonial and post-colonial nation building efforts, typically by analyzing official top-down documents aimed at deliberate language change, in the 1990s–2000s researchers increasingly adopted a critical perspective with an interest in ensuring that language education policies do not create or perpetuate social inequities. This critical focus was followed by the current focus on educator agency, in which research methods informed by anthropology have been favored as scholars increasingly conduct ethnographic research inside schools. This has resulted in greater attention to the human dimensions of policies as living and dynamic and acknowledgment that educators are at the epicenter of language policy processes, as they are called upon to interpret policies and implement them within their classrooms. We describe how understandings of the dynamic and fluid language practices of bilinguals coming from the new body of translanguaging research hold great promise for shaping the next wave of language education policy research. After overviewing current challenges, we conclude by offering a set of questions for future research.

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Language education policy • Language-in-education planning • Educational language policy • Translanguaging

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Introduction: Early Developments

In this section, we introduce early developments in language education policy. While by no means new as an activity, language policies in classrooms and schools have only been formally examined by scholars since the 1980s (Kaplan and Baldauf 1997; Ricento and Hornberger 1996). Einar Haugen (1959) introduced “language planning” into the literature in 1959 (though he maintains that it was actually Uriel Weinreich who first used the term in a lecture). The early work in language planning and policy was concerned primarily with issues of nation building and modernization in colonial and postcolonial contexts and finding solutions to the perceived “problems” of multilingualism. Thus, from the very beginning, multilingualism was at the center of language policy work. The early work concerned itself with policies that were typically official top-down documents aimed at deliberate language change, such as changes in the status of the language, as well as changes to the corpus, or language, itself. (As we will discuss in the sections that follow, this focus on language problems and planned language change from a top-down perspective is critiqued by more recent research in the field). At the time, for instance, Rubin and Jernudd (1971) defined language planning as “*deliberate* language change. . . focused on problem-solving” (p. xvi). Likewise, Fishman (1974) stated, “the term language planning refers to the organized pursuit of language problems, typically at the national level” (p. 97).

Recognizing that schools serve as a primary vehicle for language planning and policy implementation, Fishman (1972) suggested that language planning and policy in education had been a concern since the field’s beginnings and that the challenges of educating linguistically diverse students were what galvanized interest in language planning from the start. Likewise, Haugen (1983) acknowledged education as a primary reason for the field’s development. Spolsky (1977, 1978) was one of the earliest scholars to begin theorizing what he termed “language education policy.”

Chris Kennedy later edited what may be the earliest entire book on the topic, *Language Planning and Language Education*, published in 1983. As Kennedy (1983) states: “[n]owhere is this planning more crucial than in education, universally recognized as a powerful instrument of change” (p. i).

Building on this work, Robert Cooper acknowledged the power of schooling in language planning theory, and in 1989 added what he termed *acquisition planning* to Haugen’s (1972) status and corpus planning framework, offering acquisition planning as a third key goal of language planning and policy efforts. Acquisition planning can be thought of as efforts to increase the number of speakers of a language, expand speakers’ knowledge of a language, or influence the distribution of languages by offering greater opportunities and incentives for language learning, typically through formal language education. As Cooper (1989) notes, language teaching is an object of policymaking. Hornberger (1994, 1996) later built on this theoretical work by weaving together acquisition planning and Haugen’s (1972) four-dimensional matrix. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) likewise built on Cooper (1989), offering the term *language-in-education planning*. As they write:

Of these, language-in-education planning, or what Cooper (1989) has called “acquisition planning,” is often seen as the most potent resource for bringing about language change. . . [L]anguage in education planning is a key implementation procedure for language policy and planning. (p. 122)

Growing recognition of education within the field paved the way for many later studies on language policies in classrooms and schools as a central component of language planning and policy.

Major Contributions

Critical Focus in Language Policy Research

The field of language education policy has greatly evolved since the 1980s. Departing from the earlier language problems focus, research in the 1990s and early 2000s was informed by critical theory and centered on ways that language policies can either create or perpetuate social inequities (e.g., Corson 1999; Tollefson 1991). This is because language policies are often imposed in schools that privilege the dominant or national language, strengthening the prestige afforded to those who speak the language of instruction (not coincidentally, the language of instruction is typically that spoken by the elite), and in the process marginalizing speakers of minoritized languages. Language policies have long-term consequences in schools, as they can lead to language loss and shift over time, prevent speakers of minoritized languages from learning when teaching and curricula are in a language they do not know, and limit students’ future opportunities.

This critical research promoted a language ecology perspective, wherein each language is viewed as a natural resource worth preserving, and a great deal of

scholarly attention was paid to ensuring that school language policies do not contribute to language loss or disparities because of language (Corson 1999; Phillipson 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; Tollefson 1991). Researchers in this era showed how certain languages dominate others and how this domination is typically related to power dynamics between groups of people (Phillipson 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). David Corson (1999) explains this movement, which he termed “critical language planning,” in the following passage:

When school language policies are put into action, they are linked with power and with social justice in a range of ways. Whenever schools set out to plan their response to the language problems they face, matters of language variety, race, culture, and class always affect the planning process, and an effective language policy process will always look critically at the impact of these and other aspects of human diversity. (p. 6)

Likewise, James Tollefson (1991) argued that early research promoted a “positivist” paradigm in education, denying the political nature of language teaching and research. In writing about the role of language as a gatekeeper for education, employment, and economic advancement, he stated:

[W]hile modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people will be unable to acquire that competence. A central mechanism by which this process occurs is language policy. (p. 7)

Naming language policy as culpable for social inequities in his groundbreaking work, Tollefson (1991) argued that teaching and research instead must problematize linguistic and social hegemony, seeing language as a mechanism for control by a dominant elite.

Seminal theoretical and empirical studies document how some schools have contributed to language loss while others have contributed to language maintenance, revitalization, and/or reversing language shift. For instance, examples of school policies resulting in language loss include the imposition of English-only policies in US public schools (Crawford 2000; Wiley and Lukes 1996) and in Ireland (Ó Riagáin 1997), policies mandating instruction in English and Afrikaans at the expense of Indigenous languages in apartheid South Africa (Alexander 1999; Heugh 1999), and the shift to Hebrew monolingualism as part of the Zionist ideology over a 50-year period leading up to the establishment of the State of Israel (Spolsky and Shohamy 1999). By contrast, research on language maintenance and reversing language shift in schooling included documented efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages such as Navajo and Hawaiian in the USA (McCarty 2003), Quechua in Peru (Hornberger 1988), and Māori in New Zealand (Bishop 2003), as well as minoritized languages such as Euskera (Basque) in Spain (Cenoz 2001) and Welsh in Wales (Baker and Jones 2000).

Out of this period came a growing interest in supporting schools in their development of policies that would sustain and deepen students’ home language practices. In 1999, David Corson published *Language Policy in Schools: A Resource for*

Teachers and Administrators, which was intended as a guide for educational practitioners to develop their own school language policies and outlined the procedures for them to do so. His framework for what he terms “critical policymaking” offers the following four stages with the processes for each stage: (1) Identifying the real problem(s), (2) Trial policies: The views of stakeholders, (3) Testing policies against the views of participants, and (4) Policy implementation and evaluations. Building on Corson’s (1999) work, Freeman’s (2004) book, *Building on Community Bilingualism*, draws upon her ethnographic research and experiences in school language policy development, and offers a practical framework for schools and school districts to use to develop language policies that promote bilingualism.

Focus on Educator Agency and Ethnographic Work

Cooper’s (1989) contribution of language acquisition planning to the field opened spaces for researchers to move beyond official policies such as those initiated by government (e.g., in the creation of a national language), to encompass “bottom-up” activities such as the decision for instruction to be solely in Hawaiian language at the Pa’ia school in Maui as a result of community pressure (Warner 1999). Tollefson (1991) characterizes earlier approaches to language policy research as neoclassical (referring to the period in which research focused on solving language problems) and distinguishes those from critical ones (where attention was paid in research to power dynamics and social inequities). Ricento and Hornberger (1996) take this a step further theoretically and argue that neither approach fully captured the complexities of the policy process.

[N]one offers a model that can predict the consequences of a particular policy or show a clear cause/effect relationship between particular policy types or configurations and observed (often undesirable, from the perspective of critical theorists) outcomes. (p. 408)

Moreover, they highlight how implementation had been overlooked in the literature and offer a metaphor depicting language planning and policy in schooling as a multilayered “onion.” Legislation and political processes were placed at the outer layers of their onion, with states, supranational agencies, institutions, and educators, respectively, moving into the heart of the onion. They thereby emphasized the agency of individuals across national, institutional, and interpersonal levels in language policy implementation, and positioned educators at the core demarcating them as essential – albeit often overlooked – in language policy (Ricento and Hornberger 1996).

From research in the field that paid attention to bottom-up policy, Shohamy (2006) drew the important distinction between “overt” and “covert”/“hidden”/“de facto” language policies. Her book views language policy broadly, moving beyond statements about policy to examine different mechanisms that create de facto language policies and practices (p. 2). Language education policy is depicted in her book as one such mechanism; accordingly, she writes about language education

policy as “the mechanism used to create de facto language practices in educational institutions” (p. 76).

Menken and García (2010) describe this current research, which accepts de facto policy as an educational reality and is attentive to the critical role of educators in policy making, as:

... [A] newer wave of language education policy research that refocuses our attentions from governments to local school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members—the so-called bottom of the educational policy structure—and which views language policies as far more multidimensional than written policy statements. (p. 3)

In their edited volume about educators as language policymakers, with chapters about language policies in schools and classrooms around the world, Menken and García argue that the role of educators in policy implementation has been “undertheorized” (p. 251). They draw a distinction between Kaplan and Baldauf’s (1997) language-in-education policy and language education policy and write that while the former “is concerned with decisions only about languages and their uses in school, language education policy refers to decisions made in schools beyond those made explicitly about language itself” (Menken and García 2010, p. 254). Hélot and Ó Laoire (2011) put forth “language policy for the multilingual classroom” and likewise offer international cases, which together detail efforts taken on by educators, communities, and states to embrace multilingualism as an accepted norm in schools. Johnson (2013) instead prefers “educational language policy” over “language education policy” in order to describe the “official and unofficial policies that are created across multiple layers and institutional contexts (from national organizations to classrooms) that impact language use in classrooms and schools” (p. 54).

Taking this a step further, Menken and García (2010) write about language education policies in the plural in their book, seeing them as living and dynamic rather than two-dimensional, due to the individuals involved in their development and implementation as well as the fact that they are often numerous and competing in education, especially as policies are negotiated, interpreted, and ultimately implemented by educators in schools and classrooms. Others who have focused on agency and the human element in language policy include Canagarajah (2005), Hornberger and Johnson (2007), and Ramanathan (2005). Along these lines, McCarty (2011) describes language policy not as a disembodied “thing,” but rather as “a situated sociocultural process – the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people’s language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways” (p. xii). Going further, Davis (2014) talks about “engaged language policy” as “situated action — collaboratively designing and doing social welfare equity” (p. 83), political activism that then brings meaning to language policy and planning endeavors.

The recent paradigm shift in language policy research with its current interest in human agency and “lived” policies has been accompanied by methodological shifts. Early language planning and policy work was national in scope and typically involved empirical observation or historical analyses of policy texts, in which

“language policy was viewed as something linguists *did* rather than what linguists *studied*” (Johnson 2013, p. 124), whereas more recent approaches include the ethnography of language policy (Johnson 2009; McCarty 2011) and discourse analysis (Martín-Rojo 2010). Informed by educational research trends as a whole, language education policy researchers in recent years have relied heavily on anthropological, qualitative approaches such as ethnography in researching how language policies are lived in schools. This critical ethnographic research, Tollefson (2013) says, has “the potential for individuals and groups to resist, undermine, and alter the trajectory of language policies adopted for the benefit of powerful groups” (p. 27).

Palmer and Snodgrass-Rangel (2011) use ethnographic interviews with bilingual teachers at six US elementary schools to examine how policy and context shape teacher decision making, as teachers negotiate top-down high-stakes testing and accountability policies. As is often the case in the USA and other contexts where there is no official language education policy in place, education policies intended for all students become de facto language policies in classrooms (as examined by Menken 2008). Palmer and Snodgrass-Rangel (2011) found that teachers are under pressure to limit their curricula in favor of test preparation, but tempered these pressures with efforts to incorporate authentic language teaching based on what they believed to be best for their students (p. 623). The researchers’ use of ethnographic methods here offers deeper understandings of sense-making and policy negotiation by language teachers in schools.

Chimbutane (2011) combines ethnographic methods with discourse analysis in his study of language policy in Mozambique, focusing on bilingual education in two primary schools. In the absence of explicit language education policy, Chimbutane maintains the current de facto policy in Mozambique is multilingual, favoring instruction in local languages, with 16 languages offered as initial media of instruction. Chimbutane (2011) found that in the two schools examined bilingual education helped strengthen the local languages (Changana and Chope), affirming student identity and fostering ethnolinguistic pride, while also aiding in the transition to Portuguese medium instruction. At the same time, he found postcolonial language ideologies linger in favor of Portuguese over the local languages.

Work in Progress: Poststructuralism, Neoliberal Globalization, and Language Education Policy

The critical position of many language education policy scholars today, together with the ethnographic work that has accompanied it, has made visible the complexity of language and semiotic practices that students and teachers perform in the classroom, and the ways in which these are often restricted. This critical ethnographic work has galvanized a theoretical shift towards poststructuralist positions in which the very construct of “language” has been questioned, and the consequences of economic neoliberalism for education foregrounded.

In the past, and despite the critical emphasis of much language education policy work, the focus had been the maintenance, shift, or revitalization of language as an

autonomous object or linguistic system. In a theoretically influential book, Makoni and Pennycook (2007) focused on how languages and metalanguages had been invented as part of colonial and nationalistic projects. Pennycook (2006) points out that language has to be seen “as contingent, shifting, and produced in particular, rather than having some prior ontological status” (p. 63). In recent sociolinguistic work, “language” has begun to be epistemologically repositioned as a sociopolitical construct linked to processes of domination of a neoliberal globalized economy. That is, language has been stripped of its privileged status as an ontological entity (Heller 2007). Sociolinguists now refer to mobile “repertoires” (Blommaert 2010) that speakers use in creative ways to make meaning. Scholars have started to ask themselves what language education policy would look like if we no longer posited the existence of separate languages and to probe the sociopolitical and socioeconomic consequences of such a shift. As Pennycook (2006) asks: “If the languages that language policy claims to deal with cannot themselves claim ontological status, what then is language policy concerned with?” (p. 67). Petrovic (2015) replies to this by offering what he calls a “post-liberal approach to language policy in education” (p. 17), appealing to the pedagogical and political value of heteroglossic language practices in which various voices interact and compete.

Current language education policy research is attentive to the impact of a neoliberal economy that focuses on privatization as a way to enhance profit-making, thus reinforcing socioeconomic inequality and benefitting the dominant class. In the case of US schools, for example, recent language education policies narrowly focus on what is constructed as “academic language,” ensuring the failure of language-minoritized students and blaming public schools for their lack of success. School language practices have become increasingly regimented through the adoption of Common Core State Standards and assessments that reify these, thereby codifying language correctness and effectively sorting students, since not all groups have the same control over the production of what is constructed as “academic English.” Pérez-Milans (2015) suggests that (socio)linguistic ethnography can constitute a suitable theoretical and methodological approach to resist language education policy that oppresses minoritized speakers “since it avoids bounded representations of stable communities/identities and carries a strong orientation to the discovery of the local, uncertain, unpredictable and changeable positioning of the participants in interaction” (p. 103).

One way these more fluid local practices resist linguistic regimes imposed by schools has been to take up a *translanguaging* theoretical lens (García 2009; García and Li Wei 2014). In language education policy terms, translanguaging refers to how agents (including students, educators, and communities) leverage and sustain the fluid language practices of multilingual communities in ways that can lead to more engagement with learning, as well as greater social equality and justice for all. Translanguaging education policies do not focus on maintaining nationalistic understandings of separate languages. Nor do they privilege “balanced” bilingualism, wherein an individual’s languages are regarded in isolation and a speaker can only be considered a “legitimate” bilingual if they perform as two monolinguals in one (Grosjean 1989). Instead, translanguaging policies focus on assisting speakers to

sustain their diverse language practices so that they can endure the hegemony of dominant languages typically imposed in schools. The difference between maintenance and sustainability is subtle, but important. Translanguaging education policies are not concerned with maintaining, or even revitalizing languages as static systems separate from the social, human context in which they operate. Instead, they offer speakers agency to perform their language practices in functional interrelationships with those of their multiple communities of practice in order to benefit their own communities.

The City University of New York–New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (CUNY-NYSIEB), a project in which we serve as co-principal investigators, is one example of how traditional top-down language policies in schools with emergent bilinguals (whether monolingual or bilingual) are being transformed. Translanguaging policies in these schools leverage the complex repertoires of emergent bilinguals, offering assistance to language-minoritized *speakers*, not to languages as ontological entities per se. Such assistance focuses not just on sustaining the communities' own language and cultural practices and leveraging them to develop others and other ways of knowing, but providing them, as Kathryn Davis says, with the “tools and opportunities for taking up agency” (Davis 2009, p. 2004). While assisting schools in their efforts to serve emergent bilinguals in practical ways, translanguaging is a stance that is, as Flores (2014) argues, a political act that is “part of a larger political struggle of linguistic self-determination for language-minoritized populations” (n.p.).

Many other scholars are working today with translingual practices that go beyond traditional understandings of language, thus extending the field by rethinking both the language education policies and the linguistic outcomes that scholars and practitioners advocate. Canagarajah (2011), for example, talks about *codemeshing* in referring to the shuttle between repertoires, especially in writing, for rhetorical effectiveness. Yet in most classrooms, implicit or explicit language education policies continue to dictate narrow definitions of “appropriate language” for education, invalidating and marginalizing the complex language practices of diverse speakers. In response, we suggest below that this body of translanguaging research will inform the next wave of language education policy scholarship and educational practices.

Problems and Difficulties

A great challenge of language policies in classrooms and schools is that often those who are most affected by the language policies being imposed – students, especially minoritized ones, and their teachers – are negotiating macro policies that were developed outside of their context without their input. Families and communities are rarely considered in language policy research or policy development. Likewise, the role of students in language policy making is typically not addressed in research or practice, making them solely policy subjects rather than active participants in the policy process.

While research about the role of educators in language policy has increased in recent years, their expertise is rarely leveraged in the creation and adoption of explicit and de facto language policies. Within schools, particularly in contexts where there is no official language education policy, education reforms intended for all students assume the role of de facto language policies. These policies are typically adopted without consideration for language-minoritized students, resulting in de facto language policies that undermine the education of such students, including bilingual education efforts. For instance, general education policies in the USA have been emphasizing high-stakes testing in English, and a well-documented byproduct of this has been English-only instruction and the marginalization of languages other than English in schools (McCarty 2003; Menken 2008; Menken and Solorza 2014; Wiley and Wright 2004). In China, task-based teaching was a curriculum reform adopted for all areas including English language teaching, but because teachers were not involved in policy development, there was limited guidance and no accountability for policy implementation, so teachers were ultimately left to adopt the reform or not according to their interpretation of its meaning in instruction (Zhang and Hu 2010). In Israel, mandates regarding how much instructional time should be devoted to the three official national languages – Hebrew, Arabic, and English – have resulted in the marginalization of Arabic and the privileging of Hebrew and English, in spite of official, national language policy promoting these languages equally (Shohamy 2006). Curricula and materials are often adopted in schools with bilingual education programs that are not available in the languages of instruction, thereby undermining school language policies (as is the case in Mozambique per Chimbutane 2011; and in the US per Menken 2008). In many cases, policies are created by officials who have limited understandings about language education and language learning (Menken and Solorza 2014).

These issues raise a number of questions. One question pertains to how those most affected can inform the adoption of educational policies that would support minoritized languages and language learning. Little is known about how to increase the voices of students, families, and communities, and teachers in policy development and adoption, for instance, through advocacy, or how to open spaces for their voices in political arenas when policies are often politically dictated. Like testing policy, curricula and materials generate de facto language policies in schools, and they have received very little attention in research or practice; moreover, the full range of mechanisms in schools that create de facto language education policies is unknown.

Teachers and school administrators, though now increasingly recognized in research within the field as language policy makers in their own right, usually receive no preparation or guidance on how to negotiate and manage top-down educational policies in ways that support the education of minoritized students. Language teachers are often those within school buildings who hold the most expertise about language learning, and their input is needed to shape policy implementation in ways that support bilingual students; however, they are often excluded from important decision making, particularly in schools where leadership is not collaborative and where school leaders themselves do not have this knowledge base.

School structures as identified in much language education policy work typically continue to be based on hard boundaries between languages, with languages strictly separated by class, teacher, period, or day of the week (Cenoz and Gorter 2011). For example, language education policy in the context of bilingual/multilingual education has focused on the ways in which one language or the other is used as medium of instruction, without considering the complex linguistic and semiotic repertoire of students.

A challenge in shedding the ontological nature of language for language education policy is that educational systems serve precisely the interests of nation-states and their elites. Taking up a poststructuralist perspective of language education policy puts us at odds with what many schools do. The challenge then is to enable students to leverage their complex linguistic and semiotic repertoire to show what they know and can do and to develop their political conscientization vis-à-vis language, as they both resist and appropriate the language practices legitimized in schools.

An even more important challenge in taking up translanguaging education policies is that because we have not only constructed “language,” but rather “national languages” have constituted us as social beings, we lack the ability to clearly communicate (through language) the linguistic and semiotic complexities of the diverse repertoires of speakers and their communities of practice. In other words, it is difficult to talk about language education policy without the concept of national languages that is now understood as socially constructed. That is why in this chapter we have emphasized translanguaging education policy, focusing on the language practices of speakers, and especially multilingual speakers, which do not fall squarely among those legitimized in dictionaries, grammar books, school textbooks, and assessments. We see this as the next frontier in language education policy research and practice.

Future Directions

The areas noted above lead to the following questions to be addressed in future research studies:

- How can language policy actors at every layer of educational systems not only be heard but serve as leaders in policy adoption and implementation, to ensure policies support students with different linguistic practices and educational programs that buttress their education?
- How can all key stakeholders, particularly families and communities, teachers, and students lead policy development and adoption?
- How can the expertise of teachers and other educational practitioners be leveraged and heard more effectively in policy development and adoption?
- What is the entire range of mechanisms in education that result in de facto language policies and practices in schools?
- In what ways are curricula, available materials, and assessments acting as de facto language policies in schools?

- How can teachers and educators be better prepared to negotiate competing policy pressures in ways that make sense for their students, and especially speakers of minoritized languages?
- To what extent do language educational policies validate or invalidate the actual language practices of bilingual students?
- What does a translanguaging education policy imply? What are the challenges and possibilities of implementing such a policy in traditional educational spaces?

In late modernity, educational institutions have been transformed by globalization, transnational migration, new technologies, and a neoliberal economy. The language education policy field has responded to this transformation by emphasizing its social criticality and focusing on the local and speakers themselves through ethnographic work. Recently, language education policy scholars have also started to question a concept that had been central in the field – that of language as an autonomous and static system comprised of extractable fractions that form its corpus. The notion (and practice) of translanguaging reorients the field towards a humanizing language education policy perspective that can not only empower language-minoritized students, their families and their teachers, but also makes evident how ideologies of language construct the sociopolitical frameworks that perpetuate domination and exclusion of these students from civil society.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)

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- Angela Creese: [Linguistic Ethnography](#). In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education
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Language, Identity, and Investment in the Twenty-First Century

Ron Darvin and Bonny Norton

Abstract

The construct of investment, developed by Norton in the mid-1990s, represents the historically and socially constructed commitment of learners to language learning. Now considered a significant explanatory construct in language education research (Cummins 2006; Douglas Fir Group 2016; Kramsch 2013), this construct serves as a sociological complement to the psychological construct of motivation and is an index of identity and power. Of central interest is the question, “What is the learner’s investment in the language and literacy practices of classrooms and communities?” Because identities are multiple and sites of struggle, the investment of learners is always a dynamic negotiation of learning in specific contexts. This chapter traces how investment has been taken up in language education research internationally, including journal special issues in Asia and Europe. The chapter addresses both the origins of the construct as well as the recent development of a comprehensive model that locates investment at the intersection of identity, capital, and ideology (Darvin and Norton 2015). Responding to the changing social and digital landscape, the model recognizes the capacity of both learners and teachers to move fluidly across both time and space in an increasingly digital world. The chapter concludes with a discussion of investment research directions for the future, given evolving conceptions of identity, capital, and ideology, and how such research can impact language education policy.

Keywords

Identity • Investment • Ideology • Capital • Digital • Language learning

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Introduction

Recognizing that learners are social beings with complex identities, the construct of *investment*, introduced by Norton in 1995, highlights the socially and historically constructed relationship between learners and the target language (Norton 2013; Norton Peirce 1995). This construct demonstrates that commitment is not just a product of motivation, but that learners invest in a language because they recognize how it will help them acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power. At the same time, how learners are able to invest in a target language is contingent on the dynamic negotiation of power in different fields and how learners are granted or refused the right to speak (Norton 2013; Norton Peirce 1995). A learner may be highly motivated, for example, but may resist opportunities to speak if a given classroom is racist, sexist, or homophobic. Over the past two decades, Norton has advanced these ideas, and identity and investment are now considered foundational in language education (Cummins 2006; Douglas Fir Group 2016; Kramsch 2013; Miller and Kubota 2013; Ortega 2009). This chapter illustrates how both emerging and established scholars in the international community have taken this work in new directions and in diverse scholarly and linguistic communities, with important implications for language policy.

Early Developments

In her classic study of immigrant women in Canada, Norton (2013; Norton Peirce 1995) observed that existing theories of motivation in the field of language learning often conceptualized the learner as having a unitary, fixed, and ahistorical “personality.” She argued that this conception was inconsistent with the findings from her research and did not do justice to the identities and experiences of language learners in immigrant contexts. Inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1990, 1991) and Weedon (1997), *investment* recognizes the language learner as having complex,

multiple identities, changing across time and space, and reproduced in social interaction. If learners “invest” in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will increase the value of their cultural capital and social power. By collapsing the dichotomies associated with traditional conceptions of the learner (good/bad, motivated/unmotivated, anxious/confident, introvert/extrovert), investment recognizes that the conditions of power in different learning contexts can position the learner in multiple and often unequal ways, leading to varying learning outcomes.

Norton also made the case that an investment in the target language is an investment in the learner’s own identity. In addition to asking “Are students motivated to learn a language?” researchers pose the question “To what extent are students and teachers invested in the language and literacy practices of a given classroom and community?” A learner may be highly motivated, for example, but not necessarily invested in the language practices of a given classroom, if the classroom exhibits racist, sexist, or homophobic tendencies. In the same way that identity is a site of struggle, how learners are able to invest in a target language is contingent on the dynamic negotiation of power in different fields, and thus investment is complex, contradictory, and in a state of flux (Norton 2013; Norton Peirce 1995).

By demonstrating the socially and historically constructed relationship between language learner identity and learning commitment, investment soon secured a significant place in language learning theory. As Kramsch (2013) notes:

Norton’s notion of *investment*, a strong dynamic term with economic connotations . . . accentuates the role of human agency and identity in engaging with the task at hand, in accumulating economic and symbolic capital, in having stakes in the endeavor and in persevering in that endeavor. In the North American context, *investment* in SLA has become synonymous with ‘language learning commitment’ and is based on a learner’s intentional choice and desire. (p. 195)

Since its inception, the construct of investment has been used analytically in diverse research studies. For example, McKay and Wong (1996) examined how four Mandarin-speaking secondary students from a California school were invested in learning English, while Skilton-Sylvester (2002) drew on investment to analyze the participation of four Cambodian women in adult ESL classes in the USA. While Haneda (2005) focused on the engagement of two university students in an advanced Japanese literacy course, Potowski (2004) and Bearse and de Jong (2008) analyzed how learners invest in the context of two-way Spanish-English immersion programs. In a “meta study” of two nonnative English-speaking (NNES) international students in an English-speaking graduate school in the USA, Chang (2011) examined how the students were able to exert their own agency “to fight their academic battle” (p. 228) and selectively invest in areas that would increase their market value in their current and imagined communities. In a study of low-level adult ESL classrooms in Australia, Ollerhead (2012) drew on the constructs of investment and imagined communities to understand teacher responses to learner identity and to demonstrate how the aspirations of learners are integral to this identity. A comprehensive literature review on investment by Pittaway (2004) underscored the growing

significance of the construct, and in 2006 Cummins asserted that investment had emerged as a “significant explanatory construct” (p. 59) in second language learning research.

Major Contributions

While earlier research on identity and investment was mostly from North America, major contributions in recent years have been more international in orientation. In the African context, Norton and her colleagues (Andema 2014; Early and Norton 2014; Norton et al. 2011; Norton 2014; Norton and Williams 2012) have worked in different countries, particularly Uganda, to better understand the investment of learners and teachers in the English language, digital literacies, and language policy. The researchers observed that as learners and teachers developed valued digital skills, they gained greater cultural capital and social power. One teacher named Betty indicated that when she used a digital camera, she “felt like a man”:

I feel very powerful like a man because I had never held a camera in my life. I have always seen only men carrying cameras and taking photos in big public functions like may be independence celebration, political rallies and wedding ceremonies. But now as I move in the community taking pictures with my camera, I feel I am also very powerful, like a man. (Andema 2014, p. 91)

Norton and colleagues observed that both Ugandan students and their teachers are highly invested in new literacy practices because the use of digital technology extends the range of identities available to them and expands what is socially imaginable in the future. Advanced education, professional opportunities, study abroad, and other opportunities have become a component of their imagined futures and imagined identities. Recognizing that what is socially imaginable in the African context is not always available. Norton and Williams (2012) have looked to the work of Blommaert (2010) to theorize the investments of learners in language and literacy practices associated with digital resources. This conception sought to extend Blommaert’s notion of “uptake” with reference to the construct of investment. While Blommaert argues that discourses shift their value, meaning, and function as they travel across borders, Norton and Williams (2012) point out, similarly, that when digital tools travel, they are subject to different sociopolitical and economic conditions, which shape their social meaning. This in turn has a concomitant impact on the investments of learners and teachers, who navigate a range of identities in taking up and sometimes rejecting these new digital resources.

The construct of investment has also proven productive in the Asian context. To respond to the questions, “Who owns English?” and “What are learner and teacher investments in the English language?,” the *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* published a special issue on investment (Arkoudis and Davison 2008) that focused on the social, cognitive, and linguistic investment of Chinese learners in English medium interaction. The research in this issue included studies of an English Club

that allowed mainland Chinese learners in Hong Kong to practice English (Gao et al. 2008), college students from nonurban areas in China (Gu 2008), and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) learners in an English medium university in Hong Kong (Trent 2008). More recently, De Costa (2010) drew on the construct of investment to understand how and why a Chinese language learner in Singapore embraced standard English to inhabit an identity associated with being an academically able student. With reference to Chinese learners of English, Norton and Gao (2008) note:

As Chinese learners of English continue to take greater ownership of the English language, redefine the target language community, and develop unique forms of intercultural competence, scholars interested in English language learning and teaching need to reframe their research questions and reconsider their assumptions. (p. 119)

In the South American context, Carazzai (2013) and Sanches Silva (2013), like Reeves (2009), have focused on the investments of language teachers. Their doctoral theses examine the construction of teacher identity in the Brazilian states of Santa Catarina and Mato Grosso, where Portuguese is the dominant language. They concluded that the imagined identities of students and teachers were crucial in explaining investments in English language learning and teaching, together with the opportunities afforded to them for both face to face and virtual interaction with English speakers internationally. Mastrella-de-Andrade has also helped to extend theories of identity and investment to her Portuguese-speaking colleagues in Brazil (Mastrella-de-Andrade and Norton 2011). Although at the time a graduate student in the United States, Uju Anya (2017) conducted data collection in the Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador, where she studied the investments of African-American language learners of Portuguese in a study abroad program. She demonstrated how the learners co-constructed and negotiated multiple racialized, gendered, and classed identities in the learning of Portuguese and how their investments influenced second language acquisition.

Research interest in identity and investment has also been gathering momentum in Europe. German-speaking European educators have found the relationship between literacy, identity, and investment productive for classroom-based research with youth (Bertschi-Kaufmann and Rosebrock 2013), and research on English as a Lingua Franca (Jenkins 2007) has drawn considerably on the construct of investment. A 2014 international symposium at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland organized by Bemporad and Jeanneret (2014) focused entirely on the construct of investment, and is now a special issue of the European journal, *Langage et Société* (Bemporad 2016). The purpose was “to recontextualize the notion of investment in the field of the francophone *didactique des langues* and to consider its possible developments, articulating theoretical considerations and empirical analyses from various research contexts” (Symposium Program, para. 3). Opening with a paper by Norton and Darwin, the symposium addressed a wide range of issues, including the challenges of translating research on investment from English to French (Zeiter and Bemporad 2014); the relationship between materiality and investment (Dagenais and Toohey 2016); and the political economy of language investment (Duchêne 2016).

Responding to how technology has radically changed lifestyles and modes of productivity (Darvin 2016), compressing time and space, while ushering people into more private, isolated spaces, Darvin and Norton (2015) have extended theories of identity and investment to address the realities of this new world order. For these two scholars, the individualization of labor and the virtualization of social processes have made the mechanisms of power more difficult to detect. As people occupy more fragmented spaces, it also becomes challenging to determine how specific communicative events are indexical of the macrostructures of power. Hence, there needs to be a critical framework of language learning that attempts to lay bare the invisible and reexamine the situated against the backdrop of institutional processes and systemic practices. Responding to this need, they have proposed an expanded model of investment (Darvin and Norton 2015) that challenges educational agents to examine how discrete events are indexical of communicative practices and how learners both position themselves and are positioned not only within the contexts of a classroom or workplace but within community, national, and global networks. To achieve this, the model is built on the constructs of identity, capital, and ideology (see Fig. 1).

Recognizing a more polythetic and porous conception of ideology, Darvin and Norton refer to *ideologies* as “dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion” (p. 72). It is a pluralized formulation because ideologies are constructed by different structures of power and reproduced by both institutional conditions and recursive hegemonic practices. In an age of mobility, learners are able to move fluidly across spaces where ideologies collude and compete, shaping their identities and positioning them in different ways. Such a conception complements the view of identity as multiple and fluid, and in the same way this model recognizes that the value of one’s economic, cultural, or social capital shifts across time and space – subject to but not completely constrained by the ideologies of different groups or fields. It is when capital is “perceived and recognized as legitimate” (Bourdieu 1987, p. 4) that it becomes symbolic capital. Hence, the extent to which teachers are able to recognize

Fig. 1 Darvin and Norton’s 2015 model of investment



the value of the linguistic or cultural capital learners bring to the classroom – their prior knowledge, home literacies, mother tongues – will impact the extent to which learners will invest in the language and literacy practices of their classrooms.

The conception of identity in this model aligns well with the theoretical underpinnings of Norton's 1995 definition, which describes identity as multiple, a site of struggle, and continually changing over time and space. What Darwin and Norton do in this later work is to elucidate further the struggle as one that wrestles with the conflict of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities. Ideologies shape a learner's habitus, an internalized system "of durable, transposable dispositions" (Bourdieu 1990, p. 53) that allow him or her to make sense of the world. While one's social location shapes habitus, which in turn structures the way one thinks and behaves, there is also desire that may align with or contradict this predisposition. Learners exercise agency by choosing what they perceive as beneficial to their existing or imagined identities, by consenting to or resisting hegemonic practices and by investing or divesting from the language and literacy practices of particular classrooms and communities.

Work in Progress

Since the expanded model of investment has only recently been made available in the literature, research which draws on the model is in its early stages, but scholars such as Barkhuizen (2016) have begun to explore its potential. In a 2015 *TESOL Quarterly* article on language learner strategy research (Cohen and Griffiths 2015), Darwin and Norton explore strategies associated with what Bourdieu calls *sens pratique* or practical sense, which is an important component of the model. This "feel for the game" comes with knowing the various rules, genres, and discourses that inform learners' practices and help them make strategic decisions across diverse spaces. Learners need to be able to read multimodal cues and communicate with not just the visual but also the gestural and other embodied signs; they need to know how to gain access to spaces where communication is taking place; and they need to manage communication gatekeepers, in order to claim the right to speak.

In a teaching issues article for the *TESOL Quarterly*, Darwin (2015) uses the model of investment to chart how teachers can reflect critically on a short play, written by Darwin, about a migrant caregiver mother in Canada and her teenage son in the Philippines. A dramatization of the issues of long-term family separation instigated by temporary migrant worker arrangements, the play was written primarily for an audience of teachers and school administrators to understand how this predicament impinges on migrant learners' imagined identities and investments and has been performed in a range of schools and teacher education institutions in Vancouver. In the article, Darwin draws on the model of investment to pose questions to teachers for critical reflection: (1) To what extent do I as a teacher respond to the material, unequal lived realities of learners, and their transnational identities? (2) What dominant ideologies circumscribe these realities, and how does my own worldview position these learners? and (3) In what ways do I recognize and value the

linguistic and cultural capital that these learners are equipped with? By challenging educators to examine specific classroom events and their own recurring classroom practices, the model of investment serves as a critical framework for both language teaching and language policy. It compels teachers and policymakers to recognize that the classroom itself is a microcosm of political economic forces that inscribe an increasingly globalized world. A greater awareness of how these macro forces shape the investment of learners can help teachers and policymakers develop more equitable teaching strategies and educational policies.

In other recent work, Mendoza (2015) examines data from interviews with eight international graduate students in Canada, analyzing how cultural and social capital shaped student investments in their imagined identities. Students from China, Singapore, and different parts of Europe, who had prior knowledge about Western popular culture and academic socialization and developed a local social network, were able to navigate the personal and professional demands of studying in a foreign country. By using the model of investment as a way to frame her argument, Mendoza examined how the positioning of these students and their capacity to negotiate their own capital shaped their investment in higher education.

At an April 2015 “think tank” in Calgary that discussed how literacy needs are evolving in the new world order, Darvin and Norton (2017) explored how the model can be used to theorize pedagogy in transcultural, cosmopolitan times. By framing the imperatives of this critical pedagogy through the constructs of identity, capital, and ideology, they asserted the need to equip learners with the capacity to: (1) negotiate individual aspirations with a sense of global citizenship; (2) recognize the value of different knowledges and the material inequalities that circumscribe them; and (3) examine differences in worldviews and discern how these enable or constrain a cosmopolitan imagination. They argue that by developing these skills, learners can be fully invested not just in the identity of a global citizen but the imagination of an equitable future.

Problems and Difficulties

Perhaps the fundamental challenge in identifying ideology as a means to examine learner investment is that ideologies often operate invisibly and that people subscribe to ideologies both consciously and unconsciously. By structuring habitus, ideology makes particular relations and ideas normative and common sense. To dissect ideology thus requires a “stepping back” that allows one to critically examine the constructed nature of one’s own dispositions and convictions. Achieving this reflexivity is difficult, especially as ideological mechanisms become increasingly invisible in the twenty-first century. The paradox of the discourses of globalization and neoliberalism is that while they highlight “mobility,” “flows,” “flexibility,” and “de-regulation,” ideological sites continue to exercise greater control and

regimentation (Duchêne et al. 2013). The logic of capitalism and the supremacy of market forces and profit become deeply entrenched into systems of governance. The rhetoric of the self as entrepreneur (Foucault 2008) aggrandizes the pursuit of individual gain, naturalizing it in a way that overlooks or neglects more collective aspirations. This has great implications for the way investment is interpreted and how learning is understood as a means to achieve both personal and societal benefits.

In the digital age, the control of the flow of information and ideas on the Internet also contributes to the preservation of ideologies. Technology can filter the data made available to users through algorithms in search engines like Google and social media platforms like Facebook. The value of a piece of data is determined by its popularity among users or by one's own search history and location. Facebook newsfeeds push status updates and posts of friends with whom a user interacts the most. As users are socialized into the practices technologized around specific tools, not only do these media shape the way people behave and communicate with one another, they can also promote particular versions of reality and make possible some kinds of relationships more than others (Jones and Hafner 2012).

When teachers and researchers analyze the investment of learners through the lens of ideology, they need to exercise greater reflexivity by examining how their own worldviews and conceptions of such categories as race, gender, and class shape their interpretation of what learners are capable of and can invest in. This critical reflection allows teachers to understand how their own assumptions position learners and value or devalue the capital they possess. Norton (2017), for example, describes how Keeley Ryan (2012), a teacher working in an adult English language learner classroom in Vancouver, found that reflection on issues of investment led to a much higher retention rate in her classes. Prior to drawing on investment, Ryan found that 9 out of 25 students remained in her adult class; after drawing on investment, 25 of 29 students remained till the end. As Ryan notes, "I began by imagining what a good English teacher would look like for my students . . . I altered my practice to reflect what I imagined their idea of a good school would look like." De Costa and Norton (2017) assert that globalization is impacting language teacher identity in diverse ways. The expanded model of investment may help researchers investigate the degree to which teachers consent to or dissent from the pressures of a neoliberal ideology and how this will shape curricula, classroom materials, and practices. The call to decenter and decolonize teaching becomes increasingly relevant in a social order that emphasizes accountability and adherence to common standards.

Future Directions

As teachers, researchers, and policymakers confront issues of reflexivity and power to examine learner investment, the constructs of identity, capital, and ideology, which are key to investment, need to be continually researched and developed for such constructs to prove useful in the new social order.

Identity

Recognizing the shifting social landscape, De Costa and Norton (2016) and Norton and De Costa (2018, forthcoming) consider future directions in identity research and propose a number of research tasks on identity and investment. They highlight, for example, the importance of intersectionality (Block and Corona 2014) in understanding identities as always a convergence of different social categories. Research needs to examine how racial, ethnic, gender, and class identities are often inextricably linked as learners navigate the spaces of home, school, and community. They point out how other categories like sexual orientation and religion are under-researched and that new insights can still be drawn from a diverse range of research populations that include lingua franca speakers, heritage language learners, and study abroad learners. In a study of how transnational Mexicans construct their identity in offline and online contexts, Christiansen (2015) identified four emic criteria: language, color, transnationality, and display of culture. She looks at how the perceived level of Mexicanness negotiated through Facebook establishes a place of influence that disrupts a hierarchy traditionally built on age and gender. By examining how online interactions influence those offline, this study presents new ways of understanding how one's ethnic identity is negotiated through social media. These gradations of identity across different social categories, performed in digital media, provide new opportunities for research.

Capital

As learners move fluidly across boundaries and oscillate between online and offline spaces, they enter these spaces equipped with their own material resources, linguistic skills, and social networks. For learners, occupying new spaces involves not only acquiring new material and symbolic resources but also using the capital they already possess as affordances and transforming it into symbolic capital. What is valued in one place however may be greatly devalued in another, and thus the process of transformation is always a site of struggle. Within the digital landscape, what is perceived as valuable is also shifting. The simultaneity of communicative events and tasks made possible through digital tools creates a distinct need to structure attention. People have begun to live in a state of "continuous partial attention" where they feel they always need to attend to information from their communication devices. In the knowledge economy that runs on the exchange of information, the most valuable commodity becomes attention, and this shift has shaped digital literacy practices of representing the self and of sharing and creating information (Jones and Hafner 2012). It has also promoted the use of an affective discourse style that employs a high degree of intensification. This includes frequent use of boosters like "very" or "really," exclamation marks, capitalization, and exaggerated quantifiers like "all" and "everyone" (Page 2012). Recognizing that value is created from the exchange of attention has important implications for how linguistic, economic, and cultural capital is transformed into the symbolic. How learners produce and consume digital texts and how

they use language in social media to obtain attention promises to be an exciting area of research. The choices they make to participate in this attention economy and how these in turn shape their identity have important links to investment.

Ideology

To understand ideology as a complex, layered space of sometimes contradictory ideational, behavioral, and institutional meanings (Blommaert 2005), one needs to recognize dominance and hegemony as processes rather than facts. Ideology is not a static, monolithic worldview that rests on either acceptance or resistance. At the same time, while language can be ideological, “this does not mean all language is ideological or that discourse doubles up as ideology” (Holborow 2012, p. 31). For Holborow (2012), when discourse is conflated with ideology, dynamic social processes are isolated from analysis. Real world events like the economic crisis of 2008, the rise and fall of economies, and the implementation of policies in trade, labor, and migration make and unmake ideologies. Research on how material and historical conditions and events shape educational policies, language ideologies, and other patterns of control becomes increasingly significant (Block et al. 2012; Duchêne and Heller 2012; Kramsch 2013).

An examination of learner and teacher investment and its relationship to identity, capital, and ideology can help shape language education policy by demonstrating how classroom practices are indexical of larger relations of power. As learners today participate in multilingual online and offline spaces, how multilingualism is recognized as cultural capital is key to policymaking. At the same time, the research discussed in this chapter demonstrates that the valuing of different languages is often unequal and associated with language ideologies and other political/economic forces. Our hope is that our model of investment, which represents an organic integration of identity, capital, and ideology, will serve as a resource for scholars in the future, as they examine the intriguing relationship between classroom practice and language policy in the twenty-first century.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language and Power in the Classroom](#)
- ▶ [Language, Class, and Education](#)

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- Eva Lam: [Identity in Mediated Contexts of Transnationalism and Mobility](#). In Volume: Language, Education, and Technology
- Kevin Leander: [Literacy and Internet Technologies](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education

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 Monica Heller: [Language Choice and Symbolic Domination](#). In Volume: Discourse and Education

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Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages

Terrence G. Wiley

Abstract

This chapter focuses on heritage and community language policy (HL-CL), primarily in the United States context. It details the genesis of work on this topic with groundbreaking research by Joshua Fishman in the 1960s and notes subsequent developments. The chapter notes the challenges for focusing on HL-CL due to the dominance of monolingual ideology in the USA, as well as the emphasis on immigrant and foreign language perspectives, often to the detriment of a focus on Indigenous language policy. The chapter also notes a shift in federal policy away from bilingual education and the absence of an emphasis on HL-CL children in more recent US language policy initiatives. Despite these emphases, the chapter notes some areas of progress in policies focused on Native Americans as well as some areas of progress at the community level. The chapter concludes by making a case for the importance of a more comprehensive national language policy that includes an emphasis on building on HL-CL resources in the population.

Keywords

Heritage language • Community language • Indigenous language • Language policy

This chapter revises and updates Wiley (2014). Policy considerations for promoting heritage, community, and Native American languages. In T.G. Wiley, J.K. Peyton, D. Christian, S.K. Moore, & N., Liu. (Eds.) (2014). *Handbook on Heritage, Community, and Native American Language Education in the United States: Research, Policy and Practice* (pp.45–53). London: Routledge. It is published here with permission.

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Introduction

The field of “heritage” language (HL) in the United States dates at least to Fishman et al.’s *Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues by American Ethnic and Religious Groups* (1966). HL received renewed interest after two national conferences were held in 1999 and 2001 (UCLA Steering Committee, 2001). Shortly thereafter, a joint national conference was held in Melbourne Australia to address commonalities between the US focus on HL and the Australian emphasis on community languages (CL). The results of that comparative effort were subsequently published in a volume edited by Hornberger (2005). There are many important international efforts in the promotion of languages that may fall broadly under the label of heritage and community language policy – for example, those in Wales (Williams 2014) or Ireland (Moriarty 2015) – that in many ways are more noteworthy than those in the United States, but this discussion will focus primarily on the US context.

From the perspective of educational and public policy in the United States, language diversity has typically been characterized as a problem, even though there have been persistent concerns for several decades that the country is facing a foreign language “crisis” (Simon 1988; Wiley 2007). Underlying this contradiction is a widespread ideology that English monolingualism is the natural starting point to which policies promoting additional languages may be added. The dominance of this ideological stance has been prevalent in the USA for over a century and impedes the development of policies that could build on the multilingual resources of the country, given that approximately one quarter of the population resides in homes where languages in addition to English are spoken (Fee et al. 2014). In this regard, Hakuta (1986) concluded that, “Perhaps the rosier future for bilingual education in the United States can be attained by dissolving the paradoxical attitude of admiration and pride for school-attained bilingualism on the one hand and scorn and shame for home-brewed immigrant bilinguals on the other” (p. 229).

From a policy perspective, it is ironic that in a country where historical and contemporary multilingualism have always been prevalent, the linguistic resources within the population have been problematized even as there have been consistent concerns raised regarding a foreign language “crisis” (Simon 1988; Wiley 2007).

In addition, in the United States and other countries with histories of large-scale immigration, issues involving heritage languages have typically been framed from an “immigrant” perspective, despite the presence of Indigenous language minorities. From this perspective, the English-speaking majority has long viewed the loss of heritage languages as a kind of rite-of-passage (Kloss 1971). However, this perspective may be seen as antithetical to a nation that prides itself on the preservation of individual liberties and has no credible relevance for Indigenous groups.

Early Developments

As background to understanding the current policy environment for speakers of heritage languages in the USA, it is important to compare the historical experiences of different groups, their modes of incorporation into the nation state, and their subsequent treatments (Weinberg 1995). Kloss (1998) observed that there are several policy stances that the government can take in response to minority languages, articulated as “promotion,” “expediency accommodations,” “tolerance,” or even “suppression.” In one of the few major historical works that focused mostly on European language minority immigrant experience in the United States, Kloss (1998) concluded that tolerance had characterized the language policy climate, with the notable exception of the World War I era, when speakers of German and other languages were persecuted and most states removed or restricted German in the curriculum (cf. Pavlenko 2002; Toth 1990; Wiley 1998).

However, historically, the role of state and federal governments in the formation of language and education policies has had major consequences regarding opportunities for languages to be maintained. The history of US languages as a source for promoting the language rights of immigrant and Indigenous language minority groups to retain their languages has been mixed. Kloss (1998), in the *American Bilingual Tradition*, maintained that a policy orientation favoring language tolerance has been the norm throughout most of US history. However, Kloss failed to make a connection between discriminatory racial policies and restrictive language policies and how the latter had been used as surrogates for the former (Leibowitz 1969).

Although there is considerable evidence prior to the twentieth century to support the tolerance view for European immigrant languages, the experience of Native Americans was marked by overt attempts to eradicate their languages and cultures, particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century with the boarding school policies that mandated the incarceration of Native American children in English-only boarding schools (Adams 1995). Regarding Native American languages, for the most part, there has been little federal support for endoglossic policies designed to promote a language among community members but not to outsiders (Ruíz 1995), until the passage of the Native American Languages Act of 1990, which affirms Native peoples’ rights to preserve, promote, maintain, use, and develop their languages. Other groups, such as speakers of Hawaiian, experienced similar treatment (Benham and Heck 1998). However, an important “symbolic” shift

in policy also occurred for Hawaiian and Native American languages. Since 1978, Hawaiian has been an “official” language, along with English, in Hawai‘i. In 1987, the State Board of Education approved a pilot proposal for Hawaiian-medium schools, and, despite the vicissitudes of state support and retrenchment, Wilson (1999) concludes,

The overall effect of the various Hawaiian language programs established by law has been very significant if only to greatly increase the number of people who can speak Hawaiian and the involvement of Hawaiians in the public schools system. . . . Furthermore, against all odds and albeit still at a rudimentary level, a new population that speaks Hawaiian as its dominant language, at least in some circumstances, has been created and is growing. (pp. 106–107; see also Wilson 2014)

Hawaiian immersion has also been found to increase academic achievement at the Nāwahī school (McCarty 2009).

Since its inception in the late 1960s, the implications of federal bilingual education policy in the United States have been an area of considerable contention and misunderstanding. For several decades, many have opposed federal and state funded bilingual education, because they believe its goal is what Epstein (1977) refers to as “affirmative ethnicity,” which claims that it is inappropriate for states or the federal government to promote any single language other than English. Support for this view since the late 1990s has led to the passage of voter-approved ballot measures in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts that restrict publically funded bilingual education. For entirely different reasons, some supporters of bilingual education have been critical of federal policy and of federal “transitional” bilingual education programs in particular for being instruments of a “monolingual policy with the goal of Anglification” (Ruíz 1995, p. 78; cf. Lyons 1995) because of its goal to facilitate the acquisition of English rather than the promotion of bilingualism and biliteracy.

With the 2001 passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, the term “bilingual” disappeared from most federal policy discourse in the United States. García (2005) noted that during the late 1990s, even as heritage languages were being recognized, most references to bilingualism were being eliminated. This was a strategic shift in labeling that sought to control languages through discourse. This strategy also extended to use of official names for federal offices. The US Department of Education’s Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs became the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students. Similarly, the federally funded National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education became the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (García 2005; Wiley 2007). One positive exception has occurred with December 2015 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), wherein bilingual education is mentioned in reference to American Indian education, thanks to proactive efforts of Indigenous language educators, researchers, and activists.

As previously noted, over the past two decades, voters in some states have passed measures to restrict the use of native (non-English) languages in bilingual education

(California, Massachusetts, and Arizona). However, even where bilingual education has not been restricted there have been separate policy agendas for promoting bilingual education and foreign language education, even though both address education in languages other than English. Whereas bilingual educators focused on the use of “mother tongue” education (the heritage language of English language learners), recognition of “heritage” speakers only gradually gained recognition among foreign language educators. Although there has been some attempt to articulate bilingual education with foreign language education, in two-way/dual-language immersion programs, the effort to do so has often been on a more local level. The National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC) at the University of California, Los Angeles, for example, has offered specialized institutes for this purpose.

Major Contributions

Important contributions have come from contextualized studies from ethnographic perspectives and are highly informative in formulating viable policies (McCarty 2011). Similarly, understanding the sociolinguistic context of heritage- and community-based languages, particularly as in their relation to dominant languages of wider communication, is important to their preservation and promotion. In this regard, the following case is instructive. “If we start with a language, e.g., Welsh, and describe only its history or dialect variants, we might fail to notice that most if not all speakers of Welsh also speak English, and it is likely that English would be the dominant language for most” (Horvath and Vaughan 1991, p. 8). This situation would characterize the sociolinguistic context of most heritage and community language speakers in the United States as well.

The social contexts for heritage, community, and Native American languages can vary greatly. In some communities, these languages may include varieties that are mutually intelligible with a written standard, but in others they may differ greatly. For example, historically, immigrants to the United States from Germany and Italy spoke regional dialects, some of which were closer to the national standard dialects of the source countries than others. Here, proficiency in a national standard tended to correlate with access to formal schooling. For some speakers, formal schooling or bilingual education in the standard language provided a means of maintaining linkage with the prestige variety but not always with the community variety of language.

Similar issues exist among contemporary populations regarding which variety of a language might be taught as the “heritage language.” More often than not, the tendency is to teach the school standard variety, which may be different from the variety of the home and community. In other sociolinguistic contexts, the discrepancies are quite pronounced. For example, the third-generation descendent of Chinese ancestry who studies Mandarin in the USA will not necessarily be in a better position to communicate with her Taiwanese/Fukienese-speaking or Cantonese-speaking grandmother.

Ruíz (1995) has provided a useful analysis of motivations for promotional language policies particularly as they affect English. He makes a distinction among *endoglossic*, *exoglossic*, and *mixed* language policies. “Endoglossic policies are those that give primacy to and promote an Indigenous language of the community” (p. 75). In the United States, unlike some countries, Indigenous languages are local and regional but are not the language(s) of wider communication (LWC). Exoglossic policies are intended to promote the LWCs, whereas mixed policies attempt to promote both. Given its emphasis on overcoming “limited English proficiency” and on language shift to English, Ruíz (1995) characterizes US federal bilingual education policy as exoglossic.

Policy shifts have also occurred at the federal level in the USA. In 1990, when the federal government passed the Native American Languages Act, it emphasized the uniqueness and value of Indigenous languages and the responsibility of the government to redress its past attempts to exterminate them. Schiffman (1996) took a dim view of the passage of this act, concluding that it was mostly a case of “locking the barn door after the horse” had been stolen because “now that Native-American languages are practically extinct, and pose no threat to anyone anywhere, we can grant them special status” (p. 91). McCarty and Watahomigie (1999), however, have taken a more optimistic view of the Native American Languages Act. They conclude that although funding for educational programs has been meager, “they have supported some of the boldest new attempts at language renewal” (p. 91). They add, “Indigenous language education programs . . . given the immensity of the language-loss crisis . . . constitute critical assets which cannot be overlooked. Cultivating these assets is a process that *can* be influenced by external institutions” (p. 91). Beyond this, McCarty and Watahomigie identify a number of successful programs that were implemented with federal bilingual education funding (see McCarty 2004 and McCarty and Watahomigie 1999, 2004, for elaboration).

In his critique of federal bilingual education policy, Ruíz (1995) also saw some cause for optimism, despite problems with official policies: “If, in fact, federal funded bilingual education programs in American Indian communities have served purposes of language renewal and reversal of language shift, it is testimony to the ingenuity and dedication of staffs of these programs, not the policy itself” (p. 79). Given the history of language policies toward Native Americans, Ruíz (1995) further suggests developing endoglossic policies now even if it is not possible to do so in the future, explain that “the language policy planning decisions made now will help communities achieve the continuity of tradition that has served them well up to now” (p. 79).

In recent years, there has been increased recognition by a growing number of language educators that US educational policy needs more a specific focus on heritage learners who are enrolled in “foreign” language programs in order to reverse language shift and increase the linguistic resources of the country (Kagan 2005; Peyton et al. 2008; Valdés 2001). Despite the evidence related to the increasing pace of language shift previously noted, there are signs for optimism. A number of surveys and interviews with language minority parents have demonstrated strong support for bilingual and community language education in languages such as

Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Native American languages, when parents have the opportunity to choose them (e.g., Krashen 1996; McCarty 2004; Rumbaut 2009; Wiley et al. 2008). There is substantial support at the community level for the promotion of some languages as heritage and community languages, such as Korean and Chinese (Liu 2010; Pu 2008; You 2009). McGinnis (2005) concluded that in the teaching of Chinese, community-based efforts have often been more progressive than K-12 and university efforts to teach the language. Thus, he has called for closer coordination and planning among all stakeholders. There have been some positive examples, at the local level, where there is evidence of coordination between those promoting foreign and heritage language and community-based education. One such collaboration occurred between university and community-heritage-based partners in the Southwestern USA (Liu 2010). Pu (2008) noted collaboration between elementary school teachers and weekend heritage teachers during her dissertation research. As Mercurio and Scarino (2005) argued within the Australian context, there is often a “struggle for legitimacy” in getting community languages recognized for inclusion with equal status to foreign languages.

Baker and Wright (2017) note that while the preponderance of research on heritage language has been conducted in the Northern Hemisphere, a growing body of research from the South Hemisphere also supports the efficacy of HL-CL. They note four positive findings based on a composite of international evaluation research from both hemispheres: (1) that HL-CL students maintain and develop their home languages; (2) they generally perform as well or better than so-called “mainstream” children; (3) such children tend to have a more positive self-concept and self-esteem and are academically better motivated with improved intrafamily communication; and (4) they even tend to acquire the dominant language more effectively.

Work in Progress

Within the US context (unlike Australia, Wales, and elsewhere), what has been missing is a comprehensive national policy framework that links those interested in the promotion of foreign languages at the K-12 and higher education levels with heritage and community-based education efforts. At the federal level, it is the US Department of Defense (rather than the Department of Education) that has led efforts to promote critical and strategic language programs such as STARTALK and Flagship. Although initially designed to focus on foreign languages, these programs have often attracted heritage learners (Chen 2016). Bale’s (2008) focus has been noteworthy in addressing another major challenge in promoting a new direction for heritage and community language educational policies in the United States, as a need to overcome the legacy and ongoing impact of restrictive policies, as well as the need to fill the void caused by the demise of federally sponsored bilingual education (Arias and Faltis 2012; McField 2014; Moore 2014).

Over a decade ago, Potowski and Carreira (2004) argued that apart from federal policy, there is a need for official recognition of heritage-community language

learners at the state level. This concern is still relevant. Potowski and Carreira (2004) advocated for state-endorsed programs in heritage language teaching to be differentiated from foreign language teaching endorsements. Similarly, Spolsky (2011) has noted the need to link language immersion programs and heritage programs with advanced training programs as well as to overseas immersion experiences. An ongoing challenge that has been recognized for some time is the need to promote those heritage and community languages that have not traditionally been used as mediums of instruction (Action and Dalphinis 2000).

Problems and Difficulties

The promotion of HL-CLs has not been without challenges. Historically, for example, the maintenance and promotion of heritage languages has largely been left to the resources and desires of language minority communities. Given the dominance and spread of English, there has been a three-generation shift to English, as was observed by Veltman (1983) several decades ago and still evident today. The typical pattern among immigrant language minorities until fairly recently has been that the first generation acquired some English but remained dominant in the native tongue; the second generation became bilingual but often had further developed literacy skills in English; and the third generation tended to be English-speaking with little functional ability in the language of the grandparents. More recently, however, there is some evidence that the shift to English is occurring even more rapidly among some immigrant populations. Veltman (2000) noted a more rapid shift, wherein “the rates of language shift to English are so high that all minority languages are routinely abandoned, depriving the United States of one type of human resource that may be economically and politically desirable both to maintain and develop” (p. 58). Further evidence of rapid language shift has also been noted by the Pew Hispanic Center (2004). The situation is aptly summarized by Rumbaut (2009), who concludes:

The death of languages in the United States is not only an empirical fact, but part of a global process of ‘language death’ . . . [A] foreign language represents a scarce resource in a global economy; immigrants’ efforts to maintain that part of their cultural heritage and to pass it on to their children certainly seem worth supporting. Indeed the United States finds itself enmeshed in global economic competition . . . [t]he second generation, now growing up in many American cities could fulfill such a need. (p. 64)

Numerous factors contribute to language shift, not the least of which relates to the dominance of English in this society; however, language policies also have an impact. Most public and private education is mediated through English, and English facilitates economic and political access and social mobility (Spolsky 2011).

For those concerned about the implications of the loss of languages, public policy endorsements and initiatives to promote heritage languages are welcome. However, Horvath and Vaughn (1991) have argued that those who make and implement policy should consider the “possible ways in which languages can vary sociolinguistically,

[because] misunderstandings can result” (p. 2). Citing an Australian example, they describe how a well-intended effort to promote community languages backfired when:

An Egyptian teacher was hired to teach Lebanese children; although Egypt and Lebanon are both Arabic speaking countries, the spoken languages of these two speech communities are not mutually intelligible, although the formal spoken and written language is. So much for starting with the language that the children speak. Administrators quickly learned that Serbo-Croatian was not a single language; Croats are particularly adamant that their language is separate and distinct from Serbian no matter what the linguists might have to say about it. Suddenly, the Anglo-Celtic population was shocked to learn that most of the Italian migrants did not speak Italian; they spoke “dialect.” (p. 3)

Similar examples of mismatch between the policy assumptions of educators and the perceptions of their prospective clients have also occurred in the United States, where some school districts have recruited teachers of Spanish from Spain to instruct immigrant children from Mexico and Central America, whose community language varieties vary greatly from those of their teachers. There have also been reports of very prescriptive textbooks/teachers, as well as home country curriculum, being used in these Saturday schools. These sometimes do not fit well with US-raised youth.

These examples underscore the importance of understanding the sociolinguistic profiles of the communities to be served as well as the language attitudes and social judgments of those in the target community toward their own and related language varieties. Several criteria have been recommended by which community languages can be profiled. These include the social uses and functions of the community languages, knowledge of their historical development, and their relationship to other language varieties (Horvath and Vaughn 1991).

Future Directions

As noted, a number of scholars (e.g., McCarty 2011) have been drawing attention to the constructive role that ethnography can make in illuminating “bottom-up” agency in efforts to promote heritage-community and revitalize Indigenous languages. In looking toward the future, Spolsky (2001) has offered a general framework with five basic principles for a comprehensive national language policy. These include the development of policies designed to ensure (1) no linguistic discrimination; (2) the provision of adequate programs for the teaching of English to all; (3) the development of respect for both plurilingual capacity and diverse individual languages; (4) the development of approaches that enhance the status and enrich the knowledge of heritage language and community languages; (5) the development of a multi-branched language-capacity program that strengthens and integrates a variety of language programs that assures the heritage programs connect with advanced training programs; builds on heritage, immersion, and overseas-experience approaches to constantly replenish a cadre of efficient plurilingual citizens capable of professional work using their plurilingual skills; and provides rich and satisfying language

programs that lead to a plurilingual population with knowledge of and respect for other languages and cultures (Spolsky 2001, 2011).

The first two principles are closely linked. Freedom from discrimination requires the need for policies of linguistic accommodation in cases where translation and interpretation provide access to basic human services or to protect human and civil rights. Spolsky (2009) has noted that US Executive (Presidential) Order (EO) 13166, "Improving access to services for persons with limited English proficiency," which was enacted by President Clinton in 2001, provides a good example of a policy of linguistic accommodation. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that executive orders can be rescinded, as they do not have the same legal force as constitutionally guaranteed rights (Wiley 2010).

Spolsky's second principle of adequate instruction in English to ensure that language minorities have access to the dominant common language is necessary for social, economic, and political participation. This is essential in ensuring that speakers of languages other than English do not become linguistically isolated. As Spolsky (2001) observed, however, the demise of federal discretionary funding for bilingual education programs has weakened the range of educational options for allowing language minority studies the opportunity to develop their heritage and community languages.

The expiration of the Bilingual Education Act when the No Child Left Behind legislation was passed in 2001, and which has continued under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, has also reduced opportunities to develop Spolsky's (2001) third principle, which articulates respect for both plurilingual capacity and diverse individual languages. As with the No Child Left Behind Act, there was not only a lack of attention to bilingual education, there was also a lack of emphasis on foreign language instruction which reduced educational capacity to promote multilingualism (Blake and Kramsch 2007). With the expectation of a brief reference related to bilingual education for American Indian children, the Every Student Succeeds Act largely neglects the need to promote multilingualism. Thus, a new comprehensive national policy initiative to connect heritage language education, bilingual education, foreign language education, and native language preservation is needed (Wiley 2010; Wiley et al. 2014).

Spolsky's (2001) fourth principle calls for promoting the status of heritage language and community languages. As previously noted, promotion may either been seen as internal (endoglossic) to language communities or aimed at promoting languages more widely (exoglossic) (Ruiz 1995). In the United States, Native American language promotion efforts have tended to be endoglossic. Thus, efforts to promote language status should consider a community's goals regarding whether it is the intent is to promote the language within the community or on a more broad scale.

Spolsky's (2001) fifth principle, the building of a multibranch language-capacity network, is the most ambitious, requiring the development of a comprehensive language policy that would link community-based efforts to K-12 language programs and K-university programs. Ideally, such a comprehensive effort would locate heritage-community language programs in high-density language minority population centers. This would facilitate the development of partnerships among communities, schools, and universities (Wiley 2010).

Spolsky's (2011) comprehensive principles offer a basis to begin a critical dialogue regarding what a national language policy should entail. Nevertheless, he recognized that community agency must also be recognized. Thus, he proposed specific issues that communities and parents also need to consider. They need to (1) recognize the importance of plurilingual competence in their members; (2) support programs that assure that everyone can develop full control of English for access to educational, economic, social, and cultural development; and (3) support efforts to assure that everyone can develop a high level of proficiency in the community language for the maintenance of tradition and culture by raising children bilingually by (a) providing opportunities for developing oral and literacy skills in both languages, (b) ensuring the use of the community language in public domains as well as private, (c) assisting in the maintenance and cultivation of the community language, which provides ways of passing traditional language and culture between the generations, (d) providing community schools, (e) persuading the public schools to respect and support community language maintenance, and (f) encouraging and respect efforts by other language groups to do the same (Spolsky 2001).

Even if federal and state policy planners attempt to develop a comprehensive framework, community agency is foundational to the successful implementation of any policy. If history provides any guidance for those committed to the promotion of heritage languages, the recommendation is essentially one of using government policies to promote heritage languages during favorable times and relying on community-based efforts over the long term. There is a role for externally supported programs and top-down policies that promote long-term funding support as long as they are supported by "bottom-up" efforts in the home and community (Hornberger 1997; McCarty 2004; McCarty and Watahomigie 1999).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)

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Part IV

Critical Issues in Language Policy

Language Endangerment and Revitalization

Leanne Hinton

Abstract

It is written by many scholars that half or more of the languages of the world are in danger of dying out by the end of the twenty-first century. Language endangerment is largely the result of government suppression through repressive education, laws, and policies. In the USA and around the world, minority communities have been working hard to reclaim their languages, encouraged and assisted, in many cases, by the liberalization of government policies. Education systems have played a role in the effort to eradicate minority languages, but also in the effort to revive them. In the USA, the first big movement, in the 1970s and 1980s, was bilingual education. In the 1990s, communities began to develop “language survival schools” (also known as immersion schools) and creative new strategies for language learning. The learning of endangered languages must always include ways to begin using the language in daily life, which may in turn necessitate the development of new vocabulary. Because the last generations of native speakers of endangered languages are disappearing, the next generation of speakers will be taught by second-language learners, who will probably carry with them changes in the language through grammatical differences and influences from the majority language.

Keywords

Language revitalization • Immersion schools • Endangered languages • Language education • Family language policy • Language rights

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Introduction

An endangered language is one whose use is on the decline and is seen as being on a trajectory toward extinction. While these processes of language shift have been happening throughout the history, since the industrial revolution, the number of languages that become endangered or ultimately extinct has increased exponentially. The Ethnologue estimates that of around 7,000 languages, 1,531 are “in trouble” and 916 are “dying.” Also listed are 367 languages that have gone extinct since 1950, an average of six per year (Lewis et al. 2015). Most endangered languages are Indigenous to lands that have been taken over through colonization and other encroaching actions by another population.

The current state of language diversity, then, is in free-fall. This worries many people – not least the very people whose languages are disappearing. Many authors have written on what the loss of language diversity in the world means. We are reminded that language loss is tied inextricably to the loss of cultural practices and knowledge (Woodbury 1993). Along with language death is the loss of everything expressed by that language – oratory, song and storytelling, metaphors, sayings, and conversational practices. Language loss is also a sign that other aspects of a culture are on their way out too – spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, ways of interacting with the land (Maffi 2001). K. David Harrison (2007) calls language loss “the extinction of ideas.”

Educational systems play a major role in both minority language decline and language revitalization. Schools have been employed as an arm of governments to make sure that minority children learn the official or majority language and are culturally assimilated to mainstream society. And now the educational systems are being called upon again, this time by the minority communities, to teach the mother tongue as a second language. While the Indigenous languages of the world are under enormous pressure, the forces leading to language decline are being met head-on by individuals and communities who are trying to keep their languages alive.

Early Developments: To Kill a Language or to Let It Die

They were trying to take the language out of us. They wouldn't let us speak the language. (Eileen Mosely testimony, the Stolen Generations testimony project. Australia. stolengenerationstestimonies.com/index.php/testimonies/1015.html) (Accessed April 18, 2015)
 Language death means not only the loss of cultural autonomy, but also of spiritual and intellectual sovereignty. (Zuckerman 2013).

Cobarrubias (1983) lists a taxonomy of state policies towards minority languages:

1. Attempting to kill a language
2. Letting a language die
3. Unsupported coexistence
4. Partial support of specific language functions;
5. Adoption as an official language. (p. 71)

“Attempting to kill a language” is a good title for the educational policies of the USA in the late nineteenth century. In 1868 came the report of the “Peace Commission” to Congress:

In the difference of language to-day lies two-thirds of our trouble. . . . Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects should be blotted out and the English language substituted. . . . (quoted in Crawford 1992, p. 40)

In 1879, the first American Indian boarding school was founded. At their height, there were over 100 in the USA. Canada had some 80 residential schools for First Nations children. In both countries, the schools were harsh and abuse was common. Not a word of the mother tongue was allowed in the classroom, playground, or dormitory.

Boarding schools were utilized in other nations as well. Schools and boarding schools in Sweden, Finland, and Norway banned the Sámi language from classrooms and schoolyards, and pupils who violated these rules were punished (Huss 1999, p. 73). Perhaps the worst situation of all was for Aboriginal and half-caste children of Australia who were permanently removed from their families to be forcibly placed in institutions and educated there. In all these places, the boarding schools’ mission was to “replace heritage languages with English; replace ‘paganism’ with Christianity; replace economic, political, social, legal, aesthetic institutions” (Lomawaima and McCarty 2006, p. 4). Some children who attended the boarding schools from an early age lost their language. Others were able to maintain knowledge of the language, but decided as a result of their bitter experiences that they would not pass it on to their children.

Today in the USA, few of the government boarding schools remain, and for those that do, there is no longer punishment for speaking one’s mother tongue, though most students now are either bilingual, or more commonly monolingual in English. One of the remaining boarding schools is Sherman High School in Riverside, California. Ironically, a 3-year sequence in the Diné (Navajo) language is one of the options to fill the requirement of a “language other than English” (Sherman Indian High School 2013).

Today the overt attempt to kill minority languages is no longer in operation in the Americas and Europe. Instead, the current policies could be described as the second level of Cobarrubias’s list – letting a language die. For children who learn a language at home other than the dominant language, they generally still go to majority-language schools. Once there, a cascade of decline of the first language is begun. There is a good deal of literature on incomplete learning (due to insufficient exposure

to a language) and attrition (the decline of competency in the first language). (For history and current research in this field, see Montrul 2008.) As an example of incomplete learning and attrition in threatened and endangered languages, Allen et al. (2006) write on native language decline in Inuit-speaking children as a result of school exposure to the majority language. Decreased exposure to the first language is often exacerbated by parents accommodating to children who begin to use the school language at home. Often later in children's lives, criticism and derision from relatives and community members for mistakes the children exhibit in the first language may lead them to stop using the minority language entirely. These studies of incomplete bilingual acquisition by children show one possible origin of the structural changes seen in "semi-speaker" adults of languages in decline (Dorian 1981).

Major Contributions: Language Rights and Revitalization

...I almost stopped speaking Cheyenne. ... However, as I reflected on this situation, I made the conscious decision at the age of 15 that I was not going to be deprived of speaking my own language. ... I am glad I made the decision to continue speaking the Cheyenne language way back then because personally, spiritually, economically, socially, academically and intellectually, both of my languages, Cheyenne and English, have immeasurable enriched my life. (Littlebear 2013, pp. xiv–xv.)

The role of schools in the decline of languages has been assailed by many authors as a violation of human rights. In *Linguistic Human Rights*, Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, and Rannut (1995) indict language policies and educational practices in the current era around the world (see also Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 2010; Skutnabb-Kangas and May, chapter "► [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)" this volume). Their description of linguistic human rights (LHRs) includes on the individual level having the right to identify positively with one's mother tongue and to have that respected; the right to learn and use the mother tongue both privately and publicly; and also the right to learn and use the official language(s) of the state. LHRs include on the group level the right to enjoy and develop the language and the right for minorities to establish and maintain schools and have control of curricula and use their own language.

In her 2000 volume *Linguistic Genocide in Education*, Skutnabb-Kangas directly attacks the role of school systems in language endangerment. She points out that although the draconian educational policies of the past have decreased, education today is continuing to prevent the use of minority languages by indirect means, as we saw in the previous section. There are also still incidents of discrimination against students who dare to speak a different language at school. Even in the case of bilingual education, where the mother tongue is permitted in the curriculum, the usual goal of the government-funded bilingual programs is to make sure that the student is ultimately able to function in the dominant language. The importance of maintaining a different home language is downplayed (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

The United Nations supports linguistic rights. A number of covenants, treaties, and conventions have come out from the United Nations concerning Indigenous and minority rights, expressly including language as one of those rights. The first mention was in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and includes language as one of the rights:

ARTICLE 27: In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to *use their own language*. (UN General Assembly 1966; emphasis added)

Of course, few speech communities would have monolingualism in their endangered heritage language as their goal, but would instead be aiming at a stable multilingual community. The right to learn and use the national language is also a linguistic right and has been stated as such. (See, for example, UNESCO 1996, Article 29.2.)

The European Union also supports the language rights of minorities. Countries within the European Union have over 50 million citizens who speak minority languages. These include the Sámi languages (the only languages categorized as “Indigenous” to Europe), as well as Basque, Romany, Scots and Irish Gaelic, Cornish, Breton, and Welsh, and various other minority languages, many descending from the same roots as national languages (e.g., Occitan, Catalan, and other minority languages descended from Latin). In all, over 60 minority languages are recognized by the EU. Most of the minority languages would be classified as endangered or at least threatened. While language policy is under the purview of the nations themselves, the EU encourages and pressures them toward liberal and supportive policies, including mother tongue education.

Around the world, many countries have at least nominally shown liberal attitudes to minority languages through mother tongue education, and sometimes even giving official status – such as Columbia’s 1991 constitution (Asemblea Nacional Constituyente) which committed the government to “linguistically, ethnically, and culturally responsible education,” and gave official status to all Indigenous languages of the country (Uribe-Jongbloed and Anderson 2014, p. 222). However, most nations have not considered it a high priority to support minority languages. Instead, it has primarily been up to the minority communities themselves to advocate for their own languages and to find ways the languages can be learned.

Language revitalization as a modern movement can trace its roots back to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and its international reverberations, when minority groups began to successfully press for their rights and recognition. In the United States, American Indians were one of the minorities to publicly assert their civil rights, through the actions of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and other organizations. Education reform was one of AIM’s issues.

By the 1970s, Indigenous communities in the USA were using a number of strategies to help their members learn their endangered languages. There was help in this coming from another direction. In 1974, a lawsuit by the families of Chinese-

American students with limited English proficiency (*Lau v. Nichols*) resulted in a decision by the US Supreme Court that eventually brought about the founding of the Office of Bilingual Education and funding for bilingual education nationwide (Crawford 2004). The objective of government-backed bilingual education was to teach school subjects in students' first language while teaching them English, until they are able to switch to English-medium education. However, many people, including Native Americans, saw it as a way to maintain the first language. Thus from the beginning there was a debate between the "transitional model" and the "maintenance model" of bilingual education, with the latter keeping a balance between the two languages throughout the grades.

While many thousands of students are hearing and using their heritage tongue in bilingual education programs around the world, bilingual education is inadequate to maintain an endangered language, in part because of the "second-class" status given to minority languages within the educational system. Endangered languages are further hampered in bilingual education programs because the home and the community do not provide sufficient additional language exposure or motivation for language use to the children. Further, insufficient training and funding, and conflicting educational policies on the government level have challenged the effectiveness and even the survival of bilingual education programs.

In the 1990s, a major shift toward more intensive language revitalization efforts began to take place, as communities saw the enormity of their crisis. Minority groups began to search for better ways that their children – and adults as well – could learn their languages and to advocate for policies that would allow this to be done. Through pressure from the minority communities, governments have had to rethink their policies and provide at least some support for endangered languages, including programs inside and outside of the schools.

There are many public schools in North America and Europe that now offer classes in a local endangered language, generally to students who are not learning the language at home. Hinton (2011) discusses some of the differences between teaching endangered languages and teaching languages of other statuses (see Table 1). As the table shows, teaching an endangered language has many differences from teaching majority languages or foreign languages. There are differences concerning the goals of learning, the motives for learning, for the expectations the community has of the learner, and even the effect on the form of the language itself.

The most obvious success in training new speakers of endangered languages comes in immersion schools, or what have been called in the US language survival schools (Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act 2006). In the most effective language survival schools, the endangered language is the only language of instruction, with the majority language of the nation not being taught until the higher grades and then taught only as part of an otherwise minority language curriculum. Major successes in raising children who are bilingual in their mother tongue and in the language of the nation have been achieved in New Zealand (for Māori) and Hawai'i. Smaller schools have also been effective, such as the Akwesasne Freedom School in New York (Mohawk), the Cuts Wood immersion school in Montana (Blackfeet), and the Chief Atahm immersion school in British

Table 1 Differences in teaching languages of different status

	Foreign languages	Majority languages	Heritage languages	Endangered languages
1. Primary goal of the program	Helping people gain knowledge of language and culture of another society	Helping people function in the dominant language of the society	Helping people gain ability in their ancestral tongue	Save language from extinction; bring it back into use
2. Learner's motives	Communication with foreigners or immigrants at home or abroad; develop literary knowledge of another language	Acquire a sense of membership in the dominant culture; gain economic power	Ability to speak to older relatives; retain or regain ties to one's home country; belonging to a minority culture; political stance about cultural and linguistic autonomy	Sense of identity, belonging to a minority culture; resistance to assimilation; political stance about cultural and linguistic autonomy; spiritual and cultural access
3. Expected future relationship of the learner to the language	Tourist, teacher, job where the language is used	Linguistic assimilation to the dominant society	Speaking or writing to friends and relatives; visits and other ties to one's country of origin	Become a language activist and a transmitter of the language to future generations (through teaching, parenthood); help form a language community
4. Possible influence on the language being learned	None	None (or New Englishes)	None on the language as spoken in the home country; possible establishment of a new dialect in the new country	Influence of a dominant language (e.g., English) on the endangered language; modernization of the endangered language
5. Considerations for teaching	Big literature on language teaching, lots of research, lots of available tools and materials	Big literature on language teaching, lots of research, lots of available tools and materials	Development of heritage learner courses to accommodate differences in learning needs	Evolving strategies, including "bootstrap" methods

Columbia (Secwepemc). Besides being effective for the learning of the Indigenous language, the survival schools report high student achievement, low dropout rates, and high college entrance rates (Hawai'i Island Journal 2011; McCarty 2013, 2014.)

One problem for teaching children in an endangered language is that there may not be enough adults with the needed fluency and educational background to do the teaching. Thus, a major part of language revitalization involves adult language learning and training. Programs to help adults learn their language are often found at tribal colleges and in some universities. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo, for example, successfully trains most of the staff of the survival schools in both language competency and teaching (Wilson and Kawai'ae'a 2007). For smaller languages, college or university classes may not be available, and for these, communities have adopted ways of language learning outside of educational institutions.

There are many languages that have been labeled as "extinct" rather than endangered. Language activists prefer to call such languages "dormant" or "sleeping languages," to indicate that reclamation is still possible (Hinton and Hale 2001). There are several inspirational examples of language reconstruction and revitalization from documentation, including Kaurna in Australia (2000), Miami and Wampanoag in the USA (Hinton 2013), and Cornish in Europe (Ferdinand 2013). Once declared extinct, Cornish now has international recognition as a minority language in the European Union. Thieberger (1995) has edited a fine manual on how to begin learning from documentation. Workshops have also been developed to assist communities in revitalization from documentation; in the USA, these are the Breath of Life archival language workshops and institutes in California (Gehr 2013), Oklahoma, and Washington D.C.

Linguists and sociolinguists have been useful in language revitalization. One of the leading scholars in this movement was Joshua Fishman (e.g., Fishman 1991, 2001). His Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale or GIDS (Fishman 1991) has had a strong influence on modern efforts in language revitalization, by linking recommendations for remedies to stages of disruption. The scale has been modified recently to take into better account the smaller Indigenous languages (Lewis et al. 2015). Communities doing language revitalization have also benefited from the work of documentary linguists, who have been able to assist in such areas as orthography development and the creation of dictionaries, grammars, and volumes of texts (Mosel 2006). The work of linguists in the past to document endangered languages has been of critical importance to people of the present who have lost all the speakers of their language. The documentation made by linguists (as well as others) is now the only tie people may have to their language, and the only way they can hope to learn it. The crisis of endangered languages has inspired a whole new approach to documentation, utilizing modern technology to do both audio and video recording of many genres of speech, and a whole new set of ethics concerning community partnerships and language needs. (see, e.g., Austin and Sallabank 2011, Part II). Academic policies about promotion and tenure have sometimes presented an obstacle to some of the new approaches to fieldwork and publication in service of speech communities, but there is a slow but sure progress toward greater acceptance

of such items as layman-friendly dictionaries and pedagogical grammars as legitimate products for academics.

On the other hand, linguists are usually not trained in language teaching and learning theory and methodology. Applied linguists, who do have that training, are less often trained in the special characteristics, circumstances, and needs of endangered languages (Cope and Penfield 2011). Training programs for foreign language teachers have proved inadequate to treat the special case of teaching endangered languages. It has fallen to community language activists to glean useful input from linguistics, applied linguistics, and the knowledge of their own cultures to develop their own training programs in language teaching theory and methodology. In North America, the most venerable of these programs is the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI), established in 1978, now institutionalized as a credit-bearing summer offering at the University of Arizona (McCarty et al. 2001). There are now many other training programs in North America, many with grass-roots beginnings like AILDI. Beyond these, certificates and degrees in language revitalization are now offered at several major institutions. For example, the University of Victoria offers a teaching certificate and an MA program in Indigenous language revitalization; and the University of Hawai'i at Hilo offers a Ph.D. in language revitalization.

Work in Progress

Language revitalization is always a work in progress for peoples whose languages are endangered. Only the new generations of speakers of the Hebrew language in Israel might be able to say “the job of language revitalization is done.” Otherwise, almost every language where revitalization is taking place remains a minority language with continuing pressures against it, and revitalization is a multi-generational process where each generation must decide for themselves whether they will continue that process.

Ways to teach and learn an endangered language are always being tested, evolving, improving, and if needed, abandoned in favor of another model. Publications on language revitalization have often been aimed at least in part at practitioners – the people “on the ground” doing the real work – and have often been written by them as well (although I have several times heard people say, “We are too busy doing it to write about it”). An important series of books, which are available online as well as print, are the publications developed out of the Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium, held annually in different places throughout North America. The first volume was published in 1996 (Cantoni 1996), and these edited volumes have been coming out regularly ever since. Hinton and Hale (2001) also cover all aspects of language revitalization, from language planning to teaching techniques. For Australian languages, the major volume on language revitalization is by Hobson (2010).

New methods for teaching, learning, and acquiring the habit of using endangered languages are being pioneered. One example is the Accelerated Second Language

Acquisition method (ASLA) developed by Arapaho language scholar-activist Stephen Greymorning, a picture-based but personal and interactive method of developing competence in vocabulary and grammar. (This information is based on my attendance at workshops by Greymorning and observation of the method in use by the Tolowa Tribe at Smith River Rancheria, California.) The “Where Are Your Keys” game- and sign-based language learning method is also becoming popular in communities trying to teach and learn their endangered languages (<http://www.whereareyourkeys.org/>). Zalmi Zahir, a fluent speaker of Lushootseed, a language Indigenous to the US Pacific Northwest Coast, has developed especially creative ways to bring language into daily use at home. Some of his videos demonstrating these can be found on YouTube (e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-rsqgfoTz0>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv1dx2GX5L8>). Another model for language learning is the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program, developed in California by the Indigenous-run organization Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival. Teams consisting of one or more learners with one or more elder speakers are trained to learn through immersion in their language while they are living their daily lives (Hinton 2002; Olthuis et al. 2013; Tsunoda 2005). All of these models have been used internationally. Many programs developed throughout North America are gaining currency in Australia and Europe.

Since one problem for learners and users of endangered languages is finding others with whom to converse in the language, creative projects have been invented to that end. The Yurok Tribe of northern California developed “language pods,” groups of speakers, and advanced learners who get together on a regular basis to converse on various topics, some of which are decided beforehand to get things started. A more intensive program is the “language house,” where people live together committed to using the language with each other. For example, Michele Johnson (2013) wrote her dissertation on a language house she set up in the Okanagan valley of British Columbia with several other learners and one native speaker of the N’syilxcn (Colville-Okanagan) language, with the goal of completely immersing themselves in the language. In 2015, the North American-based CBC News produced a report on several Skwomesh youth in Vancouver, BC, who set up a household for the purpose of using their language together (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/skwomesh-language-revitalized-by-first-nation-youth-through-diy-immersion-1.2940513>). In Belfast Ireland, Gaelic speakers have taken this a step further by developing a whole community where Gaelic is the language of home, school, and streets (Mac Póilin 2013).

Problems and Difficulties

Over the past few decades, language revitalization has matured as a movement around the world. Native peoples in the United States have been strong in this movement. Advocacy by Indigenous groups resulted in the passage by the US Congress of the Native American Languages Act of 1990 (NALA), authorizing government funding to tribal language revitalization programs. At the same time, motivated primarily by the racialized fears of the growing number of Spanish-

speaking people living the USA, many states were developing “English-only” laws, and state educational policies were tightening their opposition to languages other than English being taught in the schools. During the George W. Bush administration, the Office of Bilingual Education was renamed the Office of English Language Acquisition, and the “No-Child-Left-Behind” (NCLB) and “Common Core” education initiatives were a blow to language diversity in education, with their one-size-fits-all curriculum and emphasis on English language testing. These mutually conflicting language education policies – NALA and NCLB – create pendulum swings that obstruct the ability of communities to develop and maintain stable programs.

There are many problems language activists have to deal with in regard to language development. For unwritten languages, orthography development is often a priority, but if there is a history of differing orthographies, the choice between them can turn factional. Dialect differences and controversies over standardization can also create divisions. The development of new vocabulary is a socially sensitive issue as well. All of these issues can create negative feelings and long delays in progress if not handled well.

The ultimate difficulty for language revitalization appears to be bringing the languages back into use, which is different from language learning. Learning in well-run immersion schools can create fluent speakers, but this does not necessarily translate into use in daily life outside the classroom. For severely endangered languages, a person may learn the language by various means outlined above, but may have no speech community with whom to use the language. And conversely, if there are speakers the learner can talk to, especially native speakers, fear of error may keep the learner from speaking the language to them. The dominant language of nation or region will still be used in most domains, which makes it difficult to find the time and space to use the endangered language. Revitalization efforts are always met with counter-forces from both outside and inside the speech community.

Future Directions

Just as linguistic features of dying languages have been studied as a field in itself (e.g., Dorian 1981, 1989), so can we begin to look at the linguistic features of languages in revitalization. One field of interest is vocabulary changes. Endangered languages, almost by definition, stopped being used at some point in time. In revitalization, what the new speakers talk about has changed. In an immersion school, for example, the students are learning to talk about things that were traditionally never talked about before in the language – such as algebra, or chemistry. Even in daily life, if the language stopped being spoken 50 or 100 years ago or more, some of the most common contemporary items and activities of daily life were not in use at the time the last speakers who actually knew their language stopped speaking it. Thus, one massive change in languages under revitalization is vocabulary. (See, for example, the dictionary of new words in Hawaiian, *Kōmike Hua ‘ōlelo* 2003). Furthermore, languages learned as a second language will very frequently exhibit

features of morphological simplification and phonological and grammatical influence from the first language.

Almost by definition, endangered languages have the characteristic that relatively few or even *no* people have been learning them as a first language. This puts the burden of learning and transmission on second language learners, which can – and usually does – mean that the language they speak has strong differences from the language of the previous generations. For most endangered languages in revitalization, language change is clearly evident; elders complain that the old language is gone and that now there is a “new language.” There are often phonological and grammatical changes, from incomplete learning or influences from the encroaching languages.

As a case in point, Ghil’ad Zuckermann (2009) sees reviving languages as hybrid languages, bringing with them features from the dominant majority languages. In his work on Hebrew, he finds that Israeli has many grammatical patterns pointing to a European influence and concludes that “Israeli is a Eurasian (Semito-European) hybrid language: both Afro-Asiatic and IndoEuropean,” and that, “When one revives a language, one should expect to end up with a hybrid” (Zuckermann 2009, p. 63).

Zuckermann’s claim is controversial, considered too extreme by most other Hebraists. For example, Yael Reshef (2012), citing several other scholars, summarizes as follows: “Non-Semitic phenomena documented in Modern Hebrew do not surpass and in many cases are less far-reaching than those found in Semitic languages whose use as vernaculars has never been interrupted” (p. 551). However, Reshef and other Hebraists agree that Modern Hebrew does have phonological and grammatical influences from other languages, both from non-Semitic and other Semitic languages. In general, how much a language has changed under the revitalization process, and what kind of value is placed on those changes, is a topic of interest and debate in both scholarly circles and within the revitalizing speech communities.

Within the field of language teaching and learning, how endangered languages can be learned and brought into use again is a subject that matters greatly. What language revitalization hopes for from a learner is the following steps:

1. To *learn* the language as fluently as possible
2. To *use* the language in daily life
3. To *transmit* knowledge and use of the language to others
4. To *ensure continuation* of the language across generations (in particular, to the learner’s children and grandchildren).

Note that most of these expectations are about actions that take place outside a classroom. In some cases, two, three, or all four of these steps can be taking place at the same time, if, for example, a learner decides to use his or her language at home with family members while s/he is learning it (see, e.g., Baldwin et al. 2013).

Language revitalization efforts in various parts of the world have succeeded in creating a new generation of young speakers – sometimes just a few resulting from families determined to raise their children in the language, and sometimes a very

large number, through full-scale immersion schooling. Language activists know that language revitalization is a continual process that will always depend on what the next generation does with it. Language activists hope that the programs they run will develop speakers who will then pass on the language to others, at school, in the community, and at home. Language revitalization activists must think beyond language teaching and learning and grow opportunities for people to use the language within the community.

Language policy at the family, community, national, and international levels is key to this movement. Supportive language policies of the United Nations and the European Union, and of some nations including the United States, Canada, Australia, and many other countries, represent recent trends of major importance to the momentum of language revitalization. Changes in state laws that make it easier to teach endangered languages in the schools help enormously. But the conflicting laws and policies described above create difficult obstacles, and insufficient, insecure funding for language revitalization efforts has resulted in an end to many good programs.

Community and family policies, then, are where the real work lies. The drive to language revitalization is part of the drive for the maintenance or renewal of minority culture, identity, community, and autonomy. As long as that larger goal is present, people will continue the good work of reclaiming their mother tongues.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Family Language Policy](#)
- ▶ [Language Education for New Speakers](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Policies and the Indigenous and Minority Languages of Northernmost Scandinavia and Finland](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Australia](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Canada](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the USA](#)
- ▶ [Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- K.M. Howard: [Language Socialization and Language Shift among School-aged Children](#). In Volume: [Language Socialization](#)
- Leanne Hinton: [Learning and Teaching Endangered Indigenous Languages](#). In Volume: [Second and Foreign Language Education](#)
- M. Candelier: [“Awakening to Languages” and Educational Language Policy](#). In Volume: [Language Awareness and Multilingualism](#)

Onowa McIvor and Teresa L. McCarty: [Indigenous Bilingual and Revitalization-Immersion Education in Canada and the United States](#). In Volume: [Bilingual and Multilingual Education](#)

Sabine Siekman: [Indigenous Language Education and Uses of Technology](#). In Volume: [Language, Education, and Technology](#)

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Language Education for New Speakers

Bernadette O'Rourke, Joan Pujolar, and John Walsh

Abstract

This chapter examines the emergence of the category of “new speakers” in different contexts, as well as scholarly debate about the phenomenon. It focuses particularly on the processes involved in becoming a new speaker of a minority language. The term is used to refer to individuals who acquire a minority language outside of the home and come to the language through the education system or as adult learners in the context of language revitalization efforts. While focusing on minority languages and cases of language revitalization, we also wish to argue that the new speaker has wider theoretical and epistemological implications, shedding new light on the processes of production and reproduction of sociolinguistic difference and ideologies of legitimacy in multilingual contexts more generally. There are parallels also between new speakers and heritage speakers with a long trajectory in minority language contexts where English is hegemonic. The notion of new speakers is used here as a generic term with which to examine how categories of speakers are produced, reproduced, or contested in each specific context. As such, it builds on existing critiques in applied linguistics and language education policy more generally of the native speaker ideology.

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Introduction

The “new speaker” label focuses on the experience of multilingual individuals who adopt and use a language of which they are not native speakers. The term finds its origins in minority language sociolinguistics but has come to be used in critical sociolinguistics more generally to engage with debates around nativeness, language, and nationalism. In the context of minority languages and revitalization projects such as Basque, Galician, or Welsh, we now find folk terms used to refer to new speakers (e.g., *Euskaldunberri*, *neofalantes*), whereas in similar contexts such categories seem to be expressed more implicitly (e.g., in Catalonia) or not at all if no native speakers of the language remain (e.g., Isle of Man). Scholarly research on this phenomenon has arrived relatively recently to the sociolinguistics of minority languages, where some scholarship (in line with the ideological position of “language planners” on the ground) was concerned with the maintenance and reproduction of traditional native speaker communities (see the commentary on “sociolinguists for language revival” in O’Rourke et al. 2015, p. 11). This is despite the fact that the profile of new speaker has now become more widespread in contexts where traditional communities are being eroded because of modernization and globalization processes. These processes have given rise to a sizable number of new speakers who often acquire the language at school or other formal means, as a second or third language, but outside of the classical model of family-home transmission.

There are also clear parallels between “new speakers” and “heritage speakers” with a long trajectory in minority language contexts where English is hegemonic, particularly among Native Americans in the United States, First Nations peoples in Canada, and Indigenous Australian communities. Being a new speaker can be used to describe members of those speech communities who “relearned” the language after language shift has taken place. This relearning can happen as adults through formal training, or informally from their elders or through a recalling of the language from childhood (see, e.g., McCarty 2013).

Early Developments

In the field of linguistics and its related disciplines, the monolingual native speaker paradigm has been historically dominant and various labels emerged to describe people who were not “native” speakers of particular languages: “nonnative,” “second language,” “L2” speaker, “learner,” and so on. These labels were based on the idea that the “native” speaker was the linguistic model and should be emulated in language learning, a stance that carried wider implications of access to employment and other economic opportunities for “nonnative” speakers. The dominance of this model also permeated minority language communities where “native speakers” had come to be socially, economically, and politically marginalized. This helps explain why language planners, revitalization movements, and some researchers in the field of minority language research have sometimes sought to reverse the processes of language shift through a reification of the native speaker community. In line with its historical dominance in linguistics generally, the role of the native speaker in the process of language survival was given central importance, drawing extensively on the Fishmanian model of reversing language shift and the need to reconstruct the native speaker community based on stage six of the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS); see Fishman (1991). As O’Rourke et al. (2015) note, *sociolinguists for language revival* drew on this model, inspired by ideals of social justice for traditional speakers in the minority language community and by what Bucholtz (2003, p. 400) refers to as the *salvaging leanings* which had come to be inherent in linguistic anthropology more broadly.

Challenges to the dominance of the native speaker paradigm have been particularly prolific among scholars working in the field of English as a global language (see Kachru 1990). While this debate has tended to be less widespread among scholars researching minority languages (O’Rourke and Pujolar 2013), numerous case studies nonetheless exist in which speakers other than the native speaker model are brought to the fore (see, e.g., Trosset 1986 for Welsh; Woolard 1989 for Catalan; MacCaluim 2007 and McEwan-Fujita 2010 for Scottish Gaelic) or where the native speaker is explicitly problematized (see Doerr 2009).

The explicit labeling of the “new speaker” phenomenon builds on these developments and began to be used by European-based researchers concerned with overlapping issues of legitimacy, linguistic authority, and language ownership in postrevitalization situations, specifically in the context of Catalan (Pujolar 2007; Woolard 2011) and comparative work on Galician and Irish (O’Rourke 2011a). The focus of these discussions was on understanding the issues that arise in situations in which these new profiles of speakers were emerging and the subsequent tensions which often seemed to arise between traditional and new speakers of minority languages more generally. In this context, new speakers began to be used as a generic term to refer to individuals who had acquired a minority language outside of the home and had come to the language through the education system or as adult learners in the context of language revitalization efforts. In contrast to longstanding terms such as L2 and nonnative, the new speaker label tries to move away from the

notion of deficit or deficiency and instead encapsulates the possibilities available to the speaker to expand his/her linguistic repertoire through active use of the target language. In that sense, it differs from learner in that a learner may never actually use a language outside an educational setting, whereas new speakers are active and regular users of their target languages or are attempting to achieve that goal (O'Rourke et al. 2015). In this sense, the term is also applicable to Indigenous settings where members of the Indigenous heritage-language community learn that language as a second or additional language (see, e.g., the discussion in Wiley et al. 2014).

In the European context, the specific use of the term new speaker to describe this phenomenon drew inspiration from the Galician category of *neofalante* (literally neo-speaker). This is a term that gained currency among both Galician sociolinguists and language planners. It also existed as a folk concept and came to be used to refer to this specific category of speaker in a contemporary Galician context (O'Rourke and Ramallo 2013). Explicit use of the label had also existed in other Spanish contact situations, notably Basque, where the term *euskaldunberri* (literally Basque new speakers) was and continues to be used to describe speakers of the language who had acquired it through schooling or as adults. The new speaker label had begun to appear in the English-language literature, specifically in the context of Welsh and used by Robert (2009) to refer to second language speakers emerging from Welsh immersion schooling. Comparatively, however, there had been no such labeling in the Catalan or Irish contexts, although other terms existed and were used to describe the phenomenon. Notably, in her early work on Catalan, Woolard (1989) had made explicit use of the term "New Catalans" to refer to first language speakers of Spanish who had acquired Catalan through the education system and who adopted bilingual practices. In Irish, the term *Gaeilgeoir* (literally meaning Irish speaker), like *neofalante* in Galicia, was used as a folk concept to refer to Irish speakers who had acquired the language outside of traditional Gaeltacht areas, thus distinguishing them from "real" speakers of the language who tended to be referred to as *cainteoir dúchais* (meaning native speaker or literally "speaker from heritage") (see O'Rourke 2011b; Walsh 2012b).

Notably, then, the new speaker profile in all of these contexts was invariably linked to the acquisition of the language outside of the home, through the formal education system or adult classes. It is also notable that these categories were used as a marked category, as if they described somewhat extraordinary cases, despite the fact that they were actually a fast growing category of speakers, to the point that they outnumbered native speakers (e.g., in Ireland) or were a clear majority among the young population (e.g., in the Basque country).

Major Contributions

The use of the new speaker label as an umbrella term provides a means for researchers working in and across different minority language contexts, such as those described above, to explore issues collectively and to come up with new

understandings of what is involved in the struggles over the legitimacy of speakers and of linguistic forms in minority language communities. It also builds on and contributes to a critique of the native speaker ideology which has been so deeply engrained in linguistics and its related strands, an ideology which stems from the governmentalization of language and the development of nationalisms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

An underlying concern in many individual case studies has been the processes of legitimization or delegitimization of new speakers and their pursuit for linguistic authority and authenticity. In the case of Corsican, one of France's regional minorities, new speakers struggle for legitimacy in a context in which both formal and informal use of the language is now restricted (Jaffe 2015). In cases of "extreme language shift" such as is the case of Manx where there are no native speakers left, linguistic legitimacy and authenticity can no longer rely on a native speaker model. Instead, legitimacy must derive from new speakers, who can claim authority and construct such legitimacy (Ó hlfearnáin 2015). In other cases where native speakers continue to be in a majority, new speakers are often denied linguistic authority because they are seen to lack territorial ties to the language or what is seen to be the correct pronunciation or grammar. New speakers of Basque, for example, generally accord greater legitimacy and authenticity to native speakers (Ortega et al. 2015).

Similarly, new speakers of Galician often downgrade their urbanized way of speaking which they perceive as lacking authenticity. However, an older generation of traditional native speakers may also devalue their linguistic abilities and grant authority to new speakers who are proficient in the newly established standard language as opposed to their more dialectal Galician (see O'Rourke and Ramallo 2013). In the case of Catalan, Frekko (2009) has shown that an older generation of native speakers does not always have access to standard Catalan and can thus claim less authority over the language than new speakers. Tensions can also be found between traditionalist activists and modernist academics in another one of France's minority languages, Occitan. Here, native speakers, as users of dialectal forms oppose the new standard variety which they see as very far removed from their own way of speaking (Costa 2015). In the case of Breton, the source of conflict stems from demands for linguistic purity where new speakers are often seen to speak a form of Breton which is overly influenced by French (see Hornsby 2015; Timm et al. 2010). Irish in the Republic of Ireland shows struggles over language ownership, particularly in a context in which language policy initiatives had given the language a certain market value (O'Rourke 2011a, b).

A full special issue dedicated to the new speaker theme in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (O'Rourke et al. 2015) examines what the authors refer to as the "challenging opportunity" presented by the rise of this profile of speaker in many of Europe's minority languages. New speakers provide an opportunity for many minority languages where traditional communities of speakers are in decline because they offer the possibility of increasing the demographic strength of the language. Manx points to a case where there are in fact no traditional speakers left, but in more recent history the language has in a sense been "brought

back to life” through a growing new speaker population of language enthusiasts and activists. In some of Spain’s minority languages, we find a similar pattern. In the Basque Country, among a younger generation of the population, more than half are new speakers (Ortega et al. 2015). Similarly, the majority of younger Galicians now acquire the language outside of the home and nearly half of Catalan users are new speakers.

However, the challenge lies in sustaining the new types of communities and networks that emerge for minority languages, as what were viewed as traditional native speaker communities decline and the dominance of the traditional family-based model of intergenerational transmission fades. The question of what language models to use in such circumstances has been raised by Suzanne Romaine in her critique of Fishman’s model which prioritizes the reproduction of the traditional native speaker population (2006). King (2001) and McCarty (2013), among others, propose a reconceptualization of language revitalization as one which involves bringing the language forward to new speakers and to new contexts of use instead of an attempt to “reverse language shift,” which amounts to a restoration of a forgone time. Relatedly, Jaffe (2011) makes the point that inevitably, language revitalization involves new contexts of use and new users that by definition cannot reproduce the past, thus making such a project doomed to fail. From this perspective, Jaffe’s suggests that language revitalization programs that look beyond reproducing the past often have a more satisfactory outcome. At the same time, as she also notes, this does not preclude other kinds of more conventional activities such as “preserving” traditional forms of speech and performance.

The new speaker concept also opens up avenues of debate about fundamental theoretical and epistemological questions about what is meant by a “language” itself and therefore what it means for a language to “survive.” While some new speakers wish to emulate traditional speakers and hold them as linguistic models, our research has illustrated that many others do not and prefer to engage in hybrid and fluid linguistic practices which involve moving between what have been considered two distinct languages, such as a new speaker of Basque who uses elements of Spanish extensively in her utterances. Seen from the perspective of the dominant monolingual native speaker ideology, such practice could be constructed as a step towards the “death” of Basque, but seen from the new speaker perspective this practice facilitates a debate about what is meant by “language survival.” In that sense, work on new speakers has considerable epistemological and theoretical implications for sociolinguistics.

Work in Progress

While the new speaker phenomenon and related case studies have had a strong focus on European minoritized languages, the concept can be usefully extended to Indigenous minority languages in many other parts of the world. There are clear parallels with recent research in Indigenous language planning and policy where revitalization efforts are also concerned with the creation of new speakers (see, e.g., Hinton and

Hale 2001). The idea of being a new speaker can be used to describe “heritage” speakers among Native Americans or Canadian First Nations where members of those speech communities “reclaimed” the language after language shift has taken place (McCarty 2013).

Initial thinking on the concept thus provides a frame for a scholarly conversation that has in fact been going on for some time in other domains but which has not been explored collectively across different subfields. While focusing on minority languages and cases of language revitalization, discussion around the new speaker has wider theoretical and epistemological implications for sociolinguistics and the study of multilingualism more broadly. Although the concept was used initially to describe a particular profile of speaker in minority language contexts, such labeling goes beyond a simple categorization of speaker types. While other research has focused on processes and practices of multilingual individuals, including “translanguaging” (García and Li Wei 2014), “translingualism” (Canagarajah 2013), and “metrolingualism” (Pennycook 2010), the new speaker concept has a more clearly defined focus on the speakers themselves, their trajectories, and experiences. In this respect, the new speaker label is perhaps more closely aligned to other related concepts, including García and Kleifgen’s (2010) notion of “emergent bilinguals” and what Kramsch (2012) refers to as “multilingual subjects.” These concepts, like the new speaker label, have attempted to frame the processes involved in adopting a new language or languages as additive as opposed to subtractive, thus moving away from the deficient model implied in older terminological constructs which had focused on “nonnative” or “second” language speakers.

Problems, Difficulties, and Progress

Emerging research, presentations, and publications on new speakers since the inception of the concept have opened up debates about how it is defined and applied to very different cases and contexts, what the social and political consequences of disseminating or publicizing debates on new speakers might be, and what its theoretical affordances and caveats are. Jaffe (2015), for instance, reviews different criteria that have either been used in specific contexts to identify new speakers, or the implications that can be derived from existing definitions of new speakers, observing that:

...the “new speaker” can be an explicit/relatively established or an emergent/implicit emic category. It also has the potential to be used as an etic framework for categorizing profiles of speakers/learners that can then be compared and contrasted with “insider” social categorization practices. (p. 25)

She suggests four key criteria when defining new speakers: the types or levels of knowledge and competence in the languages concerned, the patterns of language use, the social setting where the acquisition had taken place, and finally, the life stage at which the language had been learnt or used socially.

Pujolar and González (2013) refer to these life stages as linguistic *mudes* or critical junctures during a speaker's life leading to the adoption of a new language in social interaction outside educational contexts. There are several factors that can contribute to the transition between "learner" and new speaker status which may facilitate or thwart the use of the language at these different points in an individual's life (Pujolar and Puigdevall 2015). O'Rourke and Ramallo (2013) identify early and late adolescence as critical social junctures for new speakers of Galician, leading them to change their sociolinguistic behavior as Spanish speakers and to predominantly Galician-speaking. These are linked to key life stages such as the transition from primary to second level education or to university. For new speakers of many European minority languages, these key life stages often constitute critical points in time which, as Woolard suggests, can "mobilize linguistic resources that had been at least theoretically available to them earlier" (2011, p. 262). This was through their exposure to the language in the education system and in the majority of cases also, through passive exposure to the language in the home or community. However, this transition is not always clear-cut as the linguistic resources available to new speakers are often contested and need to be negotiated with native speakers and sometimes other new speakers. The difficulties involved in the process of sociolinguistic transformation can demand strong ideological commitment to adopting a new language, sometimes against all the odds.

Future Directions

The airing of the new speaker label as a research concept at international fora has created connections with scholars working in a variety of multilingual contexts. This includes new speakers in the context of migration, new speakers in the contexts of translation where the focus has tended to be given to translating into one's mother-tongue (Pokorn 2005), new speaker teachers of English and their legitimacy compared to native speakers (Cook 1999), new speakers' experience as transnational workers (Roberts 2010) or in transnational networks connected to youth cultures often associated with the use of international languages such as English, Chinese, French, Spanish (Androutsopoulos 2004), and heritage speakers among North American Indigenous peoples (McCarty 2013). Scholars in these subdisciplines have questioned the epistemologies of linguistics and its uncritical emphasis on "native" speaker models.

The formation of a research network in 2013 under the European Framework in Science and Technology has provided the space and the means to develop the connections between regional minority language and other perspectives on new speakerhood, in particular in the context of migration. Through this there has thus been a coming together of researchers working on different multilingual strands to explore the new speaker phenomenon from a wider theoretical perspective, shedding

new light on the processes of production and reproduction of sociolinguistic difference and ideologies of legitimacy.

While still focusing on a minority language setting in the case of Catalan, Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015), for example, frame new speakers in Catalonia in the context of migration. At the turn of the millennium, international migration and mobility provided the space for a growing population of new speakers of more diverse origins who were sometimes new speakers of *both* Catalan and Spanish. Here, however, ideologies of authenticity associated with Catalan could no longer be sustained in the context of integration policies (Woolard 2008). Indeed, these contradictions are not dissimilar to those found with “majority languages” experiencing migration and which have been examined under the lens of superdiversity (Blommaert and Rampton 2011).

In Quebec, Lamarre (2013) also explores in-between spaces and looks at whether or not new speakers as newcomers take on socially ratified identities as members of the host community, or if they remain hegemonically positioned as dis-citizens. In the case of more powerful linguistic communities such as Spanish, Márquez-Reiter and Martin Rojo (2014) examine the effect of migration and mobility on the emergence of new forms of Spanish.

For African women immigrants in Spain (Caglitutuncigil Martinez 2014), gender and social class are overwhelming factors in their new speakerness. For these women, learning Catalan or Spanish may open up new opportunities, but it may also be part of the process through which they leave behind their former cultural capital to enter the lower-paid sectors of the job market. New speakers as workers provide another lens through which the processes involved in accessing specific jobs and the sometimes unequal access to resources as a new speaker of language. This builds on existing research on language and communication as primary resources of work (Duchêne et al. 2013; Heller 2011) and the growing need of multilingual competence(s) in transnationally operating workplaces.

Across different multilingual sites, there are similarities between new speaker categories and profiles, but there are also significant differences. These differences constitute highly salient sociolinguistic territory which is yet to be explored. This exploration can allow us to move in some way towards a typology of new speakers. The insights gained within and across this range of multilingual sites lay crucial groundwork on which further explorations can be built. As language education policies often play a key role in the production of new multilingual speakers, understanding the lived experiences of such speakers can provide valuable insights for practitioners, language planners, and policy makers on what it means to “become” a new speaker of a language and the challenges and opportunities this can present.

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Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Claire Kramersch: [The Ecology of Second Language Acquisition and Socialization](#). In Volume: Language Socialization
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Youth Language in Education

Django Paris and Lorena Gutierrez

Abstract

In this chapter, we trace the trajectory of research on youth language and culture, focusing the bulk of our assessment on research over the first decade and half of the twenty-first century and on the future of research and practice at the intersection of youth language and educational equity. To do so, we begin with major early developments in Britain and the United States from 1955 to 1980. We then move to major contributions in the study of youth language and education, spending significant time reviewing studies in the strength-based education traditions. Our review then takes up contemporary research in the USA and globally that documents youth language and literacy across embodied and digital spaces, Hip Hop cultures, and migrant, Latina/o, Indigenous, LGBTQ, Black, and intersectional youth communities. Ultimately, we offer an assessment and a way forward that joins youth agency and demographic and social change at the intersection of research, identities, and activism.

Keywords

Youth language • Language policy • Language education • Equity

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Introduction: Toward Strength-Based Approaches

There is a movement underway in equity-oriented youth language and culture research to situate young people as doers and makers of educational practice and policy. In the United States, this movement is most fully articulated in work with youth of color across Indigenous, African American, Latina/o, and Asian Pacific Islander communities. Globally, too, this work has importantly focused on youth of color. At heart, this shift toward understanding youth linguistic and cultural assets (vs. deficits), and agency in teaching and learning represents a culmination of decades of strength-based research on the ways young people use oral and written language to mark and shape identities as members of formal and informal learning communities (Alim 2004; Harris 2006; Mendoza-Denton 2008; Paris 2011; Wyman et al. 2014).

While most official educational policies and practices continue to devalue youth language and culture in formal school settings, there are many beyond school and within school educational spaces that are centered on youth practices. There is also a burgeoning research base documenting the role of youth as participants in and shapers of the cultural and political changes rising from major demographic shifts and evolving digital and embodied practices across national and global contexts. In this chapter, we trace the trajectory of research on youth language and culture, focusing the bulk of our assessment on research over the first decade and half of the twenty-first century and on the future of research and practice at the intersection of youth language and educational equity.

Early Developments: The Birmingham and Chicago Schools and Beyond

Although there was a significant amount of research on young people across the first half of the twentieth century in sociology, psychology, and anthropology, this work was by and large narrowly focused on psychosocial and (less so) cultural definitions of adolescence as a life stage and suffered from a tendency to compare all young people to White, European, and American, middle-class, monocultural, and – especially in the USA – monolingual norms of development. These early studies are characterized by a focus on deviance (e.g., violence and sexuality) as defined against such norms and show a broader tendency to equate the period of life between

“childhood” and “adulthood” (themselves contested and situated terms) as a problem to be fixed. In Bucholtz’s (2002) seminal review of the study of youth culture, she deftly evaluates this early research and both urges and documents a scholarly shift from the study of adolescence to the study of youth.

Scholars in the United States (namely, what became known as the “Chicago School” of sociology) and Britain (namely, what became known as the “Birmingham School” of cultural studies) played prominent roles between 1955 and 1980 in laying the groundwork for the study of popular youth culture. Indeed, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, England, is a foundational starting point for thinking about the shift to studying youth culture from strength-based perspectives (Petroni 2013). The Birmingham School’s emphasis on how popular youth culture is enacted and understood across practices of particular, mainly male, White, cisgendered, heterosexual, and working class groups of youth has remained a bedrock element of youth cultural studies. It is a turn that asked the researcher to take seriously youth engagement with popular culture as a necessary site of and for knowledge production.

Although foundational to what was to come, this early work paid little nuanced attention to race, gender identity, sexuality, and – crucially to this chapter – language as they were enacted to reproduce, resist, and reshape identities and participations in informal and formal institutions. As well, this work was not done in dialogue with learning research and theory in education and related disciplines, so it had less direct implications for uses of youth language and culture in formal and informal educational settings, especially education settings serving poor and working class students of color.

It was early work on the language of young children and youth of color in the USA and, later, on what that meant to education that would join the achievements of the Birmingham and Chicago schools toward a field of youth language and literacy in education. Responding to the harmful *culture of poverty* arguments of the 1960s that framed the languages and cultures of poor students of color as deficits needing to be fixed and replaced with “better” languages and cultures, social language research across the 1960s through the 1980s worked in a somewhat dialogic relationship with court rulings, such as *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) and *Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School Children v. Ann Arbor School District* (1979), to inform more equitable, strength-based educational policy and practice (e.g., Cazden and Leggett 1976; Garcia 1993; Heath 1983; Labov 1972; Smitherman 1977). It is important to note here that we view language and educational “policy” following McCarty (2011) as “the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people’s language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways” (p. xii).

Much of this social language and education research and the associated bilingual education policy focused on the relationship between multilingualism and classroom learning for younger children and set the stage for the youth language and education research that was to follow. In his landmark, exhaustive review of research from 1970 to 1990 on language and education among bi- and multilingual students of color in the USA, Garcia (1993) summarizes the state of the field:

It is clear that no research supports ignoring the language and culture of students. The reverse seems to be confirmed by recent contributions: Observe, come to understand, and appropriate into schooling contexts these attributes of culture and language that characterize the student. (p. 9)

Although contemporary research has moved away from the idea of appropriating youth language and culture into, and instead works to join it as equal, the move toward embracing the language and culture of students as vital to successful school learning was a major shift that ushered in the windfall of strength-based youth language and education research, practice, and (less so) policy during the 1990s.

Major Contributions: Joining Contemporary Understandings with Strength-Based Learning Theory

The period of youth language and education research from the early 1990s to the turn of the twenty-first century was characterized by two major contributions that continue to shape the field. These contributions themselves lived out the legacies of the Chicago and Birmingham Schools, once again drawing on concurrent work in anthropology and sociology in the USA and in British cultural studies.

In the USA, educational scholars studying successful learning approaches to teaching with students of color developed the influential *funds of knowledge* (Moll and González 1992) and *culturally relevant pedagogy* (Ladson-Billings 1995) frameworks. These and related frameworks, which echo across much youth language and education research, documented and conceptualized strength-based pedagogies that took up Garcia's (1993) and others' calls to meaningfully include the languages and cultures of students of color in classroom learning. Throughout the 1990s to the present, many university-based teacher education programs and school district professional development programs have adopted these and related frameworks (in both superficial and, sometimes, deeply engaged ways) as vital to classroom practice. As such, strength-based pedagogical research has had direct impact on the practices and policies guiding the preparation and professional learning of teachers, including teachers of youth.

During the same period, interactional sociolinguists in the British cultural studies tradition were taking up Jamaican scholar Stuart Hall's (1988) conception of *new ethnicities* to investigate the way British working class youth of color pushed against static notions of ethnicity and language through what Rampton (1995) called *language crossing* – momentary and sustained uses by out-group youth of a language traditionally used only by in-group members. Such language uses evidenced shifting enactments of racial and ethnic identity as demographic shifts, continued residential and educational segregation, and a growing popular media culture brought youth of color and some working class White youth together in learning and living.

Although an ocean apart, these separate research trajectories of strength-based pedagogies on the one hand and notions of the fluid and dynamic nature of youth

language and culture on the other would begin to coalesce in youth language work in US schools during the first decade and a half of the twenty-first century (Moll 2000). Indeed a string of influential studies has appeared across this period investigating the dynamism of youth language in the context of secondary schools. Some of these studies focused the methods of critical linguistic anthropology and other qualitative social language methodologies on language use in schools, without necessarily offering explicit pedagogical implications and innovations within the research.

Among these was Mendoza-Denton's (2008) important ethnography of the language of Latina gangs in a California high school. Mendoza-Denton offers a portrait of the ways Latinas in the Norteña and Sureña youth gangs enact language, literacy, and embodied practices across Spanishes and Englishes to define membership. Another important study situated in an urban secondary school in West London was Harris's (2006) research on language and identity among urban British South Asian youth. Harris found that indeed these youth were forging linguistic and ethnic identities that allowed them to be both South Asian and British; to use a range of South Asian languages and culturally situated practices and a range of more long-term working class British language features to index Britishness, urbanness, and South Asian selves separately and together depending on context. Bucholtz (2011) also examined the ways youth enacted race and ethnicity through language in the context of an urban high school, providing a rare and needed example of such work focused explicitly on the languaged racialization of urban White youth who shared a school with many students of color in US schools.

Another set of studies more explicitly married notions of linguistic and cultural dynamism among youth with pedagogical implications and innovations for school language and literacy learning. In a year-long social language and literacy ethnography of African American, Latina/o, and Pacific Islander students in a demographically changing US West Coast community, Paris (2011) explored the ways youth of color engaged in language crossing and *language sharing* across race and ethnicity. An important contribution of this work was documenting how African Americans *and* their Latina/o and Pacific Islander peers shared in African American Language (AAL) and Hip Hop culture, while Latina/o and Pacific Islander youth simultaneously participated in heritage practices of, for example, Spanish, Samoan, and Tongan. African Americans and Pacific Islanders in Paris's study also crossed and shared in Spanish in small but important ways. Unlike previously mentioned studies, Paris brought findings on shifting enactments of youth language and literacy together with strength-based learning theory to argue for school instruction that joined these practices in generative ways. Alim's (2004) study took this educational equity advocacy further, offering a sociolinguistic and ethnographic portrait of an African American and Hip Hop Language speech community in California *and* youth engagement in critical language awareness curriculum. Alim's study, then, brought strength-based learning theory into action, working with Black and Latina/o youth to document, analyze, and produce school texts of their language and culture.

Building on seminal work in Hip Hop cultural studies, Alim's (2004) study was part of a larger, influential branch of youth language and literacy research known as Hip Hop Pedagogy (Hill 2009 is another seminal example). In a related stream of

research, Alim et al. (2009) brought together prominent scholars of Hip Hop and social language in their landmark volume on the local and globalized linguistic identity work performed through rap and other facets of Hip Hop culture in youth communities from Africa, Asia, Australia, the Americas, and Europe.

In a groundbreaking volume on Indigenous youth and multilingualism, Wyman et al. (2014) gathered long-term, collaborative, and participatory research with Indigenous youth to foreground the ways Indigeneity and cultural and linguistic *survivance* (Vizenor 1994) and *continuance* (Ortiz 1992) are practiced by young people across Native North American communities in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The volume presents cases of Indigenous youth across communities – from Navajo, to Inuit, to Hopi – actively participating in and being central to language revitalization movements. Among these youth language studies are several documenting youths' direct impact on local and national policy debates about the role of formal and informal schooling in maintaining and revitalizing Indigenous languages and cultures. As well, the research collected in this volume offers portraits at the intersection of heritage practices and contemporary enactments of Native youth identity. One example of this is a culturally grounded Navajo Hip Hop artist who joins Hip Hop cultural and linguistic practices with those of his heritage Navajo community.

Taken together, these major contributions over the first decade and half of the twenty-first century have documented the ways race, ethnicity, gender, and class (among other important identities) are enacted by youth through language in both traditional and changing ways. These studies have also largely documented the ways that other markers of race and ethnicity, like skin color and phenotype, continue to play prominent roles in reinforcing systems of inequality in schools and society through continued educational and residential segregation, unequal access to resources, and disproportionate discipline, incarceration, and harm. In the face of such pervasive inequality, one of the broader goals of this youth social language work has been to center – in theory, practice, and policy debates – youth linguistic and cultural practices as strengths to be joined in formal and informal learning spaces.

Digital and other media learning spaces have necessarily garnered significant research attention in contemporary youth culture and education studies (e.g., Knobel and Lankshear 2011; Soep and Chavez 2010). Digital spaces, home to social media (Twitter, Snapchat, Tumblr), are heavily populated by youth, who participate in language and literacy for a range of purposes. Although much of the long-term linguistic anthropological and sociolinguistic social media research is still in progress, an important recent volume edited by Middaugh and Kirshner (2015) offers studies with youth engaged in forms of agency and activism across the blogosphere, Twitter, youth radio and video production in the USA, India, and Britain. What this volume and emerging work show is the ways youth, mainly youth of color in the research, are using intersections of literacy, language, and visual culture to fashion their own learning spaces (sometimes curated with adults, but often not). As well, these studies evidence the power of digital media participatory cultures to influence

local, national, and global politics and policy conversations (e.g., Arab Spring, the #BlackLivesMatter and #NoDAPL movements).

Taken together, the major contributions of youth language and educational research across the first decade and half of the twenty-first century have built broad knowledge about the assets, agency, and activism of youth of color across heritage and evolving practices and in embodied and digital learning spaces. Some of this work has been done in secondary schools, others in youth spaces beyond schools, but all has consistently found youth to be vital participants in pushing for equitable learning and living through language and literacy, especially in situations when they are positioned (by themselves or adult others) from strength versus deficit perspectives. Most recently, this decades-long trajectory has been reframed as *culturally sustaining pedagogy* (Paris 2012), teaching and learning that seeks to perpetuate and foster cultural and linguistic pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling and as a needed response to demographic and social change. Unfortunately, as we discuss below, mainstream formal educational policy continues to in many ways move in the opposite direction, even as demographic, social, and technological change forecasts a more equitable possible future.

Contemporary Studies: Possible Futures for Youth Language and Education

There are several current studies that build directly on the work we have reviewed so far, pushing understandings of youth language, politics, and digital cultures as they relate to educational policy and practice. We highlight just a few here. Several scholars continue to push the global Hip Hop Pedagogy research and practice toward deeper culturally situated understanding of Hip Hop language and culture as an intersectionally raced, gendered, classed, languaged, gender identified aesthetic around which teaching and learning spaces are and should be built (among these, Alim and Haupt 2017, in South Africa; Lindsey 2014, in the United States)

Another strand of important ongoing work is focused on Latina/o youth in the US Gutierrez (2016) recently completed a 3-year longitudinal study of US Latina/o migrant and seasonal farmworker youth. She examined the schooling experiences and language practices of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in K-12 schools and a General Educational Development (GED) diploma granting migrant education program. In the USA, the GED is an alternative diploma to a secondary (high school) education diploma. Her analysis utilizes language to understand the fluid and dynamic ways migrant youth live and learn bilingually and how language is a central part of their educational experiences and identities. In another study, Martinez (2016) is extending the work on evolving enactments of race and ethnicity, looking at the ways US Latina/o youth are using Spanish and AAL to forward academic learning within the official scripts of classroom discourse.

Work with Indigenous youth has also continued to build on recent strength-based Indigenous pedagogy and language and literacy pedagogy research and practice,

documenting the positive educational and life outcomes possible from Indigenous-centered classroom and school level practices and policies (McCarty and Lee 2014; San Pedro 2014). As well, there is important emerging work showing how youth engage in activism for self and community at the intersection of LGBTQ and raced identities of youth of color in the digital spaces of Tumblr and Snapchat (Wargo 2015).

One area that remains yet to be fully researched in this ongoing strength-based work on youth language and literacy are the problematic practices youth in all communities engage in as they sometimes rehearse dominant discourses of inequality that are not at all about justice. An example of such practices are the ways youth engage language and literacy through Hip Hop music, much of which is equity oriented, yet may fail to critique the lyrics and practices in some Hip Hop that perpetuate misogyny, homophobia, and xenophobia. In addition, then, to embracing the many practices youth engage in that *are* about equality and justice, future work must also continue to reveal the ways educators and researchers can join youth in critiquing and changing problematic beliefs and practices (Paris and Alim 2014).

Overall, what this emerging work portends is a continuing and expanding focus on youth as doers and shapers of language and literacy educational practice in formal and informal learning environments, both with and without the input and design of adult allies.

Persistent Challenges and Future Directions

As we stated at the outset, unfortunately most official educational policies and practices continue to devalue the language and cultural practices (and bodies) of youth in formal school settings despite decades of research proving the opposite is needed. Indeed, many educational language and culture policies impacting youth of color are moving in the opposite direction of the research base. In the US context, for example, the twenty-first century has seen a backlash against the cultural, racial, and demographic shifts and against programs that have shown success with students of color. State- and district-level policies abandoning and pulling back from bilingual education and ethnic studies coupled with the advent of zero-tolerance discipline policies are all part of this backlash. And all of these current policies disproportionately negatively impact youth of color who lead, by at minimum double “drop-out,” suspension and expulsion, and incarceration rates, as compared to their White peers.

Much of this is related to centuries old, colonizing ideologies in the USA and across the globe, which position people of color (and so their languages) as less valuable. We see the persistence of such ideologies in current research on the so-called “language gap” of children of color in the USA (McCarty 2015).

And yet demographic and social changes, digital social media, and their intersection with youth cultures offer us a very different possible future in youth language educational practice and policy. The language and literacy twitter activism of young Black women and youth of color, for example, created (Garza 2014) and fueled the

#BlackLivesMatter movement, which has brought millions of people into material and digital streets to protest the killings of Black people (most of them unarmed youth). And these protests have had some real political consequences, for example, with the US Department of Justice investigating the Ferguson, Missouri Police Department and releasing a damning report as a result of the work primarily of youth.

With their continued activism in digital and embodied protest movements in the USA, youth continue to demonstrate themselves as key stakeholders in cultural and educational practice, policy, and future possibilities. Using oral and written language as a vehicle for change, youth are exercising their agency explicitly for their visions of social justice. As we move forward in a digitally mediated society, we must consider the way technology is making it possible for youth to engage in social change at much faster speeds – and with much less adult involvement, than ever before. The days of adults giving or providing space for youth voice is in many ways becoming a thing of the past as youth themselves become the movers and shakers of social media and, in turn, of mainstream media (which often takes its lead from Twitter these days). These interventions into national and global discourses, then, position youth movements through language and literacy as far more efficient and far-reaching than ever before, opening up possibilities of real social and cultural change at the hands of youth.

In addition to digital and embodied protest movements in the USA is a simple demographic fact: In 1970, 80% of public school students were White and only 20% were students of color. Today, over 50% of US public school students are students of color. Among this quickly growing majority are many new immigrants (especially from across regions of Asia and Latin American) who live and learn across multiple languages. This shift is not isolated to the USA alone, with major cities and schools of Canada, Europe, and beyond increasingly becoming multiethnic and multilingual (Blommaert 2015).

The results of these shifts on educational practice and policy predict a way forward that will once again join the research base on youth language and education, resisting the backlash we just described. In the US state of California, for example, a growing Latina/o presence in the state legislature has meant bills revitalizing bilingual education and ethnic studies (see Cabrera et al. 2014; de los Ríos 2013, for current research on youth and ethnic studies).

Even as schools in the USA and many other nations are struggling through legacies of settler colonialism and slavery and continuing to center educational policy and practice largely on White, monocultural, monolingual (in English) norms of achievement, contemporary research on youth language and literacy evidences a nexus of digital participatory cultures, strength-based educational approaches, and demographic and social change that calls into question in what ways traditional political entities and institutions (like schools) will remain central to youth language, literacy, and learning in the coming decades. In light of this research and social moment, the looming question for educators, researchers, and policy becomes, *what is our role in understanding and joining such youth activism toward a more just engagement with youth, their ways with language, and their futures.*

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Culture](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the USA](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)

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Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education

Luis Enrique López

Abstract

The idea of decolonizing education in Latin America has been present in political and educational discourse since the 1960s. At the verge of the bicentennial of political independence in almost all of Latin America and as a result of Indigenous resurgence, there is now an increasing concern regarding epistemological and ideological emancipation from Western knowledge. Hence, the ontology of academic knowledge is at stake, and the need to take into account other ways of knowledge construction and transmission interrogates nationally defined school curriculum. Issues such as these are analyzed in this chapter vis-à-vis the implementation of intercultural bilingual education in Indigenous settings and of intercultural education for all.

Keywords

Indigenous resurgence • Language decolonization • Life-for-the-Common-Good • Ontology of knowledge • Indigenous knowledge systems

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Introduction

The decolonization of education is a relatively old issue in Latin American political and educational discourse. It is a topic that was either explicitly or implicitly discussed in the 1960s and 1970s, in connection with the languages and cultures of subaltern communities. After approximately 150 years of independence, it was acknowledged that political liberation from the Spanish colony had not necessarily implied the recuperation of ideological and intellectual freedom since Eurocentrism prevailed to the detriment of the multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual makeup of the region and particularly of its Amerindian heritage. With notable exceptions, such pretension of Europeanism developed into intellectual practices of copy, mimicry, and simulation.

In the early 1970s, mainstream anthropologists and linguists working with Indigenous leaders and organizations explicitly appealed to the notion of mental decolonization while questioning cultural and linguistic homogeneity vis-à-vis the hegemonic condition of European knowledge and languages enjoyed. Gradually, the notions of interculturalism and intercultural bilingual education emerged regarding the unresolved Indigenous question (López 2009). Secondly, aligned with another politically oppressed social sector – those living in the margins of Westernized urban settings – Paulo Freire created a socio-educational movement that transformed educational thought and action throughout Latin America and later in other continents. Indeed, popular education set the beginnings of modern critical pedagogy, emphasizing the undeniable political nature of education (Freire 1970). Henceforward, actions aligned with the oppressed have been regarded as political-pedagogical projects. Additionally, in response to social injustice and inequality, at a time of political persecution and military dictatorships, Catholic priests created Liberation Theology (Gutiérrez [1971] 1988). Interdenominational clergy and laypersons looked into oppressed languages and cultures from an emancipatory perspective and used Indigenous languages in their social and religious work, stimulating social criticism and awareness raising by the oppressed concerning their subaltern condition. These lines of thought coexisted in Latin America and to some extent have had an impact on Indigenous societies.

Regarding the decolonization of education and language, one must also recall that since the 1970s, Latin America has experienced ethnic revival and renaissance, resulting from ongoing Indigenous resurgence (Varese 2007). In this process of ethnogenesis, the notions of imperial culturalism, internal colonialism (González-Casanova 1980), neocolonialism, and decolonization (Fanon 1967) have been appealed to. At the turn of the twentieth century, these notions were recuperated as

dissatisfaction with the project of development and progress, and the market logic of the neoliberal order became stronger.

Recently, concerned with their own survival, Indigenous leaders and intellectuals in the Americas, beginning in Bolivia and Ecuador, recuperated the notion of decolonization in their proposals of Living-Well or Life-for-the-Common-Good (CAOI 2010). As originally occurred with interculturalism and bilingualism, the concept of decolonization was first used in their claims to transform education, since emphasis was placed on mental decolonization of the colonized and of the colonizers. When decolonization is approached historically and in relation to multiethnicity and multilingualism, there is a shared conviction of the need to recollect and relocate local histories in order to construct a perspective of the future different from the one that hegemonic evolutionary thinking proposes and one where Indigenous and non-Indigenous work together toward their social and cultural emancipation.

The notion of decolonization cannot be detached from Indigenous struggles for self-determination and Indigenous claims to relocate their ways of knowing, feeling, and being vis-à-vis the mainstream. Neither can decolonization be disconnected from the need to confront global neoliberalism with local and regional alternative moral economies based on the underlying aspiration of Life-for-the-Common-Good. Thus, language education and education itself cannot ignore denial, invisibility, racism, discrimination, and all social injustices perpetrated against Indigenous populations in the name of modernity, development, and progress. Education must be deconstructive, critical, and culturally responsible in order to overcome these historical ruptures and continuities.

The epicenter of decolonization in Latin America lies in challenging Western hegemony through a semantic rediscovery of one's own place in society and in the world. Hence, the need to deconstruct and reinvent history regarding the place and rights of Indigenous peoples, the character and functioning of the modern nation-state copied from Europe, and the global economic order – since economic growth has not resulted in benefits for the underprivileged sectors of society and income gaps – has increased and become impossible to breach (De Ferranti et al. 2013; Moreno et al. 2013).

Early Developments

In the 1920s, José Carlos Mariátegui, the Peruvian intellectual, was one of the precursors of anti-colonial struggle in Latin America. Concerned with the oppressed condition of Indigenous peoples in the Andes, Mariátegui contextualized Marxism and applied it to the analysis of their sociocultural, socioeconomic, and political situation. He emphasized the specific condition of Latin American modernity heavily marked by the persistence of feudalism. His *Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality* ([1928] 1971) stressed the colonial condition of his country, drew attention to lacerating and wretched situations colonized minds were reluctant to accept, highlighted social injustice and inequality, and called for inventing and

constructing a new Peruvian tradition built on its Indigenous heritage and the dissolution of the economic and political divisions between Europeans and Indians. Mariátegui considered that Peruvian education had a colonial rather than a national character; hence, it approached its majority Indigenous populations as inferior and always from a paternalistic perspective.

Mariátegui identified the dispossession of land as central to the Indian problem and to the resolution of colonialism and oppression in Latin America. He highlighted not only the cultural but especially the economic and political basis of those ruptures, remarking that any solution based on “administrative or policy measures, through education or by a road building program, is superficial and secondary as long as [...] feudalism continues to exist” (Mariátegui 1971, p. 26).

Although Mariátegui did not foresee the Indigenous language issue as essential to the national debate and to the reinvention of his country, in his seventh essay devoted to the analysis of Peruvian literature, he suggested that for a new literature to emerge, writers had to disentangle from the Hispanic paradigm and revive the Indigenous tradition – not to copy it, but to interpret the feelings and understandings of oppressed Quechua majorities. Hence, nativism was necessary for emancipation as well as a literary and artistic movement inspired in the Indigenous struggles to end colonial feudalism. Only in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a nationalist military revolutionary government, partly inspired by Mariátegui’s writings, recognized Quechua as an official language and instituted bilingual education in Peru, in an attempt to revisit national identity building on the country’s Indigenous ancestry and cultural heritage.

The notion of decolonization was explicitly introduced in the Caribbean by Frantz Fanon. He raised Black consciousness and was influential also in Africa. In his *Black Skins, White Masks*, published in French (1952) and English (1967), Fanon elaborated on the psychopathology of colonization and on its consequences, concluding that being colonized has physical and cultural consequences, as speaking a given language implies internalizing a culture and also absorbing the contents of a civilization.

Fanon’s work was influenced by his mentor Aimé Césaire, founder of the Negritude movement. His *Discourse on Colonialism* ([1955] 1972) inspired scholars and activists of liberation movements worldwide, highlighting that the colonizers were the most affected as they renounce civilization and dehumanize and brutalize themselves. Further developments of Fanon’s work appeared in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth* ([1961] 2004), now widely cited in postcolonial studies, critical theory, and neo-Marxism. He severely criticized Eurocentrism and postulated a different kind of society where the colonized rediscover themselves and create and invent new concepts.

Fanon’s thoughts and the Negritude movement were influential in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s. In parallel to the concept of Negritude, Indianist movements in the Andean countries reinvented history, built on idealized readings of pre-Hispanic history, and proposed a renewed project of emancipation (Reinaga 1969). Unlike state indigenism that emerged in Mexico and Peru in the early twentieth century (Marzal 1993), Indianism postulated the liberation of Indigenous peoples and not their assimilation to the Eurocentric mainstream.

The Bolivian Fausto Reinaga, in his 1969 book *The Indian Revolution*, influenced Indianist movements in South America with emancipatory ideas. He revisited the socioeconomic organization of the Inca Empire and, like Mariátegui (1928), considered it the most harmonious communist system (Reinaga 1969). He aimed at the resurrection of consciousness, feelings, and determinations of the autochthonous people of the Andes – an ideological movement of ethnic relocation and ideological rupture with the West and its theories. Indianism constructed a new political subject with a strong ethnic and historical identity, who repositions his language, culture, social practices, and even spirituality. Unlike Mariátegui, Reinaga strongly criticized the mestizo population and considered culture and race central to the analysis of Indigenous domination, as Europe had been founded on a supposed superiority of the White man; but like Mariátegui, he considered the Indian as the seed of political transformation in the Andes and Latin America.

The Indigenous Council of South America (CISA), originating in Cuzco, Peru, in 1980, owes much to Reinaga's thoughts, as indeed do most of the Andean and Amazonian Indigenous organizations and movements of the 1970s and 1980s. One of the first Indigenous organizations resurged in the Cauca region of Colombia, home to seven different Indigenous peoples, of whom the Nasas are the best known internationally. Founded in 1971, the Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (CRIC) struggled to recuperate their lands from White and *Criollo* landowners who had deprived them of their ancestral territories. Decolonization underlies their nine-point political platform aimed at reclaiming their territory, including consolidating self-rule; relocating their histories, languages, and social practices; reinforcing their communal economic structures so as to protect and interact harmoniously with Mother Nature; and training Indigenous teachers who could educate their peers through their values and languages regarding their present condition (www.cric-colombia.org).

To overcome Western ideological penetration, CRIC's autonomous education repositions Indigenous knowledges and the roles of community elders. In the 1970s, they proposed an ethno-educational approach, which, although bilingual and intercultural, highlighted community ownership, autonomy, and self-management (Bolaños et al. 2004). Their system encompasses all educational levels, including an autonomous intercultural Indigenous university, under the decolonizing principle of *educación propia* ("own education," or defined and administered autonomously), since for them the ethno-educational model has been co-opted by governments.

Almost a decade later, Indigenous organizations were created in Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru, who claimed the right to mother tongue education in their political struggles with the nation-state. These initiatives, like the one in the Cauca region, assumed the need to conquer public schooling, as schools play a key role in the mental colonization of Indigenous students and in the social disintegration of their families and communities. Pre- and in-service teacher training was one of the key devices these organizations tried to control. By the end of 1970s, most Ministry of Education and governments had been forced to include this new social actor that pushed its way into national politics: Indigenous intelligentsia.

In 1971, sponsored by the World Council of Churches, social scientists met in Barbados to analyze the situation of Indigenous peoples. Their Barbados I Declaration, “For the Liberation of the Indigenous People,” was a strong denunciation and demand to the state, the church, the private sector, and the social scientists to guarantee Indigenous human and ethnic rights. In 1977, a second Barbados meeting included 18 active Indigenous intellectuals, some of whom belonged to the Nasa (Colombia), Maya (Guatemala and Mexico), and Awajun (Peru) peoples. Issues of neocolonialism, war, land eviction, genocide, human rights abuses, and cultural destruction were discussed (Bonfil 1981; Varese 2007). Interculturalism and intercultural bilingual education (IBE) were part of these discussions.

In 1979, a national organization of Mexican Indigenous bilingual teachers openly postulated the intellectual and emotional decolonization of education by means of the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing, feeling, and behaving. At their first national congress, they demanded the creation of a specific directorate of Indigenous education and called for an alternative to the governmental assimilationist strategy (Bonfil 1981). They did not achieve all their demands since the political and economic forces in Mexico favored cultural assimilation. Nonetheless, concessions allowed the partial inclusion of Indigenous languages in primary schooling.

Similarly, in 1982, a Latin American UNESCO Inter-American Indigenist Institute meeting in Oaxaca, Mexico, under the axiom of decolonization, analyzed a series of queries related to IBE pinpointing the need to move away from the transitional-assimilationist model and called for participatory strategies allowing parents and community elders’ involvement in the implementation of educational programs in Indigenous communities (Rodriguez et al. 1983). Another UNESCO meeting took place in Lima, Peru, in 1985, but the ideal of decolonization lost strength, at least explicitly. Since then, emphasis seems to have been placed on governmental development and institutionalization of IBE, in order to overcome the marginalization of Indigenous learners and teachers and to diminish the risk of assimilation by formal schooling. During the 1980s, Indigenous organizations became stronger, and the agency of Indigenous intellectuals and leaders allowed them to drive their agendas further.

Major Contributions

Conceptually there are numerous contributions regarding decolonization and its emancipatory potential in multicultural and multilingual contexts. Notwithstanding, the field is practically virgin regarding recommendations for action and particularly concerning the school and the classroom. Neither Indigenous intellectuals who claim the decolonization of education nor organic intellectuals who accompany their struggle have sufficiently contributed to transform theory and ideology into concrete proposals to help teachers, whether Indigenous or not, transform their social and pedagogical practices.

One major contribution comes from the field of popular education inspired by the critical and emancipatory proposals put forward by Freire in the late 1960s and

1970s (Freire 1970, 1973). Although based on Marxist class analysis and not related to ethnicity or Indigenous ways of knowing, Freire's critical views of Latin American society and his emphasis on education as awareness raising and liberating the oppressed through overcoming an imposed culture of silence mobilized educational thought and action in Indigenous settings. In fact, one of the most empowering adult Indigenous intercultural literacy programs carried out in Indigenous languages in the early 1980s in Bolivia was developed under Freirean inspiration (Gustafson 2009). In the early 1990s, another Indigenous youth and adult education program among the Bolivian Guaranis built on Freire's conscientization approach. Awareness raising was not only around their oppressed situation but also about the semantic and political potentials inherent in their native language. The methodologies employed by Native facilitators led to the awareness of their autochthonous values and knowledges. The use of Guarani in an out-of-school climate helped strengthen Indigenous agency and self-determination (López 1997).

Similarly, the manifestos and agreements from Indigenous congresses since the early 1970s (Bonfil 1981) have interrogated the ontology of academic knowledge production and challenged nationally defined curricula, educational standards, and even the understanding of educational quality, since what really seems to be at stake are the notions of development and progress and the survival of Indigenous peoples (Bolaños et al. 1984). The 1973 Bolivian "Tiahuanaco Manifesto" was one of the most important Indigenous declarations in the continent: Aymara and Quechua leaders and intellectuals rejected colonialism in all its forms, calling attention to their condition of second-class citizens and of foreigners in their own land. Education was regarded as a national catastrophe, and the disinterest of governments in the education of Indigenous populations was denounced, instead demanding autonomy and self-rule, based on their social practices and values but without discrediting the cultural richness of other peoples (Rivera-Cusicanqui 1986).

Likewise, the evolution of the notion of interculturalism coined in the early 1970s as a result of the interaction between anthropologists, linguists, and Indigenous leaders and intellectuals has resulted in the present understanding of interculturalism as either critical (Tubino 2008) or transformative (López 2006, 2009). Interculturalism questions the nature and functioning of the nation-state, structural inequality and inequity, and challenges the socio-racial conditions that determine the unequal distribution of power, thus setting a useful conceptual framework for the decolonization of education. The emergence of Indigenous and/or intercultural universities and higher education programs is an additional evidence of the struggle for a decolonized curriculum (Mato 2008; López et al. 2009).

In Bolivia, in the 1970s, a new interdisciplinary area of inquiry emerged, breaking away from traditional anthropology, historiography, and sociology. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, a mestizo scholar of Aymara adscription, and Aymara and Quechua social scientists challenged Bolivian official history and in interaction with community elders reconstructed local histories and worldviews through their *Oral History Workshop* (Rivera-Cusicanqui and THOA 1991). Critical knowledge of the Indigenous past and present was thus constructed, challenging the mainstream and

decentering Bolivian hegemonic thought. This decolonizing perspective was also adopted by other scholars and institutions in other Andean regions, particularly in Cuzco, Peru, and Quito, Ecuador. Hence, new research methods and strategies are brought to the forefront alternative epistememes as well as the issues of power control in the social sciences.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, another Aymara sociologist, Felix Patzi (1999), was among the first to recuperate the notion of decolonization, initially resorting to the concept of structural ethnophagia, borrowed from Díaz-Polanco (1991). He described ethnophagia as a new form of symbolic violence, whereby the state makes use of Indigenous symbolic and cultural capital to the benefit of the hegemonic economy. He criticized the Bolivian Educational Reform Act of 1994, which introduced IBE, since it had not yet reached urban settings and privileged Indigenous communities. He cast doubt over the sincerity of IBE, since its implementation coincided with Bolivia's ascription to the neoliberal global order. This criticism emerged during anti-systemic political turmoil and Indigenous resurgence (2002–2006), which gave way to the election of an Aymara president. Four years later, Bolivia was declared a multination-state (*plurinational*) (Gustafson 2009). In 2006, Patzi became the first Minister of Education of the new *plurinational* order and benefitted from proposals formulated by the Indigenous educational councils created in the preceding period. These councils saw this as the opportunity for radicalizing IBE (Bloque Indígena 2005). Patzi's participation in the 2006 8th Latin America IBE Congress allowed him to continentally disseminate his ideas.

Patzi's views on decolonizing education appeared when he assumed the responsibility of drafting a new education law. Demanding more curricular radicalism – with the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges alongside Western knowledge – he pushed for two-way bilingual education, for antiracist and inclusive pedagogies, and also for more political and ideological awareness so that capitalism could be confronted with a new economic system rooted in local and communal practices. Paradoxically, he advocated for equality of opportunity on meritocratic terms; access to the English language; technical and vocational training, even while simultaneously calling for counteracting all forms of social, cultural, and economic exclusion; and for the pursuit of equality and justice (Patzi 2013). Surprisingly, during Patzi's only year in office, Spanish-only Indigenous youth and adult literacy programs were implemented nationwide. The new Bolivian Education Act could not be approved for almost 4 years due to teachers' union resistance.

Subsequently, other Bolivian thinkers developed anti-colonial and decolonizing rhetoric, which exerted influence beyond Bolivia as opposition to neoliberalism grew in Latin America. Different foreign scholars became interested in Bolivian *plurinationalism* and in its continental projection and contributed with their analysis and insights. Among the most influential are De Souza Santos (2009), with his works on globalization, social movements, and alternative epistemologies, and Mignolo (2000) and Walsh (2006) who work on the coloniality of power and knowledge, building mainly on Quijano (2000).

Work in Progress

Without such elaborated rhetoric, Indigenous political-pedagogical projects rooted in identity politics have stemmed from the bottom-up, in opposition to official IBE, which has discursively experienced stagnation as a result of the dissatisfaction with the widening gaps between rhetoric and practice (López 2014). These alternative projects respond to an envisioned future of Life-for-the-Common-Good, and are thus part of communally defined *life plans*, which generally prioritize local knowledge and community school management. This occurs now in different Indigenous territories in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru, and such experiences are gradually expanding into other areas and countries (López 2009). In other cases, they are the result of NGO interventions aligned with a given Indigenous political agenda, as is the case of some NGOs in Southern Peru (PRATEC 2006) and of the Mayan National School Council in Guatemala (CNEM 2013). Nonetheless, important differences persist; while in Cuzco, Peru, schools rely on local ways of knowing and spirituality, related to agricultural work and to the relationship with Mother Nature in general, partially detaching from the national curriculum; in Guatemala, CNEM entrusts the Ministry of Education with the responsibility of carrying out the new approach. What must be highlighted is the Indigenous will to challenge official educational systems, demanding recognition and relocation of their specific epistemic, social, and cultural characteristics; in so doing, they adopt an anti-colonial position.

In Colombia and Nicaragua, within the partial administrative and/or territorial autonomy Indigenous peoples enjoy, comprehensive plans (from preschool to the tertiary level) have been formulated and negotiated with national governments, such as the cases of CONTCEPI (2013) *Sistema Indígena de Educación Propia* (SEIP, or the Indigenous Peoples' Own System of Education) and of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Atlantic Coast's Autonomous Regional Educational System (SEAR) (Consejos Regionales Autónomos de la RAAN y la RAAS 2013). In both cases, in an attempt to radicalize IBE, their education is deep-rooted in their political struggles. Even more radical is the approach implemented by the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, México, where autonomous schools have been organized by local autonomous governments with the purpose of preparing new cadres of local leaders and citizens (Baronnet 2013). Although in all of these cases the decolonization ideology is not always explicitly appealed to, it undoubtedly underlies the political-pedagogical projects under implementation.

The only nationwide attempt of declared decolonization of education is the one undertaken in Bolivia, after a 2010 new law assumed the desideratum of intracultural, intercultural, and plurilingual education (Bolivia 2010). To configure a decolonizing, liberating, revolutionary, and anti-imperialistic education, the new curriculum aims at a model relying on Indigenous participatory community practices and cultural, linguistic, scientific, technological, and artistic competencies and content belonging to Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews (Bolivia 2012). Nonetheless, strong disparities between revolutionary rhetoric and what actually

happens in schools become evident. To date, (1) a new national curriculum has been approved, but it has already been regarded as conservative (Prada 2014; Patzi 2013); (2) a national in-service teacher training program emphasizing the appropriation of theoretical and ideological content is being implemented, while teachers also ask for practical recommendations (Kim and López 2015); and (3) there is a new student evaluation scheme that seeks to break away from standardized testing.

Nonetheless, the Andean ideals of *Life-for-the-Common-Good* and decolonization have migrated to other countries and Indigenous territories. Indigenous resurgence, micro-politics, and self-management are challenging the mainstream. Traditional and contemporary Indigenous and popular cultural views and expressions impinge on the national sphere through political manifestos and marches and also through clothing, buildings, publications, poetry, folklore, and music including even rock-and-roll and hip-hop which are now also at the service of Indigenous reaffirmation (Cru 2014; Tejerina 2014). If not in the economic sphere where neoliberalism predominates, in the cultural realm, there is a feeling that society is what matters and not the state. There are also now numerous Web sites and social media that highlight the importance of Indigenous languages and increase their visibility. Similarly, the Web and particularly social media are being appropriated by Indigenous persons who publish information regarding Indigenous languages, cultures, and worldviews and also their claims and proposals for revitalization and decolonization (Cru 2014). In a sense, these new media provide room and possibilities in line with Indigenous social and epistemic emancipation.

Additionally, unexpectedly and without appealing to the notion of decolonization, in countries where neoliberal policies are explicit (Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru), increasing attention is being paid to the educational, cultural, and linguistic needs and rights of Indigenous students (López and Sichra 2017). In some other countries that assume socialist postures, like Bolivia, Ecuador, or Nicaragua, this is not the case, and Indigenous worldviews are displayed and discussed in Spanish. This might be due to the desire to make the mainstream aware of existing epistemic differences. Meanwhile, Indigenous languages seem to be more restricted than ever to the most intimate domains, at times of gradual Indigenous language decay and loss of intergenerational language transmission. But in Mexico and Peru, for instance, Indigenous language rights seem to have found a place in public policy, and in Peru there is increasing evidence of the visibility of some Indigenous languages in public life, e.g., in the administration of justice. This in itself constitutes an anti-colonial act.

The most daring attempt at epistemic decolonization is the effort to unveil and systematize Indigenous knowledges, values, and social practices. Two contrasting examples are those produced in Guatemala and in the Brazilian and Peruvian Amazonia. In Guatemala, a conventional university helped Mayan intellectuals depict some key aspects of the Mayan cosmology and social practices in Spanish (Mendizabal 2007). Similarly, the Matses, a cross-border Amazonian community, with NGO support, took it upon themselves to systematize, in their own writings and language, expert knowledge in the field of health and healing. In so doing, they recruited their most experienced shamans to put together a vast 500-page

encyclopedia with information regarding their natural environment, worldviews, spirituality, social practices, botany, and also their healing practices. This encyclopedia was produced and written only in Matse to secure their intellectual property and prevent transnationals from ill-treating their knowledge for commercial purposes. Furthermore, they envisage using this compilation in training younger shamans, thus safeguarding intergenerational transmission of knowledge needed to continue being a Matse (<http://news.mongabay.com/2015/06/amazon-tribe-creates-500-page-traditional-medicine-encyclopedia/>).

Comparably, the turn of the century brought about the emergence of Indigenous-autonomous community universities in Colombia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua, as well as alternative tertiary education programs in Bolivia, Brazil, Nicaragua, and Peru, where higher education is decentered and interrogated by Indigenous ways of knowing (López et al. 2009; Mato 2008). Two community universities in Guatemala and one in Bolivia that do not enjoy official recognition comprise now this list. The Indigenous will to transform higher education also deserved attention by some governments and other official Indigenous and/or intercultural universities that were created in Bolivia, Mexico, and Peru, but unlike the autonomous ones, these remain under government management and control.

Problems and Difficulties

In general terms, and as a result of the doubt cast on the ontology of school and academic knowledge, processes conducive to the decolonization of education in multiethnic settings have so far placed emphasis on revisiting national curricula. Such reexamination has favored the partial inclusion of Indigenous values, knowledges, and social practices and the involvement of Indigenous elders and experts – at least at the level of consultation, highlighting the need of an inter-epistemic dialogue. Such inter-epistemic dialogue seeks to go beyond what UNESCO postulates as a dialogue of knowledge and/or civilizations, to inscribe the action within a rights approach and possibly lead to the formulation of alternative and even autonomous educational proposals differing substantially from what governments foster under IBE (cf. López and Sichra 2017).

Yet, this chapter has revealed the predominance of micro-politics and of a move away from the center to specific regions, municipalities, and even communities, where organized groups and individuals assume responsibilities regarding their knowledge and their cultural and linguistic heritage. From this microsphere of local action, these actors challenge the status quo and demand changes at the national level resorting to different kinds of strategies and arguments, despite their cultural origin. In other words, and within a more radical rhetorical framework of reference, we seem to be confronting what historically occurred in the IBE movement, which, although generated locally and with Indigenous involvement, was later assumed and even co-opted by national governments, becoming in the 1990s part of official educational systems. It was precisely this very fact that generated suspicion from Indigenous intelligentsia, but simultaneously the circumstance that allowed the

evolution now faced: from Indigenous language and culture to knowledge and from the classroom and didactics to the curriculum. With the implicit or explicit adoption of decolonizing rhetoric, the discussion now focuses on the hard core of education – the curriculum – and on its negotiation (Trapnell 2008). But it is intriguing to observe how attention continues being focused on schools, classrooms, and teachers and what they do, and the historically constructed hierarchy between schools and communities persists.

If one analyzes the only two cases where these new tensions have become national, further tensions arise. The Ecuadorian curriculum considers interculturalism and Living-Well as crosscutting issues, with priority given to the development of a *national* Ecuadorian identity in an apparent contradiction with *plurinationalism*. It is unclear how decolonizing this model really is, since it is based on notions of meritocracy and privileges math, conventional sciences, and mastery of Spanish by all without explicit connection to other ways of knowing (Ecuador 2011). Furthermore, attention to IBE is only symbolic and under a compensatory orientation, a fact that might be linked to political discrepancies between the main Indigenous organization and the government (<http://livestream.com/larepublicaac/NoticiasDeUltimoMomento/videos/93619582>). The Bolivian model also faces implementation challenges related to the role Indigenous languages play, and Spanish seems to have been reinforced as the official language of education and public life, in spite of the fact that constitutionally all Indigenous languages are now official (Sichra 2013).

Paradoxically, most Indigenous intellectuals and leaders in power might not be aware of the intrinsic semantic decolonizing potential of Indigenous languages; and from Indigenous language use in the classroom, we seem to be going backward to Indigenous language teaching only. Thus the languages seem to be reduced in their scope although legally compulsory for everybody, whether Indigenous or not.

This is not the only paradox in Bolivia and Ecuador: Rural development is based on the modern notion of development, and the prevailing economic model favors economic growth and extractivism to the detriment of the Life-for-the-Common-Good scheme strongly advocated by most Indigenous representatives in the constitutional assemblies that adopted *plurinationalism*. In Bolivia, the policies of decolonization have been entrusted to the Ministry of Cultures, to ensure antidiscriminatory policies, and in Ecuador to a National Secretariat for Living-Well that emphasizes awareness raising regarding environmental issues. In general, the symbolic functions of decolonization seem to predominate, as also occurred in the preceding period where Latin American governments responded to the Indigenous demands for transformative interculturalism and *plurinationalism* with policies corresponding to Anglo-Saxon neoliberal multiculturalism (Díaz-Polanco 1991; López 2009).

It is also paradoxical that in the context of the constitutional autonomy granted to Indigenous peoples in Bolivia, Andean ideology, rationality, and worldviews are being imposed nationally disregarding existing differences between the Andes and the lowlands; hence, the initial struggle for cultural hegemony between the Indigenous majorities and the White-mestizo minority has gradually become a dispute

between two culturally distinct Indigenous sectors. Thus, the ideal of a multination-state is giving way to an Andean state of hegemonic vocation. Curriculum-wise these facts have serious repercussions.

The paradoxes highlighted above generate intriguing questions: Is it possible to speak of decolonization at the macro level within the straightjacket of capitalist neoliberal (post) modernity and of the state as we now know it? Or need the ideal of decolonization be restricted to micro-interventions, at least for the time being, to strengthen the community in order to construct a different view of the future as the Zapatistas are now doing in Mexico?

For the time being, there might not be any other alternative than to generate comprehensive emancipatory micro-projects that approach education in connection to the economic, environmental, and cultural conditions and problems of specific localities or regions, in which, under Indigenous leadership, the different social sectors that coexist in a given territory learn to live together and moreover through consensus building construct a future worth living in. It is not surprising that the plea for the decolonization of education, and implicitly also for the decolonization of IBE, stemmed out of local movements and due to specific political circumstances reached national level in two countries (Bolivia and Ecuador).

In all of the other countries, national policies have not been modified. Hence, IBE is still the norm for Indigenous students and intercultural education for everyone else, although there is still a lot ahead in terms of implementation. Similarly, no other country has opted for the present Bolivian denomination of intracultural, intercultural, and plurilingual education. Notwithstanding, increasing attention is being paid to Indigenous curriculum content in Chile, Guatemala, and Peru, for example.

Future Directions

Should the answers to the questions just raised lead us to prioritize the micro level, it might be essential to transcend the curriculum plane and revisit the pedagogical decolonizing domain in order to recover and introduce to formal education settings those other Indigenous ways of knowing, thus empowering Indigenous elders and experts. Indigenous ways of learning combined or complemented with those aiming at critical language awareness, cultural revival, and conscientization in general (Freire 1970, 1973) might help instill a decolonizing methodology. That way, new cadres of critical intercultural citizens who look back into their heritage to relocate what is valid to respond to present requirements could be educated. A decolonizing methodology could also prepare people to interrogate hegemonic thought and action in order to dream a different future for themselves and humanity in general, such as educational thinkers now postulate through their concerns with the ecological disasters our planet is undergoing (cf. Bowers 2002). On the one hand, a decolonizing language education and a reinvented or decolonized IBE, for that matter, would need to look beyond the classroom and the school and recuperate all those other learning possibilities that communities and even neighborhoods offer.

On the other hand, more attention should be given to the new technologies of communication, the Internet, social media, and networking in general. In fact, we might have to, at least partially, deschool education and society in general as proposed by Illich (1971) and also relearn from societies that have not been greatly affected by the market economy, individualism, and consumerism and who still prioritize family and community bonds as well as learning over teaching.

The time may have come to reconcile the two most important Latin American contemporary contributions to a renewed and critical education, intercultural bilingual education – which originated in rural Indigenous areas – and popular education, which emerged in marginal mestizo urban settings, so as to empower the disadvantaged, whether Indigenous or not, since at the end what is at stake is the coloniality of power and knowledge (Quijano 2000). Such articulation and strategic complementarity require a different kind of pedagogy and an equally renewed and creative teacher performance in line with the principles of relocation, recuperation, reinstallation, articulation, and creativity that the implementation of a decolonized pedagogy calls for. Hence, teacher training centers and universities need to engage in uncovering, systematizing, and disseminating those other ways of learning that societies like the Indigenous ones have historically prioritized over teaching.

The reconciliation called for would also contribute, in line with the pioneering decolonization proposals – and with the emphasis placed on mental decolonization – to make use of contemporary approaches and techniques to recover traditions and autochthonous knowledges judged as valuable to pursue a future worth living in, a future that is different from the one prefabricated by the hegemonic sectors of society to maintain the status quo. Challenging hegemonic thought and action with dignity and self-esteem would be part of this new and innovative political-pedagogical program and of an intercultural pedagogy of hope and action.

But, due to the historical reticence that universities and all higher education institutions have shown vis-à-vis ways of knowledge production and transmission other than rational-positivist ones, they are now the most threatened by contemporary Indigenous epistemological disobedience and also by schools of thought that unveil and struggle to counteract the prevailing coloniality of power and knowledge. In other words, in a political context where universities have been overtly trapped by the market economy and the neoliberal order, the essence of knowledge construction and the universal character of knowledge are at stake. As a Quechua leader bluntly put it, “If knowledge is universal why do universities insist on denying our knowledge and don’t even consider it as such?” (F. Condori, 2006, personal communication, Cochabamba).

But even then and recalling the origins of the modern application of the notion in Latin America, decolonizing proposals seem trapped in the symbolic and cultural planes to which global multiculturalism seems to have reduced claims of a higher order that are in fact civilizatory in nature. Such proposals fall short since they have not yet considered the socioeconomic dimension at a point in time when most Indigenous communities are threatened as the result of internal and multinational colonialism. Hence, there also seems to be a need to rearticulate epistemology, culture, language, and economics since consumerism and capitalism have effectively

co-opted diversity and even managed to celebrate it to the benefit of the global economic hegemonic order (Díaz-Polanco 1991). A renewed intercultural political-pedagogical project must not lose sight of these facts and also include, jointly with schools and communities, economic projects to create models based on specific communities and regions' local solutions that might generate a decent future where everyone fits and where none are excluded.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Critical Applied Linguistics and Education](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Language Policy and Education in Mexico](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the Andes](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Inge Sichra: [Language Diversity and Indigenous Literacy in the Andes](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Kwesi Prah: [Language, Literacy and Knowledge Production in Africa](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Luis Enrique López and Inge Sichra: [Indigenous Bilingual Education in Latin America](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
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Family Language Policy

Kendall A. King and Lyn Wright Fogle

Abstract

Family language policy is generally defined as explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within the home and among family members. Family language policy provides a frame for examining child-caretaker interactions, parental language ideologies (including broader societal attitudes and ideologies about language(s) and parenting), and ultimately, child language development. This chapter reviews early developments in the field, including the first studies of bilingual child development and then describes some of the major research contributions to family language policy to date. Next, recent shifts in the field are outlined; these include increased focus on and intentional inclusion of a broader, more diverse range of family types, languages, and social contexts; greater emphasis on the family as a dynamic system, including the importance of child agency and identity choices; and more attention to trilingualism or multilingualism, with a growing number of studies examining how families manage multiple languages. Lastly, challenges and future directions for the field are considered. Conceptual challenges include the (over)emphasis on “explicit” planning and potential overlap with other areas of sociolinguistics. Methodological challenges include (over)reliance on parental reports of language practices and frequent failure to collect empirical data on language interaction and language outcomes. Practical challenges include the need for the field to keep up

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with changing national education policy initiatives, including how caretakers make sense of efforts to reshape or police their language and how those understandings shape family dynamics, including not only language use, but what it means to be a “good” parent and “good” family under these regimes.

Keywords

Agency • Child language acquisition • Family language planning • Identity • Intergenerational language transmission • Multilingualism • Transnationalism • Word gap

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Introduction

The field of family language policy brings together concepts and findings from two disparate fields of research, language policy, and child language acquisition, to deepen the understanding of heritage language maintenance and the acquisition of more than one language in the intimate domain of the family (King et al. 2008). Family language policy provides a frame for examining child-caretaker interactions, parental language ideologies (which are linked to broader societal attitudes and ideologies about language(s) and parenting), and ultimately, child language development.

This chapter reviews early developments in the field, including the first studies of bilingual child development, and then describes some of the major research contributions to family language policy to date. Next, recent shifts in the field are outlined; these include increased focus on and intentional inclusion of a broader, more diverse range of family types, languages, and social contexts; greater emphasis on the family as a dynamic system, including the importance of child agency and identity choices; and more attention to trilingualism or multilingualism, with a growing number of studies examining how families manage multiple languages. Lastly, challenges and future directions for the field are considered. Conceptual challenges include the (over)emphasis on “explicit” planning and potential overlap with other areas of sociolinguistics. Methodological challenges include (over)reliance on parental reports of language practices, and frequent failure to collect empirical data on language interaction and language outcomes. Practical challenges include the need for the field to keep up with changing national education policy initiatives, including

how caretakers make sense of efforts to reshape or police their language, and how those understandings shape family dynamics, including not only language use, but what it means to be a “good” parent and “good” family under these regimes.

Early Developments

While a defined research focus on what has come to be known as “family language policy” has existed for just a decade or so (King et al. 2008), the study of bilingual development among children dates back more than a century. Foundational work includes Ronjat’s (1913) description of his son’s growing competencies in French-German (birth to age four). Ronjat’s text is known for supporting and popularizing Grammont’s so-called “one-person-one language” (OPOL) principle as a means to achieve balanced bilingualism, an approach that has been recommended, debated, and studied for 100 years. Equally well known is Leopold’s four-volume study of his German-English-speaking daughter (Hildegard), which remains to date the most comprehensive and detailed longitudinal description of one child’s bilingual development (1939–1949). This account was the first to address the relationship between child bilingualism and multiple cognitive attributes, including metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility, serving as both an inspiration and reference for researchers of child language development decades later.

More modern work in the field of applied linguistics has expanded on and developed many of these early themes. For instance, Swain (1972) studied two siblings (aged roughly 2;10-4;0) who were in the process of acquiring French and English simultaneously, collecting audio data regularly over 6–8 months while child participants interacted with adults who feigned French or English monolingualism. Swain (1972) proposed a theoretical perspective in which bilingualism is viewed “as merely an instance of the general human capacity to learn linguistic codes and switch among them” (p. xiv), a finding which is reflected in the title of her work, *Bilingualism as a First Language*. A decade later (1983), Taeschner’s analysis of the spontaneous speech of two, bilingual Italian-German girls from late infancy through age six likewise stressed the similarity of bilingual children’s development to that of monolingual children. De Houwer (1990), in turn, examined early morphosyntactic development of a child exposed to two languages simultaneously from birth (Dutch and English), addressing the separate development hypothesis (i.e., that children’s morphosyntactic development proceeds independently from each language). Through analysis of the child’s speech productions, and comparisons with monolingual English- and Dutch-speaking children, De Houwer found that the girl closely resembled her monolingual peers in either language. She argued that these data suggest the language-specific nature of morphosyntactic development, lack of transfer from one language to the next, and the importance of the child’s differentiated input systems.

While much of this early work attended to psycholinguistic aspects of bilingualism in order to address central questions within the field of child language development, Lanza’s groundbreaking study (1992, 1997/2004), in contrast, took a language

socialization and discourse analytic approach. Through detailed analysis of parent-child interaction, Lanza addressed a long-standing question among psycholinguistic researchers of bilingualism: does language differentiation occur before the age of three? Lanza demonstrated that language mixing before age 3 is contextually sensitive, that is, children responded to parental strategies that shaped language choice in interaction. Furthermore, she found that parental strategies shape even very young children's bilingual outcomes and that 2-year-olds can indeed code-switch, concluding that language mixing is primarily a sociolinguistic, rather than psycholinguistic phenomenon.

As evident in this brief review, much of this early research was designed to address fundamental psycholinguistic questions. These included the differences between bi- and monolingual language development trajectories; the nature and role of linguistic transfer; and the relationship between bilingualism and specific cognitive traits and functions. Of less concern in this early work were the social, political, and ideological constraints and characteristics of the familial context. Furthermore, all of this early foundational work examined two-parent, middle-class homes in which children were acquiring more than one (high status) European language. This represents an important oversight within this line of research because there is substantial evidence that the family-external environment, including, for example, the relative status of the languages and their associations with media, peer practices, schooling, and literacy, shapes the practices of both adult caretakers and children (Kulick 1992).

Major Contributions

Family language policy was initially defined as explicit (Shohamy 2006) and overt (Schiffman 1996) planning in relation to language use within the home among family members (King et al. 2008). Family language policy provides a frame for examining both parental language ideologies, thus reflecting broader societal attitudes and ideologies about both language(s) and parenting, and child-caretaker interactions, and thus, ultimately, child language development (De Houwer 1999). As illustrated below, family language policy draws from – and contributes to – two (previously) distinct fields of study: language policy and child language acquisition.

The study of language policy includes analysis of language beliefs or ideologies (what people think about language), of language practices (what people do with language), and of efforts to modify or influence those practices through any kind of language intervention, planning, or management (what people try to do to language) (Spolsky 2004; Spolsky, chapter “► [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#),” this volume). At the field's inception, language policy (in the early years known as language planning) was largely concerned with solving “language problems” in newly independent, former colonial nations. The field's working assumptions and paradigmatic orientations have shifted dramatically over the last decade, with much less focus on solving language “problems” and greater

emphasis on understanding shifting language policies as part of dynamic social, cultural, and ideological systems (Ricento 2000; McCarty 2011). However, much of the research to date continues to focus on language policy and related language use in public space; with relatively few exceptions (e.g., Okita 2001), most language policy work, both theoretical and empirical, has examined language policy in institutional contexts, such as the state, the school, or the work place with limited attention to the intimate context of the home.

Child language acquisition, in turn, is the study of through what mechanisms and under what conditions children learn one or more languages in the early years of life (Berko-Gleason 2005). While child language acquisition encompasses a very large domain of study and includes researchers working within distinct theoretical paradigms (e.g., nativism, connectionism, and social interactionism) and diverse research approaches (e.g., experimental and quasi-experimental designs, longitudinal case studies, and naturalistic observation), most child language researchers share the goal of illuminating the mechanisms by which children acquire language at a similar pace and following similar trajectories under diverse learning circumstances. Child language acquisition researchers often have focused on detailed analysis of caretaker–child interactions in the context of the home or laboratory settings, with much less attention to parental language learning goals, attitudes, or intentions. Furthermore, the bulk of child language research has focused on first language acquisition, with monolingual development treated as the norm, rather than second and bilingual language acquisition.

While the fields of language policy and child language acquisition are both broadly concerned with the conditions of language learning and use, their foci are shaped by distinct disciplinary perspectives: language policy is rooted in the sociology of education, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics; child language acquisition, in contrast, is a subfield of psychology. As a result, both language policy and child language acquisition have significant “blind spots” in their approaches and spheres of attention. For instance, a significant area of language policy research in recent years concerns what types of policies best enable the maintenance or revitalization of endangered languages, such as Navajo in the USA (McCarty et al. 2008) or Quechua in Andean nations (Hornberger 1988; King 2001). Yet, important questions, such as whether (and how) school language policies can effectively support minority language acquisition and use in the home, remain unresolved.

Significant gaps likewise exist within the field of child language acquisition. As an example, basic issues concerning bilingual development – including how much and what types of exposure to the two languages are needed to ensure balanced bilingualism – remain unclear (De Houwer 2007). Furthermore, child language acquisition scholars have yet to advance a satisfactory explanatory model for why children raised under similar conditions (e.g., with English-speaking fathers and Spanish-speaking mothers, each of whom speaks their first language with the child) often experience such different outcomes in terms of language proficiency and preference. In order to fully address these important questions, the field of child language acquisition must include within the scope of its investigations not just

detailed analyses of caretaker–child interactions, but also the support and constraints of the wider family and community context.

Family language policy research has begun to bridge exactly this gap by drawing from the substantial body of existing work in each of these two areas, as well as through the focused examination on questions such as those above. This approach takes into account what families actually do with language in day-to-day interactions; their beliefs and ideologies about language and language use; and their goals and efforts to shape language use and learning outcomes. For instance, Yamamoto (1995) investigated bilingual parenting in Japanese international families where one parent spoke Japanese and the other English. Most families in the study chose to use one language at home (usually the minority language, English), a trend that was attributed to positive attitudes toward bilingualism. Yamamoto's findings indicated that language use patterns varied according to interlocutors, concluding that lack of support for biliteracy and a perceived taboo over "conspicuousness" or visibility of bilingual international families in Japan were major obstacles.

At a more microinteractional level, Pan (1995) studied how children introduced the majority language into parent-child interaction in Mandarin-English bilingual homes. Pan audio-taped ten parent-child dyads reading a wordless book together and at family mealtime. Children in the study were found to use more English than their parents and to code-switch more frequently in the Chinese-to-English direction. Pan noted that code-switching is not always the result of conscious "policy making" but that such switching occurred without speakers' awareness. The study pointed to an inherent conflict between parents' desires to maintain a heritage language and their tendencies to accommodate their children. In a similar vein but altogether different context, Luykx (2003) examined intersections of bilingual language socialization and gender socialization in Aymara-speaking Bolivian households. She investigated patterns of socialization and use of Aymara versus Spanish within the home as well as outside the home in boys' peer groups, ritual gatherings, and public meetings among other contexts. Luykx concluded that family language planning and socialization are dynamic processes and that socialization should not be viewed "as a one-way process, but as a dynamic network of mutual family influences" (p. 41).

King and Fogle (2006) examined how parents explained and framed their family language policies. The authors conducted interviews with 24 families who were attempting to achieve additive Spanish-English bilingualism for their young children. Parental participants differed from those of previous studies as their family language policy entailed using and teaching a language that was not the primary language of the wider community, nor parents' first language in many cases. Findings revealed how parents make these decisions; how parents position themselves relative to "expert" advice; and how these decisions are linked to their identities as "good" parents. Adopting a more quantitative approach, Lyons surveyed the language use of 400 North Wales mothers and their partners. Lyons (1996) examined factors associated with parental language use, including cross-language partnerships, past educational medium, and reported language use patterns. Lyons reported that within two-parent homes, the language competencies of the father have the greater influence on language use in the home. This study was one of the first to

examine parental language choices quantitatively. Martínez-Roldán and Malavé (2004) conducted a case study of one 7-year-old Mexican American student and his family to show how language ideologies, identities, and literacy development intersect. This study emphasized the importance of parents' beliefs in early biliteracy development and concluded that the de-emphasis of language heritage and self-deprecation of ethnic background, associated with wider societal discourses, were major factors in failed efforts to promote childhood bilingualism.

Innovative, cross-disciplinary approaches such as these have begun to bring us a fuller understanding of the complex ways in which parental language ideologies inform the application, realization, and negotiation of family language policies over time as well the short- and long-term impact of such policies on child language development. Such an approach is particularly relevant for researchers of heritage languages and practitioners working with heritage language learners (see Wiley, chapter “► [Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages](#),” this volume) as a family language policy approach deepens our understanding of home language maintenance processes and how best to support these learners.

Work in Progress

The field of family language policy has expanded and evolved rapidly over the last decade or so and is characterized by three substantial shifts. The first of these is increased focus on and intentional inclusion of a broader, more diverse range of family types, languages, and contexts. While early FLP research tended to document two-parent, middle-class homes in which children were acquiring more than one European language, current work has turned an eye to how these processes play out within minority language and/or nontraditional (e.g., adoptive, grandparents, single-parent, lesbian/gay) families in transnational or diasporic contexts (e.g., Canagarajah 2008; Fogle 2012; King 2013; Pérez Báez 2013). For instance, recent work on youth writing practices in Sámi, a group of Indigenous languages of Northern Sweden, Finland, and Norway, demonstrates the ways in which multiple sources such as popular culture, literature, media, community, tourism, and school determine youths' strategies and competence levels in the Sápmi language (Outakoski 2015). Put differently: what happens *outside* the home profoundly constrains what takes place *within* family interactions. Concomitantly, as Joshua Fishman (1991) relentlessly reminded us, maintaining (or restoring) intergenerational transmission of an endangered or minoritized language is a prerequisite to the societal project of language maintenance (or revitalization). Conversely, but equally importantly, intrafamilial, intergenerational transmission processes can only be understood with close attention to both situated child language development and the broader social, cultural and political contexts in which the family and home resides. Family language policy was developed as an area of study to provide a conceptual structure for such an approach.

In addition, Vidal and He (2015) examined naturally occurring interaction between grandparents and grandchildren in English/Spanish and English/Chinese

speaking, globally dispersed families. Their work analyzed family roles and responsibilities as they are organized through turn-by-turn in conversation. Data revealed “the largely unconscious, unmarked process of transmission and transformation of linguistic meanings and cultural norms that are usually tacit,” and thus “present a dynamic view of power/authority and expert/novice relations in the family, an emergent account of meaning and intentions, and a discursive entailment of bilingual, globally dispersed families” (2015, p. 23).

Second, the last 5 years have been marked by increasing emphasis on the family as a dynamic system, including the importance of child agency and identity choices, both enacted through language. Gafaranga’s (2010) close analysis of parent-child interactions in Kinyarwanda-French families in Belgium, for example, demonstrated how children made “medium requests” that led to parallel interactions as parents used Kinyarwanda and children used French. With a similar focus on children’s strategies, Fogle (2012) examined the second language socialization processes in three adoptive families (5 parents and 10 adoptees, ages 4-17) and analyzed how language ideologies, discourse practices, and family identities are negotiated and constructed in everyday activities. The data illustrated how language socialization processes are collaborative and co-constructed as children seek out opportunities for language learning and form self and family identities. The children’s strategies, in turn, had lasting effects on their parents’ own language ideologies and practices. More recently, Gallo and Hornberger (*in press*) explored the complexities of how young Latino children with a parent who was recently deported from the US interpret, appropriate, resist, and create family language policies within their routine interactions. Their work highlighted how young children serve as agentive social actors in which they assert their own self-positioning across institutional settings in ways that contribute to both family language policy and migration decisions.

Third, current work in FLP gives greater emphasis to trilingualism or multilingualism, with a growing number of studies examining how families manage multiple languages (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen 2009). Recent research by Zhu and Said (*in press*), for instance, examined how multilingual, transnational families negotiated multiple languages, including Classical Arabic, Yemeni Arabic, and British English, finding that parents make conscious efforts to promote and implement their views on language learning, use and socialization. Through these very efforts, children became empowered to participate in mealtime conversations and could confidently resist or negotiate with their parents and enact their agency through creative multiple language use.

Problems and Difficulties

Roughly a decade in, the field of family language policy faces several important challenges. First, while early definitions emphasized that family language policy referred to “explicit” and “overt” planning in relation to language use within the home among family members, recent work has pointed to the fact that much family language policy – like all (language) policy – is in fact implicit, covert, unarticulated,

fluid, and negotiated moment by moment (e.g., King 2013). If the field narrowly defines its scope and focus of interest to that policy which is articulated and explicit, without question, a large number of families, contexts, and situations are excluded. This is to the detriment of the field of family language policy and our understanding of it.

A second and related point concerns the shifting nature of language policy, which is increasingly informed by anthropological approaches and has been (re)defined by some as a sociocultural process; that is, language policy consists of the “modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power” (McCarty 2004, p. 72). As language policy, and by extension, family language policy are now widely recognized as interactional in nature, this raises the question of whether and how the field differs from sociolinguistic and language socialization approaches (see Duff, chapter “► [Language Socialization and Family Dinnertime Discourse](#)” in volume “Language Socialization”; Fogle and King, chapter “► [Bi- and Multilingual Family Language Socialization](#)”; Garrett, chapter “► [Researching Language Socialization](#)” in volume “Research Methods in Language and Education”; Ochs and Scheffelin, chapter “► [Language Socialization: An Historical Overview](#)” in volume “Language Socialization”). Put more bluntly: the (sub)field of family language policy might eventually (and productively) be subsumed into one of these other (sub)fields.

The strength and value of family language policy as a defined area of study rests on its ability to pull together and integrate data in novel and productive ways to address important practical and academic questions (e.g., what school and community policies are most likely to support intergenerational transmission of an endangered Indigenous language?). Fully addressing this question entails the collection and integrated analysis of at least three types of data: (1) community, context, and programmatic descriptions; (2) family interactional data, and (3) child language learning or competencies. This is a tall (but important) order. Much of the work to date has fallen short, (over)relying, for instance, on parental reports of language practices, and failing to collect empirical data on language interaction and language outcomes.

The final challenge concerns the need for the field to keep up with changing social and educational policy initiatives. While the field has focused almost entirely on bi- and multilingual families, an important new direction for family language policy (at least in the USA) is understanding how monolingual families make sense of and negotiate recent, intensive programs and policies to close academic disparities by altering the language and interactional patterns among caretakers and children. These policy initiatives (e.g., *Providence Talks* and *Too Small to Fail* among others) aim not to change the medium of language use (e.g., Spanish, English, Somali), but rather, to train (low-income) caretakers to use language in ways similar to those found in formal school settings in the USA (Avineri et al. 2015). Linguistic anthropologists agree that these parent-training programs operate from a deficit premise and that these “single-approach” programs to mitigate the impact of poverty on a child are unlikely to be effective (Avineri et al. 2015). Indeed, “anthropological research shows, in fact, that addressing the younger children as conversational

partners is extremely unusual in the world” (Avineri et al. 2015, p. 75). Such programs “naturalize the middle-class European-American language socialization model as though it were biologically and evolutionarily required. This is because the principal caregiver is supposed to act as the child’s in-home teacher from before birth” (p. 75). Indeed, these programs negate three decades of work from linguistic anthropologists that show pervasive and high variation in “language input behaviors around the world,” and underline the very limited impact that this work has had on either “teacher education programs or reading curricula, even as the school populations have increasingly diversified from the 1990s forward” (Avineri et al. 2015, p. 70).

One challenge for the field of family language policy is to document and analyze how this federal, state, and local language policy (e.g., funding and training programs for parents) are implemented and negotiated on the ground. A family language policy approach entails here not just measuring numbers of words spoken by children and adults in the home, or the linguistic-cognitive impacts of these efforts on the child, but rather, how caretakers make sense of these efforts to reshape or police their language, and how those understandings shape family dynamics, including not only language use, but what it means to be a “good” parent, “good” child, and “good” family under these regimes.

Future Directions

Important future steps to enhance our understanding of family language policy would be longitudinal research over a period of several years; such an approach takes into account not only the developing child and evolving nature of family dynamics but outcomes with respect to language learning and use among children. This is particularly important in light of the fact that the field, by definition, does not allow for experimentation (e.g., we cannot assign children into “treatment” and “control” groups/families); rather, the field needs to look for and examine closely so-called “natural experiments.” This entails doing more cross-context, cross-national work as the most important “natural” condition is change in linguistic environment of the family. This careful, long-term, contextualized work allows us to move towards deeper understanding of driving, causal factors – and mitigators – of language shift, maintenance, and revitalization.

More broadly, researchers of family language policy might productively take on a more overtly “anthropolitical perspective” (Zentella 1997). Such work seeks not just to document and explain, for instance, links across parental language ideologies, practices, and child language outcomes, but to uncover “the ways in which one or more group’s ways of speaking or raising children are constructed as inferior to the benefit of the continued domination of a powerful class” and to challenge “the policies that encourage and enforce subjugation” (Zentella 2015, p. 77). Such an approach seems increasingly urgent in light of recent efforts to “train” or “police” parental language and behavior.

As family language policy evolves and matures as a field of study, we also expect greater focus on the sociocultural factors related to globalization and technology and their influence on parents and families, as well as sharper attention to the role of children in family language policy processes and children's perspectives on these processes. With more studies of families participating in migratory and transnational flows, the field of family language policy will help us understand linguistic and social worlds of young children, most of whom – when we look worldwide – are shaped by, and of course profoundly shape, their multilingual contexts.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Kathryn M. Howard: [Language Socialization and Language Shift Among School-Aged Children](#). In Volume: Language Socialization
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- Patricia Duff: [Language Socialization and Family Dinnertime Discourse](#). In Volume: Language Socialization
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Part V

Regional Perspectives on Language Policy

Language Policy and Education in the New Europe

Guus Extra

Abstract

In this chapter, the constellation of languages in the new Europe is described as a descending hierarchy of English as *lingua franca*, national or “official state” languages, regional minority languages, and immigrant minority languages. The main European institutions promoting language learning and multilingualism/plurilingualism are the European Union (EU) based in Brussels (Belgium) and the Council of Europe based in Strasbourg (France). Within the three constituent bodies of the EU – the Council of the EU (heads of state and government), the European Commission (EC), and the European Parliament – these domains have been focused upon for more than 20 years. Early developments and major contributions of these institutions in the domain of language policy and education in the new Europe are outlined. Three major initiatives of the Council of Europe are addressed: the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, and the *European Language Portfolio*. The focus of work in progress is on the *Language Rich Europe* project, which examines European trends in policies and practices for multilingualism across 25 European countries and regions. Problems and difficulties are discussed in terms of multilingualism and linguistic diversity as sometimes conflicting policy agendas, the lack of legal binding of European Parliament communications and resolutions, and the reluctance in promoting the proposed *trilingual formula* of the European Commission at the national policy level. In this formula, the principle of “a language of personal adoption” plays a key role. Future directions of European policy on multilingualism and education are offered in reference to international experiences and recommendations.

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Introduction

Speaking more than one or two languages is a common challenge for most Europeans, and many of them, both “old” and “new” Europeans, learn the national language of their country of residence not as a first language but as an *additional language*. Linguistic diversity has always been conceived as a constituent characteristic of European identity (Arzoz 2008). However, some languages play a more important role in the European public and political discourse on “celebrating linguistic diversity,” the motto of the European Year of Languages (2001). The constellation of languages in Europe actually functions as a descending hierarchy (Extra and Gorter 2008; Nic Craith 2006) with the following ranking of categories:

- English as *lingua franca* for transnational communication
- National or “official state” languages of European countries
- Regional minority (RM) languages across Europe
- Immigrant minority (IM) languages across Europe

In the official EU discourse, RM languages are referred to as *regional or minority languages* and IM languages as *migrant languages*. Both concepts are problematic for a variety of reasons. Whereas the national languages of the EU with English increasingly on top are celebrated most at the EU level, RM languages are celebrated less and IM languages least. IM languages are only marginally covered by EU language promotion programs and – so far – are mainly considered in the context of provisions for learning the national languages of the “migrants’ countries of residence.”

There is a great need for educational policies in Europe that take new realities of multilingualism into account. Processes of internationalization and globalization have brought European nation-states to the world, but they have also brought the world to European nation-states. This bipolar pattern of change has led to both convergence and divergence of multilingualism across Europe. On the one hand, English is increasingly on the rise as *lingua franca* for transnational communication across the borders of European nation-states (Jenkins 2010), at the cost of all other official state languages of Europe, including French and German. The upward mobility of English is clearly visible in such recent European Commission reports as *Special Barometer 386* (2012) and *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe* (Eurydice/Eurostat 2012). In spite of many objections against the hegemony of English (Phillipson 2003), this process of convergence is enhanced by the extension of the EU to Eastern Europe. Within the borders of European nation-states, however, there is an increasing divergence of home languages, often referred to in Europe as “mother tongues” (see Extra 2010), due to large-scale processes of global migration and intergenerational minorization. The outcomes of the 23 June 2016 EU Brexit Referendum in the UK, in which more than half of voters voted to leave the EU, may lead to a complex and lengthy disentanglement of the EU and UK, the political and socio-linguistics effects of which could not be foreseen at the time of writing.

Even at the level of (co-)official languages, Europe’s identity is to a great extent determined by cultural and linguistic diversity (Haarmann 1995). Table 1 serves to illustrate this diversity in terms of EU (candidate) Member States with their estimated populations (ranked in decreasing order) and corresponding (co-)official state languages. As Table 1 makes clear, there are large differences in population size among EU Member States. German, French, English, Italian, Spanish, and Polish belong, in this order, to the six most widely spoken official state languages in the present EU, whereas Turkish would come second to German in an enlarged EU. Table 1 also shows the close connection between nation-state references and official state language references. In 27 out of 30 cases, distinct languages are the clearest feature distinguishing one nation-state from its neighbors (Barbour 2000), the only exceptions (and for different reasons) being Belgium, Austria, and Cyprus. This match between nation-state references and official state language references obscures the existence of different types of other languages that are actually spoken across European nation-states (Haberland 1991; Nic Craith 2006). Many of these languages are Indigenous minority languages with a regional territorial base; many other languages stem from abroad without such a base. As mentioned before, we will refer to these languages as regional minority (RM) languages and immigrant minority (IM) languages, respectively (Extra and Gorter 2001), in this way expressing both their shared main property and their major modifying difference.

As all of these RM and IM languages are spoken by different language communities and not at statewide level, it may seem logical to refer to them as community languages, thus contrasting them with the official languages of nation-states. However, the attractive designation “community languages,” commonly used in the UK, would lead to confusion at the surface level because this concept is already in use to

Table 1 Overview of 30 EU (candidate) Member States with estimated populations and (co-)official state languages (EuroStat 2015)

Nr	Member States	Population (in millions)	(Co-)official state language(s)
1	Germany	81,2	German
2	France	66,4	French
3	UK	64,9	English
4	Italy	60,8	Italian
5	Spain	46,4	Spanish
6	Poland	38,0	Polish
7	Romania	19,9	Romanian
8	The Netherlands	16,9	Dutch (Nederlands)
9	Belgium	11,3	Dutch, French, German
10	Greece	10,8	Greek
11	Czech Republic	10,5	Czech
12	Portugal	10,4	Portuguese
13	Hungary	9,8	Hungarian
14	Sweden	9,7	Swedish
15	Austria	8,6	Austrian-German
16	Bulgaria	7,2	Bulgarian
17	Denmark	5,7	Danish
18	Finland	5,5	Finnish, Swedish
19	Slovakia	5,4	Slovak
20	Ireland	4,6	Irish, English
21	Croatia	4,2	Croatian
22	Lithuania	2,9	Lithuanian
23	Slovenia	2,1	Slovenian
24	Latvia	2,0	Latvian
25	Estonia	1,3	Estonian
26	Cyprus	0,8	Greek, Turkish
27	Luxembourg	0,6	Luxemburgish, French, German
28	Malta	0,4	Maltese, English
	Candidate Member States	Population (in millions)	Official state language
29	Turkey	78,7	Turkish
30	Macedonia	2,1	Macedonian

refer to the official state languages of the EU. In that sense, the designation “community languages” is occupied territory, at least in the EU jargon. The distinction between RM and IM languages is widely used and understood across continental Europe. A final argument in favor of using the concept of “immigrant” languages is its widespread use on the website of *Ethnologue, Languages of the World*, a most valuable and widely used standard source of cross-national information on this topic.

A number of other issues need to be kept in mind as well. First, within and across EU Member States, many RM and IM languages have larger numbers of speakers than many of the official state languages mentioned in Table 1. Moreover, RM and IM languages in one EU nation-state may be official state languages in another

nation-state. Examples of the former result from language border crossing in adjacent nation-states, such as Finnish in Sweden or Swedish in Finland. Examples of the latter result from processes of migration, in particular from Southern to Northern Europe, such as Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, or Greek. It should also be kept in mind that many, if not most, IM languages in particular European nation-states originate from countries *outside* Europe. It is the context of migration and minorization in particular that makes our proposed distinction between RM and IM languages ambiguous. We see, however, no better alternative. In our opinion, the proposed distinction will lead at least to awareness raising and may ultimately lead to an inclusive approach in the European conceptualization of minority languages (Extra and Gorter 2008; Extra and Yağmur 2012).

Early Developments

Both the EU institutions based in Brussels and the Council of Europe based in Strasbourg have been active in promoting language learning and multilingualism/plurilingualism. The major language policy agencies in these two institutions are the *Unit for Multilingualism Policy* within the Directorate-General of Education and Culture in the European Commission and the *Language Policy Unit* of the Directorate of Education in the Council of Europe. The work done by these agencies underpins the important resolutions, charters, and conventions produced by the respective bodies. Coulmas (1991) and Baetens-Beardsmore (2008) give insightful overviews of both EU and CoE language promotion activities in the past.

A search for multilingualism publications on <http://europa.eu/> yields key EU documents in a range of languages organized under five headings: EU policy documents, information brochures, reports, studies, and surveys. On the CoE site, <http://www.coe.int/lang>, publications are offered in the domains of policy development, instruments and standards, languages of school education, migrants, conference reports, and selected studies. The CoE makes a distinction between plurilingualism as a speaker's competence (ability to use more than one language) and multilingualism as the presence of a range of languages in a given geographical area. The EU uses multilingualism for both (sometimes specifying "multilingualism of the individual").

European Union (EU)

Within the EU, language policy is the responsibility of individual Member States. EU institutions play a supporting role in this field, based on the "principle of subsidiarity." Their role is to promote cooperation between the Member States and to promote the European dimension in national language policies. Within the three constituent bodies of the EU, that is, the Council of the European Union (heads of state and government), the European Commission (EC), and the European Parliament, multilingualism and language learning have been a key area of focus for more

than 20 years. EU language policies aim to protect language diversity and promote knowledge of languages, for reasons of cultural identity and social integration, but also because multilingual citizens are better placed to take advantage of the educational, professional, and economic opportunities created by an integrated Europe.

The European Commission (1995), in a so-called *Whitebook*, opted for trilingualism as a policy goal for all European citizens. Apart from the “mother tongue,” each citizen should learn at least two “community languages.” At this stage, the concept of “mother tongue” was being used to refer to the official languages of EU Member States and overlooked the fact that for many inhabitants of Europe, “mother tongue” and “official state language” do not coincide (Tulasiewicz and Adams 2005). At the same time, the concept of “community languages” referred to the official languages of two other EU Member States. In later European Commission documents, reference was made to one foreign language with high international prestige (English was deliberately not referred to) and one so-called “neighboring language.” This latter concept always referred to neighboring countries, never to next-door neighbors.

In a follow-up to the European Year of Languages in 2001, the heads of state and government of all EU Member States gathered in 2002 in Barcelona and called upon the European Commission to take further action to promote the learning and teaching of two “additional languages” from a very early age (Nikolov and Curtain 2000). In 2003, the EC committed itself to undertake a range of new actions to encourage national, regional, and local authorities to work toward a “major step change in promoting language learning and linguistic diversity.” Whereas the concept of “additional languages” within the EU policy context initially related to European languages, the reference to “European” was removed in more recent documents.

Council of Europe (CoE)

Founded in 1949, the CoE is an intergovernmental organization with 47 Member States, including the 28 European Union States. Two CoE conventions are directly concerned with European standards to promote and safeguard linguistic diversity and language rights: the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* and the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. The *Charter* came into operation in 1998. It functions as a European benchmark for the comparison of legal measures and facilities of Member States in this policy domain (Nic Craith 2003) and is aimed at the protection and the promotion of “the historical regional or minority languages of Europe.” The concepts of “regional” and “minority” languages are not specified in the *Charter*, and immigrant languages are explicitly excluded from it. States are free in their choice of which regional/minority languages to include. Also, the degree of protection is not prescribed; thus, a state can choose loose or tight policies. The result is a wide variety of provisions across EU Member States (Grin 2003). The *Framework Convention* specifies the conditions necessary for persons belonging to “national” minorities to maintain and

develop their culture and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely, their religion, language, traditions, and cultural heritage. States that have ratified these conventions are monitored with regard to their fulfillment of the commitments they have undertaken.

CoE recommendations are authoritative statements to national authorities on guiding principles and related implementation measures, but are not legally binding. What might be described as “technical” instruments in the field of language education are generally reference tools, always nonnormative, which policy deciders and practitioners may consult and adapt as appropriate to their specific educational context and needs. These instruments include the widely used *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, the *European Language Portfolio*, policy guides, and a variety of other practical tools developed through the programs of the *Language Policy Unit* in Strasbourg and the *European Centre for Modern Languages* in Graz.

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) was designed to promote plurilingual education and to be adapted to the specific contexts of use. The CEFR offers a common basis for developing and comparing second/foreign language curricula, textbooks, courses, and examinations in a dynamic plurilingual lifelong learning perspective. Developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation, the CEFR provides a practical tool for setting clear goals to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. It provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility. It is increasingly used in the reform of national curricula and by international consortia for relating of language certificates, in Europe and beyond, and is available in over 35 language versions.

The *European Language Portfolio* (2001) is a personal document in which those who are learning or have learned any language can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. It is the property of the learner. In the Portfolio, all competence is valued, regardless of the level or whether it is gained inside or outside formal education. It is linked to the CEFR.

Major Contributions

The call for differentiation of the monolingual *habitus* (Gogolin 1994) of primary and secondary schools across Europe originates *top-down* from supranational institutions which emphasize the increasing need for European citizens with a transnational and multicultural affinity and identity. Plurilingual competencies are considered prerequisites for such an affinity and identity. Both the European Commission and the Council of Europe have published many policy documents in which language diversity is cherished as a key element of the multicultural identity of Europe – now and in the future. This language diversity is considered to be a prerequisite rather than an obstacle for a united European space in which all citizens are equal (but not the same) and enjoy equal rights.

European Commission

The EC's first ever Communication on Multilingualism, *A new framework strategy for multilingualism*, was adopted in 2005 and complemented its action plan *Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity*. In 2008, the EC produced their well-known Communication *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment*. The Communication set out what needed to be done to turn linguistic diversity into an asset for solidarity and prosperity. The two central objectives for multilingualism policy were:

- To raise awareness of the value and opportunities of the EU's linguistic diversity and encourage the removal of barriers to intercultural dialogue
- To give all citizens real opportunities to learn to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue

Member States were invited to offer a wider range of languages more effectively within the education system from an early age up to adult education and to value and further develop language skills acquired outside the formal education system. Moreover, the EC stated its determination to make strategic use of relevant EU programs and initiatives to bring multilingualism "closer to the citizen."

In its 2008 Communication, the EC referred to the many "national, regional, minority, and migrant" languages spoken in Europe "adding a facet to our common background" and also "foreign languages," used to refer principally to both European and non-European languages with a worldwide coverage. The value of learning the national language well in order to function successfully in society and benefit fully from education has been widely recognized. The learning of foreign languages has also been common in Europe. The language types which have been less emphasized are RM and IM languages, but their value across European Member States has been acknowledged and supported by both the CoE and the EU, which have emphasized that both types of languages need to be supported as they are important means of intragroup communication and are part of the personal, cultural, and social identity of many EU citizens.

The Commission Staff Working Document (2008), accompanying the abovementioned EC Communication, presents a good overview of existing EU activities supporting multilingualism. The EC Communication (2008) was welcomed and endorsed by resolutions from both the Council of the EU (2008) and the European Parliament (2009), with the emphasis on lifelong learning, competitiveness, mobility, and employability. In 2011, the EC reported back on progress since 2008 and provided a full inventory of EU actions in the field. The *High Level Group on Multilingualism: Final Report* (2007), published at the initiative of the EC, also mentions that it is necessary to use the potential of immigrants as a source of language knowledge and as a good opportunity for companies to profit from these immigrants' cultural and linguistic abilities in order to gain access to markets in the immigrants' countries of origin.

Key statistics on language learning and teaching in the EU are collected in the context of *Eurydice* and *Eurobarometer* surveys. Of major importance for primary

and secondary education are the reports *Key data on teaching languages at school in Europe* (Eurydice/EuroStat 2012) and *Integrating immigrant children into schools in Europe* (Eurydice 2009), as well as two European Commission Eurobarometer reports on language skills of European citizens and their attitudes toward languages (Eurobarometers 2001 and 2012). The final report to the EC by Strubell et al. (2007) also contains key data on student enrolments in language classes in primary, lower, and upper secondary education in EU countries; moreover, the report offers an analysis of cross-national results and trends and concludes with a range of recommendations.

Council of Europe

The CoE's work on language education is coordinated by the *Language Policy Unit* (LPU) in Strasbourg and the *European Centre for Modern Languages* (ECML) in Graz. The LPU has been a pioneer of international cooperation in language education since 1957, acting as a catalyst for innovation and providing a pan-European forum in which to address the policy priorities of all Member States. The results of the LPU's programs have led to a number of recommendations and resolutions of the Committee of Ministers and of the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE, which provide political support for its policy instruments and initiatives. Following on from this, the LPU organized the European Year of Languages 2001 with the European Commission, the aims of which continue to be promoted in the annual European Day of Languages.

The programs of the LPU are complemented by those of the ECML, an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe set up in 1994 in Graz (Austria). The ECML's mission is to promote innovative approaches and disseminate good practice in language learning and teaching. The Centre runs four-year programs of projects organized in cooperation with European experts in the field of language education. An important initiative, supported by the Council of Europe and coordinated by the ECML, has been the *Valeur* project 2004–2007. Its ambitions were to bring together information on educational provisions for nonnational languages in more than 20 - European countries, to focus on the outcomes of these provisions for students by the time they have left school, to identify good practices and draw conclusions about how provision can be developed, to promote a greater awareness of the issues involved, and to create a network for developing new initiatives (McPake et al. 2007).

Work in Progress

In this section, our focus will be on the *Language Rich Europe* project which has been cofinanced by the European Commission and the British Council. The research part of the LRE project has been led by Extra and Yağmur (2012). Derived from key European Union (EU) and Council of Europe (CoE) resolutions, conventions, and recommendations, a survey questionnaire has been designed to examine European

trends in policies and practices for multilingualism across 25 European countries and regions (including three non-EU countries, i.e., Switzerland, Ukraine, and Bosnia-Herzegovina). The overall objectives of the LRE project were to:

- Facilitate the exchange of good practice in promoting intercultural dialogue and social inclusion through language teaching and learning.
- Promote European cooperation in developing language policies and practices across several education sectors and broader society.
- Raise awareness of the EU and CoE recommendations for promoting language learning and linguistic diversity across Europe.

The resulting outcomes go beyond our current state of knowledge with regard to language policies and practices in Europe from four different perspectives:

- The high number of participating countries and regions – 25
- The spectrum of chosen language varieties in the constellation of languages in Europe: foreign, regional or minority, immigrant, and national languages, the latter with a special focus on support for newcomers
- The range of chosen language domains within and beyond education to include business, public services and spaces in cities, and the media
- The open-access publication and dissemination of the outcomes of this study in 20 languages, including Turkish and Arabic as major languages of immigration in Europe

The following language varieties are addressed in the LRE project:

- National languages: official languages of European nation-states
- Foreign languages: languages that are not learned or used at home but learned and taught at school or used as languages of wider communication in noneducational sectors
- Regional or minority (RM) languages: languages that are traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population
- Immigrant minority (IM) languages: languages spoken by immigrants and their descendants in the country of residence, originating from a wide range of (former) source countries

Eight language domains are covered by the LRE survey. As the first domain, a meta-domain is included which looks at the availability of official national/regional documents and databases on language diversity (see also Extra 2010). Given the key role of language learning in education, four domains focus on the main stages of publicly funded education from preschool to university. In addition, three language domains outside and beyond education are addressed, in order to capture levels of multilingual services in society and business. All in all, the eight domains are covered by a total of 260 questions, distributed across these domains as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Composition of the LRE survey across language domains

N	Language domains	N questions
1.	Languages in official documents and databases	15
2.	Languages in preprimary education	34
3.	Languages in primary education	58
4.	Languages in secondary education	60
5.	Languages in further and higher education	30
6.	Languages in audiovisual media and press	14
7.	Languages in public services and public spaces	31
8.	Languages in business	18
Total of questions		260

Domain 1 explores the availability of nationwide or region-wide official documents and databases on language diversity in each of the participating countries/regions. The availability of such documents and databases may contribute significantly to the awareness of multilingualism in a given country/region and can inform language education policy. The division of this domain into official documents and databases is closely related to the common distinction in studies on language planning between *status planning* and *corpus planning*. In our study, the section on documents refers to efforts undertaken *to regulate* the use and function of different languages in a given society, and the section on databases refers to efforts undertaken *to map* the distribution and vitality of the spectrum of languages in a given society.

Domains 2–4 of the survey focus on education for non-adult learners provided by the state, including the common distinction between lower and upper secondary education which may refer to age-related differences and/or differences related to type of schooling. In each of these domains, the organization of language teaching is addressed in addition to the qualifications and training of teachers, for each of the four language varieties. The key distinction between organization versus teachers is widely used in the EU context. The responses in these sections are based on publicly available data as well as from official sources.

Given the significant diversification in postsecondary education at the national and cross-national level, domain 5 focuses on further (vocational) versus higher (university) education. As a result, this domain yields highly binary and complementary data on postsecondary education. Domains 6–8 cover three crucial domains outside and beyond education. Responses in domains 5–8 are based on collected and reported data in the urban contexts of three cities per country or region. Domain 5 explores language provision in a small sample of vocational and university education institutions. Domain 6 focuses on languages in the audiovisual media and the press. Domain 7 concentrates on languages in public services and public spaces in terms of institutionalized language strategies, oral communication facilities, and written communication facilities. The focus of domain 8, languages in business, is on company language strategies, internal communication strategies, and external communication strategies; in each country/region, a sample of 24 companies was aimed at.

Extra and Yağmur (2012) present major LRE outcomes for domains 1–4 on (pre-) primary and secondary education. A remarkable outcome is that the largest numbers of officially offered RM languages in education emerge in Southeastern and Central European countries. In Western Europe, Italy and France are the clearest exceptions to this general rule, as they offer a wide variety of languages. In Western European countries, IM languages often have a more prominent appearance than RM languages but enjoy less recognition, protection, and/or promotion. Follow-up studies on the LRE project have been planned in a number of European countries and regions.

Problems and Difficulties

A detailed overview and analysis of EU policies on multilingualism is provided by Cullen et al. (2008), who report that there is still significant reluctance or resistance with respect to additional language learning – apart from learning English. This view is supported by Eurydice/Eurostat data (2009) data which shows a marked increase in the learning of English, but not other languages. Only one in five Europeans can be described as an active additional language learner, say Cullen et al. (2008), and language skills are unevenly distributed geographically and culturally. Most of the activities aimed at promoting multilingualism take place in the formal education sector, more particularly in the domain of secondary education. Cullen et al. (2008, pp. iii–iv) arrive at the following main conclusions with respect to the political and policy context of promoting multilingualism in the EU:

- Multilingualism and linguistic diversity are sometimes conflicting policy agendas. Language learning policy has tended to be influenced by “harder” priorities, like economic competitiveness and labor market mobility, and linguistic diversity policies by “softer” issues like inclusion and human rights. Multilingualism policy has been more highly prioritized than linguistic diversity policy in terms of concrete actions.
- The action of the European Parliament reflects a consistent and persistent effort to maintain minority language protection and linguistic diversity support. Since the late 1970s, the European Parliament has issued a series of communications and resolutions that call for the Commission to take action in order to promote the use of minority languages and to review all community legislation or practices which discriminate against minority languages. However, a major problem is that none of these initiatives are binding for the Member States.

Promoting multilingualism in terms of trilingualism has not only been advocated by the EU. UNESCO adopted the term “multilingual education” in 1999 (General Conference Resolution 12) in reference to the use of at least three languages in education, that is, the mother tongue, a regional or national language, and an international language. As early as the 1950s, the Indian government had put forward the outline of a multilingual educational policy, which included instruction

in the mother language, in the regional (or State) language, in Hindi as the language of general communication, and in one of the classical languages – Sanskrit, Pali, Arabic, or Persian. Revised in 1961, the proposal was named the *three-language formula* (TLF), which included instruction in the regional language, in Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking areas or in another Indian language in Hindi-speaking areas, and in English or another European language.

As yet, the promotion of trilingualism as an EU policy goal for all European citizens has not been taken up strongly at the level of European nation-states, and for various reasons, the development of an educational policy regarding RM and IM languages was, and continues to be, a complex and challenging task. In view of the multicultural composition of many European schools, this task involves the organization of multilingual rather than bilingual education (García et al. 2006). Experiences with, and the results of previous research into, an exclusively bilingual context are therefore only transferable to a limited degree. Bilingual education in official state languages and RM languages has been an area of interest and research in Europe for a long time. More recently, local and global perspectives are taken into consideration that go beyond bilingualism for RM groups and focus on plurilingualism and plurilingual education. Apart from official state languages and RM languages, the focus is commonly on the learning and teaching of English as a third language from a perspective of *glocalization* and in this way on promoting trilingualism from an early age on in the context of, e.g., the Basque Country and Catalonia in Spain or Friesland in the Netherlands (Cenoz and Jessner 2000; Ytsma and Hoffmann 2003).

It is remarkable that the teaching of RM languages is generally advocated as a matter of course for reasons of fairness, social cohesion, group identity, or economic benefit, while such reasoning rarely is an argument in favor of teaching IM languages. The 1977 guideline of the Council of European Communities on education for “migrant” children (*Directive 77/486*, dated 25 July 1977) has become nowadays completely outdated. It needs to be put in a new and increasingly multicultural context, and it needs to be extended to pupils originating from non-EU countries who form the large part of IM children at European primary schools. Besides, most of the so-called “migrants” in EU countries have taken up citizenship of the countries in which they live, and in many cases, they belong to second- or third-generation groups. Against this background, there is a growing need for overarching human rights for all European citizens, irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, religious, or language background. For similar inclusive approaches to IM and RM language rights, we refer to Nic Craith (2006) and May (2011).

Future Directions

The plea for the learning of *three languages* by all EU citizens, the plea for *an early start* to such learning experiences, and the plea for offering *a wide range of languages* to choose from, based on the *principle of personal adoption* by parents/children, open the door to the abovementioned inclusive approach. Although this may sound paradoxical (Phillipson 2003), such an approach can also be advanced by

accepting the role of English as *lingua franca* for transnational communication across Europe. Against this background, a number of principles should be spelled out for the *enhancement of trilingualism* at primary and secondary schools in *continental* European countries in which *one* language functions as official state language (Extra and Gorter 2008; Extra and Yağmur 2004). Other principles need to be worked out for the UK in which English functions as official state language and for those European countries in which more than one language functions as such. According to Table 1, presented in the Introduction, the latter holds for Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Malta.

Institutional support structures for RM languages exist at both the national and European level. Such institutional support structures are much weaker for IM languages, and support tends to be bottom-up from parents at the local or national level. Although IM languages are often conceived of and transmitted as core values by IM language groups, they are much less protected than RM languages by affirmative action and legal measures in, for example, education. In fact, the learning and certainly the teaching of IM languages are often seen by majority language speakers and by policy makers as obstacles to integration and as a threat to the national identity. As a result, a rarely addressed paradox in the European versus national public and political discourse on diversity of languages becomes visible:

- Linguistic diversity at the European level is commonly conceived of as an inherent property of European identity and prerequisite for integration, accompanied by such devices as *celebrating linguistic diversity* or *diversity within unity*.
- Linguistic diversity at the national level, in particular with respect to immigrant languages, is often conceived of as a threat to national identity and obstacle for integration.

A clash of paradigms emerges in those areas where RM languages and IM languages appear in strong co-occurrence. Good examples of such areas are Barcelona and Catalonia at large (Carrasco 2008, p. 28).

The abovementioned principles on trilingualism for all European citizens are aimed at reconciling bottom-up and top-down pleas in Europe for plurilingualism and are inspired by large-scale and enduring experiences with the learning and teaching of English (as L1 or L2) and one *Language Other Than English* (LOTE) for all children in the State of Victoria, Australia (Extra and Yağmur 2004). The *Victorian School of Languages* in Melbourne has led to an internationally recognized breakthrough in the conceptualization of plurilingualism in terms of making provision feasible and mandatory for all children (including a minority of L1 English-speaking children), in terms of offering a broad spectrum of LOTE provision (in 2015, more than 50 languages were offered in primary and secondary education), and in terms of government support for this provision derived from multicultural policy perspectives.

When in the European context, each of the abovementioned languages should be introduced in the curriculum, and whether or when they should be subject or medium of instruction has to be spelled out according to particular national, regional, or local demands. The increasing internationalization of pupil populations in European schools

requires that a language policy be introduced for all school children in which the traditional dichotomy between foreign language instruction for the majority of Indigenous pupils and home language instruction for IM pupils is put aside. Given the experiences abroad (e.g., the *Victorian School of Languages* in Melbourne), language schools can become centers of expertise where a variety of languages are taught, if the students' demand is low and/or spread over many schools. In line with the proposed principles for primary schooling, similar ideas could be worked out for secondary schools where learning more than one language across European nation-states is already an established curricular practice. The abovementioned principles would recognize plurilingualism in an increasingly multicultural environment as an asset for all youngsters and for society at large. The EU, the Council of Europe, and the UNESCO could function as leading transnational agencies in promoting such concepts. The UNESCO *Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity* (updated in 2002) is very much in line with the views expressed here, in particular in its plea to encourage linguistic diversity, to respect the mother tongue at all levels of education, and to foster the learning of more than one language from a very early age.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Russia](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Language Policy and Education in Russia

Bill Bowring and Tamara Borgoiakova

Abstract

This chapter discusses the extraordinary political, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the Russian Federation and charts the dramatic shifts in languages and education policy through the Tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet state structures and laws. With reference to leading Russian and English language scholars, the current situation is analyzed, and a number of problems and dangers are identified. Fundamental changes to Russia's nationalities policy, especially with regard to education with minority languages as the language of instruction, are the subject of intense debate. However, it is too early to predict what the eventual outcomes will be.

Keywords

Russia • Language policy • Language education • Minority languages • Linguistic diversity • Tsarism • Communism

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Early Developments

The Russian Federation is a case of extraordinary political, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Since the controversial events of March 2014, there are now 85 subjects (members) of the Federation, the most recent being the Republic of Crimea, and, its capital, the city of Sevastopol, as a city of federal significance. There are now 22 ethnic republics, each with the right to an official language in addition to Russian.

Russia's ethnic and linguistic diversity is impressive if not unique. In the first periodical report of the Russian Federation, dated 8 March 2000, Russia's first report, of 8 March 2000, to the Advisory Committee under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), a treaty which Russia ratified in August 1998 (Council of Europe 2000), Russia stated that "The Russian Federation is one of the largest multinational states in the world, inhabited by more than 170 peoples, the total population being about 140 million." Russia also reported that "The education in Russia's schools is now available in 38 languages. . . . As many as 75 national languages are a part (including languages of national minorities) of the secondary schools curricula." The annexation of Crimea means that there is one more "people," the Crimean Tatars (Bowring 2015).

There have been radical changes in language and education policy in the past two and a half centuries. During the Tsarist period (1721–1917), the Russian Empire's policy in relation to many linguistic minorities was harsh. For example, from 1876 to 1905, during the reign of the reformer Aleksandr II, noted for his abolition of serfdom in 1861 and the Great Legal Reforms of 1864, the publication of any literature in the Ukrainian language was forbidden, and the Polish language was expunged from academic institutions and from all official spheres. At the same time, this harsh policy was tempered by the very large number of users of minority languages and, for many of them, by the development of national self-consciousness (Alpatov 2014). Finns and Germans retained linguistic privileges, and the Volga Tatars, following the religious reforms of Catherine II in the 1780s, maintained their language along with their Muslim religion (Yemelianova 2007).

After 1905, this policy to some extent was mitigated but roused significant opposition from the ethnically orientated intelligentsia and opponents of Tsarist autocracy. The ideas of left liberals such as the Polish linguist Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (in Russian, Boduen de Kurtene) and revolutionaries such as Vladimir Lenin were very close. In 1906, Boduen wrote that he preferred a form of the state in which "no one language should be considered the state language and compulsory for all educated citizens. . . . Each citizen should have the right to engage with the central bodies of government in his own language. The task of such central bodies is to

guarantee that translators in all languages should be found on the territory of the state” (Boduen-de-Kurtene 1906, pp. 12–13). Lenin wrote, in 1914, “Russian Marxists say that there must be no compulsory official language, that the population must be provided with schools where teaching will be carried on in all the local languages, that a fundamental law must be introduced in the constitution declaring invalid all privileges of any one nation and all violations of the rights of national minorities” (Lenin 1914, para. 12).

After the 1917 revolution, these ideas began to come to life. It is argued that Russia was the first country in the world in which minority rights to language were guaranteed (Alpatov 2014). In February 1918, it was ordered that all local languages could be used in the courts. In the most bitter period of the civil war, in October 1918, the Narkomat (Peoples’ Commissariat) enacted a decree entitled, “On schools for national (ethnic) minorities.” At the same time, the centralized production of literature in a significant number of languages began. In 1921, the X Congress of the Communist Party adopted a special resolution on national (ethnic) policy, which set out the task of translating into minority languages documents of the courts, administration, economic bodies, theaters, and so on. However, achievements in the legal support for the functioning of languages seemed to be minimal.

The 1918 Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics (RSFSR) enshrined the multiethnicity of society but did not regulate ethnic linguistic relations. In the Treaty on the formation of the USSR in 1923 and the Constitution of the USSR of 1924, of all spheres of the official use of languages, there is mention only of the possibility of publication of legal documents and state symbols. As regards the RSFSR, the 1925 Constitution (Article 13) enshrined the rights of citizens to use their mother tongue in congresses, before the court, and in administration (Vakhtin and Golovko 2004). The absence of comprehensive legal documents regulating language relations was partially put right with the adoption of the new Constitutions for the country and its republics in 1936–1937. These contained norms on the use of languages in the judicial system (Article 110 of the 1936 USSR Constitution) and the guarantee of education in the mother tongue (Article 114). These did not regulate the use of languages in state symbols and in the sphere of publication of the legislation of the higher representative bodies of state power (Dorovskikh 1996).

From 1922, in the newly created USSR, there were many objective obstacles to the implementation of a new language policy, including the inadequate development of many languages, and the absence of written forms or standard grammar. In order to overcome this situation, a range of activities were undertaken, together named “language construction.” Established linguists such as E.D. Polivanov, N.F. Yakovlev, and others were attracted to this work. They established alphabets on the basis of Latin letters for languages without writing and for languages that had alphabets—Arabic, Old Mongolian, and others—which were incompatible with the political situation. The Latin alphabet was preferred as the most widely used in the world and the most neutral. Cyrillic was associated with the policies of the Tsarist regime. In 1929–1930, a group of scholars led by N.F. Yakovlev also proposed a project for the Latinization of the Russian language, which did not receive the

support of the Party leadership and did not proceed. But by the mid-1930s, more than 70 languages received written form.

However, in the mid-1930s, after Lenin's death, and following Stalin's ascent to power, the new Latin alphabets began to be changed to Cyrillic, and this process was concluded by 1941. After World War II, Latin letters were conserved only for the Baltic languages and for Finnish and Karelian. At the same time, measures were taken for universal use of the Russian language. The 1938 decree of the Central Committee of the Party and Soviet of Peoples Commissars "On the compulsory instruction of the Russian language in schools of the national (ethnic) republics and oblasts" played an important role.

In 1939, a fundamental decree on compulsory instruction of the Russian language in the army to soldiers of non-Russian ethnicities was enacted. The need for such a measure was obvious in conditions of war. However, after the enactment of the decree in 1938, a significant number of schools teaching in minor languages were closed, and as a result of translation of languages into Cyrillic, no less than 12 peoples lost the written form of their languages (Alpatov 2014, p. 18).

Indeed, at the end of the 1930s, under Stalin, there was an abrupt change in the language policy of the Soviet state. All the legal documents listed above and the official slogans of "free development" and "equality" of nations (ethnicities) and languages very quickly became only declaratory. The policy of supporting multilingualism changed to a policy of forced Russification and implementation of the Russian language as the "language of interethnic communication." A decree of the Party Central Committee and the Soviet of Peoples Commissars of 1938 made the Russian language compulsory in all national (ethnic) schools from the first class. In 1930, more than 95% of Komi-Zyryan children studied in national (ethnic) schools, but after the war, instruction in the Komi ASSR was entirely in the Russian language, and teachers forbade Komi children, who before going to school did not know Russian, from speaking their mother tongue, even during their breaks. This is precisely what happened in Komi schools before 1917 under Tsarism (Alpatov 1995, p. 89, cited in Mechkovskaya 2001).

After World War II, the USSR became a national state with one de facto official language: Russian. A new turn of the screw of Russification took place under N.S. Khrushchev, when in 1958 the law entitled, "On strengthening the connections between school and life," was enacted, giving parents the right to choose the language of instruction for their children. Teaching in the native language in many schools of autonomous republics and oblasts of the RSFSR was initially terminated in the fourth year, or instruction was completely changed to the Russian language, and the native language was treated as a subject to be taught rather than a language of instruction. In many regions the school system functioning in local languages was changed, above all in the territories of the RSFSR and such regions as Karelia, Marii El, Komi, and others. Significantly less literature in these languages was published, and new mass media, radio, and television were for the most part in the Russian language (Zamyatin et al. 2012).

In the succeeding decades, the official ideology of the merging of the nations and peoples of the country in the framework of a united community, a Soviet people, and a sole common language for all, Russian, dominated. In many ethnic regions of contemporary Russia, the transition from local languages to the Russian language became stronger in the 1970s. The 1977–1978 Constitutions of the USSR and RSFSR preserved without changing a quantity of legal regulation in the sphere of the official functioning of languages. At the same time, the rights of the individual in the use of languages were broadened. These constitutional norms established the equality of citizens before the law independent of origin, race, or ethnic belonging and so on, as well as of language (Article 34).

However, it should be noted that legal guarantees in the sphere of ethnic linguistic relations were strengthened, as before, only in the context of the rights of the citizen to education. Thus, for example, the following linguistic rights were established in the “Foundations of legislation of the USSR in union republics on peoples’ education”: freedom of choice of the language of instruction, the possibility of instruction in the native language, the choice of school with the corresponding language of instruction, equality in receiving education independent not only of social situation, racial, and ethnic belonging, and so on but also from language.

The list of languages of instruction, nonetheless, was not established by legislation at the union or republic level (Dorovskikh 1996). The 1977 Constitution of the USSR did not define the legal status of a language. It contained no linguonym or other indication of the special status of the Russian language. Nonetheless, in the chapter, “The court and arbitrazh,” there was a hierarchy of languages and special status for the Russian language with the help of a gradation for languages of the union republics, autonomous republics, autonomous oblasts (regions which are subjects of the Russian Federation), and autonomous okrugs (districts within subjects of the Russian Federation). The special status of the Russian language was manifested in the heraldic symbols. For example, “Proletarians of all Countries, Unite!” was written on the state crest of the USSR in the Russian language at the center and in bolder letters and in the languages of the Union Republics at the edge.

The real language policy consigned native languages to the category of the languages of day-to-day communication, political decor, and folklore events. A particularly noteworthy change took place in the system of education. Native languages more and more began to be studied only as subjects (Adigei, Ingush, Kabardino-Balkar, Karachaevo-Cherkess, Ossetian) or remained a language of instruction only to the third class in ethnic schools (Altai, Marii, Mordovian, Udmurt, Khakass, and the Komi languages). If at the start of the 1960s instruction in the RSFSR was conducted in 47 languages, by 1982, this was reduced to 17 (see Belikov and Krysin 2001, pp. 390–405). Vakhtin and Golovko (2004) evaluate the language policy of the Soviet period of the 1980s to the 1990s in the following way: “In many senses the policy of Russification was successful in the sense that the proposed results were achieved” (p. 184). The results of the 1989 census confirm this

view. According to this, 50% of Karelians and 30% of Bashkirs, Mordovians, Komi, Udmurts, and others did not consider their ethnic language to be their mother tongue. From 1970 to 1985, the number of people who did not know their mother tongue among Buryats, Tatars, Marii, Yakutians, and others grew twofold. Linguistic loyalty in the form of recognition as the mother tongue of one's ethnos for the people of South Siberia was about 50% for Shors, 77% for Khakass, and 85% for Altai.

Linguistic assimilation, which posed a real threat to the majority of languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union, became one of the causes of its collapse in 1991. This is demonstrated by the fact that in almost all countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the first laws to be enacted were laws on language, making the relevant languages state languages.

Russia was no exception: The law "On languages of the peoples of the RSFSR" was enacted in 1991, before the country's Constitution of 1993. This was the result of the need to correct the errors made in state nationalities policy, and the regulation of questions of the state language of the country, on the one hand, and the creation of a legal mechanism for the protection of the languages of the peoples of Russia, on the other. A law "On education" was enacted in 1992 (Alpatov 2000; Belikov and Krysin 2001, p. 332–414; Bowring 2012; Vakhtin 2001).

New Directions in Research Since 1991

The sociolinguistic research of the Soviet period was characterized by the ideologically correct repetition of the "equality of all language," although the process of language shift (*svig*) among all non-Russian peoples was clear to see. After the collapse of the USSR, at the start of the 1990s, research into the language situation in the ethnic regions of Russia in the context of new language policies became one of the priorities of Russian linguistics and sociolinguistics. An analysis was undertaken of the particularities of realizing language legislation, taking into account the dynamics of the actual language situation and the status of languages in the (ethnic) republics. According to the results, a symptom of language assimilation among small in number Indigenous peoples (populations of less than 50,000) was the entry of 63 minority languages into UNESCO's *Red Book of Endangered Languages* of peoples of Russia (Neroznak 1994).

Among the priorities for future research in the field of policy are the search for directions for the optimal functioning of languages which have different status; strengthening of regional bilingualism; organization of regular monitoring of the level of functioning of minority languages, especially in the sphere of education; and studying the cause of the changes in the linguistic behavior of bearers of these languages in order to work out state programs for the preservation and support of the linguistic diversity of the country. One encouraging factor is the adoption of the "Strategy of the state national policy of the Russian Federation" for the period to 2025, in which language policy directed toward the preservation of the languages of the peoples of Russia is one of the priority directions.

Major Contributions

The RSFSR Law on Languages of 1991 defined the languages of the peoples of the RSFSR as a national achievement of the Russian state, a historical and cultural legacy, under the protection of the state. Languages were recognized as the most important element of culture and the foundation for the appearance of ethnic and personal self-consciousness.

The 1993 Constitution entrenched the fundamental principle of “the equality of the rights and freedoms of the person and the citizen independently of. . . race, ethnicity, language. . .” and, developing this principle, directly forbade any form of “limitation of the rights of the citizen on grounds of social, racial, ethnic, religious or linguistic superiority” (Article 29). Article 26 provided that “each person has the right to the use of their native language, and to the free choice of the language of communication, upbringing, instruction and creativity.” The Constitution also designated a single state language on the whole territory of the Russian Federation. The state language of Russia became the Russian language (Article 68[1])—the language of the most numerous ethnic group in the country (about 80%)—and one of the international languages of the world.

The realization of the constitutional principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples received its entrenchment in the linguistic sphere in Article 68(2), according to which the (ethnic) republics have the right to determine their own state languages. The Article further provides that these are used in the bodies of state power, the bodies of local government, and state institutions of the republic “side by side with the state language of the Russian Federation.” The Constitution also contained the collective linguistic rights of the other peoples of Russia. All peoples of the Russian Federation were guaranteed “the right to preservation of their native language, and to the creation of the conditions for its instruction and development” (Article 68[3]).

In all (ethnic) republics except Karelia, the corresponding “titular” languages received legislative status as state languages. There are 34 such languages in the Russian Federation. In some republics two or several languages received such a status. The greatest number of state languages is to be found in the Republic of Dagestan, in which there are 13 such languages.

Work in Progress

The enactment of language legislation in the Russian Federation from 1991 represented a genuine step forward. Only the provision in Article 3(6) of the 1991 Law “On languages,” forbidding the use of any alphabet other than Cyrillic for languages functioning in the Russian Federation, could be described as a violation of international law.

It is also a problematic aspect of Russian language legislation that a wide range of rights of free choice and use of languages is declared, but their implementation is

made difficult in practice by the absence of concrete regulations. Thus, for example, definitions of the rights to the use of their languages by the peoples of Russia are generally qualified in the following ways: “taking into account the local population” (Article 21), “in necessary cases” (Article 16), “in cases of necessity” (Article 15), and so on. This lack of definition is also maintained at the (ethnic) republic level of language legislation, which influences practical activity in support of local languages in a negative way. However, Baskakov (2003) referred to the “obviously political motivation of the Federal legislation on languages,” the aim of which “in the first instance was not so much the protection and development of languages, but rather the enhancement of the sovereignty of the ethnic subjects (republics) of the Federation, and the raising of the social and political status of their ‘titular’ peoples.”

In 1998, a federal law “On amendments and corrections to the Law of the RSFSR ‘On languages of the peoples of the RSFSR’” was enacted. The changes concerned the formulations prescribing the use of the state languages of the (ethnic) republics, which were changed to formulations of a permissive character (Articles 12, 13, 16, 23). For example, if Article 13 of the 1991 Law provided that the texts of laws and other legal documents, enacted by the legislative bodies of the (ethnic) republics, “*are* published in their state languages and in the state language of the RSFSR,” then the law in its new version provides “Laws and other normative documents of the republic side by side with their official publication in the state language of the RF *may* be officially published in the state languages of the republic,” a change from mandatory to permissive. Article 7(1) in the 1991 version provided that state programs of the RSFSR and republics in the RSFSR for the preservation and development of languages of the peoples of the RSFSR *are* worked out and realized by the relevant bodies of state power. In the changed version, this is “bodies of state power of subjects of the RF *may* work out the relevant regional goal oriented programs,” a similar change. Article 4(6), on the completion of documents, confirming the identity of the citizen of the RF, marriage, birth and death certificates, labor booklets, documents concerning education, military cards, and other documents has also undergone change: The state language of the republic may also be placed side by side with the state language of the RF. In the previous version, these documents were formulated in the Russian language and in the state language of the republic (Borgoiakova 2005).

It should be noted that, for example, in the Republic of Khakassia, Article 16(4) in the previous version was never implemented, but (1) and (2) were only implemented in part. Therefore implementation of the changes reinforced the existing practice of functioning of the state republican language (see also Bowring 2010).

The contemporary language legislation of the republics has become more differentiated. The Russian Federation can be divided into three types of republic:

1. Republics in which the “titular” nation composes the majority of the population—more than 50%—for example, the republic of Tyva, the Chuvash Republic, the republic of Kalmykia, and the republic of Tatarstan
2. Republics in which the “titular” nation composes less than 50%: the republic of Altai, the republic of Marii El, and the republic of Mordovia

3. Republics in which the “titular” nation composes less than 30%: the republic of Adygeya, the republic of Komi, and the republic of Khakassiya

The requirement to learn the language of the “titular” people was reinforced in the legal documents only of particular republics mostly in the first two groups, for example, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Chuvashiya (Table 1).

Analysis of the results of the censuses of the population of the RF from the point of view of the dynamics of linguistic “loyalty” and the number of persons who do not have the native (ethnic) language shows that for the most part, they use the Russian language and that the non-Russian population of the country demonstrates a continuing growth of Russia (Table 2).

Problems and Difficulties

The implementation of language policy in Russia has been transferred from the center to the regions, where it is carried out in various ways. In some places local nationalism appears, in others excessive Russification (Alpatov 2014). The measures taken after 1991 were more successful in places where it was possible to implement them in purely administrative ways: dual language signs in institutions, raising the time for broadcasting in ethnic languages on radio and television, and broadening school education in these languages.

But in places where the laws of the market operate—for example, in book publishing and the production of newspapers and journals—minor languages are significantly superseded by Russian. Measures such as dual signage are superficial and in the best cases have only symbolic significance. Even the development of education in ethnic languages is suffocated by the absence of motivation. It is possible to know a language well but not to have the possibility to apply this knowledge.

As a whole the greatest danger is posed by what is happening to the languages of peoples of Russia who are especially small in number. The smallest languages of Siberia, the Far East, and the European North are in a particularly grave situation.

National (ethnic) schools in Russia were always understood to be institutions with the native (non-Russian) language of instruction. Today this concept has been transformed into “schools with ethnic cultural component” (Goryacheva 2010, p. 100). In official reports the heading has been preserved: “institutions with non-Russian languages of instruction” and “institutions with Russian and non-Russian languages of instruction.” In the 2006/2007 academic year, there were, in the first category, 2897 schools or 5.1% (88 town and 2809 village schools) and, in the second, 2848 schools or 9.5% (308 town and 2540 village). The number of schools with Russian as the language of instruction comprised 50,757 (of these 17,998 town and 32,759 village schools). Gymnasiums (grammar schools), colleges, and some other teaching institutions were not to be found in these categories. For comparison: in the 2004/2005 academic year, the number of institutions with Russian language of instruction was 53,896 (town 18,634 and village 35,262), and

Table 1 Subjects (members) of the Russian Federation and the functioning in each of the languages with the status of state languages

	(Ethnic) republics of the Russian Federation	State languages of republics of the RF	Numbers of bearers of the language as a percentage of the population of the republic	
			1989	2010
1	Adygeya	Russian Adigei	68 22.1	63.6 25.2
2	Altai	Russian Altai	60.4 31	56.6 33.9
3	Bashkortostan	Russian Bashkir	39.3 21.9	36.1 29.5
4	Buryatiya	Russian Buryat	70.0 24.0	66.1 30
5	Dagestan	Avar Dargin Kumyk Lezgin Russian Lak Tabasaran Azeri Chechen Nogai Agul Rutul Tat Tsakhur	27.5 15.6 12.9 11.3 9.2 5.1 4.3 4.2 3.2 1.6 0.8 0.8 0.7 0.3	29.4 17 14.9 13.3 3.6 5.6 4.1 4.5 3.2 1.4 1.0 1.0 0.02 0.3
6	Ingushetiya	Ingush Russian		94.1 0.8
7	Kabardino-Balkar republic	Kabardin Russian Balkar	48.2 32.0 9.4	57.2 31.6 12.7
8	Kalmykia	Kalmyk Russian	45.4 37.7	57.4 30.2
9	Karachaevo-Cherkess republic	Russian Karachaev Cherkess Abazin Nogay	42.4 31.2 9.7 6.6 3.2	31.6 41 11.9 7.8 3.3
10	Komi	Russian Komi-Zyryan	57.7 23.3	65.1 23.7
11	Marii El	Russian Mariisky-lugovoi Mariisky-gorny	47.5 43.3	47.4 43.9

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

	(Ethnic) republics of the Russian Federation	State languages of republics of the RF	Numbers of bearers of the language as a percentage of the population of the republic	
			1989	2010
12	Mordovia	Russian	60.8	53.4
		Mordovian Moksha Mordovian Erzya	32.5	40
13	Sakha (Yakutiya)	Russian	50.3	37.8
		Yakut	33.4	49.9
14	Severnaya Osetiya	Osetin	53.3	65.1
		Russian	33.4	20.8
15	Tatarstan	Tatar	48.5	53.2
		Russian	43.3	39.7
16	Tuva	Tuva	64.3	82
		Russian	36.2	16.3
17	Udmurt Republic	Russian	58.9	62.2
		Udmurt	30.9	28
18	Khakassiya	Russian	79.2	81.7
		Khakass	12	12.1
19	Chechnya	Chechen		95.3
		Russian		1.9
20	Chuvash Republic	Chuvash	67.8	67.7
		Russian	26.7	26.9

From Solntsev and Mikhailchenko 2000; 2010 data added by Borgoiakova

Table 2 The number of people using the Russian language, according to the data of censuses, in percentages

	Year				
	1970 ^a	1979 ^a	1989 ^a	2002 ^b	2010 ^b
Population as a whole	96.2	97.4	97.8	98.9	99.1
Russians	100.00	99.99	99.97	99.76	99.81
Non-Russians	78.1	85.1	88.0	95.2	96.2

^aIn 1970–1989, the number of those with Russian language was defined as the sum of those who named Russian as their mother tongue and those who said that they used Russian freely as another language of the peoples of the USSR.

^bIn relation to the nationality (ethnicity) specified and the bearing of some language. Source: D Bogoyavlenskii's analysis (Bogoyavlenskii 2013) on the basis of the data of the census in 1970, 1979, 1989, 2002, and 2010.

institutions “with non-Russian languages of instruction,” 3141 or 5.2% of all schools (101 town and 3040 village), and the number of institutions with “Russian and non-Russian languages of instruction” was 3094 or 5.14% (345 town and 2749

village). Altogether, there were 60,131 schools (town schools 19,080 and village schools 41,051). In this way, the number of schools with non-Russian languages of instruction had diminished in 2 years by 244, and the number of schools with Russian and non-Russian languages of instruction had diminished by 246 schools (Goryacheva 2010).

Languages of instruction apart from Russian are the following. There are 28 languages of the peoples of Russia: Avar, Bashkir, Buryat, Dargin, Kabardin, Kalmyk, Kumyk, Lak, Lezgin, Marii Gorny, Marii Lugovoi, Mordovian Moksha, Mordovian Erzya, Ossetian, Tabasaran, Tatar, Tat, Tuva, Udmurt, Khakass, Chechen, Chuvash, Evenk, and Yakut. There are four languages of peoples with a kin state outside Russia: Azeri, Armenian, Georgian, and Kazakh. Their use as languages of instruction is primarily the teaching of a number of disciplines in the given language (usually humanities and the historical-cultural-local interest cycle). In 2007, 390,223 schoolchildren—2.8% of all schoolchildren—were reported as using these non-Russian languages as a means of communication. Of all school children with non-Russian language of instruction at each level, there were 56.7% in the first to fourth classes, 33.4% in the fifth to ninth classes, and 9.9% in the tenth to 11th classes.

In 2010, at the first level (first to fourth or first to second classes), 31 languages other than Russian were used as languages of instruction: Avar, Adigei, Azeri, Altai, Armenian, Balkar, Bashkir, Buryat, Georgian, Dargin, Kazakh, Kalmyk, Kumyk, Lak, Lezgin, Marii Gorny, Marii Lugovoi, Mordovian Moksha, Mordovian Erzya, Ossetian, Tabasaran, Tatar, Tat, Tuva, Udmurt, Khakass, Chechen, Chuvash, Evenki, Even, and Yakut. These are all languages functioning in the school system except Evenki and Even. The number of schoolchildren with non-Russian languages of instruction in primary schools was 221,256 or 4.5% of all schoolchildren at the first level (Goryacheva 2010).

In the fifth to ninth classes, only the following 15 non-Russian languages were used as languages of instruction: Armenian, Bashkir, Buryat, Georgian, Kazakh, Kalmyk, Marii Lugovoi, Mordovian Erzya, Tatar, Tuva, Udmurt, Chuvash, Evenki, Even, and Yakut. That is, only 1.9% of all schoolchildren at the second level were instructed in a language other than Russian. In the tenth to 11th classes, all these languages are used as the means of instructions except Mordovian Erzya and Tuvan. Schoolchildren with non-Russian languages of instruction were 1.8% of the total number of schoolchildren at the third level.

Altogether nine languages were used in the Russian Federation as languages of instruction from the first to the 11th class. Nearly 90% of all pupils received instruction only in Russian; instruction in non-Russian languages comprised 4%, including in the first to fourth classes, 56.7%; in the fifth to ninth classes, 0.5%; and in the tenth to 11th classes, 1.8%.

Seventy-five languages were studied as a subject, which exceeds twofold the number of languages used as a language of instruction. Village schools are 85.4% of the schools with “non-Russian languages of education” and are 68.5% of schools with “Russian and non-Russian languages of education.” Most schools with Russian as a language of instruction are located in more urban areas (Goryacheva 2010, pp. 115–116, 125–126).

Of foreign languages studied in schools, the English language is primary, comprising 79% of those studying a foreign language, while German, with 16.6%, is second, and French, 4%, is third. Other languages are studied by 0.6% of pupils. Italian is the most often studied of other European languages, while Turkish and Arabic lead non-European languages.

Future Directions

In the process of realizing a pluralist language policy, the Russian Federation has worked out a unique combination of functional dominant languages, with the Russian language and (ethnic) republican languages as functional dominant languages of regional significance. The following regional language policy subtypes in the Russian Federation can be distinguished:

1. Single component model: various forms of the existence of the Russian language
2. Two component model: two dominants (Russian language + republic state language)
3. Three component model: three dominants (Russian language + two republic state languages)
4. Multicomponent model: four, five, and more dominants (Russian language + languages of Dagestan)
5. Differentiated model: language policy in the (administrative) Oblasts where the languages of “small in number” (Indigenous) peoples function (Mikhailchenko 2014, p. 27)

However, this impressive and flexible policy is in the process of being undermined. On 1 September 2013, the 1992 law “On Education” was repealed and replaced by the 2012 law “On education in the Russian Federation.” This continued a trend established in amendments of 2007 to reduce the ethnic component in education, with the abolition of the “national cultural component” and the recentralization and standardization of education (Prina 2011). Article 14 stipulates that education is guaranteed in the state language of the Federation, Russian, while the right to choose the language of instruction is provided “within the opportunities offered by the education system.” The same article states that in schools situated in the (ethnic) republics, the teaching of and instruction in the state languages of the republics “*can* be introduced”; this, however, must be “in accordance with the federal state education standards” and “should not be to the detriment of the teaching and learning of the state language of the Russian Federation” (Prina 2015, p. 128).

New Tasks and Vision of State Language Policy

The policy of the Russian Federation toward minorities underwent an institutional change in 2015. In March 2015, exactly 1 year after the inclusion of Crimea in

Russia in March 2014, a new state agency was created, the Federal Agency for Affairs of Nationalities, with new leadership. At the time of this writing, there was a renewed emphasis on the promotion of the Russian language, which is seen to be in some ways under threat (Bowring 2016).

These developments were summed up by President Vladimir Putin in his address to the Joint Session of the Council for Interethnic Relations and the Council for the Russian Language on 19 May 2015 at the Kremlin (Putin 2015). The discussion that followed Putin's introduction highlighted the tensions created by the new policies. Pyotr Tultaev of the Association of Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia pointed to the severe lack of textbooks and failure to prepare teachers for ethnic languages. Mikhail Khubutiya of the Georgian National Cultural Autonomy used stronger language, asking why schools with an ethnocultural component were being abolished. Ethnic culture was disappearing. Ildar Gilmutdinov of the Tatar National Cultural Autonomy also expressed alarm. Despite the fact that there are 5.5 million Tatars in Russia, 2 million live in Tatarstan, and 3.5 million in other regions of Russia. There are textbooks for Tatar language for primary schools but no textbooks at all for years 5–9. How then, he asked, can the Tatar language be taught in Ulyanovsk Oblast or Mordovia? Furthermore, no teachers were being trained to teach national languages; he gave as an example the Moscow State Pedagogical University, which previously had trained teachers in Tatar language and literature. At the same time, standards of Russian language in Tatarstan were constantly rising (Putin 2015).

The development of language policy has resulted in a number of measures, including some giving perspectives of improvement of the legislation on the use of languages of different status. One of these measures was the task of carrying out annual monitoring of the state and development of the languages of Russia. The results of the 2015 monitoring confirmed a decrease by 1.6 times (238,900 people) of the number of children taught at school in their mother tongues compared with 2007. According to these statistics, in the 2014–2015 academic year, only 24 state languages of the republics of Russia were used as languages of instruction, and 73 languages of the peoples of Russia were taught as a subject (On monitoring 2015).

According to Safaraliev (2015), the number of children learning their mother tongue decreased by 3.5 times compared with the mid-1990s. Golovko (2016) points out that not only has the functional sphere of the majority of languages spoken by the peoples of Russia been reduced (i.e., not only minority languages of Indigenous peoples but also some of the titular languages—for example—Udmurt and Marii), but there is also a significant decrease in the number of people speaking these languages. In light of this decrease in linguistic diversity, there is a need for special state programs aimed at the revitalization, preservation, and development of minority languages of Russia (Golovko 2016, p. 11). These tendencies and developments indicate that the future prospects for language policy and language education in Russia are not at all straightforward.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the New Europe](#)

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Language Education Policies and the Indigenous and Minority Languages of Northernmost Scandinavia and Finland

Leena Huss

Abstract

Three Nordic countries, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, share a very similar history as regards to language policies targeting their northernmost Indigenous and minority peoples. The Sámi in all three countries, the Tornedalians in Sweden, and the Kven in Norway all experienced an early history of a rather laissez-faire policy followed by a long period of forced assimilation, the main assimilative force being the public school system. Especially in Sweden and Norway, the speakers of these languages were also targets of social Darwinist theories, which labeled these peoples both physically and mentally inferior to the higher-standing Scandinavians. The 1970s finally marked the end of assimilation policies in the three Nordic countries. Schools in Sweden and Norway took the first steps of promoting the instruction of Finnish as an optional subject for Tornedalian and Kven pupils. The ethnopolitical Sámi movement had been gaining strength, and during the 1970s, the official view on the Indigenous Sámi and their languages had become more positive in all three countries. Securing the maintenance of Sámi language and culture became the responsibility of the compulsory school system. Today, official language acquisition planning in Norway, Sweden, and Finland includes explicit protection and promotion of Indigenous and minoritized languages, regarded as part of the national heritage of these countries. This chapter provides a brief description of previous and ongoing research on these issues as well as specific questions connected to this research and its policy implications.

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Keywords

Sámi • Meänkieli • Kven • Assimilation • Revitalization

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Introduction

The Nordic countries, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, are often perceived as sharing many common traits, and this is also true concerning their official language education policies as regards to their northernmost Indigenous and minority groups: the Sámi in all three countries, the Tornedalians in Sweden, and the Kven in Norway. The two latter groups are speakers of old Finnish varieties which today are called Meänkieli and Kven and have the status of official national minority languages in their respective countries. Their speakers as well as the speakers of the rest of the languages focused on in this chapter – North Sámi in all three countries, Lule and South Sámi in Sweden and Norway, and Inari and Skolt Sámi in Finland – share an early history of a rather *laissez-faire* policy followed by a long period of forced assimilation where the main assimilative force was the public school system. Especially in Sweden and Norway, the speakers of these languages were also targets of social Darwinist theories in the form of “racial biology,” which labeled these peoples both physically and mentally inferior to the higher-standing Scandinavians (Broberg 1995; Lundborg and Linders 1926). Although such theories have long since been abandoned by scientists in these countries, they are still part of the collective memory among the peoples whose ethnicity, identity, and culture were once heavily stigmatized by them. Today, language acquisition planning in these countries includes protection and promotion of Indigenous and minoritized languages, which earlier were seen as alien to the nation and in need to be thrown into the dustbin of history. This chapter provides a brief description of previous and ongoing research on these issues as well as specific questions connected to this research and its policy implications.

Early Developments and Major Contributions: Forced Assimilation and Stigmatization of the Minority Languages in the North

The fate of the Sámi in the Nordic countries is very similar to the fate of many other Indigenous peoples in the world. The relationship between the Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish states vis-à-vis the Sámi is colonial in origin, as the former president of the Norwegian Sámi Parliament Ole Henrik Magga (1996) has described. Outsiders came as traders, plunderers, and missionaries, borders were drawn up without asking the Sámi, and the states installed themselves as private owners of the land and waters. According to social Darwinistic ideas, the Sámi were an inferior race, doomed to extinction in the modern world.

This thinking led to two different practices described in the scholarly literature, one segregative and the other assimilative. Sjögren (2010) describes how school development in Sweden was impacted by these ideas. A special focus was given to reindeer herders who were regarded as the only “real Sámi,” with a right to maintain their own culture. They were considered as the only ones who could inhabit and use the remote mountain areas in the North. As part of a paternalistic “Lapps shall be Lapps” policy, the so-called Nomad School Reform was implemented, and a special segregated school system was created for the children of reindeer herders, to ensure that Sámi children would not become too civilized or spoiled attending schools for the rest of the children in Sweden (Svonni 2007, p. 98). During the first school years, instruction was given in so-called wandering school huts, which were moved from place to place, in the rhythm of the reindeer-herding year. Instruction was adapted to what was deemed adequate for the children: considerably shorter school terms than in Swedish schools and a special focus on knowledge of reindeer-herding life and northern nature. The conditions were harsh. The huts were cold and drafty and the teachers often inadequately trained. Especially at the beginning, textbooks and other school materials adapted to Sámi children were scarce (Henrysson and Flodin 1992). During the later school years, many pupils were housed with local Sámi or non-Sámi peasant families, but in some places, special household huts were erected with the aim of not spoiling the children with modern comforts (Huss 1999). Although the goal of these schools was segregative, the main medium of instruction was, rather surprisingly, Swedish.

Sámi children with non-reindeer-herding parents, in reality a majority of the Sámi in Sweden, were treated in the same way as Sámi in Norway and Finland. In these countries, social Darwinism led to the idea that the only way to save the Sámi from extinction was a quick assimilation to the majority society. The Sámi language was strictly forbidden in classrooms and schoolyards, and pupils who were found using it were punished in various ways. As many people lived isolated in vast areas, a number of residential schools were established, with the result that many Sámi children were separated from their families at an early age and placed in an alien environment where everything they had been accustomed to was taken from them,

including their language. Many Kven children in Norway and Tornedalian children in Sweden went through similar ordeals. Slunga (1995) has described how in Finnish- and Sámi-speaking areas of northernmost Sweden a number of charity-based workhouses or boarding schools were established. The schools provided food and shelter, instruction, and training in various kinds of household work. In these workhouses, the Swedish language was usually the only language allowed, and as Tornedalian and Sámi children lived there for long periods of time, away from their families, these houses became efficient assimilation instruments. Although some interviews made with former workhouse children include happy memories, many more bear witness to years of unhappiness and homesickness, abuse, and constant physical work (Lindskog 2014; Slunga 1995).

These repressive policies had harmful effects on people's self-image and self-esteem. Eidheim's (1971) seminal study, "When ethnic identity is a social stigma," describes the strong efforts of the Norwegian coastal Sámi to qualify themselves as full participants in the Norwegian society by trying to hide their Sáminess and avoiding the use of Sámi in public spaces, even when no Norwegians were present. Hansegård (1990) has thoroughly discussed the linguistic consequences caused by school instruction in a language the children in the North did not understand. He also describes the low self-esteem among the Tornedalians and a situation where bilingualism in Finnish and Swedish became a negative marker in a society where Swedish monolingualism was the ideal and the majority language the symbol of modernization and advancement in society. Kven in Norway were in a similar situation, and many Kven parents, like their Tornedalian and Sámi counterparts, started speaking the majority language at home, even in cases where their own knowledge of the language was lacking. This led to special grammatical and lexical features and a partly deviant pronunciation in the local Norwegian variety which added to the shame many Kven felt for their roots (Bull 1994; Eidheim 1971). Similar outcomes of assimilation policies were common in other parts of the North as well. In addition, the Kven and the Tornedalians faced the difficulty that their Finnish varieties deviated from the supposedly "real" Finnish used on the Finnish side of the border, and they were therefore sometimes deemed as inferior because of that (e.g., Lane 2011; Lindgren 2009).

Another factor that complicated the situation of the Kven and the Tornedalians and accelerated the assimilation policy toward them was the political situation after Sweden had lost its Finnish territory to Russia in 1809. Eriksen and Niemi's (1981) work, "The Finnish Menace," describes how the Finnish speakers in the border areas of Norway were considered a security risk in the eyes of the authorities since it was feared that they could be used as a pretext for the Russian emperor to demand new territories in the North. After Finnish independence in 1917, the Finns were suspected of having similar plans. Slunga (1965) has described in detail the impact of such fears concerning Finnish speakers in the Swedish-Finnish border regions.

Minde (2005) discussed the fact that relatively little was known about the social-psychological consequences of the Norwegianization policy in the schools. In spite of the fact that so many people had suffered so much, there were few accounts of how these children experienced their time in school. He concluded that this was an

indication of the complexity and taboo riddenness of the subject. One common attitude in Sámi areas was, according to him, to “let bygones be bygones” and not to “drag up” painful memories (Minde 2005, p. 30). A similar “collective silence” about past experiences, a reluctance among Sámi to put words to what happened in the past, has also been observed by Johansen in Norway (2009, p. 195; 2013, p.74). The need to break the silence among the Sámi in Sweden is discussed in a collection of personal memories and articles on the Nomad School which is part of an ongoing reconciliation process between the Swedish Church and the Sámi.

The history of forced assimilation, most efficiently carried out through school education, still impacts the lives of those who have firsthand experience of it, but also succeeding generations. The original languages were not always lost during the school years, but the stigmatization of them by the school was so great that it made many decide not to pass on the minority or Indigenous language to their children. This was done to protect the children from negative experiences similar to those that the parents had had themselves (e.g., Eidheim 1971). At the same time, however, this deprived the children of their heritage – the language and all the traditions and knowledge transmitted through it. Johansen, in her (2009, p. 195) study of the assimilation and revitalization of the Norwegian coastal Sámi, claims that the second and third generations therefore actually paid the highest price for Norwegianization, as they landed in a “neither-nor identity” which many of them have tried to process later in life. The generation who had experienced forced assimilation still retained enough of their linguistic and cultural competence to be able to express Sámi identity in private contexts, while their children lacked that possibility.

Recent and Current Work: Language Maintenance and Revitalization Through Schooling

Kven and Meänkieli in School

The 1970s marked the end of assimilation policies in the three Nordic countries. At that time provincial school authorities in Norrbotten, Sweden, took the first steps of promoting the instruction of Finnish in school (Huss 1999). Toward the end of the 1960s, the prohibition against speaking Finnish in Norwegian schools was lifted, and in 1970, teaching in Finnish as an optional subject was started in one school (Huss 1999).

During the following years, there were increasing possibilities of studying Finnish in local schools in Tornedalian and Kven areas. For many children, however, the standard Finnish taught in schools deviated from the variety used at home, which contributed to many pupils dropping the subject after a while. Later, instruction in the local varieties, Kven and Meänkieli (literally “Our Language,” the official name of the Tornedalian variety of Finnish since 2000), has been offered in some schools in Sweden and Norway as an optional subject. To enhance the status of Meänkieli, an attempt was made in 1999 to introduce instruction in Meänkieli as a compulsory

subject in the local curriculum for primary schools in Pajala, a core area for Meänkieli (Huss 2008b). The aim was to enable all pupils to “read and write simple texts in Meänkieli” by the time they left school. The issue was sensitive, and a reaction came in the form of a petition that gathered more than 1000 signatures against the new policy – a considerable number in a municipality with less than 8000 inhabitants. Later, the policy was amended, and the original aim to teach Meänkieli to all comprehensive school pupils was lowered to cover only part of the pupils (Huss 2008b). Since then, Meänkieli in education appears to be a less controversial issue in Sweden. Nevertheless, Meänkieli and Kven have only been taught as subjects in school, without the use of any strong bilingual models. Research on the scope, methods, and outcomes of teaching Meänkieli and Kven in Swedish and Norwegian schools is still seriously lacking.

Corpus Planning for Meänkieli and Kven

Another issue, seldom a topic in the Nordic school research context, is the effect of a lacking or still ongoing language standardization of minority languages. While all the recognized Sámi languages are fully standardized and schoolbooks exist in these languages, the standardization of Meänkieli and Kven is still in progress. For the schools, this is particularly challenging since the instruction in these languages still has to take departure from a norm of some kind. Lindgren (2009) describes how in Norway, this corpus planning issue has been tackled by establishing an expert group that proposes alternative orthographical, lexical, and morphological norms, based on various varieties of Kven spoken in Norway. The proposals are discussed by a group of Kven-speaking laypersons from different Kven areas who have the right to choose between the alternatives. After this process, norms are established little by little. This standard is specifically meant to be a “schoolbook standard,” while outside school, only a common orthography, very close to that of Finnish and Meänkieli, has been established. Apart from that, Kven can be written in many ways, reflecting the liberal view on language variation in Norway as regards to the national language Norwegian as well. Standardization is a sensitive issue in small, vulnerable language communities who have experienced a very long assimilation process. Resources are scarce, and standardization work which necessarily almost always favors some of the speakers and sidelines others is likely to cause conflicts within these groups (Lane 2011).

Developing Schools for the Sámi

In the 1970s, the ethnopolitical Sámi movement had been gaining strength, and the official view on the Sámi and their languages had become more positive in all three countries. Securing the maintenance of Sámi language and culture became the task of the compulsory school system in Norway, Finland, and Sweden, and different models were gradually developed for that purpose.

A few decades later, Aikio-Puoskari (2001) compared the education in and of the Sámi languages in the three countries and came to the conclusion that all countries had taken steps forward, but the school had not yet become a sufficient counterforce to the far advanced language shift among the Sámi. She noted that the terms of learning Sámi and maintaining Sámi identity through school education varied considerably from country to country, while Norway stood out as offering the best terms in all respects. She also noted that the fulfillment of Sámi language rights through compulsory school education was least satisfactory outside the official Sámi administrative areas, and also regarding the smaller Sámi languages, such as South, Lule, Inari, and Skolt Sámi. This is also the case today.

In Norway, instruction through the medium of Sámi is more frequent today than in the other two countries, but even there, instruction in Sámi as a second language or in “Sámi language and culture” (the latter model was abandoned in 2006) – implicating that Sámi is only taught as a subject – has until today been the most common model used. In a study on Sámi language revitalization in school, Todal (2002) noted that in the 1990s, strong bilingual teaching models existed for pupils learning Sámi as their first language, while no such strong models were available for pupils choosing Sámi as a second language. For them, only instruction in Sámi as a subject was available and such a model was, as Todal noted, insufficient if the pupils were to acquire active competence in Sámi. This continues to be the case, and Todal has noted that it is a serious obstacle for revitalization of Sámi in Norway (Todal 2013).

The case is similar in Sweden and Finland as well. In the few special Sámi schools in Sweden, comprising grades 1–6, Sámi was long taught in virtually the same way as the so-called home languages for immigrants and minorities in municipal schools: a couple of weekly hours of the “home language.” As late as the 1990s, the situation changed and bilingual education became common in some of these schools. Svonni (1993) conducted a study on the proficiency in North Sámi of pupils in Swedish Sámi schools and municipal schools with instruction in Sámi. As could be expected, he found the best results among the children who knew Sámi when they started school and who had had at least some instruction through the medium of Sámi. Conversely, the children who did not know any Sámi prior to school and only used Sámi during the Sámi lessons at school benefitted least from the instruction. Such Sámi children being the majority in Sweden, Svonni concluded that his results demonstrated an ongoing language shift among the young Sámi generation.

Generally, Sámi education in Sweden has been characterized as a transitional model with assimilatory goals (e.g., Outakoski 2015), as Sámi-medium instruction only exists in the Sámi schools, and even there, part of the instruction must be in Swedish, making the strongest bilingual education models such as full immersion impossible. Moreover, the proportion of Swedish-medium teaching must increase through the first 6 years until the children leave the Sámi school for grades 7 to 9 in a regular compulsory school, where Swedish is the language of instruction.

Sámi education in Finland, characterized by Outakoski (2015) as a maintenance model, allows education in the Sámi administrative area partly or mainly through the medium of Sámi, according to the choices of the individual schools. The greatest

possibilities of receiving Sámi-medium education are found in Utsjoki and Inari, where the proportion of Sámi among the population is high. The context of Sámi-medium education can nevertheless vary. In a recent comparison between a Norwegian and Finnish school, Rasmussen (2015) shows that the Sámi school in Tana, Norway, with only Sámi pupils and Sámi as the only medium of instruction, resulted in better Sámi learning outcomes and more use of Sámi outside the school and among peers, than what was accomplished by the school in Utsjoki. There, both Finnish- and Sámi-medium classes were hosted in the same building, and the administrative and other work in the premises surrounding the Sámi classes was conducted in Finnish. In both municipalities, the Sámi are in a majority, but Rasmussen concludes that only the Norwegian school was able to contribute to the ethnolinguistic vitality among the Sámi population by creating a sufficiently Sámi milieu for the pupils, while this did not apply to Utsjoki. In a recent interview study among teachers, Hornberger and Outakoski (2015) also pointed out that the school materials available for Sámi pupils in Finland are often translated from Finnish, and the overall school content is the same as in the Finnish schools. This results in a situation where Sámi pupils do not have much chance of learning about their own history and culture.

As part of a comparative study on language choice patterns in Sámi families in Finland, Sweden, and Norway, Jansson (2005) conducted ethnographic fieldwork in six schools. Her detailed account offers a vivid picture of life in these schools, the common difficulty of recruiting teachers who had *both* the formal teacher competence required *and* active Sámi skills, the struggle of the teachers to increase the amount of Sámi used in class in spite of heterogenous classes, and their need to produce their own teaching materials to compensate for lacking or inadequate school materials in Sámi. Jansson (2005) also presents examples of individual strong immersion-type instruction efforts and mentions some cases where the schools actually succeeded in teaching Sámi to children who did not know the language prior to school. She also witnessed how the use of Sámi could spread from the classroom to other activities as well and become the language used during the breaks.

A study on a parent-initiated language revitalization project among South Sámi children in preschool and school in Norway was carried out by Todal (2007). The parents of the children were reindeer herders, and while they identified strongly with the South Sámi language, most had only receptive skills in Sámi and did not use the language at home. Todal describes the development of a daycare center inspired by the Māori *kōhanga reo* (language nest preschool) as the first step. The daycare center was primarily designed for South Sámi children, but other children were welcome, which was one of the reasons for not using only South Sámi in the daycare activities. Later, a special South Sámi immersion class was started in the local school for the children leaving the daycare center. The results from the 5-year project were very positive. The children acquired active skills in everyday South Sámi which continued to develop during the whole project period (Todal 2007).

Outakoski (2015) studied literacy development among 9 to 15 year old North Sámi learners in the core Sámi areas of Finland, Norway, and Sweden. She found

that all these schoolchildren were exposed daily to at least three languages – North Sámi, English, and the national majority language; their exposure was through the school but also through the media, popular culture, tourism, literature, and the home. However, the languages were unevenly distributed in these contexts, and North Sámi could easily be sidelined by the other languages. Outakoski (2015) concludes that the support given by the school for bilingualism among Sámi learners is limited, while there are also considerable differences in how this support is divided in the three countries and in local schools. What is lacking is the possibility for the young multilingual learners to access a wide range of written content in all of their languages, including especially their Indigenous Sámi language (Outakoski 2015).

A general problem discussed by several scholars of Sámi education is a need for increasing Sámi cultural content in school education. Høgmo (1989) described an early dilemma faced by the Norwegian school system in the late 1970s and the 1980s when a more adequate school for the Sámi was to be developed. In Sámi society, the school had long been associated with Norwegian authorities, as an instrument to control the Norwegian society. Its task was to qualify the young Sámi generation for a society and a working life that, from the perspective of the parents and grandparents, had little to do with the qualifications needed in Sámi life. Those were acquired through the family and livelihoods, and the question was whether their task now was to be taken over by the school and how – if at all possible – this could be accomplished.

The right of the Sámi to Sámi cultural content in education was widely accepted, but the practical implementation of this right has been criticized during the years and still remains a central educational concern in all three countries. Hirvonen (2004) studied teachers' views on the realization of the Sámi school in Norway after the Curriculum Reform 97 and concluded among other things that “subject syllabuses must be rewritten so that Sámi culture is their starting-point and not just a fragmentary part of syllabuses which are otherwise wholly Norwegian” (p. 155). In a critical article about linguistic and cultural equality in the Sámi school in Norway, Hirvonen (2008) discusses the weak form of Sámi education, Sámi as a second language. It has the official aim of functional bilingualism, while the scope and methods used seldom result in that. Hirvonen provides examples of methods teachers use to enhance the language competence and interest of their pupils. One example is a quote from a teacher who describes how she takes her pupils outdoors, on the fells, because it gives them “this Sámi feeling” and they want to speak the language there (p. 34).

An example of efforts to introduce Sámi pedagogy and traditional knowledge in school education in Sweden is Jannok Nutti's (2013) study of the possibilities of teaching mathematics from the perspective of the local Sámi culture. She noted the lack of an authorized teaching approach grounded in Sámi culture, a state of affairs shifting the responsibility of developing a culturally based Sámi education to the individual teacher. The teachers she followed showed how mathematics teaching could indeed be integrated into a Sámi context by implementing culturally based mathematics lessons and how the teachers themselves became active agents of school change.

Johansson (2009) conducted a study based on the possibilities offered by the Swedish national curriculum to give support to Sámi schools and to make them more sensitive to Sámi culture. Her aim was to examine how parents could be involved in developing a special school curriculum based on local Sámi culture. In cooperation with parents, teachers, and pupils, the existing curriculum and school practices were analyzed critically to learn what areas in the curriculum gave opportunities to develop a more culture-based education. A new local curriculum text for the school was formulated and realized in school practice. Parents and pupils participated in the discussions and working groups together with their teachers, and the cooperation functioned well in this kind of curriculum work.

Määttä et al. (2013) discussed the lack of an independent Sámi school based on Sámi culture in Finland and presented opinions of Sámi education experts on the possibilities and obstacles for creating such a school model. A precondition for it was deemed to be a special Sámi curriculum where Sámi language plays a central role as opposed to the present system with a national core curriculum which does not pay attention to the special needs of the Sámi. The importance of creating a culturally sensitive learning environment and strengthening the special characteristics of Sámi culture in the pedagogy was emphasized in the study.

Problems and Difficulties

Research on language maintenance and revitalization in Sweden and Norway is complicated by the fact that collecting data about the ethnicity or language affiliation of people is prohibited in law, which is not the case in Finland. This can be a problem in comparative studies between countries, and it affects especially all kinds of long-term studies, for instance, when there is a need to investigate how legal obligations to offer service in minority languages reaches those who have these rights or whether the fulfillment of the obligations has improved over time. In the school context, data on pupils participating in Sámi language instruction can be obtained, but it is difficult to investigate changes in these figures in relation to the number of potential Sámi learners since there is no way of knowing how many children in fact have Sámi roots or know Sámi and who therefore are entitled to such instruction (Todal 2013). Figures commonly used for Sámi are rough estimates from various sources or the registers of the Sámi in the three countries who have the right to vote for the Sámi Parliaments in each country. Even then, it is difficult to know how many of those who qualify actually choose to use their right to vote or not. (According to the information given on the website of the Swedish Sámi Parliament (<https://www.sametinget.se/samer>), the number of Sámi in the three countries is often estimated as follows: 20,000–40,000 in Sweden, 50,000–65,000 in Norway, 8000 in Finland, and 2000 in Russia. The proportion of Sámi speakers is estimated to be 40–45%.)

The lack of official census data on minority and Indigenous language speakers is even more difficult when doing research on Sámi, Kven, and Tornedalians outside their traditional core areas. Figures for Sámi can be found in Finland, based on

census information gathered in connection with the elections for the Sámi Parliament every 4 years (Aikio-Puoskari et al. 2009). These figures demonstrate that the proportion of Sámi children aged 0–10 years living outside the Sámi administrative area is as high as 73%, and for ages 11–17 the proportion is 65%. It is probable that the tendency is similar regarding the Sámi in other countries as well as the Kven and Tornedalians. The possibilities of all children and young people in this situation to acquire and maintain their minority and Indigenous languages through school instruction and otherwise – an important issue for the fate of these languages in the long run – is an insufficiently studied field in all three countries.

Future Directions

The prevalence of weak education models in language education for Sámi, Tornedalian, and Kven children has been demonstrated in research, but very little is known about the long-term results of receiving such education. We do not know whether this model, or strong education models for that matter, impacts language choices in the homes of these pupils or in their future lives and how the interaction between the two worlds – the home and the school – could be enhanced to contribute to further minority and Indigenous language maintenance and revitalization in all three countries.

Hirvonen (2008) has pointed out that, while weak education models do not lead to high levels of language competence or bilingualism, they can be important in developing positive attitudes among the pupils toward the language and culture in question and signaling that they are valued by the school. This is in line with Hinton's (2001) reflections on the impact of language-as-subject programs in revitalization. In spite of their disadvantages, she has found that these programs also have some considerable advantages. She describes how a generation of children in a language-as-subject program became proud of their linguistic heritage and developed a level of conversational ability in their Indigenous language. In contrast to what their parents felt as teenagers, Hinton had heard these children express the view that children at school think it is really "cool" to know their language. She concluded that "children with such positive attitudes will be tomorrow's leaders in language revitalization" (p. 5).

In fact, in many studies, data can be found indicating a growing interest and positive attitudes among children and the young toward minority and Indigenous languages of the North (Jansson 2005; Linkola 2014; Outakoski 2015; Rasmus 2008; Todal 2002). The children have no personal experience of forced assimilation policies, but at the same time, because of the history, many of them have not had the opportunity of acquiring Sámi, Meänkieli, or Kven at home. Many parents put their hope in the school, while the majority language remains the language in many homes. The possibilities of learning the languages at school are by far best for the Sámi, but even for them, there are serious obstacles for achieving a higher level of language competence, especially in terms of literacy, in the Sámi languages. More

research is needed on various ways of increasing the number of strong bilingual teaching models as well as creating a milieu and a context on the local level for school children where Sámi is the norm or equal to other languages and where Sámi and non-Sámi content is available in the Sámi language in forms which are relevant and attractive for the young (cf. Outakoski 2015).

The precarious position of the minor Sámi languages and their double minority position vis-à-vis the more powerful North Sámi spoken in all three countries has been addressed in research (e.g., Huss 2008a; Pasanen 2015; Todal and Coleman 1999). However, far too little research has been conducted on the language situations in these smaller communities in the era of a rising interest and engagement in language revitalization. There are some striking examples of successful, community-initiated revitalization efforts in some of the most endangered language communities: among South Sámi speakers in Norway (Todal 2007) and Inari Sámi speakers in Finland (Olthuis et al. 2013; Pasanen 2015). More research is needed on what is happening on the local level, on what factors may eventually prove decisive in counteracting the lingering negative ideologies and attitudes toward Indigenous and minoritized languages, and, not least, on what impact school education can have on local revitalization efforts.

The fact that Sámi is spoken in several countries – the three countries focused on in this chapter as well as in the Kola Peninsula in Russia – has turned out to be a strength in many ways. Sámi political and language cooperation exists between the countries, and the relatively strong position of Sámi language and culture in Norway where also the largest numbers of Sámi live has strengthened and inspired the Sámi in the rest of the countries. Comparative studies, like those already conducted, shed more light on common issues in minority and Indigenous education in different countries and can disseminate knowledge of successful and innovative developments across the borders. They also offer new opportunities for researchers from different countries to initiate joint projects together with practitioners and local communities and to cooperate in ways that will benefit and inspire all parties.

As has been shown above, the official policies toward Sámi, Meänkieli, and Kven have changed completely, from forced assimilation to active promotion, but these languages are still in a very precarious situation. For those engaged in language education policy, the challenge is to create more efficient follow-up systems and to apply and spread stronger language education models, better reflecting the culture and philosophy tied to the languages in question. The path to successful language and culture maintenance in the North still appears long, and while the speakers and potential speakers themselves have a central role in revitalization work, it is also the responsibility of the Nordic states to strongly support its continuation.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Language Policy and Education in the USA

Wayne E. Wright and Thomas Ricento

Abstract

The purpose of this review is to provide a balanced description of important aspects of language policy in the United States as they relate, either directly or indirectly, to educational practices. In the first part of the chapter, we briefly describe policy and approaches from the early days of nationhood through the middle of the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1960s, the federal government took a more active role in accommodating and, in some cases, promoting non-English languages in education. The first major federal involvement was the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 (Title VII of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act), a competitive grant program for schools to develop and support bilingual programs for students not yet proficient in English (Lyons 1992). Other federally supported programs that have dealt with language and education include the Native American Languages Act of 1990 and the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006, which endorse the preservation of Indigenous languages; the National Literacy Act of 1991 authorized literacy programs and established the National Institute for Literacy. The National Security Education Act of 1991 established a program designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of US citizens with foreign language skills in identified “critical needs” languages. In addition, the US Department of Education supports 16 Language Resource Centers at selected universities around the country designed to address the national need for expertise and competencies in foreign languages. The lack of a coherent (explicit) national language policy

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reflects, in part, broader social divisions about the role of education and, especially, language(s), in society (Tollefson and Tsui 2014).

Keywords

Bilingual Education Act (1968) • No Child Left Behind (NCLB) • English language learners (ELLs) • Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) • Dual language/bilingual education (DLBE)

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Introduction

The purpose of this review is to provide a balanced description of important aspects of language policy in the United States as they relate, either directly or indirectly, to educational practices. Language policies derive from official enactments of governing bodies or authorities, such as legislation, executive directives, judicial orders or decrees, or policy statements, voter-approved initiatives, and nonofficial institutional or individual practices or customs. Policies may also evolve as a consequence of actions governments do *not* take, for example, by not providing support for the teaching or learning of a particular language, or language variety, or by designating and promoting an official language and ignoring other languages, or by failing to provide adequate resources to ensure all groups have equal opportunities to acquire the official language in educational settings. Policies may also evolve from grassroots movements and become formalized through laws, practices, or some combination of both. In this chapter, theoretical perspectives on language policy and education will be addressed only briefly (for background information, see Johnson 2013; Johnson and Ricento 2013; Wiley 2005).

Early Developments

The focus of much of the earliest work in language policy in the United States was on the status of English vs. non-English languages from the colonial period through the mid-nineteenth century (Kloss 1998). Conklin and Lourie (1983) describe the history of languages in North America, beginning with the arrival of the first

Europeans in the sixteenth century; Heath and Mandabach (1983) describe the British legacy of tolerance toward the use of non-English languages coupled with an aversion to rigid standardization of English prevalent in the United States until the mid-nineteenth century. Linguistic minority immigrants from Europe often settled into relatively isolated communities where they established schools taught in the medium of their native languages instead or bilingually along with English (Toth 1990). In the southwest, bilingual Spanish-English schools were common in the mid- to late 1880s (Blanton 2004; Wiley 2013).

However, such linguistic tolerance was not extended to Native Americans and enslaved Africans. Colonies such as Virginia and South Carolina (and later, many states) passed “compulsory ignorance laws” which made it a crime to teach slaves and sometimes free Blacks to read or write (Crawford 1992). Native American languages and cultures were stigmatized. Government policy, beginning in 1802, provided “civilization funds” including support for English teaching provided mainly by missionary groups; however, the bilingual approaches favored in mission schools were ultimately outlawed and led to the forced separation of Native children from their languages and cultures in English-only government boarding schools beginning in 1889 (Leibowitz 1971).

The development of a common public school system beginning in the 1850s, coupled with a nativist movement beginning in the 1880s, led to the imposition of English as the sole language of instruction in public and most parochial schools by the 1920s (Heath 1981). Prior to 1889, only three states had laws prescribing English as the language of instruction in private schools, while by 1923, 34 states required English (Leibowitz 1971, p. 7). In Hawaii (1920) and California (1921), a series of laws were passed aimed at abolishing private Japanese language schools; by 1923, 22 states had laws prohibiting the teaching of foreign languages in primary schools. In *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923), in response to a 1919 Nebraska law forbidding instruction in languages other than English, the US Supreme Court upheld the right of states to mandate the language of instruction in schools, but also ruled that state efforts to prevent such instruction outside of regular school hours to be unconstitutional. In 1927, the Court upheld a ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (1926) which had found laws prohibiting the teaching of non-English languages in 22 states to be unconstitutional (Tamura 1993). Moreover in 1927, the US Supreme Court ruled in *Farrington v. Tokushige* that Hawaii’s efforts to abolish private Japanese, Korean, and Chinese language schools were unconstitutional and thus reaffirmed the right of language minority communities to organize after-school and weekend heritage language programs.

The period 1930–1965 was relatively uneventful with regard to federal intervention in language policy issues, with several notable exceptions, such as the continued intrusion of US influence in language-in-education policy in Puerto Rico (Resnick 1993), restrictive policies toward the use of Japanese and German in public domains from the 1930s through World War II, and renewed restrictions on Native Americans (Wiley 2013; Wiley et al. 2014). In a more positive vein, oppressive boarding school policies for Native Americans began to become more relaxed, and the linkage of language minority status with segregation in political access was significant,

anticipating major policy shifts culminating in federal legislation in the 1960s supporting bilingual education and voting ballots, which was expanded in the 1970s.

Major Contributions

Beginning in the 1960s, the federal government took a more active role in accommodating and, in some cases, promoting non-English languages in education. The federal role increased in two ways: increased expenditures for students identified as lacking proficiency in English under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and an increased role in the enforcement of civil rights laws in education (Macias 1982). The first major federal involvement was the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 (Title VII of the ESEA), a competitive grant program for schools to develop and support bilingual programs for students not yet proficient in English (Lyons 1992). Through several reauthorizations over the next 30 years, BEA funds mainly supported transitional models of bilingual education designed to move ELLs to English-only instruction as quickly as possible. Some support was provided for dual language programs promoting higher levels of bilingualism and biliteracy, though BEA funds were also increasingly used to support non-bilingual programs such as structured (sheltered) English immersion (Wright 2015). However, the BEA came to an end following the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which reauthorized the ESEA in 2001.

Under NCLB, all direct references to “bilingual education” were stripped from federal education law. Title III, “Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students,” required states to identify ELLs and develop their English proficiency through “language instruction education programs,” though such programs “may make instructional use of both English and a child’s native language.” Federal funding to support language instruction education programs was provided directly to state governments with the expectation that funding be provided to all schools serving ELLs. Thus, states could utilize these funds to support bilingual education programs if they so chose (Wright 2015). Title III required states to establish English language proficiency (ELP) standards and assessments. Schools were accountable for ensuring that increasing numbers of ELLs made progress in learning and attaining proficiency in English each year, in addition to passing state reading and math tests given to all students as mandated under Title I. Under Title I, all ELLs were required to take state tests in grades 3–8 and once in high school. Schools were held accountable for ensuring that all students made adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward a goal of 100% passing rates by 2014; this included ELLs whose progress was required to be tracked in a separate limited English proficient (LEP) subgroup.

In partial recognition of the challenges ELLs face in taking tests in English before they are proficient in the language, Title I called for the provision of testing accommodations, including, “to the extent practicable,” testing students in their native language for up to the first 5 years of enrollment. Despite NCLB’s call for accommodations, the vast majority of ELL students were tested in English with little

to no accommodations. Amidst rising concerns about the validity of their scores, schools nonetheless faced threats of sanctions if too many ELL (or other) students failed the test each year. Given the pressure to raise test scores, the lack of tests in students' native languages, the lack of encouragement and financial support for bilingual programs, and the heavy emphasis on English, many viewed NCLB as an implicit (or covert) language policy encouraging English-only instruction (Menken 2008).

After several years of delay, the US Congress reauthorized the ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law by President Barack Obama on December 10, 2015. In wide recognition of the NCLB's flaws, ESSA provides states with much greater flexibility in establishing academic content and language standards, assessments, accountability programs, and short- and long-term student achievement goals. The testing regimen, requirements for including and tracking the progress of ELLs, and calls for testing accommodation (including options for testing in the native language) remain essentially the same as under NCLB. However, ESSA requires schools to pay greater attention to students' English language proficiency and gives schools some leeway in how ELL test scores are included in a school's accountability rating. The call for generic "language instruction education programs" focused on English language development remains the same, including the suggestion that such programs may make use of a child's native language. In Title VI of ESSA special attention is given to Native American education, which includes the possibility of Indigenous language immersion and calls for a national study on the same.

With the absence of clearly defined instructional approaches in the federal law, states are given some flexibility to define what constitutes effective instruction for ELL students. This has been particularly problematic in three states that passed anti-bilingual education voter initiatives: California (Proposition 227), Arizona (Proposition 203), and Massachusetts (Question 2). Together, these states are home to over one-third of the nation's ELL student population. Despite federal allowances for native language instruction, the law in these states mandates that ELL students be placed in structured English immersion (SEI) classrooms. Despite some allowances for waivers, it has proved difficult for schools to provide bilingual education as an option (Arias and Faltis 2012; Gándara and Hopkins 2010; G. McField 2014; Moore 2014). However, the passage of Proposition 58 in California in 2016 overturned Proposition 227, thus opening up new possibilities for expanding bilingual education programs.

Other federally supported programs which deal with language and education include the Native American Languages Act of 1990 and the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006, which endorse the preservation of Indigenous languages, and the National Literacy Act of 1991, which authorized literacy programs and established the National Institute for Literacy. The National Security Education Act of 1991 established a program designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of US citizens with foreign language skills in identified "critical needs" languages. In addition, the US Department of Education supports 16 Language Resource Centers at selected universities around the country designed

to address the national need for expertise and competencies in foreign languages. However, only one of the centers focuses on heritage speakers.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 have provided the statutory bases, while the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution has provided the constitutional rationale for expanding educational opportunities for language minority students in a number of important court cases (Del Valle 2003). Among the most significant of these was the *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) decision, in which the US Supreme Court, relying on the 1964 Civil Rights Act, found that the San Francisco School District had failed to provide a meaningful educational opportunity to Chinese ancestry students due to their lack of basic English skills. The Court did not specify an appropriate remedy. However, soon after the ruling, the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education wrote guidelines (known as the *Lau Remedies*), which instructed school districts how to identify and evaluate limited and non-English-speaking children, identified instructional “treatments” to use (including bilingual education), and established exit criteria and professional teacher standards. Resistance to these federal regulations resulted in lawsuits, including an important court ruling in the case of *Casteñeda v. Pickard* (1981), which clarified that bilingual education was not required, but that any programs for ELLs must be (1) based on sound educational theory, (2) adequately funded, and (3) evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

Policy for English as a second language (ESL) education has been subsumed under a variety of federal and state programs, including NCLB and ESSA, the Head Start (Early Childhood) Program, the National Literacy Act of 1991, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, the Adult Education Act (AEA), and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (Perkins Act). According to the US Census Bureau, nearly 60.6 million people (5+ years of age) speak a language other than English at home. While over three-fourths (77.6%) of these individuals are bilinguals who report speaking English “very well” (58.2%) or “well” (19.4%), 7.0% reported they did not speak English at all, while 15.4% reported they spoke English “not well” (Ryan 2013). The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (2011) identified over 5.2 million K-12 students as English language learners (ELLs) in 2010 – a 64.5% growth since 1994. These figures suggest that there are millions of children and adults in need of specialized education programs to help them learn English. In a biennial report to Congress, the US Department of Education (2013) reported that over 95% of identified ELLs were participating in federally funded language instruction education programs. However, in many states these programs are ill-defined and often differ little from mainstream instruction (Wright 2015). Programs for adult ESL are far fewer, lack coordination among federal, state, and private providers, and thus are harder to access (Wiley 2005). A report from the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education reported that in 2010, 50 of the 51 states/territories confirmed that they have students on waiting lists for access to adult education programs (McLendon 2010). The US Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education reported serving 1.7 million adult students in 2012–2013 through the Adult

Education and Family Literacy Act, though only 40% participated in English literacy courses which tend to target adult ESL students (Swoyer 2014). Thus, adult education programs are likely only serving a small portion of those in need of ESL instruction.

According to the results of the most recent survey of K-12 public schools in the United States conducted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2011), in the 2007–2008 school year, only 18.5% of students (8.9 million) were enrolled in foreign language courses – a slight increase from 18% (8.6 million) in 2004–2005. However, ACTFL found that students in just five states (California, Arizona, Texas, New York, Florida, and Pennsylvania) account for 40% of foreign language enrollment, and enrollments actually decreased in 17 states since 2005. The majority of students study Spanish (72.6%), followed distantly by French (14.8%) and German (4.43%). The other most commonly studied languages are Latin (2.3%), Japanese (0.82%), Chinese (0.67%), and Russian (0.14%). Despite these low numbers, some have seen sharp increases in enrollment since 2004, including Chinese (194.99%), Japanese (35.01%), and German (8.21%), while there were decreases for Latin (–8.97%) and French (–3.24%). There was also a sharp increase (35.01%) in the study of other languages. Although the actual number of students studying these other languages are low (most are between 94 and 4000), increasing enrollments in languages such as Arabic, Korean, Portuguese, Swahili, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Native American languages may be indicative of increasing demands of heritage language students for opportunities to further develop their languages at school (Wiley et al. 2014).

Data on foreign language enrollments in postsecondary institutions for 2013 have been compiled by the Modern Language Association (Goldbert et al. 2015). The data are based on results of a questionnaire sent to 2616 eligible higher education institutions, with 98.3% of the institutions responding. Table 1 lists the 14 most studied languages, followed by total number of enrollments and percentage of total foreign language enrollments. Overall, enrollments in foreign languages decreased by 6.7% between 2009 and 2013, though enrollments increased for Korean (44.7%), ASL (19.0%), Portuguese (10.1%), and Chinese (2.0%). There was also an increase between 2009 and 2013 in the number of institutions offering specific languages, including 84 more for Chinese, 26 more for ASL, 23 more for Arabic, 19 more for Korean, and 17 more for Portuguese. As with the K-12 data, these increases may be a reflection of the demand by heritage speakers of these languages. Less commonly taught languages typically have very low enrollments, and in 2013 there were 104 languages that were taught at only one institution, and 56 languages that were taught in 2006 or 2009 were no longer taught in 2013; however, there were 63 languages taught in 2013 that were not taught in prior years.

According to latest reports from the US Census Bureau using data from the 2011 American Community Survey (Ryan 2013), about 60.6 million people in the United States aged 5+ speak a language other than English at home (21% of the population), a substantial increase from 32 million in 1980. The Census Bureau identified 381 languages spoken in the United States. Following English, Spanish is the most common with 37.6 million speakers, representing 62% of speakers of

Table 1 Most studied foreign languages in postsecondary US institutions

Language	Number of students enrolled	Percentage of FL enrollments (%)
Spanish	790,756	50.6
French	197,757	12.7
American Sign Language	109,577	7.0
German	86,700	5.5
Italian	71,285	4.6
Japanese	66,740	4.3
Chinese	61,055	3.9
Arabic	32,286	2.1
Latin	27,192	1.7
Russian	21,962	1.4
Hebrew (biblical and modern)	19,249	1.2
Ancient Greek	12,917	0.8
Portuguese	12,415	0.8
Korean	12,229	0.8

languages other than English. Chinese follows with 2.9 million speakers (4.8%). Other languages with over one million speakers in the United States include French, German, Korean, Vietnamese, and Tagalog; Arabic and Russian have over 900,000 speakers.

Work in Progress

Issues which have received attention in the literature in recent years include challenges of meeting federal education requirements and expectations under the former policies of NCLB, and ESEA Flexibility, and now under the current ESSA. Recent attention has also been given to initiatives such as the Seal of Biliteracy, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and associated state assessment consortia (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers [PARCC] and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium), the English language proficiency standards and associated state assessment consortia (WIDA and the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the Twenty-First Century [ELPA21]), the heritage language education, the softening of restrictions on bilingual education, and the continuing efforts related to deaf education and teacher training. Each of these works in progress is discussed briefly below.

High failure rates of states in meeting NCLB's increasingly unrealistic expectations for adequate yearly progress, coupled with Congress' long delay in reauthorizing the ESEA, led the Obama Administration to offer states waivers from portions of NCLB and propose their own accountability systems through a program called ESEA Flexibility. Requirements included the adoption of new "college and career readiness standards," new corresponding English language proficiency standards for ELLs, new next-generation assessments to measure these

content and language standards, and new teacher evaluation systems. By 2015, 43 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had obtained approval.

ESEA Flexibility states and territories had the option of developing their own college and career readiness standards or adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) developed by a coalition of state education leaders with federal encouragement and financial support. By 2016, 42 states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) had adopted the Common Core State Standards. Rather than develop their own assessments, most states originally elected to join one of two state consortia developing next-generation assessments designed to measure the CCSS: the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. However, political backlash against the CCSS, including the (questionable) view that it represented a federal intrusion into state rights, state memberships in PARCC, and Smarter Balanced, dropped by half (from 49 to 24). Thus, most states are creating their own assessments to measure the CCSS. Currently, under the ESSA, states remain free to join consortia or create their own standards; the US Secretary of Education is forbidden from influencing their choice.

To meet federal expectations for English language proficiency standards and assessments (previously under Title III of NCLB and ESEA Flexibility and currently under Title I of ESSA), most states joined one of two consortia. As of 2016, 38 states/territories joined the WIDA consortia, and ten states joined the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the Twenty-First Century (ELPA21) consortia to share common English language proficiency standards and assessments.

Despite many years of restrictions on bilingual education programs in the three states that passed “English for the Children” initiatives mandating structured English immersion programs (California, Arizona, and Massachusetts), and the general effect of NCLB’s accountability programs pushing schools toward English-only instruction, bilingual education is alive and well and still going strong in states across the country. Dual language/bilingual education (DLBE) programs, especially models including English-proficient students learning Spanish or other languages of their classroom ELL peers, have grown in popularity. DLBE programs were given blanket waivers from the law in Massachusetts, meaning schools were free to offer these programs without any restrictions or need to file for individual waivers. Despite Proposition 227, California became the first state to offer a “Seal of Biliteracy” on the high school diploma of graduates who could provide evidence of proficiency in another language – a distinction now available in other states including Texas, New York, Washington, and Illinois; efforts are underway in several other states. In 2014, California legislators approved Senate Bill 1174 to give voters an opportunity to repeal Proposition 227 (McGreevy 2014). The repeal was approved by voters in the 2016 general elections through Proposition 58. These changes are taking place within the context of the growing popularity of heritage language programs, not only traditional community-based programs, and also in K-12 schools and in higher education (Lee and Wright 2014). Thus, traditional foreign and world language programs are adjusting their classes out of recognition of the different strengths and unique needs that heritage speakers may bring and now

offer courses such as Spanish-for-Spanish speakers and Korean for native speakers (Wiley et al. 2014). Successful graduates from these programs in K-12 schools become eligible for the Seal of Biliteracy in states that offer them, and many also reach levels high enough to take Advanced Placement exams and earn college credit for available languages such as Spanish and Chinese.

The lack of a coherent (explicit) national language policy reflects, in part, broader social divisions about the role of education and especially language(s), in society (Tollefson and Tsui 2014). For example, pluralists favor maintaining immigrant and Indigenous non-English languages and argue that all students – majority and minority – benefit cognitively, as well as socially, by educational programs which develop two languages; assimilationists, on the other hand, believe maintenance of non-English languages is a private matter and that the most important measure of success for bilingual programs is how fast children acquire English, not the long-term academic achievement of students. Nonetheless, the best evidence to date shows that strong forms of bilingual education that lead to high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy (e.g., developmental and dual language programs) are superior to most early exit or so-called English immersion (submersion) programs in terms of students' long-term academic achievement in English-mediated instruction (G. P. McField and McField 2014; Valentino and Reardon 2014). However, explaining underlying causes of student success (and failure) is extremely complex and cannot be undertaken without reference to issues of language and identity and socioeconomic status, among many other variables (Baker and Lewis 2015).

In recent years, a movement has emerged within the deaf community in the United States to promote the teaching of American Sign Language, rather than English, as the first language of deaf persons, preferably in bilingual (ASL/English)-bicultural programs (Compton 2014). This recommendation is based on research that shows that the acquisition of English literacy by deaf students instructed in sign systems, such as manually coded English (MCE), is less successful than it is for students who have had access to ASL during their formative language acquiring years. Critics, who oppose removing deaf children from their hearing parents to learn ASL and become acculturated into the deaf community, argue this will result in permanent separation and rejection of English. Proponents of ASL as a first language view this as a language rights issue, since policies promoting oralism and restricting the use of sign language, usually developed by hearing persons, have historically oppressed the deaf community and limited their social and economic advancement (Reagan 2015).

An important policy issue, given the increasing diversity of the school age and adult population in the United States, concerns the preparation of teachers (de Mejía and Hélot 2015). State credentialing authorities have modified requirements for teacher certification to include courses in second language acquisition, culture, and methods and materials appropriate for linguistically and culturally diverse populations. Professional teacher organizations have lobbied state and federal agencies for greater funding and recognition of the specialized training required for teaching in multilingual and multicultural classrooms and schools. Most states

now offer a certificate or endorsement in bilingual education (in various non-English languages), ESL, and/or SEI.

Problems and Difficulties

The promise of federal education policy to leave no child behind has proven to be empty, as have claims that restrictions on bilingual education would ensure that ELLs would “soar academically” (G. McField 2014; Moore 2014; Wright 2014). NCLB failed to raise academic achievement and close the achievement gaps between minority and majority students and failed to provide a clear picture of ELL students’ progress across the nation in learning and attaining proficiency in English (U.S. Department of Education 2013). It remains to be seen if ESSA will be any more effective in ensuring that “every student succeeds.”

The CCSS were not developed with ELLs in mind. However, they feature specific listening and speaking standards and emphasize the need to develop the “academic language” skills of all students. Thus, a concern is that if the language bar is being raised for native English-speaking students, ELLs may fall even further behind. However, some ELL advocates believe that such a raising of the bar is precisely what is needed to provide ELL students with the type of language exposure that will help them learn English faster and better. The Understanding Language initiative (<http://ell.stanford.edu>), based out of Stanford University, has been working to develop sample instructional units and to provide resources to schools and teachers to model ways that the CCSS can be made accessible to ELL students.

The next-generation tests to measure the CCSS feature untried computer-based testing and new technology-enhanced test items. Of concern are the types of testing accommodations to be allowed for ELL students, including whether or not tests will be made available in their home languages. Accommodation policies and procedures have yet to be fully articulated. Of greatest concern, however, is that the ESSA maintains an approach to school reform through high-stakes testing and accountability – the same approach that failed under NCLB.

Problems of testing ELLs in a valid and reliable manner on large-scale assessments have not been resolved. Available research on testing accommodations has not been able to provide conclusive evidence on which, if any, testing accommodations actually work (Francis et al. 2006). New ELP tests will also be “next-generation” computer-based assessments with technology-enhanced items. For example, test takers click on portions of a text or an illustration and drag and drop items in response to an oral or written command to demonstrate comprehension. While these types of items may open new possibilities, challenges related to the technology in addition to challenges in how to score and interpret such new items are likely.

Also of concern is the impact the CCSS and the ESSA may have on bilingual education. If tests are not available in students’ home languages, then states may be inclined to insist that the language of instruction matches the language of the test – English. However, at least two states – New York and California – have initiatives related to the implementation of the CCSS in Spanish. Within this context is the

reality of growing political pressure in opposition to the CCSS. Despite the involvement of many Republican governors and chief state school officers in the creation of the CCSS and the full backing of the business community (which stands to profit from common curriculum, standards, and assessments), much of the backlash is coming from conservative legislators who view the CCSS as an infringement on state rights. Several states pulled out the PARCC and Smarter Balanced testing consortia, opting to create their own assessments. Many of these state tests were hastily thrown together and thus are likely to be riddled with validity and reliability problems, especially for ELLs. Support for the CCSS will likely further decline under the ESSA, especially given opposition to the Common Core by the Trump Administration.

The negotiated rule-making progress is still underway for ESSA. Thus, it is not yet clear what exactly will be required or expected of ELLs. It is also unclear the extent to which states will take advantages of the flexibility of ESSA to attempt innovative assessment programs that are more fair for ELLs, or if they will stick with the traditional forms of assessment that yield results of questionable reliability and validity for such students.

Groups that oppose bilingual education, such as US English, also tend to oppose other types of federal accommodations for non-English speakers, such as bilingual ballots and the publication of government documents, forms, and brochures in non-English languages (although a study by the US General Accountability Office [1995] found that 99.4% of the documents produced by the federal government are in English, excluding documents from the State and Defense departments). Such provisions and programs are often cited by opponents as examples of “ethnic-based” entitlements (see, e.g., Imhoff 1990). These groups also strongly advocate the establishment of English as the official language of the United States or of governmental entities at all levels. This movement began in the early 1980s under the leadership of the late US Senator S. I. Hayakawa who introduced a constitutional amendment (S.J. Res. 72) in 1981 declaring English the official language of the United States. Although the bill was never reported out of committee, by 2015, 31 states had adopted laws or amended their constitutions declaring English the official state language (US English n.d.). On August 1, 1996, the US House of Representatives, under Republican leadership, passed for the first time in US history a bill declaring English the official language of the US government (H.R. 123, The English Language Empowerment Act). Provisions of the bill include repeal of federal bilingual ballots and a prohibition against federal employees communicating in writing in non-English languages, although they may communicate orally in languages other than English. The Senate failed to act on a similar bill in the 104th Congress, thereby preventing the 104th Congress from enacting an official English law. The issue has frequently returned in subsequent sessions of Congress, including a proposal in 2006 amidst major debates over immigration, to declare English as the “national and unifying language,” but to date none of the proposed bills has passed. Nonetheless efforts continue, with the most recent attempt being the “English Language Unity Act” (S.678) reintroduced in March 2015 by Republican Senator Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma.

Although research in second language acquisition has provided clear evidence of the benefits of bilingual education programs, of the effectiveness of second language immersion programs for monolingual English speakers, of the transferability of conceptual knowledge learned in one language to another language, and of the social and affective benefits of programs and curricula which value the culture and language of so-called nonmainstream students (see Baker and Wright 2017), these findings have been distorted and politicized by opponents. Professional education organizations, such as Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), the Modern Language Association (MLA), and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), among many others, have offered their expertise on language education matters to policy-makers at the state and federal level. However, the issues surrounding language in education policy – the use of non-English languages as the medium of instruction, the teaching of foreign languages from kindergarten through college, the maintenance of non-English languages through education, the valuing of non-English as well as English literacy among immigrant populations, and the development of bilingual-bicultural language programs for the deaf – have histories which extend back to the mid-nineteenth century. For example, the effects of the Americanization campaign (roughly 1914–1924) (McClymer 1982), which saw severe restriction of non-English languages in public and private domains at the same time the teaching of English to adults through civics classes was promoted by the states and the federal government, continue to influence and shape attitudes, and hence policy, with regard to the learning and teaching of languages (Ricento 2003, 2005).

Likely Future Directions in Research and Practice

Research in language policy and planning is subsumed under three general headings: processes, agents, and goals. Under processes, researchers investigate the mechanisms by which and through which language policies are developed, implemented, and evaluated. Examples of possible research topics in the coming decade include the implementation of federal language policies at the state and local level, the role played by grassroots organizations in articulating policy and influencing legislative processes, the evaluation of policies by different constituencies, the implementation and evaluation of specific program types in specific educational settings, and the interplay of the various components which collectively, and individually, determine language policies. Agents refer to the public and private individuals and collectivities which promote various policies. Examples of areas likely to be researched include who controls language policy agendas and by what means, what are the sources of authority for those agents who argue for particular policies, what are the characteristics of various interest groups that promote particular policies, what role do the media play in promoting particular policy views, and how do local educators also function as policy-makers? Goals refer to sociopolitical and/or economic objectives sought by particular language policies. Examples of research topics in

this area include assessing the differences between stated and unstated goals, investigation of language in education policies from sociohistorical perspectives, articulation of alternative societal goals and the development of specific policies to achieve those goals, and comparative analysis of language policy goals among polities.

A good sampling of new directions in language policy research is found in Ricento (2006) and Johnson (2013). Johnson (2013) notes, however, that the field of language policy and planning lacks methodological guidance and thus has had to rely on methods from other disciplines in the social sciences. He proposes some new research methods, including the combination of ethnography of language policy with critical discourse analysis (see also Hornberger and Johnson 2011; Johnson and Ricento 2013) and the “Educational Language Policy Engagement and Action Research” (ELPEAR) model in which teams of educators within a school collaborate with external language policy researchers to affect positive changes in policy and practice.

While politics will continue to drive debates regarding the CCSS and ESSA, the flexibility and potential is there for states to develop innovative language education programs for ELLs and language majority students. The establishment of the WIDA and ELPA21 state consortia means that for the first time in US history, most states will have a common definition of ELLs, common procedures for identifying and exiting students from ELL programs, common standards and assessments, and assessment results that can be meaningfully compared across districts and states. This opens new research possibilities to better understand the processes of home language and English language development in school, which may lead to more effective policies and programs. In addition, the increasing focus on language development of all students for academic purposes may motivate changes in teacher preparation programs that would produce teachers with greater language awareness and thus more sensitive to and better prepared to address the unique language needs of ELLs.

Finally, scholars are beginning to challenge monoglossic ideologies that view a bilingual student’s languages as separate and thus lead to programs that simply “add” or “subtract” a language, programs that disallow the use of home languages, and even bilingual programs that insist on a rigid separation of students’ home languages and English (García 2009). In contrast, a heteroglossic view of the languages of bilinguals sees them as coexisting and intertwined, grounded in the reality that in everyday language use bilinguals draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire in dynamic ways (including standard and nonstandard language varieties) for meaningful communication purposes and the accomplishment of daily and academic tasks (Blackledge and Creese 2014). This dynamic use of linguistic resources has been referred to by some scholars as translanguaging and goes beyond what has been traditionally called code-switching by focusing on the practices of the language user rather than focusing on the code (language) itself. This work has led to a reconsideration and reconfiguration of existing program models (Flores and Baetens Beardsmore 2015) and new efforts to consider translanguaging as a pedagogical tool for effective instruction (García and Wei 2014). Considerations of

translanguaging open up new areas for research and practice. As more research in language policy becomes available to decision-makers, and as more trained scholars enter the field, the impact on language policy development, implementation, and evaluation could be significant.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Family Language Policy](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Classrooms and Schools](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages](#)

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Language Policy and Education in Canada

Donna Patrick

Abstract

Canada is a settler nation with tremendous linguistic and cultural diversity, as reflected in its Indigenous peoples, in the groups descended from the French and the English, and in the many groups that have immigrated to Canada since it gained independence from Britain in 1867. This diversity is also reflected in the histories and current trajectories of the country's language and education policies. As we shall see, education policies and practices are closely tied not only to the creation of an official language policy in 1969, which legitimized Canada's two colonial languages, French and English, but also to government policies that repressed Indigenous languages and those related to official language training and immigrant "heritage" languages. Tracing the trajectories of these policies through the early twenty-first century brings into focus various developments in language politics, policy, and education that have arisen locally, regionally, and nationally and that have been shaped by and are shaping a dynamic linguistic landscape across the country.

Keywords

Official languages • Multiculturalism • Indigenous languages • Heritage languages • Canada

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Early Developments

In understanding the history of language policy and education in Canada, it is crucial to address the history of the language practices that have informed education policies. Given Canada's history as a settler nation, Indigenous languages have figured prominently in its processes of colonization and settlement – processes dominated by a European economic system and the use of French and English languages. In the early contact period, multilingual and mixed language practices – which arose from trading practices, the emergence of bilingual brokers, and the work, often in Indigenous languages, of French-, German-, and English-speaking missionaries – existed at the colonial periphery. Nevertheless, these language practices developed concurrently with the use of French and English, which existed at the centers of colonial expansion. While English has been dominant in what is now Ontario and the eastern provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island since the sixteenth century, French has been the dominant language in Quebec and parts of these eastern provinces. French also played a key role in expansion and settlement west of Ontario, while English came to dominate subsequent patterns of settler migration across the nation – migration dominated by speakers across a range of European, Asian, and other languages. These patterns of coexistence, tension, and conflict between Indigenous, French, English, and other settler groups and their languages and the uneven distribution of economic benefits among these groups that underlies all of these patterns have come to characterize the creation and management of language policies and practices in Canada to the present day.

The entrenchment of French and English within the history of language policy and education in Canada is rooted in the history of British-French and Indigenous colonial relations. The enactment by Britain of the *Quebec Act of 1774* restored French civil law, the rights of the Catholic Church, and the seigneurial regime, and provided the social, political, and ecclesiastical structures needed to ensure French language use in Quebec. At the time of the Act, there were some 300 English speakers and 65,000 French speakers in what is now Quebec (Larrivée 2003). The Catholic Church cooperated with the colonial administration, and a French-language pastoral educational model persisted from the nineteenth into the twentieth century (Curtis 2012). Likewise, Protestant churches, which were largely responsible for English-language schooling in the colony, became part of a broad-based public schooling system in the nineteenth century, and one shaped in the twentieth century especially by growing industrialization, secularization, immigration, and nation-building. Significantly, this history of state-sanctioned, church-based control of French- and English-language education is also key to understanding the history

of language education for Indigenous peoples in Canada. This is because of the authority the churches had to run about 130 Indian residential schools from the 1840s to 1996, the majority of which did not close until the 1960s and 1970s.

By the 1870s, Indian residential schools were still church-run, despite having come under Canadian jurisdiction. This chapter of Canadian language education policy is widely acknowledged as a very dark one, given its overtly assimilationist goals and the abusive conditions that residential school policies and practices engendered for most children attending these schools. These, as it is now well known, had substantial personal, collective, and intergenerational impacts on Aboriginal peoples (Barman 1986; Brody 2000; Castellano 2008; Chrisjohn and Young 1997; Miller 1996; Milloy 1999).

The conditions in these schools were brought to public attention in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1991–96) and the litigation that followed, which ultimately resulted in an official government apology (2008), and in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2009–2015), the mandate of which was to document the incidents that occurred in residential schools and convey these to the Canadian public (Regan 2011; Coulthard 2014). The vast majority of these schools operated in English, with some in Quebec operating in French. Regardless of geographical location – these schools existed in every province except New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland – there were strict prohibitions on the use of Indigenous languages.

The early nineteenth-century educational language policies and practices coincided with legislation, as reflected in the *British North America Act* of 1867 and the *Indian Act* of 1869, that shaped French, English, Indigenous, and newcomer relations. The *BNA Act* entrenched linguistic duality, confirming the practice of adopting laws in French and English, guaranteeing the right to legal proceedings in both languages, and assigning responsibility to the federal government for all “Indians and lands reserved for Indians” (Section 91(24)). The *Indian Act* and subsequent related amendments and legislation set out the government’s vision of “an aggressive colonizing project of assimilation” (Milloy 2008, p. 1). The ideological basis of the *Indian Act* was an earlier colonial policy of “civilizing” Indigenous peoples through education and enfranchisement into colonial society. However, despite decades of assimilationist measures including residential schooling, many Indigenous cultures in Canada continue to thrive, with some 87 languages currently recognized by UNESCO (Moseley 2010) and a number of language revitalization initiatives underway, as described below.

When the *BNA Act* came into force in 1867, French and English language use had already become well established in official domains (Chevrier 2003). This was also true for education, which the *BNA Act* placed under the jurisdiction of the provinces. Interestingly, the languages used for classroom instruction in some provinces, such as Manitoba and Saskatchewan (which became Canadian provinces in 1870 and 1905, respectively), included Ukrainian, among other languages until provincial legislation eliminated them in the early twentieth century. Another contentious linguistic matter for provinces concerned French-language schooling for French-speaking populations outside of Quebec, which was also often banned during the

same period (Gaffield 1987; Heller and Mougeon 1986). Ultimately, these tensions along with those related to Indigenous languages were not brought into the wider public sphere until the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB, 1963–1969), a formal inquiry initiated in response to growing political tensions in Quebec, French-language nationalism, and changing immigration patterns (Haque 2012). This Commission and its aftereffects are addressed in the next section.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

Language and Education in the Late Twentieth Century

Language policy and education issues in the latter half of the twentieth century were broadly shaped by liberal post–Second World War attitudes related to immigration, multiculturalism, human rights, and the postcolonial movements that informed Quebec nationalism. The RCBB was pivotal to the development of language and education policy in Canada. With a mandate to promote equality between French and English in federal public domains, the RCBB was to also take “into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution” (RCBB 1967, p. 173; see also Haque 2012; Haque and Patrick 2015, p. 30). The inquiry led to the *Official Languages Act* (1969), multiculturalism policy (1971), the *Multiculturalism Act* (1988), and a number of later initiatives that addressed newcomer “heritage” languages and Indigenous languages. These included attempts to establish a Canadian Heritage Language Institute (1987) and heritage language legislation (1989), and a consultative process on Aboriginal languages (2003–2005) through an Aboriginal Language Task Force (Patrick 2007).

As the RCBB came to a close, Indigenous mobilization targeting the government’s failed “Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian policy” (the so-called “White Paper,” 1969; see Turner 2006) – which attempted to erase the distinct status of Indigenous peoples in Canada – coincided with official bilingualism and multiculturalism. In 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) (later the Assembly of First Nations or AFN) issued their policy of “Indian control of Indian education.” This policy document confirmed that language issues were very much on Indigenous peoples’ political agenda, notwithstanding the changing political and legal landscape where land and economic development had taken precedence (Haque and Patrick 2015).

In the NIB policy document, the promotion of Indigenous languages and culture was linked to bridging the socioeconomic gap between settlers and Indigenous peoples by fostering school success and reinforcing Indigenous identities. As the report succinctly states, early proficiency in Indigenous languages would form the basis for school success, preparing Indigenous children for schooling in an official language (see Haque and Patrick 2015, p. 35):

It is generally accepted that pre-school and primary school classes should be taught in the language of the community. Transition to English or French as a second language should be introduced only after the child has a strong grasp of his own language. . . . While governments are reluctant to invest in any but the two official languages, funds given for studies in native languages and for the development of teaching tools and instructional materials will have both short and long term benefits. (NIB 1972, p. 15)

As in the Aboriginal Task Force report, which followed some 33 years later, arguments were made for greater government funding for Indigenous-language instruction, akin to that for French- and English-language instruction (Patrick 2007).

In the 1960s and 1970s, as Indigenous people were mobilizing for more political engagement with Canada, Quebec was involved in what is known as its “Quiet Revolution,” a cultural and political reawakening, pursued under the slogan of “*maitres chez nous*” (masters in our own house). This era ushered in a renewed interest in policy and politics to protect and promote the French language in light of the widespread and increasingly dominant use of English in North America and across the globe. As the RCBB wound down, Quebec language legislation was passed, including Bill 63 (1969), which stipulated that children going to English schools needed to gain a working knowledge of French and that newcomers would be provided with French-language training. Five years later, Bill 22 established French as the official language and stipulated that immigrants must be enrolled in French-language schools. This was followed by Bill 101, the *Charte de la Langue Française* (1977) (Charter of the French Language), introduced by the nationalist Parti Québécois, elected in late 1976. In addition to requiring French in official spheres, Bill 101 established French as the language not only of the workplace but also of education for all newcomers to Quebec, including those from other Canadian provinces. The bill subsequently came to be modified through a series of Supreme Court of Canada challenges, so that eventually children who had been instructed in English elsewhere in Canada were allowed to attend English schools in Quebec (Levine 1990).

During this period, members of Quebec’s – and in particular, Montreal’s – Anglophone community reacted in two very different ways to the changes to education brought in by these laws. While some parents fought for access to English-medium schools for their children, others became more concerned about access to French. As it happens, some parents in the Anglophone community had been aware of the importance of French. One indication of this was the launching of French-immersion programs in 1965, which began in St. Lambert, a suburb of Montreal, and soon spread to other areas of Montreal and across the country (Lambert and Tucker 1972). Immersion schools have since become a standard – and popular – form of public education. Significantly, they have also been adapted to the teaching of some Indigenous and heritage/international languages in some parts of the country.

Less well known than Quebec’s immersion programs has been its groundbreaking Indigenous language education policy, which emerged in this same era. In 1963, the establishment of the Direction Générale du Nouveau-Québec (DGNQ) ushered in an

emphasis on French-language education for Quebec's Inuit communities, in "Nouveau-Québec," north of the fifty-fifth parallel. Inuit, however, insisted on schooling in their own language, Inuktitut – an idea that the government of the day had accepted in principle (Patrick and Shearwood 1999). Inuit teacher-training and program development were implemented, with the assistance of Quebec's public universities, leading to the establishment of Inuktitut-medium education for the first years of schooling. Further developments in Aboriginal education in Quebec were ushered in with the signing of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (1975), the first modern land claim agreement in Canada. This agreement established, among other institutions, Cree and Inuit school boards, and teacher training for Inuit, with certification from McGill University, was implemented (Patrick 1999). Schools in the Inuit school board continue to deliver Inuktitut-medium instruction in the first three years of schooling – a model followed in some communities for Cree-language education.

Since that time, local and federal policy shifts have enabled other Aboriginal (that is, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) groups in Canada to establish their own language education programs. Many of these initiatives are still in place, albeit with limited resources; some (as mentioned above) have expanded into full-scale immersion programs.

While the 1960s and 1970s were key to the development of language, culture, and education policy, the *Constitution Act, 1982*, including the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, has been key to the legal recognition of French and English language rights, as well as certain Aboriginal rights. Among other rights, the Charter guarantees the right of members of the two official language groups, English and French, to receive government services and education in their own language. This guarantee has led to a number of Supreme Court decisions that have served to clarify these rights. One such decision, *Mahe v. Alberta* (1990), concerned a father who sued the Alberta provincial government for denying his children their Charter right to publicly funded schooling in French. The court decided that, while the number of Francophone students in Edmonton did not warrant a separate school board, it was sufficient to have a publicly funded French-language school (Patrick 2005).

Worth noting here is that while the provinces have jurisdiction over education, the Charter applies to provincial (and territorial) as well as federal legislation. This means that provincial official-language education laws must be consistent with the Charter, although the Charter contains an "override" clause (section 33), which legislatures may invoke in certain limited cases (see, e.g., Johansen and Rosen 2008). Provinces and local school boards, however, have their own policies regarding programming for other languages. For example, the city of Edmonton has not only French-language schools from kindergarten to grade 12 but also ten other international language programs, including bilingual programs in American Sign Language, Arabic, German, Hebrew, Mandarin, and Spanish. As such, this city school district now has one of the most diverse language programs in the country (Edmonton Public Schools, 2015). This example from Edmonton demonstrates the potential for delivering (nonofficial) "heritage," or ancestral, language education in Canada (Duff 2008; Duff and Li 2009). Admittedly, this potential has long been

subject to restricted funding for these programs. For example, the federal Cultural Enrichment Program, created in 1977, provided modest funding for heritage language instruction, but even this funding was eliminated in 1990 (see e.g., Cummins 1995). As a result, many such heritage language classes have operated without any public funding. In most jurisdictions, heritage-language classes, if offered at all, have operated after-school or on weekends as noncredit add-ons to regular school curricula (Ashworth 1992; Cummins and Danesi 1990; Curdt-Christiansen 2006). Despite good evidence for the value of these language programs (Cummins 1993), they have always been subject to tight budgets, especially in an era of increasing government austerity.

We have seen that French and English are the dominant languages in Canada; this is reflected not only in Canada's Constitution but also in the fact that 98% of Canadians speak either one or both languages. Significantly, the rate of bilingualism among Anglophones, those who speak English as their first language, remains relatively low at 9.5% – although it is slightly higher, at 16%, in New Brunswick, Canada's only officially bilingual province (Patrick 2010). Bilingualism among Francophones, however, is much higher. This French-English asymmetry in the rates of bilingualism, together with a decline in the number of French speakers in Canada, raises the question of how effective the policy of official bilingualism and the programs designed to increase French-language usage across the country have been (Cardinal 2005). Adding to this concern is the fact that most newcomers to Canada opt for English-language training rather than French-language training and choose to use English at work and in community life. The linguistic situation of newcomers to Canada is discussed in the following section.

Language Training for Newcomers

Canada has one of the highest per capita immigration rates in the world, with over 250,000 permanent residents accepted annually since the 1990s. It has also witnessed a shift in its immigration policy, from one that prioritized humanitarian and family reunification to one that places an emphasis on skilled workers and “labour market-ready” and “entrepreneurial” newcomers (Haque 2014, p. 5). A points-based immigration policy has explicitly favored immigrants with French- or English-language proficiency, who are awarded more points for such skills. And for those adults who require additional language training, both federal and provincial governments are involved in delivering English or French language programs, primarily on the basis that economic integration requires linguistic integration.

For school children requiring ESL or FSL classes, the responsibility for providing these services has been placed on the provinces. This has meant that access to programs across the country is uneven, since it is dependent on the priorities of local and provincial stakeholders. Programs have usually been limited to special classes for part of the day, along with training for teachers of regular classes, which assists them in accommodating language learners in their classrooms (Ashworth 1992).

Such language programs, however, remain in a precarious state, given that (as just noted) they are subject to the vagaries of provincial funding priorities.

Language training for adult immigrants, on the other hand, has been heavily influenced by federal policy. In 1978, Employment and Immigration Canada introduced the first national language training program for English or French. In 1986, this program was replaced by the Settlement Language Training program, which had a broader, community focus, providing childcare and transportation in order to broaden its accessibility (Burnaby 1992; Fleming 2007; Haque 2014). These employment-related programs were replaced in 1992 with the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada, or LINC, program (in French, the Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada, or CLIC program), funded through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. These federally funded programs have been limited to adult permanent residents, with provincially funded or NGO-run ESL/FSL programs addressing the needs of refugee claimants and Canadian citizens (Dieleman 2012).

The objective of the LINC program has been to provide newcomers with communication skills and knowledge necessary for participation in social, cultural, civic, and economic life (Haque 2014; Singh and Blakely 2012). The program has also been instrumental in shaping ESL/FSL standards across Canada, through its curriculum guidelines, and assessment and teacher certification requirements. The Canadian Language Benchmarks (1996), for example, provide national standards for describing and measuring second-language proficiency (See <http://www.language.ca>). These benchmarks make use of a scale from 1 to 12, with most language learners falling between levels 1 and 4, although increasingly newcomers with higher educational and training levels require higher-level programming (Dieleman 2012). A learner's level is assessed through language testing or the more recently introduced Portfolio-Based Language Assessment, which analyses and measures language progress across a variety of contexts of use. More importantly, benchmarks have been integrated into broader immigration and citizenship policy, with a level 4 required in listening and speaking in order to apply for Canadian Citizenship, while other forms of knowledge of critical citizenship are excluded (Fleming 2015). In light of the new language-level requirement – while at the same time acknowledging the need to reach more immigrants and limit expenditures – there has been a push towards online courses and other forms of technology-driven distance training for both students and teacher development (Singh and Blakely 2012; Türegün 2012).

Indigenous Language Policy and Education

The *Constitution Act, 1982*, described above, treats the rights of Aboriginal peoples quite differently from French and English peoples (Patrick 2005, 2007). While section 35 “recognizes and affirms” the “existing [A]boriginal and treaty rights of the [A]boriginal peoples of Canada,” there is no explicit constitutional protection of Aboriginal language education. Moreover, what actually counts as an “Aboriginal right” has been left to the courts.

Given this lack of constitutional or other legal protection for Indigenous languages, Indigenous language revitalization and education policies have been pursued largely through local school board and First Nations initiatives, such as those involving the Cree and Inuit in Northern Quebec, noted above. These initiatives are linked to the political engagement of Indigenous groups, whose goal has been self-determination and self-government within the Canadian state (Meek 2009). Worth noting is that, as mentioned in the “[Early Developments](#)” section, First Nations and Inuit education remains primarily a federal responsibility, and the federal government has put policies in place to support the teaching of Indigenous languages. Yet, as it happens, the federal government has allocated little money for promoting Indigenous language teaching and learning. Some programs such as the Aboriginal Head Start, initiated in 1995, emerged at the close of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples and provided some focus on Indigenous languages in the broader context of culture, education, and health programming for preschoolers (Public Health Agency of Canada 1998). For the most part, however, the lack of funding on a par with that allocated to French and English minority language instruction is a concern for Indigenous groups (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005; Patrick 2007). One counterbalance to this is the number of policy and educational initiatives that have developed at the territorial and First Nation levels of governance.

In the Yukon Territory, the North West Territories (NWT), and Nunavut we find interesting examples of Indigenous control of language policy and education. The NWT, for example, passed their own *Official Languages Act* in 1984, which provides official status to 11 languages in the territory, including French and English (see <http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/official-languages>). The Yukon Territory followed suit with the *Yukon Languages Act* (1988), which declares that French, English, or any Yukon Aboriginal language can be used in the legislature (Meek 2009). Nunavut, an Inuit-majority territory formed in 1999, has gone even further, with two pieces of legislation, the 2008 *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. The former statute recognizes three official languages – “Inuktitut,” which comprises all varieties of the Inuit language, English, and French – and guarantees the right to use any of these three languages in the legislature, courts, and public services. The latter statute deals with the protection of Inuktitut with respect to the “standardization” of terminology and orthography, the right to work in the Inuit language in government offices, and the right to services and education in the Inuit language. In addition, the 2012 *Uqausivut* (literally “our words”) is a comprehensive plan to coordinate government language programs and services (Cloutier 2013).

As for Indigenous language and education, there are agreements in place between the territorial and federal governments for federal funding transfers to design and deliver Indigenous language culture and curricula (see Meek 2009 on the Yukon). Language laws, together with Indigenous language programs, have created unique political landscapes in the northern regions. Nevertheless, as in other Canadian Indigenous contexts, any language efforts have been dependent on the continued dedication of particular individuals working on smaller-scale projects, who work to record and document languages, produce dictionaries and teaching materials, and

create cultural contexts and opportunities for language use, including mentor-apprentice programs and adult- and primary-school immersion programs (see, e.g., First Peoples Cultural Council 2014). Indigenous-initiated language consultations, such as that produced in Arctic Quebec (Avataq 2012; Parnasimautik 2014), have been instrumental in raising language awareness. Such work has played a key role in Indigenous-initiated language policy and education.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

The Arctic continues to be a site of social, economic, and geographic transformation, and as such a prime one for developments in language policy and education. Climate change, developing transportation routes and economic investments, intensive resource extraction, and challenges to Arctic sovereignty have magnified concerns about Indigenous language and education (Berger 2006). In Nunavik, the *Plan Nord* announced by the Quebec government covers policy plans related to mining, infrastructure development, and investment in Inuit social and public services, including education and training (Marotte 2015; Nunatsiaq News 2015; Rogers 2015). There has also been movement to standardize Inuktitut orthography and to create more bilingual Inuktitut-English education in Nunavut (Cloutier 2013; Palluq-Cloutier 2011, 2013; see also Uqausivut 2012). In addition, discussion of an Arctic University in Nunavut, perhaps serving the four Inuit regions, is ongoing (CBC 2015).

The current neoliberal political era in Canada has shaped language and education policies in the Arctic, as in other regions. This includes policies and practices of marketization, commodification, privatization, and deregulation, the rolling back of the welfare state, and a shift in focus from “rights” to “needs” (Harvey 2005, p. 3; Haque and Patrick 2015, p. 37). The effect on language education can be seen in a shift to individualized, entrepreneurial processes, and in a focus on integrating proficient language speakers into job markets and on measurable, accountable assessment paradigms over the last 25 years (Duchêne and Heller 2012; Haque 2014; Haque and Patrick 2015, p. 37–38). In light of this, increased “governmentality from below,” whereby new norms, new evaluation measures, and new management schemes have been created by speakers themselves (Urla 2012), new kinds of program delivery, language assessment, and standardization projects are emerging. This technical focus, at the expense of the social, idealizes notions of equal opportunity through the acquisition of “skills” and disregards issues of race and racism in language policies, education, and hiring practices, which have deep roots in Canada (see a recent special issue, Kubota 2015a, b). Newcomers and Indigenous peoples will continue to face barriers and challenges, both socially and materially, especially as governments and school boards look to reduce expenditures and current ESL/FSL programming becomes more precarious. For speakers of “nonofficial” languages, struggles will continue not only for resources but to foster the political will necessary to revitalize and maintain linguistic diversity across Canada.

Further challenges also remain for “official” language policy and learning, as immigration rates remain high and plurilingual language practices and socialization have led to new categories of speakers in multilingual cities like Montreal and elsewhere, where traditional ethnic and linguistic categories, including “Anglophone” and “Francophone,” are breaking down (Lamarre 2007, 2013). The definition, formulation, and implementation of language policies are, therefore, constantly evolving in all sectors and across the country, drawing increased attention from those concerned with maintaining and fostering linguistic diversity that has persisted over centuries.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education for New Speakers](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Language, Identity, and Investment in the Twenty-First Century](#)
- ▶ [Policy Considerations for Promoting Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Diane Pesco and Martha Crago: [Language Socialization in Canadian Indigenous Communities](#). In Volume: Language Socialization
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Indigenous Language Policy and Education in Mexico

Lourdes de León

Abstract

This chapter offers an overview of the social, institutional, political, and ideological processes that have shaped language policy and Indigenous education in Mexico from colonial times to the present millennium. It examines the principal paradigms and programs adopted by the nation-state to reconcile the integration of Indigenous peoples in light of the challenges of Mexico's ethnic and linguistic diversity. The chapter then traces the succession of different educational approaches ranging from direct methods to the gradual incorporation of bilingualism, biculturalism, and interculturality. Next, the effectiveness of a decade of government educational programs created in response to the Indigenous needs and demands of Zapatismo is evaluated. In the present post-Zapatista period, although significant new laws have been passed and institutions created, the goals of addressing the myriad and complex challenges are far from being realized. In spite of the "unity in diversity" initiative advanced by the Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education) and the Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indios (General Act on the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples), children's rights to be educated in their mother tongue have not been implemented de facto or guaranteed. Finally, this chapter considers the paradigm shift in Indigenous language education policies prior to Zapatismo from the state's vertical policies into the current more diverse mix of independent and grass roots processes generated "from within and below" (Bertely Busquets et al., 2008, p. 29, see

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also Maldonado Alvarado 2002; Meyer 2010) and by intercultural “transversal” exchange (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2013). The changes brought about by this paradigm shift are considered with respect to the goal of fostering interculturality and keeping Indo-Mexican languages alive.

Keywords

Practical literacy • Transversalization • Intercultural exchange community • Language shift • Diversity • Linguistic ideology

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Introduction

Mexico stands out as one of the ten nations in the world with the greatest ethnolinguistic diversity. Within the Americas, in spite of widespread Indigenous language loss and shift to Spanish, Mexico occupies second place with respect to the number of living Native languages spoken, representing 7.2% of the total Indigenous population worldwide.

The Mexican attempts to address this complex linguistic and ethnic diversity within the context of the broader project of national integration have been fraught with tensions between the official policies and the complexities posed by the country’s linguistic and ethnic diversity. In the last decades, in particular, Indigenous people’s active resistance to the processes that do not include them as stakeholders, and which threaten their linguistic and cultural heritage, has posed yet another challenge.

The most recent expression of Indigenous demands has come from the Zapatista movement at the end of the last century (1994), which exposed the often ignored potential for Indigenous people, as historical subjects, to both influence and shape state policies. The Zapatista demands forced entrenched institutions to take a hard look at fundamental issues of constitutional and collective rights that form the core of the nation-state, but have not been properly nurtured and acknowledged for this population.

This chapter offers an overview of the social, institutional, political, and ideological processes that have defined language policy and Indigenous education in Mexico from colonial times to the present. I look first at the principal paradigms that have guided the historical process in question, within the context of the construction of the nation-state. I turn next to evaluate the effectiveness of a decade of governmental programs within the frame of the various debates among the major political and academic actors that were generated by Zapatismo. These programs include the *Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indios* (LGDLPI, General Act on the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples), enacted in 2003 (*Diario Oficial de la Federación* 2012, April) and hosted by the Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas (INALI, National Institute of Indigenous Languages), and the creation of the *Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe* (CGEIB, General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education). Finally, I provide an overview of the recent processes of “transversalization” of intercultural processes (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2013). This overview includes the exchanges among various actors who hold the vision of intercultural education, including the differences within this vision, between what are called “official interculturality” and “true interculturality” (Baronnet 2009; Maldonado Alvarado 2002; Meyer 2010). Within this frame, I contrast the changes that have transpired between the vertical, monolithic Indigenous language education governmental policies prior to Zapatismo with those of the rich diversity of experiences of autonomous education and other independent projects that point in new directions.

Early Developments: A History of Language Policies from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-first Century

Language policies in colonial Mexico (1519–1810) were shaped by linguistic ideologies that explicitly employed language as an instrument to consolidate the power of the Spanish Empire. A similar strategy was employed by the Aztec state, which had instated Nahuatl as the language of its pre-Hispanic empire (for a classical study, see Heath 1972).

At the time of the conquest, Spain had already adopted Castilian as the Spanish imperial language in accordance with their projects of Christianization and imperial consolidation. The policies of the Spanish Crown in Mexico fluctuated between imposing Castilian as the most effective instrument of Christianization and, for the same purpose, allowing the use of Nahuatl and other regional languages. This latter strategy involved the work of some religious orders (e.g., Franciscans) to develop literacy in Nahuatl and provide training to Indigenous students in their path to become cultural brokers and priests (Hamel 2008).

At the beginning of the independence period (1810), Carlos III placed an absolute ban on the use of Indigenous languages. Despite this, in the three centuries of the Mexican colony leading up to the consolidation of independence, there were no significant advances toward Spanish becoming the dominant language for the

majority of the population. Thus, Native languages were not displaced to the extent to which the Mexican colony had hoped. Nevertheless, as was to be expected, the colonial process gradually limited the functionality and sociocultural force of these languages, especially Nahuatl, which was gradually being replaced by Castilian.

During the time of independence, all energy was focused on reinforcing unification, imposing Spanish as the language in the construction of the nation. When independence was achieved (1821), Indigenous peoples made up 66% of the total population of the country (Cifuentes and Pellicer 1989). However, in the following period leading up to the Mexican Revolution, the devastation of the Indigenous population resulted in Spanish becoming the language of the majority (83% around 1895) (Cifuentes 2002). It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the emerging discourse of Mexican nationalism recognized the existence and resilience of the Indigenous peoples as a “problem,” which had to be addressed (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011).

The Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), compared to previous eras, ushered in ideological shifts that began to value the country’s diverse composition in the construction of a new national identity (Gamio 1916). In 1921, the Ministry of Public Education was created to standardize a national education system, which became the central project in the construction of the new nation-state.

The expansion of the national education system was ethnocentric and Spanish-centered, which sought to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the state without, however, any effective pedagogical methods for teaching Spanish. Given these limitations, the commitment of rural schools to prepare Indigenous peoples for a “civilized life” indirectly contributed to the persistence of these languages during the post-revolutionary period.

During the 1930s, “indigenism” emerged as a set of ideologies, discourses, and actions with a political, educational, and cultural focus on “the Indian,” but viewed from a non-Indigenous intellectual perspective (Aguirre Beltrán 1973; Villoro 1950). The first substantial change in educational strategies for Indigenous integration emerged during the government of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940). Within the national education project, Indigenous language literacy was now considered as a new route into Castilianization (see Heath 1972 for an overview of Mexico’s language policies).

During Cárdenas’ administration, the well-known Tarascan Project (Proyecto Tarasco) was designed and launched (1939–1941). In contrast to previous policies, the team of linguists led by Morris Swadesh took advantage of the country’s linguistic diversity by developing autochthonous language literacy programs. This shift led to reconsidering the “Spanish/direct assimilation” method in favor of fostering Indigenous literacies.

In association with the Tarascan Project, we need to consider the impact in Mexico of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), founded by the Protestant William Cameron Townsend. The creation of literacy primers and Bible translations in a collection of Indigenous languages was a central aspect of the innovative literacy project conducted by the Institute. These materials, in contrast to previous ones, which were mostly focused on the creation of alphabets and basic reading in the

Native languages, offered a new kind of *practical literacy* that involved reading and comprehending larger bodies of texts (e.g., the Bible) with an educational, social, and religious goal. In spite of its educational effectiveness, this project had as a goal religious conversion, which can be seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, SIL brought Indo-Mexican languages into the prestigious domain of textual literacy; on the other hand, religious literacy was also an effective tool of the new Anglo-Protestant evangelism. Along with evangelism came the gradual spread of literacy and Protestantism throughout the newly converted Indigenous population in several regions of the country. As a consequence, SIL also fostered new community and identity configurations that would fragment and be put into direct conflict with the Indigenous communities' historical integrity, creating changes in its relationship to the state (Rus and Wasserstorm 1981). Along with these controversial activities, SIL carried out an unprecedentedly thorough linguistic investigation of the country's languages, which set important foundations for linguistic documentation at different levels (e.g., vocabularies, dictionaries, grammars, narratives, etc.). Despite its positive contributions to education and linguistic research, SIL's sociocultural, ideological, and political impact led the government to formally demand that it leave the country in the 1980s.

In the decade after SIL had entered the country, the National Indigenous Institute was created (1948) (INI, Instituto Nacional Indigenista; now the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, or CDI for its Spanish initials). Among its goals were Indigenous integration into the national culture through bilingual education and the development and "modernization" of Indigenous regions (Aguirre Beltrán 1973). Both SIL and INI worked on their own projects but still within the framework of the national integration project. Between 1950 and the 1960s, the program of cultural promoters (*promotores culturales*) focused on creating cultural intermediaries who could play a role in the integration process as agents of cultural change (Aguirre Beltrán [1957] 1992). In 1963 their educational role would extend to that of bilingual teachers, as part of a larger project of the Secretary of Public Education and INI.

In the late 1970s, amid the political controversies of the impact of the ILV in the country, the DGEI proposed INI and CISINAH (Centro de Investigaciones Superiores de Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, now CIESAS, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social) to design the first program in higher education to train Native linguists as researchers and political leaders in the promotion of their own languages. Guillermo Bonfil, director of CISINAH and a prominent anthropologist, along with a team of anthropologists, founded the Programa de Formación de Etnolingüistas (BA in Ethnolinguistics), which years later was redesigned as a program for master's and doctorate degrees in Indo-American linguistics; at present, this is still hosted at CIESAS and financed by CDI. The program was highly controversial, especially in its origins (Dietz 1999, p. 280). Lagarde and Cazes (1980) considered it to be "the training of the new illustrated *caciques*" (a pejorative Spanish term for local Indian political leaders in the service of the State). Nevertheless, after 25 years of operation and with 130 graduates, the program has proven successful in providing graduate

training for Native linguists who are now serving important roles in academic, educational, and political posts – among them the direction of INALI. Interestingly, in 1980, the same year the Programa de Etnolingüística was founded, the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (UPN, National Pedagogic University) opened a BA program to train Indigenous elementary school teachers. Along this line, the professional training of bilingual teachers, within the context of the III National Congress of Indigenous Peoples, led to the emergence of a new force that would play a prominent role in Indigenous bilingual education in the years to come. This force was represented in the newly created teachers' union, the Alianza Nacional de Profesores Indígenas Bilingües A. C (National Alliance of Bilingual Indigenous Teachers [ANPIBAC] 1979).

In spite of the new policies toward the end of the millennium favoring bilingual education and professionalization of a sector of Native academics and teachers, however, the larger sociolinguistic picture of the country's Native languages revealed increasing subtractive bilingualism as well as different degrees of language displacement. Cifuentes and Moctezuma's (2009) study of twentieth-century linguistic census data reports a marked national tendency toward bilingualism, which almost doubled from 47% in 1930 to 87.7% in 2005 (p. 10).

It should be mentioned that at a regional and local level, the census statistics on mono- and bilingualism show great variation. Mayan languages such as Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Ch'ol, and Huastec show signs of strong vitality, given their high rates of monolingualism and intergenerational transmission (Cifuentes and Moctezuma 2009). Nevertheless, according to the census statistics of the last four decades (1970–2010), these languages have shown an increase of 40% bilingualism, which points to processes of ongoing language shift (de León 2005, 2011). Although the rates of bilingualism and language shift vary across languages and regions, we could argue that the overall tendency is increased subtractive bilingualism and language shift at a national level.

Major Contributions: Paradigms and Transformations in Language Policies and Indigenous Education

As previously stated, from the beginning of the 1960s, the state reoriented its language and education policies through implementing a new paradigm that brought Indigenous bilingual education into the forefront. Around 1963, the Ministry of Public Education officially adopted the notion of “bilingual education” as part of its agenda, which a decade later, in the effort to encourage cultural diversity, evolved into “bilingual and bicultural education” (Educación Bilingüe y Bicultural, EBB for its Spanish initials).

In the period of 1970–1974, Sub-secretary of Culture Aguirre Beltrán took the lead in developing bilingual and bicultural education on several fronts (e.g., bilingual programs, teacher training, Indigenous children's boarding schools, etc.). Among the

few studies reporting results, Modiano's (1972) research in the Mayan Tzotzil and Tzeltal area of Chiapas showed that literacy instruction in the L1 was effective in developing Spanish literacy (see Hamel 2008; Hamel and Francis 2006, for L1 literacy advantages in the P'urepecha region). This finding, which had important theoretical consequences, did not mean bilingual literacy was successfully being implemented consistently nationwide. By contrast, a few years later, Bravo Ahuja (1977) developed an integrated method to teach Spanish as L2 as a transitional step to Castilianization in apparent contradiction with the official policy at the time claiming bilingual and bicultural education.

In 1978, a new subsystem, the Dirección General de Educación Indígena (DGEI, General Department of Indigenous Education), was created, recruiting many of the bilingual teachers trained in the previous years. Yet, in this period, the so-called bilingual program lacked pedagogical and curricular implementation. Indigenous schools followed basically the same federal curriculum as all primary schools in the country, using obligatory textbooks in Spanish (Hamel 2008, p. 304), with teachers using the local language in the classroom. In fact, this curriculum led to a mix of immersion bilingualism with a nonsystematic transitional bilingualism (Hamel 1997, 2008, 2016).

Eventually, EBB led to the General Law of Indigenous Education (Ley General de Educación Indígena) of 1993. This law sought to foster education in Indigenous languages specifying that teaching Spanish should not interfere with the linguistic and cultural identities of the Indigenous school children. The new conceptualization of EBB is historically framed in Mexico's signing of Agreement No. 169 of the International Labor Organization of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Independent Countries, which recommends that children learn to read and write in their mother tongue.

During this time around 40 introductory books in the country's 40 most spoken Indigenous languages were published. This approach promoted the use of the first language (L1) as the language of instruction and the teaching of Spanish as L2, a somewhat innovative approach compared to previous ones. The project was met with resistance from both teachers and Indigenous communities alike and overall did not meet expectations (Hamel 2008). The new proposal's failings were not exclusively the result of sociopolitical conditions in the communities, but also of the lack of proper teacher training for the new "bilingual" and "bicultural" curricula.

In analyzing the evolution of the institutionalization of language policies, one should acknowledge the gradual refinement of methods and techniques that involve teams of specialists in pedagogy, didactics, and linguistics in the development and design of materials. Nevertheless, in hindsight one can see that the success and continuity of these programs also required anthropological, sociolinguistic, and linguistic research. Important issues and problems that need to be addressed include, to name just a few, the introduction of reading and writing programs into cultures that maintain an oral tradition, the cultural relevance of the books that are introduced, the concept of literacy as simply the ability to read or write, the complexity and variability of "bilingualism," the criteria for choosing the

dialects in textbooks, and the role of the “bilingual” teacher as a cultural and linguistic intermediary.

In summary, despite the claims that bilingualism led to the recognition of linguistic diversity, the political, practical, and pedagogical constraints of these programs did not help reverse the ongoing trend toward subtractive bilingualism. In this sense, much as in the Cardenist period, these bilingual programs served as alternative routes into the national integrationist program.

Intercultural Education: A New Paradigm

With the development of Latin American Indigenous movements of the 1970s and their approaches to multilingualism and bilingual education programs, the very notion of “culture” itself began to be reconceptualized. Starting in the 1980s, Latin Americans began to talk about “*intercultural* bilingual education.”

In Mexico, this transition pointed to “a new paradigm of the Mexican Nation of the twenty-first Century, one of *unity in diversity* [italics in original] through the development of interculturality which leads to coexistence in diversity, in a dignified and respectful way for all Mexicans” (Ahuja Sánchez et al. 2007, p. 13; Schmelkes 2004). This paradigm occurred with the emergence of new legislation linked to the construction of a citizenship that, toward the end of the last millennium, was defined as “multicultural and plurilingual” (see Kymlicka 1995). The driving force behind this new legislation was, in important ways, the Indigenous movements in Latin America.

In 1991, in recognition of the rich cultural diversity of the Mexican State, Article 4 of the Mexican Constitution was modified to incorporate protection and promotion of the languages, cultures, traditions, customs, and specific forms of social organization of the Indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, this acknowledgment of diversity has been severely criticized as it was applied to cultural rights only. Only a decade later, in the context of peace negotiations with the government, the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN, National Zapatista Liberation Army) and Indigenous representatives from all over Mexico presented a more inclusive program that laid out a new relationship for the Indigenous peoples, the state, and the society.

The Zapatista army (EZ for its Spanish initials) demanded political and economic autonomy, demands that obviously were not to be granted, since the government only offered cultural concessions (de León 2001). The constitutional recognition of Indigenous cultural rights was granted with the modification of Article 2 of the Mexican Constitution. These concessions were worded in terms of “the right to preserve and enrich the languages” (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2015, July, section A.IV ASAS), as favoring intercultural bilingual education and the advancement of primary, secondary, and higher education (section B.II). Along this line, the government “allows” for the creation of various agencies and regulations responsible for establishing the conditions to implement these rights: the Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural y Bilingüe (CGEIB, General Coordination of

Intercultural and Bilingual Education) and in 2003 the Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indígenas (LGDLPI, General Law on the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples), along with the creation of the Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas (INALI, National Institute of Indigenous Languages) in 2005. This conceptual package placed Mexican linguistic and cultural diversity within a new juridical framework, aiming to advance the construction of a new pluralistic citizenry.

CGEIB is understood as: “The body of intentional teaching processes which are orientated towards the formation of persons capable of comprehending reality from diverse cultural perspectives and of intervening in the processes of social transformation which respect and are benefited from cultural diversity. This refers to a deep understanding of ones’ own cultural logics as well as the cultural logics of others” (Ahuja Sánchez et al. 2007, p. 49; see also Schmelkes 2004). Unlike previous periods in which culture was defined in terms of the “otherness” of Indigenous peoples, the CGEIB strives to consider “diversity” as a resource of cognitive and cultural plasticity, with the potential for social transformation for *all* citizens. Language, for its part, is defined as “A formative force of culture itself, tool of thought, means of communication and expression, as well as existing as a historical memory of all the aforementioned” (Ahuja Sánchez et al. 2007, p. 47). This approach is radically different from previous language policies, given that the Native language is placed as a central educational resource for culture, cognition, and historical memory and not as a transitive means toward Castilianization. In the same way, the CGEIB proposes the incorporation of bilingualism as a resource for the maintenance, revitalization, and development of Indigenous languages, highlighting the promotion of oral and written skills in both their mother tongue and a second language. A major objective of the CGEIB’s proposals is to build upon the *right to be educated in one’s mother tongue* (my italics) (Ahuja Sánchez et al. 2007, p. 53). This right is granted by Article 11 of LGDLPI, which establishes the guaranteed access to obligatory education for Indigenous peoples, in both intercultural and bilingual forms, promoting interculturality, multilingualism, and respect for diversity and linguistic rights in secondary and higher education.

Parallel to this, LGDLPI strives for the recognition and protection of linguistic, individual, and collective rights of Indigenous peoples and communities, as well as promoting the use and development of Indigenous languages (Article 1). A central point of this new legislation is the recommendation that Indigenous languages be recognized as national languages, enjoying the same status as Spanish, with regard to all official documentation. This includes complete access to public administration, services, and information (Article 4), including having translators present at legal proceedings.

Thirteen years after its creation, CGEIB reports to have led to the development of intercultural education models for teacher training; the creation of secondary and higher education programs, such as undergraduate degrees and intercultural universities; the production of didactic materials; and the promotion of research on these topics (Schmelkes 2013). Two main points of CGEIB projects are worth questioning:

1. Has CGEIB guaranteed children's rights as established in LGDLPI to receive an education in their mother tongue?
2. Has it implemented intercultural education within the Indigenous population and for citizens in general, as its objectives proposed?

Regarding (1), CGEIB has not as yet guaranteed de facto the rights of children to receive an education in their mother tongue, despite modifications made to the curricula in accordance to LGDLPI. Regarding (2), schools have not transformed their prior Indigenous conditions to include an increased emphasis on “interculturality” (Barriga Villanueva 2004). The spread of “interculturality” to all citizens has been even less successful than in the schools. These challenges show the limitations and weaknesses of the project, which was intended to extend well beyond formal schooling.

However, the new intercultural paradigm first articulated by the Zapatista movement has opened a range of possibilities generated from diverse regions and a plurality of participants independent of CGEIB. Interculturality for all citizens, as was put forward by CGEIB and some critics of the subject (Bertely Busquets 2008), has not been achieved, but it is clear that one of the effects of the Zapatista movement has been a paradigm shift from *indigenismo* (Villoro 1950) to *zapatismo* (Díaz Polanco 1997), nowadays expressed in multiple forms of neo-Zapatista ideologies, with the Indigenous subject at the forefront. At present, in fact, the discourse and the practice of interculturality do not reside or emanate from state institutions by means of CGEIB, but rather are produced by diverse academic, civic, and political participants who generate spaces of intercultural “transversal” exchange (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2013).

Work in Progress: Institutional Intercultural Education Generated “From Below” and Indigenous Languages

At the beginning of the present millennium, the conservatively inclined Mexican State, faced with the demands of the Indigenous movement for cultural and linguistic rights, created CGEIB and INALI through legislative reform. The education program of CGEIB proposed to cover all formal educational levels, from elementary through higher education. The creation of intercultural universities (12 by 2015) is especially worth mentioning. These represent a pioneering project in Mexico responding to Zapatista demands and greatly inspired by the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (URACCAN, University of the Autonomous Regions of Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast). These intercultural universities were designed to prepare young Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of the predominantly Indigenous regions, with the goal of achieving greater integration of Indigenous people within conventional universities (Ahuja Sánchez et al. 2007). Although these universities were created to decentralize and diversify higher education, it should be noted that this initiative was not developed by the Indigenous peoples themselves in their respective regions.

The project faces many challenges with respect to educational quality, as well as internal political tensions within the universities themselves. However, from the regional perspective, intercultural universities offer educational options for the Indigenous population, which had previously never existed. The project has been criticized on a number of fronts, including critical evaluations by its own administration's internal inspections (Salmerón 2013; Schmelkes 2013). Furthermore, its long-term impact needs to be evaluated in the coming years.

A decade and a half following the creation of these institutions, the intercultural educational program is still not exclusively held in CGEIB hands, as had been the case during the previous periods involving the state's vertical education projects. CGEIB is defined by its "transversal" role, which is why its interventions seek to coordinate resources rather than assuming direct responsibility in education policy. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that *intercultural exchange communities* have emerged independent of CGEIB. These communities are characterized by their local and trans-local interaction of diverse participants involved in autonomous education, research, and activism.

This type of "transversal" relation (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011) links community education programs, academia, nongovernmental organizations, and, in some cases, institutions. Examples of these cooperative efforts include independent projects opposed to mainstream institutional education now present in many Indigenous communities in the country. To cite just a few, we have UNEM (Unión de Maestros por la Nueva Educación de México, or Teachers' Union for a New Education in Mexico) (Bertely Busquets 2008; Sartorello 2009), CMPIO (Coalición de Maestros y Promotores Indígenas de Oaxaca, Coalition of Teachers and Indigenous Promoters of Oaxaca) in association with the communality project (Maldonado Alvarado 2002; Meyer 2010; Rockwell 2003), the autonomous education of the Zapatista regions (Baronnet 2009, among others), ECIDEA (Educación Comunitaria Indígena para el Desarrollo Autónomo, or Indigenous Communitarian Education for Autonomous Development) (Paoli 2003), the education programs of the Misión de Bachajón (2014) (Bachajón Mission), Chiapas (<http://www.mb.org.mx>), and Tanesque A. C. (2014) "Education from and with the subject" (<http://tanesque.edu.mx>), to name a few. It is important to point out that these projects (see also Mateo Alvarado 2002; Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2001; Meyer 2010) were generated "from within and from below" (Bertely Busquets et al. 2008, p. 29), that is, from local actors and the communities themselves. For its part, the pedagogical proposal of Gasché's (2008) "inductive intercultural education" was born out of the coordination of local residents, children, teachers, and anthropologists in the design of curricula that integrate community knowledge with diverse participants.

Regarding Native languages, these projects, as a whole, implicitly or explicitly demand "the maintaining or revitalization of the Indigenous cultures and languages" (Hamel 2008, p. 320, 2016) not achieved by the institutional programs. An exemplary project focused on developing a mother tongue curriculum was created by the P'urepecha teachers' of Michoacan in 1995. One of its notable

achievements is the effect of P'urepecha (L1) literacy proficiency in developing Spanish L2 proficiency and overall academic proficiency (see Hamel 2008, 2016; Hamel and Francis 2006).

All these projects are promising in terms of language maintenance and revitalization, as many teachers are from these communities, and use their Native language at school for instruction and hold linguistic ideologies in favor of the local language in a way that avoids the breakdowns that are common between state schools and the community.

Various analysts have suggested that the intercultural transversal process among various participants has the effect of “interculturalizing” the Mexican educational institutions (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011; Muñoz Cruz 2001, among others). They argue that this exchange offers the school an interface between state and Indigenous peoples.

It is important to highlight, nevertheless, that many of these intercultural exchanges are generated from the very same agents “from below” (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011, p. 132; see also Bertely Busquets 2008; Maldonado Alvarado 2002; Meyer 2010), often in opposition or open resistance to institutional projects. This is why these experiences are distinguished from “official interculturalism” (Baronnet 2009), not only for their inductive procedures of teaching and learning but also for their refusal of standardized teaching, as well as for opposing organizational and evaluative procedures (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011).

In consequence, in the last decades of Indigenous education in Mexico, we can observe that the state had ceased to be the only authority of definition, imposition, unification, regulation, and control. The educational processes, for a major part of the protest movement, are in the hands of the stakeholders themselves, in dialogue with other participants. This does not mean that the state has lost its presence and control; it just ceases to be the sole arbiter in matters of Indigenous education. At the same time, given the processes of the “transversalization” of interculturality, the state participates in intercultural exchange within certain contexts of dialogue with other authorities (Dietz and Mateos Cortés 2011) – negotiating, intermediating, and also co-opting.

While the subject of interculturality has been developed in various areas, with regard to Indigenous languages, the following question still remains: What kind of pedagogic training have teachers received in the context of bilingual intercultural education within the frame of the new state policies? The official bilingual intercultural education project has neither developed methodologies from a bilingual perspective suited to the cultural and linguistic environment of the Indigenous population, nor has it advanced in its design, development, application, and evaluation of the didactic resources of this approach. This point presents the greatest challenge, given that it requires a specialized documentation of the languages and a specific didactic program from a bilingual focus, as is set out in official objectives.

In reality, it is the alternative unofficial projects that are the ones that have incorporated Native languages into their curricula, in collaboration with teachers

who speak the same language and are residents of the community. In spite of their strengths, these projects however do not represent a coherent and effective national project designed to maintain or revitalize Indo-Mexican languages. More collaborative work and exchange among different actors is needed to assess their impact and potential in reversing diglossia and language shift.

Problems and Challenges

The integrationist policies of Mexico's past, focusing on imposing Spanish as the dominant language, have posed multiple challenges to the building of the open, pluralistic, and inclusive society promoted by Zapatismo over more than two decades ago. The postcolonial Mexico of today, growing out of a multicultural mosaic of languages and their speakers, inherently contains asymmetric, conflictive, unequal, and exclusionary relationships. Thus, the following challenges facing language and education policy are of both a practical and a political nature. The practical challenges involve issues pertinent to linguistics, sociolinguistics, and pedagogy. The political challenges involve, among many factors, the linguistic rights recognized and ratified by the LGDLPI, but are yet to be achieved.

In 2008, INALI carried out an exhaustive documentation of Mexican linguistic diversity of Indigenous languages and published in its *Catalogue of Indigenous National Languages: Linguistic Variants of Mexico with Their Auto-denominations and Geostatistical References*. The catalogue identified 11 distinct linguistic families, placing them into 64 groups with 364 variants. All these languages, owing to the growing attention provided by programs in education, health, justice, and social development, are now recognized at a national level. This documentation of extensive linguistic diversity could potentially contribute to revitalize, strengthen, and develop Mexican languages in a more rigorous and effective way. However, according to INALI, all these languages are, to differing degrees, threatened to become extinct. "Of the 364 existing variants, 249 are in danger of extinction" (PINALI 2008, p. 18).

Given the complexity of the situation, the degree and quality of linguistic documentation are highly variable and sometimes lack in descriptive research. Linguistic displacement is in advanced stages and many languages are no longer spoken as first languages. INALI was given the task of cataloging these languages with the goal of "strengthening and revitalizing them" through a specific program called Program for the Revitalization, Strengthening and Development of National Indigenous Languages (PINALI 2008–2012). Recognizing and acknowledging the urgent need to intervene represent a critical step in the potential reversal of the steady loss of Indigenous languages.

Language revitalization, however, does not depend exclusively on cataloging, documenting, or describing languages themselves, nor solely on the production of didactic materials, no matter how necessary they may be. Its greater challenge lies in transforming the linguistic ideologies of both non-speakers *and* Native speakers,

who have neglected transmitting and preserving their own languages. This gradual loss of intergenerational transmission, leading to the subsequent loss of these languages, only points to the success of the dominant ideology of promoting Spanish as the language of education, prestige, and social mobility – all of which comes from state policies, but also, in part, from Indigenous teachers and the parents themselves.

The evident displacement of these languages is undeniable, revealing that the so-called “bilingual” proposals represent nothing more than labels for diverse sociolinguistic phenomena, ranging from syncretism to subtractive bilingualism and language shift. Given this situation, INALI was forced to admit the challenges it faces in guaranteeing the rights set out by LGDLPI (Hamel 2008; Pellicer et al. 2006). This suggests the main problem is people who are unaware of their rights due to the state showing lack of interest in disseminating these rights. INALI reports in its Institutional Program of the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (PROINALI 2014–2018), “The majority of federal entities have not enacted legal reforms recognizing Indigenous peoples and their rights at a state level, as is set out by the 2nd Article of the Constitution; therefore, they lack the proper means to attend to the Indigenous peoples in cultural and linguistic matters” (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2014, p. 9).

Public institutions and judiciary powers fail to enforce these laws in many ways: (1) lack of official translators and interpreters, (2) insufficiently trained public servants who attend to Indigenous peoples in their own languages, and (3) the failure of LGDLPI to create mechanisms empowering INALI to monitor and issue sanction (PINALI 2008). Thus, after more than a decade since the enactment of LGDLPI, Indigenous peoples are still not able to exercise their linguistic rights (de León 2011).

The challenge of reversing the process of linguistic displacement, while at the same time guaranteeing the implementation of LGDLPI, goes beyond the powers of such bodies as INALI. Nevertheless, this institution has been able to propose policies and actions which had not been proposed before in the language policies of Mexico: (1) their recognition at a legislative level, (2) their documentation and cataloging, (3) the production of teaching materials, and (4) the planning and implementation of revitalization programs for those in danger of extinction. The road from program to practice admittedly contains a variety of ongoing challenges to INALI, despite the proposal published by the PINALI, which was to be carried out between 2008 and 2012.

Among these challenges we find the federal- and state-wide lack of interest in the implementation of language policies. However, the greatest challenge comes from the structural conditions that continue to allow Indigenous people to suffer inequality and discrimination. The recognition of cultural and linguistic rights represents an important step in Mexico’s history, although it does not get to the heart of the problems of inequality that affect Indigenous Mexicans, given that the conditions which would guarantee these rights do not exist.

Zapatismo has played an important role in redirecting the linguistic ideologies of speakers and certain academic and institutional sectors toward maintaining and reevaluating the use of Native languages. Nevertheless, progress has been hampered by ongoing struggles against a current of dominant discriminatory linguistic ideologies, which favor cultural and linguistic homogenization.

Future Directions

Linguistic and Indigenous education policies have always revolved around the construction of the Mexican nation-state, passing through various paradigms, all of which looked for “solutions” to the country’s cultural and linguistic diversity. The CGEIB’s current paradigm of “unity in diversity” aspires to grant rights to citizens who have not been acknowledged. After Zapatismo, the gap between legislative and institutional gains and the reality of the challenges of implementing them continues to grow as the Indigenous population has been affected at different levels by the neoliberal economic model. The radical economic changes and reconfigurations created by these models have had a devastating effect on the Indigenous population. Increasing poverty and consequent enforced migration to seek work toward the interior of the country and abroad have profoundly affected birth rates, the survival of Indigenous communities, and the languages they speak, thereby accelerating language shift. The conditions for intergenerational linguistic transmission are increasingly threatened as the integrity of the family unit continues to fragment, especially with the ever-increasing incidence of child migration. This reality, which cannot be ignored, represents unrecognized challenges to the institutions that serve these communities.

The PINALI program attempts to cover all possible linguistic revitalization cases on an institutional level. Nevertheless, the program will have to be evaluated by means other than documentation and cataloging, including an ongoing dialogue between INALI and CGEIB, if the problems of educational inequality and diversity are to be tackled head on.

In the meantime, independent and autonomous projects involving the participation of actors from Indigenous communities, as well as academics and local, international nongovernmental agencies, have accomplished substantial achievements and developed new models to follow. Here we should also take into account spaces of resistance and intercultural creativity in the everyday life of some official schools and a good number of official teachers searching for alternative ways beyond state models (Rockwell 2003; Soberanes Bojórquez 2003). These diverse participants will have to document and integrate new proposals, methodologies, and experiences in empirical, reflective, and critical research that does not lose sight of the value of knowledge generated “from below” and through plural exchange. In this sense, it seems that genuine intercultural education and maintenance of Indo-Mexican languages can forge ahead only through intercultural exchange communities characterized by the interaction of different actors involved in state-independent projects, autonomous education, research, and activism.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the Andes](#)

- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

- Enrique Hamel: [Bilingual Education for Indigenous Languages of Mexico](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
- Judy Kalman: [Literacies in Latin America](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education
- Luis Enrique López and Inge Sichra: [Indigenous Bilingual Education in Latin America](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
- I. Sichra: [Language Diversity and Indigenous Literacy in the Andes](#). In Volume: Literacies and Language Education

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Language Policy and Education in the Andes

Marleen Haboud and Nicholas Limerick

Abstract

This chapter describes current formal bilingual intercultural educational programs throughout the central Andean region (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru), focusing on both regional trends and developments of bilingual intercultural programs in each one of the abovementioned nation-states. After a brief historical overview, we discuss a number of recent transformations that are purported to offer inclusive education for Indigenous populations in the region. Some of the ongoing pressures, challenges, and expectations placed on language education are also discussed.

Keywords

Andes • Intercultural bilingual education • Multilingual education • Interculturalism • Indigenous languages

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Introduction

This chapter analyzes language and education in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. In addition to sharing a common geography, these countries are known for overlapping linguistic and cultural groups, especially in regards to the Indigenous populations of each respective nation-state. Although statistics are controversial, official sources identify 34% of Ecuadorians, 37% of Peruvians, and 62% of Bolivians as Indigenous. There are estimated to be 36 Amerindian languages in Bolivia, 13 in Ecuador, and 68 in Peru (Haboud et al. 2016). Many Native communities still use their own languages. Although each country has preferences regarding the terminology used to name each language, in this chapter, we use Amerindian, Indigenous, originary, and ancestral as synonyms. Indigenous languages have been “officially” recognized in different ways across nation-states, proclaiming the importance of language use across social domains.

Formal education is compulsory in the three countries, and they have compromised to offer intercultural bilingual education (EIB) and to legally support local languages, identities, and cultures. Due to pressures generated with Indigenous movements and the transnational indigenist networks in the Andes that gained steam in the 1970s and 1980s, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru adopted different forms of intercultural bilingual education. These projects have tended to focus on the valorization of Indigenous cultures, respect for and dialogue across cultural diversity, and platforms for linguistic and cultural rights. EIB pedagogy has emphasized the incorporation of the history, values, and technologies of *pueblos Indígenas* (Indigenous peoples). EIB policies have also recognized the teaching of mother tongues with Spanish as the second language and increasingly also the teaching of foreign languages. There are language requirements for teachers who work in the EIB system, such as speaking Spanish and an Amerindian language of the community in which they teach. Despite such progressive policies, Indigenous languages across the Andes face extensive shift and are of limited use in formal education (Crevels 2012; Yataco 2015).

It is worth noting that official figures regarding literacy rates among 15–24-year-olds are as high as 98% for the three countries. As promising as these rates seem, they only refer to Spanish literacy. No similar information is found regarding literacy in Native languages.

Having briefly described language policy and education across the region, the next sections examine recent histories of linguistic and educational policies for each

respective nation-state. We show that in spite of favorable conditions surrounding education, there are profound gaps between policies and practices, oftentimes leading to the continued hispanization of Indigenous peoples.

Bolivia

Bolivia is often cited as one of the most linguistically and culturally diverse nation-states in the Americas. The 2009 Constitution recognizes 36 Indigenous languages, as well as Spanish, as official languages (Art. 5, I). It also institutionalizes Plurilingual Intercultural Intracultural Education (EIIP, formerly EIB) (Art. 30, II.12). Framed in the *Suma Qamaña* principle (Quechua: *to live correctly and well*), EIIP aims to promote intercultural and multilingual relations while reinforcing cultural identities and linguistic diversity. Nevertheless, Spanish is still the main language of instruction nationwide. Council of Assessment, Accreditation and Quality Education (ten listed for Bolivia), English, French, German, Italian, and Mandarin are taught in addition to Spanish.

Early Developments

Though Bolivia has increasingly promoted Indigenous languages and cultures, the use of various languages in education is not new. As early as 1926, President Siles created a so-called national “pro-Indian crusade” and a Pedagogical Rural Institute for Indigenous education. Such initiatives were short-lived, in part due to the resistance of elitist groups.

In the 1930s, Aymara leaders and a *mestiza* teacher developed a community-based school called Warisata. This program later became known throughout the world for providing bilingual education to Aymara students with a pedagogy inspired by community values and local Indigenous organizations (<http://www.katari.org/warisata-escuela-ayllu>). This program, however, which lasted until 1940, was the exception rather than the rule for locally initiated Indigenous schooling. In the 1950s, the National Revolution attempted to use formal education for the assimilation of Indigenous individuals into a national imaginary (Lazar 2010), bringing forth legislation such as the Education Act of 1955. This document proclaimed the importance of literacy campaigns in Indigenous languages “for the immediate learning of Spanish as an indispensable factor in national linguistic unification” (Von Gleich 1994, p. 91). Such policies of assimilation and hispanization continued in the 1960s and 1970s, mainly through the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), which had led education in the Amazonian region since the 1950s.

During these same decades, Latin American indigenists and missionaries began writing in Indigenous languages. The 1954 Interamerican Indigenist Conference adapted earlier work from SIL linguists, yielding a standardized alphabet for writing

in Quechua and Aymara that would also travel to Peru (Hornberger 1993). A series of similar meetings in the region, now involving some Indigenous participants, resulted in the official use of similar alphabets for varieties of Quechua across the nation-states. The Bolivian version of this alphabet was ratified in 1984, although contemporarily many Indigenous groups across the Andes reject a standardized alphabet as difficult and artificial. In the 1980s, cross-Andean influences sent 75 Indigenous individuals from Bolivia to Peru to study bilingual education and linguistics at the Experimental Bilingual Education Project of Puno (PEEB-P) (Jiménez Quishpe 2014). This came about with the introduction of organizations like UNICEF, which promoted education in Quechua, Aymara, and Guarani territories in Bolivia in the late 1980s (Hornberger and López 1998).

Accounts of Indigenous education in Bolivia often highlight the beginning of national-level EIB endeavors in the 1990s, a decade that marked increased mobilization of Indigenous groups. In the same years, the state restructured economic policies with support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These processes led to paradoxical outcomes, such as the official recognition of interculturalism and educational reform alongside increases in economic inequality for Indigenous citizens (Gustafson 2009). Despite such tensions, a wide-ranging effort to transform the educational system began, including teaching EIB and Indigenous languages in all of the schools of Bolivia. In 1994, a series of legal reforms such as the Education Reform Act (Law 1565) attempted to institutionalize a number of changes across the system. One such change was the establishment of the Educational Councils of Indigenous Peoples, which afforded a limited degree of responsibility for education to Indigenous communities (Jiménez Quishpe 2014).

Major Contributions

In the 2000s, the economic policies of the 1990s collapsed, and in 2006 Evo Morales became Bolivia's first Aymara president. He arrived to power as Indigenous organizers were designing a number of changes, some of which were influenced by the schools of the 1930s and the reforms of the 1990s. These efforts culminated in 2010 with the Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez Law of Education (No. 070). Named after the founders of the Warisata project, this law reformed EIB to EIIP. Law 070 designates a number of more radical educational labels, such as "anti-imperialist," "de-colonization," and "intracultural," which have been largely ignored elsewhere in the Andes (<http://www.scielo.org.bo/img/revistas/rcc/v17n30/a04.pdf>). It also stipulates the importance of Indigenous languages, Spanish, and foreign languages. Primary education should now include both an Indigenous language and Spanish in monolingual communities, instead of emphasizing on shifting to Spanish. The lack of appropriate materials, infrastructure of rural schools, and teacher training are some challenges faced by EIIP (Machaca 2013).

Such national policy designations brought about a number of other programs, though there is still a tendency to use Spanish (Machaca 2013). Since 2012, parents are officially invited to participate in the *Educación Inicial en Familia Comunitaria*

program (Early Education in Family Community program), where they can use their preferred language. In the same year, the government created the *Plurinational Institute of Languages*, which has published alphabets for 23 ancestral Bolivian languages and has supported Quechua, Aymara, and Guarani universities.

Despite these advances, speakers discuss the difficulties of truly implementing the national policy after centuries of hispanization. Their concern is that Indigenous languages may merely retain symbolic status, since laws and classrooms have not inspired individuals to live their languages with understanding and pride (Saavedra 2011).

Ecuador

Formal education in Ecuador has undergone wide-ranging reforms since 2009, which are part of President Rafael Correa's *Sumak Kawsay* (Kichwa, Ecuadorian variety of Quechua: "Good living"), the National Plan for Development that draws from the Kichwa notion of prioritizing human needs and harmony (Becker 2013). However, many have noted that Correa's project is closely linked to economic development, including the exploitation and extraction of raw materials railed against by many Indigenous groups.

Supporting the 2008 Constitution (Art. 2), which recognizes Spanish as an official language and Kichwa and Shuar as official languages of intercultural relations, the National Plan includes the 2011 Organic Law of Intercultural Education, which describes a nationwide restructuring of formal education. Article 19 offers an example of its paradoxes, such as how the law draws simultaneously from audit culture in international education and the recognition efforts of Indigenous groups: "the Ecuadorian government must provide quality education considering all the pedagogical, technological, cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the peoples and the right of every person to be taught in their own language, as well as others that relate to the international community."

In Ecuador, the following rubric has structured two parallel public school systems (Law of Education, Art 27):

1. National "intercultural" system (formerly Hispanic Education) with three levels: (a) Early Childhood Education (0–5 years of age), (b) Basic General Education (6–15 years of age), and (c) General Unified Baccalaureate (15–18 years of age). Spanish is the main means of instruction, but English is usually taught as a required subject. Under the Law, thousands of English teachers have been trained in the United States and through programs via e-training, webinars, or Massive Open Online Courses. The Curriculum Reform Aimed at the Development of the Learning of English program, which came into effect in 1992 under an agreement between the British and Ecuadorian governments, has been devoted to improving the teaching of English in all Ecuadorian schools, including in EIB.
2. Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB) is aimed at students who belong to an Indigenous nation. In Ecuador, EIB has had an unprecedented arrangement of a

parallel national-level school system for Indigenous students, which we examine below.

Early Developments

Histories of intercultural bilingual education in Ecuador often begin with the Kichwa leader Dolores Cacuango. In the region of Cayambe, Cacuango established a network of three schools in the 1940s with both Kichwa and Spanish as mediums of instruction. Over the following decades, Indigenous communities established various educational projects throughout the country (Conejo 2008). These initiatives were important not only for bringing formal education to Indigenous communities but also for developing local initiatives that would later aid national projects. These initiatives also formed a cadre of Indigenous leaders with experience in founding and administrating educational institutions.

Montaluisa (1980) describes how, in Ecuador, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) led efforts for writing in Kichwa since their arrival in 1953, where they foregrounded regional Kichwa registers in bible translations. According to Barriga López (1992), the goal of SIL in Ecuador was the “global preparation” of Indigenous communities through bilingual and bicultural education, literacy programs, and Indigenous teacher training. As in Bolivia and Peru, Abram (1992) emphasizes that SIL educational institutions used Kichwa as a language of transition, excluding it from use past the third grade. Pan-Andean ideologies about enlightening and converting Kichwa speakers through alphabetic writing also surfaced in discourses in the 1980s orthography meetings in Ecuador and in Peru, though in Ecuador many Kichwa individuals played central roles.

As Indigenous organizations gained traction in the 1970s and 1980s, they relied not only upon the experiences of local community leaders but also upon a variety of non-Indigenous national and international actors. The same can be said for education initiatives. Two such projects were especially influential for Indigenous education in Ecuador. One was the Center of Research for Indigenous Education (CIEI) at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador in Quito, which created materials for teaching in Ecuadorian languages and trained a number of prominent Kichwa linguists and education activists. A second project was a Bilingual Intercultural Education Project (P.EBI) sponsored by the German Cooperation (GTZ) in conjunction with the Ecuadorian government. P.EBI developed pedagogical materials, trained teachers, and yielded a large-scale network of schools for Indigenous education (Abram 1992).

CIEI and P.EBI were essential for one of the most radical proposals of Indigenous education seen in Latin America. As Ecuador was transitioning from dictatorship to multicultural democratic citizenship, Indigenous activists proposed an intercultural bilingual school system, relying on the will of a new President and the prevailing discourses of democracy. In 1988, with the efforts of the National Indigenous Confederation CONAIE, an executive order established the National Directorate of Intercultural Bilingual Education (DINEIB) to run the nationwide Indigenous school system (King and Haboud 2007). Over the years, many of the individuals

trained at CIEI or P.EBI would direct the bilingual system, and schools developed by P.EBI would later become EIB institutions. This system, sometimes criticized for focusing largely on the Kichwa language, would design and carry out a curriculum for and with Indigenous peoples.

Major Contributions

In recent years, the system has seen criticism, from outside and within, for not teaching Indigenous languages in schools or for being run by a small group of directors without the input of others (Martínez Novo 2009). After his election in 2007, President Correa seized upon such criticisms to systematically alter the system. His Executive Decree 98 created a government office, the Subsecretariat of Education for Intercultural Dialogue (later termed Subsecretariat of EIB) that would now oversee EIB. On the one hand, this office would be in charge of “interculturalizing” Ecuador’s entire educational system, a process which has still largely yet to unfold. On the other, the Decree proclaimed that the Ministry of Education would choose the new office’s director. These changes have been controversial, and many Indigenous communities decry the loss of the system’s autonomy. Indeed, such transformation is indicative of larger-scale divides around Correa’s policies. Under his administration, Indigenous languages have gained unprecedented visibility throughout government events and offices. Yet, Indigenous organizations such as CONAIE have also accused Correa of manipulating such symbols as he shifts authority from Indigenous communities to state institutions (Becker 2013).

One of the more recent controversies of reform in EIB is the arrival of Millennium Schools. With new buildings, technologies, and/or teachers, Correa’s administration has attempted to provide a nationwide “education of quality,” planning for up to 88 Millennium Schools by 2015. In the process, the state has shuttered hundreds of schools, including EIB community-based educational institutions. This project has divided communities, with some appreciating the disappearance of schools with a sole teacher for all grade levels and others lamenting the erosion of community values and jobs (Sacha Rosero, Kichwa leader, in personal communication, 06/15). Most recently, the Ministry of Education has announced plans for 14 Millennium Schools called “Guardians of the language,” devoted in name to preserving and revitalizing ancestral languages.

Regarding higher education, the Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation; the Council of Higher Education; and the Council of Assessment, Accreditation, and Quality Education are evaluating and restructuring universities according to new standards, which has caused problems for institutions created by EIB that train Indigenous teachers for the system. While this reform has increased awareness about the importance of educational processes, it has also boosted bureaucratic and administrative requirements, delaying pedagogical activities across universities.

Indeed, education has been emphasized during Correa’s administration, as evidenced in the creation of four public universities, two of them with Indigenous

names: *Yachay* (Kichwa: “knowledge”) and *Ikiam* (Shuar: “forest”). Criticisms have arisen in regard to content and the fact that Amerindian languages play no role in instruction (Villavicencio, 2014). On a more general level, while Indigenous languages and cultures have gained presence in the public sphere, programs have tended to lack serious engagement with teaching and encouraging speakers and nonspeakers of the languages. They have also divided speakers of Indigenous languages around Correa’s political project.

Peru

Like Bolivia and Ecuador, Peru has introduced a number of national laws and policies for various domains of education. According to the 2003 Law of Education (28044), Peru’s educational system requires equal rights, quality education, and respect for each individual and human group in regards to their linguistic and cultural particularities. This legislation centers on the most-spoken Indigenous languages, Quechua and Aymara. The current Constitution has proclaimed Quechua and Aymara as official languages, alongside Spanish, since 1993. Peru also recognizes 68 Indigenous languages, stipulating the need to apply them in educational settings (General Law of Education 19326 and National Policy of Bilingual Education), though the processes through which this would play out are unknown. Instruction can be in Spanish, a foreign language, or an Indigenous language, depending on the region. Outside of Indigenous education, international schools offer dual immersion in Spanish and English, French, or German.

Legal recognition of Quechua, and the standardization of policies for originary languages, has a relatively long history in Peru. At least on paper, Peru is progressive in assuring the participation of Indigenous peoples in the creation and implementation of educational programs. In general practice, however, Indigenous languages have largely been caught up in ideologies of repression that shift to ideologies of making modern citizens, the latter of which has sometimes involved recognizing regional linguistic diversity (Freeland 1996; Mannheim 1991).

Early Developments

In the twentieth century, discourses of assimilation drove SIL’s largely autonomous efforts, with approval from the state, to establish schools for 24 Native groups in the Amazon. By 1956 there were 37 bilingual schools, including 12 in remote areas. Writing in Indigenous languages also began in the 1940s and 1950s when SIL initiatives combined with indigenists’ efforts in creating alphabets for Amerindian languages.

As early as 1963, the Roundtable on Quechua and Aymara monolingualism brought anthropologists, educators, and linguists together to elaborate linguistic and educational policies. Though these meetings largely continued assimilationist ideologies, Velasco Alvarado’s leftist dictatorship in the 1970s brought national

proclamations that emphasized language and education through labor reform and class inequality. In 1975, as part of such discourses of equality, Decree Law 21156 made Peru the first country in the Andes to declare Quechua an official language, meaning that Quechua was supposed to be taught in the educational system; however, many of the more radical sectors of the government changed as Velasco began to relinquish power later in the decade (Freeland 1996). As the leadership transitioned, the 1979 Constitution named Spanish as the only official language, erasing the previous gains (Hornberger 1993).

These early efforts at standardizing and officializing languages were also invoked in movements for educational reform, including legislation that emphasized bilingual education (Hornberger 1988b). But as the policies of the 1970s faded, they gave way to internationally sponsored, regionally focused projects in bilingual education like the Upper Napo Bilingual Intercultural Education Project and the Training Program for Bilingual Teachers of the Peruvian Amazon. One of the most prominent of such programs occurred in 1977 as GTZ financially sponsored and provided expertise for the PEEB-P program (Cortina 2014), which attempted to conduct primary education in Quechua and Aymara throughout the region. Initially, the goal was still assimilationist, transitioning the students into Spanish after the first 4 years of education (López 1991). The programs sometimes proved to be controversial, as they were often institutionalized in ways that Quechua communities viewed unfavorably (Hornberger 1988a). In later years, the program focused on creating a more equitable, community-based project, and its work on bilingual education in Indigenous languages became a model for bilingual education around the world.

Freeland (1996) notes that the national government continued the bilateral agreement with GTZ, building 40 schools in the region by 1988. The state sought an even larger-scale version of the program, but such efforts failed for a number of reasons, including the lack of grassroots support and expertise. The government established the National Bilingual Directorate in 1987, which was heavily influenced by international institutions like the World Bank and UNESCO. This founding was a part of, and brought about, a larger-scale discourse of interculturalism that would figure prominently into national policy initiatives, which Hornberger (2000) describes as still promoting assimilation. An important difference to highlight is that many of Peru's leaders who planned Indigenous education and language policy have been urban elites, as opposed to Indigenous community leaders as in the rest of the Andes (Gustafson 2014).

While Indigenous movements advanced in Ecuador during the 1980s, the Shining Path became a primary factor keeping bilingual education in the margins. As García (2005) notes, the election of Alberto Fujimori brought aggressive military campaigns and neoliberal multiculturalism that promoted official recognition of linguistic and cultural diversity. Recognition of Quechua and Aymara in the 1993 Constitution was part of Fujimori's strategic attempt to offer an image of a unified nation-state. He also opened Peru to the economic policies of global institutions like the World Bank, exacerbating economic inequality. Though he had previously ended the National Bilingual Directorate, Fujimori reopened what became the National

Directorate of Bilingual Intercultural Education because of local protests (Garcia 2005). These undertakings have had significant effects on changing discourses of language rights and human rights in Peruvian education – discourses that are prominent contemporarily.

Major Contributions

It is within this historical trajectory of ideologies about recognition and assimilation that we can better understand contemporary Peru, where national projects are still somewhat lacking in practice. Trapnell (2011) and Valdiviezo (2009) note that the Law of Education (Art. 20), and the supporting documents that make up EIB's platform, has offered important advances like intercultural education for the entire school system, even if such documents are riddled with contradictions. As we have seen throughout the Andes, many of the conflicts center on what constitutes interculturalism. Such contradictions frequently play out as teachers invoke and rework legal designations.

Similar to presidential politics in the rest of the Andes, the election of Ollanta Humala in 2011 has seen the emergence of new policies, such as the Prior Consultation Law with Indigenous communities. These efforts have focused on the social inclusion of marginalized groups, especially through notions of interculturalism. Since 2011, the Law of Languages (29735), which has been translated into five Indigenous languages, regulates the use, preservation, development, recovery, promotion, and diffusion of the originary languages of Peru. With the goal of facilitating intercultural dialogue, the Ministry of Culture and the Directorate of Indigenous Languages have sponsored the training of interpreters of 35 different Indigenous languages (Law 29785, Art. 16).

Framed as regional educational projects and decentralization policies, there are important local initiatives in bilingual education and Quechua revival in regions like Ayacucho and Cuzco, although with less success in using the languages in public spaces (Zavala et al. 2014). Additionally, there is a shortage of intercultural education materials and the rejection of EIB on the part of several bilingual teachers; as such, carrying out the policies continuous to be a permanent challenge.

Challenges and Future Directions

Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru are complex multilingual and multicultural territories where Spanish has long been the main language of instruction. As such, the use of ancestral languages in education implies challenges that demand new creative responses. Although the three countries have modified their legal charters to assert multilingual identities, there are numerous political and practical controversies that have problematized the fostering of interculturalism and multilingualism as stipulated by law and demanded by powerful Indigenous voices.

While much work needs to be done regarding curricula, instructors, and methodologies, we note that intercultural education must not be limited to the rural and Indigenous, but systematically adopted across each nation-state, including urban populations. Otherwise, discourses around interculturalism will continue merely as synonyms of assimilatory multiculturalism. Intercultural education must be a tool for systematic social change that transcends the conundrums of recognition that have divided Indigenous populations. We strongly believe that such efforts must rediscover individual and collective particularities beyond standardization. Though laws promote inclusion and respect, they oftentimes lead to new social hierarchies and the exclusion of other voices. In the Andes, this frequently involves the masking of numerous marginalized communities, including smaller Indigenous and non-Indigenous others such as deaf communities and their languages (Haboud and Ortega 2015). Merely going beyond official recognition will help us reconceptualize, recreate, and redesign linguistic and educational planning and practices toward creating egalitarian education in which students of multiple cultures and languages equally value and promote all ways of knowing, creating, and learning.

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Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Language Policy and Education in Mexico](#)
- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)

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Enrique Hamel: [Bilingual Education for Indigenous Peoples in Mexico](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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Language Policy and Education in Australia

Joseph Lo Bianco and Yvette Slaughter

Abstract

Australia's language policy history reflects the country's complex linguistic demography and multiple policy needs and interests. Languages and language policy have played an important and evolving role in the formation of Australia as a postcolonial, immigrant, and trading nation, moving from the suppression of Indigenous languages and a preference for British English norms through colonization, to greater assertion of language rights for Indigenous and immigrant languages, and onto economically motivated language planning. The policy landscape has been intermittently shaped by decisive policies for language policy and language education policy, as well as educational interventions such as the prioritization of English literacy. This chapter provides an overview of the historical, political, and educational influences on the language policy landscape in Australia, including achievements in addressing Indigenous and community language needs, along with supporting second language acquisition more broadly in the education system. However, the absence of a national language policy contributes to a weak language policy environment, where language rights are highly politicized and the loss of collaborative language policy processes has led to fragmented and fragile language program provision.

Keywords

Australia • Language policy and planning • Language education • Language rights • Bilingual education

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Introduction

As an immigrant, postcolonial, and trading nation, Australia has inherited a complex linguistic demography with multiple language policy needs and interests and diverse language education challenges. As a result, administrators, politicians, and educators have needed to address a diverse range of language categories across several policy settings and in response to often conflicting language ideologies.

First, English, the national and de facto official language that arises in Australian policy history under several guises. Originally conceptualized in its British norms and character as symbol and link to British Empire loyalty and civilization, English was later challenged by evolving Australian variations and local ideologies of communication (Collins 2014). Today, English is increasingly discussed either as a key tool for integrating minorities, for “closing the gap” in literacy achievements for Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders (Indigenous) Australian children, or commercially as a commodity traded in the delivery and accreditation of internationally oriented higher education.

Second, Australian Indigenous communication, comprising essentially three groups: (1) the original 270 Australian languages, (2) the remaining languages of today (Walsh 2014), and (3) a range of koines or lingua francas, mixed languages, and pidgins and creoles, both English-based and non-English-based, that have emerged through the dislocation and oppression of Indigenous language speakers but also through innovation and a growing esteem for contact languages as important vessels of heritage languages (Eades 2014; Meakins 2014). Indigenous speech forms, and how Australian communication has been influenced by them, feature in education and integration discussions of Indigenous Australians, but also, though less commonly, in consideration of national cultural directions (e.g., Meakins 2014; Nakata 2000; Purdie et al. 2011).

Third, immigrant languages other than English that comprise a substantial demographic presence in both urban and rural settings. Known as “community languages,” these are often intergenerationally vibrant, both through evolving local speech forms as well as through increasing access to nonlocal communities through technological innovations (see Hajek and Slaughter 2015). The local settings and contexts of their use support networks of social, religious, educational, recreational, and economic institutions. The visible presence that community languages forge

within the wider society gives rise to complex relations between the linguistic norms that have evolved in Australia, the “source” country authoritative norms and shifting language policies (Clyne et al. 2015; Leitner 2004, Vol. II).

Fourth, second languages with dramatic shifts in language choices over time. The study of second languages originally reflected British geography and a selection of the intellectual heritage of Western civilization but, in more recent years, have stressed Australia’s proximity to Asian countries, economic regionalism, and geopolitical interests (Lo Bianco and Aliani 2013; Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2016).

Restricting the present discussion to education we can say that, broadly speaking, the aspirations of language policy can be divided into three. First has been the goal of ensuring all Australian permanent residents gain access to the dominant language of the society, English, in both its literate and spoken dimensions. Literacy extends to all children and among adults, to disadvantaged sections of mainstream society, as well as to many immigrants, and as the critical medium for accessing employment, progressing through education and participating in the entitlements and duties of citizenship. Universal literacy is possibly the widest reaching language policy aim (Freebody 2007).

The second aspiration of language education policy refers not to state or public official action but to the vigorous community-based efforts invested in the maintenance of minority languages, seeking essentially to secure their intergenerational transmission. Since this goal depends on establishing community-controlled institutions and since these are by definition beyond the control of the dominant social structures, they have from time to time encountered opposition and hostility as well as encouragement and toleration (Cordella and Huang 2016).

The third goal has been second language acquisition, which has shifted from a narrow focus on language acquisition through literacy cultivation, to the active acquisition of languages, incorporating first, the languages of migrants in the 1970s, then to a greater emphasis on geographically proximate Asian languages. The construction of second languages as “outside” languages has resulted in challenges for bilingual education, particularly in Indigenous contexts, but for bilingual education more broadly, with greater esteem given to the acquisition of “outside” languages, and language maintenance and development judged as a kind of remediation of disadvantage (Lo Bianco and Slaughter, chapter “► [Bilingual Education in Australia](#)” in volume “Bilingual Education”).

Although it has only been in recent decades that these ambitions have been brought together in coherent policy statements emphasising complementarity, the divergent tendencies they represent have always been implicit in policy. This is a consequence of Australia occupying a vast territory by a small population, of having European origins but being located within an Asian geography, and of having a historically disputed process of settlement and national formation, particularly of relations between all newcomers with the Indigenous inhabitants, the oldest continually surviving cultures in the world, which are strongly language based (Evans 2013; Leitner 2004, Vol. I).

For the bulk of the colonial (1788–1900) and national (post-1901) phases of Australian history, the language consequences of colonialism, settlement, development and modernization, immigration, nation building, diplomacy, geography, education, trade, war, and culture have been dealt with not as language planning but as matters resolved in the interplay of power, representative democracy, Federation and federalism, and mostly within the overarching control of social attitudes, themselves reflective of the relationships among the component parts of the population (Indigenous, settler, immigrant). Language attitudes are most evident as ideologies of esteem or stigma attached to various kinds of speech or writing (Lo Bianco 2005).

Where formal policies have been promulgated, for the most part, these are found in rules and procedures that have regulated immigrant recruitment (such as the notorious “dictation” test which enabled the government to exclude immigrants by requiring them to pass a 50 word dictation test in any European language the officers chose, including languages unknown to the applicant.) (Ryan and McNamara 2011), the mostly assimilative biases of compulsory education and their literacy pedagogies (Simpson et al. 2009), foreign relations (such as diplomatic and strategic officer training), and the shifting curriculum status of foreign language teaching (Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2016).

From 1987, however, Australia embarked on a process of explicit language planning, formulating sociolinguistically informed language decisions, making explicit declarations of aims and objectives, setting in place evaluation and research programs. Initially very successful, then strongly contested, pluralistic language policy remains part of the policy framework of Australian language planning but with its immediate fortunes dictated by wider sociopolitical arrangements (Moore 1996; Scarino 2014).

Early Developments

Clyne (1997), citing his long-standing documentation of language policy, has argued that from earliest times Australian sociolinguistic history is marked by tension. The three nodes of tension are: “English monolingualism as a symbol of the British tradition, English monolingualism as a marker of Australia's independent national identity, and multilingualism as both social reality and part of the ideology of a multicultural and outreaching Australian society” (p. 127).

This long-term tension of sociolinguistic relations has been punctuated by phases whose ideological underpinnings can be described as follows:

1. Comfortably British: This is marked by preference for Australian national language norms to reflect prestige English models (with stigma attached to Australian forms of speech), mainly as a marker of identification with England (the local playing out of language-carried social distinctions). Second language teaching favored choices and methods of instruction reflecting the western canon of literary prestige, focused less on active use and more on reading and cultivation.

2. Assertively Australian: This is marked by literary and even sociopolitical assertion for evolving Australian norms of English, as a marker of independent national identity; this Australianist language ideology had ambivalent relations with domestic multilingualism, although it did occasionally align with preference for geographically close languages and with community languages. Following World War II, admission to Australia was linked to English instruction, which saw the birth of the Adult Migrant Education Program and was ultimately extended to migrant children in 1969.
3. Ambitiously multicultural: This contains two streams, Indigenous and immigrant, marked by a common discourse of asserting language rights for community language speakers; invariably multiculturalism's effect on Australian language policy has involved advocacy for English as a second language (ESL) teaching, for multicultural policy and for public language services, and therefore for wide-ranging cultivation of language "resources."
4. Energetically Asian: This is marked by an assertion of priority for the teaching of the key languages of select Asian countries, tied specifically to the North and South East regions of Asia, and accompanied by economic, diplomatic, and strategic justifications; sometimes Asianism invokes wider social and cultural changes for Australia itself, at other times it is a more restricted discourse embedded within short-term thinking about strategic and economic calculations of national interest; Asianism has had ambivalent relations with domestic multilingualism.
5. Fundamentally economic: This is marked by the favoring of market-based choices and commercial principles of efficiency over public policy and ethnic advocacy. Concerns around international economic competitiveness have concentrated on English literacy standards, as illustrated through the introduction of national assessments in literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN), the expansion of the commercial teaching of English, and competition for international full-fee paying students in higher education (based on Lo Bianco 2003).

Societies have distinctive national policy styles and in some ways Australian language education policy has evolved a distinctive "language problem-solving" approach, characterized by low-ideology pragmatism (Ozolins 1993). Perhaps, the clearest example is the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) established in 1947, initially as ship-board English tuition for postwar displaced and refugee populations and continually funded for almost 60 years. AMEP represents a pragmatic acceptance that intolerable communication and citizenship problems would result if immigrants were not assisted to acquire English, an apparently straightforward claim, widely held, but that in societies opposed to state intervention in social planning becomes untenable (Lo Bianco 2016).

Of course, at one level, this is also an ideology – one of social pragmatism and interventionism, responding to community expectations that state measures are warranted so that minorities do not form ongoing, economically marginalized linguistic enclaves. Policy making of this kind has received support from all political streams in Australia, and is therefore not sharply aligned politically, and represents

low-ideology pragmatism, a shared project of “problem amelioration.” AMEP has come to represent a major public investment, possibly the measure most responsible for facilitating the relatively high rate of economic, residential, and social mobility characterising Australian immigration. Other examples of language education pragmatism are 1970s schemes for interpreting and translating in community languages, alongside accreditation and certification procedures to encourage professionalism (Ozolins 2001).

Major Contributions

At the Federal level, there have been five decisive policies for language education in Australia, followed by series of texts and funding documents as de facto language policies. The formally adopted policies, in chronological order, are:

1. Report on Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants (Galbally 1978)
2. National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco 1987)
3. Australian Language and Literacy Policy (Dawkins 1992)
4. National Asian Languages Strategy (COAG 1994)
5. Commonwealth Literacy Policy (embodied in various reports, media statements, and funding programs since 1997)

Although not identical in remit, scope or style, these five policies are the key formally adopted and implemented language education programs of the past 35 years: receiving government endorsement, disbursing public finances, leading to implementation and monitoring processes. Each is a complex of discursive, textual and rhetorical components, an amalgam distinctive of the national policy style in societies lacking legalistic policy-making traditions (Lo Bianco 2001).

It is important to recognize that many other reports and investigations have informed, guided, or influenced policy and to acknowledge the policy-influencing impact of lobbying and pressure from key interest groups and occasionally from academic research (Lo Bianco 2001). But these are materially different from actual policy. The five listed policies represent therefore the explicit and implemented language policy frameworks in the 25-year period between 1980 and 2005 in the near quarter century from 1980 (Lo Bianco 2003).

The Galbally report was a government-commissioned review of services, not addressing Indigenous, mainstream English, literacy or foreign relations issues. Nevertheless, it represents a major language education policy, signaling the acceptance of multiculturalism by Australian conservative political forces. As a result, for the entire 1980s a broadly shared political program among policy elites prevailed. The Galbally report led to public funding for part-time ethnic schools; and by extension to part-time Indigenous language programs; and large increases in funding for all multilingual services.

Over time, the shared program of support for a pluralist interpretation of Australian society was seen to comprise three principles: *social cohesion, economic*

benefits, and cultural diversity. Language education policy epitomized these principles.

The *National Policy on Languages* (NPL) was the first comprehensive national language policy, which was also bipartisan, receiving public endorsement from all political parties. NPL operated four key strategies: “(1) the *conservation* of Australia’s linguistic resources; (2) the *development and expansion* of these resources; (3) the *integration* of Australian language teaching and language use efforts with national economic, social, and cultural policies; and (4) the *provision* of information and services understood by clients’ (Lo Bianco 1987, p. 70, emphasis in original). The NPL was fully funded and produced the first programs in many areas: deafness and sign language; Indigenous, community, and Asian languages; cross-cultural and intercultural training in professions; extensions to translating and interpreting; funding for multilingual resources in public libraries; media; support for adult literacy; ESL; and coordinated research activity such as the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia (NLLIA).

Although the 1992 ALLP positioned itself as a policy reauthorization (claiming to “build on” and “maintain and develop” NPL), it was widely interpreted (e.g., Moore 1996) as restricting its scope and ambition, of directing policy emphasis away from pluralism and towards a more “foreign” and less “community” orientation and inaugurating a return to divisive prioritizing of language needs. Still, the ALLP drew heavily on its predecessor, continued funding many of its programs (often changing only titles and procedures), and was far more comprehensive than policies which followed it. Despite its shortcomings, ALLP was supportive of extensive language learning efforts and boosted adult literacy tied to workplace education.

The National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) scheme made available extensive funding; federal outlays on its targeted languages, Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean were over \$220 million by the program’s termination in 2002. A second iteration of the scheme, the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP 2008–2012), continued some support for the Asian languages and studies, although predominantly focused on the secondary level. This vast investment in Asian language teaching was based on shared funding commitments with state, territory, and independent education jurisdictions. The program accelerated growth of a small number of Asian languages, surpassing school and university enrollments in European languages, but also distanced the focus of domestic community language contexts in language education (Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2016).

From 1997, however, a strong turn towards making English literacy a priority focus for educational intervention occurred (e.g., Lo Bianco 2001). There is no single policy document in which this “policy” was announced as a “turn.” Its antecedents in the electoral platforms of the political parties lack specificity; essentially what took place was a dramatic elevation in political discourse of concern about English literacy standards – rhetorically a “national crisis” (Freebody 2007). Arising out of interpretation disputes of research data on children’s assessed English literacy performance in 1996, all ministers of education since have made solving the problem of literacy underperformance a prominent goal. The flow-on effects of

elevating spelling and paragraph cohesion measures in primary school English literacy has been manifold: continuing media debates about categorical superiority of “phonics” or “whole language” literacy teaching disputes about what counts as literacy and the place of critical and technological literacy, with effects for adult sectors, non-English languages, Indigenous education, teacher education, ESL, literacy pedagogy, and teacher professionalism (e.g., Freebody 2007).

The culmination of these debates was the introduction in 2008, by the federal government, of national assessments in literacy and numeracy for students in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9, in order to determine whether students were achieving above or below a national minimum standard. Although intended as a “snapshot” of student assessment and not as a replacement for teacher assessment, the introduction of NAPLAN has been highly contested. While assessment programs such as NAPLAN “create opportunities for meaningful exploration of teaching and learning practices” (Harris et al. 2013, p. 32), the testing has resulted in many unintended consequences, including contributing to the closure of bilingual education in Indigenous communities (see Simpson et al. 2009). Challenges have been made to the “cultural and linguistic appropriateness and accessibility of NAPLAN’s content” (Harris et al. 2013, p. 32) for Indigenous, EAL and remedial student groups, and the test’s narrow focus on a single mode of literacy, while unintended consequences that have been reported include the use of results to rank schools; pressure on schools to lift results at any cost; pressure on parents to keep children with lower literacy and numeracy skills at home on test day; and some schools and parents actively choosing to boycott the testing (e.g., Harris et al. 2013; Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith 2012; Simpson et al. 2009).

Problems and Difficulties

The absence of a national language policy and any clear directives and financial imperatives presents enormous challenges for language education in Australia. Following on from the five policy documents above have been a series of texts acting as language policies. These include the *National Statement and Plan for Languages* (MCEETYA 2005), the *National Indigenous Languages Policy* (Australian Government 2009), and the second iteration of the Asian languages plan, NALSSP. Lo Bianco and Aliani (2013) argue that:

the contradictions, lack of integration and differential status of these three separate texts are stark. The failure to reconcile and integrate them. . . suggests that the political framework for policy-making on languages is one of accommodating to and placating diverse constituencies and interests. (p. 14)

More recently, a national curriculum for languages has been developed in Australia, starting with a Shape paper (ACARA 2011), which provides a rationale for language education, a description of key theoretical components, and an overview of the curriculum structure and processes. In discussing her role in the framing

of Languages as a learning area in the national curriculum, Scarino (2014, p. 295) details the complexities “at the interface of different ideological positions and mindsets in Australian education,” arguing that central to all discussions in drafting the Shape paper for languages were each participants’ ideological positions and mindsets – either monolingual or multilingual in terms of both languages and education. Scarino (2014) argues that the effective implementation of the languages curriculum and the effectual teaching, learning, and assessment of languages across the curricula landscape are dependent on a shift in the monolingual mindset.

The Australian federal system can also be cumbersome and difficult for language planning; although there are only six states and two territories, these comprise 27 separate education jurisdictions. The implementation of the national languages curriculum is yet to be universally enacted and without a national policy directive and funding, the imperative to develop robust language programs is weak. The impetus, therefore, belongs to each state government and educational authority. There are progressive policies have been employed, including *The Victorian Government’s Vision for Languages Education* and the *Languages – Finding Your Voice 2014–2016*, a strategy in Victorian Catholic schools. Policies and strategies in other states and jurisdictions are compartmentalized, such as Aboriginal languages policies in Western Australia and New South Wales, and lack a coordinated approach to general languages education. Other state language policies have been seriously eroded (see Scarino 2014, p. 292). This is not to discount a range of excellent language programs and bilingual programs across the Australian education landscape (see Lo Bianco and Slaughter, chapter “► [Bilingual Education in Australia](#)” in volume “Bilingual Education”), but these programs thrive despite the feeble policy environment.

Another challenge arises due to policies and practices often having to compromise among competing demands, sometimes opting for wide coverage of languages, producing difficulties of continuation between sectors and levels of schooling, and issues of comparability, syllabus and program design, evaluation, and assessment. The language policy milieu, over many decades, has allowed for the teaching of an incredible number of languages in Australia, with over 150 languages taught in a range of educational settings and 50 languages examined through to the Year 12 level. The difficulties inherent in the wide coverage of languages lead to many students studying a number of languages throughout their schooling, with fewer and fewer students completing a language through to the end of secondary schooling (Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2009). One consequence of this is the proliferation of *ab initio* language courses at higher education level as fewer students enter the tertiary system as continuers in languages study (Nettelbeck et al. 2007).

A further difficulty arises with the construction of languages as “foreign” or “second” languages, particularly when some languages, principally Mandarin, but a broad range of languages, have significant communities of speakers across Australia. While iterations of language policies have elevated the study of Asian languages, the failure of these policies to adequately acknowledge linguistic repertoires existing within the student population and the failure of curriculum policy to effectively differentiate and address the language needs of different cohorts of

speakers have resulted in a growing avoidance of these languages by both background and nonbackground speakers (Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2016; Orton 2016).

The final difficulty, perhaps an amalgam of the others, relates to the loss of direction in language and literacy policy and the loss of the formerly collaborative nature of language policy. The sequence of policy changes discussed earlier highlights two key problems of language education policy “Australian style.”

The first is the rapidity of change, the chopping and changing of policy frameworks and ideologies. Although the effects of policies can be felt long after their termination, a consequence of distributed implementation arrangements, and of the power of positive discourses, the relatively short duration of formal policies produces problems of coherence, continuation and articulation across education sectors, and rapid changes are ultimately damaging to effective implementation.

The second problem is how policies undertaken in one area impact, whether by accident or design, contiguous areas. Policy changes in English literacy, for example, impact on the teaching of Indigenous languages, even if unintended; and policy measures for Asian languages impact on community language teaching, whether Asian or not, and other programs, even if these are unintended. The inability to quarantine the effects of policy suggests an interlinked language education ecology and highlights the benefits of comprehensive and coordinated policy, but governments in Australia appear to have lost interest in this kind of policy making at present.

Future Developments

Scarino (2014) argues that language policy in education in Australia is poised amid four realities:

1. Australia’s increasing linguistic and cultural diversity
2. A highly politicized multiculturalism agenda
3. A highly abstract expression of national educational goals that “acknowledge linguistic and cultural diversity while failing to recognize the central mediating role of these languages and cultures in student learning”
4. Fragility on the ground for those involved in languages in school education (p. 290)

Australia has, at a number of points, been a leader in language policy in education for English dominant, as well multicultural societies. The enduring effect of these successes can be seen both at an educational and a societal level, including in language study in education both formally and informally, the AMEP program, EAL support for students, and in the workplace, in, translating and interpreting services, and across modes of media networks.

Language education generally enjoys public esteem, even within a weak policy environment, when related issues of immigration and multiculturalism are embroiled in often-bitter debate and contest. However, the imperative of future development is to

once again create a collaborative policy environment which harmonizes “the work of professional academic researchers, with the demand and needs of parents and communities, professional educators and policy makers” ((Lo Bianco and Slaughter, chapter “► [Bilingual Education in Australia](#)” in volume “Bilingual Education”, p. 12). Australia has a rich cultural and linguistic diversity and many decades of accumulated language and literacy practices which, given adequate and immediate policy support by governments and educational jurisdictions, could quickly regain strength. These policies need to be more nuanced and inclusive – and more sociolinguistically informed.

Cross-References

- [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Language Planning in Education](#)
- [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)

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- Nelson Flores and Jeff Bale: [Sociopolitical Issues in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
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Language Policy and Education in Greater China

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Abstract

Globalization and nation-state building are two major factors that have conditioned language education policies in Greater China for over a century. The geopolitics of Greater China (Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau) is the result of the global expansion of Western capitalism and colonialism. Conceived in the ideology of one nation, one state, and one language, language education was then among China's fundamental responses to the West. To this end, the collapsing Qing Dynasty (1616–1911) managed to pass the Resolution on Methods of National Language Standardization (*Tongyi guoyu banfa an*) in its final year. Since then, language education has always been an important dimension of China's nation-state building. The Republic of China (1912–present) started with a model of a republic of five ethnic groups (*wuzu gonghe*) in the 1910s, evolved to that of an inclusive Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*) in the 1940s, and now entertains the latter with more diversity in Taiwan. The People's Republic of China (1949–present) first followed the Soviet model of multinational state building in the 1950s–1990s and has adopted a Chinese model of one nation with diversity (*zhonghua minzu duoyuan yiti*) since the late 1990s. These evolving models of nation-state building have essentially shaped language education policies in Greater China. Meanwhile, the impact of that old cycle of globalization is still felt as the politics of language education unfolds in decolonized Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau in the twenty-first century, but the new cycle of globalization of information and mobility sees Chinese as a rising global language.

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Globalization • Decolonization • Nation-state building • Putonghua/Guoyu • Identity

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Introduction

Greater China geographically encompasses Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau, but politically this map is the consequence of the cycle of globalization that brought the expansion of Western capitalism and colonialism into conflict with imperial China between the sixteenth century and the twentieth century. Taiwan was colonized by the Dutch and Spanish in the 1600s and ceded to Japan in 1895 before it finally returned to China in 1945. When China lost the Opium War in 1842, Hong Kong was ceded to Great Britain and returned to China only in 1997. Macau was colonized by the Portuguese in 1557 and its sovereignty was not undisputedly recovered by China until 1999. These losses created a humiliating sense of crisis among Chinese intellectuals who attempted in various ways to respond to that cycle of globalization.

When looking at the West, some Chinese intellectuals found then that modern nation-states appeared to be built on the ideology of one nation, one state, and one language. They followed this ideology to modernize China, blaming its linguistic diversity and “outdated” Chinese for its failure to meet the challenges of modernization (see DeFrancis 1972). Thus, the Qing dynasty (1616–1911) was urged to pass the Resolution on Methods of National Language Standardization (*Tongyi guoyu banfa an*) right before it collapsed in 1911. This language act set the precedent in language education policies for the infrastructure, teaching materials, teacher training, and codification of the national language in modern China.

China’s population has grown from 429 million in the early 1900s to over 1.3 billion in the early 2000s. Of this population, about 8% are ethnic minorities while

over 90% are the majority Han. After a century of efforts at linguistic assimilation, over 130 languages are still spoken in China though some are endangered. These languages belong to the Sino-Tibetan, Altaic, Austroasiatic, Austronesian, and Indo-European families (Sun et al. 2007). Meanwhile, in addition to its “outdated” script, the Chinese language has numerous dialects, such as Mandarin, Cantonese, Shanghainese, and Hakka, which are not always mutually intelligible and thus also known as the Sinitic languages. Similar linguistic diversity is also found in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Of the 23 million people in Taiwan today, about 98% are native speakers of various Chinese dialects, mostly Minnan or Taiwanese, while about 2% belong to Indigenous communities where 13 officially recognized Indigenous languages of the Austronesian family are spoken (Wu 2011). Hong Kong is primarily a Cantonese speaking community, of whose population of over seven million, about 90% are Cantonese speakers, 1% Putonghua speakers, 4% speakers of other Chinese dialects, 3.5% English speakers, and 1.5% speakers of other languages (Hong Kong 2011). Of Macau’s 552 thousand residents, about 83.3% usually speak Cantonese, 5% Putonghua, 3.7% Fujianese, and 2% other dialects, 0.7% Portuguese, 2.3% English, and 3% other languages (Macau 2012, 12–13). How to manage this linguistic diversity was and still remains a challenge in Greater China.

This chapter examines how the evolution of the Qing language acts in various forms responding to globalization and the needs of nation-state building in managing the linguistic diversity in Greater China since the early twentieth century.

Early Developments

Mainland

Viewing China’s extensive linguistic diversity as a problem in their modernization drive, the successive Chinese regimes followed the Qing’s 1911 approach to modernize Chinese for linguistic unification. The Republic of China (ROC) succeeded the Qing in 1912 and ruled the Mainland until its retreat to Taiwan in 1949. Soon after the founding of the ROC, Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), founder of the ruling Nationalist Party (*Guomindang* or GMD), envisioned modern China as a republic of five ethnic groups (*wuzu gonghe*), where the Hans, Manchus, Mongols, Huis (Turkic speakers), and Tibetans were equal citizens (see Zhao 2004). In Sun’s model of five-nation-state building, the ROC government took two separate approaches to language education. First, in the Han communities, the effort was to standardize the national language (*Guoyu*), reform the script, and vernacularize the written language (Chen 1999). Soon after the initial compromised settlement of *Guoyu* on the combination of both northern and southern Mandarin, the Ministry of Education (MOE) decreed that the first two grades of public primary schools should replace classical literary Chinese with vernacular literary Chinese in 1920 and other grades should gradually phase out classical literary Chinese. Correspondingly in-service

training workshops for language teachers were held in Beijing and various provincial capitals while new Chinese primers were compiled to include diverse everyday Chinese, such as folksongs and newspaper articles, with a system of kana-like phonetic symbols to assist pronunciation and reading. Efforts were continued to finalize the standardization of Guoyu on the basis of the Beijing variety of Mandarin in 1926 and to introduce Guoyu Romanization as a step to modernize Chinese in 1928 (see Chen 1999), but efforts to simplify Chinese characters failed due to the resistance from the educated elite.

Secondly, the republican government based in Beijing established a Mongolian–Tibetan Affairs Office (*Meng-zang yuan*) to oversee education in minority communities in the 1910s–1920s. It funded minority language education and also encouraged Chinese language education. Since the late 1920s, the GMD-led central government in Nanjing adopted a minority policy that was more accommodating in north and northwestern China but more assimilating in south and southwestern China (see Mackerras 1994). For instance, a plan passed by the Second National Conference on Education in 1930 promoted, among a number of favorable measures, the development of bilingual textbooks and compilation of textbooks in minority languages in Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uyghur communities (Inner Mongolia 1995, vol. 2), while Chinese language education was enforced in Miao and other minority communities in southwestern China.

The ROC's assimilationist approach became intensified during the war against the Japanese invasion in the early 1940s when President Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975, in office 1928–1975) promoted a model of inclusive Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*). According to Chiang's model, the inclusive Chinese nation evolved with various branches (*zongzhi*) being blended into one blood system (*xuetong*) in its long history, while by its virtue the Han civilization absorbed various minority civilizations to form an embracing Chinese civilization (Zhao 2004). In this model, language education policies became more assimilationist as an MOE decree indicates, "Frontier education should promote the integration of various ethnic groups" and "Frontier education should promote Guoyu education" (Song and Zhang 2005, p. 584). In preparation for a civil war against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP, 1921-present) in 1945, the GMD appeared to be more willing to accommodate minorities linguistically. An MOE minority education measurement published in September of that year stressed that Guoyu education and minority language education may be both accommodated or one may be selected over the other depending on needs in minority communities (Song and Zhang 2005, p. 596). However, before the above policies could be effectively implemented, the GMD was defeated by the CCP and forced to retreat to Taiwan in 1949.

In early 1949, the CCP was still considering available options of nation-state building before its outreach to the United States was rejected in the emerging Cold War. When the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in October 1949, the new Chinese government had already decided to take sides with the Soviet Union, and thus emulated the Soviet Union in many ways (see Bernstein and Li 2010). The PRC adopted the Soviet model of multinational-state building and adapted it to

China by encoding it into the PRC's provisional constitution (known as the Common Program or *Gongtong Gangling*) in 1949, the Guidelines for Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities in the PRC (*zhonghua renmin gonghe guo minzu quyue zizhi shishi gangyao*) in 1952, and finally the PRC Constitution in 1954 (Zhou 2003, pp. 42–45). Constitutionally this Soviet model entails the following doctrines: (1) all nationalities are equal, (2) all nationalities enjoy equal rights and obligations, (3) all nationalities have the right to use their native languages in official, public, educational, and private functions, and (4) minority nationalities have the right for regional autonomy to ensure their rights and interests.

Linguistically this Soviet model accommodates two separate tracks of national language developments, a main track for Chinese and a satellite track for minority languages. The main track is the development of the common language for the Han, which is known as Putonghua. Officially based on the phonology of Beijing Mandarin, northern Mandarin as the base dialect, and the grammatical norm of exemplary modern vernacular literary works, Putonghua did not have native speakers when its promotion began in late 1955. In November 1955, PRC's MOE announced its decree that (1) all primary, secondary, and normal schools should use Putonghua as the medium of instruction (MOI) and require their students to speak Putonghua, (2) all provinces and municipalities should organize Putonghua training workshops and finish the training of language teachers by summer 1956 and other teachers by 1958, (3) local educational department and universities should collaborate in compiling Putonghua training materials and offering training classes, and (4) local governments and schools should organize Putonghua speech competitions and reward high-achievers (China 1996, pp. 48–55). Meanwhile, aiming at mass literacy, simplified Chinese characters and Romanization of Chinese (*Pinyin*) were also promoted along with Putonghua in all schools for a comprehensive modernization of Chinese. In a follow-up decree in February 1956, the State Council required that all students from third grade and up should be able to speak Putonghua by 1960, with the exception for minority communities where only Han students and students of Chinese should learn Putonghua (China 1996). It was expected that by the above measures Putonghua would first reduce the domains of dialect use and eventually replace various Chinese dialects to reach linguistic unification among the Hans, but this expectation was never materialized because of the PRC's household registration system that blocked migration and thus the needs of Putonghua as a lingua franca.

The satellite track was destined to integrate with the main track in the theory of communism according to which all peoples would assimilate into one people speaking one language in a communist society (Zhou 2003). For minority communities, the Soviet linguistic model would first of all select a standard language which was expected to facilitate the development of diverse clan languages to fewer tribal languages and finally to a national language in preparation for the eventual national and linguistic integration. This process relies extensively on writing systems that ground on the standard pronunciation of a national language, share the same script with other national languages, and loan terms from the mainstream national language (Zhou 2003). Following this approach, the PRC created or reformed the

writing systems for nearly twenty minority languages, aligning most of these systems with Pinyin for Chinese. The newly created writing systems were permanently or experimentally used for minority language education. However, minority language education in this track was always influenced by the CCP's perception of the pace of China's evolution into a communist society. The above multistep language policy was implemented when the evolution was perceived as slow, but a single-step policy to replace minority languages with Chinese was carried out when the evolution was considered imminent (Zhou 2003). Thus, the PRC's language education policies for minorities were alternating between assimilation and accommodation in its first four decades (see Beckett and Postiglione 2010; Tsung 2009).

Taiwan

In August 1945 when the ROC recovered Taiwan from Japan, most people were able to speak Japanese because of a half-century's forced Japanese language education in public schools, but they actually developed a Taiwanese identity instead of a Japanese identity and spoke their native languages privately (Wu 2011). After Taiwan's return, the ROC's language education policy unfolded in two major stages in decolonization (see Tse 2000).

The first stage is de-Japanization from 1945 to 1969. Adopting the ROC's assimilationist language policy, the new GMD provincial government immediately launched its Guoyu Movement (*Guoyu yundong*) in Taiwan in order to (re)sinicize the local people, particularly in schools (see Tsao 1999). Soon tension between the local people and the GMD government led to riots and massacres in February 1947 when martial law was declared. Coupled with the retreat of the ROC government to Taiwan in 1949, this assimilationist policy was strengthened for the ROC's inclusive Chinese nation-state building in Taiwan as the base for the imagined recovery of Mainland. Guoyu was designated as the only MOI in schools while all other languages were deemed inappropriate for educational function (Tsao 1999). According to the GMD government's 1966 Reinforcing Guoyu Plan for Schools (*Geji xuexiao jiaqiang tuixing guoyu jihua*), children were punishable in schools when caught speaking their non-Mandarin mother tongues (Huang 2008). However, the sinicizing effort did not cultivate a solid Chinese identity in the local people, but stimulated the growth of the Taiwanese identity that began to challenge the GMD martial law in the late 1960s.

The second stage is the consolidation of Guoyu as the sole language in public domains between 1969 and 1986 when Taiwan's economic success reinforced the ROC's confidence in its authentic representation of the Chinese nation, such as the continued use of the traditional Chinese characters. In 1970, the MOE published Measures for the Implementation of Guoyu Movement (*Jiaqiang tuixing guoyu yundong shishi banfa*), which stressed the role of local Guoyu Promotion Councils and linked speaking standard Guoyu to model Chinese citizenship. In the following

year, Taiwan's provincial government made a specific plan to implement the MOE measures (*Taiwan sheng jiaqiang tuixing guoyu shishi jihua*), which covered Guoyu pedagogy, proficiency training and testing, and tutoring from primary schools to normal schools. To further Guoyu education, in 1973, a policy (*Taiwan sheng ge xian shandi xiang guoyu tuixing banfa*) was made to promote Guoyu, to wipe out the practice of speaking Japanese and native languages, and to strengthen local identification with the Chinese nation in Indigenous communities in rural Taiwan. More policies were made along the above lines with explicit references to identification with the Chinese nation and restoration of the Chinese culture during this stage, but this orientation evolved farther away from what the local people strove for (see Dreyer 2003; Huang 2000).

Hong Kong

Hong Kong residents used to strongly identify with China, though not necessarily with the PRC, because they were mainly political, economic, and war migrants from the Mainland (Bray and Koo 2005). They began to develop a strong Hong Kong identity since the 1970s when the colony's economy rocketed. The British colonial government had English as the only official language from the 1840s to 1974 when Chinese was finally added as an official language. The new status of Chinese, which then referred to spoken Cantonese and written Modern Standard Chinese, did not have much impact on education until the last years of the colonial rule when schools began to be officially categorized as English-medium and Chinese-medium in preparation for the transfer of sovereignty to the PRC, creating a divisive problem across the transfer (see Tsui 2003).

Macau

During Portugal's over four centuries' of colonial rule, Portuguese was the sole official language until 1987 when Chinese was finally added as an official language in preparation for the transfer of sovereignty to the PRC. However, the Portuguese colonial regime's language education policy was largely laissez-faire though Portuguese was required for a few public schools (see Bray and Koo 2005; Mann and Wong 1999). In the last decade of the colonial rule, six Portuguese-medium public schools served 5.1% of the students and six Luso-Chinese public schools taught 2.8% students. Chinese-medium private schools enrolled 86% students who were taught in spoken Cantonese and written Standard Modern Chinese, and English-medium private schools had 6.1% students (see Shan and Jeong 2008). Thus, Macau's primary and secondary education was a trilateral (Portuguese, Chinese, and English) and quadrilingual (Portuguese, Putonghua, Cantonese, and English) world.

Current Developments

Mainland

The Soviet models were essentially bankrupted in China before the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Economic and political reforms were initiated in the late 1970s to replace or remedy the Soviet models. Still the actual collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 directly forced the CCP to search for options (see Shambaugh 2008). The CCP believed that the fundamental cause for the collapse lies in the problematic Soviet model of multinational state building that lacked direct central control of the republics and cultivated separatism. In the middle 1990s, the CCP leadership began to shift from the Stalinist discourse on the national question to a new discourse on an inclusive Chinese nation. The new discourse originated from Fei Xiaotong's (1910–2005) Tanner Lecture delivered at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1988. Dr. Fei proposed the concept of *zhonghua minzu duoyuan yiti geju*, which he first translated as “plurality and unity in the configuration of the Chinese people” and later changed to “the pattern of diversity in unity of the Chinese nation” (Fei 1999). In Fei's concept, the inclusive Chinese nation has evolved with the Han as the core but transcended the Han to embrace all the ethnic groups in China as diversity.

The CCP's adoption of Fei's concept has three direct policy impacts (Zhou 2010). First, it stressed speeding up economic development but downplaying the national question (*jiakuai jingji fazhan, danhua minzu wenti*), leading to China's Great Western Development Project (1999–2009) to integrate minority communities' economy with that of the Han heartland. Second, it revised the PRC Regional Autonomy Law in 1999 to curb local legislative power in order to preempt any possible legislative run-away. Third, it passed the PRC Common Language and Script Law in 2000, replacing the policy of two-tracks with a policy of a hierarchical language order where Putonghua functions as the super language while minority languages and Chinese dialects serve as complementary. These policy changes for greater economic, political, and linguistic integration lay the foundation for the Chinese model of an inclusive Chinese nation with diversity (*zhonghua minzu duoyuan yiti*).

The Chinese model as linguistically represented by the new language law has impacts on both Chinese and minority language education. In Han communities, the law has intensified Putonghua education at all levels of schools at a time when the demand for Putonghua use is increasing as the migrating Chinese population is skyrocketing to over 300 million throughout China annually. Chinese dialect communities felt the pressure on the maintenance of their mother tongues in schools and some began to take political action in the streets and local legislatures when the state started implementing its plan for a preliminary spread of Putonghua throughout China by 2010 and a comprehensive spread throughout the whole country by 2050 (Li 2005). For example, local legislature in some provinces and municipalities began to hear voices on the protection of Chinese dialects, such as Shanghaiese and Cantonese, and there were peaceful demonstrations for the

status of Cantonese in Guangzhou and Hong Kong in 2010. In minority communities, the law's first impact was the dismantling of the infrastructure left by the Soviet model – separate minority-language-medium schools and Chinese-medium schools (*minhan fenxiao*). Local governments planned to integrate these two types of schools into a single Chinese-medium school system (*minhan hexiao*) between 2008 and 2015, but the plans are now slowing down because of the lack of qualified teachers and resistance from minority communities (Tsung 2009). For instance, in 2010, the Tibetan communities in Qinghai protested against the local government's plan to switch from Tibetan as the primary MOI to Chinese in 5 years. The protest successfully pressured the government to slow down its pace in Qinghai and in other minority communities as well. The second impact is the development of bilingual preschools in minority communities where Chinese is not spoken. These preschools aim at a transitional bilingual education so that minority children can smoothly move up to compulsory education in Chinese (see Anaytulla 2008). This practice leads to a dilemma between minority parents' concerns about the future of their children's mother tongues and parents' willingness for their children to learn Putonghua for social mobility.

Globally, the Chinese model also seeks to redefine China linguistically in the current cycle of globalization as China rises as a global economic powerhouse. In 2003 China launched its Mandarin initiative to promote Chinese globally (*hanyu guoji tuiguang*) (see Hartig 2012; Lo Bianco 2007). China's global language education policy is one of its continuous responses to the West since the late 1800s and facilitates the globalization of Chinese that is characterized by (1) the shift to Putonghua in diaspora Chinese communities, (2) the adoption of Putonghua, Pinyin, and simplified characters as the standard in both public and private schools in the global community, and (3) the mushrooming of Confucius Institutes/Classrooms on every continent.

Taiwan

Monolingualism and multilingualism collided after the martial law was lifted in 1987 and democracy began to develop in the 1990s. Guoyu as the sole MOI in schools began to be challenged legally and politically since the Constitution of the ROC does not specify the status of Guoyu. The GMD led government headed by native leaders began to consider linguistic diversity. In 1993, the MOE announced that local languages could be offered as electives, effectively allowing additive bilingual education, though hours were still limited (see Wu 2011). Because of this change, MOE also encouraged the study and compilation of teaching materials for Indigenous languages. These measures were not enough as Taiwanese identity and other local identities arose rapidly. The politics on this issue became intensified after the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) became the ruling party between 2000 and 2008. In 2003, the MOE published the draft of the Language Equality Law (*guojia yuyan pingdeng fa*), which proposed that languages of Taiwanese, Hakka, and Austronesian communities become national languages along with Mandarin

(Wu 2011). However, it has not yet been passed by the legislature because it is considered a symbol of desinification. Meanwhile progress has been made in Indigenous language education. In 2006, the Council on Indigenous Affairs (*Yuanzhu minzu weiyuanhui*) of the ROC passed a 6-year plan to revitalize Indigenous languages. The plan includes (1) increasing legislative protection, (2) establishing promotional organizations, (3) compiling dictionaries and textbooks, (4) furthering linguistic research, (5) training workers for revitalization, (6) fostering Indigenous language use at home and in the community, (7) taking advantage of multimedia and digital technology, and (8) developing proficiency certification (see Zhou and Shi 2011). After the GMD returned to power in 2009, the ROC has continued the policy for diversity domestically while responding to the PRC's Mandarin initiative with the establishment of Taiwan Academies (*Taiwan shuyuan*) to promote Guoyu and cultures of Taiwan globally (for more visit <http://www.taiwanacademy.tw>). However, the status of Guoyu in schools continues to be challenged as the politics of being Chinese or not still divides the communities in Taiwan.

Hong Kong

When the transfer was made within a frame of one country and two systems (capitalist and socialist) in 1997, linguistic sovereignty was an important dimension in the decolonization. The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) allows English to be used as an official language along with Chinese (Article 19) and HKSAR to formulate its language policy for education (Article 136). Now the ambiguity of Chinese has to be clarified since Chinese as the national language in the PRC refers to Putonghua while it conventionally means Cantonese in Hong Kong. To seek a balance, HKSAR developed a policy of biliteracy (written English and Modern Standard Chinese) and trilingualism (English, Cantonese, and Putonghua) in 1999 (Zhang and Yang 2004). However, the three spoken languages are associated with different identities and different functions. English represents an international identity and Cantonese stands for the local Hong Kong identity, while Putonghua clearly symbolizes a Chinese identity. Thus, English either as a subject or MOI still enjoys priority and prestige since Hong Kong needs it to maintain its global economic competitiveness and, possibly, its political ambivalence. Based on a proposal from the late colonial period, HKSAR published a mother-tongue teaching policy in 1998. The policy may be pedagogically and politically sound to the residents of Hong Kong since Chinese does not refer to Putonghua, but it is still considered secondary to English as the MOI (see Tsui 2003). Now Putonghua is awkward in that its political function is always obvious but its pragmatic function was less clear in the 1990s. The number of schools using Putonghua as the medium started low in the late 1990s but slowly increased in the early 2000s as China rose economically. In these schools students' attitudes toward Putonghua have significantly improved by the end of the first decade of this century (Lai 2013). There were optimism and concerns about the

momentum (see Bray and Koo 2005; Evans 2011). However, neither optimism nor concern is fully warranted if recent student protests are considered. Pragmatic considerations facilitate Putonghua education, but political concerns may undermine it and alienate young Hong Kong residents' identification with the PRC. It all depends on how well the concept of one country and two systems works out for Hong Kong in the coming decades.

Macau

Modeled after that of Hong Kong, the Basic Law of Macao Special Administrative Region (MCSAR) allows the option of Portuguese to be used as an official language along with Chinese (Article 9) and gives MCSAR the authority to make policies on the MOI for schools (Article 121). The status for Portuguese may be offered to pacify the local residents and Portugal since Portuguese does not join the status that English has as the super language. Unlike Hong Kong, MCSAR never bothers to disambiguate "Chinese" for educational practice nor does it intend to change the practice of trilingualism and quadrilingualism in education. This practice has further extended to Macau's flourishing higher education in the last two decades (see Bray and Kool, 2005; Shan and Ieong 2008). Only recently in its 2014 primary and secondary school curriculum does MCSAR regulate that Putonghua must be included in Chinese as the first language courses and may be included in Chinese as a second language courses, but it still does not directly interfere with the practice of Cantonese as the MOI (Macau 2014). Given this approach and the nature of Macau residents, Putonghua education both in regular schools and evening schools seems successful. Between 2001 and 2011, residents with the ability to speak Putonghua increased from 26.7% to 41.4% and English from 13.5% to 21.1%, while Cantonese reduced from 94.4% to 90.0% and Portuguese from 3.0% to 2.4% (Macau 2012, 13). Macau's residents seem to be more willing to embrace their Chinese citizenship while going global. The momentum is expected to continue if the practice of one country and two systems is well maintained.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

Against the forces of the early cycle of globalization, efforts at the unification of Greater China have undergone four models of nation-state building, two during the ROC and two under the PRC, and three respective processes of decolonization in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau in the last hundred years. In these models and processes language education policies have been instrumental.

The current cycle of globalization continues to affect language education policies in Greater China because it changes both the global and local language orders (Zhou 2011). Globalization may bring Greater China together linguistically but might tear it apart politically. Putonghua is undoubtedly used in more and more domains and by more and more people because of the free movement of people, expansion of the

market economy, and revolution in information technology in Greater China. Now Putonghua is seen as a threat to linguistic diversity, both in Chinese dialect communities and minority language communities. Protests of Putonghua-dominated language education policies have arisen now and then, as witnessed in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, and Qinghai as recently as 2010. Thus, how the state keeps a good balance between monolingualism and multilingualism in education remains a great challenge for the twenty-first century.

Globalization offers both opportunities and challenges, the successful handling of which depends on the wisdom of various stakeholders. Economic globalization actually facilitates linguistic unification as Chinese emerges as a global language. With this free ride, inclusive Chinese nation-state building should embrace linguistic diversity, not taking advantage to eliminate it. Linguistically an inclusive Chinese nation may be built only on consensus and enjoyable and empowering language education experiences. How the desired consensus and experiences will be worked out remains a challenge in the next few decades.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
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Language Policy and Education in Southeast Asia

Kimmo Kosonen

Abstract

Southeast Asia comprises 11 nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. More than 1,200 languages are spoken in the region. Due to the evident linguistic diversity, Southeast Asian nations have attempted to find a balance between the national, local, and international languages – English in particular. Consequently, the chosen language policies and language education practices vary widely throughout the region. Southeast Asian language policies and education systems have traditionally emphasized the respective official and national languages. In contrast, little attention has been paid to other languages, apart from English, which has been taught as a foreign language – or in some countries used as a language of instruction. Prioritizing different languages in education represents conflicting interests in terms of national identity (national languages), globalization, and economic development (English), as well as pluralism and cultural heritage (local languages). Policy support for local languages differs widely, and the scope ranges from the Philippines' and Vietnam's supportive language policies to Brunei and Laos, where the use of local languages in education is currently impossible. According to its policy of mother tongue-based multilingual education, the Philippines is attempting to include all languages in education. Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, and Timor-Leste use several dominant languages as languages of instruction. In other Southeast Asian countries the respective national language is almost exclusively the language of instruction. Multilingual education which includes local languages is increasing in Cambodia, Thailand, and Timor-Leste.

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Keywords

Language of instruction • Language policy • Local languages • Multilingual education • Southeast Asia

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Introduction

Southeast Asia is an Asian subregion located between South Asia, China, and the Pacific region. It comprises 11 independent nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR (Laos), Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. The region is linguistically and culturally among the most diverse in the world. More than 1,200 languages are spoken and all major world religions practiced by the Southeast Asia population of over 600 million (Lewis et al. 2015). The region's diversity is also reflected in economic development. The UN classifies Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste as the least developed countries, whereas Singapore and Brunei have already reached high-income status. Southeast Asian language policies and education systems have traditionally emphasized the respective official and national languages, and despite the evident linguistic diversity, little attention has been paid to nondominant languages (NDL). Policy support for NDLs differs widely in Southeast Asia. The scope ranges from the Philippines' and Vietnam's strongly supportive written language policies to Brunei and Laos, where the use of NDLs in education is practically impossible (Cincotta-Segi 2014; Kosonen 2009; Sercombe 2014). In educational practice, however, the official languages are preferred – even in countries with more pluralistic language policies, excepting pilot projects on multilingual education (MLE). English is the most widely taught foreign language, and all Southeast Asian countries except Indonesia introduce English as a foreign language at some point in elementary education – or use English as a language of instruction (Kirkpatrick 2012).

Most Southeast Asian governments recognize that not all ethnolinguistic groups benefit equally from education provided in the national and official languages. The most commonly offered alleviation to this situation, however, is the strengthening of national language teaching to minority population rather than an increased use of minority learners' first languages (L1) (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2009; Sercombe and Tupas 2014).

Early Developments

Europeans – namely the British, Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Spanish – colonized all of Southeast Asia barring Thailand from the sixteenth century, and the United States colonized the Philippines from the late nineteenth century. The decolonization of the region took place in the 1940s–1960s (Brunei and Timor-Leste are exceptions and gained independence later). The colonial legacy was reflected in the language policies of the newly independent nations, particularly in the former English-speaking colonies. English was given an official status in Brunei, Singapore, and the Philippines, along with locally dominant Asian languages. Although English did not become an official language in Malaysia, it has played an important role in the education system. Another colonial language, Portuguese, has had an official role in Timor-Leste since independence, whereas all other countries have made autochthonous Asian languages their national and official languages.

The postcolonial decades in Southeast Asia were characterized by strong nation-building efforts by the newly independent states. Nation-building in most cases was based on the culture of the dominant ethnolinguistic group, and the language spoken by the dominant group became the national or official language. Most countries prioritized the designated national and official languages in their education systems, as this was seen as a strategic tool in the creation of a unified nation-state made up of heterogeneous populations. In some cases the dominant language was reflected in the name of the nation as well, e.g., Burma/Myanmar, Malaysia, and Thailand. Singapore is the main exception, as it gave four languages an official status, but emphasized English in education and preferred Mandarin Chinese over the other widely spoken Chinese varieties. Indonesia also chose a different approach from other Southeast Asian states and made Malay, a widely used *lingua franca*, rather than any of larger languages, the basis of its national language Bahasa Indonesia. Filipino, the national language of the Philippines, was based on Tagalog, the country's most widely spoken language. Likewise, Timor-Leste adopted the newly standardized Tetun, the most widely spoken autochthonous language, as an official language – along with Portuguese.

Current Status of Language Policy and Education

The official and national languages dominate all Southeast Asian education systems. The respective national languages are the main languages of instruction (LOI) and languages of literacy at most levels of education. English is taught in most countries. Some space is given for nondominant languages as well. Brunei, Laos, and Singapore are exceptions, and in these countries only the official languages are used in education. The roles given to official and nondominant languages differ widely in Southeast Asian language policies. Countries with more pluralistic language policies, such as Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam use some NDLs as languages of instruction in multilingual education, though mostly in

pilot projects. Over the past decade, interest in the use of nondominant languages in education has increased, and a movement towards multilingual education is emerging (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2013; UNESCO 2015).

It is estimated that 15 languages are spoken in Brunei Darussalam, and most Bruneians are plurilingual. Standard Malay, as in Malaysia, is the official language according to the Constitution of 1959. The most widely spoken language, however, is Brunei Malay, which is used for much of daily interpersonal communication, and it is the first language of most Bruneians (Lewis et al. 2015; Sercombe 2014). Since 1985, the national education system has emphasized bilingualism in Standard Malay and English, which are the languages of instruction. More Malay than English is used in the early grades, apart from Mathematics and Science, which since 2009 have been taught in English at all levels (Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009; Martin 2008; Sercombe 2014; Watson 2011). The government policy and educational practice overlook all nondominant languages, including the de facto colloquial national language, Brunei Malay. To help students understand the curriculum content, many teachers – particularly in the early grades – are reported to use Brunei Malay informally (Martin 2008; Sercombe 2014). Although the Bruneian education system is well resourced, the use of English and Standard Malay, which few speak at home, has resulted in lower than expected learning achievement (Kosonen 2009; Martin 2008; Sercombe 2014).

The Khmer are the dominant ethnolinguistic group in the Kingdom of Cambodia, and they comprise approximately 90% of the population. In addition to Khmer, 22 other languages are spoken by the rest of the population making Cambodia linguistically more homogeneous than most of its neighbors (Kosonen 2013; Lewis et al. 2015). Apart from the Cham, Chinese, and Vietnamese, most minority groups are small. According to the Constitution of 1993 Khmer is the official language. Khmer was the exclusive LOI until the late 1990s, when bilingual education programs were first initiated in some minority areas. Five nondominant languages are currently used as languages of instruction and literacy (Kosonen 2013; Sun 2009; Ton 2013).

The positive results of first language-based education have informed Cambodian policy developments. The Education Law of 2007 gave local authorities the right to choose the language(s) of instruction in certain minority areas. The “Guidelines on implementation of bilingual education programs for Indigenous children in highland provinces” of 2010 attempted to concretize the Law for minority regions. The Guidelines describe how bilingual education was to be implemented at the primary level in five Northern and Eastern provinces (Frewer 2014; Kosonen 2013; Ton 2013). The Cambodian model has been criticized for being an early-exit transitional model of bilingual education (Kosonen 2013, 2017). Minority learners’ L1 is used as a LOI until the end of primary Grade 3, after which Khmer is the exclusive language of instruction (Kosonen 2013, 2017). However, Cambodian policies evolved further, and the Bilingual Education Decree of 2013 further strengthened the position of NDIs in education (Ton 2013). After a series of consultations in 2014, the “Multilingual Education National Action Plan” (MENAP) was adopted in 2015 (Kosonen 2017). The MENAP is a detailed 4-year plan on MLE implementation increasing the

role of the government in the delivery of multilingual education. However, the MENAP falls short of strengthening the Cambodian MLE model and is unclear about the expansion of MLE provision to new languages. Cambodia has also replaced “bilingual education” with “multilingual education,” following the regional use of terminology.

Indonesia, where 706 languages are estimated to be spoken, is linguistically the most diverse country in Asia (Lewis et al. 2015). The 1945 Constitution states that Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) is the official and national language. Indonesian is also the language of instruction and language of literacy at all levels of education. Only an estimated 20% of the population speaks Indonesian as their first language, but it is widely used as the second language around the country. Regional and local languages are also used widely. Languages such as Javanese, Madurese, and Sundanese, for example, are spoken by tens of millions of people, and many other languages have millions of speakers (Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009; Musgrave 2014).

The Indonesian Constitution guarantees the use and development of nondominant languages. Further, Law No. 20 of 2003 states that other mother tongues than Indonesian can be used in the early stages of education. Nonetheless, in practice Indonesian is used exclusively as the LOI throughout the nation. NDLs are used orally in some regions and also occasionally in “local curriculum” (Kosonen 2009). The new national curriculum of 2013 reemphasizes the importance of Bahasa Indonesia and, for example, does not include English as a subject at the primary level – a rare exception in the region. There is anecdotal evidence that some schools actually teach English – due to popular demand – as local curriculum. Pilot projects of mother tongue–based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) have begun in Eastern Indonesia (ACDP 2014). The Special Autonomy of Papua and West Papua provinces allows for regional policies and practices that would be impossible elsewhere.

In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Laos) the estimated number of languages spoken is 85 (Lewis et al. 2015). However, various sources disagree on the number of languages or ethnolinguistic groups in Laos. The government has followed a Soviet-influenced classification of ethnic groups which is not necessarily based on the languages people speak (Benson and Kosonen 2012). According to the Constitution of 1991, Lao is the official language. The Constitution and other policy documents, however, provide some support to “ethnic groups” and “ethnic group areas,” but there are no references to language use. The Education Law of 2007 stipulates Lao as the language in education, and it is usually interpreted to allow the use of Lao only. Currently, no nondominant languages are used in education. The government seem reluctant to move forward on bilingual education, despite advocacy efforts by nongovernmental, multilateral, and donor agencies. Available educational statistics show that the enrolment, retention, and achievement rates of ethnic minority children are lower than the national average. The fact that around the half – some claim a majority – of the Lao population do not speak Lao as their first language is a major challenge in educational development but rarely admitted as such by government authorities (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Cincotta-Segi 2014; Kosonen 2009).

It is estimated that about 138 languages are spoken in Malaysia (Lewis et al. 2015), and the Malays, the dominant ethnolinguistic group, make up about the half of the total population. The Constitution of 1957 establishes Standard Malay (Bahasa Malaysia) as the official and national language. The Constitution also guarantees the freedom to use, teach, and learn any language, as well as the preservation and maintenance of nondominant languages (David and Govindasamy 2007; Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kosonen 2009).

The government system of formal education has two kinds of schools. The “national primary schools” use Standard Malay as the main language of instruction. The “national-type primary schools” use another language, such as Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, or an alternative Indian language, as the main LOI. English is taught as a foreign language in all schools. In Malay-medium schools, Tamil and Mandarin, as well as other nondominant languages, including ethnolinguistic minority languages, can be studied as subjects called “Pupil’s Own Language” on certain conditions (David and Govindasamy 2007; Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009; Watson 2011). In 2003–2012 Malaysia used English as the LOI for mathematics and science. The experiment was ended as in many rural areas teachers and students had difficulties using English for successful learning. Urban middle class, many of whom have good foundation in English, have complained about the return to Malay-medium instruction, which they see as regressive step in the globalizing world (Kirkpatrick 2012; Watson 2011). Interest in using nondominant languages in education is increasing, however, and various minority groups have introduced their languages in different education programs. In the East Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah several local languages are used in early childhood education and taught as subjects in formal schools (Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009).

It is estimated that 117 languages are spoken in the Union of Myanmar (Lewis et al. 2015). The majority of the population is Bamar (Burmese or Myanmar). The 2008 Constitution stipulates Myanmar (Burmese) as the official language, and currently Myanmar is the main language of instruction in government schools. Until the late 1980s, basic education in some regions was also offered in regional languages. Mon has since 2014 been taught as a subject in some government primary schools. NDIs are used – also as LOIs – in early childhood and nonformal education in programs run by civil society organizations. It is estimated that some 30% of children do not speak Myanmar at the entry to formal education (Aye and Sercombe 2014; Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009; Martin 2011).

The new National Education Law was adopted in 2014. The Law acknowledges Myanmar’s linguistic diversity but underlines the role of Myanmar as the official language. It stipulates English as a LOI along with Myanmar, whereas local languages can be used as auxiliary languages to help non-Myanmar speakers understand the curriculum. The Law also supports the teaching of nondominant languages as subjects. The Law was criticized and it prompted student protests. Proposed amendments regarding the LOIs and L1-based education were considered but rejected by parliament in mid-2015. The new government elected in November 2015 has largely continued an education policy in line with the 2014 Education

Law. The debates on the role of different languages in education will continue as the Myanmar government and ethnic groups work through a peace process aimed at negotiating ceasefires, national reconciliation, and a democratic federal union system of governance. State-level language policies are being developed in some regions. Nevertheless, it is likely there will be an increasing role for NDLs – at least the larger regional languages – in education.

With 182 languages estimated to be spoken the Philippines, it is among the linguistically most diverse countries in Asia (Lewis et al. 2015). Several languages such as Bicol, Cebuano, Illongo, Ilocano, and Tagalog are spoken by millions of people. Many of these languages are used as the *lingua francas* in their respective areas. According to the 1987 Constitution, Filipino (based on Tagalog) is the national language, and with English it is also an official language. According to the Bilingual Education Policy of 1974 the official languages were used as the languages of instruction. The policy was revised in 1987 providing regional languages the role of auxiliary languages in education. In practice, however, the regional languages were used orally to help students better understand the curricula taught in Filipino and English. The prominence of the official languages meant that the majority of Filipinos had study through languages they did not speak at home (Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kirkpatrick 2012; Kosonen 2009; Tupas and Lorente 2014).

After decades of privileging Filipino and English, the Philippines adopted a policy of Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education in 2009 (Gunigundo 2013; Kirkpatrick 2012; Tupas and Lorente 2014). The Department of Education's Order 74 set the framework for MLE as the basis of educational language policy. Reasons for the policy change included a realization of increasing disparities in learning achievement, good learning results in L1-based educational pilots, and intensive debates on language and education issues in various media and fora. Republic Act no. 10533 in 2013 strengthened the pluralistic language policy in education. It made the principles of multilingual education the foundation of the formal education curricula. The learner's L1 is the main LOI up to primary Grade 3, and Filipino and English are introduced gradually as additional LOIs. Currently, 19 languages are used as the initial LOIs in government schools and dozens of other languages are used in programs supported by nongovernmental and civil society actors (Gunigundo 2013).

Lewis et al. (2015) list 24 languages for Singapore. The majority of the population is ethnic Chinese who traditionally spoke a number of Chinese varieties, though use of Mandarin is increasing. The rest of the population comprises Malays, Tamils, and other ethnolinguistic groups (Kaplan and Baldauf 2003; Kosonen 2009; Watson 2011; Wee 2014). Singapore is unique in Southeast Asia, as the Constitution of 1965 stipulates four official languages: Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil, and English. The national language is Standard Malay, and the use, teaching, and learning of other languages is guaranteed. Singapore is clearly supporting societal multilingualism and plurilingualism among its citizens. English is the sole language of instruction at all levels of education. All students also study one of the official "mother tongue languages," i.e., Malay, Mandarin, or Tamil, despite the fact that this language may

not be spoken at home. Younger Singaporeans are adopting English (among all major ethnic groups) and Mandarin (among some ethnic Chinese) as their main home languages (Kirkpatrick 2012; Watson 2011; Wee 2014). Many children enter formal education from English-speaking households (Wee 2014), though the actual home language is often “Singlish,” the Singaporean nonstandard variety of English. Singapore is gradually becoming a predominantly English-speaking country (Watson 2011).

An estimated 74 languages are spoken in the Kingdom of Thailand (Lewis et al. 2015), and the populations of some ethnolinguistic communities, such as Lao-Isan, Kammeuang, Pak Tai, Pattani Malay, and Northern Khmer, are in the millions. Standard Thai (based on Central Thai as spoken in Bangkok) is the de facto official and national language, and the Thai Constitution has no references to the official language. Though only an estimated 50% of Thai citizens speak Standard or Central Thai as their first language, Standard Thai is widely spoken as a second language throughout the country. Standard Thai has been the almost exclusive language of instruction at all levels of education for about a century, but despite its wide use as a second language, many children have comprehension problems in the early years of education (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2013; Kosonen and Person 2014; Watson 2011).

Thailand’s first National Language Policy (NLP) was drafted as a result of a series of consultations, and it was signed by two Prime Ministers in 2010 and 2012, respectively. The NLP deals with a range of language issues, but many key points relate to nondominant languages and their use in education. The rationale given by the NLP goes beyond merely justifying the use of local languages as a way to teach the national language more effectively. The NLP also calls for the use of learners’ first languages as the basis for cognitive development. Political instability has hindered the operationalization of the language policy. Nonetheless, the NLP does provide official government support for the use of nondominant languages as LOIs. Consequently, several nondominant languages are currently used in L1-based education pilot projects run by academic institutions and nongovernmental actors in partnership with the Ministry of Education (Kosonen 2013; Kosonen and Person 2014). In 2015 two teacher training institutions started to train MLE teachers.

An estimated 19 languages are spoken in Timor-Leste (Lewis et al. 2015). According to the Constitution of 2002, Tetun and Portuguese are the official languages, and other “national languages” – including Tetun – are valued and developed by the state. Indonesian and English have a status of working Languages. The majority of Timorese do not speak either of the official languages as their first language, and Tetun has a number of distinct varieties. The language and education situation in Timor-Leste has been in a flux since independence in 2002. In the years after independence, Portuguese dominated as the language of instruction, even though most of the Timorese teachers had limited proficiency in it and Tetun was used as an oral auxiliary language (Curaming and Kalidjernih 2014; Kosonen 2009; Taylor-Leech 2013; Watson 2011). The 2008 Basic Education Act mandated both a standardized version of Tetun and Portuguese as the LOIs and languages of literacy in formal education.

After debates, conferences, and consultations the national policy on mother tongue–based multilingual education was adopted in 2010 (Curaming and Kalidjernih 2014; Taylor-Leech 2013). The policy is based on the basic premises of first language–based education. The policy stipulates the learner’s first language the main LOI until Grade 4, with the gradual introduction of Tetun and Portuguese – as subjects as well as LOIs. Indonesian and English would be taught later as foreign languages. Curriculum development and materials development is on-going in Tetun as well as in some local languages. The first step in the implementation of this policy is a pilot project which since 2012 has been using three local languages in multilingual education with support from international organizations (Curaming and Kalidjernih 2014; Taylor-Leech 2013). Most schools around the country still follow the Tetun-Portuguese formula according to the 2008 Act. Debates on language policy issues continue.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam officially recognizes 54 ethnic groups, but 108 languages are estimated to be spoken (Lewis et al. 2015). About 87% of the population is Vietnamese-speaking Kinh, the dominant ethnolinguistic group. The rest of the population comprises various ethnolinguistic communities, some of which have large populations (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2009, 2013; Phan et al. 2014).

According to the Constitution of 1992, the national and official language is Vietnamese. The 2005 Education Law reiterated the role of Vietnamese as the official language of education. The use of nondominant languages in education is supported by various policy documents (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2009, 2013; Phan et al. 2014). Despite written policy support for nondominant languages, in practice Vietnamese is the main LOI at all levels of education. Some NDLs are taught as subjects. There is confusion over conflicting statements in different documents and their relative weight (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2013). For example, statements in the Education Law and Government Decree No. 82/2010/ND-CP “on teaching and learning ethnic minority languages in general and continuing educational institutions” can be understood as decreeing Vietnamese the sole LOI, whereas nondominant languages can be studied as subjects but not necessarily used as LOIs (Kosonen 2013). Despite confusion over conflicting policy statements, some initiatives, with the assistance of international agencies, are using sound principles of bilingual education. These programs are functioning in three provinces, and they are based on minority learners’ first language, from preschool to the end of the primary level. These pilot programs have allegedly achieved positive results (Kosonen 2013; Phan et al. 2014).

Problems and Difficulties

As Southeast Asian governments envision their future development strategies, they encounter linguistically diverse populations and a challenge of how to manage this diversity. They try to balance conflicting interests, and the adopted language policies reveal governments’ positions on the official and national languages, nondominant

languages, and international languages – predominantly English. The national/official languages are prioritized when national identity is being strengthened. English is prioritized when globalization, business opportunities, and economic development are the focus. However, nondominant languages rarely receive governments' attention, unless cultural heritage and pluralism are seen as important values or when strategies to improve learning achievement of minority populations are explored. The varying approaches and policies' shifting foci over time can be explained by different positions taken.

Consequently, some Southeast Asian countries have policies supporting linguistic diversity, but the policies are rarely implemented to the full extent. In Cambodia and Malaysia, for example, language policies support only some local languages in education (David and Govindasamy 2007; Kosonen 2013, 2017). Some countries have internally conflicting policies, and thus it is difficult to know what can and cannot be done. Concerns exist about the implementation of multilingual education. Education reforms may have been introduced, but extra funding needed for evident start-up costs or necessary teacher training have not been provided. Questions remain particularly in Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam on whether the outlined actions on multilingual education will actually be implemented. Vietnam has by far the widest gap between the policy and practice, and it has in fact begun to weaken its previously supportive policy statements to match the nonimplementation of earlier policies (Kosonen 2013).

A rural–urban divide exists in most countries. This disparity is evident in terms of teachers, schools facilities, and other educational infrastructure, as well as in the educational and cultural background of the students. For example, using English or official languages in urban middle class schools may pose few problems, but the situation may be quite different in rural areas. When centralized systems of education operate in diverse settings, it is clear that the same strategies rarely work everywhere. Decentralization, as seen in MLE implementation in Cambodia – and increasingly in other countries – may be a more feasible option.

Assimilation of minority populations into dominant languages and cultures can be widely observed (Sercombe and Tupas 2014), and education systems play an important key role in assimilation. The most explicit form of assimilation of linguistic minorities can be found in Vietnam, where the expansion of Vietnamese-medium preschools and boarding schools in minority areas are used to “strengthen” the Vietnamese language skills of ethnolinguistic minorities (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2009, 2013).

Few Southeast Asian government officials or parents understand the importance of first language–based education. Thus, pluralistic language policies and multilingual education is often opposed. Myths about language learning are common. The most commonly held fallacy is that by simply introducing an unknown language, such as the official language or English, to children as early as possible increases and accelerates the learning of that language (Benson and Kosonen 2012). This myth is used to justify the early introduction of dominant languages. As a result, learning achievements in Brunei, for example, are lower than expected, as most students have

to struggle through two languages in which they may not be fully proficient (Kosonen 2009; Sercombe 2014).

Likewise, the concepts of bilingual or multilingual education are often misunderstood. They are commonly seen as approaches to teach the national language and English or that even a minimal oral use of the learners' L1 by teaching assistants is considered bilingual education. There is also confusion about the difference of using languages for instruction or studying them as subjects. It is not uncommon to see media reporting about multilingual education, whereas in fact the question is about teaching local languages as subjects.

Ethnolinguistic diversity is also managed by using criteria not necessarily based on the languages people speak. For instance, Vietnam officially recognizes only 54 ethnic groups, but many more languages are spoken in the country (Kosonen 2013), posing challenges in the selection of appropriate LOIs. At least in Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand related issues can be observed. Further, in Cambodia and Thailand, for example, the government agencies insist that orthographies of newly written languages adapt the national language script. The use of the Roman script may not be allowed in education, despite the fact that some NDLS have used Romanized orthographies for decades (Benson and Kosonen 2012; Kosonen 2013).

Future Directions

The Philippines, with its pluralistic language and education policies, is leading the way in the Southeast Asian movement towards multilingual education. Countries such as Cambodia, Thailand, and Timor-Leste are strengthening the position of nondominant languages in their language policies and educational practice. As a result, evidence on improved learning achievements in some minority regions is emerging (Kosonen 2013; Kosonen and Person 2014), though there is also evidence of weaknesses – and consequently serious challenges – in the implementation of MLE. Debates on language and education issues continue in most countries. It seems likely that at least in Eastern Indonesia and some regions of Myanmar more inclusive policies will gain momentum.

It remains to be seen whether the MLE movement – and with it linguistic pluralism – will continue to strengthen in Southeast Asia or whether nationalistic tendencies will turn the policy direction towards assimilation with an increased emphasis on the language and culture of the respective dominant groups. The first scenario will likely result in more equitable provision of education, whereas the latter will increase the rural–urban divide and already existing disparities between dominant and nondominant ethnolinguistic communities and languages.

The future role of English in Southeast Asia is an open question. English already is the main *lingua franca* of Southeast Asians. It is also the sole working language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and regional integration is strengthening. English-medium international schools and private institutions teaching English are mushrooming around the region. Using English in education

systems, however, is not a panacea to more equitable and improved educational quality, as the cases of Malaysia and the Philippines show. Those countries have been decreasing the use of English in education, as it served mostly the more privileged urban elites and middle classes, and only widened the rural–urban disparity. Yet, decision-makers in some countries still envy Singapore’s economic success story and sometimes credit this to the role English has played in Singapore’s education system and society. It is likely that the use of English will increase. New Myanmar policies point to this direction. Finally, the future role of Mandarin Chinese in Southeast Asia is an enigma. Recent developments indicate that the role of Mandarin will increase in Southeast Asian education, but only time will tell the extent.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)
- ▶ [Language Planning in Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Greater China](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Japan](#)

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- Moses Stephens and Gunams Samuel: [Bilingual Education in Malaysia](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education
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Language Policy and Education in Japan

Sachiyo Fujita-Round and John C. Maher

Abstract

Japan's government sees new social factors emerging in the twenty-first century: an aging population, cultural diversification, and the continuing modernist trope of Japan as a "monolingual" and "monocultural" nation. In national language policy, the Japanese government adopted a standard language (*hyojungo*). The growth of non-Japanese nationalities is an emerging demography. There are minority languages and Indigenous languages. The economic successes from the 1970s enabled families to spend more on education in a globalizing world. These factors led to a call to "internationalize the Japanese people." There is concern that foreign language education is becoming subsumed under a quasi-nationalistic and ideological policy of the central government of "globalization." There are concerns about a growing insularity among young Japanese and to improve their communication and problem-solving skills. English classes are currently offered once a week in the final 2 years of elementary school, and there are government plans to teach from grade 3 and make English a formal subject by the year 2020. Korean as a foreign language is the fastest-growing foreign language of study in Japan, and there are Chinese ethnic bilingual schools. Language revitalization is driven by the tension between heritage Ainu and benign authorities who wish to "protect" and "preserve" Ainu culture in accord with the legal requirements. Ryukyuan plays no official role in public education in the Okinawan education system, and its use has traditionally been discouraged in schools. Deaf sign language (JSL) activity has intensified in recent

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years. Brazilian language maintenance schools have been established. The steady increase in the number of foreign students enrolled in educational institutions impacts the growing field of the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language. Popular culture is crucial to the validity and pedagogy of Japanese language teaching. Language and cultural hybridity, nonessentialism, and “metroethnization” are emerging sociolinguistic themes.

Keywords

Japan • Japanese language policy • Globalization • MEXT • Minorities • Hybridity

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Introduction

The formulation of language education policy is guided by a combination of needs and needs discourse: a new “vision” of the state, economic shift, talk of “crisis in education,” residual loyalties to the past, or, conversely, what Raymond Williams (1977) termed “emergent ideological assemblage.” Japan’s educational governance is no less a tangled composite of needs than other nations. New social factors are emerging. The demographic “big bang” (a declining population and the possibility of substantial immigration) that awoke Japanese society in the 1990s even now threatens to shake old educational certainties, former ways of doing and talking. We always knew what to do with ourselves but now we have the prospect of “the Other.” However, since 2011 and the occasion of the East Japan earthquake, an explosive and social psyche bending event, the demography of the non-Japanese national residents has again shifted.

In the imagined community in which language policy emerges in Japan, two geographical beacons are visible: Japanese (*Nihongo*) is the (sole) national language (*kokugo*), and English is preeminently the vehicle of internationalization, recently relabeled as globalization. A straightforward ideological system underpins this stance, which, *mutatis mutandis*, informs large tracts of policy-making at various educational levels. Its underpinning is the familiar modernist trope that Japan is remarkable as a “monolingual” and “monocultural” nation. The truth, of course, lies elsewhere. Japan has been, for many centuries, multilingual and multicultural

(Gottlieb 2012; Maher and Macdonald 1995; Maher and Yashiro 1995; Sugimoto 2003; Yamamoto 2000) due to migration to and from Japan, cultural flows, geographical realignment (Okinawa, Hokkaido), the (Asian) colonial experience, and so on. Likewise, the growth of non-Japanese nationalities is a real and emerging demographic increase given the decrease of the Japanese population and the apparent need for a new (imported) labor force to maintain the current socioeconomic system.

Language diversity in Japan entails geographical location. The northern border of the Japanese archipelago faces Sakhalin and the Russian Far East, while the southern islands border the Korean Peninsula, China, and further Taiwan. Japan has officially 6,852 islands (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism 2012): 426 islands with residents and 6,426 without. There was a population of 127 million in 2014. The largest number of native speakers is Japanese, comprising distinct regional dialects. There are 1,258,263 residents overseas with Japanese nationality (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014) and thousands of older speakers of Japanese in the former imperial colonies of Taiwan and Korea and *Nikkei* (Japanese descendants). Apart from Japanese, there are minority languages: Japanese Indigenous languages, such as Ainu (Ainu *Itak*) and Ryukyuan languages, old immigrant languages such as Korean and Chinese, and newer immigrant languages like Portuguese and Spanish brought by foreign workers and immigrants. All these speakers constitute the multilingual hybridity of twenty-first-century Japan. Japanese speakers as a first language rank ninth in the Ethnologue, after Chinese, Spanish, English, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, and Russian (Lewis et al. 2015).

Compulsory Education in Japan

In Japan, compulsory education (*gimu kyoiku*) is organized along public and private lines for children from elementary school to junior high school (aged 6 and 15), 6 years in elementary school (*shogakko*) and 3 years in junior high school (*chugakko*) in which English is formally introduced as a school subject. Three-year senior high schools are classified as regular (*kotogakko*) or vocational (*koto senmon gakko*). In higher education, vocational schools (*senmon gakko*) provide a vocational or technical education, and junior colleges (*tanki daigaku*) are 2-year courses. Universities (*daigaku*) comprise an undergraduate level (4-year course) and postgraduate schools (*daigakuin*), 2 years for a master's degree and 3 years for a doctoral degree. All schools follow a three-semester system starting in April.

Foreign nationals can send their children to public elementary school and junior high school during Japanese compulsory education, regardless of the child's level of Japanese proficiency. However, under Japanese law, there is no obligation for such children to attend school. This has created serious "leakage" in many *gastarbeiter* families who may or may not understand the educational system and whose children thereby fail to attend school or drop out. Language support for foreign children in Japanese varies by locality. Alternatively, foreign nationals can choose international schools. The majority are English-medium and/or ethnic schools: American,

Brazilian, British, Canadian, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Korean, Peruvian, and Nepalese schools. Most schools are high fee paying and private. English-medium international schools are assumed to be prestigious as they provide elite bilingual education.

Early Developments

Early History

Drastic social change followed the Meiji Restoration (1868) and its nation-state enterprise. In national language policy, a new Japanese government adopted a standard language (*hyojungo*) (Carroll 2001). For the implementation of this policy, a centralist approach to the issue of standardization was applied (Gottlieb 2005). The policy-makers and intelligentsia of Japan adopted the formula of language and nationalism employed by the empires of Europe and implemented this in the colonies of Taiwan and Korea (Heinrich 2012; Lee 1996). The “standard language” was deemed necessary to serve as the national language (*kokugo*). In this early modernization of nation-state, *kokugo* emerged in 1896, when the Japanese government announced the opening of the governor-general’s national language school in Taiwan. In this early history of Japanese modernity, Japanese language and education policy are directly connected with the nation building and colonization.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) was founded in 1871, and the Japanese school system started thereafter. In 1886, the first school education policy (*gakko-rei*) was published, setting the curricula for universities (education for the elite) and for teacher education colleges, elementary, and secondary schools. In this period, educational diglossia prevailed, whereby schoolchildren bound for the social elite were drilled in *kanji* (Chinese characters) and *kango* (Chinese literature). The masses possessed only elementary school diplomas.

The backbone of the postwar education system was formulated in 1947, with an increasing number of students attending senior high school: approximately 42% in 1950, 57% in 1960, 82% in 1970, and 94% in 1980; after 1990, the rate has grown to 96–98% (MEXT 2015b). This increase illuminates the two basal changes in Japanese society: (1) the economic success of the 1970s and 1980s enabled families to spend more on education, and (2) the Japanese economy needed quality workers to lead its competitive economy in a globalizing world. These factors led to a call to “internationalize the Japanese people.”

Major Issues for Language Education Policy

“Internationalization” remains a preeminent, long-term goal of the Japanese Ministry of Education. Millennium policy strategies were formulated for the twenty-first century:

1. To improve teaching methods in foreign language classes in order to provide children with a better understanding of the distinctive history and culture of other nations in the world
2. To promote international exchange in the field of education, culture, and sport
3. To improve programs for the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language, thus responding to the growing enthusiasm for learning Japanese
4. To improve educational programs both for Japanese children living overseas and for “returnees” (children who reentered the educational system after prolonged stay overseas) to maintain the language and knowledge which they acquired abroad

While these strategy goals remain preeminent, the tone has changed. Returnees, with their various degrees of bilingualism, were initially regarded as “a problem” since they could not adjust to the monolingual ethic of Japanese schools in the 1960s and 1970s. Social change in the 1980s, however, saw returnees reclassified under “internationalization” (Goodman 2003)—a convenient policy shift based not upon an awareness of emergent multiculturalism but rather political ideology and the need to avoid chaos in school.

On the surface, “internationalization” seemed to stimulate foreign language education. Regarding the fifth revised “Foreign Language Policy” in 1989 (junior and senior high school), Otani et al. (2004) noted the extension of communication-based activities to promote English oral expression in reading and writing. At the same time, the Ministry of Education promoted “petit nationalism” by centralizing school management and enforcing the new patriotism of compulsory singing of the national anthem and American-style “honoring the flag.”

The discourse of internationalization still treads a tightrope between the promotion of English and nationalism. In the Japanese context, the logic of internationalization implies, tendentially, educating Japanese people to behave “more Japanese” as well as equipping them with the linguistic armor to compete in the world beyond Japan. The current alarm in the language education community is that the foreign language education is becoming subsumed under a quasi-nationalistic and ideologically policy of the central government of “globalization.”

The plan to “accept 100,000+ overseas students in Japan” was first proposed in 1983 by Prime Minister Nakasone. The new policy was positioned as an “intellectual international contribution (MEXT 2002)” toward the twenty-first century. This goal was achieved in 2003, and an enlarged target was set to “accept 300,000+ overseas students,” a plan linking MEXT, with five other government ministries overseeing foreign and domestic affairs, health, trade, communication, and tourism. The aim appears to increase the availability of highly skilled foreign personnel, a socio-educational strategy consistent with the economic aims of postwar Japan.

Diversity of Language and Education in Japan

The problematic of twenty-first century national language policy in Japan emerges in the designation of language subjects in education. In the domain of compulsory

education, Japanese distinguishes “*kokugo*” (“nation language”) for Japanese native speakers and *Nihongo* (“language of Japan”) for non-Japanese native speakers.

Postwar Foreign Language Policy for secondary education level has been repeatedly revised. Until the sixth revision in 1998, foreign language education at secondary schools was elective and included English, French, and German. After 2003 foreign language education became compulsory in high school. At junior high school, it was effectively limited to English, while some private and state schools specializing in foreign languages now offer, electively, Chinese, French, German, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Italian, and Portuguese.

English

The *Report on the Future Improvement and Enhancement of English Education* proposed five reform areas for improvement in school education to meet the needs of rapid globalization: educational content, teaching and evaluation, university and high school entrance, teaching materials, and the implementation of reform (MEXT 2014). The landmark Commission on Japan’s Goals in the Twenty-First Century (2000) recommended the goal of “global literacy”: to enable Japanese citizens to freely and efficiently exchange information with the world. The basic elements were (1) mastery of information technology tools (computer, the Internet) and (2) mastery of English as the international lingua franca. The Commission suggested that English might be designated an official second language of Japan. The latter proposal provoked public outrage and accusations that national identity and the national language were threatened.

Japanese industry has made English the de facto language of business. In the mid-1980s many Japanese firms accelerated the transfer of production lines to other countries in Asia and elsewhere. Following Uniqlo’s workplace language policy, the online shopping operator Rakuten declared English the company lingua franca in 2012. The issue is controversial with the question why employees should be disadvantaged linguistically in a Japanese environment. As globalization and competition among multinationals intensify, the operating system of Japanese commerce is becoming English dominant.

The Super Global High School (SGH) concept was introduced in Japan as a leadership skill-building program designed also to address concerns about a growing insularity among young Japanese and improve their communication and problem-solving skills. However, large-scale policy change in the school curriculum has caused structural and curriculum problems for teacher development—a problem of the congruency of system and innovation (Suda 2011).

English classes are currently offered once a week in the final 2 years of elementary school, and there are government plans to teach from grade 3 and make English a formal subject by the year 2020. An ambitious government-sponsored program brings assistant language teachers (ALTs) from overseas. Progress, however, is hampered by ALTs’ inexperience and the absence of qualifications.

Among the Japanese teaching profession, there is the problem of adequate support and training as well as serious overwork (the longest hours, at 54 per week, of the OECD’s 34 member states). At the current time of writing, English

language policies in the cities are being reconsidered as the nation prepares for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020.

Korean

The immediate postwar period saw an explosion of Korean-medium schools. By 1946, there were 525 Korean schools in Japan (serving a population of 647,006 Korean). However, Koreans were obliged to register as aliens, and in 1948, the Ministry of Education ordered all Korean children to receive Japanese public education. The route to bicultural/bilingual education was thus effectively closed. Their children—*nisei*, *sansei*, and *yonse*i (second, third, and fourth generation)—comprise a substantial minority in Japan, approximately 1 million (including those that have naturalized as Japanese). The large majority are now (monolingual) native Japanese speakers (Maher and Kawanishi 1995).

The majority of ethnic Korean children attend local state Japanese schools; there these Korean children are “invisible” and ethnically unmarked, compared to the “visible” Brazilian or Peruvian students. Okano (2006) argues that Japan-born ethnic Koreans need no Japanese as second language (JSL) but that their ethnic language and culture do need support, as much as that of “visible” newcomers.

In contrast, Korean as a foreign language is the fastest-growing foreign language of study in Japan. Several factors contribute to this: the 1988 Seoul Olympics; the 2002 World Cup in Korea and Japan; more print media in Korean; stabilization of trade-economic relations between Japan and Korea, leading to increased confidence among Korean-Japanese; and municipal interest in supporting Korean resident communities. The prevalence of hate speech in rallies held in urban Korean neighborhoods has given rise to fears of racism and xenophobia. There are counter demonstrations, and in the globalized media glare, the social, linguistic, and educational agency of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will be significant.

In an attempt to maintain the Korean language and culture and avoid the historical bias against minorities found in the school curriculum in Japanese schools, the General Association of (North) Korean Residents in Japan (*Sooren*), and to a lesser extent the Korean Residents Union (*Mindan*), run their own system with the provision of textbooks on Korean language or history. A mixed bilingual curriculum in Japanese and Korean is employed in *Sooren* elementary, secondary schools, and university throughout Japan—120 schools in 2003, 110 in 2008, and 98 in 2012—whereas the union (*Mindan*) has far fewer four schools throughout the same time period (Park 2008, 2012; Shin 2005).

Chinese

Chinese migrants comprise two groups: *Kakyo*—those with Chinese nationality—and *Kajin*—naturalized Japanese. The migration of Chinese can be traced back to 1858 when the Edo shogunate opened its ports and markets. These *Kakyo* are categorized as oldcomers and newcomers. Chinese oldcomers live in former foreigners’ residence areas like Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki, whereas newcomers live in cities like Tokyo, Chiba, and Saitama, urban populated cities (Chen 2008).

The *Kakyo* are the largest ethnic group in the foreign registered population, and their presence in Chinese is increasing.

There are five Chinese ethnic bilingual (Japanese-Chinese) schools in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kobe being originally established by Chinese oldcomers. Kanno (2003) noted at one ethnic Chinese school, 60% “oldcomer,” 30% “newcomer,” and 10% “mainstream” Japanese.

Maher and Kawanishi’s (1995) study of Korean students noted the strong link between Korean ethnicity and language, including the refusal of (North) Korean residents to adopt Japanese nationality. In contrast, Chen (2005), in a study of the Chinese community in Tokyo-Yokohama, noted a “fluid and loose connection between language and Chinese identity” (p. 179). The “fluidity” in the language awareness of the overseas Chinese community seems to derive from some basic principles: (1) Japanese language learning is essential, (2) language affiliation with Chinese is desirable, (3) code mixing is normal, and (4) learning English as an international language is essential for the community.

Ainu

The United Nations’ declaration on language rights in 1993, Year of the Indigenous Peoples, was a landmark in the history of language maintenance among the peripheral language communities in Japan, particularly the Indigenous Ainu. Supported by overseas language minorities, the Ainu have achieved significant progress in their struggle for language protection. In Hokkaido, where approximately 24,000 identified themselves as Ainu, according to Hokkaido Government Surveys, there are now universities in the northern prefectures that offer Ainu language instruction. Local community groups also now operate Ainugo Kyoshitsu (Ainu language classes) in community centers in Hokkaido (DeChicchis 1995). By 2010, classes funded by the Japanese government were held in 14 different locations throughout Hokkaido. Language revitalization is underway, and intensive training courses for Ainu people wanting to teach the Ainu language are available (Martin 2011). Language revitalization is driven by the tension between heritage Ainu and benign authorities who wish to “protect” and “preserve” Ainu culture in accord with the legal requirements (Sato 2012).

Placing Ainu within Fishman’s theory of reversing language shift, Maher (2001) has pointed out that “Ainu has a powerful symbolic resonance since it recalls the sociopolitical landscape of the past, the good old days and bad old days, colonialism, forced-removal from land, schooling in Japanese and prohibition of the Ainu language” (p. 323). Language education for the historic community of the Ainu advanced with the Ainu Culture Promotion Act of 1997. This removed older laws such as the 1901 Education Code, which aimed at the complete linguistic conformity of the Ainu and de facto elimination of the Ainu language. While the provisions of the new law have not met all the demands of the Ainu people, the renewed language becomes a defining characteristic of Ainu culture (see Siddle 1997 for a critique of the new legislation). A cultural resurgence in Ainu dance, pop, jazz, and *upopo* (rhythmical patterns sung in canon) has created a new generation of artists and

musicians (e.g., “Oki,” “Marewrew”) performing in the Ainu language (see Maher 2010 for the new Ainu identity).

Ryukyuan

The Ryukyuan group of languages is spoken in the Okinawa prefecture, the south islands of Japan. Until recently, Japanese scholars tended to treat Ryukyuan language groups as dialects of Japanese even though the two languages are mutually unintelligible. Thus, a more recent trend is to treat Ryukyuan as forming a branch of its own with the status of a sister language to Japanese, following by earlier proposals by Chamberlain (1895) and Miller (1971) (Shibatani and Kageyama 2015).

The return of the islands to Japan from US control in 1972 accelerated the decline of Ryukyuan. Standard Japanese is the medium of instruction throughout the Ryukyuan school system, while standard Japanese is employed in all media, magazines, books, official documents, public signs, etc. Ryukyuan plays no official role in public education in the Okinawan education system, and its use has traditionally been discouraged in schools. Heinrich (2015) illustrated that “dialect tag” was put into practice in the classroom; it was worn around the neck of schoolchildren by the last pupil in class having used “dialect” (p. 599). The tag increased in the 1920s and 1930s, and then, even after World War II, it was employed until 1972.

Attitudes are changing, though, owing to increased awareness of language endangerment and regional pride. Six Ryukyuan languages—Amami, Kunigami, Miyako, Okinawan, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni—were announced endangered by the UNESCO *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Extinction* (Moseley 2010). There is increasing local interest in the language, its ethnolinguistic maintenance, and language vitality (Ishihara 2014), though no policy proposal exists to reintegrate Ryukyuan languages into the school system.

The Deaf People and Japanese Sign Language

Japanese Sign Language (JSL) is a generic term for a cluster of deaf language varieties used by an estimated 400,000 hearing-impaired people and is subject to dialectal and sociolectal variation. Sign language activity has intensified in recent years. This includes the guarantee of sign language interpreting in court, local government-initiated sign language services, and television broadcasting in sign.

The Kyoto Prefectural School for the Blind and Deaf in 1873 adopted JSL as a means of instruction. However, when oralism was introduced in 1925, this resulted in the dissolution/prohibition of JSL in Japan's schools, where hearing teachers were required to teach “signed Japanese” based upon spoken Japanese word order and expression (Honma and Kato 1995). The policy continued until the Japanese Ministry of Education acknowledged the use of sign language in deaf schools. Hailed in the popular press as the first statement in the history of educational policy to recognize language diversity in schools, the document was attacked by many language rights activists in the deaf community. The reason was obvious. The definition of sign language adopted by the government was signed Japanese (based on the structure and lexis of standard Japanese) and not Japanese Sign

Language, the Indigenous language of the deaf community (Honna and Kato 1995; Ichida 2004).

There is at least one school in which bilingual education is conducted in Japanese Sign Language and Japanese language (Kaya 2012), and discriminatory laws pertaining to JSL were amended in 2001. There is burgeoning nationwide awareness of the importance of JSL-Japanese bilingualism, a sophisticated sign language interpreting system, information centers for the deaf, as well as vibrant cultural activity in the arts, television and film, and social media.

Portuguese and Spanish

A dramatic economic upturn occurred in the 1980s, the period of the so-called bubble economy. This drew in *gastarbeiter* to work in what was termed, ironically, the san-K (3-K) type of jobs: work that was considered low status, particularly in the construction industry, *kitsui* (hard), *kitanai* (dirty), and *kiken* (dangerous). In the 1980s, there was an influx of Vietnamese-Chinese and Cambodian refugees, followed by the settlement of foreign workers from Asia and South America (speakers of Portuguese) in the 1990s, after the immigration provision enacted in 1990. With this Nikkei (Japanese descendent) workers pushed up the number of non-Japanese children in the Japanese state schools. Several commentators have pointed out the urgent need to deal with the problem of the children of recent immigrants who do not have Japanese language ability and who find it difficult to function in public schools (Gottlieb 2012; Ota 2000). According to a survey by the Ministry of Education, the numbers of foreign national children with Japanese language support necessary in Japanese state schools were 19,678 in 2004 and 29,198 in 2014. In 2014, they were speakers of Portuguese (8,340), Chinese (6,410), Filipino (5,153), and Spanish (3,576) (MEXT 2015a).

In 2015, 44 Brazilian language maintenance schools were approved by the Brazilian government (<http://www.brasemb.or.jp/culture/study.php>). The rapid expansion in the number of immigrant language speakers both in urban and rural areas has focused serious attention on the dynamics of family bilingualism and language maintenance in the next generation of Japanese citizens.

Japanese as a Second Language

The steady increase in the number of foreign students enrolled in educational institutions impacts on the growing field of the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language. In 2004, the number of foreign students studying at higher education institutions stood at 117,302; by 2014 the number had risen to 139,185. This compares with 53,787 in 1994 (JASSO 2015). That half of the foreign student population comes from mainland China (77,792), and the bulk of the rest from South Korea (13,940), Vietnam (11,174), Nepal (5,291), and Taiwan (4,971) points to the “Asianization” of the foreign student body. This population shift as well as its subject-specific orientation contrasts with the immediate postwar period, when a very small number of foreign students, mostly from North America and Europe, came to Japan for Japanese language and culture training.

Popular culture is crucial to the validity and pedagogical success of Japanese language teaching. This has long been recognized (Kishimoto 1992) and will continue as twenty-first-century students in Japan learn about Japanese society and practice TV drama, film, popular songs, *manga* (a generic term for comics and animation), and anime (animation) manga.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

The ethnic hybridity of Japan's towns and cities, the new "imagining" of minority communities, cultural crossover in lifestyle, the arts and education, and the furious globalization of the Japanese economy and business are among the many factors that impact upon language policy in twenty-first-century Japan. However, these dynamic interfaces are an old story. We may recall that writing systems employed in Japan are mixed and diverse: two phonemics syllabaries are arranged in Sanskrit phonetic order and adapted from kanji, Sino-Japanese kanji (Chinese characters), *romaji* (Romanized letters), European alphabet borrowing, and Japanese braille. A large percentage of spoken and written Japanese across most genres includes foreign words, loanwords, now mostly English (Honma 1995). The fact that the Japanese language developed by internationalizing such non-Japanese elements has caused tension between two contrastive viewpoints: progress toward the desired reforms and subsequent regression (Gottlieb 1995). Over the past century, language and language education policies have struggled at this interface, now hyper-accelerated by globalizing society.

The central government's push for "internationalization" lacks an adequate framework based upon multilingualism and multiculturalism. However, at the local level, Japanese cities are increasingly multicultural and bring forth new expectations for educational change to meet the present increasing number of foreign national residents. At the national level, language education policy is predicated upon the concept "internationalization" but nowhere does internationalization include support for regional and community or Indigenous languages. The reality of the critically declining population of Japanese society led the government to sign an agreement in 2004 to import Filipino nurses and care workers to look after the Japanese elderly. Such social changes will also change the demographics of foreign nationals and language policy (including the nature of Japanese as a foreign language education).

The discourse of immigration since the 1990s in Japan articulates the fact that globalization in Japan has blurred the boundaries of oldcomer and newcomer (Fujita-Round 2011). Moreover, there has been a historical shift in ideology and nomenclature from early "Westernization" to "internationalization" and most recently to "globalization."

Whither Japan's minorities and language communities? Tracing the "ethnic boom" of the 1980s–1990s, Maher (2005) has theorized that Korean and Ryukyuan, in particular, are now subject to "metroethnicization":

A hybridized “street” ethnicity deployed by a cross-section of the people with ethnic or mainstream backgrounds who are oriented towards cultural hybridity, cultural/ethnic tolerance and multicultural lifestyle in friendships, music, the arts, eating and dress. . . . Metroethnicity is bored with sentimentalism about ethnic language. . . . involved cultural crossings, self-definition made up of borrowing and bricolage. Its desktop cultural expression is “Cool”. The historic struggle of Japan’s language minorities may be giving way to a new metroethnic generation. Its performative style is based upon and derived simultaneously from the symbols of both disaffiliation and association. (p. 83)

Language education in Japan is in flux. It is neither revolutionary change nor planned incremental policy shift. Rather, flux occurs here and there: in schools, in companies, and as the result of the government’s now aging mantra of “internationalization.” The prospect for a nation’s language education policy is most influenced by the needs of its citizen-public: the younger generation will live with the emerging social realities. The absence of creative government responses to these realities is marked, and the powerful question remains, turning itself over, repeatedly, in the public mind: in what manner will the next generation come to terms with Japan’s new identity as a multilingual and multicultural society?

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in Southeast Asia](#)
- ▶ [Language, Identity, and Investment in the Twenty-First Century](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)

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Language Policy and Education in the Indian Subcontinent

Ajit K. Mohanty and Minati Panda

Abstract

The Indian subcontinent constitutes a highly diverse linguistic area, with over 750 languages belonging to nine language families. A large proportion of these languages are endangered. Multilingualism and language-in-education policies and practices in the subcontinent are affected by a hierarchical relationship of languages characterized by a double divide – one between English and the major national/regional languages and the other between the major languages and the Indigenous tribal minority (ITM) ones. The declared language policies in the subcontinent emphasize languages of national identity and development of ITM languages. In practice, however, English is the most dominant language promoted along with the major national/regional languages, while the ITM languages are neglected. Languages in education reflect the linguistic double divide; private schools are English-medium schools, and public schools are in the medium of the dominant regional languages with English becoming increasingly important in the higher levels of education. Submersion education in the dominant language leads to educational failure of the ITM children. Some countries, such as Nepal and India, have started experimental programs of MT-based multilingual education (MLE) to deal with the problems of classroom language barriers. But the burden of the double divide seems to force early exit from the use of MT in MLE programs limiting the scope for development of MT and its egalitarian positioning in the society.

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Introduction

Multilingualism and language-in-education policies and practices in the different countries in the Indian subcontinent are affected by a hierarchical relationship between the dominant and minority languages. This hierarchy is characterized by a double divide – one between English and the major national/regional languages and the other between the major languages and the Indigenous tribal minority (ITM) ones. The declared language policies in most parts of the subcontinent are guided by priority to the languages of national identity and liberal safeguards for protection and development of ITM languages. In practice, however, English is the most dominant language of popular aspirations, and it is promoted along with the major national/regional languages, while the ITM languages are grossly neglected. Languages in education reflect the linguistic double divide; private schools use English as the medium of teaching-learning, whereas public schools are in the medium of the dominant regional languages with English becoming increasingly important in the higher levels of education.

Neglect of minority mother tongues (MTs) and submersion education in the dominant language lead to educational failure of the ITM children. Recent attempts in some countries, such as Nepal and India, to deal with the problems of classroom language barriers for these children through experimental programs of MT-based multilingual educations (MLE) show positive impacts. But the burden of the double divide seems to force early exit from the use of MT in MLE programs limiting the scope for development of MT and its egalitarian positioning in the society.

The countries in the Indian subcontinent – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka – constitute a highly diverse linguistic area with over 750 languages belonging to nine different language families. The region is home to more than 10% of the languages of the world. It is also noteworthy that a large proportion of these languages are endangered. *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* (UNESCO 2009) lists 344 languages in these countries in different

degrees of endangerment. India alone has 197 languages in the endangered category, the highest for any country in the world. The fact that the degree of linguistic diversity is strongly associated with endangerment of languages shows that multilingualism entails “unequal division of power and resources” (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, p. 30) and a hierarchical positioning of languages, leading to disadvantage, marginalization, language shift, and loss of linguistic diversity. This is a common pattern across the Indian subcontinent; some languages are associated with greater power and privileges compared to many others, which suffer neglect and discrimination in significant domains of use such as governance, law, education, trade, and commerce.

Languages that people use or do not use are associated with their access to socioeconomic resources and chances of upward mobility. This chapter will briefly analyze the sociolinguistic positioning of languages in different countries in the Indian subcontinent to show how these languages are hierarchically organized in the society. We focus on language policy in education of these countries as a critical area of neglect of languages and show how such neglect leads to loss of diversity and cumulative disadvantage to the users of these languages. Recent attempts to deal with the problems associated with educational neglect of languages through policy and practice level emphasis on mother tongue (MT)-based multilingual education are also discussed.

Early Developments and Major Contributions

Languages, Power, and Hierarchy

The multilingual scenario in the Indian subcontinent is characterized by a dominant position of English regardless of its constitutional or institutional status. English has some official status in India as an associate official language, in Pakistan as one of the two official languages and, more recently, in Sri Lanka, which accepted a trilingual policy of Sinhala, Tamil, and English as official languages since 2011. In the remaining countries, English does not have any official status, but it dominates as a language of power and popular aspiration. It is definitely the most sought offer language of education, at least in post-secondary and higher education.

During the colonial rule and the movement for independence in India, English was shunned as a language of the colonizers, and it was never a symbol of Indian nationalism. However, primarily because of conflict of interest among several Indian languages claiming a dominant or national language status in the constituent assembly, English was bestowed an associate official language status in the Constitution of India (Article 343.2) promulgated in 1950. While no language was recognized as a national language, Hindi was named the official language of the Union of India. The Constitution of India also listed the major languages (including Hindi) in the VIIIth schedule as official languages for all communication between the states as well as the states and the Union of India.

Only 14 languages were initially scheduled in 1950, and subsequently other languages were added to the VIIIth schedule, the latest being in December 2003 when the number was increased from 18 to 22 adding, for the first time, two tribal languages – Santali and Bodo – to the schedule. The status as an additional official language was initially given to English for a period of 15 years during which other Indian languages including Hindi were envisaged to develop and replace English. However, following some conflict between Hindi and South Indian languages including Tamil, the associate official language status of English was extended for an indefinite period by the Official Language Act of 1963.

English is an official language in Pakistan along with Urdu, the national language. While Urdu is promoted as the language of national identity, English is the language of power. In Sri Lanka the major languages are Sinhala and Tamil with some official status at different points in its several attempts to sort out the issue of languages. The Official Language Act of Sri Lanka, in 1956, introduced a policy of Sinhala as the only official language, and later, Tamil was given an official language status particularly in the northern and southern provinces. The official position of the two major languages in Sri Lanka continued to be debated in recent years, while English became the language of popular choice in education and government policy. A Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) was set up in the aftermaths of Tamil movement and the war. In 2011, the LLRC recommended a trilingual policy of Sinhala, Tamil, and English as the official languages and also languages in education. Amid the changing strategies and policies in respect of the major languages in the country, English has continued as a language of the elites, preferred over the two national languages.

English does not have any formal “official” status in the remaining countries in the subcontinent – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Afghanistan. But it is the most dominant language – the language of power and opportunities in the global economy. Bengali nationalism and rejection of Urdu dominance led to the nationalistic movement in Bangladesh for separation from Pakistan. Following its independence, Bengali became the only official language of Bangladesh. But English is still the dominant language of popular aspirations and official use. English has a similar position in Nepal and Bhutan as the dominant language even if it does not have any official standing. The language situation in Afghanistan remains fluid; its 2004 constitution (Article 16.1 and 16.2) specifies Pashto and Dari as national languages and few other languages, such as Uzbek, Turkmen, Pasal, Kati, Balochi, and Munji, as provincial statutory languages. But the preference for English is quite evident in education despite the national emphasis on Islamic education. The School Education Curriculum Framework in Afghanistan mandates Dari and Pashto as languages of education with a priority on moving toward English as the language of instruction in higher education. In the 10th to 12th years of education, English is a language of curriculum along with Pashto and Dari.

The dominant position of English vis-à-vis the major languages of national and regional identity is characteristic of the hierarchical structure of languages in the Indian subcontinent. While the power of English relegates the major languages in each of the countries in the subcontinent to positions of lesser power, the major

languages, in turn, push the Indigenous tribal minority (ITM) languages into marginalization. The three-tiered hierarchy of languages show two major power gaps – one between English and the major national and regional languages and, the other, between the major languages and the ITM languages at the bottom.

Mohanty (2010) has analyzed this hierarchical structure as a “double divide” in multilingualism. In India, the 22 official languages in the VIIIth schedule of the constitution, including state majority languages and some other major regional languages, are under pressure due to the dominance of English which has adversely affected the extent of their use; particularly, the younger generation shows a clear decline in their preference for and proficiency in these languages. In the state levels, the dominance of the major official languages of the state pushes the ITM languages into disuse, neglect, and marginalization.

In Pakistan, there is a power divide between English and Urdu, the other official and national language. English is not a first language of the people in Pakistan, and only 8% of the people use Urdu as their first language, whereas other major language like Punjabi is spoken as the first language by 44%, Pashto by 15.42%, and Sindhi by 14.5% of the national population. Although all these languages are sometimes claimed to be major powerful languages (vis-a-vis other smaller languages), the real language of power is English. Urdu as the national language has a prominent position in Pakistan’s politics and governance. English and Urdu relegate the major provincial languages to positions of lesser power sometimes calling for movements of resistance from Punjabi, Sindhi, and other major regional language speakers. The second divide is between the major provisional or regional languages and nearly 70 other Indigenous and minor languages which remain marginalized (Rahman 1998).

The same pattern of a double divide is evident in Bangladesh between English and major languages (Bengali as the official language and Urdu as a major language) and between these dominant languages and 39 other ITM languages which remain marginalized. The constitution of Nepal recognizes all languages of the country (nearly 122 languages) as national languages. But English occupies the most dominant status as a language of greater power than Nepali, the major national-level language. While these two languages dominate all major domains of public activity, all other regional and minority languages struggle for a place in the new democratic setup awaiting promulgation of a new constitution. In Sri Lanka there is a clear power divide between English and the other national languages, Sinhala and Tamil, while about five other minor languages are fully neglected in the country’s language discourse and remain completely isolated and marginalized or nearly extinct. Bhutan has 30 languages, most of which are endangered. Dzongkha is the national language with a power divide between English and Dzongkha and a second divide between Dzongkha and the other ITM languages.

Multilingualism in the Indian subcontinent is characterized by inequality and a hierarchical structure of “double divide.” The role of English as a powerful international language of the global economy has pushed major languages of national and regional identity into positions of lesser power, and further down the hierarchy, the ITM languages are also pushed and marginalized by the regional dominance of the

major languages. Admittedly, while the double divide points to the two major cleavages in the hierarchy of languages in the society, each layer of the three-tiered hierarchy shows other further power gaps between the speakers of these languages. As such, while some users of English (such as the urban elites) are clearly more privileged over others (such as the rural first-generation learners of English), there are power discrepancies between speakers of different major national/regional languages as also between the speakers of the various ITM languages; within each category some languages and varieties have more power than others. This is quite evident in the role of languages in education.

Language in Education in the Indian Subcontinent: Policy and Practice

Despite the grassroots level of multilingualism in the Indian subcontinent, the diversity of languages in use is clearly on the decline, as evidenced in different public domains such as the judiciary, law and governance, print and electronic media, business, trade and commerce, and significantly, education. Of over 700 languages in the subcontinent, less than 50 are in use as languages of teaching and learning in formal education. Further, the number of languages sharply declines as one moves up the levels of education from primary to higher and university education.

Private English-medium schools are most sought after in the region, and their number and enrolment are growing at a rapid rate. A majority of the 6- to 16-year-olds in India and Pakistan are in private English-medium schools. University education is almost exclusively in English. While the dominant languages have a major place in the public school systems, their place in higher and University level education is less visible. The other dominated and ITM languages are conspicuously absent in the formal systems of school and higher education, except in some recent experimental programs and MT-based early education for the tribal and minority language children.

Private schools in India, as in other countries in the subcontinent, are almost exclusively English-medium schools using English as the language of teaching and learning. Barring some schools of the central government and some recent attempts to have English-medium programs in the state government schools, the medium of instruction (MoI) in the public schools is the respective dominant language of the region or the state. In Indian schools, 33 languages, besides English, are used as the MoI. Out of these, 22 are official languages (listed in the VIIIth schedule of the constitution). Besides two tribal languages, Bodo and Santali, now recognized as official languages of India, only 3–5 of 128 tribal languages are used as MoI in regular school programs (see Panda and Mohanty 2014 for analysis of India's language-in-education policy).

Education in Nepal is also dominated by English-medium private schools which are growing rapidly. Medium of teaching in the public schools is Nepali regardless of the pupils' MT. Except in some recent experimental programs in early school years,

other languages of Nepal do not have any educational use (see Skutnabb-Kangas and Mohanty 2009 for details). The interim constitution of Nepal and its National Curriculum Framework of 2007 acknowledge the right to early education in children's MT (Mohanty and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013), but the situation in Nepal remains quite uncertain and fluid.

In Pakistan all private schools are English-medium schools, whereas government schools use Urdu as the MoI (Coleman 2010). The National Education Policy of the Government of Pakistan (GOP 2009) recommends English as a subject from the first year (class I) of schooling and as the MoI for Science and Mathematics from class IV onward in all public schools. Urdu is also recommended to be taught, besides one regional language, from class I. The 2009 policy stipulated a 5-year interim period during which provincial or regional departments of education could select either English or Urdu or an official regional language as MoI for Science and Mathematics. But after 5 years, only English would be the MoI. In practice, teaching of a regional language or a mother tongue has not been implemented except for Sindhi in parts of Sindh province. Thus, English (besides Urdu to some extent) is the most important language in Pakistan's system of education, while the major provincial/regional languages as well as the other minority languages are neglected. In higher levels of education beyond the primary grades, English becomes increasingly significant in the curriculum, and higher/university education is exclusively in English.

The language-in-education policy and practice in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Bhutan are also dominated by national language(s) in early education, and English, which is introduced quite early in primary grades, becomes increasingly important in the higher levels of education. In all these countries, as in rest of the subcontinent, private education is in the medium of English as the only language of teaching-learning (except for other languages) right from the point of school entry (grade I or early childhood education). In Bangladesh, Bengali and Urdu (in some schools) are the MoI from grade I in all government schools, and English is introduced as a language subject during the primary grades. The ITM languages are completely absent in education except in some experimental program in recent years with help of NGOs.

Bhutan's Royal Commission for Education manages educational policy and practices in Bhutan. However, early education and primary schools, in most cases, are locally managed. Dzongkha is the MoI in all schools although in some cases the community-managed schools bring in local languages or children's MT into early literacy instruction in an informal manner to facilitate teaching-learning in Dzongkha. English is introduced in school education quite early, targeted as a major language of higher education and global economy. Language in education policy in Bhutan has a clear emphasis on English with promotion of early literacy in Dzongkha regardless of children's MT. There is currently some effort to develop a national framework for education in which some role to the other 29 languages is being debated.

In Sri Lanka there is an ongoing effort to restructure education to promote the new trilingual policy of developing proficiency in English, Sinhala, and Tamil through

the MT-based MLE system in which early literacy education will be in children's MT (either Tamil or Sinhala) with English and the second national language taught early during the primary stage of schooling. The exact nature of education for trilingual development is to be finalized through ongoing processes of national and international consultation. However, the role of English is considered quite significant in all levels of education, especially in higher education.

Education in Afghanistan has been quite unstable through the divergent impacts of Islamic fundamentalists, Soviet occupation, and the new tension-ridden democratic setup under American and Western influences. Since 1992, the system of education has gone through some modernization although the traditional religious conservatism in education has not been completely nullified. The new school curriculum framework seeks a balance between the different forces and orientations seeking to promote Pashto and Dari as languages of early education along with use of ethnic minority languages as MoI and continuation of traditional Islamic education. However, the modern education in Afghanistan has a clear priority toward using English as the language of instruction in higher education. New universities in the country are developed as English-only universities. Thus, at a broader level, the language-in-education policy in Afghanistan has priorities on English, the national languages – Pashto and Dari – and then the regional languages.

Policy and practice in respect of language in education in the Indian subcontinent reflect the linguistic “double divide” between English and major national language(s) on one hand and the major languages and the ITM languages on the other. In public education, while major languages are promoted as languages of early literacy, emphasis on English is quite evident in its presence quite early in school education. The declared policy may provide some scope for early education in children's MT, but in actual practice, ITM languages are neglected. Further, there is a parallel form of private education in English as the MoI, at all levels of schooling. Higher and university level education is in English in public as well as private systems. This, in fact, triggers a wash-back effect generating popular demand for early English and contributing to the rapid growth of private English-medium schools with a major share of school-age pupils. Generally, the quality of English teaching is quite poor in private as well as public schools. A huge number of low-cost poor quality private English-medium schools have started coming up for children from the lower socio-economic strata in rural, semi-urban, and urban slums without much home support for learning English. This is in sharp contrast to the children from higher socioeconomic families in high-cost private schools; early learning in English by these children is amply supported in their home environment and early socialization. Such variations in the cost and quality of private English-medium schools for the poor and the affluent and for major language-medium public schools for the relatively poor and also the children from linguistic minorities, such as the tribal children, have given rise to a hierarchy of school systems in the subcontinent with the ITM children from lower socioeconomic conditions as the most disadvantaged (Mohanty 2010).

Education for Linguistic Minorities

Private schooling with English as the MoI and dominant language-medium public schools have created a problem of access for the ITM children mostly from the economically weaker sections in the society. Imposition of the dominant languages as MoI creates a language barrier for a large number of children in the Indian subcontinent limiting the chances of their educational success and having a subtractive effect on their mother tongue competence (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 2010). Neglect of MTs in education has been shown to be leading to educational failure, high “push out” rates, capability deprivation, and poverty for ITM children in India and Nepal (Hough et al. 2009; Mohanty 2008; Mohanty and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013) and in Pakistan (Coleman 2010; Rahman 2008).

The critical link between submersion education in dominant languages and educational failure of ITM children has led to some experimental programs of MT-based education in minority and tribal languages in parts of the subcontinent. Two states in India have experimental programs of multilingual education (MLE) in which tribal MTs are used as the language of teaching-learning and early literacy development during primary grades (I to V). The dominant state language and English are introduced as language subjects (not as MoI, except in the respective language teaching) in later grades. The program started in eight tribal languages in 240 primary schools in Andhra Pradesh in the year 2005 and in Odisha 2 years later in ten tribal languages in 195 schools. The MT of tribal children is used as the language of the classroom till the end of grade V. The teachers are from the respective language communities, and textbooks prepared in these languages follow the state curriculum with special efforts to make the content specific to the Indigenous cultural experiences of the children. From grade VI onward, the major state language, Telugu in Andhra Pradesh and Odia in Odisha, becomes the sole medium of teaching (except other language subjects such as English). In eight of the Government of Odisha MLE schools, a special intervention program called *MLE Plus* was implemented in two tribal languages, Kui and Saora, by the authors (see Panda and Mohanty 2011, 2014 for details) from 2007 until 2012. A longitudinal evaluation (Panda et al. 2011) of MLE in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh and an evaluation by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, India (NCERT 2011), of the Odisha Program, besides several other evaluations, have shown positive effects of the MT-based MLE on children’s classroom achievement, improved scores on the dominant state language (Telugu/Odia) and English, school attendance, classroom participation, and positive teacher and community attitudes. The Odisha MLE program is now extended to 1,000 schools in 19 tribal languages and the program in Andhra Pradesh to over 3,000 schools in the earlier eight languages. The Government of Odisha has now accepted a set of policy recommendations (Mohanty et al. 2014) to provide MT-based MLE to all tribal children in the state in a phased manner. With this Odisha is the first state in India to have a policy of MT-based education for tribal children.

The Odisha model was followed in Nepal in a small-scale experimental MLE program in eight languages in seven schools (out of 32,000 schools in the country; see Hough et al. 2009; Yonjan-Tamang et al. 2009 for details). Similarly, some experimental MLE programs have started in Bangladesh for Indigenous minorities (Rahman 2010). The 2009 Educational Policy of Pakistan recommends use of local mother tongues or early education along with Urdu and English that are targeted to become major languages of teaching by grade 4. As pointed out earlier, Sri Lanka has an official trilingual policy and has plans for use of MLE model for MT-based education in Sinhala and Tamil and development of trilingual competence in English, Tamil, and Sinhala.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

In her analysis of language-in-education policies, Shohamy (2010) speaks of the gap between declared and de facto policies. The declared MT-based official policies in the countries in the Indian subcontinent seem to be liberal and egalitarian treating all languages as resources and accepting education in the MTs in principle. However, the ground level de facto policies, under pressure to yield a prominent role to English and major national and regional languages, confirm to the hierarchical double divide (Panda and Mohanty 2014). Mother tongues, wherever used for early education, are treated as convenient stepping stones for targeted development of dominant languages including English. There is a widespread attempt to bring English very early into the primary education in the Indian subcontinent – in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. English is taught in the first year of primary grades in the public schools in more than 21 of the 29 states in India. Thus, the dominant languages, including English, are considered more important than the ITM languages in the MLE programs in which development of early literacy in MT is viewed as a necessary condition for development of the major languages. This, as Panda (2012) argues, gives the MT-based experimental programs in the Indian subcontinent an “early-exit” character. As soon as the “major” languages are introduced into the MLE programs, MT is no longer viewed as primary, and there seems to be an urgency to drop the MT as early as possible.

The positioning and sequencing of languages in education and the tendency to emphasize long-term continuation of the dominant languages dropping the MTs early in the MLE programs seem to reflect the power hierarchy of languages in the society. In the process, English is treated as a vital cultural capital making its prominence in the de facto policies appear to be natural and in the best interests of the children and their communities. In this context, the policy implications of positive evaluations of the experimental programs of MT-based MLE are crucial, even if, given the small-scale nature of the programs and the dominant bias toward education in English and the major national or regional languages, they appear to be too weak to subvert the linguistic double divide in the society.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Education and Multilingualism](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Education, Pluralism, and Citizenship](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)
- ▶ [The Politics of English Language Teaching](#)

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Language Policy and Education in Southern Africa

Leketi Makalela

Abstract

Whereas the post-independent states in Southern Africa have attained independence from colonial rule for more than two decades, the language policy and practices largely remain similar to the ones introduced by the former colonial countries. Generally, the policies still reflect a monolingual bias toward the former colonial languages to the detriment of local African languages, which are not used in high prestige positions such as education. On the other hand, everyday discursive resources show evidence for fluid multilingualism as a norm for making sense of the world and of self. In this chapter, I explore this sociolinguistic tension, provide a synopsis of monolingual bias that cuts across a wider spectrum of current policy provisions, and demonstrate the state of linguistic fluidity in the precolonial period and confluence of languages in the past. Taken together, I argue for a reorientation of multilingualism to reflect the cultural constructs and local epistemologies found in the value system of *ubuntu* (African humanism) where there are infinite relations of dependency. In the end, recommendations for a return to African multilingualism are considered for adaptations by the member states in Southern Africa.

Keywords

Ubuntu translanguaging • Language policy • African multilingualism

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Introduction

The Southern African countries form the last region of the African continent to receive independence from colonial powers. While the post-independence era represented a new phase of linguistic emancipation toward the use of local languages for a range of social functions, these countries have adopted a monolingual lens and inherited colonial linguistic practices that were passed on to them. Associatively, conceptions of multilingualism are still construed within the aegis of a European oneness ideology that characterized the European enlightenment period (Makalela 2015; Ricento 2000). Yet their ancient cultural value systems, which assumed an interdependent worldview and fluid linguistic system between people of different language varieties, continue to be sidelined in favor of colonial cultural practices.

This chapter describes tensions between local and colonial notions of multilingualism and shows how these unresolved tensions have assured the continuation of colonial language policies in the region. To offer an alternative language policy paradigm, I use the African humanism concept of fluidity, referred to as *ubuntu*, and a translanguaging framework (García 2009; García and Li Wei 2014), which recognizes alternation of languages of input and output as normative in contemporary societies. In the end, I propose a rethinking of the Southern African multilingual space to accommodate and promote *ubuntu* translanguaging discourse practices where interdependence is highly valued over independence of language systems.

Early Developments

Precolonial Southern Africa

A quick review of the precolonial language situation in Southern African countries shows a complex myriad of language systems that overlapped the current boundaries that were recreated through evangelization and colonialism systems of the West

(Jackson 2001). It has been established that by the fourth century CE, the Iron Age Bantu-speaking people had settled in several parts of the Southern African community such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, and Mozambique. These ancient inhabitants of the region were known for their progress in smelting iron and a range of farming activities. The kingdoms of Monomotapa, Congo, Lozi, and Malawi stretched over large geographical spaces, and their peoples carried out trade that went as far as the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean in the east (see, e.g., Cox 1993).

The languages used in this era belonged to the Bantu or Niger-Congo family. While phonological and lexical variation was apparent between these languages, the idea of *ntu* or humanity was a thread that enabled them to collaborate and overlap in both the mining and agricultural industries. Makalela (2015) notes that the speakers of these languages are believed to have carried a value system of interconnectedness referred to as *ubuntu* or *botho*, as realized in the injunction: “I am because you are, you are because we are.” An example of linguistic continuum can be found in the cousin kingdoms of Monomotapa and Mapungubwe at the current border of Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. In these kingdoms, more than one language was used in interactions and trade, which resulted in the Indigenous people of the Limpopo Valley developing one of the finest civilization centers and advancing trade with the East African countries and Arabia. Khoza (2013) reminds us about the Mapungubwe community, as follows: “At Mapungubwe, a thousand years ago, late Iron Age metal-workers produced astonishing artifacts like the golden rhino and other jewelry of rare quality” (p. 159).

The civilization of Mapungubwe went on through the use of language systems that were porous, flexible, and accommodative of differences. This development coincided with the advanced Iron Age culture in what today is known as Zambia; this culture was referred to as Luanga in the eleventh and twelfth century. The inhabitants of Luanga and Mapunguawe lived side by side with the Khoe and the San people who were in the region for more than 120,000 years (Makalela 2015; Webb and Kembo-Sure 2000). In other words, there was a continuum of language systems as well as inward and outward mobility between various ethnic or tribal communities. It is therefore useful to describe multilingualism before Western colonialism by emphasizing the notions of harmony and coexistence (Makalela 2005). These notions find resonance within the ancient value system that is captured in the injunction: *motho ke motho ka batho* or *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, which means “a human is a human because of others” or “I am because you are; you are because we are.” Unlike the fear of the foreigner, which characterized the European medieval period and the resultant nation statism, South African tribalism was endowed with *ubuntu*, which encouraged cohabitation and interdependence between people of different tribes and their languages (Makalela 2015). It was thus possible for the kingdoms of Monomotapa, Malawi, Lozi, and Mapungubwe to oversee a large space of tribes that today include many countries in the region (Cox 1993).

Linguistic Balkanization and Colonial Language Policies

The language-in-education policies of colonial Southern Africa followed the colonization strategies that can be characterized as total assimilation in the Portuguese colonies and indirect rule or the adaptation approach in the British and Belgian colonies. Prior to the formal colonization of 1848, the education system in the region was largely in the hands of the missionaries who had an urgent mission to evangelize the local people with the belief that instruction in the mother tongue would rapidly spread the word of God effectively (Makalela 2015). It was the missionaries' tasks to analyze the African languages, to develop a writing system, and to translate the Bible (Mansour 1993). The need to transition the local people into the Western cultural values necessitated an adoption of European monolingual practices from the missionary schools (Obeng and Purvis 2010). The language policies were reinforced later through the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission of the 1920s (King 1971):

1. The tribal language should be used in the lower elementary standards or grades.
2. A lingua franca of African origin should be introduced in the middle classes of the school if the area is occupied by large native groups speaking diverse languages.
3. The language of the European nation in control should be taught in the upper standards. (p. 56)

It should be noted that the German colonies had different language-in-education policies. Here, the use of local languages for the entire primary school education and transition into colonial languages at secondary education levels were promoted. This was the case for Tanzania (Kiswahili) and South-West Africa (Namibia). We learn from Obeng and Purvin's (2010) work that the motivation for this direction was that the Germans did not want to share their German language with the local people because they needed to preserve their ethnocentric values. When the Germans and Italians forfeited their colonies after World War II, however, Tanzania fell under the control of Britain and Namibia under the Afrikaners (South Africa).

The colonial language-in-education policies as described above all pointed to one direction: immersion of the local people into European value systems through adoption of the languages of the colonizers for education and national/official domains. This system of immersion was quite effective in making multilingual children learn through foreign languages before they had developed proficiency or conversational ability in the languages of instruction. Hailemariam et al. (2003) caution that most of the cases of transitional bilingual education involve transition to a language spoken natively by a large segment of the Indigenous population such as English in the USA or French in France. Conversely, abrupt shift in language of instruction shows that the teaching of foreign languages has origins in second language programs that were designed in Western countries to teach second languages aiming for conversation skills, writing tasks, and some literature, but not full

mastery of the language to learn and teach mathematics, science, geography, or history (Alidou et al. 2006).

Apart from South Africa, which has 11 official languages, the official languages of the Southern African countries remained the languages of their former colonizers: English (Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia), French (Democratic Republic of the Congo), and Portuguese (Mozambique, Angola). Local languages are in the margins even in countries that have more than 80% of the populations speaking a common language (e.g., Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland).

The Case of South Africa

While South Africa inherited colonial policies, it followed a slightly different path from the Southern African countries. The Dutch were the first Europeans to colonize the country as presented in Troup's (1972) work as follows:

Some five years after the wreck of the *Harlem* and 154 years after Vasco da Gama's voyage, Jan van Riebeeck, a tough, much traveled and very able ship's surgeon, set from Holland with three small ships, *Goede Hoep*, the *Dramedaris* and the *Reiger*, to found at the Cape "a depot of provisions," to enable ships of the company to refresh themselves with the vegetables, meat, water, and other necessities, by which means the sick on board may be restored to health. (p. 40)

As cited in Makalela (2015), this story opened a long history of Dutch settlement, which was followed by the English settlers more than 100 years later. In the Cape, the settlers clashed with the Khoe and the San people who had been in the region for more than 120,000 years and later with the Bantu-speaking people.

When the English settled in 1795, they sought to change the cultural landscape and exert influence on the local people through English until they clashed with the Dutch in a 3-year war, referred to as the Anglo-Boer War, from 1899 until 1902. It was observed that the Dutch and the British divided South Africa into four colonies: Transvaal and Orange Free State (both Dutch) and Cape Colony and Natal (both British).

In 1910, South Africa signed a union treaty as a way to avoid future wars. This treaty resulted in a cultural "union" where Dutch and English were considered official languages of the republic, as follows: "Both the English and Dutch languages shall be official languages of the Union and shall be treated on a footing of equality and possess and enjoy freedom, rights and privileges" (Hill 2009, p. 8). This national language policy was short-lived as it ignored Afrikaans mother tongue speakers who had grown in large numbers. The Afrikaans speakers (Afrikaners) started a protest movement that promoted Afrikaans as official language in lieu of Dutch. This movement developed during World War I (1914–1919), but reached its peak under Hertzog's leadership from 1925 (Hartshorne 1987; Steyn 1993).

As stated previously, the linguistic outcome of these political developments was that between the years 1918 and 1959, English-Afrikaans bilingual medium was used for learning and teaching. This means that White schools were divided into Afrikaans or English medium schools, with either of these languages used as the language of instruction and both languages taught as subjects. In contrast, the Black learners attended the missionary schools that had a policy of learning through the African home language for the first 3 years and transition into English medium instruction at grade 4.

Post-independent South Africa. South Africa was the last to receive independence from colonialism and apartheid. Nelson Mandela was released from prison on February 11, 1990, and the new sociopolitical dispensation began in 1994. In 1996, the Constitution of the new Republic declared 11 languages (nine Indigenous African languages as well as Afrikaans and English) an official status: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, isiZulu, SiSwati, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, English, and Afrikaans (RSA 1996). In addition, the Bill of Rights (1996) accorded the children with the right to be taught in any language of their choice:

Every child has the right to receive education in the official language of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. (Republic of South Africa 1996, Section 29, subsection 2)

Some of the guidelines include a requirement of 40 or more learners for a language to be granted status of medium of instruction in public schools. The following year (1997), the language-in-education policy stated:

Subject to any law dealing with language in education and the constitutional rights of the learners, in determining the language policy of the school, the governing body must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through using *more than one language of learning and teaching*. [Emphasis mine] and/or applying special immersion or language maintenance programs. (Republic of South Africa 1997, p. 8)

One observes here that the choice for languages of learning and teaching has been left in the hands of the school governing bodies. Despite this multilingual policy directive, there has been an increasing gravitation toward monolingualism with English gaining more clout than any of the official languages. The middle-class Black parents, for example, have been taking their children to English-only medium schools for the past 15 years. The schools in rural and poor urban areas, on the other hand, retained the subtractive bilingualism program that was instituted by the missionaries in the eighteenth century. From this point of view, South Africa has retained two policy programs of colonialism: going straight for the language of the colonizers from grade 1 (total immersion) and transition from mother tongue to colonial language in grade 4 (delayed immersion/subtractive bilingualism). Thus, South Africa has instances of both total assimilation and partial immersion into English monolingualism and provides a model of inherited language-in-education policies in Southern Africa.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

Reasons for Neocolonial Policies

Southern African countries have inherited colonial language policies under different guises. It would appear that these countries have not yet tapped their cultural competence as they follow the footsteps of their former colonizers. Despite pretensions of freedom, democracy, and independence, these countries remain colonial projects conditioned by many years of deliberate effort to believe in a oneness ideology. As Europeans saw civilization through the means of one language at a time, multilingual African countries have come to accept that their countries too can develop following their former colonizers' pathways. To this end, multilingualism is seen as a challenge, not a resource to explore full potential of the citizens in these countries. The following myths have been promoted as reasons for adoption of foreign/colonial languages:

- There are too many mutually unintelligible languages.
- It is very expensive to develop all the languages.
- Local languages are not developed.
- The best way to learn the foreign language is to use it as the language of instruction. (Makalela 2009)

As stated previously (Makalela 2015), I dismiss these myths as resulting from monolingual bias that was inherited from colonialism that one nation needs one language to develop its education system. This shows that there is a failure to imagine multilingualism outside of the colonial worldview and that there is no foresight and political will to drive linguistic and cultural transformation. Maintenance of the colonial linguistic dispensation that was not meant to develop the masses reveals continued politics of power relations between the colonizers and their former colonies. As seen in South Africa, South Africa is no exception to this view as English and Afrikaans mother tongue speakers continue to have an advantage over speakers of African languages. The late Dr. Neville Alexander is meticulous in presenting this stark reality:

It is an amazing fact that South Africa, in spite of its modernist pretensions, is one of the few countries worldwide where at least primary school children are not taught through the medium of the mother tongue or a language of immediate community. . . . It is an equally amazing fact that within the South African context the only children who receive mother tongue medium education virtually from cradle to the tertiary level are the minority English and Afrikaans-speaking children of the country. Children born to parents whose home language is one or other African language; i.e., the vast majority of our children, are doomed to be taught through a medium of the second language (mostly English) from the third or fourth year of school, mostly by teachers for whom this medium is at best a second language but often only a third language. (Alexander 2001, pp. 16–17)

The language policy of South Africa perpetuates inequalities and reinforces the colonial project of subjugation via linguistic discrimination that cut across the colonial period (1848–1947), apartheid period (1948–1993), and post-apartheid period (1994 to date). This inheritance seems to be full proof of a predictive programming that the colonial language policies continue to exist at the expense of the local African languages.

A Multilingual Return: Ubuntu as Cultural Competence

The turn of the twenty-first century has been adequately characterized as a “multilingual turn” (May 2012). This comes as a result of the criticism leveled against monolingual bias in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), second language acquisition, and bilingualism research and practices. Important to note is that globalization, which began with the liberation of European colonies shortly after the Second World War, has heralded an era of multilingualism through translocal and transnational movements in ways that were never experienced before. When framed in this light, the multilingual turn is largely understood within the contexts of European superdiversity, where immigrants from the former colonized countries move into the metropolitan cities of the former colonizing nations.

The former European colonies in the Southern African states have, on the converse, had complex fluid cultural and linguistic systems that predate colonization. Despite the geographical boundaries that were created between these states in 1884, most of the languages spoken in the region have always been cross border languages. In the post-independence era, immigration between the states has also increased exponentially, thereby recreating complex multilingual encounters reminiscent of *ubuntu* languaging practices that are fluid, flexible, and mobile. In order to connect dots of knowledge in all spheres of life in Southern Africa and to develop strong identity positions in the region, it is logical to return to the cultural competence of multilingualism as understood from an *ubuntu* epistemological orientation. Khoza (2013) cites the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, who observes that:

I have been exhorting Africans, and especially the intelligentsia to define themselves so that we, as a people, can devise and implement our own political and socioeconomic programmes of action. We have to meet prevailing global challenges from within our *own worldview* and proceed to action from our own authentic possibilities based on the culture and competencies of Africans themselves. (p xi)

The notion of worldview of the Africans is important in reorienting African multilingualism (Makalela 2014a, 2015) to reflect this cultural competence as an alternative epistemological orientation for language policy and practice directives. This worldview begins from the premise that one language is incomplete without the other as understood from the *ubuntu* principles. It also means intentional policy changes that would enhance:

- Moving away from oneness ideology of prescribing any one language for learning and teaching

- Developing common orthographies that represent different cross border languages
- Using *ubuntu* translanguaging as a pedagogic strategy

Clearly, the old boundaries between the languages in this region are increasingly weakening and giving way to complex multilingual encounters centered around the African worldview of *ubuntu* (Makalela 2014b). I have referred here and elsewhere to the complex use of three or more languages to make meaning about the world and to make sense of self from a communal African humanism as *ubuntu* translanguaging. It is in this connection to *ubuntu* as the cultural competency that Africans have and the one they can rediscover to challenge the ideology.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

In this chapter I have analyzed the language policies of Southern African countries in order to discern tensions and prospects based on colonial ideologies and African multilingualism based on *ubuntu*. The scholarship examined showed that all the Southern African countries have inherited colonial language policies at two levels. First, the official languages in these countries, except for South Africa, are colonial languages. Second, the language-in-education policies reflect two strands: (1) going straight for the colonial language or (2) subtractive programs where African languages are used only for the first 3 years of schooling. Worth noting here is that a monolingual bias prevails in complex multilingual encounters. Because of this inherited bias, South Africa's recognition of 11 official languages does not become a model to developing African languages, since the languages are conceived as isolated units, without overlaps. Yet the *ubuntu* value system valorizes interdependence, fluidity, and flexibility of cultural and linguistic systems as gleaned from the Limpopo Valley, among other centers of civilization.

This chapter shows that in contexts where a monolingual bias prevails, there should be a return to the value system that uses *ubuntu* and breaks the boundaries between languages in the region. I referred to the use of more than three languages in the same discourse as *ubuntu* translanguaging. In particular, I have pointed out that the *ubuntu* value system can be appropriated to shift lens of oneness found in the current language policy provisions. Here, one rediscovers a plural vision of interdependence, fluid, and overlapping and discursive system that matches ways of communicating where the use of one language is incomplete without the other.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Decolonization and Bilingual/Intercultural Education](#)
- ▶ [Language Education Planning and Policy by and for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy and Education in the USA](#)
- ▶ [Language, Identity, and Investment in the Twenty-First Century](#)

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Nelson-Flores and Jeff Bale: [Sociopolitical Issues in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Ofelia García: [Translanguaging in Bilingual Education](#). In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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Language Policy and Education in the Middle East and North Africa

Iair G. Or

Abstract

Language education policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a complex set of norms, beliefs, and practices deeply rooted in the history of the region. Despite the appearance of uniformity, the MENA region is marked by economic, religious, and linguistic differences. Language policies in MENA are to be understood against the background of prolonged colonial rule and the traditional opposition to colonialism and foreign intervention. Three major aspects of language policy (LP) in the region are discussed: diglossia, which involves the relatively rigid separation between the high, standard language and the native, colloquial one; Arabization, which is the historical process of reversing the linguistic consequences of colonialism, substituting Western colonial languages with Arabic; and, finally, issues of linguistic minorities, multilingualism, and language education, which pose significant challenges to language policy in the region. Following the discussion of current issues in the field, a discussion of work in progress and future directions in the field specifically addresses the issues of political instability in some parts of the region and the challenges of improving and researching language policy in contexts where language ideologies often clash. Particular attention is given to ways in which language policy can become more democratic and inclusive, the way new language policy initiatives can be executed and monitored, the potential economic value of certain policies, and the importance of research on the links between language policy and religion.

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Keywords

 Arabic • Colonialism • Diglossia • The Middle East and North Africa • Minorities

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Introduction

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a vast region spanning from the Atlantic coasts of Morocco in the west all the way through the Mediterranean ports of Africa and the Levant into the Red Sea inlets of the Arabian Peninsula and further into the Persian Gulf. The most populous countries in MENA are Egypt (ca. 91 million inhabitants), Algeria (40 million), Iraq (36.5 million), Morocco (33 million), Saudi Arabia (31.5 million), Yemen (25 million), and Syria (23 million in 2011). The term MENA partly overlaps “the Arab world,” since Arab regional identity and the Arabic language, with nearly 300 million native speakers, are extremely dominant in MENA. With the exception of Israel (ca. 8 million inhabitants), as well as Iran (79 million) and Turkey (78 million), which are not always considered part of MENA, Arabic is the official and majority language of all MENA countries.

Despite the appearance of uniformity, the MENA region is marked by economic, religious, and linguistic differences. Economically, while oil-producing countries such as Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Saudi Arabia are among the richest in the world, some MENA countries are among the poorest, often facing problems of poor infrastructures, health care, and nutrition as well as limited resources available for education. While the majority of MENA population is Muslim, many religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities contribute to the complexity and variety of the region. Tensions are frequent, not only between religious and ethnic sects but also between secular and clerical movements as well as between authoritarian regimes and groups demanding democratization. Linguistically, the huge variety of the region is determined not only by minority languages but also by countless Arabic dialects spoken as vernaculars in different parts of the region.

Early Developments

The Middle East has traditionally been a crossroads of trade and migration, seeing the rise and fall of some of the world's greatest civilizations and empires. It was the region where Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were born and the place of origin of Western civilization and the Western alphabets. Although parts of MENA had been invaded and ruled for relatively long periods by the Greeks and Romans, and later by the Byzantine Empire, no single invasion or empire had had an impact as dramatic and sustained as that of Islam. Starting in the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century CE, the Islamic conquests rapidly covered nearly the entire region and beyond, and Arabic spread not only as the language of the Holy Qur'an but as the language of administration, trade, science, and education. The various dialects of the Arabian Peninsula came into contact with local populations, giving birth to the immense variety of local Arabic dialects in the region. Nonnative speakers of Arabic who wished to learn the language helped to advance the systematic study of Arabic grammar, vocabulary, and culture.

The Ottoman Empire (1299–1923) ruled vast areas of the region for centuries. While the religion of the empire was Sunni Islam, like that of the majority of its inhabitants, its language of administration was not Arabic but Ottoman Turkish. The contrast between Turkish and Arab cultures created tensions that pushed Arabs to develop their separate, local identities (Suleiman 2003). This process of increased national and local identities was reinforced by the Western colonization of MENA countries, especially by France and Britain. The Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 marks the beginning of Arabic linguistic and literary revival known as *al-Nahḍa* (Suleiman 2003). The culmination of European colonialism in MENA was the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, which divided most of the Arab world between France and Britain, outlining the borders of future Arab countries. The colonial period was characterized by attempts of the colonizers to downplay the role and status of Arabic (Bassiouney 2009; Fassi Fehri 2013). Thus, Arab national as well as local identities evolved to a great extent in a process of differentiation from foreign colonial powers.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

Language education policy in MENA is determined by numerous factors that link general education issues with particular language policy (LP) issues. One of the main problems in many MENA countries is the fact that high quality education is often reserved for a small elite. Vocational tracking is common at an early age, as well as the exclusion of certain groups from mainstream education. While literacy rates have risen in the past few decades, illiteracy and particularly female illiteracy are still widespread in some countries. Not all students have equal access to English or other foreign languages as part of their education. Schoolchildren who do not get quality

education are unlikely to pursue (and be admitted to) higher education, especially in the high-demand faculties. Tests, particularly school-leaving examinations modeled after the French *Baccalauréat* or similar designs, serve as gatekeepers. Other issues often mentioned in connection with education MENA are the lack of consistency between curriculum, teaching materials, and examinations and the fact that the educational systems are highly centralistic. The lack of a professionalized teaching force impedes innovation, leaving compulsory education at a very low level (Akkari 2004). In the following subsections, issues that particularly characterize the language education policy of MENA will be discussed.

Diglossia

The most salient LP issue in MENA is undoubtedly the so-called Arabic diglossia, discussed in Ferguson (1959) and revised in Ferguson (1991). Traditionally described as a situation in which “two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions” (Ferguson 1959, p. 325), diglossia involves the use of one language variety, designated as “H” (for “high”), for formal, written interactions, alongside the use of the native variety, designated as “L” (for “low”) in informal, everyday interactions. In Arabic, the H variety is typically called *Fuṣḥā* (literally “the most eloquent one”) and is relatively uniform across the Arab world. The many regional L varieties may have many different local names but are more generally termed *‘āmmiyya* or *dārija*, meaning the popular, current, or colloquial language varieties. The spoken dialects usually suffer from low prestige associated with the fact that they have never been officially standardized.

In most Arab countries, education is expected to be conducted only in *Fuṣḥā*, and the fact that schoolchildren are expected to become literate in a nonnative variety causes numerous problems. Upon entering school, children have to acquire a new language variety with new phonemes, grammar, and vocabulary. Combined with the complexities of the Arabic script and syntax, this amounts to difficulties that may affect the level of literacy of students, especially students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or with language impairments (Saiegh-Haddad and Spolsky 2014). In reality, the colloquial dialects are not always completely excluded, but standards of literacy are almost exclusively focused on *Fuṣḥā*. Students are typically tested in *Fuṣḥā* and not in their native dialect, which may be one of the factors leading to relatively low achievement of Arabs in international exams such as the OECD PISA survey.

The diglossic reality of Arabic is in some respects comparable to various scenarios around the world analyzed by Fishman (1971), in which students are not educated in their own native language but in a language of wider communication (typically English). However, from a cultural and ideological point of view, while languages of wider communication can be viewed as external standards imposed by colonialism and globalization, *Fuṣḥā* is not typically seen as external but rather as the epitome of Arabness, a language of high prestige that encapsulates Arabs’ own heritage and glorious past. Throughout modern history proposals were made to

simplify *Fuṣḥā* or get rid of it entirely (Suleiman 2013). However, in terms of language ideologies, language simplification and reform could hardly compete with the religious value of preserving the language of the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as with general trends of language purism and conservatism in the Arab world. Moreover, the fact that proponents of simplification were often associated with Western colonialism or Western ideals transformed *Fuṣḥā* into a way of countering colonialism and maintaining precious linguistic heritage, for example, as part of the postcolonial Pan-Arabism movement (Fassi Fehri 2013; Haeri 2003; Suleiman 2003).

In English usage, the modern, standardized form of *Fuṣḥā* is often termed Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), though the term is somewhat misleading, since the inclusion of the word "standard" in the name of the language makes any discussion of nonstandard or substandard varieties of MSA, which no doubt exist, extremely cumbersome. Indeed, one of the problems surrounding *Fuṣḥā* lies in the fact that it is often treated prescriptively, and departures from the standard are typically discarded as "errors" or interferences of the spoken dialects. Even in descriptive studies based on written corpora, scholars tend to fill certain gaps (such as the short vowels and case endings) based on prescriptive norms, disregarding the actual linguistic knowledge of *Fuṣḥā* writers from different parts of society. Although *Fuṣḥā* has traditionally been viewed as monolithic and resistant to change, regional, social, and functional differences within the language variety are growingly acknowledged and demand further research.

One aspect of the actual complexity of Arabic diglossia can be found in Hary (1996, 2003), who points to the fact that rather than a clear dichotomy between L and H, a continuum of language varieties is in place, which he terms "multiglossia" and later "continuoglossia." Such a continuum may be in the form of a true gradation of language forms (e.g., phonemes or allophones) attached to various levels of formality and variables of socioeconomic status and education. In many cases, even among the colloquial dialects, clear hierarchies exist and some varieties enjoy more prestige than others. Thus, over lifetime, speakers may change their way of speaking as they move from a village to the city or pursue higher education, and de facto processes of standardization may be taking place in spoken dialects of prestige (Al-Wer 1997). In international settings, speakers of Tunisian Arabic may switch to Egyptian (Cairene) Arabic in the presence of Egyptians or other Middle Easterners, since Egyptian Arabic has more prestige and is more widely understood due to the Egyptian movie, television, and music industry (S'hiri 2002). Thus, prestigious forms of colloquial Arabic rather than *Fuṣḥā* may play a role in connecting speakers of different dialects. The growing contact between vernaculars due to immigration, satellite TV, and the Internet strengthens some (mainly prestigious) spoken dialects.

Additionally, the division of labor between *Fuṣḥā* and the spoken dialects is constantly evolving. Colloquial dialects are gradually becoming legitimate written languages frequently used in commercials, text messages, emails, and social networks as well as in literary works. Arabic as well as Latin (and, in Israel, Hebrew) letters are used by Arabs to represent Arabic speech. Speaking the colloquial

language in formal speeches is becoming acceptable in various social contexts, when the excessive formality of *Fuṣḥā* is unwanted. Conversely, *Fuṣḥā* (or varieties close to the *Fuṣḥā* ideal) is becoming a spoken language, being the language of news broadcasts and some satellite television programming. Children's cartoons are often dubbed in *Fuṣḥā*, enabling children to become exposed to the high, standard language from a very early age. The increased literacy in the Arab world helps to blur the lines between the varieties. Lastly, it should be noted that there is constant debate about diglossia, and some differences of approach can be discerned in different parts of the Arab world.

Arabization

Arabization refers to a broad array of language policies designed to strengthen the status of Arabic and reverse language shift initially caused by colonialism and later by globalization. A specific context in which Arabization played a major role is the countries of the Maghreb, where the French colonial authorities had introduced French as the main language of instruction, administration, and the media. Quality French education was generally reserved for the (often non-Muslim) elites, adding both to the prestige of the French language and to the resentment toward these elites. With independence in 1956 (Morocco and Tunisia) and 1962 (Algeria), the countries of the Maghreb soon adopted a policy of Arabization, mainly using legislation and the educational system to achieve this goal (Ennaji 2002; Fassi Fehri 2013; Marley 2004). This policy sought to eradicate French and (re)establish standard Arabic as the norm, typically disregarding the vernaculars (both Arabic and Berber), thus striving to create a monolingual nation out of a complex, multilingual society (Marley 2004). The degree to which these Arabization efforts were successful is a matter of debate, since French is still seen as the language of business and higher education in the region, and Arabization is increasingly challenged by movements promoting multilingualism, foreign language education, and minority languages. However, the fact that Arabic is the main language of primary and secondary education, of government documents and television, has certainly contributed to the status of Arabic (Bassiouney 2009; Benrabah 2013).

Looking at other parts of MENA, Lebanon represents a case in which Arabization was attempted but never fully achieved. When Lebanon gained independence in 1943, Arabic became the sole official language and an attempt was made to make Arabic the language of instruction for all subjects. However, the 1975–1990 civil war and the ailing public education system led to the proliferation of private institutions teaching in English or French. French became associated with the educated Maronite Christian elite, while English became associated with educated Muslims or Orthodox Christians (Zakharia 2009). The post-civil war constitutional amendments led to renewed efforts to bolster the status of Arabic, but French and English are still used by schools as media of instruction for mathematics and sciences. While Arabic is viewed as key to national unity and identity, Arabic monolingualism is often regarded negatively, and foreign languages are perceived

as signs of modernization and good education. Thus, the importance of foreign languages, especially for economic success, seems to undermine efforts to strengthen Arab identity (Zakharia 2009). In most other MENA countries, Arabization was typically more easily achieved, although considerable efforts were and are still made to reinforce the status of Arabic, such as the establishment of Arabic language academies in Amman, Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo, special educational activities commemorating the UN-proclaimed Arabic Language Day, or the framing of a 2012 Arabic Language Charter in the UAE.

In Israel, similar trends can be found with regard to Hebrew. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Jewish national movement known as Zionism led to waves of Jewish immigration to Ottoman and British-ruled Palestine, accompanied by a successful attempt to revive and reinvigorate the Hebrew language. These revival efforts came at the price of effacing much of the linguistic variety of both Palestine and the Jewish people (Halperin 2015; Shohamy 2008; Spolsky 2014; Spolsky and Shohamy 2001). Following Israel's independence in 1948, the exile of Palestinians and massive Jewish immigration created a situation in which Palestinian Arabs became an ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority. Proponents of Hebrew-only policies are fearful for the status of Hebrew even today, when it is the language of the majority.

Minority Languages, Multilingualism, and Language Education

Despite the great uniformity imposed by national standards, the MENA region exhibits a great deal of linguistic diversity. Among the Indigenous minority languages spoken in the region are the Berber dialects of North Africa; the Nubian languages of Egypt; varieties of Neo-Aramaic in parts of Turkey, Syria, and Iraq; Kurdish varieties in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran; as well as Turkic minority languages in Turkey, Iran, and Syria. In Israel, Arabic is the largest minority language of ca. 20.7% of the population. Western Armenian, Circassian, and Domari are some of the smaller, endangered languages spoken in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. Coptic and Syriac are long dormant and mainly survive as liturgical languages, although some recent efforts have been made to revive Coptic in Egypt and Syriac in multiple countries such as Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey. In addition to Indigenous languages, recent waves of immigrants, migrant workers, and asylum seekers bring numerous African, Asian, and European languages to the region. Particularly in the Gulf States and the southern Nile area, Arabic-based pidgins and creoles have evolved as a result of the contact with speakers of other languages. This diversity contributes to the fact that bilingualism and multilingualism are very common in MENA, with or without formal education (Rosenhouse 2013).

Historically, linguistic minorities have often been subordinated to broader agendas. In some cases, foreign colonial rulers supported minorities in order to weaken the dominance of Arabic. After independence and at the peak of the Arabization process, linguistic minorities were often oppressed and banished, and

in many MENA countries, linguistic minority rights are still far from being acknowledged and addressed properly. In recent years, however, change is becoming visible, as nations realize the benefits of preserving cultural diversity, no longer posing a threat to national unity. In Morocco, for instance, Berber (Tamazight), the language of almost half of the population (most of them bilingual with Arabic), was given official status in 2011, and its teaching, study, and standardization are encouraged (Fassi Fehri 2013). Similar trends exist in other MENA countries, partly in compliance with the expectations of the international community.

The importance of foreign language education in MENA is becoming increasingly recognized. English is the main foreign language taught, although in the Maghreb and Lebanon many students opt for French as their main foreign language, partly due to its value for social mobility in their own countries.

Cultural differences and opposition to foreign influences pose a challenge to language education. Traditionally, English teaching in MENA has relied on foreign (mainly British) textbooks and formal, grammar-based teaching methods. In the past few decades, two major trends can be traced: (1) attempts to generalize, modernize, and improve the quality of teaching by making English a compulsory school subject, providing intensive English instruction, beginning English teaching at an early age, recruiting better qualified teachers, and providing in-service training for existing teachers and (2) attempts to counter linguistic imperialism by “indigenizing” English education, e.g., hiring local rather than native-speaking teachers or replacing foreign textbooks with locally produced ones, in which foreign influences are minimized (Bailey and Damerow 2014; Borjian 2013; Kirkpatrick 2017). Textbooks in Israel are locally produced but typically focus on the Jewish population and not the Palestinian minority, which also uses them (Amara 2014). In Israel, Palestinians are required to learn Hebrew, and Jews are required to learn Arabic as compulsory subjects, although the level of Arabic in the Jewish sector is usually very low (Amara and Mar’i 2002; Or and Shohamy 2016). Language assessment, especially testing, is typically dominant in all MENA countries (Gebriel and Hozayin 2014; Inbar-Lourie 2014).

Current work on the language education policy of MENA countries involves researching the consequences of political instability in the region. In the aftermath of the so-called Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia in December 2010, the MENA region has witnessed revolutions and counterrevolutions, social protests, armed clashes, and wars. In some countries despotic regimes were toppled, while in others sweeping reforms were pushed for. The changing reality also greatly affects linguistic, ethnic, and religious minorities. While some are temporarily relieved after long periods of oppression, others are faced with greater insecurity. Some local militant groups such as the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL) organization exhibit sharp contrasts between the multilingual policies used for propaganda and recruitment and the anti-minority policies they seem to promote. In most cases, current research still strives to provide the most rudimentary information about the language situation and language education policy in places such as Libya after the Gaddafi era, Syria during the ongoing civil war, or war-ravaged Yemen (Kirkpatrick 2017).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict provides a context for ongoing research of LP in a conflict situation (Suleiman 2004). In Israel, Arabic enjoys official status, but there are constant struggles for more equality, and the use of Arabic is politicized (Tannenbaum 2009). Recent work by Hawker (2013) and Mar'i (2013) sheds light on Arabic-Hebrew language contact. Historical work by Mendel (2014) shows that political and security considerations have shaped the teaching of Arabic in Israel throughout history. Wong et al. (2011) show that while certain points of contact exist between Arabs and Jews, there are growing segregation, hostility, ignorance, and mistrust that leave little hope for dialogue. A study by Peled-Elhanan (2012) deals with representations of Palestinians in Israeli textbooks, which often reflect the power relations between the groups. Bekerman and Horenczyk (2004) initiated research on a growing trend of Arab-Hebrew bilingual schools in Israel. As these schools become more popular, there is a growing body of research pointing to their achievements and challenges.

Problems and Difficulties

The research on language education policy in MENA is fraught with methodological and moral difficulties. First and foremost, one should consider the immense discrepancies sometimes found in the way policies are interpreted and evaluated between different groups in MENA as well as between Western and local scholars. For obvious reasons, policies favoring linguistic minorities or foreign language education may be seen by proponents of Arabization (or a Hebrew-only policy in Israel) as threats to national ideals and unity. Since the appeal to justice by Arabization (and Hebrew-only) supporters is typically based on a history of colonialism and persecution, it is not an easy task for a researcher to be the judge of what policies ought to consist of and how they should be carried out. Disputes may similarly occur in relation to the effects of certain policies on opposing or competing groups, to the proper allocation of resources, or to whether certain policies are effective or not (Bassiouny 2009). Since the field of LP in the West is usually committed to ideals of democratization, minority rights, and multilingualism, one of the most fundamental moral questions, of whether these ideals should be relativized or imposed on groups that do not share them, seems particularly pertinent.

In terms of methodology, while the MENA region is fertile ground for research, the lack of standardized, official statistics, particularly such that afford a comparison between MENA countries, limits the possibilities of obtaining a fuller picture of the situation across the entire region. While some works such as Bassiouny (2009) do contain valuable data, most of the research is done on a per-country, per-language, or per-setting basis, leaving little for comparative or integrative analysis. While comparative work can barely capture the complexities of so many disparate contexts and settings, much could be done in the way of collecting data and figures regarding the foreign languages taught in each country, whether or not languages are compulsory

and in which grades, the number of students learning each language, and the medium of instruction used in every grade and subject. Some international organizations such as the OECD do provide data, but only in select countries. Testing organizations such as IELTS provide test results by country, but these only reflect a very small percentage of the population that has access to those tests. Therefore, comparative research in education and LP is often limited to discussing isolated cases, and generalizations are often bound to be made impressionistically.

In some cases, even reliable qualitative information cannot easily be reached, especially regarding policies in war zones or under rapidly changing regimes. Certain traditional or religious communities may be hard to access because community leaders or members, anxious to protect their identity against external influences, refuse to cooperate with researchers or limit their possibilities. Bureaucratic barriers also impede access to information as well as the implementation of policies. While these and other difficulties exist, they can also indicate how much is yet to be explored and done in the field.

Future Directions

As our understanding of Arabic and Arabic sociolinguistics expands (Al-Wer 2013; Bassiouney 2009; Suleiman 2013; Versteegh 2014), patterns of a shared history and other forms of commonality emerge, paving a road for future research. While Arabic and other languages in the region are often perceived as rigid prescriptive standards, it is important to uncover the ways in which LP can become more democratic and inclusive, and the ways in which this is already taking place, if not on the national, official level then in other domains such as the municipality, school, classroom, family, or social media.

As discussed in previous sections, LP in the MENA region cannot be understood without the legacy of resistance to colonialism and foreign intervention. One of the challenges would be for policy makers to look beyond this legacy into the goals and ideals that MENA societies wish to achieve for the greater good of their population. In language education, this may include the introduction or generalization of immersion schools, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) – some of which are only nascent and met with some opposition (Shohamy 2014) – as well as the improvement and modernization of existing programs. The challenge for research is to investigate new policies and initiatives as they emerge, evaluate them, and help policy makers become better informed.

Fassi Fehri (2013) points out that the economic value of languages should not be neglected. There is great demand worldwide for Arabic, for instance, in the form of Arabic courses, Arabic learning materials, and Arabic translators. Some countries see some gains from students who come to learn the language or tourists interested in local culture, but these are easily deterred by the political instability and violence in the region. MENA countries can profit by creating the conditions for overseas students and expatriates to take language courses as well as by producing books, dictionaries, applications, and media in their local languages. Research on this topic

can benefit policy makers wishing to convince others of the benefits of language education and multilingualism or businesses and individuals struggling to capitalize on the linguistic and cultural resources they possess.

Since religion plays a major role in MENA, another future avenue for research has to do with religion, secularization, and their implications for language and LP (Or 2016; Suleiman 2003; Versteegh 2014). Whereas language ideologies of conservatism and purism are often deeply rooted in religion, in many cases throughout history, religious institutions tended to be more forgiving and tolerant than the secular nationalistic regimes that pushed for language standardization and unification. Ongoing changes in the power relations between religion and the state make the study of LP and religion a crucial part of our understanding of language in the region.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Language Endangerment and Revitalization](#)
- ▶ [Language Policy in Education: Practices, Ideology, and Management](#)
- ▶ [Linguistic Human Rights in Education](#)

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