Language Policy

Robert Kirkpatrick *Editor*

English Language Education Policy in Asia

Language Policy

Volume 11

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The last half century has witnessed an explosive shift in language diversity not unlike the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel, but involving now a rapid spread of global languages and an associated threat to small languages. The diffusion of global languages, the stampede towards English, the counter-pressures in the form of ethnic efforts to reverse or slow the process, the continued determination of nation-states to assert national identity through language, and, in an opposite direction, the greater tolerance shown to multilingualism and the increasing concern for language rights, all these are working to make the study of the nature and possibilities of language policy and planning a field of swift growth.

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Robert Kirkpatrick
Editor

English Language Education Policy in Asia

Editor
Robert Kirkpatrick
English Faculty
Gulf University of Science and Technology
Hawally, Kuwait

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Contents

Introduction: The Challenges for English Education Policies in Asia 1
Robert Kirkpatrick and Thuy Thi Ngoc Bui

English-in-Education Policy and Planning in Bangladesh: A Critical Examination 25
M. Obaidul Hamid and Elizabeth J. Erling

English Language Education Policies in the People's Republic of China 49
Jeffrey Gil

English Language Education Policy and the Native-Speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in Hong Kong 91
Mihyon Jeon

English Education Policy in India 113
Hema Ramanathan

Language Policy in Practice: Reframing the English Language Curriculum in the Indonesian Secondary Education Sector 127
Handoyo Puji Widodo

English Language Education Policy in Japan: At a Crossroads 153
Gregory Paul Glasgow and Daniel Leigh Paller

The Impact of English on Educational Policies and Practices in Malaysia 181
Ria Hanewald

Local-Global Tension in the Ideological Construction of English Language Education Policy in Nepal 199
Prem Phyak

English Language Teaching in Pakistan: Language Policies, Delusions and Solutions 219
Syed Abdul Manan, Maya Khemlani David, and Francisco Perlas Dumanig

English Language Education in the Philippines: Policies, Problems, and Prospects 245
Marilu Rañosa Madrunio, Isabel Pefianco Martin, and Sterling Miranda Plata

Singapore's English-Knowing Bilingual Policy: A Critical Evaluation 265
Patrick Ng Chin Leong

English Education Policies in South Korea: Planned and Enacted 281
Jeehyae Chung and Taehee Choi

English Language Policy and Planning in Sri Lanka: A Critical Overview 301
Dilini Chamali Walisundara and Shyamani Hettiarachchi

English Language Education Policy in Timor-Leste 333
John Macalister

English Education Policy in Thailand: Why the Poor Results? 345
Amrita Kaur, David Young, and Robert Kirkpatrick

Standardizing English for Educational and Socio-economic Betterment- A Critical Analysis of English Language Policy Reforms in Vietnam 363
Thuy Thi Ngoc Bui and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

Introduction: The Challenges for English Education Policies in Asia

Robert Kirkpatrick and Thuy Thi Ngoc Bui

Abstract This chapter introduces the volume and considers the realities, possibilities, and challenges of English language policies with reference to a wide range of socio-political, economic, and linguistic shifts among Asian countries. It reflects on English language policies in the countries through addressing three dominant aspects: (1) the relationship of the English language spread and the English language ability for educational, economic, cultural and political equity, and the effects on local/indigenous languages; (2) educational challenges of the current English language policies such as teacher education, English learning environment, national curriculums, pedagogies, English proficiency, evaluation; and (3) approaches to improve English education policies.

Keywords Language policy • English education • Education in Asia • Minority languages • English as an international language

1 Recent Trends in Language Policy Research

In the early 1960s, language policy studies tended to focus on national language policies, nation building, standardization, and officialization at the macrocosmic level (e.g., Ferguson & Huebner, 1996). Their principal aim was to find solutions to problems with language policy, using a linear process of identifying a problem, formulating an appropriate policy, implementing and evaluating that policy, and revising accordingly (Shouhui & Baldauf, 2012). The field of language policy and planning (LPP) has subsequently moved beyond this traditional research model to include a postmodern critical approach (Paciotto & Delany-Barmann, 2011) that

R. Kirkpatrick (✉)
English Faculty, Gulf University of Science and Technology, Hawally, Kuwait
e-mail: ltaeditor@gmail.com

T.T.N. Bui
The University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia

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questions the ideological, socio-structural, and historical complexities of LPP (Canagarajah, 2011). Many LPP researchers have become conscious of the link between LPP and social justice, and the impact of social and economic inequalities on the lives, social welfare, language, culture, and self-identification of minority, immigrant, and segregated populations (Coleman, 2011a, 2011b).

As language policy is to a large extent politically, linguistically, and socially situated (e.g., Davis, 2012), experts in the field have argued that LPP research cannot be detached from the government's larger political, linguistic, and socio-economic agendas (McCarty, 2011). This critical-research framework has been taken up by a large number of researchers, including Clayton (2006), Coleman (2011a), Song (2011), and Rappa and Wee Hock An (2006), who attempt to unpack the linguistic ideologies and realities of LPP with reference to a wide range of socio-political, economic, and linguistic shifts in Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Malaysia, and several other Asian countries (Clayton, 2006).

In parallel with the movement toward investigating language policy in its social, economic, and political contexts, scholarship has begun to move away from the national, official, "top-down" approach to address "bottom-up" language policy practices (McCarty, 2002; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Tollefson, 2002). Drawing on socio-cultural theory[1] and ethnographic approaches, a number of scholars scrutinize language policy at the micro level, both inside and outside the school setting. They focus on language shift, maintenance, revitalization, and endangerment, as well as bilingual education, the roles of schools and teachers, and the medium of instruction policies (McCarty, 2002). Other researchers focus on micro level language policy with reference to local and classroom practices and teachers' roles as policy enactors in schools in contexts. These and other scholars undertaking on-the-ground language policy research (e.g., Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008) call for the formation of a space in which educators and community members can negotiate and address community needs and create more equitable bilingual educational practices. They also emphasize local agency and the self-determination of local/indigenous people (McCarty, 2002) challenging unequal official language policy and bringing about change through grassroots movements.

The 16 chapters in this new volume, written by experts on each country, include both traditional and the most recent approaches and examine the views and controversies, to wit: (1) the relationship of the English language spread and the English language ability for educational, economic, cultural and political equity; (2) educational challenges of the current English language policies (teacher education, English learning environment, national curriculum, pedagogies, limited English proficiency, and evaluation); (3) and consider English in education policies, emphasizing a comprehensive understanding of socio-economic, political, educational, and linguistic contexts in language policy implementation and learners' needs and give reasoned arguments as to what might be the best way forward for each country. The following sections offer a discussion on these major aspects.

[1] Sociocultural theory offers a perspective from which to examine LPP by uncovering the relationships between language and power (e.g., Warhol, 2012).

2 Globalization and English Language Spread

Globalization is intertwined in all academic disciplines, and has had a crucial role in organizing political, economic, social, and educational agenda worldwide, and extending the influence of English language in a great number of countries (Heller, 2010; Ricento, 2012). Heller (2010) argues that in order to legitimize the reconstruction of capitalism and the circulation of resources, the global agenda works to commoditize a form of language capitalism that emphasizes the expansion of markets and increase the importance of English language for the following processes:

> managing the flow of resources over extended spatial relations and compressed space-time relations; adding symbolic value to industrially produced resources; facilitating the construction of and access to niche markets; and developing linguistically mediated knowledge and service industries (p. 103).

Countries such as Hong Kong, the Philippines, and India relied on English for historical, socio-economic and political processes; and English skills are an integral part of these countries' efforts to integrate with the global market economy for technological advancement and nationalism. Together with national languages, colonized countries, moreover, consistently utilize English as an instrument for the national identity, and historical construction, deconstruction, and proclamation both domestically and internationally (Tsui & Tollefson,, 2007). A number of language scholars such as Coleman (2011a, 2011b), Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012), Rubdy and Tan (2008) hold that English has been expanding as a multinational and multifaceted tool, performing a broad gamut of purposes, such as a vehicle for economic development, increased employability and productivity, nation-building, technological advancement, fulfilling personal needs, and serving the cause of national integration (Clayton, 2006; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). For instance, countries such as Malaysia (David & Govindasamy, 2007), Nepal (Phyak, 2011), India (Agnihotri, 2007), Pakistan (Hossain & Tollefson, 2007), Bangladesh (Shamim, 2011), Cambodia (Clayton, 2006), and Japan (Silver & Steele, 2005), as well as countries in Africa (Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia) (Coleman, 2011a, 2011b), have adopted English as a main foreign language, or official language, and even medium of instruction for students of minority linguistic backgrounds. Williams (2011) observes that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the extreme favoring of English has led various governments to introduce the language as the medium of instruction even when children do not use it at home. In Uganda and other African countries (Coleman, 2011a, 2011b; William & Cooke, 2002), the English influence is so profound that minority parents insist on education in English for their children. In order to legitimize English as the vehicle of mainstream education, many governments have argued that the language is closely linked to increased educational opportunities, economic value, and social equity (e.g., Seargeant & Erling, 2011, p. 11). Moreover, the rapid spread of English indicates the success of neoliberal capitalism in making both governments and individuals believe in English as a powerful tool to solve

various deep-seated social issues such as class division, poverty, and unemployment.

English has been privileged not only through endogenous national strategies but also through the exogenous forces exerted by corporations, international schools, a wide range of philanthropic and educational-exchange missions, Western-duplicate programs, the Internet, television, transnational organizations, and multinational companies (Appleby, 2010; Heller, 2010). Researchers such as Gray (2012), Luke (2011), and Phillipson (2012) have indicated that the investment of Western countries in English language education, the production of materials for an English language curriculum, English testing agencies, and international schools are critical strategies for promoting English inside developing countries, alongside other economic and political agendas. Language policy educators such as Seargeant and Erling (2011) and Phillipson (2012) have reported that this approach to English is reinforced on an ongoing basis in countries such as Bangladesh, Thailand, Burma, and Ukraine by the U.S. and U.K. governments' global push of English language teaching (ELT). It is apparent, therefore, that the influence of English has crossed national borders in its expansion to numerous education systems, signaling a movement toward English (Ricento, 2012).

3 Is It All Good?

Despite the active promotion to embrace the English language on a large scope and scale, an overarching question for scholars of applied linguistics is if or to what extent the widespread teaching and learning English worldwide may be beneficial or detrimental (e.g., Appleby, Copley, Sithirajvongsa, & Pennycook, 2002; Fergusion, 2013; Pennycook, Kubota, & Morgan, 2013; Ricento, 2015).

3.1 Economics

At one end of the spectrum a popular perspective sees the rise of English – not as Phillipson (1992), as premeditated and almost sinister – but accidental and fortuitous and as a driver of globalization and the benefits that come with a mobile and educated workforce, with populations that can learn, speak and write in the international language. This is reflected in the words of Hanewald (see chapter on Malaysia) who writes that English is "the lingua franca of the world, beneficial for global trade and commerce, business and education opportunities". And many researchers see an active link between English and economic development for the nations and individuals (e.g. Seargeant & Erling, 2013). An action research study by Norton, Jones, and Ahimbisibwe (2013) with a group of young women in village in a Uganda indicates that English language embedded in information technology helped these women gain awareness to access better healthcare. Coleman (2011a, 2011b) and

Tsui and Tollefson (2007) acknowledge that English may continue to play positive roles in increasing employability and facilitating international mobility (migration, tourism, studying abroad), and so forth. Moreover the policy makers in practically all countries in this volume recognize the economic advantages of English and are under pressure from their population, who are often even more cognizant of the need for English, to increase the level of English education.While it is true that thousands of Asian students may never benefit much by their years of studying English – and isn't that true of many subjects, from calculus to geography - it also seems that for a significant section English is a genuine economic asset. In the Philippines (see the chapter by Madrunio, Martin and Plata) around one million workers are currently employed in call centers where English ability is a critical requirement and over 10 million more live overseas ("Stock estimate of overseas Filipinos", 2012), the majority working in positions that require some level of English, remitting a significant part of the total national budget back to the Philippines. Ramathan (India chapter) writes that being without English ability "affects personal and professional advancement" and cites a study (Nagarajan, 2014) that finds the English skilled earn over a third more than those lacking English. In Sri Lanka a report by The National Educational Commission Report (2003, p. 176), found that, "English has emerged as a critical factor in graduate employment," (cited by Hettiarachchi and Walisundara, Sri Lanka chapter).

However, taking a more critical position some scholars point out that a consequence of the hegemony of the English language in many developing countries is that it tends to magnify the socio-economic disparity between the "have" and "have-nots" (e.g., Shamim, 2011; Phyak & Bui, 2014). Tsui and Tollefson (2007) note that in Asian countries, "English is a language of the educated elite and is not commonly used in daily interactions" (p. 4). English language promotion assists the cosmopolitan multilingual elite while at the same time closing off opportunities to those from a less advantaged socio-economic background in India, and Indonesia (e.g., Rubdy & Tan, 2008; Williams, 2011) and in Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam (this volume). The consequences can be pervasive when children fail to gain both fluency in English and the ability to satisfy the demands of the job market. Consequently, English language policies may threaten students' social welfare, equipping them only for low-wage, limited social participations, and insecure economic potentials (e.g., Coleman, 2011a, 2011b; Bui, 2012). Through examining the role of English language education scholars (e.g., Appleby et al., 2002; Ferguson, 2013) suggest language policy makers avoid having a sweeping generalization of English language and development since it is highly complex and involves wide-ranging interconnecting social and human factors. Rather, they should acknowledge such complexity in managing effective solutions while providing positive outcomes for citizens. Language policy scholars in diverse geographic settings in Asia and Africa (Rapatahana & Bunce, 2012; Shamim, 2011; Tembe & Norton, 2011; Williams, 2011) argue that subordinate classes often fail to gain both fluency in English and the ability to participate in the world by using it. Accordingly, such policies may fail to uphold class, race, and language equality and social mobility (Butler & Iino, 2005; Paulson & McLaughlin, 1994; Silver & Steele, 2005; Warriner,

2007). In Pakistan (this volume) the authors describe English language teaching as a divisive element between the urban and rural, and poor and well-off, and in the chapter on Sri Lanka, Hettiarachchi and Walisundara speak about historical inequities, where the section of the population skilled in English earned "social prestige and power while dethroning the masses of the country of similar privileges" (although they explain that recent programmes mean English education is now more accessible to the wider population). Kaplan, Baldauf, and Kamwangamalu (2011, p. 106) write that "English-knowing is not a guarantee of an improvement in economic opportunity". These scholars and many others (e.g., Arcand & Grin, (2013); Erling, Hamid, & Seargeant, 2013; Rassool, 2007) added the clear proviso that the economic benefits, while real, are largely in the hands of middle-class elites and/or of members of the ruling class, rather than those who belong to minority and/or economically disadvantaged groups.

3.2 Minority Languages

Some researchers in language policy and planning (LPP) (e.g., Canagarajah, 2005a, 2005b; Rubdy & Tan, 2008; Tollefson & Tsui, 2007) have expressed concerns about the capacity of English language policies to cause the serious depreciation and even extinction of local cultures and languages. The reach of English is almost mystified, giving people the strong belief that acquiring English equates to educational, social, economic advantages. Consequently, individuals belonging to linguistic minority groups often devalue their native languages, or even refuse to receive education in their own tongue (Shamim, 2011; Wedell, 2011), for example, in Pakistan (Mustafa, 2012), in Uganda (Tembe & Norton, 2011). Furthermore, the increasing permeation of English has created divisions and collisions between Western and non-Western pedagogical and cultural values, at times preventing students from accessing the full wealth of knowledge embedded in their own cultural and linguistic traditions (e.g., Phillipson, 2012).

Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012) and Phillipson (2012) challenge governments' 'quick fixes' for distributing English to the masses, such as importing native speakers, starting English instruction very early in students' lives, and mandating its use as either a major subject or the primary medium of instruction. There is a possibility of taken-for-granted English language policies not only to weaken the vitality of local languages and cultures but to arouse linguistic conflict and confusion among parents, local communities, and children, especially in developing contexts (Canagarajah, 2005a, 2005b; Coleman, 2011a, 2011b; Kirkpatrick, 2012c; Shamim, 2011; Tollefson & Tsui, 2007).

4 Politics

The extensive permeation of English worldwide has transformed both the governments and individuals' ideologies and practices, believing that the language is a powerful tool to solve various deep-seated social issues such as class division, poverty, and unemployment and closely increase educational opportunities, economic value, and social equity. Countries such as Malaysia (David & Govindasamy, 2007), Nepal (Phyak, 2011), India (Agnihotri, 2007), Pakistan (Hossain & Tollefson, 2007), Bangladesh (Shamim, 2011), Cambodia (Clayton, 2006), and Japan (Silver & Steele, 2005), as well as countries in Africa (Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia) (Coleman, 2011a, 2011b), have adopted English as a main foreign language, official language, and even medium of instruction for students of minority linguistic backgrounds. Williams (2011) observes that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the great favoring of English has led various governments to introduce the language as the medium of instruction even when children do not use it at home. Similarly, Phyak (2011) described the governmentally imposed overhaul of Nepal's education system from a Nepali monolingual to a multilingual curriculum that requires children in both private and public schools to study English from grade one onwards. The existing scholarship of the English language spread has created pressure to promote English for both the governments and individuals. This phenomenon is again explained in several chapters of this volume. An example of the complex relationships between English education policy makers and the local population is Hong Kong (see Jeon in this volume) where after the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 a compulsory Chinese medium school policy was used to try to cement Chinese identity and government power. Yet, the rulers of a country cannot easily dismiss the aspirations of the people and, demonstrating the power of market forces and individual aspirations, Jeon writes that, "English still symbolizes wealth and power in Hong Kong, and this did not change even after 1997". In Cambodia students protested when the government tried to have French placed as the main foreign language taught (Clayton, 2006), and Macallister (chapter on Timor) notes that while Portuguese was chosen over English as an official language in East Timor most parents and students feel that English is more useful.

Evidently, no matter how much well-intentioned education ministries, policy makers, or academics try to impose or protect native languages, or indeed any languages other than English, it seems that the population in Asia are intent on gaining access to English, even if detrimental to the local languages and possibly to a wider, deeper education in their own language.

5 Official Language

If English proficiency is a benefit to the overall population of a country then it could be reasoned that any measures, including making it an official language, which assists its rise should be implemented. Kaplan, Richard, and Kamwangamalu (2011)

note that when a language is given official status that this "enhances its prestige [and] extends its use into educational and non-official domains" (p. 116). Yet, applied linguists such as Kirkpatrick (2012c) indicate that favoring English or only English and the national language may increasingly turn Asian multilingualism to bilingualism (national language and English) or monolingualism.

The reasons for this are complex but as Kaplan et al. warn, the granting of official status, because it privileges that language it consequently "impinges on the linguistic rights of speakers of other languages within the community" (2011, p. 116) and that the "official national language is a core value that unites the people and defines the essential culture of the community" (p. 116): In essence, English, if given such official warrant, could be seen as a threat to the local culture. Pennycook, Kubota, and Morgan (2013) argue that promoting English as an official language or a medium of instruction "potentially harm the educational development of children who struggle to understand the educational content… push other languages and subjects out of the curriculum, and… make some languages increasingly redundant (p. xviii). In responding to the current issue of English as an official language, Hamid and Erling (Bangladesh chapter) further explain that there may be a feeling that language learning is a "zero-sum game": hence the concern, sometimes unvoiced, that if English grows stronger this must come at the expense of the local language.

Thus countries like Thailand, Korea and Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia in this volume are torn between a desire to embrace English educationally and officially, hoping that this will increase proficiency and allow a competitive advantage in the global business village, and a feeling of unease that this may harm the local language or even weaken the culture.

And of course making English one of the official language does not solve the more practical issues at the chalk face discussed later in this introduction, and in the individual chapters.

6 Access

Since English is often equated to a key to social mobility, success, and opportunities, many decisions need to be made about (1) who gets to decide the education and English language policies; (2) how is the distribution of English to the overall population; (3) who can access English, what kind of English that people receive; and (4) to what extent people gain from English, and the quality of English programs (Bui, 2013a).

Several authors find that due to their access to private education and tutors, the elite and middle classes can learn English to a superior level and this helps to give them influence politically and economically. In Pakistan, Manan, David and Dumanig (Chapter on Pakistan) note that 30 % of children are studying in private English schools. Ramanathan suggest an even higher number in India, and Prem Phyak (this volume) writes that private English education is a huge industry in Nepal: A kind of beneficent, at least for the well off, market in education. Hamid and Erling (Bangladesh chapter) discuss how this "raises questions of education and

social justice, as those with limited financial ability are denied access to this alternative learning opportunity". Moreover it means those with the means can simply ignore the whole government run education system, meaning that on one hand the private English industry saves a significant part of the public education budget, on the other educational oversight is considerably more complicated.

7 Education

Taking into account the apparent economic need for English, most Asian countries have polices of making English available, often as a compulsory subject, and some countries allocate significant portions of the education budget to English. Yet money alone is not a guarantee of improving English proficiency as we see from Thailand, (see Kaur, Young and Kirkpatrick, this volume), which as a percentage of national budget, has one of the world's highest expenditures on education (although the exact proportion spent on English is hard to gauge) but one of the lower overall levels of English proficiency among the countries examined.

7.1 Classroom

Apart from the controversies about the rise of English as lingua franca, and whether it should be an official language, there are those, about how to best develop it in each country. Should it, for instance, be based on an enforced national curriculum or dependent on local school districts, or even left up to each school? Bui and Nguyen (Vietnam chapter) and Widodo (Indonesia chapter) among other authors suggest that that at the school level teachers and administrators have to deal with "ideologically and politically imposed language policies" and the discussions in these chapters explain the diversity and changing balance involved in curriculum development in the various countries. While Bui and Nguyen and Widodo argue that teachers should have more autonomy when implementing the English curriculum, other writers note that in their respective countries the teacher's English level overall is too low to be able to properly implement the curriculum even if they use the prescribed textbooks.

Another issue is how much of the curriculum should be given over to English instruction and when should it begin. Educators and academics are well aware that every class devoted to English is one that is taken from another subject and this tug-of-war remains unresolved in most of the countries. Japan, for instance, in 2011 introduced English lessons into elementary schools, although at only at 45 min a week one must wonder if this is more than a token; but even that small amount has been criticized by some educators in the country who feel that (choose a subject) is more deserving.

7.2 Language Teaching and Teacher Professional Development

Researchers of language policy and planning (Canagarajah, 2005a, 2005b; Menken & Garcia, 2010) have examined a variety of impacts of language shifts on teacher education, resources, and teaching practices. English language shifts in many nations urge teachers to re-conceptualize their teaching ideologies from the grammar-centered into the communicative approach.

In another development some researchers have embraced theories of multilingualism and literacy learning (e.g., Canagarajah, 2009; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Sylvan, 2011; Hélot & O'Laoire, 2011). They suggest that language policy and teaching should accommodate the linguistic complexity, fluidity, and flexibility of multilingual populations, whether in a single country or as part of diasporas/immigrant communities (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Arguing against monolingual instructional approaches that tend to marginalize the voices, restrict educational access, and weaken the linguistic and cultural pride of multilingual students, some scholars urge policy makers and teachers to regard multilingualism as the norm: a teachable, flexible, and feasible practice (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011) or a "pedagogy of the possible" (Hélot & O'Laoire, 2011, p. xv) that should constitute educational praxis in all schools.

Aligning theories of multiculturalism and literacy and language learning with this current volume, some authors in this volume call for taking advantage of students' experiences of literacy acquisition, teachers' literacy teaching practices, students' authentic and rich linguistic and cultural capital, and ways of using students' traditional narratives, knowledge, learning styles, and identities to scaffold teaching. Generally, the scholarship on language and literacy acquisition is of assistance in posing the following questions in Bangladesh (Hamid & Erling), China (Gil), Indonesia (Widodo), Nepal (Phyak), Pakistan (Manan, David and Dumanig), Korea (Chung & Choi), and Vietnam (Bui & Nguyen) chapters: What does teaching English language mean to the teachers? What are the students' experiences of English language learning? In what ways can teachers help socialize students into different discourse, register, and genre, to prepare them for academic literacies and meta-awareness of linguistic interaction? How do teachers and students challenge and appropriate the national ideologies of literacy and language learning?

7.3 Examination Backwash

Evaluation is controversial in English language education transformation because the current evaluation systems have not been an effective tool to articulate students' knowledge and skills. Byrnes (2007) raises the question: How do we enable students to display that knowledge (language knowledge) on tests and other assessments of

competence? Several chapters (China, Bangladesh, Japan, Thailand, South Korea, Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Indonesia) noted the effect, always important and sometimes damaging, of examination backwash on the English curriculum.

Part of the problem facing examination boards, assuming they wish to improve backwash, is the practical element(s) involved in adding communicative, direct testing of speaking, writing, and listening (reading comprehension is more straightforward): The listening section needs foolproof audio systems, while a speaking component needs a veritable army of trained raters. Even requiring written essays – in an effort to improve validity – is fraught with rating problems. For these reasons it is perhaps not surprising that most examination boards focus on grammar in multiple-choice formats: objective, but with the disadvantages inherent to indirect ways of assessment. It is encouraging, then, to see recognition of these effects of the university entrance examination (Center Shiken) in Japan, where in 2006 a listening component was added to the all-important national university entrance examination. A partial step but the backwash from this move does bring a communicative aspect to the generally academic way English is taught, and gives an indication of where other Asian countries may improve.

The next and final section of this introduction section briefly summarizes each chapter and lists key points.

8 Bangladesh

The status of English language fluctuated after the golden time of the British colonialism. English was for the most part rejected in Post-independence as Bangla was a potent symbol of identity and national aspiration. However, since the 1970s and 80s until the present, the language has been strongly promoted for various historical factors and national priorities, educational NGOs, and international development agencies. English occupies a significant place in the Bangladesh curriculum, and is a compulsory subject from grade 1, yet Hamid and Erling explain that results are unimpressive countrywide and even worse in rural areas, with some studies (e.g. Hamid & Baldauf, 2008) suggesting little progress in English skills even after 10 or more years of schooling. Part of this can be explained by a lack of teacher training, minimal resources and low expenditure on education. However, because of the language's prestige socially and in business those with the means send their children to private English-medium schools which thrive in major cities like Dhaka.

This has led to a degree of social inequity where those who cannot afford the fees are at a disadvantage in the severely competitive job market (see Erling, 2014). According to the authors, sustainable and effective English language teaching must be built on the examination of real roles of English, collective efforts of multiple actors across disciplines in policy enactment and implementation, as well as effective professional development and evaluation systems.

9 China

In this chapter Jeffrey Gil examines both official and popular views of English, and considers the efforts to build English competence from the latter half of the twentieth century until the present day. We see that in the current Peoples Republic of China (PRC) English is pre-eminent among foreign languages, although, like many other countries in Asia, there are concerns about the erosion of the local culture and even language due to the rise of English worldwide.

English today is used to varying degrees in many domains in the PRC, including academic research, media, business, tourism, literature and creative arts. Nevertheless, the number of functional English users and the population's levels of proficiency in English are still low. The chapter explains significant obstacles encountered in the development of communicative competence in the PRC: most importantly; the backwash from examinations which emphasize academic knowledge of English rather than communicative competence; teacher and student beliefs that academic study of English, rote learning and grammar analysis are superior to CLT; and a lack of resources and qualified teachers. Gill also discusses the challenges of providing English language education to ethnic minorities, and speculates on the possible future of English language education policies in light of the PRC's recent efforts to promote Chinese language learning around the world.

10 Hong Kong

The Hong Kong chapter explains how the language-in-education policy has been deeply historically, politically, economically, pedagogically, and ideologically situated. The country has faced complex pressure, ambivalence, and conflicts of legalizing different languages for multi-faceted purposes. It is an ongoing pendulum of promoting English for global development, social mobility, social status, and job market competitiveness on the one end and maintaining Chinese language and culture at the other end. The chapter further reveals the Hong Kong people's hidden ideologies and desires of protecting their own identity, image, and culture in the light of persistent language policy shifts especially after Hong Kong was turned over to China. English has been a language of wealth and power in Hong Kong since the colonial era, and its prestige did not diminish even after the sovereignty changeover to China in 1997. After reviewing the current status of English in Hong Kong, Mihyon Jeon explains the four periods of Hong Kong's medium of instruction policies and explains the debate over the compulsory Chinese medium of instruction (CMI) policy that was adopted in 1997.

Language-in-education policy in Hong Kong has reflected around the issues of medium of instruction and of coping with declining language standards, particularly the supposed decline of English proficiency, through various language enhancement policies, to combat declining language standards, focusing on the biliterate/trilingual

policy and the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme implemented in 1997, respectively. The chapter explains that the NET Scheme was initiated to counteract concerns that the compulsory CMI policy led to declining standards of English, creating unequal access to English between Chinese and English medium school students; and tainting Hong Kong's image as an international business centre.

11 Indonesia

Widodo explains that after the independence of Indonesia (from the Japanese occupation in 1945, and the Dutch colonial rule soon after) English was chosen as a compulsory foreign language subject and has been widely taught in secondary schools and universities. The decision to opt for English rather than say Dutch or Japanese was because the latter languages were tainted as the languages of colonists and because English was already seen as the main language of international communication and also Indonesia's ELT curricula, especially since 2000, have undergone substantial changes. However, Widodo notes that English remains viewed as a school subject, rather than social language, where the success and failure of English learning are determined by a high-stakes university/college entrance examination. Widodo suggests six principles for reframing the current ELT curriculum: (1) revisiting roles of teachers from a curriculum development perspective, (2) negotiating policy and curriculum materials: teacher-driven language curriculum development, (3) positioning and framing English language pedagogy, (4) integrating assessment and pedagogy: a dynamic approach, (5) re-envisioning sound language teacher training and education, and (6) sustaining teacher professional development.

12 India

Hema Ramanathan finds that English in India continues to grow in importance. English, while technically only an associate official language is also an "additional" national language, making its status close to that of Hindi, the national language; and Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland states count English as the state language. English is the lingua franca for business and administration and public exams for civil services are required to be available in both English and Hindi, but in local languages only if these are available.

In public schools Hindi and English, the official and associate official languages, must be studied as two of the three languages taught. Ramanathan notes that the demand for private English medium schools continues to grow and cites one study (iValue Consulting Private Ltd, n.d.), that estimates 40 % of students now attend these schools.

Furthermore, unlike some of the countries in this volume, where English is viewed by students and teachers as primarily an academic subject (e.g. see Thailand, or Japan), in India academic results are only part of the focus and students are expected to be proficient in English for communication in social settings and business. As with Bangladesh and Pakistan anyone without English skills can expect to have limited opportunities in which university they can attend and consequently career choice.

While acknowledging the government's consistent efforts to improve the English language education system, the author points out a range of issues of thriving multiple languages in education, weak and problematic correlations between pedagogy and assessment, unresponsive curriculum, and ineffective teacher education. These matters are reflected from dominant questions arising from the chapter: How can English be taught as a first, second and foreign language in the same setting? How can the curriculum be differentiated for each group of learners? What teacher education will adequately meet the needs of different learners?

13 Japan

Japan, while expending significant sums, publicly and privately, on English education, does not seem to be fully rewarded with the fruits of this largesse.

As noted earlier in this introduction in 2006 the always conservative education ministry (MEXT) introduced a listening component to the university entrance examination which has helped to moderate the grammar oriented approach and add a communicative element to the exam. However the national exam is only one component and students must then pass individual university exams, written as often as not, by educators with an academic view of what is important about English language, and frequently involving translating obscure English texts into Japanese.

From 1987 an ambitious project bringing assistant teachers from English speaking countries was introduced with the aim of to expose Japanese youth to foreign cultures. This remains a noteworthy aspect of English education in Japan but has limitations which are brought out in the chapter by Glasgow and Paller.

Building upon the notion of teachers' agency as the heart of language policy reforms, the Japan chapter further depicts various ideological and implementation clashes between the policies at the macro level and teachers' interpretation of the policies in practice. Ambivalent curriculum organization, incomprehensive and neglected professional culture and teacher education, unresponsive teaching materials significantly weaken teachers' professional well-being, generate ineffective outcomes, as well as create multi-layered tensions between the macro and micro levels of language policy reforms.

14 Malaysia

Quite similar to the case of language policies in Hong Kong, language-in-education policy in Malaysia “brought out ethnic conflicts, ideological pressures, and political dogmas”. Malaysia has been an ongoing process of reconciling tensions to foster national languages, unity, and pride, while allowing other minority languages to co-develop. To add to this already complex language issue, English is ever needed for a plethora of economic and social developments and global integrations. English retained its historically loaded association with the British colonialists and was therefore rejected shortly after Malaysia’s Independence in 1957 although it served as a common language among the diverse populace which comprised of Chinese, Tamil and Bahasa Malay speakers. The various groups tried to preserve and assert their cultural identity, social and economic power in the newly formed nation but national unity was the prime aspiration and the struggle for dominance was won by the Malays, hence Bahasa Malay become the national language by law. The government’s endeavours to institute Bahasa Malay for social identity, harmony and language unity did not extend into the private sector, where the ability to speak English provided social mobility, economic opportunities and potential wealth. Nevertheless, three decades of Malay-only policy caused English proficiency levels among Malaysians to dwindle and became an impediment in the quest for Malaysia’s economic advancement. English was again reinstated in the education system due to the necessity for global communication and the recognition that English proficiency is key for success in a globalized economy. In spite of this, Hanewald notes that even after studying English “… in primary and secondary schools, Malaysian students present at university level with limited vocabulary, a weak understanding of difficult words and difficulty in understanding long sentences”. In addition the focus on grammar and the mechanics of the language to pass exams that neglect communicative practice of English; and the interference from Bahasa Malaysia with reliance on translation and dictionary use to comprehend English texts do not properly prepare students for the communicative use of English. Overall, in an attempt to maintain Bahasa Malay as the official language and English as an effective lingual franca, Malaysia continues to face with problems of ineffective language policies which subsequently lead to inequalities, linguistic and ethnic conflicts, limited academic outcomes and misrecognition of linguistic rights.

15 Nepal

By situating the global discourses and ideologies of English language education in the multilingual context of Nepal, this chapter analyzes how two major ideologies—English-as-a-global-language and English-as-social-capital—have significantly contributed to shape the current de facto expansion of English as the medium of instruction policy in Nepal’s school level education. The ideological analysis of

English medium education policy, grounded in Nepal's historical-structural condition, reveals increased social divide in terms of social class and tension between local and global discourses. Historically rooted in Nepal's stratified social structure, English medium education remained in the sphere of social elites and rich people in the pre-1990 era and such elitism eventually indexed English as a social capital, that is, English is projected as the marker of social prestige and identity in dominant language policy discourses. While the general public was forced to learn only through Nepali, in the guise of nationalism, high-middle class people still had access to English medium education in private schools (particularly in India) and missionary/international schools. The ideology of English-as-social-capital is later coupled with English-as-a-global-language ideology in the post-1990 era, when the country adopted neoliberal educational policies. The privatization of education not only legitimized the symbolic power of English as the medium of instruction, but also constructed a myth that defines English medium education as quality education and the only way to produce students who can participate in global market economy. Such a myth has forced policymakers to encourage public schools to adopt English as the medium of instruction policy from Grade 1. Yet, children are not receiving better English language education nor are they learning what they are expected to learn from content area subjects such as science, social studies and mathematics. While very few high-middle class people benefit from English-only policy, a larger number of students still fail national tests and could not join higher education. More importantly, this chapter reveals that while embracing global ideologies the current English as de facto medium of instruction policy conflicts with the local need for a multilingual education policy.

16 Pakistan

The authors contend that the current English education policy suffers from solid theoretical foundations and sound empirical research work. The public need for English medium education on one hand and the poor standards of the government schools on the other hand has led to a proliferation of private English medium schools. Such schools which cater to the educational needs of the lower middle and lower class children advertise themselves as English medium; however, the findings suggest that neither are teachers qualified to teach English language well, nor is school environment nor social environment favorable to expose children to the English language. Thus, alienation from the English language results in poor English language proficiency, lack of subject knowledge, use of rote-learning. The authors conclude that the teaching of English language cannot be viewed in isolation from some major critical issues in the context of Pakistan. English language teaching plays a major divisive role between the poor and the rich, between the urban and the rural population and between the haves and the have nots because a very small percentage of children from the rich, urban and the haves have access to quality English education. Finally, on sociolinguistic and ecolinguistic grounds,

the only English in education policy seriously threatens the vitality of a large number of minor and major local languages. An additive multilingual policy that begins with children's mother tongues till the primary stages with later transition towards English as a medium from post-primary levels and Urdu as a subject , could potentially prove beneficial.

17 Philippines

While other nations in the volume such as Nepal, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Vietnam have been continuously facing tensions, inconsistencies, and ineffectiveness in English language policy reforms, English language policies in the Phillipines are seen in a more positive light. English persistently functions both as a crucial language for economic development and an exportable product (e.g., through providing English knowledge and training teachers of English within the ASEAN nations). According to the authors, the language has provided wide-ranging economic advantages to the nation, turning the Phillipines into the world's business process outsourcing, creating nearly one million jobs, enabling importing workers overseas, and stimulating remittance. The integration of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, as well as the United Nation's call for Education for All (EFA) by 2015, has pushed the Philippine government to review the effectiveness of English language education (ELE) in the country, as stakeholders strive to address issues of developing the English language competencies of Filipino students on the one hand, and the strengthening of academic achievement on the other. ELE policies have been beset with issues of alignment and coherence in the areas of curriculum and assessment, as well as having too much focus on linguistic accuracy and knowledge of grammar. In addition, ELE has been implemented at the expense of literacy in the mother tongues. This chapter then provides an overview of how ELE in the Philippines is evolving and what may be expected in the future.

18 Singapore

Patrick Ng's chapter looks at some social, economic and political problems resulting from the dominant English-medium school policy. Drawing upon the theoretical framework on why educational language plans fail (Kaplan et al., 2011), and a sociohistorical, sociocultural and sociopolitical analysis, the author critically evaluates the bilingual school policy in Singapore. Although the English-knowing bilingual policy is based on a functional 'division of labour' between languages, the emphasis on English in the educational policy has resulted in an unequal power distribution between English speaking and non-English speaking citizens. Ng also reports other issues such as the lack of interest in Chinese mother tongue learning in schools, the prevalence of Colloquial Singapore English, the decline of the

Chinese-medium schools and the language shift to English within the Chinese home environment.

19 Sri Lanka

English in Sri Lanka is used by government ministries, in commerce and technology and in colleges and universities. In some areas English language has been a unifying force in the country: when Sinhala communicate with the Tamil minority for example English is the medium, for the fluent it is vehicle of social mobility. And it is a needed tool for international trade. On the other hand for much of the last century those who were not English able were often excluded from the higher levels of society. This led to a degree of cynicism and mistrust of the "colonial" English language and those who spoke it, by sectors of the population. From 2003 numerous programmers and activities including bilingual schooling have been implemented that mean English skills are becoming available to a majority of the population.

20 South Korea

The chapter by Chung and Choi explains that English functionality is still at a relatively low level countrywide but English holds significant value in the country with English proficiency perceived as evidence of competence and success. Since the early 1990s the South Korean government, "has actively upheld English proficiency as an essential medium". In the private sector ELT is an enormous market ranging from English language pre-schools to language institutes for adults. Although South Koreans seem to display higher levels of English proficiency than expanding circle countries such as Japan and China, several measures suggest that their English proficiency does not fully reflect the dedication that is put into English teaching and learning.

In South Korea English is officially introduced as a subject in the third year of primary education, and from secondary level to the first year of senior high school, English is taught as a compulsory core subject. The communicative approach to teaching English is upheld as the best way to teach English, and the Teaching English in English (TEE) scheme that requires the subject to be taught in English, has also been nationally instituted since 2010. However, the chapter, based on case studies, finds that teachers implementation of the policies is subject to their own interpretations and beliefs about pedagogy. Drawing on the notion of teacher agency and language policy as multifaceted and interactive (Menken & Garcia, 2010), the study argues for engaging multiple actors, especially teachers and teacher trainers, the "actual policy executors", in interpreting, negotiating, and enhancing the success of the current English education.

21 Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste presents an unusually complex case. Four languages are recognized in the constitution and compete for space, both in education and in society generally. While the adoption of Portuguese as the co-official language (with Tetun) is understandable in light of the country's recent troubled relations with Indonesia and with a wish to distinguish itself from English speaking Australia to the south, it also marks Timor-Leste as different in a region where an emphasis on English language learning is the norm. While national education policy tends to favor the Portuguese language, arguably at the expense of Tetun, there is a feeling among students and parents that English and Bahasa Indonesia have more practical use. For this reason, and because many school teachers are not sufficiently fluent in Portuguese, English has remained the second language of choice and private English classes are common. In public spaces, too, English is the prevalent language. As a result, and also because of a feeling that current language policy is contributing to educational failure, there remain questions about the future of languages in education in Timor-Leste. A case can be made, for example, for moving to mother tongue based education leading to additive multilingualism.

22 Thailand

The authors of this chapter give an overview of the development of the English language in Thailand from its past to its present status. With the introduction of education reform through the National Education Act (NEA) of 1999, the Ministry of Education in Thailand sought to improve education standards in Thailand at all levels. Moreover, to prepare the nation to compete with other nations in the era of globalization, emphasis on English language skills acquisition was given extra impetus. The chapter investigates a wide range of efforts, initiatives, national policies and education reforms that demonstrate Thailand's willingness to equate itself in English language skills with the rest of the world. However, the examination of the current status of English language in the country shows a disproportionate progress of English language skills in relation to the effort made. This leads the writers to examine the policy related challenges and societal obstacles that inhibit or discourage the healthy progress of English language in the country. Towards the end, the chapter provides practical strategies and plans for various levels that may improve growth of the English language in the country.

23 Vietnam

In the Vietnam chapter, Bui and Nguyen provide an assessment on English language policies (ELPs) in Vietnam by examining their challenges, and consequences. In particular, they focus on the reality of current teacher quality in response to the

recent language policy implementation. They further explain the roles of the ELPs in advancing linguistic, education and socio-economic developments for various students, especially those from minority linguistic backgrounds in a remote province. While applied scholars and critical educators advocate placing teacher professional development at the epicenter of language policy reforms, teacher professional development in the current ELP reform in Vietnam is, for the most part, controversial, ambivalent, and contested. An array of issues including teacher training, teachers' limited English proficiency, and the shortage of English teachers are not yet effectively addressed. Furthermore, drawing on Bourdieu's (1991) social reproduction theory, Bui and Nguyen argue that, contrary to the state's goal of promoting English for socio-economic and educational advancement, these language policies may threaten social, educational and economic development, and minority students' linguistic and cultural ecology. The study thus emphasizes the need for a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness among effective teacher professional development; cultural and linguistic complexity; language/literacy education; and socio-economic needs throughout the processes of language policy decision-making and implementation. To this end, the chapter strongly recommends respecting home languages and multilingualism for effective schooling and language policy reform.

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English-in-Education Policy and Planning in Bangladesh: A Critical Examination

M. Obaidul Hamid and Elizabeth J. Erling

Abstract This chapter draws on critical perspectives on language policy and planning and language-in-education policy implementation framework to provide an overview of the history of English language education policies, policy implementation and their outcomes in Bangladesh. It traces the factors that have influenced the policies, their implementation and their rather dismal outcomes. The chapter describes the socio-political and sociolinguistic contexts within which Bangladeshi education is located, providing a historical overview of English in education policy from British colonial rule to Pakistani rule to the post-independence period. It then explores the status of English language education within the Bangladeshi education system and describes the various actors that have shaped English language teaching policy and practice within Bangladesh. The section that follows explores policy outcomes and the complex set of factors which have hindered the successful implementation of quality English language teaching in Bangladesh. We draw our conclusion at the end, which also includes a set of recommendations for policy implementation in the country.

Keywords Bangladesh • English language teaching • Language policy and planning • Actors in language policy • English and development • English learning outcomes

1 Introduction

Until recently, Bangladesh has not received much attention in language-in-education policy research, most probably due to the absence of local expertise and a lack of funding for research (see Bolton, Graddol, & Meierkord, 2011). Language-in-education planning (LEP) is one of the key sites and mechanisms for implementing national language policies (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). Despite its limited scope and capacity (see Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997), which have become ever more apparent in

M.O. Hamid (✉)
The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: m.hamid@uq.edu.au

E.J. Erling
Open University, Westminster, UK

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the contemporary context of neoliberal influence in education and language policy (see Ball, 2012; Block, Gray, & Holborow 2012; Duchéne & Heller, 2012; Piller & Cho, 2013; Ricento, 2012), LEP still constitutes a major channel of language change efforts in polities across the world. Therefore, this site deserves attention from any attempt to understand language policy and acquisition management together with the outcomes. In Bangladesh, English language education policy and planning has been influenced by numerous forces at the national, supra-national and sub-national levels. These include historical factors and national priorities, but also extend to educational NGOs and international development agencies. This complex set of factors makes it difficult to find simple explanations for the strong ideologies of English as a language for economic development, the prominence of the language in the national curriculum and, conversely, the modest outcomes of English language teaching in Bangladesh.

Accordingly, this chapter critically examines English language policy and planning in Bangladesh to provide an understanding of the factors that have influenced the policies, their implementation and their rather dismal outcomes. We first describe the socio-political and sociolinguistic contexts within which Bangladeshi education is located. This includes a historical overview of English in the polity from British colonial rule to Pakistani rule to the post-independence period. It then explores the status of English language education within the Bangladeshi education system and describes the various actors that have shaped English language teaching policy and practice within Bangladesh, including international donors. The section that follows critically explores policy outcomes and the complex set of factors which have hindered the successful implementation of quality English language teaching in Bangladesh. We draw our conclusion at the end, which also includes a set of recommendations.

2 Theoretical Framework

In the chapter, we draw on Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997, 2003) framework that identifies seven key areas of policy development for LEP implementation, including access, curriculum, materials and methods, personnel, resources, evaluation and community policy. This is complemented by Chua and Baldauf's (2011) framework of contexts and levels of LPP that indicates that instead of being confined to the traditional macro context, language policy initiatives should be located in supra-national (global) as well as sub-national (local) domains. Within this framing, we also draw on the critical LPP (see Baldauf, 2012), with reference to works by Canagarajah (1999), Lo Bianco (2014), Pennycook (2000, 2001), Phillipson (1992, 2011), Ricento (2012) and Tollefson (1991, 2013). These works help us understand the complexity of English language policies in developing societies which are shaped by global and local forces. Inspired by these scholars, we also take a critical look at the policies, how these relate to the local language ecology and the socioeconomic and socio-political realities and what outcomes these policies produce for policy target groups.

3 Bangladesh: The Socio-political and Sociolinguistic Context

Any language or education policy is, in effect, an expression of a people's desires and aspirations which have been shaped by the polity's historical, socio-political, cultural and economic contexts and realities. Therefore, understanding any policy – and particularly language policy – calls for a situated examination, locating policy within its context. The socio-political and sociolinguistic context of Bangladesh is described in the following.

Bangladesh is a densely populated Muslim-majority country in South Asia. Over 160 million people live in a land area (143,598 km^2) which is slightly bigger than New York State. Although the country has made some progress in recent decades in reducing poverty and malnutrition, poverty still remains a chronic problem with over 30 % of the people living below the poverty line. The per capita national income of US$840 as of 2012 (World Bank, 2013) is one of the lowest figures for South Asian nations. Bangladesh's economy has been significantly impacted by political instability which has affected investment, productivity, education and, occasionally, normal life and living. Although parliamentary democracy is the official form of government, poor governance, corruption and suppression of dissident voices and political oppression have been common practices of recent political regimes. Bangladesh's Human Development Index (HDI) ranking of 146 (UNDP, 2013) also points to the overall poor quality of life and low human development in the country. Although progress has been made in recent years in primary school enrolment rate, particularly in regard to eliminating the male–female disparity (CAMPE, 2006), the literacy rate still hovers around 50 %.

These socioeconomic indicators provide the rationale for the budgetary allocation for education in general and English teaching in particular. Bangladesh's investment of 2.2 % of its GDP in education is one of the lowest figures in South Asia (cf. Bhutan and Nepal each at 4.7 %) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2013). They also explain the prominent role of international donors and NGOs in shaping the educational landscape in Bangladesh, which will be discussed further below.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, Bangladesh is often portrayed as a monolingual country with 98 % of the people speaking Bangla, the national language. However, this representation denies the existence of minority groups and their languages. Although reliable statistics are hard to come by, it is generally agreed that there are around 36 minority groups, both indigenous and non-indigenous, many of whom have their own languages (Mohsin, 2003; Rahman, 2010). Moreover, the national language is divided into several regional dialects (Morshed, 1994), one of which has been claimed as a separate language (see Hossain and Tollefson, 2007). To further complicate the sociolinguistic landscape, over 300,000 stranded Pakistanis who speak their own language, Urdu, have lived in Dhaka since the end of the civil war of 1971. Added to this is the dominant presence of Hindi in Bollywood films and music, which have become more popular than their local

counterparts. English has a strong presence in the country, particularly in the education sector. Arabic is used for Muslims' religious practices and is also an important language in religious education in the country.

4 The History of English in Bangladesh

Several authors have discussed the establishment of English in Bangladesh from its colonial origin including Hamid (2009, 2011a, 2011b), Hamid and Jahan (2015), Imam (2005), Rahman (1999), Rahman (2007), Hossain and Tollefson (2007) and Zaman (2003). Drawing on these works, we provide a brief overview of this history.

As a global language, English enjoys a special status in Bangladesh, as in other former British colonies. First introduced by the British East India Company in the early seventeenth century and later established through British colonial rule (Zaman, 2003), the language has passed through phases of significant ambivalence—simultaneous and/or successive attraction and repulsion—during its long journey to its current state of prominence. During British rule, some social reformers argued for English and western education for Indians. However, the language was seen as suspect by a significant proportion of both Muslim and Hindu communities, the legacy of which was the *Angreji hatao* movement formed after independence in 1947 in order to banish English from India (Guha, 2011). Despite this, English has not only survived but has also been established on the highest rank on the linguistic hierarchy – most plausibly due to its association with social elitism and power (Hamid, 2011b; Hamid & Jahan, 2015). As a result, the movement aimed to banish English from India appears to have gone into self-banishment (*Times of India*, 2004).

Although English education was introduced by Christian missionaries mainly for proselytizing purposes, the language became an object of social desire when it replaced Persian as the language of colonial bureaucracy. The long debate between the Orientalists and Anglicists over the introduction of English education for the natives ended with the apparent victory of the latter when Macaulay's infamous Minutes of 1835 were accepted, paving the way for the teaching of English (see Hamid, 2009 for details). At the turn of the century, the deleterious consequences of English education were conspicuous, as noted by Spear (1938):

> […] the most serious effects of British language policies and practices were the excessive emphasis on English in the schools, the neglect of the vernacular languages as subjects and instructional media, and the unrealistically early introduction of English as a teaching medium. (p. 277)

Nevertheless, English came to be associated with social elitism given a wide gap between the demand and supply of English. This meant that it was mostly the privileged groups located in urban areas who were able to access English for their children.

At the end of British colonial rule in 1947, the current territory of Bangladesh was established as one of the two wings of the Dominion of Pakistan—then called East Pakistan. The formation of the Dominion gave new status and legitimacy to the

colonial language. English served as the link language between East and West Pakistan, which was separated not only by languages and cultures but also by hostile Indian territories. Although the two regions were bound by religion, Islam, which was the basis for the state formation, this nation-building element was seen as inadequate by Pakistani rulers given the linguistic and cultural differences between East and West Pakistan and their geographic non-contiguity. Therefore, in addition to religion, a common language was considered important for forging unity among various groups of people. To Pakistani leaders, a rational choice was Urdu, which was seen as a language of Islamic identity. This was also a relatively neutral choice given that Urdu was practically a minority language spoken by less than 5 % of the total population of Pakistan and therefore it was not going to advantage or disadvantage a large segment of the population in either part of the country. There was nothing unique about choosing a language for a nationalist cause or giving preference to Urdu since the authorities were aware of European models of a one-language one-nation formula (Wright, 2012). A similar example can be seen in Indonesia where Bahasa Indonesia was spoken by comparable proportions of the population when it was chosen as the basis for forging national unity (see Hamied, 2012). However, Urdu as the state language of the Dominion of Pakistan was not received well in East Pakistan, where people protested against the imposition. While West Pakistani leaders insisted on Urdu as a national language in the interest of the Islamic identity of the Dominion, Bangla-speaking East Pakistanis perceived the state language policy as aiming to destroy their cultural identity. The Urdu-only policy was defended by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, at a civic reception in Dhaka on 21 March 1948, where he claimed that those opposing Urdu were enemies of Pakistan. While a movement to protect Bangla was taking shape in East Pakistan, the Urdu-only policy was reiterated by Governor General Khawaja Nazimuddin, the successor of Jinnah, in a speech at the University of Dhaka on 27 January 1952. Students of the University of Dhaka organised demonstrations to protest against the imposition of Urdu on the 21st of February 1952 violating Section 144, which was imposed to ban such gatherings. Several students of the University of Dhaka were killed when the police opened fire to disperse the gathering. This loss of life for the "mother tongue" marked the beginning of an intense language-based nationalism which not only restored Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan but also ultimately led to the separation of East Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country in 1971 (see Hamid, 2011a; Musa, 1996; Mohsin, 2003; Thompson, 2007).

5 English in Post-independence Bangladesh

The new nation of Bangladesh inherited Bangla as a potent symbol of identity and national aspirations. It also inherited the legacy of the Language Movement and strong ideologies around the "language heroes". Special minarets were built throughout the country to commemorate those who died. The 21st of February was

declared as a national mourning day, a public holiday, which is still observed with solemnity throughout the country every year. This national pride in Bangla, the memory of the heroes and the sentimentalities surrounding both influenced language policy and planning in the early days of independent Bangladesh.

Bangla was given official recognition as the national language in the nation's first constitution. It was to be used in all walks of life and as medium of instruction for higher education (Banu & Sussex, 2001; Rahman, 1999). In promoting Bangla with nationalistic fervour, minority groups and their languages were ignored. These groups were expected to "convert" into *Banglaees*, forgetting their own languages and identities. Indeed, it is ironic (and yet perhaps not unusual) that the state that had its origin in linguistic injustice exercised no compunction in committing the same injustice to ethno-linguistic minority groups in the same polity (Hamid, 2011a).

Although the English language received policy recognition for "historical reasons", Bangla-centric sentimentalities overshadowed any discussions about the role of English within the new nation. In practical terms, English had already been relegated to a foreign language from its earlier status as a second language which was the means of intra-national communication during the Pakistani era.

At this time, only a handful of English-medium international schools were operating in the country serving the needs of expatriate communities together with local elites. The restriction of English in the public sector, however, was responsible for the strengthening of the language in the private sector in the form of English-medium schools opened for the wealthier classes. The realization of the increasing value of English by the socially privileged class led to an expansion of the market in the 1980s. This has led to the current situation, in which English-medium schools are now ubiquitous in Dhaka and other metropolitan centres as this schooling has become a default choice for those with financial ability (Hamid & Jahan, 2015).

In the 1970s and 80s, nationalistic fervour was weakening and the nation was waking up to the necessity of English. Falling standards of English in the country were reported by a special task force commissioned by the Ministry of Education in the late 1970s (BEERI, 1976). Thus, after several incremental reforms in the 1980s, English was introduced as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 in 1991. The policy of early English (access policy) was followed by other efforts such as the introduction of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the late 1990s (methods and materials policy) (Farooqui, 2008). Since then, there have also been considerable efforts to enhance the professional skills of English teachers (personnel policy) carried out by a number of donor-funded English language projects (discussed further below).

6 The Education System in Bangladesh

Socio-political, historical and cultural dynamics have given rise to a complex pre-university education system in Bangladesh which comprises three major streams (see Hamid, 2009 for a thorough review). The dominant stream is general or secular education which caters for 83 % of the school-going population. This stream

follows the national curriculum in which Bangla is the language of instruction. The second one is *madrasa* education which provides Islamic education together with secular subjects such as English, mathematics, sciences and social sciences. This education is funded and overseen by the Government through a national board of religious education. Bangla is the medium of instruction in this stream with Arabic and English being taught as compulsory subjects. The student population of madrasa education is mainly drawn from lower and lower-middle class families and it caters for about 16 % of the school age population (see Hamid, 2009). The third is English-medium education which is provided by privately run schools for the social elite and members of the professional and business communities. It caters for 1 % of the student population in the country. Although some other forms of schooling are also available (for example different types of religious and vocational education), a discussion of these three sectors is sufficient to highlight the complexity of educational operations in the country and the resulting diversity in terms of educational quality and outcomes. More crucially, it demonstrates the limits of the public sector to provide quality education and of macro-level language planning to address language issues for the whole society, as previously noted.

Table 1 provides estimates of the number of institutions, students and teachers at the primary and secondary level in both secular and madrasa education. Although some details on English-medium education can be found in Hossain and Tollefson (2007) and Al-Quaderi and Al Mahmud (2010), the exact number of these schools and their enrolment sizes remain unknown because the Government has no control over this stream of education (see Hamid & Jahan, 2015).

Apart from these streams of education, non-government organizations (NGOs) have made a critical contribution to education in Bangladesh. Of the many NGOs involved in educational intervention, mention must be made of the BRAC Education Program (BEP) which provides pre-primary, primary and inclusive education to hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, disabled and ethnic minority children which complements government provision. The aims and scope of BEP are described by the official website in the following way:

> Establishing education programmes in six countries (Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uganda, South Sudan, and the Philippines), BRAC has built the largest secular, private education system in the world, with over 700,000 students enrolled in BRAC primary schools.
>
> The high-impact, low-cost model of BRAC's primary schools give disadvantaged students a second chance at learning. Complementing mainstream school systems with innovative teaching methods and materials, BRAC establishes primary schools in communities inaccessible by formal education systems. Through this endeavour we bring education to

Table 1 Estimates of institutions, teachers and students in pre-tertiary education in Bangladesh (BANBEIS, 2011)

Level of education	No. of institutions	No. of students	No. of teachers
Primary	78,685	16,957,894	395,281
Secondary	19,070	7,510,218	223,555
Madrasa (Grade 1–10)	6779	2,313,153	Not available

Table 2 BRAC education statistics for pre-primary and primary schools (BRAC, 2013)

	Pre-primary education	Primary education
Number of schools	15,164	22,618
Number of students	433,658 (61 % female)	670,815 (64 % female)
Number of teachers	15, 164 (100 % female)	22,699
Course completed to date	4.35 million	4.95 million
Class transfer rate	99 %	94 %

millions of children, particularly those affected by violence, displacement or discrimination and extreme poverty in rural areas as well as urban slums. (BRAC, 2013)

The following statistics provided by the BRAC website provide insight into the scale of the BEP: (Table 2)

English language teaching is also delivered in BRAC schools, following the national curriculum, and programmes have been delivered to enhance the quality of teaching in these contexts (see Rahman et al., 2006).

7 The Role of English in the Education System

With over 30 million students learning English as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 in the different streams of pre-tertiary education, Bangladesh has one of the largest English learning populations in the world. However, the status of English language education varies significantly across the various sectors of education. In secular education, it has the same status as the national language in the school curriculum and occupies almost 19 % of the curricular space. Like Bangla, English is taught every day in the class, between one and two class periods of 35–45 min. But English teaching and learning outcomes are in no way comparable to those in English-medium schools, where English is the dominant language and Bangla has a peripheral role (Hamid, 2006a; Hamid & Jahan, 2015). Finally, despite the compulsory presence of English in madrasa education, it generally has a marginal status compared to that of Bangla and Arabic.

A patterned relationship can be seen between the socioeconomic conditions of the sector of education and the role of English in the sector. English is dominant in the elitist English-medium schools and has a marginal status in lower status madrasa education (Rao & Hossain, 2011). English has a higher status in secular education, but nowhere near that of English-medium schools.

Large-scale evaluations of English language teaching in Bangladesh, as elsewhere (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997), have rarely been undertaken, in any of the sectors (but see Rahman et al., 2006 for an overview of what exists). Therefore, adequate and reliable evidence that measures the success of English language teaching is hard to come by, despite the awareness of the importance of English and curricular reforms and teacher development activities (see Farooqui, 2008). Anecdotal evidence suggests that English learning outcomes in the three streams of education can be

correlated with resource investment. Optimal investment in English-medium schools (from private sources) results in optimal output while poor English-learning outcomes in madrasas can be attributed to negligible resource investment in English teaching. The situation is comparable to a similar hierarchy of the three streams of education in Pakistan, which are distinguished by their quality of standards and learner achievement, particularly in terms of teaching communicative English (Shahab, 2013; Shamim, 2011).

The evidence that is available, drawn from various sources, suggests that English teaching and learning has yet to produce desirable outcomes across the country, particularly in secular state schools and madrasas where the majority of children are schooled. Some pockets of success can be seen in a rise in pass rates in public examinations at the end of Years 10 and 12. In the past few years these levels have risen to around 70 % or higher, meaning that larger numbers of school students have successfully passed English together with other subjects to graduate from that level of education and progress to the next (Hamid, 2009). Nevertheless, those who fail in public exams usually do so in English and/or in mathematics (EIA, 2009b; Hamid, 2009). Moreover, this success does not necessarily point to students' functional proficiency in English, as it has been shown that students' grades are not reliable indices of their levels of English proficiency, a situation also observed in Malaysia (Ali, Hamid, & Moni, 2011) and Indonesia (Hamied, 2013). In fact, poor levels of English proficiency are common among students and teachers alike in Bangladesh. Baseline studies undertaken in 2009, for example, found little evidence of English language progression through primary and secondary school and concluded that the majority of students remain at the most basic ability levels year after year (EIA, 2009a, p. 2). Regarding teachers, these studies found that a majority of teachers are teaching students at higher levels than their own ability in the language. Low levels of English are particularly common in rural areas, where Hamid and Baldauf (2008) reported that not a single Grade 10 student in a cohort of 14 students interviewed was able to introduce themselves properly after 10 years of study of English.

8 The Role of Donor-Funded English Language Education Projects

It is in part due to the limited success of implementing quality English language teaching in Bangladesh that, in addition to the NGOs like BRAC, there is an important role for donor-funded English language projects at various levels of education. These projects tend to be supported by British and American sources as well as international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). They operate at all levels of education including primary, secondary and tertiary, focussing primarily on teacher education. While each of the projects has had some measured success, their reach and ability to significantly and sustainably change the situation remains limited.

Examples of such projects include the English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP), which was initially funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) and the Government of Bangladesh and jointly implemented by the British Council and National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Bangladesh. ELTIP, which ran from 1997 to 2012, had as its aim the roll out of a communicative language teaching approach in secondary schools which was introduced in the national curriculum. The project faced multiple challenges, not only financial and environmental constraints, but also conflicting interests of the various stakeholders involved (see Hunter, 2009). DfID withdrew funding in 2002, but the project continued through two more phases and managed to train an additional 17,328 teachers (ELTIP, 2009) – however missing out almost half of the teachers it aimed to reach (*Daily Ittefaq*, 2010; Hamid, 2010; Rahman, 2007). During the period in which it was active, ELTIP succeeded in introducing a new course book series which was adopted in schools throughout the country, and in setting four regional and twelve satellite resource centres for training purposes. However, none of the educational processes proposed through the project were adopted by the government, and the cadre of trainers skilled by the project were, for the most part, diverted (Hunter, 2009).

A further project – which has overlapped with ELTIP in part – is the Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP), funded by the ADB, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Government of Bangladesh and implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) from 2005 to 2011. Approval for extension of this funding has recently been given (Hamid, 2010). The focus of this project is to improve the quality of secondary education in general, but it also includes English language teaching. As it provides similar training, TQI-SEP does not involve teachers who have received ELTIP training. This project aimed to train 28,000 English teachers, but due to budgetary constraints, not even a quarter of this number received training by 2010 (*Daily Ittefaq*, 2010; Hamid, 2010).

Another small-scale initiative is the British Council's English for teaching, teaching for English (ETTE) project which began working in 2008 with a view to developing primary teachers' English and pedagogical skills, predominantly in rural areas where it was felt that poor teaching was having a knock-on effect into the other sectors. While ETTE has met success in improving teachers' language skills and the techniques they need for the effective delivery of materials to large classes, the project reach is limited to around 2000 teachers (Hamid, 2010, p. 301).

Each of these projects had laudable aims and has met limited success, but none were able to make the impact required at scale to train English language teachers across the country and to radically and sustainably improve the quality of education in Bangladesh. It is for this reason that English in Action (EIA) was designed as a large-scale project with significant funding (£50 million) and a relatively long time scale (9 years) (see Hamid, 2010). Funded by DfID the project aims to reach nearly 100,000 teachers across the country. The focus of the school-based programmes in EIA is on achieving enhanced and improved English language learning through the professional development of teachers – both by supporting their skills in student-centred, communicative language teaching and the improvement of their language

competence. What makes EIA different from its predecessors is its innovative model of teacher development supported through self-study materials delivered through low-cost mobile phones, or the "trainer in your pocket" (Shohel & Banks, 2012; Walsh et al., 2013). Evaluation of the project so far indicates that it is helping to increase the English language skills of teachers and their ability to teach communicatively (Walsh et al., 2013), but it remains to be seen whether the project will be able to make the lasting impact that is needed. Moreover, regardless of any measurable change at the classroom level, wider changes need to be made, for example to the national teacher training and assessment systems, in order to make a lasting impact.

9 A Critical Examination of Policy Outcomes

As mentioned above, the implementation of English language education policies in Bangladesh have met limited success, and this despite rather significant support from NGO and international donor agencies. These disappointing results of English teaching and learning are not unique to Bangladesh. Research has suggested similar outcomes in other parts of the world. For instance, Qi (2009), based on a comparative assessment of English teaching outcomes in Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan, observed:

> Countries in Eas[t] Asia are investing considerable resources in providing English, often at the expense of other aspects of the curriculum, but the evidence suggests that these resources are not achieving the instructional goals desired. It would seem advisable, then, for governments and educational bureaucracies to review their policies in ELT (119).

Similarly, regarding Indonesia, Renandya (2004) noted that

> Empirical data that provide a comprehensive profile of Indonesian students' proficiency in English are lacking. However, the few studies that have been conducted seem to support the claim that the English teaching program has been largely unsuccessful (125).

In the following, we therefore critically explore why the implementation of successful English language teaching is only met with very limited success in Bangladesh. In doing so, we draw on Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997, 2003) framework that was previously mentioned. While the seven components constituting the framework are relevant to an understanding of English in education in Bangladesh, there are additional issues that can be examined by referring to Chua and Baldauf's (2011) framework of contexts and levels of LPP that we introduced in the introduction.

10 The Politics of Language and Nationalism

One factor limiting the implementation of English language education in Bangladesh is the politics surrounding the national language. This may not be linked to Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) framework, but the language ecological perspective that they

emphasize requires an understanding of all languages in a polity and their interactions. This may also be true for a number of countries in Asia including Japan and Malaysia. These countries may have found it difficult to strike the right balance between policy emphasis on the national and the global language which has resulted in tensions between the two. This has created a dilemma for these polities: people may not accept English whole-heartedly for fear of its impact on the national language but at the same time they cannot resist the dominant discourses of English as a language for economic development (see Seargeant & Erling, 2011). There may also be some kind of guilt among educational authorities who may be influenced by dominant ideologies that English and the national language are tied in a zero-sum relationship, meaning that the promotion of English will essentially harm the national language. These concerns may thus inadvertently result in policy ambiguity.

This can be seen, for instance, in Japan where the Government seems to have recognized the value of English language learning for Japan, but at the same time this is happening among fears that English may become dominant or have a negative impact on Japanese language and identity (Seargeant, 2009, p. 55). Consequently, English in Japan has been subjected to Japanese as can be understood from the discourse of Japanization of English or the emphasis on Japanese citizens who can use English (Hashimoto, 2009).

Similarly, given the political sensitivity around Malay, the national language, which has an ambiguous status particularly among minority language speakers (e.g. of Chinese or Tamil), the Malaysian Government cannot fully endorse English. So while it introduced English for teaching primary science and mathematics in 2003, this policy was revoked in 2012 for, amongst other reasons, concerns about Malay (Gill, 2012). This ambiguity can be seen in higher education as well. Although the Government values the role of English for Malaysia's place in a globalized world, it also finds it difficult to promulgate English-medium instruction policies within the context of Malay nationalism. It has therefore followed the strategy of leaving medium of instruction issues with individual higher education institutions (Ali, 2013), thereby recognizing the role of sub-national level agency in LPP (Chua & Baldauf, 2011).

The politics of national language plays out somewhat differently in Bangladesh. The country maintains clear divisions between the public and the private sectors and this has had a considerable impact on the teaching and learning of English. For the public sector, educational authorities have pursued what is called a balanced planning of Bangla and English (Hamid, 2000) to make sure that policy emphasis on English does not undermine Bangla, which is at the centre of the discourse of nationalism and national identity. In the private sector, on the other hand, the Government has shown laissez-faire attitudes to language issues. For example, while public sector educational institutions cannot exclusively focus on English, private sector institutions do not have to pay heed to nationalist concerns and can decide on language policies independently (Hamid & Baldauf, 2014). Two clear examples of this are private universities and English-medium schools which operate exclusively in English (Al-Quaderi & Al Mahmud, 2010; Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). Thus, one parental strategy that will ensure that children learn English is to

bypass public sector schooling altogether and send children to English-medium schools, provided families can afford the cost. This alternative school choice for the wealthier class means that public sector schooling can be the object of both community and policy indifference since the privileged class does not depend on this sector for their children's education.

Outside the political terrain, it appears that the general populace – including people in rural areas where English exists primarily in textbooks and the four corners of the classroom – have positive attitudes towards English, as evidenced by several studies including, Erling et al., (2013) and Hamid & Baldauf (2011). Many of the common discourses that associate English with knowledge, technology, human capital, employment, income, social mobility and economic development found in the literature (e.g., Alhamdan, 2014; Coleman, 2010, 2011; Crystal, 1997; Hamid, 2010; Nino-Murcia, 2003; Seargeant & Erling, 2011) are also dominant in Bangladeshi society. It is this perceived value of English that led a poor woman in a rural village who did not have formal literacy either in Bangla or English to self-reproach because she did not have the means to purchase private English lessons for her daughter:

> If I had some poultry, I could sell eggs and give her the money. She could then pay an English teacher and get some private lessons. (in Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009, p. 297)

In another study undertaken in rural Bangladesh, some of the participants with limited formal education thought that they would gain more respect in the community if they knew English, and so factors of prestige play a significant role as well:

> It would have been better. I could go to superior places. I could talk with good 'sirs' if I had some more proficiency in English… I could mingle with anyone anywhere … I would have been highly evaluated. (Devika, Cleaner, Shak Char in Erling et al., 2013, p. 16)

Thus, there appears to be an alignment between community ideologies of English and the enhanced English access policy in the country (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003). Although community consultation in ELT policy making or basing polices on evidence is unheard of in this context, grassroots desires and top-down efforts have converged, which can be compared to polities such as Puerto Rico where the Spanish-based community has taken a firm stance against English resulting in unsuccessful implementation of English language policies (Resnick, 1993).

However, it is likely that the poor outcomes of English learning will eventually disillusion parents and communities. This could either result in them turning to private education or private English language tutoring, if the resources are there. Or, if they are not, they may abandon hope in the material promises of English altogether, as is the case with a parent reported in an Indonesian study:

> Why should I be bothered sending my children to university [for higher education and English learning] and spend a lot of money? A lot of graduates are unemployed. When someone finishes university, s/he only wants a white-collar job and would prefer being unemployed to working in a garden. I do not have anyone who can help my children find work in a government office, and I do not have enough money to bribe them (in Pasassung, 2003, p. 145).

11 Financial Limitations: English as "A White Elephant"

The politics of language apart, another factor that constrains English in education is limited financial investment or what Kaplan and Baldauf (2003) call an inadequate 'resources policy'. The very small percentage of 2.2 % of the GDP that Bangladesh can afford to invest in education is not surprising given the level of its socioeconomic development. However, what is surprising is the level of national commitment to English in the face of this—the access policy (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003). Providing English for all appears to be a particularly ambitious policy when taking into account the requirements for policy implementation discussed by Kaplan and Baldauf (2003). This gap between what the nation can realistically spend on English and the sort of commitment that it has made to English has given rise to the case of "policy without planning" (Pearson, 2014).

Although some other polities in Asia have also introduced English from Grade 1 (see Baldauf & Nguyen, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2012), the Bangladesh case stands out when levels of socioeconomic development are taken into consideration (see Hamid & Honan, 2012). The policy of English for all may have been motivated by the principle of social justice: if English brings good to individuals, it should be made accessible to all. However, what seems not to have been considered is that there is no guarantee that everyone can take equal advantage of learning English or that the quality of English language teaching would be equal across the country (Hamid, 2011a, 2011b).

Language policies, by definition, are optimistic (Ozolins, 1996), but when policies are uninformed by affordability, these appear to be a mere political eyewash aimed at impressing the electorate with false promises of English (Hamid, 2003). The situation has been aptly described using the metaphor of a "white elephant" – a burdensome policy which consumes scarce national resources but cannot be disposed of despite the fact that its costs outweigh its usefulness:

> [t]he present state of English language teaching in Bangladesh represents a significant misapplication of human resources, time and money' (Allen, 1994 […]. The overwhelming presence of English […] thus can be argued to be the case of a 'white elephant' which consumes precious national resources but hardly produces any desirable outcomes… (Hamid & Baldauf, 2008, p. 22)

The consequences of the limited investment in English are conspicuous, particularly in rural areas where schooling in general and English teaching and learning in particular are met with harsh realities in terms of infrastructure, logistics, teacher skills and expertise and students' educational needs including textbooks. As Haq's (2004) baseline survey of secondary schools in rural Bangladesh reported:

> Physical conditions of most of the schools were miserable: poor classroom environment, poor furniture (inappropriate, broken and inadequate), insufficient (or non-existent) library and laboratory facility and finally poor and uncared surroundings. (p. 52)

In such schools where there may not even be a sufficient blackboard with chalk, teachers often have gruelling schedules with up to 100 students in a classroom. Electricity may not be available, and when it is cuts are commonplace (see Hassan, 2013).

This issue was also picked up by a participant in a study of the role of English in rural Bangladesh, who noted that English language learning needs to be contextualised within wider development issues:

> … I am not denying the importance of English learning. There are many advantages of learning English. But prior to this, it is necessary to improve general education. (in Erling et al., 2013, p. 17)

12 International ELT Projects

As mentioned above, NGOs and internationally funded development projects play an important part in the implementation of language education policy in Bangladesh. This can be linked to many aspects of the Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) framework including personnel, resources and materials and methods policies. At the same time, these project initiatives illustrate the agency of LPP actors at the global level (Chua & Baldauf, 2011; Zhao, 2011). Internationally funded projects have in fact been a major source of English language reforms, curriculum and materials development and teacher development programs in the country, as demonstrated above. And, as already discussed, these projects have met limited success despite limitations due to constrained budgets, environmental and political factors.

While acknowledging the very difficult constraints under which these projects function, it may be that they could work more efficiently for greater benefits of the teaching and learning of English than has been possible so far. As discussed in Hamid (2010), the short-life span of projects and their limited scope of intervention may result in an imbalance in the cost and effort of such projects and their positive outcomes. And since several projects tend to run at the same time, and the links and cross-over between them is not always clear, this seems to result in a waste of infrastructure, logistics and expertise. For instance, as both Hunter (2009) and Hamid (2010) have argued, the expertise developed through one project is not necessarily called upon in the next one. And similarly, project-based teacher development activities usually take place outside universities and teacher training institutions, so these traditional sites of teacher education remain underutilized (Hamid, 2010).

While previous projects have struggled to reach the large number of teachers across the country in need of professional development, particularly those in hard-to-reach areas, the English in Action project has seen some success (Walsh et al., 2013). In particular, innovative uses of technology to support a school-based model of supported open and distance learning may be harnessing new potential that could facilitate the training of teachers at scale. However, until other factors like the national exam system can be changed, and teachers' salaries, working conditions and professionalism are enhanced (discussed further below), any classroom-based change will be hindered.

13 English Teacher Professionalism

Another reason that the system in Bangladesh has limited success – and this is of course linked to financial limitations – is because of the lack of professionalism among English teachers regarding their language proficiency, content knowledge and pedagogical skills; in other words, there is an inadequate personnel policy. This is why enhancing teacher professionalism is generally the focus of the international development projects discussed above. Focusing on the gap between the necessity of teacher professional skills and the reality of teachers' existing skills and their potential impact on student learning outcomes, Hamid (2010) observed that policy makers in Bangladesh 'have not taken into account the resource and personnel policies required for successful implementation, thereby revealing the weakness of [the] state's commitment and political will to transform policies into efficient and goal-oriented pedagogic action' (305). Teacher issues have been highlighted as a major source of ELT failure in many studies from Asia and other parts of the world (Hamied, 2012; Kaplan et al., 2011; Shahab, 2013). In the case of Bangladesh, the issues are complex.

First of all, many of those who enter the profession through teacher education and training are found deficient in language skills because they are also the product of an education system which is incapable of developing English proficiency. As mentioned above, baseline studies have found a large number of teachers' skills in English only to be slightly above that of their students (EIA, 2009a). In a study conducted on the difficulties of implementing quality English language teaching in rural Bangladesh, Hassan (2013) found that none of the teachers he observed had a degree either in English literature or English language. One of these teachers thus noted:

> I do not have any qualification in English language. My knowledge in English is very limited. I am strong in English grammar, but truly speaking, I have weaknesses in English skills. I face problems if I speak English in the class. How can I conduct the class in English? (in Hassan, 2013, p. 149).

Not only do teachers have limited education in English, but many of them are also teaching with very little pre-service or in-service teacher training. None of the participants in Hassan's (2013) study had received pre-service training, and while three of the five had received some kind of in-service training, this was deemed to be patchy and inadequate.

Secondly, teachers, like their students, do not have opportunities to use the language for improving their communicative skills in an environment where communication in English is impractical and inauthentic creating a situation called the "communicative paradox" (Hamid, 2006b).

Thirdly, in the absence of incentives for continuous learning of teachers on the one hand and the lure of making money through private tutoring in English on the other (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009; Hassan, 2013), teachers may not be motivated to engage in learning and professional development. In fact, an issue appears to be the prevalence of a professional culture that cannot provide learning for teachers (Thornton, 2006).

14 The National Assessment System

Another factor that strongly influences the teaching of English in schools is the national exam system, which is related to Kaplan & Baldauf's (1997) evaluation policy. School instruction is dominated by what is tested in the examination (Farooqui, 2008)—aspects of grammar and reading and writing. Moreover, the Bangladeshi system, as some other systems in the world including Vietnam (Nguyen, 2012), does not assess speaking and listening skills and so these are rarely focussed upon in the classroom. Also, due to the importance of the exam in dictating classroom activity, discourses of English that are prevalent in society such as English for employment or English for spreading Islam are rarely activated in the pedagogical domain, as is also the case in Saudi Arabia (Alhamdan, 2014). In a society where school grades mark social pride for children and their parents which also influence which institutions they will have access to in the next stage of their education, educational competition lies in seeking higher grades, although such grades do not necessarily index higher levels of proficiency in English (Hamid & Baldauf, 2008; see Ali, Hamid, & Moni, 2011 for examples from Malaysia).

15 Dysfunctional Schooling and the Private Market

In addition to a lack of professional capacity and teacher expertise and the generally dismal state of Bangladeshi schools, particularly in rural areas, there are influences from the existing social and political order that have affected the functioning of schools and have contributed to the rise of the private market. While the latter reflects the dominance of neoliberalism on a global scale, as previously noted, ineffective schooling in English can be seen to have resulted from an inadequate attention being given to Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) policy implementation requirements in the context of socio-political and economic realities. For instance, the frequent strikes called by political parties mean loss of crucial teaching and learning time that affects the academic calendar. Public exams also interrupt the school schedule and pull teachers out of classrooms (Hassan, 2013). Similarly, using teachers by authorities as educational data suppliers and for other non-teaching activities affects academic delivery and teachers' plans and priorities (see Tietjen et al., 2004).

To further complicate matters, teachers in schools have to worry about making additional income outside school because one salary is simply not enough for a decent living. Many of them thus turn to private tutoring, which has spread all over the country as in some other parts of the world, particularly in East Asia such as Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong (Bray, 2006; Bray & Lykins, 2012; Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009). Social and educational competition for high grades and exam success coupled with the dysfunctional state of school education, particularly in rural areas, lead increasingly more parents and students to resort to private tutoring in English. Its dominance has emerged as a threat to the function of the formal sector,

since students with financial ability in rural areas consider going to school as a waste of time which can be better utilized by receiving lessons from private tutors at home. This phenomenon has emerged as a national concern and as a result the Government has recently imposed ban on private tutoring for teachers to their own students. However, it is common knowledge that this ban will prove to be ineffective in the context of declining levels of parental confidence in the formal system. Moreover, in an environment of growing competition for college/university places and employment, parents with sufficient economic and cultural capital may not risk their children's education and future by relying exclusively on ineffective formal schooling.

Since access to private tuition is mediated by socio-economic factors, its practice raises questions of education and social justice, as those with limited financial ability are denied access to this alterative learning opportunity (Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009). While the learning outcomes of taking part in private tuition have yet to be measured, students seem to have internalized the social belief that it is impossible to obtain higher grades without it. As a Grade 10 student (Tuhin) reported to the first author (R) in a rural sub-district in Bangladesh:

> R: Are you satisfied with the lessons given by him [private tutor]?
> Tuhin: Yes, satisfied.
> R: Do you go to any coaching centre as well?
> Tuhin: Yes.
> R: Now. . . do you think you could or would do well in your studies without the private lessons in English from your tutor and the coaching centre?
> Tuhin: You mean without private lessons or coaching, just depending on school [English]? Certainly not. (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009, p. 297)

16 Students' Perspectives

With this in mind, it would be remiss to comment on English teaching and learning in Bangladesh without taking into consideration the "agency" of students—the most important LPP actors (Hamid & Baldauf, 2011; Zhao, 2011). However, student-related factors have traditionally been understood with reference to psychological resources, giving minimal attention to socio-political and economic factors (Hamid, 2009; Hamid & Baldauf, 2011). Moreover, these actors are so diverse in terms of psychological, social and economic issues that generalizations can be meaningless. Nevertheless, identifying some broad outlines together with the grounds of diversity may be useful.

Students from all streams have positive attitudes towards English and are willing to learn the language which they consider important for their futures. However, it can be argued that their experiences of learning and learning outcomes are strongly influenced by two key factors: parental socio-economic status and geographic location of the family which are crucial in mediating children's access to good schools

and language resources at home and the community (Hamid, 2011a; Hamid, Sussex & Khan , 2009; Hossain, 2009). Nevertheless, there is also evidence that shows that despite significant social and economic barriers, some students are able to cross class boundaries by exercising their agency (see Hamid, 2009 for examples).

17 Conclusion and Recommendations

As we have illustrated in this chapter, English in Bangladesh is located in an extremely complex web of history, geography, politics, political economy and individual and social psychology. By analysing the motivations and interactions of these multi-sited actors from critical LPP and language ecology perspectives (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Lo Bianco, 2014; Pennycook, 2000; Tollefson, 1991, 2013), we have discussed the issues that have impacted the implementation of language-in-education policy and policy outcomes. However, given the complexity of the situation, it is difficult to establish cause-effect relationships between each of the factors and the outcomes.

It cannot be denied that English in Bangladesh, as elsewhere in Asia, has been informed by discourses of English and mobility and development in the context of globalization and the perceived value of English in nations' global competitiveness (Pennycook, 2000; Ricento, 2012; Seargeant & Erling, 2011). Policy making seems to be discourse-induced—rather than evidence-based, and policy makers don't seem to have taken into account critical discourses of English and globalization nor the financial realities of implementing such policies. An obvious consequence has been the existence of ambitious policy aspirations unmatched by the realities on the ground which has led school instruction in English to a dysfunctional state. Those with financial means can bypass this unproductive system by either opting for English-medium schooling, or by hiring private tutors. This makes the principle of social justice and equality behind the introduction of English for all mere official rhetoric (Hamid, 2011a).

It is fortunate that Bangladesh, like other developing nations, has had a regular access to NGOs and international donors to support the implementation of their language-in-education policies. However, until now, Bangladesh has not been able to fully utilize this external support for national capacity building in English language teaching and attaining self-sufficiency.

The complexity of the situation highlighted in the chapter may discourage suggesting recommendations that may appear simplistic. Therefore, our list of suggestions is headed by a call for recognition of this complexity and the avoidance of seeking uncritical and simplistic solutions.

- Recognising complexity of the situation;
- Delivering clear and honest messages about the value of English and what it can do for people, within certain constraints (along with general education, digital literacies);

- Bring together all actors and ensuring continuity not only between and across education projects, but also across all development projects (i.e. recognizing that education is embedded in a complex web of other environmental, social and political factors);
- Utilizing ELT projects for attaining sustainability and self-dependence;
- Making use of new technologies and new architectures of teacher professional development, as illustrated by EIA.
- Continuing to focus on government schools and giving attention to madrasa education;
- Working at a high level of policy such as pre-service teacher training programmes and examination system; and
- Supporting the professionalism of teachers, also teacher salaries and working conditions.

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English Language Education Policies in the People's Republic of China

Jeffrey Gil

Abstract This chapter views language policy as consisting of language practices, language beliefs and language intervention, planning or management (Spolsky. Language policy. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004; Spolsky. What is language policy? In: Spolsky B (ed) The Cambridge handbook of language policy. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 3–15, 2012), and uses this view to describe and analyze English language education policies in China. Particular attention is given to the evolution of official views, that is the opinions and perceptions of the government, and popular views, that is the opinions and perceptions of the general public, towards English, and official efforts to build English language proficiency through the provision of English language education from the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) until the present day. This is followed by an overview of the current English language curriculum at the various levels of China's education system. This chapter also assesses the effects of English language education policy on language practices, in terms of the use of English within China and levels of English language proficiency. Finally, it outlines some policy challenges and possible future trends based on policy outcomes and the broader sociolinguistic situation of China.

Keywords Bilingual instruction • China • Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) • English as a global language • English language curriculum • English language education • Ethnic minorities • Language policy • Language promotion

1 Introduction

Through a combination of the migration and settlement of English speakers; colonialism; the economic and political power of English speaking countries; and scientific, technological and cultural developments associated with English, the English language has spread across the world and achieved an unprecedented status as the global language (Crystal, 2003; Jenkins, 2015; Leitner, 1992). As such, English is

J. Gil (✉)
Flinders University, Adelaide, SA, Australia
e-mail: jeffrey.gil@flinders.edu.au

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increasingly necessary for accessing scientific and technical knowledge; gaining well-paid employment; pursuing higher education; attracting social prestige; consuming popular culture; and interacting with the global community. This means the acquisition of English language proficiency must be given serious consideration in every country's language policy (Ferguson, 2012; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007a, 2007b; Spolsky, 2004). The People's Republic of China (PRC, hereafter China) is no exception, and has sought to equip its population with English language proficiency in order to accomplish its domestic and international goals. A key focus of such efforts has been the provision of English language education, as language policies implemented through the education system can have the greatest impact on a country's population (Liddicoat, 2013).

This chapter describes and analyzes English language education policies in China from the establishment of the People's Republic until the present day. It begins with a summary of contemporary theory and discussions of English as a global language and their connections to language policy. The chapter then charts the evolution of official views towards English, that is the opinions and perceptions of the government, and popular views towards English, that is the opinions and perceptions of the general public, and official efforts to build English language proficiency through the provision of English language education. This is followed by an overview of the current English language curriculum at the various levels of China's education system. This chapter also assesses the effects of English language education policy in terms of the use of English and levels of English language proficiency within China. Finally, it outlines some policy challenges and possible future trends based on these policy outcomes and the broader sociolinguistic situation of China.

2 Contemporary Theory/Discussions on English Language Policy

Language policy, as defined by Spolsky (2004, 2012), consists of three components: (i) language practices, which refers to the actual language use of members of a speech community, including what language or variety of a language is used for what, with whom, where and how; (ii) language beliefs or ideology, which refers to the views, opinions and perceptions members of a speech community hold towards a language or variety of a language and its use; and (iii) language intervention, planning or management, which refers to endeavours to change or influence language practices by those members of a speech community with the real or perceived authority to do so. This broad conception of language policy allows investigation of the actions of governments and how such actions are interpreted and experienced by those they are designed to affect (Liddicoat, 2013; Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013; Menken & García, 2010). To use this approach to describe and analyze English language education policies in China, as this chapter does, first necessitates a summary of contemporary theory and discussions around English as a global language.

The existence of a global language and its implications is in fact "one of the liveliest current debates" in applied linguistics (Seidlhofer, 2003, p. 7). Consequently, it has received much attention in the literature on language policy (Ricento, 2006a, 2006b). Broadly speaking, there are three views on the role of English in the world which can be summarized as: English as a destructive language; English as a pluralistic language; and English as an irrelevant language.

The first of these views suggests that the global status of English was established and is maintained through structural and ideological means which marginalize, devalue and even destroy other languages and cultures, and benefit English speakers, particularly native speakers, and native English-speaking countries (Phillipson, 1992, 1998; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013). According to proponents of this view, English is consistently portrayed as more valuable or useful than other languages, a typical example being that it is represented as "the language of progress, modernity, democracy, and national unity" (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2013, p. 501). Such beliefs in turn result in more resources being allocated to English than other languages in domains such as education, the media and international organizations. As English is used more and more in such domains, it displaces other languages, meaning the global status of English has potentially dire consequences, particularly for languages which are already limited in their use (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996, 2013; Pennycook, 2001a, 2001b). Similarly, proficiency in English plays a gatekeeping function, determining who gains access to education, employment and social prestige (Pennycook, 2001a, 2001b). Scholars in this camp have also suggested that English language education is not a neutral activity of 'just teaching language'. Instead, they argue, it pushes a certain set of values, ideas and a way of seeing the world that diminishes and degrades other languages and cultures. A related claim is that English language education is based on Western ideas of what constitutes good teaching, and that Western methods are consistently portrayed as being the 'best' (Phillipson, 1992).

The second of these views says that English is no longer the sole property of native speakers and, rather than destroying them, can be used to express the cultures and identities of all those who speak it. This occurs through English being used in new and creative ways that are not linked to native English-speaking cultures, including in literature, popular music and film, and the development of distinct varieties of English (Modiano, 2001; Park & Wee, 2012). This view also emphasizes the agency of individuals and groups in responding to English as a global language. It argues that people are capable of making informed decisions regarding language learning and language use, and to deny people access to English and the advantages it brings is anything but fair or equitable (Canagarajah, 2005a, 2005b; Chew, 1999; McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). In relation to the practice of English language education, proponents of this view also argue that English is taught and learnt in diverse local contexts, meaning teaching and learning become infused with local customs, beliefs and practices (Canagarajah, 1999, 2005a, 2005b; Holliday, 1994; McKay, 2003).

The final view suggests that, despite its status as the global language, English often plays little role in people's lives. In fact, there are many people around the

world who have very little, or only superficial, contact with English, and no compelling or immediate need to learn it (Bruthiaux, 2002; Fishman, 2000; McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). Furthermore, speakers of minority languages often turn first to a national or regional language rather English, meaning English may actually play a limited role in language endangerment (Fishman, 2000; Graddol, 1996). In some parts of Africa, for example, many people are learning Swahili or Hausa, and in parts of India Bengali or Marathi, all of which have regional standing, rather than English (Fishman, 2000; Graddol, 1996). Some proponents of this view have also suggested there is a growing realization among entrepreneurs, artists and missionaries, among others, that national and regional languages can be used to reach a much greater proportion of a country's population than English, thus making them more useful vehicles for communication and interaction (Fishman, 2000; Vaish, 2010). In a related line of argument, Bruthiaux (2002) suggests that developing literacy in local languages is likely to have a far more beneficial effect on people's lives, especially those living in poverty, than learning English. As he says, "for the large majority of the poor, L1 literacy is the essential factor because they need the basic literacy skills to participate in their local economies, not the English that some argue is needed for participation in the global economy" (Bruthiaux, 2002, pp. 275–276).

Following several scholars (Canagarajah, 2005a, 2005b; McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008; Park & Wee, 2012; Wee, 2011), the position adopted here is that the implications of English as a global language are complex and multifaceted, and vary from country to country as well as across different sections of the population within a country. Understanding these issues requires us to look at the historical, political, economic and cultural characteristics of the country in question and place its English language education policies within this broader context. The rest of this chapter attempts to do this for China, and makes reference to each of the views discussed here where appropriate.

3 English Language Education Policies in China

As Bolton und Graddol (2012) say, "From the 1950s to the 1990s, Chinese education experienced a roller-coaster ride of changing policy directives in foreign language education" (p. 4). To highlight this point, Lam (2005) identifies six phases of English language education policy since the establishment of the People's Republic: (i) "the interlude with Russian"; (ii) "the back-to-English movement"; (iii) "repudiation of foreign learning"; (iv) "English for renewing ties with the West"; (v) "English for modernization"; and (vi) "English for international stature" (p. 73). In each of these phases there is a particular official and popular view of English. Official views are important because they set out a vision of what role English should play in society and citizens' lives. Popular views are likewise important because the implementation of English language education policy requires the participation and support of students, teachers, parents and other community members (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013; Menken & García, 2010). Both

official and popular views have been heavily influenced by China's political, economic and international interests, and the major actions and developments in English language education in each phase have reflected such views (Adamson, 2002; Lam, 2005; Ross, 1993).

This section details official and popular views of English and the major activities related to English language education undertaken in each phase. Due to space restrictions, it is not possible to deal in detail with the development and revision of each English language curriculum at all levels of education. Readers interested in this topic are advised to consult Adamson (2004), Bolton (2003) and Lam (2005). As language teaching methodology and the experience of learning English have also gone through various changes and developments along with shifts in policy, this section also aims to give an indication of what occurred in classrooms in the various phases identified above. It is important to recognize that teaching methodology and the experience of learning English have always, and continue to, vary considerably across urban and rural areas, coastal and inland provinces and well-resourced and less well-resourced schools and universities (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). The teaching practice of individual teachers is also influenced by their beliefs and experiences, the nature of the student cohort and interactions with colleagues (Zheng & Adamson, 2003). The aim here is therefore to give an overview of the main trends rather than a definitive account.

3.1 Russian as the Main Foreign Language: Early 1950s to Late 1950s

In this phase, Russian was the main foreign language in China's education system due to the country's close relationship with the Soviet Union.

3.1.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

As Lam (2002) points out, "because China's initial vision was alignment with the communist nations, the foreign language that received much attention in the 1950s was Russian" (p. 246). Russian language courses were introduced into the syllabuses of secondary and higher education in 1952 (Yao, 1993), while English was condemned as the language of the enemy, namely the USA. English language education consequently experienced a decline. In fact, on 28 April 1954, the Ministry of Education ruled that only Russian would be taught in secondary schools in order to ease the demands of school on students (Adamson, 2002; Ross, 1993). English was removed from the secondary education syllabus and while English language education did not cease completely, it was rare to find English being taught anywhere (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Ross, 1993; Wang, 1999).

3.1.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

Influenced by the Soviet Union, the Chinese adopted the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which dominated English language teaching in the 1950s. The GTM, as the name implies, focuses almost exclusively on the grammar rules of a language. The majority of time is devoted to reading and writing, while very little or no attention is paid to speaking and listening. All teaching is done through the students' native language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

In China, the GTM was adapted to include oral drill work in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but the essence remained the same, as Yao (1993) describes:

> A typical language class at the time was usually conducted in Chinese. The teacher started a new lesson with an oral summary of the text, and then read the text two or three times while the students listened. After that (s)he would explain it word by word, phrase by phrase, sentence by sentence, and passage by passage, both semantically and grammatically, with a lot of oral and written translation shared between the teacher and the students. Students were taught to read rather than to speak the language, though the teacher did, from time to time, raise questions on language or grammar points for the students to respond to. Recitation and retelling of the text was regarded as a useful means for measuring the learner's fluency. Terminal assessment was carried out through a written examination – oral work was excluded (p. 75).

3.2 Return to English: Late 1950s to Mid-1960s

In the second phase, English was restored as the main foreign language in China's education system due to the breakdown in relations with the Soviet Union.

3.2.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

Relations between China and the Soviet Union soured over disagreements in a number of important policy areas such as economic development, ideology and international relations in the late 1950s, and eventually led to the Sino-Soviet split in 1960 (Roberts, 2003). As a consequence, Russian was no longer viewed as a valuable and prestigious foreign language, and increasing attention was given to English.

There was of course a shortage of English teachers. In the previous phase, many English teachers had begun teaching Russian instead, so that in 1957 there were only 450 secondary school teachers of English in China (Adamson, 2002). This meant that many Russian teachers had to retrain as English teachers in order to keep their jobs. Many universities set up departments of English, and institutes specialising in English were set up in major cities to meet the newfound demand for English teachers (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). The Ministry of Education also began to recruit teachers from overseas, the first group arriving from Britain in the early 1960s, in an attempt to improve English language education (Yao, 1993). In 1963, the Beijing

Institute of Foreign Languages put forward a proposal, later ratified by the government, which suggested that each year five more foreign languages should be added to teaching programs with the aim that within ten years foreign language programs should cater for all major languages of the world (Ross, 1993; Yao, 1993). This period was a high point for foreign language learning in China, and one of the peaks for English language education.

3.2.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

In the early 1960s, with Western literature on foreign language teaching coming into China, the Direct Method was extensively used. The Direct Method is based on the assumption that people can learn a second language in the same way as they learn their first language. The focus is on oral skills and all teaching and presentation is done in the target language as translation is held to interfere with the learning process. Students were to learn through listening to and talking with the teacher (Brandle, 1993; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Chinese teachers of English took these principles to heart and taught exclusively through English while using posters, pictures and photos to help students learn vocabulary (Yao, 1993). However, there was criticism that the absence of the learners' native language can cause problems, as adults especially need explanations of the grammatical structure of the target language (Brandle, 1993). In light of this and other difficulties teachers had with this method, some use of Chinese was permitted in the classroom (Yao, 1993).

3.3 Rejection and Abandonment of Foreign Language Education: Mid-1960s to Early 1970s

The high point of English language education of the previous phase was not to last as almost all foreign language education ceased due to drastic political changes in China.

3.3.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

Despite the failure of radical policies such as the Great Leap Forward and People's Communes, Mao Zedong remained committed to the idea of radical revolution and initiated the Cultural Revolution in 1966 (Fairbank, 1992). In broad terms, the aim of the Cultural Revolution was to establish a new society through the destruction of traditional Chinese practices, beliefs and culture, and the purging of foreign culture and influence (Fairbank, 1992; Mackerras, Taneja, & Young, 1998; Spence, 1990). During this period China was also effectively shut off from the outside world, isolating itself from both the West and the Soviet Union (Fairbank, 1992; Spence, 1990).

All foreign language learning came under severe and often violent criticism during the Cultural Revolution. For example, foreign books, films and broadcasts were banned (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), foreign language teachers were considered "victims of the influence of the bourgeoisie" (Yao, 1993, p. 74), and anyone who could speak a foreign language was considered a "foreign spy" (Zhang, 2000, p. 54). Anti-foreign slogans used at the time included "I am Chinese. Why do I need foreign languages?" and "Don't learn ABC. Make revolution!" (Qun & Li, 1991 as cited in Adamson, 2002, p. 238). Several foreign language teachers were sent to the countryside for re-education and many schools and universities were closed (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). All of this made any meaningful or effective English language education virtually impossible.

3.3.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

Before the effects of the Cultural Revolution completely overwhelmed English language education, trends in teaching methodology from the previous phase continued up until the mid-1960s, when teachers started to experiment with the Audiolingual Method. The Audiolingual Method is based on the theory of behaviourism and sees foreign language learning as habit formation. Classroom activities consist of memorising dialogues and performing pattern drills in the hope that correct language will become automatic in learners (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). In China the Audiolingual Method was implemented with a particular emphasis on such pattern drills and enjoyed great popularity in the 1960s and 1970s.

3.4 Revival of English: Early 1970s to Mid-1970s

This phase saw a revival of English language education as a means of re-establishing relations with Western countries, especially the USA.

3.4.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

The chaos and turmoil of the Cultural Revolution lasted a full decade until the death of Mao Zedong on 9 September 1976. However, there was a limited revival of English language education before this as China sought to re-establish relations with the USA in the early 1970s. Some notable successes were achieved, such as China entering the United Nations (UN) at the expense of Taiwan in 1971, and President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972 (Adamson, 2002; Lam, 2005). English was seen as essential for such relations and some universities began teaching English again and a small number of students were sent overseas to study

English (Lam, 2005). Such developments did not extend to lower levels of education and remained very limited in their scope (Feng, 2009).

3.4.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

While the Audiolingual Method remained the main approach, the defining feature of teaching methodology and the classroom experience during this phase was the political overtones of content and materials. Teachers were made to use textbooks full of political slogans designed specifically for the Cultural Revolution rather than effective language learning (Adamson & Morris, 1997). The following example, taken from the works of Mao Zedong, is typical of the English language texts of this period:

> We must see to it that all our young people understand that ours is still a very poor country, that we cannot change the situation radically in a short time, and that only through the united efforts of our younger generation and all our people working with their own hands can our country be made strong and prosperous within a period of several decades. It is true that the establishment of our socialist system has opened the road to the ideal state of the future, but we must work very hard, very hard indeed, if we are to make the ideal a reality. Some of our young people think that everything ought to be perfect once a socialist society is established and that they should be able to enjoy a happy life, ready-made, without working for it. This is unrealistic (Grade 2 text from Beijing Foreign Languages Institute as cited in Mackerras, 1967, p. 63).

In such circumstances, many English teachers simply read the texts to students, translated them into Chinese and taught any new words they contained (Cheng & Wang, Wang, 2012).

3.5 English for Modernization: Late-1970s to Early 1990s

This phase represents a high point for English language education as English was seen as intimately connected to China's new direction of modernization, reform and opening to the outside world.

3.5.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

Deng Xiaoping became China's paramount leader in 1978 and set the country on a new course of development and modernization. This plan, known as the Four Modernizations, was aimed at agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology (Mackerras et al., 1998). China was once again open to the outside world and keen to institute a variety of reforms. This new direction became known as 'reform and opening up' or simply 'the open door policy'. In this phase, English was seen as by the government as essential for achieving modernization because it

provided access to scientific knowledge and recent technological developments, and also enabled China to communicate with other countries for business and other purposes (Adamson, 2004; Jin & Cortazzi, 2002; Ross, 1993).

The Ministry of Education convened a conference on foreign language education on 28 August 1978 which recommended that English should be restored as the main foreign language in China's education system (Mao & Min, 2004; Zheng & Davison, 2008). In this new climate, English language education recovered quickly from the neglect of the Cultural Revolution so that by 1981, in universities and colleges, there were 445 departments and institutes of foreign languages with a teaching staff of 8,628 and 31,089 full time students. Of these 24,368, or just over 78 %, majored in English (Yao, 1993). There were also developments at lower levels too, for example, a new syllabus and textbooks were developed for secondary schools (Adamson & Morris, 1997), and foreign teachers began coming to China again in 1977 (Yao, 1993). At the academic level, there was also a renewed interest in research, with the first ELT in China conference held in Guangzhou in 1985 (Lam, 2002).

Enthusiasm for learning English also reached a new high among the general public as proficiency in English became essential for education, employment, overseas travel and social prestige (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002). English language teaching television programs such as *Follow Me*, *Sunday English* and *Ying Ying Learns English* were watched by many millions of people eager to acquire the language for such purposes (Adamson, 2004; Zheng & Davison, 2008). English Corners, or gatherings in parks, squares and school or university grounds to practice speaking English, also originated during this phase (Adamson, 2004; Chen & Hird, 2006).

Despite the generally favourable official and popular views of English, and considerable efforts to revive English language education to aid China's modernization, concerns remained over the potential for English language learning to provide a conduit for ideas and practices perceived to be harmful to Chinese culture and communist party ideology. Such concerns were part of the Anti-Spiritual Pollution campaign of 1983–1984, during which some dramas, artworks and works of literature were banned (Adamson, 2004; Mackerras et al., 1998; Ross, 1993). Adamson (2004) recounts how, as a teacher at a college in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, during this time, he was told to stop using Western songs in his teaching and his students were told to only speak to him about English grammar and teaching methodology.

As the 1980s progressed, problems associated with reform and opening up such as corruption and inflation became much more apparent and far-reaching. Students and intellectuals, influenced by Western ideas of democracy, freedom and innovation, demanded more extensive political reforms and a number of large-scale student demonstrations took place around the country from 1986 onwards (Mackerras et al., 1998; Spence, 1990). The government had no intention of going any further in terms of political reforms and these tensions ultimately culminated in the Tiananmen Square Massacre of June 1989.

3.5.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

With China's opening up to the outside world and the resumption of recruiting Western teachers in the late 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) started to become known. CLT is also known as the Situational or Functional Approach in China (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Yao, 1993). Unlike the other methods discussed here, CLT is not so much a method but rather an approach to or position on the nature of language and language learning and teaching (Brown, 2007a). As such, "there is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 66). The essence of CLT is a view of language as a system of meaning and a way of communication rather than an abstract set of grammar rules. CLT practitioners therefore aim to develop their students' communicative competence, or ability to use English accurately, fluently and appropriately in a range of real life situations (Brown, 2007a). Teachers and other professionals involved in English language education began to experiment with CLT, and textbooks, television programs and courses based on this approach began appearing in the 1980s. One well-known example is the textbook series *Communicative English for Chinese learners*, developed by a group of Chinese scholars led by Li Xiaoju and introduced in 1984 (Rao, 2013). English language learning materials from Britain and America, such as *Essential English*, *Linguaphone* and *English for Today*, also became available to learners and opportunities to study in Western countries became more common (Lam, 2002).

3.6 English for International Stature: Early 1990s to the Present

In this phase, which continues to the present day, English continues to be linked to reform and opening up, as well as to China's efforts to play a greater role on the world stage.

3.6.1 Official and Popular Views of English and Major Developments in English Language Education

The Tiananmen Square Massacre was certainly very tragic and earned worldwide condemnation. However, despite predictions to the contrary, China was not deterred from its path of reform and opening up. By the early 1990s, China's political situation returned to stability and the economy continued to develop rapidly, with double figure increases in GDP for much of the decade (Mackerras et al., 1998; Meisner, 1999). All of China's post-Deng leaders – Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping – have continued with reform and opening up and look set to do so into the foreseeable future. Indeed, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Communist Party of China Central Committee, held from 9 to 12 November 2013, adopted over 300

measures aimed at continuing and expanding reform and opening up, including: permitting more private capital into the market; reforming the fiscal system; improving regional economic cooperation; opening cities in the interior and border regions for investment; and addressing corruption (People's Daily Online, 16/11/2013; Xinhua News Agency, 15/11/2013).

Unsurprisingly, English is still regarded as an essential requirement for China's reform and opening up, as reflected in recent policy directives. One of the most significant of these was the *Guidelines for Vigorously Promoting the Teaching of English in Primary Schools*, issued in January 2001, which specified that English language education would begin in Grade 3 of primary school in cities and suburban areas in autumn 2001 and in rural areas in autumn 2002 (Li, 2007; Hu, 2007; Wang, 2007). In some large and well-developed cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, English language education begins even earlier, in Grade 1 of primary school (Cheng, 2011). According to Hu (2007), there were five driving forces behind this new policy: the Ministry of Education's view that increasing the population's level of English language proficiency was necessary for China's continuing development and participation in globalization; broader reforms to China's education system aimed at introducing standards-based education; the desire to standardize existing practices in primary school English language education; the official and popular view that an earlier start in English language education would lead to better results; and then Vice Premier Li Lanqing's personal support for and involvement with the policy.

Two years earlier, the Ministry of Education's Department of Basic Education established a committee of experts to develop a standards-based curriculum for English language education in primary and secondary schools, known as the English Curriculum Standards (Hu, 2007; Cheng, 2011). These were first promulgated in the *English Curriculum Standards for Full-time Compulsory Education and Senior Secondary Schools (Trial Version)* of 2001, and the *English Curriculum Standards for Senior Secondary Schools (Trial Version)* of 2003. The English Curriculum Standards were revised in response to feedback from teachers, academics and administrators in 2011, the result being the *English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education*, which took effect in September 2012 (Gu, 2012; D. Zhang, 2012). The English Curriculum Standards consist of nine competence-based levels, each of which conceptualizes English language proficiency in terms of five areas: language skills (the four macroskills of speaking, listening, reading and writing); language knowledge (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, functions and topics); affect (international perspectives, patriotism, confidence, and motivation); learning strategies (communicative, resourcing, meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies); and cultural understanding (cultural knowledge, understanding of English-speaking cultures and awareness of cross-cultural differences) (Cheng, 2011; Gu, 2012; Wang, 2007). Specific targets are described in detail for all nine levels in the area of language skills, while specific targets for language knowledge, affect, learning strategies and cultural understanding are only described in detail for Levels 2, 5 and 8, the levels students are required to reach in order to graduate primary school, junior secondary school and senior secondary school (Gu, 2012). The intended purpose of

the English Curriculum Standards, as X. Cheng (2001), explains, is to develop "students' comprehensive competence in using the English language" (p. 138) rather than merely "mastering knowledge and skills" (p. 137).

Another significant policy directive was the Ministry of Education's circular of September 2001, *Guidelines for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Teaching*, requiring all universities and colleges to use English as the medium of instruction for 5–10 % of courses within three years (Feng, 2009). This practice is called *shuangyu jiaoyu* (bilingual education) or *shuangyu jiaoxue* (bilingual instruction) in Chinese (Hu, 2009). This trend has also reached lower levels of education, with some primary and secondary schools designating English as the medium of instruction for science and mathematics courses (Hu, 2009; Hu & Alsagoff, 2010).

In addition to the ongoing emphasis on modernization and opening up, English is now also seen as enabling China to take a greater role in world affairs and to encourage positive international images of the country, a role Lam (2005) refers to as "English for international stature" (p. 82). For example, in preparation for the 2001 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Shanghai, the Shanghai government organized English language courses to enable the city's residents to use 100 basic English sentences for communication with foreign visitors, and also launched new English language teaching television programs, radio programs and newspaper columns (People's Daily Online, 25/04/2000). Similarly, the Beijing government sponsored English language training courses for civil servants, while Beijing Television Station broadcast the English language teaching program *Gateway to English*, and the Beijing People's Broadcasting Station broadcast *Beijingers' 100 English Sentences* in the preparation period for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The governmental organization called the Beijing Foreign Language Committee also began running the annual Foreign Language Week and Beijing Foreign Language Festival, both of which include English public speaking competitions, performances and recruitment of volunteer teachers, in 2001 (Cheng & Wang, 2012). All of these initiatives were intended to equip the city's population with sufficient English to communicate with foreign athletes and visitors (People's Daily Online, 30/05/2000; 05/12/2000; *South China Morning Post*, 28/07/2001).

Public enthusiasm for English is equally high, perhaps more so than at any other time. Indeed, some people are willing to go to extraordinary lengths in their pursuit of proficiency in the language. According to a report in the *People's Daily Online* (18/06/2002), some students in Shanghai went to the Ren-ai Hospital and asked for tongue operations so they could have perfect English pronunciation. This procedure is called a frenectomy and involves cutting the tongue's membrane in order to lengthen it. In South Korea, where the procedure is particularly popular, many believe that it will enable one to distinguish between the sounds/l/and/r/(Abley, 2003). There are, however, no linguistic grounds for this belief and it should be noted that the doctors at Ren-ai Hospital refused to perform the operation because there was nothing wrong with the students' tongues (*People's Daily Online*, 18/06/2002).

Apprehensions over the spread and use of English within China have also emerged again in recent times among academics, the government and the general

public. The 2001 decision to begin English language education in Grade 3 of primary school, for example, prompted a series of opinion pieces by academics in the influential *Guangming Daily* newspaper raising concerns regarding teacher training, student workload, teaching methodology and teaching materials (Hu, 2007). In 2004, the Shanghai Education Commission banned kindergartens from teaching through English only and ruled that children who had attended such kindergartens would not be admitted to local primary schools. The Commission stated that Chinese should be the main focus of education at this level and only those kindergartens it considered appropriately qualified would be permitted to offer extracurricular English courses. The Vice-Director of the Commission's Elementary Education Department expressed concerns over the lack of qualified English teachers and appropriate teaching material, as well as claiming that too much English at an early age could potentially have negative effects on children's language learning in the future (*China Daily Online*, 16/03/2004). Also in 2004, some academics refused to participate in the English language tests required for promotion and the granting of professional titles because they believed their ability to contribute to their chosen discipline should not be judged on the basis of their English language proficiency (*People's Daily Online*, 12/04/2004).

More recently, the General Administration of Press and Publications issued an announcement in December 2010 stating that the inclusion of words and acronyms from English and other foreign languages would not be permitted in materials published in Chinese within China because this practice could damage the Chinese language and culture (W. Zhang, 2012). Similarly, in 2012, more than 100 linguists and other scholars signed a petition asking for English words and acronyms to be taken out of the latest edition of the widely used *Modern Chinese dictionary*. The signatories of the petition claimed that allowing English words and acronyms into the dictionary would eventually lead Chinese to degenerate into an impure mixture of Chinese and English (China.org.cn, 2012). An even more direct statement was made by former Ministry of Education spokesman Wang Xuming in September 2013. Wang argued that English classes in primary schools should be cancelled and replaced with Chinese classes because the public's enthusiasm for learning English was leading them to neglect Chinese (People's Daily Online, 15/10/2013).

On October 21 2013, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education proposed a reform to the National College Entrance Examination and senior high school entrance examinations which would see the marks allocated to English reduced from 150 to 100, and the marks allocated to Chinese increased from 150 to 180, a reform aimed at giving all students a fair opportunity to continue their education and reducing students' workloads, while authorities in Jiangsu Province were considering removing English from the National College Entrance Examination altogether (People's Daily Online, 15/10/2013, 22/10/2013, 29/11/2013). Later in the same year, the Ministry of Education announced that English would be removed from the National College Entrance Examination by the year 2020, and replaced by English tests held a number of times each year in order to give students the best chance of succeeding. Trials of this reform are already underway in some provinces and cities, and it is expected to be expanded to the whole of China from 2017

onwards (*Shanghai Daily Online*, 09/12/2013). While these incidents certainly raise some valid points – particularly in regards to the resources required for successful implementation of English language education policies – they may also indicate an unwillingness to let English penetrate too far into the social, cultural and linguistic fabric of China.

3.6.2 Teaching Methodology and the Learning Experience

English language education in this phase is characterized by eclecticism rather than one single method, with a variety of different methods and versions of methods in use (Yao, 1993). While CLT continued to be much discussed and debated by Chinese scholars, including an entire issue of the journal *Foreign Language World* devoted to the topic (Yi, 2004), interest in other teaching approaches and techniques also increased, most notably task-based language teaching (TBLT). In TBLT, language learning and teaching occurs through the completion of a series of pedagogic tasks which aim to prepare learners for real world language use (Brown, 2007b; Nunan, 1999). According to Nunan (1999), "a pedagogic task is a piece of classroom work having a beginning, middle, and an end, and a focus principally (although not exclusively) on meaning" (p. 315). Completing application forms, responding to invitations and supplying information in job interviews are all examples of the kinds of tasks which may be done in TBLT classrooms (Brown, 2007b; Nunan, 1999). TBLT is the recommended teaching approach in many recent policy documents, including the English Curriculum Standards.

In recent years there have also been attempts to incorporate computer technology into English language education in schools and universities. These range from using computer technology to supplement more traditional teaching practices, such as by providing additional reading and listening materials online or by using PowerPoint slides to present grammar structures, through to project-based courses which require students to conduct research using the Internet, communicate with fellow students, teachers and native speakers via email and develop their own web pages (Li & Walsh, 2010; Xu & Warschauer, 2004). The former approach currently seems to be far more common, due to issues such as the time and effort required to develop courses using computer technology, teachers' lack of training and/or confidence in using computer technology to teach English and commonly held student and teacher beliefs which favour more traditional methods of teaching (Li & Walsh, 2010; Xu & Warschauer, 2004).

English language education has also expanded beyond state run institutions, with private enterprise emerging as a major trend in the delivery of English language education during this phase. Many privately run English language schools, training institutions and programs, such as Wall Street English, New Oriental Education and Technology Group, Buckland College, and Li Yang's Crazy English, now operate on a large-scale throughout China (Bolton & Graddol, 2012; Lai, 2001). It is not uncommon for parents who can afford to do so to pay large amounts of money for their children to attend such schools or, alternatively, to hire university students,

postgraduate students and native English speakers to tutor their children (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002; Li, 2012). Related to this trend, recent years have also seen increased demand for courses such as English for Business, English for Foreign Trade and English for International Legal Studies as China's integration with the global economy intensifies (Yang, 2001).

Because of the prevailing official and popular views of English and the activities surrounding English language education, English now has a significant presence in China's education system. The next section provides an overview of the current place of English in the education system from kindergarten to university. As some Chinese people will continue to encounter English in their personal and professional lives once they have completed formal education, some attention is also given to this topic.

As will be seen, China shares trends towards the commencement of English language education in primary schools; emphasis on the development of communicative competence and the introduction of English medium instruction with other Asian countries such as Japan (Glasgow & Paller this volume), South Korea (Chung & Choi this volume; Piller & Cho, 2013), Thailand (Kaur, Young & Kirkpatrick this volume) and Vietnam (Bui & Nguyen this volume).

4 Overview of English in China's Education System

Most Chinese children attend kindergarten from the ages of three to six. Children then go to primary school for six years, between the ages of six and eleven. Junior secondary school then takes up three years, and senior secondary school another three years. Alternatively, students may go to a vocational school after they complete primary school. There are also specialist and vocational secondary schools, which may focus on agriculture, engineering, foreign languages or teacher training, among many other disciplines. Primary and junior secondary school are compulsory, and since 2007, these nine years of compulsory education have been free for all students. After senior secondary school students have the opportunity to go to university. There are three types of university in China: the normal university,[1] which focuses on teacher training; the specialist university, which teaches and researchers only in a particular discipline such as commerce, engineering or foreign languages; and the comprehensive university, which teaches and researchers across all the main disciplines within the social sciences, humanities and natural sciences (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Ji, 2012; Mackerras, 2006).

English language education has a presence at all of these levels of education. The target variety is almost always British or American English, with textbooks and

[1] Normal university is the accepted English translation of the Chinese term *shifan daxue*, which literally means teacher training university. For example, *beijing shifan daxue* is rendered in English as Beijing Normal University, rather than Beijing Teacher Training University. Many normal universities are highly prestigious and respected institutions.

other learning materials rarely incorporating linguistic or cultural content from non-native English-speaking countries (Wen, 2012; Xu, 2002).

4.1 Kindergarten and Primary School

While not universal, many kindergartens, especially in the larger and more developed cities, have English classes featuring songs, games and toys (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). In primary school, English is compulsory from Grade 3 onwards. In 2012, there were 16,152,389 students enrolled in Grade 3, 15,429,664 enrolled in Grade 4, 15,804,784 enrolled in Grade 5 and 15,538,895 enrolled in Grade 6 (Ministry of Education, 2012a), with 364,589 English teachers (Ministry of Education, 2012b), making the scale of primary school English language education very large indeed. According to the *Basic Requirement for Primary School English* issued by the Ministry of Education in 2001, students in Grades 3 and 4 should receive two class hours of English per week, which should be divided into four shorter periods of 20–30 min, for a total of no less than 80 min of English. Students in Grades 5 and 6 should receive four class hours of English per week (Feng, 2009; Wang, 2002). The curriculum consists of two levels of the English Curriculum Standards, with Level 1 covering Grades 3 and 4, and Level 2 covering Grades 5 and 6. Students are required to meet Level 2 in order to graduate from primary school. Both levels contain components on speaking, listening, reading, writing, playing and acting and audio and visual, with an emphasis on enabling students to be able to use English for basic communication and everyday interactions (Feng, 2009; Gu, 2012; Wang, 2002). No particular teaching methodology is mandated, but the *Basic Requirement for Primary School English* does emphasise learning through doing and enjoyable activities such as singing and playing, as well as the use of formative assessment over examination-based assessment (Wang, 2002). The most popular textbooks at the primary level include *Standard English*, published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, and *PEP Primary English* and *Starting Line*, published by the People's Education Press (Li, 2007). The policy documents also specify that students should undertake independent language learning activities outside of class with the assistance of their school and parents. These may include English competitions, broadcasting English songs on school grounds, online communication with fellow students and a log of students' English practice kept by parents (Liu, 2012).

4.2 Junior Secondary School

English language education is similarly compulsory throughout junior secondary school, where in 2012 there were 47,630,607 students enrolled and 544,691 teachers of English (Ministry of Education, 2012c, 2012d). Junior secondary school students receive four class hours of English per week in all three years, with Grade 7

focusing on Level 3 of the English Curriculum Standards, Grade 8 focusing on Level 4 and Grade 9 focusing on Level 5. All junior secondary school graduates are required to reach Level 5 in order to graduate, and are assessed through an external examination (Feng, 2009; Gu, 2012; Wang & Lam, 2009). The curriculum also requires students to undertake language learning activities outside of class, and states that they should read a total of 100,000 words independently during their junior secondary school years (Liu, 2012).

4.3 Senior Secondary School

In senior secondary school, students continue to receive four class hours of English per week in all three years (Feng, 2009; Wang & Lam, 2009). English language education in senior secondary school puts "special emphasis on developing students' skills in using English to obtain and process information, to analyse and solve problems, and to think and express themselves" (Wang & Chen, 2012, p. 92). Senior secondary school covers Levels 6–9 of the English Curriculum Standards, with all students required to attain Level 7 in order to graduate, those wishing to attend university required to attain Level 8, and those attending specialist foreign language schools required to attain Level 9. In all cases, students are assessed through an external examination (Gu, 2012; Wang & Chen, 2012). English is taught through a course called Basic Comprehensive English, which is divided into five modules, and covers ten teaching weeks. Completion of Modules 1–5 satisfies the requirements of Level 7. Students then have the option to continue studying English by taking the course Advanced Comprehensive English, of which Modules 6–8 satisfy the requirements of Level 8, and Modules 9–11, for students in specialist foreign language schools, satisfy the requirements of Level 9. In addition to these two courses, all senior secondary schools are supposed to provide "free elective courses" in three streams: language knowledge and skills training (for example, newspaper reading, public speaking, grammar and rhetoric); English for Specific Purposes (for example Tourism English, Science English, Business English) and English films, drama and poetry courses (Wang & Chen, p. 94).

The most popular textbooks at the secondary level are the *Junior English for China* and *Senior English for China* series, jointly produced by the People's Education Press and Longman International (Zheng & Adamson, 2003). These textbooks attempt to combine CLT with the more traditional practices still prevalent in China through a teaching sequence called the Five Steps: revision, presentation, controlled practice, production and consolidation (Zheng & Adamson, 2003). Independent learning activities for senior secondary school students are expected to focus on independent learning skills and enjoyment of English learning, and may include participation in school dramas and independent reading (Liu, 2012).

While the number of students and teachers at this level of education is not as high as junior secondary school and primary school, it is nevertheless significant. There were 24,671,712 students enrolled in senior secondary schools and 239,441 English teachers in 2012 (Ministry of Education, 2012e, 2012f).

At the end of senior secondary school, students wishing to continue on to university must take the important National College Entrance Examination, which includes an English language test known as the Matriculation English Test (Hu, 2002; Zheng & Adamson, 2003). The Matriculation English Test consists of a number of sections with different types of questions. These are: multiple choice questions on discrete grammar items and a cloze test, which together are worth 30 %; reading comprehension, which is worth 27 %; error correction questions and a written composition, which together are worth 23 %; and listening comprehension, which is worth 20 % (Zheng & Adamson).

4.4 University

Once at university, every student must study English for at least one year. There are two English language programs, one for students who major in English, and the other for students who major in another field (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Yao, 1993; Wen, 2012). The Ministry of Education's statistics show that in 2012 there were 810,846 undergraduate students studying a foreign language, although specific figures for English and majors and non-majors are not given (Ministry of Education, 2012g).

4.4.1 English Majors

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, there were already more than 300 established English major programs at universities in China (Cheng & Wang, 2012). English majors study English throughout the four years of their degree. This program is made up of eight bands taken in two stages. Stage One covers Bands 1–4 and Stage Two covers the advanced levels, Bands 5–8. Typically, English majors at comprehensive universities have around 20 teaching hours per week with intensive reading, extensive reading, listening, oral English, writing and translating/interpreting as the main components of the program (Wang, 1999; Yao, 1993). After two years of study, all English majors must pass the Test for English Majors 4 (TEM-4) to be eligible to graduate (Cheng, 2008; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Yao, 1993). Following the first two years of study, additional courses are offered, including drama, poetry and literature, and the above mentioned English courses continue at an advanced level (Yao, 1993). In their fourth year of study English majors are also expected to sit the Test for English Majors 8 (TEM-8). Passing this test is commonly believed to help students' chances of securing employment in jobs requiring English (Cheng, 2008). A similar pattern is followed at other kinds of university, although specialist foreign language universities often place more emphasis on speaking and listening, while English majors at normal universities also take courses on teaching methodology to prepare for their future careers teaching English at school or university (Cheng & Wang, 2012). In total, English majors can expect to receive approximately 2,000 classes during their degrees (Wen, 2012).

Here too the emphasis of English language education is developing English skills for use in real life situations. In fact, the Ministry of Education's Department of Higher Education required university English language programs to focus on producing students able to communicate through spoken and written English upon graduation in a 2004 announcement (Cheng & Wang, 2012).

4.4.2 Non-English Majors

The English language program for non-English majors is called College English and its requirements are somewhat less stringent than those for English majors (Wang, 1999). According to the *College English Curriculum Requirements* adopted nationally in 2007, English language education must make up 10 % of the total number of credits students require to earn an undergraduate degree (Feng, 2009). This generally works out to four class hours of English per week (Wen, 2012). The College English curriculum emphasizes speaking and listening, and aims to produce students who can use English in work and study situations; study independently; and have cultural knowledge to facilitate China's development and international connections (Li, 2012). The College English program allows some flexibility, with three levels of study. Students in this program are allocated to either the Basic, Intermediate or High stream based on a placement test administered when they first begin university. Those in the High stream can study College English for one year only, and subject to satisfactory performance, may then take optional English courses. Those in the Intermediate stream are required to study College English for one and a half years, and can also take optional English courses thereafter subject to satisfactory performance. Students in the Basic stream must study College English for a full two years (Li, 2012). Each stream covers speaking, listening, reading, writing and translation, and teachers are encouraged to use computer technology and formative assessment (Feng, 2009; Li, 2012).

All non-English majors must pass the College English Test 4 (CET-4) in order to receive their degrees. The CET-4 tests listening comprehension, reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar structures through multiple choice, cloze tests and writing. Students also have the option of taking the more advanced College English Test 6 (CET-6) as a means of increasing their chances of finding a well-paid job in a large Chinese company, joint venture, foreign owned enterprise or government department, and some universities also require this test for entry into a Masters degree (Feng, 2009; Li, 2012; Yao, 1993; Wang, 1999). Many students do indeed take these tests for such purposes, with 312,000 candidates sitting the CET-4 and CET-6 in the spring semester of 2008 and 332,000 in the autumn semester of 2008 in Shanghai alone, many of whom had already passed and just wanted to increase their scores (Cheng & Wang, 2012). Since 1999, a CET oral test, called the CET Spoken English Test (CET-SET), has been available in some places in China, although it is not compulsory and is only available to those who score above 80 % on the CET-4 and above 75 % on the CET-6 (Cheng, 2008; Yao, 1993; Zhu, 2003). A greater number of listening comprehension questions have also been included in both the CET-4 and CET-6 since 2007 (Cheng & Wang, 2012).

University students, whether they are English majors or not, are likewise expected to participate in language learning activities outside of class, which are often organized by the university's English Club. An English Club's activities may include a weekly English Corner; regular screening of English-language films; English speaking and writing competitions; and production of a club website (Liu, 2012).

4.5 *Bilingual Instruction*

It is also likely that students in university and some secondary and primary schools will receive some of their courses through English as the medium of instruction (Feng, 2009; Hu & Alsagoff, 2010). The Ministry of Education's website lists 34 universities offering courses through English as the medium of instruction in various areas across the sciences (for example physics, chemistry, environmental science, botany and zoology); engineering (for example structural engineering, marine engineering, thermal engineering and chemical engineering); medicine (for example surgery, paediatrics, anaesthesiology and traditional Chinese medicine); business (for example international trade, business administration, finance and accounting); law (for example criminal law, civil commercial law, procedural law and international law); and humanities and social sciences (for example international relations, modern and contemporary Chinese history, comparative education, and foreign linguistics and applied linguistics) (Ministry of Education, n.d.).

In practice, however, these may range from courses predominately taught through Chinese with English used only for classroom management and giving equivalents to key terms and concepts; courses mainly taught through Chinese with English used for some supplementary explanations, descriptions and examples; courses mainly taught through English with Chinese used for explaining difficult or complex terms and concepts; and courses completely or almost completely taught through English (Hu & Alsagoff, 2010). This also appears to be the case in other Asian countries where English medium instruction has been introduced, as reported by Glasgow and Paller in their chapter on Japan, Ramanathan in her chapter on India and Phyak in his chapter on Nepal. All of these authors raise serious questions about the quality and effectiveness of English medium instruction which apply equally to China.

4.6 *English Beyond Formal Education*

Once students complete their formal education, English is still likely to play a role in their personal and professional lives. For example, the Foreign Language Test (WSK) is required for further studies within China, overseas study and promotion for teachers who did not major in English, while the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Test of

English for International Communication (TOEIC) or Business English Certificate (BEC) may be required for better jobs, overseas corporate postings and overseas corporate training and further studies at foreign universities (Cheng, 2008; Jiang, 2003; Li, 2012).

The education system is obviously the main means through which the Chinese learn English, and the place of English within it has become so prevalent that learning the language is now arguably "part of what it means to be a Chinese citizen" (Zhang & Zeegers, 2010, p. 183). This section also suggests that English plays a significant gatekeeping role within education and employment, and can have an important effect on people's lives. What are the results of China's English language education policy? The next section will explore policy outcomes with particular reference to language practices.

5 Policy Outcomes

English language education policy is particularly relevant to two aspects of language practices, namely the uses of English in China and the population's levels of proficiency in English and degree of English usage.

5.1 The Uses of English in China

While English is not an official language and does not play a dominant role in domains such as government, law and business as it does in places such as Hong Kong (Jeon this volume), Singapore (Ng this volume), Pakistan (Manan & David this volume) and India (Ramanathan this volume), it nevertheless has a greater presence and is used more within China today than at any other time in the past. The official and popular stance on English and English language education has undoubtedly contributed to this state of affairs. Several major domains in which English has a notable presence are briefly surveyed here by way of indication.

5.1.1 Research, Scholarship and Publication

English is often used in research, at conferences, in joint projects with foreign scholars, for reading technical manuals and journals, and meeting or negotiating with foreign visitors across many academic disciplines, although some use English more than others (Gil & Adamson, 2011).

Academic works produced within China use English to varying degrees. It is common for academic journals to have journal names, table of contents, article titles and abstracts in English, while some of the most prominent universities and research institutes publish academic journals entirely in English (Gil & Adamson, 2011). According to Montgomery (2013), by the year 2010, there were more than 200

Chinese academic journals published entirely in English. There are also many book length works written in English by Chinese scholars. In the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics, for example, the conference proceedings for *ELT in China* 1985 and 1992 are both in English, while other titles include *Linguistic and cultural identities in Chinese varieties of English* (Pan, 2005) and *Applied linguistics: Language learning and teaching* (Yi, 2004). In the field of environmental studies, book length works in English include *Environment and development in China: Review and prospective* (High-level Task Force of Environment und Development in China: Review und Prospective, 2007), and in the field of international relations *30 years of reform and opening-up: Evolution and prospects of China's international environment and its foreign affairs – Papers from the Forum on International Situation 2008* (Ma, 2009). Such works are produced in English for a variety of reasons, including to: enable them to be read by an international audience; gain the prestige of publication in English for their authors and publishers; and use such works in courses taught through English as the medium of instruction.

Editions of well-known foreign works, published through cooperation between foreign and Chinese publishers for use by Chinese students, teachers and researchers, are also commonly stocked in bookstores around China. These include the Oxford Introductions to Language Study series, the Thomson English Language Teachers' Book series and the Cambridge Books for Language Teachers series, among others (Gil, 2005, 2008).

5.1.2 Media

It is now possible to find some English used in every kind of media format within China, including print, radio, television and the Internet (Gil & Adamson, 2011; Guo & Huang, 2002). Newspapers and magazines such as *China Daily*, *Beijing Review*, *Shanghai Star*, *Shanghai Daily*, *Beijing Weekend*, *21st Century English* and *The World of English* have large readerships both domestically and internationally (Gil & Adamson, 2011; Guo & Huang, 2002).

China Central Television News (CCTV News), formerly known as China Central Television 9 (CCTV 9), is China's all English television channel. CCTV News began broadcasting on 25 September 2000, and features a range of programs including documentaries, entertainment and news (CCTV News, n.d.). A small amount of English language programs, such as news, movies or documentaries, can also be found on other channels (Gil, 2008). China Radio International's English Service broadcasts over 600 h of programming per day around the world. Its programs include music, news and features (China Radio International, n.d.).

All of the media outlets mentioned here – as well as many others – also have websites, making vast amounts of English-language material available to anyone in China with an Internet connection. According to the China Internet Statistics Whitepaper, there were 632 million Internet users in China as of June 2014 (China Internet Watch, 2015). While not all of these users will view English-language content, these figures nevertheless indicate the scope of Internet use within China and its potential as a means for accessing such content.

5.1.3 Business

English is used in joint ventures operating in China and also in business dealings between Chinese and foreign companies. Some uses of English in the business domain include email, fax and telephone communication; writing contracts and letters; completing forms; and reading and researching professional or specialist business literature (Li & Moreira, 2009; Pang, Zhou, & Fu, 2002). The extent to which English is used and the number of people who use English does of course vary from one place to another and one company to another.

Many businesses operating within China have English names displayed alongside their Chinese names. These include foreign companies such as *McDonalds*, *KFC* and *Pizza Hut*, and Chinese businesses such as *China Telecom*, *China Mobile*, *Bank of China*, and *Commercial and Industrial Bank of China* (Gil & Adamson, 2011).

5.1.4 Tourism

Tourism is a huge industry in China, with large numbers of tourists from many countries visiting each year. In 2014, over 128 million tourists visited China (Travel China Guide, 2015). English is very commonly used for communicating with foreign tourists in hotels, tour groups, travel agencies and some service industries (Gil & Adamson, 2011). The following is a conversation observed by the author between two foreign tourists and a Chinese employee at a China Post branch in central Beijing in 2010:

Foreign tourist:	Hello, we need an envelope.
China Post employee:	Envelope.
Foreign tourist:	Yes, for a CD. An envelope with air bubbles.
China Post employee:	Like this?
Foreign tourist:	Smaller. Like this but smaller.
China Post employee:	This is the small one.
Foreign tourist:	OK, we can use that. How much?
China Post employee:	Two yuan.
Foreign tourist:	Thank you.

Announcements at domestic and international airports (for example flight arrival, departure and boarding times) and on-board announcements (for example welcome aboard, time of arrival at destination, turbulence and safety demonstrations) are made in English as well as Chinese. English also has a presence in the public transport systems of some cities, where announcements about destinations, travel routes and safety precautions may be made on buses, subways or light rail trains (Gil & Adamson, 2011). For example, on some buses in the northeastern city of Changchun, next stop announcements are made first in Chinese then in English, "the next stop is coming. Guilin Road is coming" (Gil, 2008, p. 6).

Signs in English can be seen at almost all tourist attractions. The following example is from a sign at the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base in Chengdu, Sichuan Province:

PLEASE PROCEED QUIETLY
AND STAY ON TRAILS
ANIMALS FRIGHTEN EASILY (Gil, 2008, p. 6)

English is also common in the downtown shopping areas of large cities, such as the following examples from in and around Chunxi Road, Chengdu's main shopping street:

GOOD WOOD COFFEE
T.K.K. FRIED CHIKEN
CKC ICE CREAM
SYDNEY STYLISTIC COFFEE
SELF SERVICE BANKING
FOOT ZONE
HONGQI CHAIN STORE (Gil, 2008, p. 6)

Many street vendors and stall holders in such places are able to use English words and phrases to attract the attention of and bargain with foreign tourists (Gil & Adamson, 2011; Pride & Liu, 1988; Zhao & Campbell, 1995). In the author's experience, some of the most commonly heard words and phrases include: "hello", "look, look" and "how much?"

5.1.5 Literature and Creative Arts

Fictional and autobiographical works written in English by Chinese writers began to appear in the first few decades of the twentieth century. There were only a small number of such works, with *Moments in Peking* by Lin Yutang, *The rice-sprout song* by Chang Ailing and *The mountain village* by Ye Junjian among the most notable examples (Pan, 2005; Zhang, 2002). Since the mid-1980s, however, a much larger number of such works have appeared. Some of the best known examples include *Wild swans* by Jung Chang; *Waiting*, *The bridegroom* and *In the pond* by Ha Jin; and *Colours of the mountain* by Da Chen (Pan, 2005). All of these works use English to present Chinese experience through the use of Chinese settings, characters and historical events; Chinese metaphors, proverbs and sayings; Chinese discourse patterns; and the blending of Chinese and English (Pan, 2005; Zhang, 2002). English language creative writing courses have also been offered at some Chinese universities since the late 2000s, and according to Dai (2012), the work students produce in such courses makes use of some of these features to relate students' experiences, such as relationships, important life decisions and personal struggles.

English also features in contemporary pop music, with many Chinese artists incorporating English words, phrases and sentences into their songs for various purposes such as enhancing the song's appeal to the audience; reflecting the language practices of both the artist and the audience; and expressing a modern, multilingual identity (Smart, 2013).

In everyday interaction, English is sometimes used in jokes, puns and plays on words by Chinese people. During the SARS epidemic of 2003, for example, the author observed several amusing interpretations of the acronym SARS written by students in various locations around the campus of a major Chinese university. One suggested SARS stood for "Smile and Remain Smile", while another suggested SARS was a computer term which stood for "Start Abort Reboot Start". A third example claimed SARS was advice for those in trouble with their girlfriends, and stood for "Sorry And Repeat Sorry" (Gil, 2005, p. 137).

The Internet is also a site of much creativity in the use of English. The mixing of English words, idioms, collocations and complete sentences with Chinese is very common among university students and young white collar workers on social networking sites such as *Sina Weibo*, the equivalent of Twitter in China, and *Douban*, a Facebook-like site (W. Zhang, 2012). Such code mixing is used for many reasons, including to build a sense of community; amuse other Internet users; and satirize social norms and practices (W. Zhang). Such uses of English reflect the pluralistic view of English discussed above.

5.2 Levels of Proficiency in English and Degree of English Usage

Statistics on the number of people who speak English and how well they do so are very difficult to come by. There are, for example, no questions in the Chinese census about proficiency in foreign languages, and statistical compilations such as the *China statistical yearbook* contain no data on language. To date, the best available source is the large-scale Survey of Language Situation in China, conducted from 1999 to 2001 through the collaboration of eleven ministerial-level government bodies, and believed to be generalizable to the whole population of China, excluding Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan (Wei & Su, 2012). Since the publication of some of the survey results in 2006, scholars such as Wei und Su have produced research which analyzes the results and relates them to issues of the presence of English in China. This section draws primarily on Wei und Su's analysis to give an indication of the number of people who use English and levels of English language proficiency in China, and supplements this with the work of other scholars.

5.2.1 Number of People Who Regularly Use English Still Low

Based on their analysis of the survey results, Wei und Su (2012) report that almost 33 % of China's population, or some 415.95 million people, had studied at least one foreign language, with the vast majority, 93.8 %, having studied English. However, the percentage of these people who actually use English in their daily lives is quite low, with only 7.3 % claiming to often use English and 23.3 % claiming to

sometimes use English. Some larger, well-developed cities, such as Chongqing and Tianjin, did have higher percentages of people claiming to often or sometimes use English than the national average. Other smaller-scale surveys also support these findings. Pang et al.'s (2002) survey of 360 business professionals in Zhejiang Province showed that only a limited number of them used English for fax and email communication and writing contracts. Most of those surveyed used English for fairly limited purposes, such as filling in forms with figures, single words or phrases, or reading specialist literature. In addition, only 13 % of the business professionals surveyed reported they had very good English; 60 % reported they had satisfactory English; 21 % reported they had poor English; and 6 % reported they had very poor English (Pang et al.). These results are quite revealing as Zhejiang is a well-developed coastal province. It is therefore reasonable to assume that English is used even less and levels of proficiency are lower in the less developed interior provinces and rural and remote areas of China. This is not unlike the remote regions of Vietnam discussed in Bui and Nguyen's chapter, where few students use English outside of class, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Other similarities in the degree of English usage can be found with some of the other Asian countries covered in this volume. In their chapter on South Korea, for example, Chung and Choi report that the majority of the population do not use English very much at all despite its prevalence in domains such as popular culture, newspapers and television and radio broadcasts, while Kaur, Young and Kirkpatrick describe how only a small fraction of Thailand's population use English, and how even those who do have limited proficiency in the language for use in a small number of domains, mainly related to tourism.

5.2.2 Number of Functional English-Speakers Still Low

As touched on above, the type of proficiency also needs to be considered. One observation commonly made about Chinese learners of English is that they are often weak in communicative ability. In other words, they may know a lot about English but have difficulties using it in a real life situation. Yang (2006) reviewed several surveys and studies and concluded that a considerable percentage of Chinese secondary school and university graduates could not use English to communicate effectively. Although 88.9 % of participants in Li and Moreira's (2009) survey of 296 people working in companies in various regions of China claimed to use English in their daily lives, the main use of English was for reading, and 78 % of participants reported that cultural and language barriers were the biggest difficulty they experienced when communicating in English.

Wei und Su's (2012) study offers some support here too. A total of only 21 % of respondents who had studied English claimed to be able to speak English well enough to do anything more than say simple greetings, such as interpret on formal occasions (1.8 %); converse fairly fluently (3.53 %); and hold everyday conversations (15.61 %). 17.54 % were able to say a few words while 61.54 % could say a few greetings. For reading, a total of 72 % of respondents who had studied English

claimed to be able to understand at least simple words (made up of 43.23 % able to understand simple sentences and 28.04 % able to recognise only a few English words), while a total of 29 % claimed a level of reading ability sufficient for beyond basic tasks such as reading English-language books and periodicals unaided (3.26 %); reading English-language books and periodicals with reliance on dictionaries and other such aids (12.67 %); and comprehending simple reading passages (12.8 %).

Similarly, the Education First (EF) English Proficiency Index placed China in the low proficiency group, ranking 33rd out of the 60 countries surveyed. By way of comparison with the other Asian countries covered in this volume for which English Proficiency Index data exists, China is behind Malaysia at 11th; Singapore at 12th (both in the high proficiency group); India at 21st; Hong Kong at 22nd; South Korea at 24th; Indonesia at 25th; Japan at 26th; and Vietnam at 28th (all in the moderate proficiency group); Sri Lanka at 30th (also in the low proficiency group); but ahead of Thailand at 55th (in the very low proficiency group) (Education First, 2013). It would therefore be a mistake to assume that the emphasis given to English in the education system has led China to become an English-speaking nation, or that English has displaced Chinese to any significant extent, as the destructive view of English suggests.

These findings suggest that English language education in China has not been entirely successful in achieving its desired results. In addition, the complex socio-linguistic situation of China also presents other challenges which may affect English language education policy. These are detailed in the next section.

6 Policy Challenges and Possible Future Trends

Three significant policy challenges are identified here, along with tentative suggestions regarding the direction they may take in the future. These policy challenges are the attainment of communicative competence; the provision of English language education for ethnic minorities; and the worldwide promotion of Chinese language learning.

6.1 Attainment of Communicative Competence

While it may be that the latest reforms to English language education have not had sufficient time to work, there are a number of obstacles to achieving the desired results. To begin with, there are certain “objectively observable pragmatic features” (Tudor, 2001, p. 18) of the Chinese context that inhibit this kind of teaching.

6.1.1 English Language Examinations

Perhaps the most significant obstacle is the various English language examinations students are required to take during and after their studies, many of which still emphasize formal knowledge of English over communicative ability (Rao, 2013). These exams, while important to students and teachers alike as they determine entrance to university, job opportunities, funding for schools and universities and salary increases for teachers (Campbell & Zhao, 1993; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Wang, 1999), have become so pervasive that in many cases "classroom procedures have focused more on test-taking tricks than on cultivating students' communicative competence" (Wang, p. 48). Using different techniques "can expose English teachers to the danger of disadvantaging their students in the examination" (Hird, 1995, p. 24), so any teacher who wants to implement a different methodology must show the institution, students and parents that the method they wish to try will prepare students properly for the various examinations (Campbell & Zhao, 1993; Rao, 2013). The English sections of the Korean Scholastic Ability Test (KSAT), Japanese university entrance examinations and various school examinations in Hong Kong and India, which also focus on receptive skills and formal knowledge of the language, have similar backwash effects on English language education (Chung & Choi this volume; Glasgow & Paller this volume; Jeon this volume; Ramanathan this volume), sometimes to the extent that classes intended to be used for teaching communication skills are instead used for examination preparation (Glasgow & Paller this volume).

6.1.2 Lack of Prestige for Communicative Teaching and Learning

Tied in with this is the fact that those teachers who teach grammar, linguistics and literature have more prestige than teachers who aim to teach English for communicative purposes (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Wang, 1999; Xu & Warschauer, 2004). There is also a belief among some English teachers that communicative methods are useful for teaching students who want to go to English-speaking countries but have limited application for teaching those who want to work within China (Burnaby & Sun, 1989).

6.1.3 Lack of Resources and Qualified Teachers

Many schools in China simply do not have the resources or appropriately qualified staff to teach communicatively. Demand for learning English is high, but since the reform and opening up era commenced, there has been a shortage of qualified teachers as many talented students seek employment in areas more lucrative than teaching:

> For those Chinese with ability in English language there are exciting opportunities in business, trade, interpreting, law and tourism. On the other hand, English teaching offers few attractions or rewards even for well-qualified teachers. The promotion system is still heavily based on seniority, and staffing procedures make movement between schools – both within regions and between rural and urban areas –cumbersome and difficult (Hird, 1995, p. 25).

This has meant that novice teachers with little training and experience are sometimes recruited. For example, some of those teaching College English generally have only an undergraduate degree in English language and literature and many have not had any formal teacher training (Zhu, 2003). More specifically, many teachers have not received training on the nature and application of the communicative approach, which is also an issue in Japan (Glasgow & Paller this volume) and India (Ramanathan this volume).

Even if teachers are not novices, many have limited proficiency in English, making the use of methods based on interaction and involvement very difficult and even threatening (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Rao, 2013; Wang, 1999). According to Kaur, Young and Kirkpatrick (this volume), lack of proficiency among teachers is also a major impediment to the use of the communicative approach in Thailand.

Classes are also often quite large. Wen (2012) estimates a national teacher-student ratio of one teacher to 160 students in primary schools and one teacher to 120 students in secondary schools and universities. While class sizes do of course varying across regions, schools and universities, it is not unusual to find 80 students in a single class (Rao, 2013), double the number commonly found in English classes in Japan (Glasgow & Paller this volume). These conditions not only make it hard to conduct activities commensurate with the communicative approach but also make it difficult for schools and universities to run in-service teacher training courses, further contributing to the continued use of more traditional teaching methods (Liu, 1998; Zhu, 2003).

Beyond these practical obstacles, there are also "the attitudes, beliefs, and behavioural expectations which participants bring with them to the classroom" (Tudor, 2001, p. 19). These too present obstacles to the implementation of the communicative teaching and learning of English.

6.1.4 Teacher and Student Beliefs

There are long held beliefs in China that language learning can only be accomplished through rote learning of the content of the textbook and what the teacher says, and that grammar analysis is the only way to proficiency (Campbell & Zhao, 1993; Wang, 1999).

Coupled with previously mentioned concerns about prestige, many activities associated with the communicative approach seem more "like games than serious learning", making both teachers and students reluctant to use them (Burnaby & Sun, 1989, p. 229). Another difficulty with using the communicative approach is tradi-

tional notions of teacher and learner roles. Teachers are seen as authority figures and experts who should be in charge of the classroom and students' learning (Rao, 2013).

In addition, Chinese culture places much importance on the concept of face. This means that many Chinese students do not feel comfortable challenging the teacher's opinion or making mistakes (Ho & Crookall, 1995). This is not unique to China, of course, and has also been shown to play a role in other Asian countries including Thailand (Kaur, Young & Kirkpatrick this volume). Considering these factors, it is easy to see why in many cases traditional practices associated with the GTM and Audiolingual Method still remain prevalent in much of China's English language education despite recent attempts to introduce more communicative teaching approaches (Campbell & Zhao, 1993).

This is not to make value judgements about how English language education is conducted, or to say that any particular approach to it is inherently better than any other. Nor are such issues unique to China as the other chapters in this volume show. However, as Byram (2008) argues, English language education policy goals and expectations need to be based on "a realistic analysis of the whole societal environment in which language learning takes place" (p. 54). The above analysis suggests that several factors may limit what kind of proficiency can be achieved through the formal education system in China. Faced with this situation, policy makers can either provide the resources required to meet goals and expectations or set goals and expectations which can be met with existing resources (Byram, 2008).

The official view of English has remained stable for some time now and while a revision of English language education policy goals and expectations cannot be ruled out, it does appear that current goals and expectations will remain for the foreseeable future, and activities related to English language education will continue to focus on achieving them. This approach will, however, require a significant amount of resources and changes to existing practices. Some of the most important issues which will need to be tackled include: teacher training; reform of the examination system within formal education and broader society; and provision of educational resources to all schools and universities. Even if such changes are carried out, the size and scale of the Chinese context means progress towards current English language education policy goals and expectations is still likely to require considerable time and occur through gradual changes (Zheng & Adamson, 2003).

6.2 Provision of English Language Education for Ethnic Minorities

China is home to 55 ethnic minorities who together make up 8.49 % of the country's population and inhabit around 60 % of its area (Mackerras, 1995; Xinhua News Agency, 28/04/2011). Most of these ethnic minorities have their own languages and cultural traditions, some of which are quite distinct from those of the majority Han Chinese. English appears to have a limited presence in ethnic minority areas, with

Chinese, the primary language of society, being of far more immediate relevance, consistent with the English as an irrelevant language view (Gil, 2006). Nevertheless, several studies have shown that members of the ethnic minorities wish to learn English for the benefits it is perceived to bring in terms of employment, education and interacting with the outside world (Blachford & Jones, 2011; Dreyer, 2003; Gil, 2006; Huang, 2011; Sunuodula & Feng, 2011). However, ethnic minorities must deal with English language learning in a different way than the Han Chinese. As Mackerras (2003) states, any "minority group in China which wishes to maintain its own language will need to be trilingual if it wants to adopt English, because any ethnic group which is part of China must know Chinese to get on in the world" (p. 132). The ideal outcome of English language education would therefore be to enable members of ethnic minorities to achieve additive trilingualism, or in other words, to acquire English and Chinese without the loss of their ethnic minority language. Although this is theoretically possible, there are significant obstacles to its actual attainment, namely lack of minority cultural content in formal education and lack of educational resources.

6.2.1 Lack of Minority Cultural Content in Formal Education

In order to achieve additive trilingualism, language learners must possess positive attitudes towards their native language and culture as well as the target language(s) and culture(s). One way of encouraging such attitudes towards the native language and culture is to accord them prestige through their inclusion in the education system (Kirkpatrick, 2012). China's policies on ethnic minority education do recognize that education has to cater for the needs of ethnic minorities and do allow for ethnic minority cultural content in the curriculum, but the reality for most ethnic minorities is somewhat different. China has a highly centralized education system and, despite the vast differences in climate, geography, language and local customs, the curriculum is basically the same all over the country. Even the textbooks, known as *tongbian jiaocai* (literally uniformly written teaching materials), are produced by the central authorities and used everywhere (Harrell & Ma, 1999). The ethnic minorities are allowed some leeway in deciding what to teach but "most schools in minority areas or schools expressly for the minorities do not deviate from the unified national model in their basic philosophy, methods, or, except for classes in minority languages and literature, their content" (Harrell & Ma, 1999, p. 220). In cases where subjects relating to the history, culture or other characteristics of the minority are taught, this is always done in addition to, rather than instead of, the standard curriculum (Mackerras, 1995). So, while there is some scope for the inclusion of ethnic minority cultures in education, maintaining and encouraging ethnic identity is a distant second to the goal of integrating and modernizing the country in line with the government's ideology (Mackerras, 2003).

6.2.2 Lack of Educational Resources

Achieving additive trilingualism, especially on the scale required for China, also requires vast amounts of resources, many of which are in short supply or simply non-existent in ethnic minority areas. As Postiglione (1992) points out, ethnic minority areas are already behind the rest of China in terms of industrial development, urbanization, health care, communications and transport infrastructure and living standards, and the improvement of these domains often competes with education for priority and funding. This means that despite some significant advances in education for ethnic minorities since the establishment of the People's Republic, the overall situation is still one where "especially in rural areas, there are shortages of teachers, schools, books and all other educational facilities" (Mackerras, 1995, p. 139).

As a result of these issues, the actual provision of English language education in ethnic minority areas is uneven, inconsistent and of questionable quality (see for example the case studies reported in Adamson & Feng, 2009; Blachford & Jones, 2011; Jiang, Liu, Quan, & Ma, 2007). The recent curriculum reforms make English language education in ethnic minority areas even more difficult because of the additional demands they place on teachers and schools (Jiang et al.). This potentially creates inequalities of access to English among the population of China. Given Asia's ethnic diversity, it is not surprising that the issues of lack of recognition of minority languages and cultures and lack of educational resources have also been found to affect the quality and effectiveness of English language education in Vietnam (Bui & Nguyen this volume), Nepal (Phyak this volume) and Pakistan (Manan & David this volume), to mention just a few examples.

For China's ethnic minorities to successfully acquire their minority language, Chinese and English would therefore require the allocation of an enormous amount of resources – even more than would be required for addressing the issues relating to English language education discussed above – as well as a significant change in the government's attitude towards ethnic minorities. A more realistic approach may be to adapt English courses to the needs of ethnic minorities through an analysis of the social, cultural and economic characteristics of each minority area undertaken in consultation with teachers, learners and other community members, while accepting that this will have to occur within the constraints discussed above (Gil, 2006).

6.3 Worldwide Promotion of Chinese Language Learning

At the same time as the Chinese government is encouraging English language education and its people are attempting to gain proficiency in English, many people around the world are also attempting to learn Chinese due to China's increasing importance and the opportunities this is perceived to bring. Some estimates place the number of Chinese language learners worldwide at 100 million (Wu, 2010).

China's government has sought to capitalize on the popularity of Chinese language learning as part of its soft power strategy, aimed at creating a favourable international environment for China through the attraction and appeal of its culture, institutions, values and policies (Wang & Lu, 2008). As such, a major trend in China's language policy is the worldwide promotion of Chinese language learning. This includes: the establishment of Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms in cooperation with foreign universities and schools; the dispatch of state-sponsored and volunteer Chinese language teachers to other countries; and the coordination of the international Chinese Bridge language competitions. Such activities have reached much of the world within a short space of time, and have made a significant contribution to Chinese language teaching and learning, although only a limited contribution to shaping a favourable international environment for China (see Gil, 2015 for further details and discussion).

Zhou (2011) sees this promotional effort as a challenge to the current English dominated global language order. At present, however, it does not appear that the worldwide promotion of Chinese language learning is being undertaken in opposition to English language education. Indeed, the Chinese government is not removing English from the education system, reducing the number of hours allocated to English within the curriculum or restricting the uses of English in society in any systematic manner. Nor does it appear that there is any widespread popular resistance to English language learning. On the contrary, despite some recent concerns regarding English language education, the Chinese government and people appear to by and large accept the prevailing language order and are devoting considerable effort to accommodate to it.

Nevertheless, the promotion of Chinese language learning does raise some interesting questions about the future of English language education policy. As a nation, China has a long and proud cultural tradition, sees itself as regaining its lost position as a world power, and has always had a somewhat ambivalent view of English. These views are also by and large shared by the population. Given this, how long will the government and people of China be prepared to learn and use English for intranational and international purposes?

Assuming China can overcome its domestic and international challenges and its power and influence in world politics continue to increase, it could well become one of "the key shapers" of the twenty-first century world (Wesley, 2011, p. 152). Any country in such a position would likely desire to use its own language to satisfy its intranational and international needs, and speakers of other languages, including English, would likely need to acquire this language for their interactions with such a country (Ostler, 2010). While predictions can only ever be speculative and tentative, it is not inconceivable that, in the long-term future, China may reduce its emphasis on English language education and focus instead on the use of Chinese and the promotion of Chinese language learning.

7 Conclusion

English language education in China is complex and multifaceted, and does not conform simply or directly to any one view of English as a global language. This chapter has shown that there is widespread official and popular support for English language education as a means for China to accomplish its goals of reform and opening up and quest for international stature. Significant efforts have also gone into providing and improving English language education, especially in the last three decades, although these have not always achieved the desired results or been met with unqualified support. It is likely that English language education will remain an important area of policy for the foreseeable future, but a number of quite complex challenges lay ahead.

Given that many of these challenges are common across Asia, collaborative research and regional cooperation between China and other countries is a potentially fruitful way forward. This may include: sharing examples of successful teaching practice and innovations in English language education; convening regular regional conferences and symposia devoted to common challenges; and jointly funding research projects focused on developing practical solutions to such challenges. In sum, English language education policies in China will require the ongoing attention of policy makers, teachers and researchers alike.

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English Language Education Policy and the Native-Speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in Hong Kong

Mihyon Jeon

Abstract This chapter examines the NET Scheme and native-speaking English teachers' participation in English education by situating the NET Scheme policy within language-in-education policy in Hong Kong. To better understand the NET Scheme policy, both the medium of instruction (MOI) policy and the language enhancement policy are reviewed. The four different stages of Hong Kong's MOI policy Hong Kong's MOI policy are presented: (1) a laissez-faired policy prior to 1994; (2) a streaming policy from 1994 to 1998; (3) the compulsory Chinese MOI policy from 1998 to 2010; and (4) the fine-tuning policy since September 2010 (Poon, Curr Issues Lang Plann, 14:1 34–51, 2013). Along with MOI policy, language enhancement policy has been the major policy influence on English language education in Hong Kong in order to combat the declining language standards, especially English language standards. The NET Scheme officially introduced in 1997 is one of the measures taken as part of the language enhancement policy. This chapter presents research findings about NETs' experiences while participating in the Scheme and it highlights how English language education policy in Hong Kong has been influenced by various factors such as historical, political, economic, pedagogical, and ideological factors in Hong Kong.

Keywords English language education policy in Hong Kong • Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme • Medium of instruction policy • Native speaker • Global English

1 Introduction

Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated areas in the world with a population reaching 7.15 million in 2013 (Census and Statistics Department, 2013). Approximately 95 % of the population is ethnic Chinese, while the remaining 5 % of permanent residents originate from India, Pakistan, and Nepal, and some

M. Jeon (✉)
York University, Toronto, ON, Canada
e-mail: mihyjeon@yorku.ca

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refugees from Vietnam (Census and Statistics Department, 2011). Hong Kong has a rich linguistic culture due to its geographical location and political history (Kan & Adamson, 2010). As a former colony of Great Britain from 1841 to 1997, Hong Kong finds itself in a unique and complex context in which English as the former colonial language and the language of international communication, Cantonese as the mother tongue of the majority of the population, and Putonghua as the national language of China, each play different and changing roles (Bray & Koo, 2004). Post-handover Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (PRC) under the 'One Country Two Systems' policy. The handover of sovereignty added further complexity to the linguistic environment in Hong Kong by introducing Putonghua, a northern variety of Chinese, as a national lingua franca (Kan & Adamson, 2010).

This chapter demonstrates the complex nature of language-in-education policy in Hong Kong by paying attention to various factors such as historical, political, economic, pedagogical, and ideological ones. Language-in-education policy in Hong Kong has evolved around the issues of medium of instruction (hereafter MOI) and of coping with declining language standards, particularly the decline of English proficiency with various language enhancement policies. This chapter examines Hong Kong's medium of instruction policies and the Native-speaking English Teacher (hearafter NET) Scheme, one of English language education policies. Since language education policy in Hong Kong has always been multilingual, it is not enough to focus on English only without considering language education policy towards Chinese. After a brief overview of the status of English in Hong Kong, the next section introduces medium of instruction policy in Hong Kong, followed by the section about the NET Scheme.

2 Theoretical Background: Global English

Since the global expansion of English is key to understanding the issues surrounding English education in Hong Kong, this chapter situates the English policy of Hong Kong in the literature on the global spread of English. As a topic of increasing scholarly interest in recent years, this phenomenon has variously been articulated through such terms as English as a 'global' language (Crystal, 1997, 2003; Davidson, 2007; Holland, 2002), English as an 'international' language (Jeffrey, 2002; Modiano, 1999; Pennycook, 1994, 1998, 2007), English as 'lingua franca' (Dewey, 2007; House, 2003; Jenkins, 2007) and 'World Englishes' (Bamgbose, 2001; Kachru, 1985a, 1985b, 1986, 1992). The wide range of approaches taken up in this literature can be located on a continuum, with linguistic neutrality theories (or the functionalist view of English) residing at one end of the spectrum and linguistic domination theories at the other end (Lysandrou & Lysandrou, 2003). The linguistic neutrality theorists posit that under circumstances of deepening global interdependence, English should be seen as a detached, neutral language, one which serves as

an instrument of wider communication in a functional division of labour between languages (Crystal, 1997, 2003; Graddol, 1997, 2007; Markee, 1993). The work of these theorists is in part rationalized by neoliberal ideologies about global economy and language (Holborow, 2007), which celebrates English as a key to success in many nation-states.

In contrast, addressing global and local relationships of power, the linguistic domination theorists (Canagarajah, 1999a, 1999b; Phillipson, 1992, 1998, 2000, 2006; Pennycook, 1994, 1998) link the global spread of English to the political and economic hegemony of English-speaking Western powers. These theories form the basis of the approaches of language ecology (Mühlhäusler, 1996) and linguistic human rights (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). The linguistic domination theories of English are articulated in the debates about postcolonialism and linguistic imperialism, which correlated the spread of English with other forms of political and economic domination and thus reflects global inequality. Different perspectives along the continuum of functionalist to linguistic domination perspectives are present in the debates about English in Hong Kong.

A market-theoretic perspective towards global English (Park & Wee, 2013) placed somewhere along the linguistic neutrality and dominance continuum provides a refined analytical tool for English is globalized world. This perspective is based on Bourdiu's notion of linguistic market as well as drew from more recent development in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology (Park & Wee). It demonstrations how through historical conditions, language ideologies, and discursive practices global English is commodified and constructed as neutral and how the global circulation of English is inherently linked with problematic structures of equality (Park & Wee).

Among the many transformations brought about by globalization (Bauman, 1997; Castells, 2000; Gidden, 1990; Heller, 2003, 2007), the commodification of English and native speakers of English in particular is specifically relevant to the global spread of English and to this chapter. Heller (2003) maintains that there has been a shift from understanding language as being primarily a marker of essentialized and ethnolinguistic identity to understanding language as being a marketable commodity on its own. English has been increasingly recognized as a marketable commodity, and the privileged position awarded the native speaker has been readily absorbed into the global market for English-language teaching. The commodification of English and its speakers is well exemplified in the case of transnational teachers of English in the Hong Kong's NET Scheme.

In regards to the relationship between language policy and global spread English, the market-theoretic perspective conceptualizes language policy as practices that shape linguistics behaviors and engages the linguistic market, proposing two types of language policy: accommodation-oriented and reconfiguration-oriented policies (Park & Wee, 2013). The former accepts the existing structure of the dominant linguistic market, while the latter problematizes it. Park and Wee point out that many nation-level language policies are accommodation-oriented by appropriating the dominant ideologies of the global language market.

3 English in Hong Kong

Its language community started with two separate monolingual groups: local Chinese speaking Cantonese and other Chinese dialects, and British colonists speaking English (Poon, 2010). For more than a century, English has been the prevalent language in the domains of government, the legislature, the judiciary, education, business and the media and has, therefore, enjoyed socioeconomic dominance, even though Cantonese is the mother tongue of 90.3 % of the Hong Kong population, while English is the mother tongue of only 1.4 % (Census and Statistics Department, 2013). English was the sole official language in administration, the law, education, and other formal registers. This situation prevailed until the 1974 Official Languages Ordinance that made Chinese a co-official language (Hong Kong Government, 1974). The Ordinance was the colonial government's response to the 'Chinese as Official Language Movement' during the late 1960s and the early 1970s (Poon & Wong, 2004: 142). Both English and Chinese remained as the official languages of Hong Kong even after the restoration of sovereignty to the People's Republic of China in 1997.

English still symbolizes wealth and power in Hong Kong, and this did not change even after 1997. Especially since the 1980s, the Hong Kong government has placed an emphasis on achieving high English standards to maintain Hong Kong's status as an international business centre (Education Commission, 1984, 1986, 1996). Recent statistics demonstrate the high status of English in Hong Kong. Although English is not the mother tongue of the majority of the Hong Kong population, a majority of them have some knowledge of English. Among all the persons aged 6 to 65, 5.1 % perceived their spoken English proficiency as very good; 18.6 % as good; 36.9 % average; 22.0 % not so good; and 17.4 % had no knowledge of English (Census and Statistics Department, 2013). For written English: 5.0 % reported their proficiency as very good; 19.2 % as good; 37.5 % as average; 21.5 % as not so good; and 16.8 % had no knowledge of written English (Census and Statistics Department). English is considered an important language in the job market. According to the same source, among the 3,398,600 employed persons aged 15–65, some 61.5 % named English as the spoken language that they would like to learn and further study most for the sake of work, followed by Putonghua (28.4 %) and Cantonese (4.5 %). In terms of written language, 83.4 % would like to study English further; 10.7 % to study Putonghua; and 6.0 % to study Cantonese.

Although the language policy of Hong Kong, since its inception in 1894, has been a multilingual one, which has ensured a key role for English as well as for Chinese (Griffin & Woods, 2009), the importance of English caused the colonial government's investment in the development of English proficiency, which was also carried on by the post-1997 SAR government (Griffin & Woods 2009).

4 Medium of Instruction Policy

The language to be used as the medium to teach subjects across the curriculum has been an enduring controversy in Hong Kong. Poon, (2013) categorized Hong Kong's MOI policy into four different policies, implemented during the following time periods:

1. the laissez-faire policy prior to 1994;
2. the streaming policy from 1994 to 1998;
3. the compulsory Chinese MOI policy from 1998 to 2010; and
4. the fine-tuning policy since September 2010.

4.1 Laissez-Faire Policy

The Hong Kong government under British rule adopted a laissez-faire attitude toward issues of MOI (Poon, 2000). During this period, the choice of medium of instruction had been left in the hands of the schools (Tsui, 2008). It was not until the 1950s that the Hong Kong government allowed the establishment of Chinese-medium (hereafter CMI) schools, while maintaining a large number of English-medium (hereafter EMI) schools (Kan & Adamson, 2010). The CMI schools had not received strong governmental support until 1997. Government policy, set out in 1974, only suggested that the choice of MOI should be left to the schools. The government was reluctant to take the risk of a strong commitment to CMI in order to avoid conflict with various sectors of the community (Kan & Adamson).

By1990, more than 90 % of secondary schools were EMI, while most primary schools remained CMI. Parents favored both EMI primary schools and secondary schools in the belief that English-medium instruction would provide better education and employment opportunities for their children (Poon, 2010). As a result of parental attitudes, schools were reluctant to abandon the label of English-medium teaching (Education Commission, 1990: 104–105). However, many students and teachers in EMI schools struggled to learn and teach through English because of their limited English proficiency. Research found that 'only around 30 % of students may be able to learn effectively through English' (Education Commission: 102). Many EMI schools adopted mixed-code teaching because of students' limited English proficiency (Poon, 2010). Mixed-code teaching was seen as a compromise between EMI, which students could not cope with, and CMI, which parents did not favor (Shek, Johnson, & Law, 1991). The declining language standards of English during the 1980s and early 1990s, and the subsequent use of mixed code in teaching have been the major language problems since the handover (Shek et al., 1991). Poon (2010) argues the language education policies were the Hong Kong government's responses to these language problems. A permanent advisory body, the Education Commission, was founded in 1984 to formulate policy and to coordinate the planning and development of education, including language education (Education Commission, 1984: 1).

4.2 Streaming Policy

In September 1994, the Hong Kong government adopted the streaming policy, a more rigorous MOI policy (Poon, 2009a). In its fourth report in 1990, the Education Commission proposed the streaming policy to raise the English standards and to resolve the problem of using mixed code in EMI schools. According to the policy, students would be streamed into different categories based on their language abilities and placed into three different kinds of schools—the EMI schools, the CMI schools, and the two-medium schools (Education Commission, 1990). This policy was the first 'clear-cut medium of instruction policy' by the Hong Kong government "with a framework and detailed implementation plan" (Poon, 2004: 5). The policy was not well received by students and parents. In their survey study, Evans, Jones, Rusmin, and Cheung (1998) found that most respondents opposed the streaming policy because they believed that the policy deprived them of a free choice of MOI and that they preferred multi-medium education using English, Cantonese, and Putonghua as the MOI. In her study on the policy and its implementation, Poon (2000) found a number of factors that impeded the implementation of the policy that would prevent the policy from being implemented to a large extent territorially. She also found extensive use of mixed code in the majority of EMI schools.

4.3 Compulsory Chinese MOI Policy

On the verge of the handover in 1997, the streaming policy was suddenly replaced by the compulsory CMI policy (Poon, 2004, 2010). In April 1997, the government issued a consultation document, titled the 'Firm Guidance,' proposing the compulsory CMI policy starting from September 1998 (Education Education Bureau, 1997a). The Firm Guidance stated that the number of secondary schools using English as the MOI would drop by half, to fewer than 100 (about 20 % of the total). According to the policy, only schools with 85 % of students accessed as capable of learning in English in the previous 3 years would be able to use English as the MOI (Wan, 1998).

Upon the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 the introduction of the compulsory CMI policy was more political than pedagogical in that CMI would serve a political agenda--the compulsory CMI policy was motivated towards ensuring the reproduction of the power of the Chinese government and identity (Morrison & Lui, 2000) and toward utilizing medium of instruction policy for the political agenda of nation building (Tsui, 2008). The compulsory CMI policy was also backed up by pedagogical grounds. For example, the Education Department report (1997b) supported the compulsory CMI policy by quoting research demonstrating that students learn and achieve better through their mother tongue and they are more motivated to learn in their mother tongue. However, the political factor outweighed the pedagogical and educational factors. Without the return of Hong Kong to China, the peda-

gogical and educational factors alone would have not lead to the compulsory CMI policy. Learning problems for Hong Kong students in EMI schools whose mother tongue was not English had been renowned even before 1997 (see Kvan, 1969; Cheng, 1973; Education Bureau, 1994). In other words, the pedagogical and educational factors alone cannot explain the sudden turn of the MOI policy to the compulsory Chinese medium. In addition to political and pedagogical factors, the debates over MOI in Hong Kong have been influenced by such factors as historical, ideological and economic ones as well. Historically English was the sole language of the British administration and legislature in Hong Kong and has enjoyed a high status (Morrison & Lui, 2000). The post-1945 economic transformation of Hong Kong increased the popularity of EMI schools, as English was considered providing students with the opportunity for upward mobility. In recently years, the necessity of English for the economic development of Hong Kong further strengthened the ideological association of English with a means to upward social mobility. All these factors contributed to the strong disapproval of the compulsory CMI policy from the public.

Because of strong disapproval from the public, the 'Firm Guidance' became the 'Guidance' in September 1997, allowing some schools to be exempted from the compulsory CMI policy (Education, 1997b). This policy was implemented in all government-funded secondary schools from 1998. The implementation of this policy raised the number of CMI schools from less than 80 schools to more than 300 schools among about 400 schools (Poon, 2010). The compulsory CMI policy aroused strong reactions from the public (Tsui, 2008). The new policy was seen as being socially divisive. Parents whose children did not get into EMI schools considered the policy as denying their children access to higher education and good jobs. Schools regarded the policy as undermining their autonomy and the business sector objected the policy, warning that the policy would lead to the decline of English standards. According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Subsidized School Council in 1999, 66 % of school principals disagreed with the policy, arguing that the policy made many CMI schools become second-class schools by limiting the intake of high-quality students (as cited in Tsui, 2008).

There have been a few studies (Tsang, 2002, 2004, 2008) which found that the policy led to the decline of English standards. Poon (2010) argues that the compulsory CMI policy ironically resulted in increasing the dominance of English through reducing the number of EMI schools and, as a result, creating intense competition for EMI schools. Furthermore, the compulsory CMI policy restricted social mobility by blocking the path to the power elite for the grassroots (Poon, 2013). In contrast, a number of studies that evaluated the impact of the compulsory CMI policy found that the students benefited from learning in their mother tongue (see Marsh, Hau, & Kong, 2000; Ng, Tsui, & Marton, 2001). Despite these findings of the positive impact of the policy, the public acceptance level of the policy continued to be low (Tsui, 2008). A survey of 805 adults conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2002 found that only 12.9 % intended to send their children to CMI schools, whereas 53.5 % intended to send their children to EMI schools, although 63.5 % supported mother tongue education (Ming Pao Daily, 6 September, 2002, as cited in

Tsui, 2008). Another study by Tung, Lam, and Tsang (1997) also found that students and parents value English over Chinese although they recognized the benefit of the use of mother tongue as MOI. This low acceptance level of the CMI policy highlights that the MOI issue is not only pedagogical but also political, ideological, and economic matter.

A 2003 report on language education, titled 'Action Plan to Raise Language Standards in Hong Kong,' published by the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) reiterated the support for CMI, while taking a more lenient position toward the use of English medium (Poon, 2010). Upon the completion of a formal policy review in 2005, a report, issued in December 2005, proposed a 'changing train' policy. According to this policy, the first language would continue to be upheld as the principal medium of instruction and the schools that had been granted an exemption to use EMI would be subject to a review every 6 years for quality assurance. It allowed schools to change medium of instruction based on the following three criteria: student ability, teacher capability, and support measures (Education Commission, 2005). This policy was scheduled to be implemented in September 2010; but the implementation was not put into effect, since the policy was poorly received as it was seen as a means to limit the number of existing EMI schools (Poon, 2011), which demonstrates the enduring low acceptance level of the compulsory Chinese MOI policy.

4.4 Fine-Tuning Policy

After the policy makers of the 'changing train' policy in 2007 stepped down, Michael Suen, the new chief of the Education and Manpower Bureau, announced a new policy in May 2009, called a 'fine-tuning policy' (Poon, 2010) with an expected implementation in September 2010. The fine-tuned MOI framework would give more flexibility to schools and entail "a spectrum of MOI arrangements across schools, ranging from total CMI at one end, CMI or EMI in different subjects between the extremes, and EMI in full immersion at the other end" (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2009a: 5). In effect, the policy deviated significantly from the compulsory CMI policy that had been in place since September 1998 (Poon, 2010). Under the fine-tuning MOI policy, secondary schools are permitted to offer EMI classes, partial-English-medium classes (one to two subjects taught in English), and/or CMI classes, based on the following three criteria: students' ability to learn through English; teachers' capability and readiness in EMI teaching; and schools' adequate support strategies/measures. For the classes that do not meet the qualification requirement, there are four options available: (1) teaching all subjects except English through CMI; (2) making use of a maximum of 25 % of the entire curriculum time, originally designated to Extended Learning Activities (ELA), to teach up to two content-based subjects through EMI; (3) making use of the time for ELA to teaching one content-based subject through EMI plus some other content-based subjects incorporating several units taught in English; and (4) making use of the

time for ELA to teach some units of some content-based subjects in English (Poon, Lau, & Chu, 2013). Poon et al. observed some limitations of the fine-tuning policy by noting that students in general faced many difficulties with EMI in the transition period of shifting their medium of learning from Chinese to English. They also found that EMI students were able to cope with the difficulties in a more proactive manner than partial-EMI students. Poon et al. (p. 953) concluded their study by pointing out the potential of this new MOI policy in their statement, "the fine-tuning MOI policy, if well implemented, is able to raise the English standards."

4.4.1 Language Enhancement Policy

Along with MOI policy, language enhancement policy has been the major policy influence on English language education in Hong Kong. The main objective of the language enhancement policy is to combat the declining language standards, especially English language standards, as the language enhancement policy has focused predominantly on the English language (Poon, 2004). Education Commission Reports (Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 6) have suggested measures to enhance the English language standards of students (Education Commission, 1984, 1986, 1990, 1996).

The following are some examples of the language enhancement policy proposed in these policy documents concerning English language standards. The Education Commission Report 1 (ECR 1, 1984) recommended (1) improving the standard of English teaching and strengthening the teaching of English in secondary schools; (2) recruiting expatriate lecturers of English for the Colleges of Education and the Institute of Language in Education; (3) encouraging secondary schools to employ locally available native English speakers with teaching qualifications; and (4) strengthening the teaching of English in secondary schools in CMI schools.

As one of the measures to enhance English language standards, the Hong Kong government completed the Expatriate English Language Pilot Scheme in July 1989 and provided additional English teachers as well as additional equipment (Education Commission, 1990). In response to the recommendation made in ECR 2 (1986), the Hong Kong government provided funds for additional equipment and more teachers of English and a one-off library grant and completed further research on split class English teaching (Education Commission, 1990). ECR 4 (1990) recommended more measures to enhance the English standards. The following are some examples of these measures: (1) offering English bridging courses for Secondary I students; (2) enhancing English language activities at Primary 5 and 6 levels; and (3) providing more educational TV and video programs in English. In 1993, the Education Commission set up a working group to study the problem relating to language proficiency in Hong Kong (Education Commission, 1996). Based on the public response to the report published by the working group, the Education Commission produced ECR 6, titled "Enhancing Language Proficiency: A Comprehensive Strategy." ECR 6 recommended the following measures: (1) setting up the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR; (2) providing benchmark qualification for language teachers; (3) training an adequate number of local teachers; (4)

employing more native English speakers; (5) establishing learning targets set under a task-oriented curriculum framework; and (6) extending intensive English courses for Secondary 6 and 7 students in EMI schools. Following the recommendation, SCOLAR was established in 1996 to advise the government on language education issues and on the use of the Language Fund which was established in 1994 to support proficiency in the use of the Chinese and English languages and to fund programs, projects, research, textbooks, reference materials, teaching aids, etc. Citing a few studies (Evans et al., 1998; Flowerdew et al. 1998; Stone 1994), Poon (2010) argues that the language enhancement policy prior to 1997 was ineffective, because the decline of the language standards and the use of code-mixing had persisted. These studies found that the English language proficiency of students in Hong Kong was inadequate.

The language enhancement policy implemented after 1997 is called the biliterate/trilingual policy. The term 'biliterate/trilingual' in the context of Hong Kong means two written languages (Modern Standard Chinese and English) and three spoken languages (Cantonese, English, and Putonghua) (Poon, 2010). The biliterate/trilingual policy was first proposed in Education Commission Report 6 (1996). This policy aimed at training students to be biliterate/trilingual, but no implementation plan was put forward until the 2003 Action Plan to raise language standards in Hong Kong (Poon, 2004). According to Poon, the Action Plan differed from the previous language policy in a number of ways. It emphasized meeting the demands of employers, by stating "we should never underestimate employers' demands as a driving force behind improvement in language standards" (SCOLAR, 2003a: 26). In its emphasis on the output of language education, the Action Plan brought new initiatives to assess the language proficiency of learners and defined clear-cut descriptors and examples of language competencies. The Action Plan included corpus planning on the standardization of the structure and pronunciation of Cantonese (Poon, 2004). It also suggested that "development of a child's mother tongue should take precedence over the acquisition of other languages at the early childhood stage" (Poon: 43), recommending Cantonese as the medium of instruction for most young children in Hong Kong with Cantonese as their mother tongues. The Action Plan recommended that the Education and Manpower Bureau (the Education Bureau prior to 2003) should continue to provide support to the schools to organize English language camps and other language activities for students. It also recommended that the Curriculum Development Institute should encourage textbook publishers to produce more stimulating and interesting language textbooks for students (SCOLAR, 2003a). The Action Plan also commented on the NET Scheme, which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

It is noteworthy that the biliterate/trilingual policy was announced in the same year as the compulsory CMI policy. While the Hong Kong SAR government announced the compulsory CMI policy (or in other words mother-tongue policy) to promote a sense of Chinese identity and national unity, it also emphasized the importance of maintaining English standards for Hong Kong. This apparent contradiction in the language education policy move, since the handover, reflects the dilemma, which the Hong Kong government and people faced (Tsui, 2008). While

China's resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong necessitated the adoption of Chinese, a symbol of national identity and unity, as the medium of instruction; at the same time, the importance of English persisted as a means to maintaining Hong Kong's competiveness in the international market. Both Chinese and English, seemly symbolizing different cultural identities and values, are too important for Hong Kong to choose one over the other. Furthermore, as Tsui rightly points out, Hong Kong people developed its own unique cultural identity, which differentiated Hong Kong from other cities in China and led to ambivalent attitudes toward the handover of sovereignty. Although the end of colonial period was welcomed, there was a resistance to identifying with the Chinese government and an urge to preserve a separate Hong Kong identity and to promote Cantonese (Tsui). In addition to Cantonese, English was also part of Hong Kong's unique cultural identity. This complexity led the Hong Kong government to adopt the biliterate/trilingual policy along with the compulsory CMI policy.

Poon (2010) summarizes the measures taken under the biliterate/trilingual policy as follows: (1) providing an additional HK$4.2 million (US$0.54 million) for a library fund; (2) launching Chinese and English Extensive Reading Schemes; (3) setting up Multi-Media Language Centers; (4) establishing a Language Teaching Support Unit; (5) adding HK$1.1 billion (US$0.14 billion) to the Language Fund; (6) establishing Benchmark requirements for teachers' language competence in English and Putonghua in 2002; (7) establishing the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme with HK$0.3 billion (US$38.65 million); and (8) launching the NET Scheme in 1998. Beyond the education sector, the biliterate/trilingual policy has been embraced in the workplace and in the wider society (Poon, 2011). For example, in 1999 the Federation of Hong Kong Industry and 10 Chambers of Commerce formed a 'Coalition on Education in the Business Sector' of which initiates aimed at improving Hong Kong's education system from the perspective of the business sector (Poon). As an outgrowth of the Coalition's efforts, on 28 February 2000 SCOLAR launched 'Workplace English Campaign (WEC)' to heighten public awareness of the importance of English in workplace and to improve the English proficiency of working population in Hong Kong. The campaign included (1) the English training subsidy scheme; (2) the business and school partnership program; and (3) the establishment of the standards of English for employees (Poon). The Workplace English Campaign developed the Hong Kong Workplace English Benchmarks (HKWEB), which spelled out the standards of English in writing and speaking that employees of different industries in Hong Kong should strive to attain, reflecting the level of proficiency in English deemed desirable by various employers and companies in Hong Kong (Workplace English Campaign). Furthermore, Poon maintains that the biliterate/trilingual policy has expanded to such domains as the media, public transport services and the community. For example, in 2003 SCOLAR has launched a project, 'English in the Air,' to promote the teaching and learning of English through television programs (SCOLAR, 2003b). SCOLAR has also sponsored the following activities and initiatives: English Festivals, Promotion of Proper Cantonese Pronunciation, Putonghua Festivals, Speech Competitions, Workplace English Contests, Quality English Language Education at Pre-primary Level

Project, Voluntary Language Ambassadors Program, and Networking and Partnership Projects (SCOLAR).

Along with launching the fine-tuning MOI policy for secondary schools, Education Bureau Circular No. 6 laid out the following measures to improve English proficiency of primary schools students: (1) establishing a scholarship for qualified school graduates to attract young talent for the teaching profession; (2) offering courses on pedagogy and subject knowledge for primary teachers not yet attaining the qualifications set by the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR); (3) re-deploying necessary resources for time-limited provision to primary schools to facilitate them in adopting school-based enhancement measures in enriching English language environment; and (4) forming a network of voluntary professionals to conduct English activities for students (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2009b).

Although billions of dollars have been invested to promote biliteracy and trilingualism since the handover in 1997, Poon (2009b) maintains that the language standards of students in Hong Kong, particularly the English language standards, have continued to decline. Poon (2010) points out that the lack of success of the language enhancement policy is evident, as the debate about the decline in English language standards among Hong Kong students that started in the 1980s has persisted up to the present day. The NET Scheme, which will be discussed in the subsequent section, is part of the language enhancement policy.

4.4.2 The Native-Speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme

In Hong Kong, there has been a long tradition of employing native-speaking English teachers, dating back to the colonial past (Sweeting, 1990). However, since the 1980s the Hong Kong government has emphasized the importance of high English standards in order to maintain and to further Hong Kong's status as an international business centre (Education Commission, 1984, 1986, 1996). As one of the measures to enhance English language standards, the NET Scheme was introduced in 1997 in order to improve the professionalism of English language teachers and to advance the quality of English teaching. The NET Scheme involved external recruitment, and HK$0.6 billion (US$0.08 billion) was used to launch the Scheme to enable each secondary school to employ one NET (Poon, 2010). Prior to 1997 expatriate teachers, "locally available native English teacher" (Education Commission, 1984: 39), had been recruited, in accordance with the recommendation in the first Education Commission Report (ECR 1). In fact, ECR 1 reversed the localization staffing policy to allow for the employment of native English speakers as English teachers, recommending recruiting expatriate lecturers of English for the Colleges of Education and the Institute of Language in Education and recruiting locally available native English speakers with teaching qualifications for secondary teachers. In 1986, the Educational Bureau initiated the Expatriate English Language Teachers Pilot Scheme (EELTPS), which recruited 81 expatriate English teachers in 41 schools from August 1988 to August 1989 (Storey et al., 2001). In 1989, the

Expatriate English Language Teachers Modified Scheme (EELTMS) was implemented, which continued until the end of the 1996–1997 school year (Storey et al.). The first Policy Address of the newly established Hong Kong Government announced the introduction of the Native English Teacher Scheme, which is the first systematic recruitment of overseas native English teachers, recruiting more than 700 additional NETs for secondary schools 1998 onward (Chief Executive of Hong Kong, 1997).

The 2003 Action Plan pointed out that most members of the public recognized the value of the NET Schemes, while some were concerned about the inappropriate and ineffective deployment of the Scheme in some schools. It emphasized that NETs should be properly deployed to enrich the language environment in schools and that the Education and Manpower Bureau should ensure that the NETs are adequately prepared in subject knowledge and pedagogy to teach English as a second language in local schools (SCOLAR, 2003a). The Action Plan also recommended that the Education and Manpower Bureau should monitor more closely the implementation of the NET Scheme (SCOLAR).

The NET Scheme was extended to primary schools in 2002 (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2006). The Primary School English Development (PSED) project was the first organized introduction of NETs into Hong Kong primary schools in 2002 (Carless, 2006). PSED was a 2 year pilot program, which involved 20 NETs and 20 local English teachers (LETs) working collaboratively in 40 schools. The NET Scheme for secondary schools is called the enhanced NET Scheme (ENET Scheme); and the NET scheme for primary school is called the Primary NET Scheme (PNET Scheme). In the school year 2010–11, 886 NETs were employed—477 for primary schools and 409 for secondary schools (Legislative, 2011). For primary schools 475 NETs were employed in the school year 2012–13; the total expenditure on employing these teachers (the total number of local English teachers in primary schools was 5674) was 323.8 million Hong Kong dollars. For secondary schools, 412 NETs were employed and 363.6 million was spent (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2013a).

The PNET and ENET Schemes slightly differ in terms of their objectives. The stated objectives of the PNET Scheme include providing an authentic English learning environment for children; developing children's interest in English; helping local teachers of English; and disseminating good practices in English teaching. The objectives of the ENET Scheme are enriching the English language learning environment; enhancing the learning and teaching of English; and strengthening teaching capacity. The PNET Scheme put more emphasis on collaboration between NETs and local English teachers than the PNET Scheme does (Griffin et al., 2006). The Primary Schools English Development (PSED) project (Education Bureau, 2002) aimed to implement institutionalized collaboration between NETs and LETs in Hong Kong primary schools in order to promote the teachers' professional development. The project adopted team teaching as a strategy to promote a collaborative professional partnership between NETs and LETs.

NETs are expected to produce teaching resources to serve as models of good practice, and to improve student language proficiency (Griffin & Woods, 2009: 10).

NETs are required to work during and after school hours and occasional weekends. Both Schemes emphasize the importance of professional development through the collaboration between NETs and local English teachers. NETs are required to be native-speakers of English or to possess “native-speaker English competence” (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2013b). ENETs are also required to hold a bachelor’s degree, a post-graduate degree (or a TEFL/TESL qualification at diploma level), and at least 1 year’s post-graduate experience of teaching English. PNETs are required to hold a bachelor’s degree (or a teacher’s certificate obtained after at least 2 years’ full time study), a teacher training qualification, and a TEFL/TESL qualification at least at certificate level.

Salaries range from HKS 23,530 (US$3000) to HK$54,665 (US$7048), depending on qualifications and teaching experiences. NETs are entitled to fringe benefits such as special (accommodation) allowance as well as passage, baggage, and medical allowances. The special allowance, that amount to HK$16,859 (US$2173) as of 2011/12, is for cost of living, mainly accommodation, in Hong Kong. NETs are also entitled to passage allowance, a round-trip airfare reimbursement between their home countries and Hong Kong for each contract period. The baggage allowance is to assist with moving costs associated with moving to Hong Kong. NETs serving in the third or fourth year of continuous service are paid 5 % of their current salary as a retention incentive; NETs serving in the fifth year are paid an incentive of 10 %. Upon satisfactory completion of the contract, NETs are entitled to a contract gratuity, amounting to 15 % of total basic salary.

All public sector primary and secondary schools have participated in the NET Scheme. NETs are responsible for organizing and conducting activities in English and cultivating a reading culture among students. Moreover, they assist in the professional development of teachers in the schools. Separately, in the light of practical needs of some schools, schools have been provided with greater flexibility in terms of recruitment and deployment of teachers to further promote English language teaching. Regarding research on the roles of NETs, a few studies found that the stated roles of NETs were not always fulfilled in reality due to a number of factors. The NETs’ role as change-agents caused friction between local teachers and NETs (Tang & Johnson, 1993), which led to the isolation of NETs by their local colleagues. Chu and Morrison’s ethnographic study (2011) identified multi-level isolation as the most common problem that NETs faced; NETs were being treated as outsiders rather than partners. Based on a survey of 613 school personnel from 120 secondary schools and interviews, Walker (2001) found that the exam oriented teaching culture was the major barrier to effectively integrating NETs. Jeon (2009) quoted a NET who described the negative side of the exam oriented school culture, as follows:

> All they care about is what’s on a piece of paper, it's heart wrenching to watch those kids work so hard all year only to not get into their school of choice…. They’ve got to stop this testing … testing … testing school system and get to something more human so the kids and the teachers stop committing suicide, and can start to have a real life.

The same NET pointed out that the exam-oriented culture made teachers refuse to teach English the way English was supposed to be taught. In the exam oriented teaching culture, teachers' worth is judged by exam results. Walker (2001) argued that NETs were allocated to oral-only classes because of local English teachers' fear that they would be judged negatively if only NETs' classes showed improvement. However, she observed some improvement: NETs were less marginalized, as they were taking fewer oral-only classes and their role became more like that of local teachers in terms of teaching allocation.

There have been a few studies to determine the effectiveness of the NET Scheme. Storey et al. (2001) found that the NETs were successful in fostering an environment for students to practice oral English and acting as English resource persons. However, they found that the Scheme did not make much progress in meeting the goal of assisting in school-based teacher development because NETs and LETs worked in isolation from one another and this limited interaction. Since the inception of the NET Scheme, there have been three major evaluation studies commissioned by the government. During the period of 2004–2006, the University of Melbourne was commissioned by the Education and Manpower Bureau to conduct a 2 year territory-wide evaluation study of the NET Scheme in Primary Schools (Griffin et al., 2006). According to the evaluation report, the largest impact of the PNET Scheme was at grade one level, and positive collaboration between local English teachers and NETs was an important factor for student English proficiency. The report (2006) identified a need to formalize the NET's role because of the finding that NETs had become marginalized and excluded from school life in a small minority of schools. In the period from 1998 to 2000 and in 2008, the Hong Kong Institute of Education and the University of Melbourne were commissioned respectively by the Bureau to evaluate the Enhanced NET Scheme in secondary schools. The first study found that NETs fulfilled their role as resource teachers by designing teaching materials, introducing teaching strategies, and providing opportunities for students to use English. Based on focus groups, school visits, and surveys, the second study (Griffin & Woods, 2009) found that schools were generally satisfied with NETs and that both students and parents were appreciative of the presence of NETs in school. It revealed some tendency to exploit the presence of a NET in the school to attract students by indicating the serious commitment to the English language education in the school system. They identified the following two factors as important indicators of successful implementation of the Scheme:

1. Collaboration between NETs and local English teachers and
2. The NETs' capacity to create an authentic and positive environment for using the English language in the schools.

Griffin & Woods (2009) also highlighted the importance of the contributions and collaboration of diverse personnel, because NETs cannot meet the goals of their deployment without the support of their Principals, English Panel Chairs, and the professional cooperation of local English teachers.

Jeon's study (2009) on government-funded English education programs hiring native-speaking English teachers in Asia, including the NET Schemes, focused on

the NETs' experience and participation in the Scheme with an emphasis on the following aspects: the relationship between the NETs' participation and the program structure of the NET Scheme; the NETs' participation and identity; and national and international policies and agreements to support the NETs' participation in the teaching of English in Hong Kong. The NETs' participation is closely related to the program structure and policies and how they are implemented in the schools. For example, the competitive salary and the special housing allowance resulted in the NETs' relatively high satisfaction rate with their salary and living condition, while causing friction between the NETs and local teachers and leading to the isolation of the NETs. Furthermore, the lack of consistency in the application of the NET deployment guidelines was one of the most frequently cited sources of the NETs' frustration and struggle, which demonstrates the close relationship between the NETs' participation in the Scheme and the implementation of the program policies and guidelines. Although their sense of national identity has not drastically changed because of their experience of teaching English in Hong Kong, the majority of the NETs reported that their outlook toward the world and sense of identity as ESL teachers had altered. Finally, the majority of the NETs identified clear deployment guidelines and strict guideline implementation as the most important support that they needed from the Education and Manpower Bureau in Hong Kong and the program administrators.

5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a backdrop for a better understanding the NET Scheme and NETs' participation in the Scheme by situating the NET Scheme policy within language-in-education policy in Hong Kong and through presenting research findings about NETs' experiences while participating in the Scheme. To better understand the NET Scheme policy, both the medium of instruction (MOI) policy and the language enhancement policy have been reviewed. The four different policies of Hong Kong's MOI policy Hong Kong's MOI policy have been presented: (1) a laissez-faired policy prior to 1994; (2) a streaming policy from 1994 to 1998; (3) the compulsory Chinese MOI policy from 1998 to 2010; and (4) the fine-tuning policy since September 2010 (Poon, 2013). With the handover in 1997, the debate on the MOI policy became deeply politicized and the government adopted the compulsory Chinese MOI policy. However, as the decline of English language standards among the local students continued, the demand for better English proficiency and for English medium education from parents increased. Although overturning the compulsory Chinese medium instruction policy is not its aim, the fine-tuning policy, by allowing a spectrum of MOI arrangements across schools, diverges significantly from the compulsory CMI policy that had been in place since September 1998 (Poon, 2011). Along with the various MOI policies, the language enhancement policy has been influential on English language education in Hong Kong. By means of the language enhancement policy, the Hong Kong government has made

vigorous efforts since the early 1980s to combat the declining language standards, especially English standards (Poon, 2004, 2010). The biliterate/trilingual policy, a type of language enhancement policy that has been implemented since 1997, has extended from the education sector to the wider society including the domains of the workplace, the media, and the community (Poon, 2011).

The NET Scheme officially introduced in 1997 is one of the measures taken as part of the language enhancement policy to reduce the declining standards of the English language. It is noteworthy that the official launching of the NET Scheme was in 1997 when the compulsory CMI policy was abruptly implemented on the verge of the sovereignty changeover. The launching of the NET Scheme signaled a shift away from 'localization' of English teaching, which refers to the teaching of English in Hong Kong being dominated by local teachers (Forrester & Lok, 2008). This shift away from localization was contrary to an expectation that the return of sovereignty back to China would favor localization (e.g., compulsory CMI instruction). The NET Scheme was initiated to counteract concerns that the compulsory CMI policy would presumably lead to declining standards of English; reducing English exposure and quality of education at CMI schools; creating unequal access to English between CMI and EMI school students; and tainting Hong Kong's image as an international business center (Forrester & Lok). The NET Scheme is an example of how English is perceived as a commodity that is a key to success of the nation-state in this rapidly globalizing world. Hong Kong's English language policies such as the language enhancement policies and the NET Scheme policy are accommodation-oriented policies which accept the dominant ideologies of the global language market without a critical examination of the presumed associations between English and economic success. The NET Scheme is an example of a language policy that privileges the traditional native speaker. Through an examination of the NET Scheme, this chapter highlights how English language education policy in Hong Kong has been influenced by various factors such as historical, political, economic, pedagogical, and ideological factors in Hong Kong.

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English Education Policy in India

Hema Ramanathan

Abstract Expansion of access to education in India, and the resultant increase of students in schools, are greatly impacting English language teaching in India. Traditionally, the focus of teaching and testing has been on reading and writing. The emphasis on speaking and listening skills are driven by societal demand and an evaluation program. Students' desire to learn English as a second or first language rather than a foreign language is shown by the dramatic growth of English medium schools. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation program, an assessment model that is sweeping the country, includes features that entail teaching speaking and listening skills. However, the demand for a re-focusing of skills is not supported by changes in curriculum, pedagogy or teacher education. In a society where English proficiency guarantees economic and social upward mobility, much greater investment in research that informs policy and practice is necessary but does not seem to be forthcoming.

Keywords ELT in India • ELT curriculum in India • ELT pedagogy in India • Teacher education in India • Continuous and comprehensive evaluation • Three language policy in India

It was only about 30 years ago that English in India was identified as a library language and taught with a traditional emphasis on reading and writing at the expense of listening and speaking skills. However, as the 12th Planning Commission Working Group on Teacher Education noted (2011), the past decade has been a period of great stress for the state school system with a large percentage of the school-aged population shifting from state schools to private schools. Focus on access to schooling to students has brought into the system students who were previously unfamiliar with schooling (UNESCO, 2014; United Nations, 2014, p. 10) and with English. While the impact on education in general has tested the field, the impact on English teaching has been significant, signaled by the dramatic rise in demand for admission to English medium schools by a staggering 280 % in 2012.

H. Ramanathan (✉)
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA, USA
e-mail: hramanat@westga.edu

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1 Relevant Contemporary Theories on English Language Policy

Two theories of three sets of researchers inform this discussion of ELT in India. Farr and Soon (2011) and Bhatt (2005) find relevance in the social and political consequences of educational policy in India, especially education of linguistics minorities who are ESL learners.

In its roles as first, second and international languages, English in India exemplifies the local being managed by the global powerful. The national language policies seek to challenge the dichotomies of standard and nonstandard English in Indian English (Bhatt, 2005) but with minimal effect on the purpose of language learning and the curriculum implemented by teachers at the ground level.

The second theory is the implication of curriculum and pedagogy in light of Mahboob's (2014) language variation framework. The nodes of locality of language use, purpose or use of the language, and the modes of communication provide an excellent framework of analysis for the purpose and pedagogy of ELT in India, especially when combined with the dialogue on western-inspired pedagogies such as Communicative Language Teaching.

This chapter will provide an overview of the status of English language teaching in India. Political and social forces and factors that influence curriculum, pedagogy, assessment as they are implemented will be examined. The status of preservice and continued professional development of teacher education of English language teachers will be analyzed. This paper will conclude with an overview of possible future directions of English language teaching in India.

2 Language Policy in India

English continues to hold sway above the other 17 official languages in terms of both status and reach. It is technically an additional national language, giving it a formal status similar to Hindi, the declared national language, with three states, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland, adopting English as the state language. But beyond these constitutional statuses, English is the lingua franca used for official and commercial purposes. For instance, public exams such as those required for civil services are necessarily supplied in English and Hindi, but in the regional medium only if available. The high status of English has recently been reaffirmed in the 12th 5-year plan which has placed the teaching of English on par with science and math (Planning Commission, 2013, p. 77, 21.126).

On the other hand, in this multilingual and plurilingual society, there has been a conscious desire to maintain the home or regional languages. To counter the power differentials between Indian languages and English and not build "contempt toward subordinate languages and dialects" (Farr & Soon, 2011, p. 660), all the policy documents through the decades of independence specifically provide for an equal

opportunity to learn heritage languages, in many cases privileging them over English (Central Advisory Board of Education, 1957; Secondary Education Commission, 1953, 1965; University Education Commission, 1949) and has been endorsed by the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005; for a summary see Annamalai 2001). However, NCF (2005) acknowledges that 60 years after independence heritage languages have ceded status and power to English. Its recommendation that the curriculum should be based on research that is increasingly uncompromising about the positive effects of first language literacy on the general education and learning of students is belying Farr and Soon's (2011) theory that language policies are motivated more by political orientations than pedagogical considerations.

Post-independence, in an effort to provide unification in a multilingual country, a three-language formula was developed and refined by successive education commissions (Central Advisory Board of Education, 1957; Secondary Education Commission, 1953, 1965). Accordingly, all schools provide education in three languages through the course of a student's education. The first language is the medium of instruction in the school while the second is required to be taught at least from Standard 5. The student is examined in these two languages by the Board of Education in Standards 10 and 12. The third language must be studied for at least three years between Standards 6 and 10 and tested internally by the school. Hindi and English, the official and associate official languages, must be studied as two of the three languages (Saini, 2000).

3 Contexts and Purposes of Teaching and Learning English

As in Bangla Desh (Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009), English is taught and learnt in both formal school settings and in language schools that operate outside of such structures. It is offered as a subject where English teachers bear the responsibility for students to demonstrate the ability to speak, read and write English proficiently. Further, to distinguish themselves from government schools, and as a marker of elitism, private schools, which are about 60 % of the schools (Planning Commission, 2013, p. 68) serving about 40 % of students (iValue Consulting Private Ltd, n.d.), offer English predominantly as the medium of instruction (EMI), where all subjects are taught in English and all school communication, academic and non-academic, is in English (Menon, 2013). However, though in a math or science class, students use English to learn the content, language in these classes remains the responsibility of the subject teachers, and not the English teachers. Government schools have responded with at least one section of each grade offering EMI, and these sections are usually over-subscribed but do not carry the same cache as private EMI schools. Thus, English may simultaneously be a first or second language to students in EMI schools, and a foreign language in non-EMI schools. This is a clear illustration of Bhatt's (2005) claim that standard English entrenches the class differences in India and supports the elites, who see themselves as ENL learners, in maintaining their

hegemony over the lower classes who are in turn seen as ESL learners, and therefore necessarily academically lower achieving.

The past decade has also seen a dramatic increase in the informal sector offering classes in spoken English, expected to be about 30 % of the ELT market (iValue Consulting Private Ltd, n.d.). Though no reliable statistics are available in respect to this industry, the drain on parents in their willingness to pay for such services to ensure proficiency in conversational English is not inconsiderable.

The most recent reform measure that has impacted education in general and English language teaching particularly is the Right to Education Act (2009) of which the most hotly contested proviso is the mandate that requires 25 % of all initial intake in all schools be reserved for students from disadvantaged sections of society. These students are likely to have little to no exposure to English and will need to be taught English as a foreign language, unlike many of their peers to whom English will be a first or second language. The multiple levels of learners in a single classroom have far-reaching consequences for curriculum and teacher education, which have not been considered in depth by policy makers.

When Mahboob's (2014) theoretical framework is applied to the purpose of learning English, the locality and purpose of language use clearly define the mode for both students and teachers. There is no doubt that all stakeholders are well aware that English provides economic, academic, social and cultural capital and mobility across levels of society, that it opens doors both at school and in careers (NCF, 2005; NCF-English, 2006; Ramanathan & Bruning, 2003) and that lack of fluency in English reading, writing, speaking and listening affects personal and professional advancement (Aggarwal 1991; NCF, 2005; Ramanathan & Bruning, 2003). The ultimate expectation of English instruction thus is to increase fluency rather than accuracy (Aggarwal 1991, Ramanathan & Bruning, 2003). Teachers overwhelmingly identify the overall purpose of teaching English as the need to make students capable of communicating in social settings, acknowledging "a need for a common language that anyone … can understand." 'Interaction' was a widely used word as in "It is important for interaction with people anywhere in the world" and "It is important for students to learn English so that they can interact with people wherever they go" (Ramanathan, 2014).

It is therefore not surprising that demonstrated excellence of students' oral skills continues to be a significant factor in parents' perceptions of successful English language learning. High-end private schools with students from English-speaking background have a high profile because of their students' proficiency in spoken English whereas the low-cost 'budget' schools whose students do not have that social capital struggle to establish that reputation. (James & Woodhead, 2014; Tooley, 2009; Tooley et al., 2011).

On the other hand, schools are viewed primarily as academic institutions, with the widely-accepted primary purpose of equipping students to be academically competent rather than providing work-related skills (Planning Commission, 2013, p. 54-55, 21.38), which are provided primarily in non-formal settings (Planning Commission, 2013, p. 141, 22.62). A school's reputation is established with its results in the 10th and 12th grade exams, which require academic English. Though

the intrinsic value of learning English is not highly prized, teachers are acutely aware of students' need to master the language as a requirement for academic success and consequently hold the belief that students "should learn to communicate freely (in) and to understand (English)" (Ramanathan & Bruning, 2003).

In an EMI school, it is logical to assume that teaching all subjects in English should aim at providing students the ability to demonstrate this academic competence in English and that the focus of competence in English will go beyond social communication to an emphasis on academic language. This apparently clear purpose is muddied when the distinction between using English for social communication and providing students competence in academic discipline using English is not maintained. Schools appear to be satisfied if students use English to fulfill their social rather than academic aspirations, and discourage code-switching and translanguaging, enforcing an English-only policy both inside and outside the classroom.

A further consideration that impacts student achievement is the low language proficiency of teachers, though the variation between private and government school teachers may be remarkably wide (NCF, 2005). In an EMI school, this is further exacerbated by subject teachers not having a good command of English. Thus, as students learn the content from a teacher whose communicative ability is sharply constrained, their learning of both content and English as an academic language is significantly impacted.

4 Curriculum

The traditional English language teaching curriculum in government schools, still widely in use, is based primarily on the canon in British literature and caters to traditional genres of prose, poetry and drama. The language component, which carries far less emphasis, is rule-based and focuses primarily on morphology, syntax and phonetics so that students learn about English rather than using the language, which partly accounts for students' lack of oral skills.

Of the four skills, reading and writing have been traditionally more valued in teaching and testing contexts at all grade levels (Ramanathan, 2008; Ramanathan & Bruning, 2003). The focus on functional language, simple structures and basic vocabulary, and the stringent word limits on responses make it difficult for students to find their 'voice.' Literary flourishes are discouraged and individual styles of expression carry little to no weight. It is only the past decade or so that innovations have been made in the teaching and testing of English, changing the curricular requirements to include oral skills to the examination systems. However, filtering down these changes to the individual teacher and classroom is proving a staggering task (Ramanathan, 2008).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) (n.d.) focused on "mak(ing) the curriculum more meaningful, relevant and life-oriented" and trained a cadre of teachers in developing materials, testing and

assessment and providing in-service training for teachers. A major result was two streams of English curriculum and testing, one focusing on literature and another on functional English, introduced officially in 2003. In practice, however, the innovations have had little impact, with few schools opting for the latter. In most schools, especially those in non-metropolitan areas, teachers are not familiar with the concept, the principles and testing methods of functional English. On the other hand, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, a central government organization which runs the largest numbers of schools affiliated to the CBSE, may have more success with the second option since it could utilize its regular in-service training opportunities to help teachers better understand the aims and goals of a functional English course.

In 2003, Tamil Nadu (Sarva Shisksha Abhyan Education for All, n.d.) introduced the highly touted Activity Based Learning (ABL) which has many of the features of oral interaction. It is student-initiated, involves group interaction (Thangavelu, n.d.), and the teacher is a facilitator who is expected to "transform the classrooms into hubs of activities and meaningful learning" (Sarva Shisksha Abhyan, Education for All, n.d.). The roll-out of the program, piloted for two years and accompanied by continued and consistent professional development for teachers, bears the hallmarks of a successful venture (Mahapatra, 2007). However, educational consultant Subir Shukla noted that while "the teachers were following the instructions to the T (exactly), without applying their mind … (they) said that the idea was not to think for yourself, but to do what was being asked of you." Shukla attributed this to "undernourished curricula" (Sarath, 2010). Thus, teachers' own lack of proficiency in English (NCF-English, 2006; Sarath, 2010; Sarva Shisksha Abhyan, Education For All, n.d.), compounded by their minimal knowledge of theoretical constructs that should guide their curricular and pedagogical decisions, decrease the likelihood of consistent effective teaching. The program evaluation report (NCERT, 2011) echoes the lack of fidelity of implementation, citing inadequate training of teachers as the major reason.

The latest state to invest in the re-design and revamping of English content is Nagaland. Among the changes that were instituted in the new curriculum was theme-based learning. Critical thinking and higher order skills of comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring (Anderson, Krathwohl, & Airasian, et al., 2001) were included in the tasks, a change from the traditional skills of summarizing and reporting. However, teachers require extensive support material to teach a poem on science-focused topics such as benzene and are reluctant to even begin a dialogue with science teachers about discipline-related topics.

The most recent curricular innovation is CBSE's long-reading projects for high schools. The purpose is to help children "acquire power of imagination, expression and appreciation of literature, … improve comprehension, accuracy, fluency and … increase vocabulary" to make students "better orators, autonomous learners as well as critical and creative thinkers" (CBSE, 2012). The suggested list is primarily the typical 'dead white male' list with nothing to appeal to twenty-first century teenagers who are scientifically or mathematically oriented. In one stroke the CBSE has demonstrated that despite all the proposed innovations, the English curriculum in India is still in thrall to the traditional British canon of Shakespeare and Keats.

5 Assessment

Like the curriculum, the importance of exams in education has not changed over the decades in spite of recent attempts to shift the focus from testing to teaching. Exams continue to play a major role in school culture, defining the curriculum and classroom activities, with teachers teaching to the test. Reading and writing skills maintain their supremacy in the testing process at all grade levels. In most government schools, tests at the end of each term are set by an external body, creating a distance between teaching and testing, allowing for them to be primarily used for student achievement rather than diagnostic purposes.

The Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) (CBSE, 2009) program is aimed at evaluating the cognitive and affective aspect of the child "at regular time intervals right from the beginning of the academic session and employing suitable remedial measures for enhancing their learning performance" (CBSE, n.d.). In English, specifically, this involves internal assessment of listening and speaking skills in Standards 10 and/or 12, carrying up to 10 % of the final grade in English; this is increased to two oral and aural tests valued at 20 % by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination. Clear and detailed guidelines define the process and the product, and external examiners address issues of confidentiality and grade inflation in internal assessment.

Initiated by the CBSE, the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination and Tamil Nadu Board of Education, CCE has the potential to impact two hitherto neglected aspects of testing: the role of teachers, and teaching and testing of listening and speaking skills. So far, school-leaving exams have been tested and graded by persons not directly involved with the test-takers, guaranteeing 'objectivity' and impartiality. In the process, teachers were encouraged to dissociate teaching from testing. With CCE allowing teachers input into students' final grades, this gap between pedagogy and assessment may be narrowed.

From the standpoint of curriculum, a major effect of testing oral skills may be the legitimacy granted to Indian English, ushering in the recognition of the World Englishes paradigm (Kachru, 1985). In the spirit of focusing on fluency and not accuracy, characteristics of Indian English are slowly finding acceptance in the classrooms. For example, inverted question structures and a generic question tag *isn't it* are not considered unacceptable since they do not impede comprehension and constitute authentic English in the lives of students. In Nagaland, the shift from view of teacher as implementer to a more accommodative insider-oriented view of language teaching-learning has made it possible to test a greater range of interaction and constructed responses that are characteristic of listening and speaking skills (Kannan, 2013).

For continuous assessment to be a ground reality in schools in India, many factors need to be in place: an overall fresh approach to evaluation that is less stressful and top-heavy with a focus on learning rather than testing; in-service for teachers of all grade levels to increase language and testing skills and to highlight the value of internal assessment; and a system to monitor grade inflation. All of this adds up to

a person- and resource-intensive assessment program that cannot succeed without adequate and continual funding especially for recruiting, developing and training teachers who can fully and successfully implement CCE.

6 Pedagogy

Principles and practices of pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge have been challenged by the rapid changes in the purposes and practices of curriculum and assessment. While access to learning English has increased dramatically, quality instruction has not kept pace. Traditional methods of teaching are still predominant. Dependence on textbooks is heavy since teachers do not possess the language skills needed to design or create material (NCF, 2005). Teachers are dissatisfied with the present content and techniques but are unaware of recent research and do they have access to teaching resources (Ramanathan, 2014). Many are caught in "conflicts between and among belief systems, agendas, and values" (Kannan, 2013).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), introduced in India in the 1980s prompted by changes in curriculum (Behera, 2013; Gupta, 2004) was highly touted as an approach that would best serve the purpose of shifting the focus of education to oral and listening skills. Though there has been an intensive effort to acclimate teachers to use CLT, over a decade of use has shown that CLT is not suited to teachers' perception of the classroom climate and their role in the pedagogy, reflecting research in other Asian contexts (Luk, 2005). While strategies such as role play may be widely used, classes are teacher-designed and teacher-led with a heavy emphasis on teacher talk, defeating the principles of CLT (Walia, 2012). Such strategies are interaction-focused but evolved from teachers' individual perceptions on communication (Ramanathan, 2014; Srinivasan, personal communication, January 12, 2014). However, the changing emphasis on learning and assessing English for communicative and job-related purposes may signal the possibility of CLT being more frequently used in K-12 classrooms (Behera, 2013; Gupta, 2004).

Some of the new initiatives have a theoretical base. Bilingual audiotapes and radio programs that supplement teaching of speaking and listening skills (Sarath, 2010) are examples of the application of the concept of plurilingualism, and acknowledge the efficacy of L2 in an English-language classroom while compensating for teachers' lack of language proficiency.

However, teachers' pedagogical practices are not influenced by a strong understanding of essential content or pedagogical knowledge. There is no readily available syllabus to guide teachers or adequate technology to make the conduct and monitoring of lessons and tests easy. Lack of computer programs that offer speaking and listening skills precludes the possibility of students learning on their own, regardless of what schools might choose to do. The increased inclusion of conversational English in assessment plans requires a more nuanced understanding of different grammars used in spoken formats, and for teachers to clarify their positions

on the teaching of grammar; gain knowledge of relevant theories and concepts; identify situations in which different kinds of grammar are appropriate; and select and implement suitable pedagogical approaches. Teaching strategies do not support the new focus on functional English. Students are not encouraged to re-do assignments which means that process writing is not a pedagogical tool and the assessment of written work is summative with no formative assessment. Since teachers assess success in terms of students passing an exam, they teach all grammar items with equal emphasis, ignoring the different needs of teaching for spoken and written genres (Ramanathan, 2014).

7 Teacher Education

The "massive spatial and numerical expansion of schooling facilities at the elementary and secondary levels (has created a) corresponding increase in the demand for teachers" (12th Planning Commission WG-Teacher Education, 2011, p. 13) which 13,800 teacher education institutes graduating about 1.1 million new teachers every year are unable to meet. This paucity of teachers has been exacerbated by the extremely low passing rate of teacher candidates taking the newly-established Teacher Eligibility Test (NCTE, 2010), 1 % in 2013 and 2 % in 2014, further reducing the pool of available teachers. States have resorted to the widely accepted but questionable method of use of para-teachers or 'contract teachers' who are uncertified and usually less qualified than regular teachers (Kingdon & Sipahamalani-Rao, 2010, p.61). These are the most pressing, and seemingly insurmountable problems facing education in India. Neither preservice nor inservice teacher preparation programs address these problems adequately.

Teacher education does not have a history of being responsive or even reactive to changing conditions with the past 20 years not witnessing any significant changes in either structure or content except in spurts (Krishna Kumar, 2013). Creation of organizational hierarchies such as Block Resource Centres, District Institutes for Education and Training and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education were meant to both decentralize teacher education and make the training more responsive to ground realities. Without much power of enforcement, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), charged with reining in the proliferation of teacher education programs that had no rigor, has struggled to impose standards of excellence and qualitatively impact preparation of teachers. Suggestions of the Justice Verma Commission (2012) address some of these issues in structural and programmatic terms. The NCTE Regulations of 2014 which have increased the initial certification to two years from the one year is the most impactful recent reform which is expected to provide more time for an indepth training for teachers.

Proposed changes in curriculum in teacher education are more cosmetic than addressing felt needs of teachers. English teacher knowledge should encompass the language and literature in English, instructional pedagogy in general and pedagogi-

cal content knowledge of how to teach various genres and aspects of the language and the literature. However, the curriculum for high school English teachers is derived primarily from their undergraduate or graduate studies which are still heavily focused on literature, with language and linguistic as disciplines yet to find a foothold. As a result, teachers have little background in a knowledge base that would help them teach the language for functional purposes. At best, therefore, teachers have a stronger base in propositional rather than procedural knowledge (Byram, 2008, Canagarajah, 2014). For instance, few programs make the connections between nominalization and its relationship to objective tone in persuasive writing. Even fewer address the differences between grammar underlying conversational and writing tasks. This supports the NCFTE call to end the isolation that most COEs in India experience by creating bridges between colleges of education (COE) and liberal arts and sciences (LAS) (Government of India, n.d.; UNESCO, 2012). However, none of these proposed or planned changes are likely to address the challenges specific to English teachers. The only recent innovation that may have an effect on teacher knowledge is the NCTE Regulations of 2014 requirement of a dissertation in the Masters in Education program.

In the absence of effective preservice education for English teachers, inservice professional development (PD) is invested with greater importance. The most appropriate preposition used in conjunction with the traditional model of in-service training is that it is done *to* teachers, not *for* or *with* them. Boards of Education offer regular professional development to teachers in government schools but take no responsibility for those in private schools (NCFTE, 2010, p. 70). Nor are these PD sessions effective since they are sporadic and unconnected both to teachers' required knowledge and their classroom setting (Bolitho & Padwad, 2013; NCTE, 2010). Orientation sessions to high school teachers of all affiliated schools about proposed changes in the curriculum or the testing patterns are informational without any follow up on implementation.

Private schools, by and large, do not invest in teacher education and very few provide consistent and high-quality professional development. They may avail themselves of the opportunity for their teachers to be examiners so that they may be exposed to new ideas and innovations through workshops offered at the testing centers. In a culture in which continuing teacher education is not a requirement for either certification or legal purposes, there is little incentive for schools to set money aside to train teachers on the job. Thus, the pedagogical learning of the teachers is stymied.

Professional development for English teachers usually focuses on how-to sessions on specific pedagogic practices and minimally, if at all, on procedural knowledge or pedagogical content knowledge. Given this bleak picture of continuous professional development for teachers, it is not surprising that teachers are encouraged to be doers, not reflective thinkers. For English teachers, the focus has primarily been on expanding their repertoire of classroom practice. Professional development sessions on reflection or spirituality that impacts their role as teachers are not offered. This inhibits exploration of efficacy and responsibilities in relation

to professional actions and decisions as teachers of English, providing a very limited instrumental conception of the dimensions of teacher capacity.

8 Future Directions

The importance of English in India is indisputable, as is the increasing use of the language and the number of users. There is an unqualified acknowledgement of the need to maintain the advantage the language bestows socially and economically with a recent study confirming the link between an education in English and the scope of employment opportunities: the English-able earn up to 34 % more than those who are not (Azam, Chin, & Prakash, 2010; Aslam, Kingdon, De, & Kumar, 2010; Nagarajan, 2014). Formal instruction is doing little to meet these demands or to maintain high standards of curriculum and instruction. The inconsequential efforts to train teachers almost seem to guarantee that teaching will not keep pace with required changes (Goel & Goel, 2012). Building teacher capacity should be a strategic initiative engendering teachers' development, growth and excellence, requiring reflection on their own strengths and weaknesses, providing enabling conditions for premium performance by them in their classrooms.

English language teaching in India is facing issues that are not new but the sudden and rapid expansion of educational access to students, especially those with little previous exposure to the language throws into relief many questions: How can English be taught as a first, second and foreign language in the same setting? How can the curriculum be differentiated for each group of learners? What teacher education will adequately meet the needs of different learners? Certain understandings are beginning to influence teaching and learning decisions. For instance, that functional English is interpreted differently in rural and urban settings primarily dictated by teacher proficiency and access to English outside the classroom for both teachers and students. It is also assumed that CCE can be successful if faithfully implemented; and that what is needed is a sea-change in the outlook of veteran teachers about grading practices. This cultural change involving challenging beliefs of teachers and habits of their mind should be the focus of in-service education.

In an educational scenario that is crying out for immediate and substantive changes, modifications in the larger context percolate slowly to English classrooms. However, urgent and immediate reforms specific to the issues of English teachers, especially in terms of teacher beliefs and behaviors, do not appear to be forthcoming, in spite of the Justice Verma Commission findings (2012). The crying need of the hour is research on every aspect of ELT. Amol Padwad's excellent compilation of research studies in ELT in India (2014) clearly demonstrates the lack of coherent research that is relevant, recent and reflects the changing landscape. Without this knowledge base that is localized and contextualized (Mahboob, 2014), policies and practices will be done at whim (Farr & Song, 2011) and will entrench the hegemony of Standard English (Bhatt, 2005).

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Language Policy in Practice: Reframing the English Language Curriculum in the Indonesian Secondary Education Sector

Handoyo Puji Widodo

Abstract English language curriculum development in a culturally and linguistically diverse setting is always a site of struggle. Particularly in Indonesia, there has been a dramatic change in English language curricula in the secondary education sector during the past decade. This change has much been driven by the ideological and political agenda instead of pedagogical benefits of interested stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, and parents). This is evidenced by the fact that the current curriculum, The 2013 ELT Curriculum, does not detail key elements, such as curriculum materials, pedagogy, and assessment from relevant theories of language, language learning, and language teaching. Though there is much literature on English language curricula in Indonesia, it does not specifically highlight key principles of reframing English language curricula in the Indonesian secondary education sector from a critical situated perspective (Tollefson, Language Policy, *14*, 183–189, 2015). To fill this gap, the present chapter attempts to provide directions for reframing the current curriculum and to give fresh insight into the design of English language curricula, which takes into account agencies of teachers and students as well as socio-cultural environments. These directions are also applicable to other ELT contexts in Asia or the context where the status of English is a foreign language or an additional language.

Keywords Critical situated perspective • English language curricula • Indonesian secondary education • Language policy in practice

1 Introduction

Ideologically and politically speaking, language policies leave an imprint on the design and implementation of language curricula at classroom and school levels. In many cases, these policies dictate what, why, and how teachers teach and students learn language. The status of whether this language is considered as either a foreign language (language as a school subject) or an additional language (language as a

H.P. Widodo (✉)
Politeknik Negeri Jember, Jember, Indonesia
e-mail: handoyopw@yahoo.com

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means of communication) is strongly determined by the socio-political agenda. Through policy and curriculum documents, educational standards and competencies are always determined without comprehensive knowledge on language and language pedagogy, better understanding of planning goals, collaboration between policy makers and curriculum makers, and rigorous negotiation between local needs and globalization demands (Widodo, 2015). These factors will result in ideologically and politically imposed language policies. These policies are hardly to be enacted on classroom and school levels. Very often, there is a hot debate over the enactment of the policies among school administrators and teachers who are always seen as implementers of policy and curriculum materials. This debate occurs due to conflicting needs and interests between policy makers, school administrators, teachers, students, and interested stakeholders.

With this in mind, language curriculum design is never apolitical but ideologically laden in which there are conflicting needs and interests that underlie language curriculum design. In this chapter, language curriculum design refers to change, reform, development, or innovation depending on how the design is contextually perceived. For us as teachers, teacher trainers, and teacher educators, language curriculum design is a starting point for sound and well-crafted language policy and curriculum materials, pedagogy, and assessment. A language curriculum can be defined as a plan (perceived curriculum), a process (enacted or experienced curriculum), and a product (valued or validated curriculum). These different orientations of language curricula show the multidimensionality of a language curriculum at the levels of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The issue of language curriculum design is always debatable, and English language curriculum design in Indonesia is no exception. Since the Independence of Indonesia in 1945, Indonesia's ELT curricula particularly in the secondary education sector (junior and senior high schools) have undergone substantial changes. Particularly during the past 11 years, there have been three periods of curriculum change: 2004 Curriculum (competency-based curriculum), 2006 Curriculum (school-based curriculum), and 2013 Curriculum (scientific inquiry) respectively. These changes have exerted influence on how pedagogical practice and assessment in Indonesia's English language pedagogy are shaped. For this reason, the present chapter addresses key principles of reframing the current curriculum, the 2013 ELT Curriculum. Before discussing these principles, it begins by reviewing the linguistic landscape in Indonesia to depict a social environment where the English language curriculum is positioned and enacted. The chapter also provides an overview of English language curricula during the past 11 years. The contributions of the chapter are providing directions for reframing the current curriculum and giving fresh insight into English language curriculum development, which takes into account agencies of teachers and students as well as socio-cultural environments.

2 Contemporary Theory on Language Policy: Critical Situated Approaches

Language policies shape how language curricula are designed. They embrace "the explicit, written, overt, de jure, official and 'top-down' decision-making about language, but also the implicit, unwritten, covert, de facto, grass-roots and unofficial ideas and assumptions" about language in a particular context of situation and culture (Schiffman, 2006, p. 11). In the context of language curriculum making or development, language policy determines "what language is to be used and learned in school" and "what choices in grammar, vocabulary, genre, and style are appropriate in particular contexts [of situation and culture]" (Farr & Song, 2011, p. 654) This language policy certainly varies in terms of formality and orientation. At a grassroots level, language teachers are responsible for interpreting and enacting language policies, which affect their teaching practices. They also have responsibility for remaking this national language policy into school or classroom policy, which fits well with a local context of teaching practice. This language policy remaking plays an important role in appropriating language policies in the form of national curriculum guidelines (Pease-Alvarez & Alisun Thompson, 2014). Particularly in the context of enforced standardization and standardized testing reflected in rigid one-size fits all curricular mandates, the deployment of critical situated approaches to language policy remaking (Tollefson, 2015) helps language teachers question what works best for themselves and for their students. In this respect, teachers play a role as engaged policy makers "who are directly involved in the enactment of educational policy at the local level, which, in the case of teachers, encompasses the classroom experiences of their students" (Pease-Alvarez & Alisun Thompson, 2014, p. 168). Thus, by looking at English language curricula through the lenses of criticality and situatedness, language teachers are fully aware that such documents are the realities of language policy in practice, and they do not take the documents for granted, but they remake those curricula, which are relevant to their educational practices situated within local and global social, political, and economic conditions.

3 The Linguistic Landscape in Indonesia

Indonesia, an archipelagic country with over 17,000 islands stretching along the equator between Southeast Asia and Australia, is known as a multilingual and multicultural country (Paauw, 2009; Widodo & Fardhani, 2011). Geographically located between two main oceans and two continents, Indonesia is famous for a home to more than 300 ethnic groups who inhabit only 6,000 of 17,000 islands and have their own unique cultures and customs. "The estimated 103.5 million Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia," inhabiting the eastern and central parts of Java (Minahan, 2012, p. 109). Partly because of government-initiated transmigration

programs, there are also sizable Javanese populations throughout the archipelago. Javanese people speak Javanese, an Austronesian language, the language of daily life. Indonesian or Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of Indonesia, is spoken as a second language by the Javanese. The majority of the Javanese are Muslims, and a small number of the Javanese follow Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, and "*Kejawen*, a traditional animistic religion mixed with Muslim practices and strong Hindu and Buddhist influences" (Minahan, p. 109, italics, my emphasis). Other ethnic majorities in Indonesia include the Acehnese, the Ambonese, the Balinese, the Banjars, the Bataks, the Buginese, the Dayaks, the Madurese, the Minahasas, the Minangkabaus, the Papuans, the Sasaks, the Sumbanese, the Sundanese, the Tenggerese, and the Torajas. These groups have different ways of life. The Chinese also become a growing ethnic group that extends the richness of the Indonesian culture.

Although one ethnic group may be dominant in one area, we can practically find people with diverse cultural backgrounds in most areas of Indonesia. It is evident that Indonesia is a home to hundreds of languages and cultures (Widodo & Fardhani, 2011). Many of ethnic groups have their own languages or dialects. It has been reported that Indonesia has more than 700 local languages with different dialects at distinct linguistic levels: phonetic, phonological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic and cultural (Ethnologue, http://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/country; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). For instance, in East Java, people speak local languages such as Javanese and Madurese with different dialects. Most of the Indonesians are bilingual or multilingual in daily social encounters. They code switch from one local language to another or from Bahasa Indonesia to a local language. Widodo and Fardhani (2011) point out that languages used in Indonesia can be classified based on (a) number of speakers, (b) socio-economic and institutional status and prestige, and (c) socio-institutional and political power as well as privilege. These categories include (1) a national lingua franca (NLF), *Bahasa Indonesia*; (2) majority indigenous languages, such as Javanese, Madurese, Sundanese, Batak, *Bahasa Melayu*, Banjarese, Buginese, and Papuan; and (3) minority indigenous languages like Lamandau, Iban, Alor, Alas, and Mapia. It is important to note that a national lingua franca is defined as "a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture …" (Firth, 1996, p. 240). Majority indigenous languages are seen as the languages of which the number of speakers exceeds 1 million, and minority indigenous languages are viewed as those spoken by less than 200,000 people.

Although the Dutch ruled Indonesia for more than 350 years, Bahasa Indonesia, originally from Malay, was successfully institutionalized as a national lingua franca when the *Sumpah Pemuda* (the Oath of Youth) was declared on 28 October 1928 (Errington, 1986). The *Sumpah Pemuda*, 'unity in diversity,' has become a driver of strengthening patriotism, nationalism, and interethnic solidarity; shaping a unified national identity; and legitimatizing Bahasa Indonesia as a national language or a language of wider communication between Indonesians who ethno-linguistically differ (Goebel, 2010). These ideological motives attempt to maintain Indonesia's cultural and ethnic diversity. This ideology is also formally spelled out in the

Chapter 36 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Alwi, 2000; Drakeley, 2005; Nababan, 1991; Widodo & Fardhani, 2011). In other words, the choice of Bahasa Indonesia as a national lingua franca among culturally and linguistically diverse groups has been made on a supra-ethnic basis where all ethnic groups accepted the decision to build a new national identity (Kridalaksana, Verhaar, & Moeliono, 1982). It is no wonder that "Bahasa Indonesia has peacefully been implemented and accepted as the official language of administration, business, education, employment, mass media, and other social services" (Goebel, as cited in Widodo & Fardhani, 2011, p. 132) because the language does not belong to any of Indonesia's diverse ethnic groups (Paulston, 2003).

The fact that Indonesia is multicultural and multilingual affords numerous opportunities and poses challenges for Indonesians. This context opens up doors for them to learn different languages and cultures, and pose them a challenge to maintain their linguistic and cultural identity while learning another language, including other local languages and foreign languages. Although a specific culture may represent a specific area in Indonesia (Hamied, 2012), there are always possibilities for everyone to live with people from different cultural backgrounds.

4 Language Policy in Practice: English Language Curricula Enacted in the Secondary Education Sector in Indonesia

The Independence of Indonesia was proclaimed on 17 August 1945 after the surrender of the Japanese at the end of World War II. It is worth noting that the Japanese occupation of Indonesia took place between 1942 and 1945 (Lamb & Coleman, 2008). Soon after this, English was chosen as a compulsory foreign language or a school subject to learn and was widely taught in secondary schools and universities. At that time, a newly-established government led by the First President and the Vice President, Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) also called 'the Indonesia's Old Order,' made a politically and ideologically laden decision that Dutch nor Japanese was not chosen as a school subject since both were the languages of colonists. The decision was also based on the fact that English was more widely acceptable as a tool for international communication (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Mistar, 2005), so English was seen as an instrumental language.

English has become a language for international communication that Indonesian people need to learn and acquire as stipulated in the Act of the 2003 National Education System. The status of English as a school subject has been well established, and "English has gained its present authority and prestige in Indonesian society; it has become essential 'cultural capital for an information-driven global world" (Gee et al., as cited in Lamb & Coleman, 2008, p. 192). English has been part of the curriculum and is formally taught in secondary schools up to university though English was institutionalized as an optional school subject in primary

schools from 1994 to 2012. Among other school subjects, English is included in the high-stakes or national examination called *Ujian Nasional* in the secondary education sector as well as in a university/college entrance examination. This indicates that English is a required language that Indonesians need to learn to pass these high-stakes examinations. Therefore, there have been many attempts to assist Indonesian students to become competent in English. To this end, there have been changes in language policies and curricula since 2004. At the national level, the Government of RI plays a pivotal role in these changes. To understand these changes, it is important to briefly review them.

4.1 The 2004 ELT Curriculum

In 2004, Indonesia underwent decentralization in education. Along with this new policy, the 2004 ELT Curriculum called Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK) in Bahasa Indonesia or competency-based curriculum (CBC) was implemented nationwide. The legal basis of the new CBC was the 2003 Act of National Education System No. 20. Specifically, the new ELT curriculum adopted Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell's competence model and Halliday's systemic functional grammar (SFG) framework (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2003a, 2003b). As spelled out in the 2004 ELT Curriculum, the goals of English learning were to:

(a) develop communicative competence, which emphasizes macro skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing and five competencies, including linguistic, discourse, actional, sociocultural, and strategic;
(b) build and raise self-awareness of acquiring English as a foreign language and a means of learning and communication;
(c) build and develop a solid understanding of a close relationship between language and culture and raise intercultural understanding.

Drawing on these goals, elements of English learning include language skills, communicative competence, the position of English as a foreign language, English as a means for communication, and intercultural awareness. To this end, English textbooks were designed around text types (e.g., recounts, narratives, information reports, exposition, discussions, reviews). The 2004 ELT Curriculum also recognized the application of Halliday's three metafunctions to the teaching of four skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Anchored in this, the goals of the 2004 ELT Curriculum also included as follows:

(a) Listening: understand ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in different genres and text types;
(b) Speaking: express spoken ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in different genres and text types;
(c) Reading: grasp ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in different genres and text types; and
(d) Writing: express written ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings in different genres and text types (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2003a, 2003b).

Activities in English textbooks were organized based on (1) themes and tasks, (2) text types and text forms, and (3) macro language skills. In these textbooks, micro language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation were not explicitly presented, but depended on how teachers presented such micro skills in the classroom. Conceptually, the curriculum emphasized performance-based instruction in which students were expected to perform integrated language skills and competencies in different communicative situations. Practically speaking, most of the English teachers were reluctant to create their own classroom materials and explore the approaches adopted in the curriculum. Teachers relied on commercially-published textbooks, and they seemed to become implementers of the textbooks. This suggests that English teachers juxtaposed the textbooks with the curriculum and thought that the textbooks were a product of the curriculum to which they had to adhere. In addition, activities in English textbooks comprised test items, emphasizing comprehension and memorization. These were typical of most of the English textbooks. This implies that the nature of English language instruction was cognitively demanding.

The successful implementation of the 2004 ELT Curriculum was hampered by an extensive list of factors such as poor classroom management, a lack of pedagogic foundations and contextual knowledge, no extensive engagement in English use, atheoretical classroom materials analysis and use, test-driven language instruction, poor understanding of competency and systematic functional frameworks, rigid pedagogic values and traditions, and government-controlled language assessment. These do not allow for exploratory and innovative language teaching practices and commonly occur in some Asian countries where English is seen as a school subject (Littlewood, 2007; Priyanto, 2009; Richards, 2010). Given these problems, to help students acquire English as a means of communication in an international arena, the Government of RI through the Ministry of National Education (now The Ministry of Education and Culture) incorporated the concept of school-based curriculum (SBC) into the 2006 ELT Curriculum. For this reason, the name of the 2004 ELT curriculum was changed to "*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*" (*KTSP*) in Bahasa Indonesia or SBC.

4.2 The 2006 ELT Curriculum

The 2006 ELT Curriculum or SBC was introduced to meet different socio-institutional, economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds and recognized the fact that each school in a different district needed to cater to its student and institutional needs as well as made use of its local resources. The revised version of the curriculum also aimed to meet globalization challenges that Indonesia has to face as information communication and technology (ICT) advances steadily. Along with this move, the 2006 ELT Curriculum adopted the framework of school-based curriculum (SBC) or *KTSP*. In this curriculum, the Government of RI gave each school freedom to design its curriculum, implement, and evaluate it at the school level

using local resources, broader socio-cultural dimensions, and learners' needs (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan*, 2006). This type of curriculum did not prescribe curriculum materials, but set core competency guidelines that English teachers needed to develop. The core of the 2006 ELT Curriculum had been driven by the fact that context, meaning, and communicative competence needed to be integrated since these are inextricably intertwined.

The 2006 ELT Curriculum were designed and developed by English teachers who worked within teams. These teachers could share their curriculum with other teachers from different schools in the same district through an English Teacher Development Group (ETDG) forum (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* or *MGMP* in Bahasa Indonesia). Through this forum, English teachers could provide feedback on each others' curriculum materials such as syllabi, lesson plans, and lesson units. Board of education at the district level facilitated and supervised these forums. The board assigned teacher supervisors, experienced teachers, to provide mentoring and supervision to school teachers.

The 2006 ELT Curriculum was also based on national education standards set out by *Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan* or *BSNP* (Council for National Education Standard or CNES). These standards include content standard, process, competency standards for school leavers, teachers and staff, facilities, management, financing, and evaluation (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan*, 2006). The package of the 2006 ELT Curriculum designed by individual schools included the goals of ELT, a yearly school calendar, lesson plans, and syllabi. Fundamentally, teachers designed and developed their own 2006 ELT curriculum based on the following principles:

(a) students' and stakeholders' needs and interests;
(b) integrity;
(c) sensitivity to the development of science, technology, and arts;
(d) relevance to real-life needs;
(e) comprehensiveness and sustainability;
(f) life-long learning;
(g) a balance between national needs and local needs.

Generally speaking, the implementation of the 2006 ELT Curriculum was based on the 2004 ELT Curriculum informed by competency-based, communicative competence, and systemic functional frameworks. The difference between the two curricula is that the Government did not prescribe a detailed nationally-mandated curriculum, so each school was responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating its own curriculum with the supervision of district board of education. In spite of this, the Ministry of National Education still exerted much control on a national assessment system, which did not reflect the core of the 2006 ELT Curriculum. In most EFL classes, English teachers skewed their English language instruction to the national examination in which competency standards were set up by policy makers.

4.3 Policy on International Standard Schools (ISSs)

In addition to the implementation of *KTSP* or SBC, in mid 2006, the Indonesian Government enacted policy on the international standard schools (ISSs) or English medium instruction (EMI) to improve education quality and cater to students with outstanding academic capabilities. The policy of EMI has recently been pervasive in Asia (see a chapter by Mihyon Jeon in this volume; Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014). This policy has ideologically been driven by the discourses of internationalization, globalization, and modernization. In the context of Indonesia, the implementation of this policy was geared to strengthen the nation's international competitiveness and to produce workforce ready to work for transnational firms. The policy on ISSs attempted to meet international competitiveness and global demands as part of economic globalization. It was geared for primary and secondary education to train and educate globally competitive students (Zacharias, 2013). The enactment of the ISSs was seen as a strategy for gaining wider access to cutting-edge knowledge and strengthening national competitive edge in knowledge and science (Hu, 2007a, 2007b). The internationalization program through both the national and institutional policy documents was also a major driver of planning and enacting the ISSs. This case is similar to that of other Asian countries such as China (Hu et al., 2014).

The definition of the ISSs is the one that meets all the national standards and which takes into account educational standards of one of 34 members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other world's most developed countries that have much more improved education systems in the international arena. The purpose of the policy was to enable school leavers and university graduates to compete globally with others from other countries. It is important to bear in mind that the ISSs differs from common international schools established in some big Indonesian cities (e.g., Jakarta, Surabaya, Denpasar) to accommodate the needs of expatriates who would like to send their children to schools with international standards (curriculum, teachers, and facilities) and a school environment similar to that of their home countries. The typicality of the ISSs includes EMI, the use of information and communication technology (ICT), and the administration of international testing (e.g., TOEFL and Cambridge's International General Certificate of Secondary Education). On an institutional level, the ISSs adopted standards of accreditation, curriculum (e.g., language policy and planning, pedagogy, and assessment), and school management set up by OECD-affiliated countries. International standard schools (ISSs) were also encouraged to build collaboration with sister schools in one of the OECD member countries.

Five years (2006–2011) have witnessed the fact that the implementation of ISS policy was problematic in some aspects. First, teachers were lack of English abilities, and students were no exception. For this reason, most of the classrooms were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. Even though teachers claimed that they adopted a bilingual or EMI approach to their instruction, they were not well-equipped with sufficient English language ability. Moreover, although most of the textbooks were written in two languages: Bahasa Indonesia and English, but the students read

Bahasa Indonesia texts. This indicates that the students were not ready for EMI. Teachers received no sound training in EMI. They were also lack of resources written in English, and they translated Bahasa Indonesian written textbooks into English, but the translated versions were poorly written. These demonstrate that both teachers and students were not well-prepared for EMI. Both the teachers and the students preferred using Bahasa Indonesian as a medium of instruction because it was much easier to teach and to understand a lesson. These problems were also reported by Hu, Li, and Lei (2014) in the context of China.

From a critical perspective, anchored in the ISSs, Indonesia is seen as a consumer or importer of international standards set by the OECD member countries (Sakhiyya, 2011). In this respect, it has to enact those standards to national schools without weighing if such standards suit institutional contexts and needs at school and classroom levels. In other words, the ISSs adopted OECD member country-set curriculum, facilities, teachers' quality, management, and accreditation without any adaptation or modification. Through an economic capital lens, international standard schools (ISSs) applied higher school tuition and fees. This was compounded by the fact that they received financial support or grants higher than regular schools. This educational hegemony created injustice between ISSs and regular schools in that the Indonesian Government paid much more attention to the ISSs in terms of financial support and facilities. The ISSs as a product of nationally-initiated policy does not reflect what an EMI framework was supposed to achieve instead of benefiting educational elites such as policy makers, schools, and economically-advantaged students and parents. Students with high socio-economic status got access to the ISSs though the Indonesian Government allocated 20 % of the financial support to students from economically-disadvantaged families. In fact, students with a high socio-economic status got access to better education quality, services, and facilities. In other words, the ISS policy created social, economic, and educational hegemonies or inequalities.

In addition to these problems, based on input from non-government bodies and community leaders, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia made a judicial review. The outcome of the review was to revoke Chapter 50, Paragraph 3 of the Act of the 2003 National Education System, which legalized the ISSs. In early January 2013, the review attempted to provide all citizens with equal rights to quality education without any socio-economic discrimination or injustice. The final decision was to cease the ISS program. At present, the ISS policy is no longer implemented in the secondary education sector, but EMI flourishes in the higher education sector through world class university (WCU) programs.

4.4 The 2013 ELT Curriculum

In this section, I would like to briefly review the current curriculum, the 2013 ELT Curriculum. To begin with, the current curriculum aims to prepare Indonesians for becoming citizens who are religious, productive, innovative, and passionate as well

as who can contribute to societal, nation's, and world's civilizations. These institutionally envisioned goals of education have much to do with citizenship, nationalism, and national identity. The current curriculum emphasizes learning designed by teachers (the taught curriculum) and learning experience (the experienced curriculum) based on students' sociocultural backgrounds and ability. It also attempts to meet eight national standards, including content, process, competency standards for school leavers, teachers and administrators, facilities, management, financing, and assessment. These standards are geared to improve educational quality and cater to global demands (e.g., human resources with global workplace requirements). Setting these standards pertains to national needs and global demands.

The development of the current curriculum is anchored in the following principles:

1. Student-centered pedagogy is of top priority. Students are afforded an opportunity to choose what to learn to achieve a particular competency.
2. Interactive pedagogy involves interactions between teacher and students, between students and materials, and between students and their social environments.
3. Integrated pedagogy assists students to explore what they need to learn and to see interconnectedness among a variety of materials through direct observations and mediated observations through the Internet, for instance.
4. Exploratory and engaging learning and teaching are framed in scientific inquiry or discovery learning, which follows these steps: Observing, questioning, exploring or experimenting, associating, and communicating.
5. A collaborative principle underpins a learning process.
6. The use of technology enriches learning and teaching process.
7. Students' needs inform pedagogy.
8. Critical and interdisciplinary approaches are adopted to inform the whole pedagogy.

In terms of curriculum materials, these include Indonesian minimum competency standards for school leavers, core competencies, basic competencies, student textbooks and teacher guidebooks, and lesson planning. Firstly, the curriculum puts much more emphasis on national standards, which are translated into minimum competency standards for school leavers. These standards are set based on levels of education such as primary education and secondary education. Like those in the 2004 and 2006 ELT Curricula, there are two competencies in the current curriculum: core competencies and basic competencies as mentioned earlier. Core competencies include four domains: spiritual attitudes, social attitudes, knowledge, and skills. These core competencies are broken down into basic competencies. The following are examples of core and basic competencies in the 2013 ELT Curriculum (Table 1).

These competencies are developed based on disciplinary and content-based approaches. Basic competencies complement each other in each of the lesson units. The former deal with three aspects: affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. These

Table 1 Core and basic competencies

Competencies	Junior high school	Senior high school
Core competencies (Year 1)	Understand knowledge (facts, concepts, and procedures) based on curiosity about science, technology, arts, and culture as well as observed phenomena	Understand knowledge (facts, concepts, and procedures) based on curiosity about science, technology, arts, culture, and humanities; knowledge about humanity, nationalism, citizenship, and civilization; and procedural knowledge about topics of interest to solve problems
Basic competencies	Understand texts about greetings, thanking, and apologies to build a social relationship with others at home and in school	Understand spoken and written texts to respond to questions, compliments, and care
	Understand purposes, rhetorical elements, and linguistic features of simple spoken and written texts about self-introduction	Understand purposes, rhetorical elements, and linguistic features of self-introductory texts
	Understand purposes, rhetorical elements, and linguistic features of simple spoken and written texts to name days, months, years, and time	Understand purposes, rhetorical elements, and linguistic features of greeting texts

competencies should reflect balanced attainments in relation to hard skills and soft skills. The latter are derived from core competencies.

Pedagogical speaking, the current curriculum prescribes a five-stage learning cycle using a scientific approach. The learning cycle includes (1) observing, (2) questioning, (3) exploring/experimenting, (4) associating, and (5) communicating. At the stage of observing, teachers ask students to observe things, places, natural/social phenomena, or social activities/events/realities. Observing can also take the form of field trips, video shows, and other digital presentation of what to be observed. In the phase of questioning, the teachers pose questions to ensure what the students have observed. This questioning can take the form of pair/group discussions. At the exploring stage, the students are asked to notice or create/construct texts that are relevant to what the students observed. Also, they can search for sources of information and linguistic resources to get assigned tasks done. In the phase of associating, the students are told to make a connection between linguistic features, rhetorical resources, different things, phenomena, or social activities/events observed. At the stage of communicating, the students are asked to demonstrate or perform relevant tasks individually or jointly. The students are also encouraged to share or publish what the students have performed or done either individually or jointly.

Through a critical lens, the nature of the current curriculum is highly prescriptive in that it dictates what and how to teach and learn English within the remit of pre-

determined competencies. Both core and basic competencies are set based on the ideological and political agenda. These competencies do not reflect communicative language competence and the totality of competencies that students have to develop to become competent users of English. English teachers have to tailor their pedagogic practice and assessment to these competencies without any adaptation or modification. In addition, the current curriculum is accompanied by prescribed syllabi and textbooks in order to lighten teacher workloads. This effort seems to underestimate teacher capability of designing sound syllabi and textbooks. Pedagogically speaking, the way teachers teach follows a prescribed five-step learning cycle. In relation to assessment, though the current curriculum emphasizes both process- and product-based assessment, it still prioritizes cognitively demanding assessment in which student capability is assessed through formal assessment. What is missing in the current curriculum is that the curriculum puts emphasis on idealized guidelines, which do not recognize crucial elements of what the curriculum means to English teachers, school administrators, teacher educators, and interested stakeholders (e.g., students, parents). More crucially, the current curriculum does not detail curriculum materials, pedagogy, and assessment, informed by relevant theories of language, language learning, and language teaching. Instead, it delineates ideologically and institutionally envisioned goals and competencies as well as rigid and idealized language pedagogy and assessment.

5 Key Principles of Reframing the 2013 ELT Curriculum

This section fleshes out six key principles of reframing the current curriculum in order to serve both inferred and expressed needs of students, teachers, and interested stakeholders. These principles provide directions for adapting the official curriculum to a particular pedagogical context. More crucially, these principles attempt to position teachers as curriculum developers and makers.

5.1 Revisiting Roles of Teachers from a Curriculum Development Perspective

Classroom life is socially complicated in that students learn better in a particular classroom context, but they underachieve in another classroom setting. For this reason, language teachers play different pivotal roles. Practically speaking, though policy makers and officially appointed curriculum developers attempt to standardize a curriculum as a plan or intention, teachers approach the curriculum differently. In the curriculum development literature, there are three approaches to how teachers enact a curriculum at a classroom level. These approaches include fidelity—curriculum transmission, adaptation—curriculum development, and enactment—curriculum

making (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992). With these approaches in mind, language teachers play different important roles.

In the first curriculum model, a curriculum transmission or top-down framework, teachers are required to follow prescribed curriculum materials, such as syllabi, lesson plans, and textbooks. The curriculum controls what and how to teach and what and how to learn. In this respect, teachers play a role as curriculum transmitters who always implement their pedagogical agenda based on standards of achievements. Learning goals and objectives, outcomes, content, process, and assessment are predetermined by policy makers and officially appointed curriculum developers without assessing students' needs as the actual actors of the curriculum in addition to teachers. Moreover, teachers consider textbooks as a classroom curriculum and follow lessons prescribed in the textbooks. Students work on these textbooks page by page. The official curriculum frames objectives, content, pedagogy, and assessment in which the totality of students' language ability is assessed or judged through a series of tests. In other words, teachers are spoon-fed by the whole package of the curriculum.

In the second curriculum model, curriculum adaptation or development, teachers tailor curriculum materials (e.g., competency standards, syllabi, textbooks) to their local teaching practices. They make significant adjustments so that they can explore what best works and what does not work best. In this sense, the role of teachers is to transform curriculum as-a-plan or product of language policy into the pedagogical enterprise (the experienced or enacted curriculum). In addition, teachers are entrusted to unpack and enact the hidden curriculum, unplanned curriculum materials. In addition, they may include important concepts, principles, skills, values, and knowledge, which are not articulated in the mandated curriculum (the null curriculum). Anchored in the adaptation framework, teachers attempt to connect curriculum materials with what students would like to learn. This process is called the experienced curriculum (Doyle, 1992). Thus, the adaptation approach gives teachers autonomy to frame curriculum materials according to their local contexts.

The third curriculum model, curriculum enactment, sees curriculum as a process "jointly created and jointly and individually experienced by students and teacher" (Snyder et al., 1992, p. 428). In this regard, curriculum is not viewed as a product, but as a process of (re)construction of the enacted experiences (the ongoing process of teaching and learning) both students and teachers encounter. With this in mind, teachers play a role as creators of curriculum knowledge. They are agents of change in thinking and practice in which they engage students in this process. In addition, the teachers use, adapt, and supplement curriculum materials based on students' needs, interests and personal development so that the teachers can assist the students to explore what is relevant to themselves and community, rather than achieve prespecified objectives that hardly cater to their needs and ability (Shawer, 2010).

In the current curriculum, teachers should be able to play roles as curriculum developers and curriculum makers. They should be entrusted to critically problematize, challenge, and revise the mandated or official curriculum, which may not be relevant to their pedagogical context. They can re-formulate standardized competencies

to develop students' ability and go beyond what policy makers and curriculum developers on a top management level intend students to learn or achieve. The teachers deserve the right to supplement what is missing in the intended curriculum and to include knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are important for students' learning development. From the perspectives of curriculum adaptation and enactment, teachers are no longer receivers or consumers of the curriculum, but constructors of the official curriculum. Curriculum development, evaluation, experimentation, expansion, adaptation, and supplementation among others are tasks in which teachers engage. With these roles in mind, teachers always endeavor to develop their own curriculum and adapt the official curriculum to the needs of students and their own needs as professional learners as well as negotiate any curriculum materials with the students as members of the classroom community. They should view a process of negotiation or dialogic talks between teachers and students as well as needs as a springboard for innovating and exploring best curriculum materials such as syllabi, lesson plans, pedagogical materials, and test papers. Teachers as curriculum remakers and curriculum makers always see the official curriculum as resources for developing their own classroom curriculum. It is evident that teachers also play different roles, among others: classroom-level policy makers, needs analysts or assessors, syllabus designers, lesson planners, materials designers or developers, explorers or creators of pedagogical methods and practices, classroom managers or designers, reflective practitioners, and program evaluators. Definitely, there are many other roles that language teachers play when working with their students, depending on tasks or activities the students perform. To make possible the agenda of innovating the 2013 ELT curriculum, English teachers need to understand and play roles as curriculum developers and curriculum makers. Thus, it is critical for teachers to see these roles as a need for engaging in vibrant and continuing language curriculum development and making.

5.2 Negotiating Policy and Curriculum Materials: Teacher-Driven Language Curriculum Development

A curriculum as a product of language policy and planning embraces three elements: policy and curriculum materials, pedagogy, and assessment. These elements construct the totality of language curriculum. As Graves (2008) emphasizes, the fabric of a language curriculum design process embraces planning, enacting, and evaluating. The outcome of the design "is going to be experienced by teachers and students in the classroom" (Macalister & Nation, 2011, p. 1). This implies that both teachers and students have agency and rights to engage in this process. From a critical situated perspective, language curricula are always attached to social environments. These social environments include a myriad of contextual factors: social, cultural, political, historical, educational, economic, geographical, and institutional. This suggests that language curriculum design is complex, dynamic, and fluid by its

very nature. Due to the complexity and fluidity of this enterprise, a curriculum is always at the center of hot debates in the educational landscape.

It is a common phenomenon that policy makers formulate or develop curriculum policy and endorse curriculum materials. This curriculum policy comes out of ideologically based positions of political actors (e.g., Dorn, 2008; Schoenfeld & Pearson, 2008). This suggests that curriculum reform or change is driven by ideological or political interests instead of educational interests. From language policy and planning perspectives, the whole package of curriculum is called curriculum materials, "the products of a curriculum, developed for several curriculum levels (national, e.g. standards; school, e.g. the school curriculum plan; or classroom, e.g. lessons, modules activities)" (Voogt et al., 2011, p. 1236). It is no wonder that "[t]here has been a growing tendency to align curriculum standards with accountability requirements. In the specificity of these standards and requirements, curriculum policies increasingly prescribe not only *what* is taught but also *how* it is taught" (Bascia, Carr-Harris, Fine-Meyer, & Zurzolo, 2014, p. 231).

From the viewpoint of teacher-driven language curriculum development, teachers should be entrusted to become drivers of changes in both language policy and practice within and beyond the remit of their classrooms and schools. It is understood that "teacher-driven curriculum innovations may take many years to achieve widespread dissemination, legitimacy and formalization in policy" (Bascia et al., 2014, p. 229). To facilitate this, policy makers should recognize teacher agency, the "capacity of teachers to act within the context of problematic situations"—to engage in autonomous action "within the contingencies of the environment within which such action occurs" (Priestley, Edwards, & Priestley, 2012, p. 196). This implies that teachers are not implementers or transmitters of policy and curriculum materials, but they are engaged actors who are capable of critically seeing possible constraints or inadequacy of formal policy and curriculum materials by developing or modifying curriculum content at classroom and school levels. A myriad of empirical research on curriculum making reports (Bascia et al., 2014) that teachers are portrayed as active agents in their own classrooms and at the school level, but as playing only a marginal role at the policy level in that their voices remain unheard.

Shawer (2010) suggests that policy-makers adopt a broad curriculum approach, which provides language teachers a myriad of ways to approach and transform the official curriculum into their own classroom curriculum. In addition, school administrators along with teachers should use a variety of sources to assess, develop, and report what is missing in the official curriculum, and they should be able to identify their contribution to curriculum development. This process-based curriculum design can exert positive influence on curriculum, school, classroom, teacher, and student development. In this instance, a curriculum should be viewed as a process of knowledge (re)construction, which takes place within and beyond both school and classroom as social environments where both teachers and students engage in pedagogic encounters. Thus, negotiating teacher-driven language curriculum development with policy makers may help ensure access, equity, and quality across all educational levels and settings.

5.3 Positioning and Framing English Language Pedagogy

Pedagogy is part of the experienced curriculum. Without this enterprise, curriculum is merely seen as a document or a plan. In other words, pedagogical practices are manifestation of the official curriculum, the hidden curriculum (pedagogical practice without planning), and the null curriculum (what is missing in the official curriculum). The pedagogical landscape is always complex and multidimensional (e.g., power, agency, identity, forms of participation). Due to the complexity of language pedagogy, English teaching and learning cannot be implemented in a linear way. As stipulated in the 2013 ELT Curriculum, teachers and students should experience a five-stage learning process, including observing, questioning, experimenting or exploring, associating, and communicating. This process attempts to dictate ways teachers and students engage in pedagogic encounters. This pedagogic process cannot simply be viewed as an organizational or procedural endeavor, but should be viewed as dynamic, negotiated, and situated practice. As curriculum makers, language teachers should be entrusted to enact their pedagogical practice beyond this dogmatic five-step learning process. In addition, prescribed textbooks as a product of the 2013 ELT Curriculum along with teacher guide books do not give language teachers freedom to assess if these textbooks are relevant and appropriate to their pedagogic contexts. In addition, such textbooks legitimatize the roles of teachers as curriculum transmitters. Language teachers are agents who pass down the intended curriculum without adapting it to their pedagogical situations.

It is high time for language teachers to position and frame their own pedagogical practices based on local or situated contexts (Widodo & Park, 2014). Pedagogical positioning has a lot to do with what conceptual or theoretical stances language teachers adopt to inform their own practices. This positioning also allows them to experiment on theories to better see what works and what does not work in a particular language classroom context. The adoption of a particular theoretical stance should be accompanied with pedagogical framing. This framing aims to skew a particular theoretical stance to a particular pedagogical zone. In Bax's (2003) term, both positioning and framing are also referred to a context approach, which encourages language teachers to tailor their pedagogical practices to meet the needs of students and their social environment/context. This condition is also relevant to what Kumaravadivelu (2001, p. 538) calls postmethod pedagogy, which aims to strike a balance between a teacher-generated theory of practice (e.g., professional knowledge, personal experience, beliefs, values, and views about meaningful pedagogical practices) and contextual conditions (e.g., the local linguistic landscape, sociocultural and political particularities). Taken together, pedagogical positioning and framing can be a springboard for exploring and innovating pedagogical practices in which students engage in making decisions on the choice of such practices. In this respect, students' voices are viewed as sources of input for what to teach and what to learn.

Thus, pre-packed curriculum materials such as a list of competency standards, syllabi, lesson plans, and textbooks among others place language teachers in the

comfort zone. Within this zone, language teachers are merely consumers of policy maker and expert knowledge. The agency of teachers is not well recognized. It does not matter how well-crafted the pre-packed curriculum materials are because language teaching and learning are always complex, dynamic, and unpredictable in that both students and teachers have different beliefs, values, expectations, and cultures in which they nurture outside the classroom. The totality of knowledge (re) construction and negotiation is much shaped by these dimensions. The ultimate goals of this pedagogical trajectory are to help language students build and enhance the ownership of English as well as to view English learning as a short- and long-term investment (Widodo & Park, 2014). Thus, what students have learned from classroom and school should be resources for them to engage in real-life communicative encounters.

5.4 Integrating Assessment and Pedagogy: A Dynamic Approach

Language assessment is a crucial part of the whole curriculum. It should be viewed as the continuum of pedagogic practices. It is important to ponder how and why language assessment should be integrated with language pedagogy. Language assessment should go beyond formative and summative assessment in which the former aims to promote learning informally and frequently conducted in classrooms, and the latter, formally planned and periodically administered, intends to document learners' progress or achievement. This formal assessment is "concerned with measuring the results of learner development and not directly with promoting development" (Poehner & van Compernolle, 2011, pp. 183–184). Language assessment should not be seen as a product of learning, but a process of developing what students have learned. Therefore, there is an urgent need for reframing language assessment as a starting point for taking into account questions of access and fairness in language education. To this end, dynamic assessment as an approach helps language teachers understand their social world as the source of abilities. Assessment is viewed as process and humanistic endeavor in that it does not look at the quantitative results of learner development, but concerned with promoting learner development. This effort is geared to integrate assessment and pedagogy to identify what students are lacking and develop their language repertoire by providing the students with sufficient teacher scaffolding and peer support.

Dynamic assessment is epistemologically rooted in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and the belief that cognitive capabilities develops through social interactions and physical and symbolic artifacts (see Poehner, 2008, 2009 for more discussion about dynamic assessment in foreign language education). A dynamic approach to language assessment recognizes the single entity of pedagogy and assessment. Thus, the approach "challenges conventional views on teaching and assessment by arguing that these should not be seen as separate activities but should instead be fully integrated" (Poehner, 2009, p. 5).

Stoynoff (2012, pp. 527–528) suggests that anchored in dynamic assessment, classroom-based assessment should

- integrate the teacher fully into the assessment process including planning assessment, evaluating performance, and making decisions based on the results of assessment;
- be conducted by and under the direction of the learners' teacher (as opposed to an external assessor);
- yield multiple samples of learner performance that are collected over time and by means of multiple assessment procedures and activities;
- be applied and adapted to meet the teaching and learning objectives of different classes and students;
- integrate learners into the assessment process and utilize self- and peer-assessment in addition to teacher-assessment of learning;
- foster opportunities for learners to engage in self-initiated enquiry;
- offer learners immediate and constructive feedback; and
- monitor, evaluate, and modify assessment procedures to optimize teaching and learning.

It is important to bear in mind that both pedagogy and assessment are inseparable in that pedagogy is a process of equipping students with required knowledge, attitude, skill, and ability to perform real-life tasks. Assessment is a way to recognize the agency of students and provide useful input for innovating or reframing the existing language pedagogy. Language assessment should be seen as a cognitive, linguistic, psychological, and social enterprise. More crucially, it is used to better understand students' language and non-language development through three formats of assessment: self-assessment (e.g., reflective journals), peer assessment (e.g., observations, projects, simulations), and teacher assessment (e.g., journals, interviews, portfolios). Formal assessments such as formative, summative, diagnostic, and high-stakes (the National Assessment) should not be used to judge student ability as a whole. Therefore, both formal assessment and dynamic assessment should complement each other. This should be a first priority agenda in the enactment of the 2013 ELT Curriculum. Policy makers, teachers, students, and other interested stakeholders should recognize this agenda as a shared vision and motivation for engineering and enacting meaningful language pedagogy.

5.5 Re-envisioning Sound Language Teacher Training and Education

Teacher training and education institutions play pivotal roles in educating sufficient and highly qualified teachers. Being a language teacher is a complex and demanding profession in that this profession requires not only capabilities of understanding curriculum and putting curriculum materials into practice, but also having solid

understanding of the nature of language and sufficient language ability. Undoubtedly, there are other abilities language teachers have to develop. Therefore, language teacher training and education is an institutional site, which involves a myriad of intertwined factors, such as cognition, visions and missions, philosophical values, socio-political agenda, and other dimensions.

To produce language teachers with the whole package of relevant competence, language teacher training and education institutions should provide a curriculum that touches upon comprehensive theories of language policy and planning as well language curriculum development. They also need to emphasize how such theories are put into practice so that pre-service and in-service teachers better understand how they approach any changing language policy and curriculum development at macro and micro levels. Shawer (2010, p. 182) suggests that "teacher training [and education] institutions introduce pre-service and in-service teachers" to different approaches to understanding language curriculum and possible strategies for raising their awareness of how language teachers are supposed to approach the curriculum. To this end, language teacher educators and administrators should always enhance quality of system, content, and pedagogy of language teacher training and education. They should also involve interested stakeholders in this quality assurance.

Teacher training and education institutions should mold teacher's role into the developmental role rather than the instrumental in order to recognize the agency of teachers. Keiny (1994, p. 159) nicely lists these two conceptions of teacher's role, that is, the instrumental and the developmental as presented below (Table 2).

Teacher's role as the developmental is much relevant to positioning teachers as agents of change. To reframe the 2013 ELT Curriculum, language teachers should take on the developmental role. With this in mind, language teachers always engage in reflective practice, joint knowledge construction, long-life learning, process-oriented personal and professional learning, and theory-driven action enterprise. In line with this, language teacher educators should be aware that teachers should recognize what becoming a teacher means and how they should behave professionally.

Table 2 Two conceptions of teacher role

	Instrumental	Developmental
General orientation	Technical rationality	Reflection in action
Epistemological aspect	Objectivism—knowledge as an external entity	Constructivism—knowledge as a subjective construction
Task ownership	Teacher	Student
Teacher's responsibility	To instruct, transfer knowledge	To promote student's learning processes by providing opportunities for direct interaction with knowledge.
Learning goals	Achievements as products of learning	Learning as a process
Education of teachers	Training or modeling their acquisition of skills and techniques	Integration of theory and action; developing reflective and diagnostic capacities

Therefore, language training and education institutions need to re-envision their language education curriculum so that they can assist both pre-service and in-service language teachers to become competent in language curriculum development and making.

5.6 Sustaining Vibrant Teacher Professional Development

Sustained and vibrant teacher professional development (TPD) is one of the key factors of fruitful language curriculum development and enactment in that teachers are active actors of these enterprises. Opfer and Pedder (2011, p. 376) contend that TPD is deemed as a crucial means of "improving schools, increasing teacher quality, and improving the quality of student learning." TPD is part of professional or teacher learning. Individual teacher learning is affected by institutional or school system orientations. For this reason, schools should provide teachers with support, access, and encouragement to engage in professional learning activities. In short, teacher's individual learning trajectories intermingle with the school's learning system orientation. Both affect the nature and activities of professional or teacher learning in which teachers engage. Specific TPD activities, processes, or programs cannot be divorced from "complex teaching and learning environments in which teachers live" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 377). Thus, school-level learning system creates socially-produced conditions for teacher learning.

Despite the recognition of TPD, most of the professional development opportunities remain fragmented and poorly aligned with curricula and inadequate to meet teachers' needs for growing professionally in Indonesia. The Indonesian government, districts, and schools have spent a great amount of money on teacher training, workshops, and seminars. None of them impact on rigorous professional or teacher learning. The nature of such professional development activities is just one-shot. To engage teachers in meaningful professional learning or development activities, the teachers understand what such activities mean to them personally and professionally. From a personal perspective, professional development activities help the teachers better understand personal goals and attainments, which lead to their personal growth and development. From a professional viewpoint, such professional development activities impact not only on their professional knowledge and competence, but also on student learning development. The teachers should contribute to their professional communities where they engage in professional knowledge and expertise sharing with their peer teachers.

Thus, professional development activities should support teacher's personal and professional learning, which needs to be sustained and intensive rather than brief and sporadic. Professionally speaking, engaging in teaching as a profession, teacher learning activities should bring about change in pedagogical practice and in turn in student learning. From a casuality perspective, meaningful professional development can enhance teacher instructional practices and in turn result in improved student learning. This concurs with Guskey's argument that professional processes,

actions and activities can "enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students" (cited in Creemers, Antoniou, & Kyriakides, 2013, p. 3).

From a curriculum development perspective, language teachers should be entrusted to play roles as curriculum developers and makers so that they have a range of opportunities to engage in sustained and vibrant TPD activities. These activities should follow these principles: collaboration, life impact, engagement, empowerment, and sustainability. Collaboration can involve working together with other teachers and teacher educators on joint curriculum materials writing, reflective teaching, action research, peer observation, and other projects, which help them learn from each other. More crucially, this collaboration can build and maintain community of teacher professional learning. The second principle is life impact. Any professional development activities in which teachers engage should impact on their personal and professional growth and on student learning development. In addition, teacher contribution to engagement in professional development activities impact on others. Engagement and empowerment are two other crucial principles of TPD. Teachers should engage in a variety of professional development activities, which can take the form of research, training, seminar and workshop programs, observation, interviewing, journaling, and other relevant activities. Additionally, the teachers are responsible for empowering others through peer modeling and scaffolding. Following a constructivist approach, teachers should help each other and assist less experienced peers to enhance their personal and professional learning. The last principle is sustainability. Teachers should see professional development activities as a need for growing personally and professionally. They need to sustain their passion for continuing such activities. In this way, teachers see themselves as life-long learners. Taken together, collaboration, life impact, engagement and empowerment, and sustainability are key principles that both policy makers and teachers should recognize to plan meaningful and vibrant professional development programs. Thus, factors such as quality, quantity, time, and opportunities should be taken into account so that teachers can reflect on and evaluate quality professional development activities. These activities should be high on the agenda of policy makers, school administrators, and teachers.

6 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have presented the landscape of English language curricula in the Indonesian secondary education context. More importantly, I have pinpointed six key principles of reframing the current ELT curriculum in Indonesia, including (1) revisiting roles of teachers from a curriculum development perspective, (2) negotiating policy and curriculum materials: teacher-driven language curriculum development, (3) positioning and framing English language pedagogy, (4) integrating assessment and pedagogy: a dynamic approach, (5) re-envisioning sound language teacher training and education, and (6) sustaining vibrant teacher professional

development. Assuredly, policy makers and curriculum developers in other Asian countries may make use of these principles to adapt the official curriculum to particular pedagogic contexts. I would like to argue that language teachers should move their pedagogic practices beyond the comfort zone by playing critical roles as curriculum developers and curriculum makers in order to adapt the official curriculum into their own pedagogic practice contexts. Thus, language teachers should see themselves as agents of change in any language policy and curriculum development.

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English Language Education Policy in Japan: At a Crossroads

Gregory Paul Glasgow and Daniel Leigh Paller

Abstract Ever since 1989, there has been an intensification of efforts to reform English Language Teaching (ELT) in Japan. Policy initiatives such as "The Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities" launched in 2003, the implementation of "Foreign Language Activities" in elementary schools in 2011, the "Global 30" Project in higher education to promote English-medium learning in 2009 and the 2013 implementation of the revised national senior high school foreign language curriculum are all efforts initiated by the Japanese government to improve ELT practice and increase international awareness among Japanese learners. In spite of these initiatives, however, a continued disconnect between policy declarations and the realities of pedagogical practice has resulted in stasis in terms of policy implementation. We argue that the central agents of English language education policy in Japan – the teachers – are often left to their own devices to interpret and deliver policy initiatives that themselves may have conflicting messages, and may not provide teachers with specific educational tools to engage in meaningful, substantive pedagogical change. This disconnect must be addressed systematically in order to better empower teachers at the local level.

Keywords Language education policy • Japan • English language teaching • Teacher education

1 Introduction

Ever since the arrival of Commodore Perry to the Japanese archipelago in 1853 (Seargeant, 2011), Japan and the English language have been said to have a "love-hate relationship" (McVeigh, 2004, p. 211), which is "polarized around

G.P. Glasgow (✉)
New York University School of Professional Studies, American Language Institute, Tokyo Center, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: gregory.paul.glasgow@nyu.edu

D.L. Paller
Department of English, Kinjo Gakuin University, Nagoya, Aichi, Japan

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ambivalence and/or enchantment" (Rivers, 2012, p. 251). Though the role of English in Japan may be influenced by the its rise in status as a language of wider communication, Hashimoto (2013) proposes that, "English remains the Other in Japan" (p. 15) and similarly, Tan and Rubdy (2008) assert that "[d]espite the rhetoric of a globalized world, English is kept at *arm's length*" (p. 2, emphasis ours). They further point out that "English as the global language is accepted in Japan, but not before taming it and Japanizing it and rendering it acceptable for Japanese consumption" (p. 2). This point of tension is key in helping to understand the complexities in the formulation of English language education policy (LEP) in Japan, especially within the last two and half decades. As the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) aims to reform English language teaching methodology, it has placed strong emphasis on the adoption of communicative-oriented approaches in rhetoric, but not necessarily in practice, which has significant implications for the future of English language teaching in the Japanese educational system.

English LEP efforts in Japan continue to intensify; the most recent initiative announced is the *English Education Reform Plan Corresponding to Globalization* (MEXT, 2014) in which English will be introduced as foreign language activities in 3rd and 4th grade of elementary school, and will become a full subject in 5th and 6th grade. In addition, junior high school English classes will be expected to be taught in English, similar to the requirement for senior high school implemented since 2013 (MEXT, 2011). Despite this continued intensification of English LEP, however, researchers consistently note gaps between such declarations and the feasibility of policy implementation at the local level (Butler & Iino, 2005; Glasgow, 2014; Gorsuch, 2000; Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; LoCastro, 1996; Machida & Walsh, 2014; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Seargeant, 2008; Robertson, 2015; Underwood, 2012). In this chapter, we note these gaps but scrutinize the policy messages from the macro-level, and how these messages are received at the local level. We would like to propose that teachers in Japan, in response to English LEP, have had to make sense of what Butler and Iino (2005) have referred to as "conflicting ideological orientations" (p. 25) in policymaking, and as a result, may resort to resistance or non-implementation. They attempt to "interpret policies for themselves, but may not have the background needed to do this successfully" (Diallo & Liddicoat, 2014, p. 113). We contend that without significant attention paid to how teachers interpret English LEP reform messages in Japan, and the professional learning process that they undergo in pre- and in-service teacher education, the most recent reforms put into place will continue to be largely cosmetic and ultimately fail to change teaching practices as intended, even though the rationale for the changes may be well justified.

In this chapter, we explore English LEP in Japan, drawing on a cognitive perspective on policy implementation (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). Rather than viewing teachers as passive implementers of LEP, we see them as active sense-makers who attempt to construct meaning out of the policy environment in which they find themselves (Spillane et al., 2002; Menken & García, 2010). The review will begin with a discussion of this conceptual framework that we apply to the situation in

Japan. Next, the chapter turns to a brief overview of English LEP initiatives in Japan since the Meiji Period and potential contradictions that may lead to problems in teachers' implementation. We then explore the role of the institution as an enabling or constraining factor in the agency of English teachers when it comes to policy reform. Afterwards, we explore how English teachers themselves, through their beliefs, knowledge and education, come to engage with or reject policy based on the previous factors discussed. After surveying the English LEP landscape in Japan, the paper moves to suggestions for future research and highlights implications for future policymaking and professional development. Our discussion primarily draws upon literature about English education at the upper secondary level, where a significant amount of literature on EFL education in Japan has been conducted; however, we also refer to LEP changes in elementary and tertiary education in order to provide a broad-based understanding of the dynamics that we discuss.

2 Contemporary Discussions on Language Education Policy: Agency in Policy Implementation

Research in language education policy implementation has increasingly focused on *micro language planning* (Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008), or the role of micro-level agents (including educators in the interpretation, negotiation and implementation of LEP). This "bottom-up" perspective puts the educator at the center of the policy-making process and acknowledges his or her role in the interpretation of policy directives. Teachers in language education exercise *agency*, also known as the socio-culturally mediated degree to which someone can act, or be in control of his or her situation (Ahearn, 2001 in van Lier, 2008). Agency can also be seen as *action potential* (van Lier, 2008), and may be affected by "social, interactional, cultural, institutional and other contextual factors" (van Lier, 2008, p. 171). Johnson (2009) states that "human agency is central because teachers are positioned as individuals who both appropriate and reconstruct the resources that have been developed and made available to them" (p. 13), which is why they play a central role in policy implementation.

The question remains as to the degree to which agency is in the hands of teachers who implement LEP reform, particularly in centralized education systems like Japan, where top-down LEP directives are implemented without much teacher input (LoCastro, 1996). In their influential volume on how teachers negotiate and interpret language education policies, Menken and Garcia (2010) state that "educators *always* seem to negotiate the language education policies they enact in their schools, even in countries where the ideological or implementational spaces for resistance or change are small" (p. 4, emphasis in original). However, other authors, such as Li (2008), interpret teachers' roles in LEP differently. In a multimethod study in the People's Republic of China (PRC) involving policy document analysis, interviews and questionnaires, Li finds that though the Chinese governmental educational policy

documents frame teachers as having a major role as policy implementers, teachers "in a centralized polity like the PRC, are not yet ready or are not yet able to play a role in educational policymaking" (p. 227). She attributes these issues to teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge, their lack of policy awareness and their tendency to be "victims of the examination-oriented educational system" (p. 228). This point is reinforced by Shohamy's (2006) observation that teachers are expected to "carry out orders by internalizing the policy ideology and its agenda as expressed in the curriculum, its textbooks and other materials" (p. 85). Also, Baldauf (2006) argues that "agency remains firmly located in the macro" (p. 27); he notes that "tensions may arise between macro-level policy and the micro situation" (p. 28). In these situations, teachers may conform to policy or resist it by doing what is appropriate for their situations in their institutions. Hence, the agency that teachers are demonstrating in these situations can be characterized as "negative"; they act to accommodate to the complexities of their situations, which may often be at variance with how educational reform policies position them (Johnson, 2009). This accommodation may involve, according to Baldauf (2006), teachers resorting to cram methods to enable students to pass high stakes entrance examinations at the secondary school level, an established practice in many Asian societies, instead of teaching using communicative methods. It may also involve teachers resorting to first language use as a way to meet the needs of students who cannot cope in an English-medium classroom.

As Japan also possesses a highly centralized education system, the aforementioned issues are critical in understanding how teachers perceive their roles in the implementation stage, and how the policymaking structure in English education affects their roles and capacity to act individually and at the institutional level. In order to better understand the complexities of English LEP in Japan, we draw on a sociocultural model of cognition in policy implementation proposed by Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002). Spillane et al. account for the role of the educator in education policy implementation by advancing the following propositions:

1. Teachers make sense of policies based on their *understanding of policy representations.* According to Spillane et al. (2002), policies are "represented through verbal and written media, including regulations, directives, legislation, workshops and pamphlets of various sorts" (p. 414). These representations of policy are similar to what Johnson (1989) refers to as *products* of policy development, such as national curriculum guidelines, teachers' handbooks and manuals, student textbooks, or local syllabi. Through these tangible sources, policymakers face challenges when they attempt to make their intentions clear to teachers in terms of how new initiatives or approaches in language teaching will be implemented. These products are well known in the literature as *policy texts* (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012; Johnson, 2013; Liddicoat, 2013), which have associated *policy discourses*, and it is the discourses from these texts that trans-

mit assumptions and values about the phenomena they seek to address (Liddicoat, 2013). As teachers in Japan are expected to make sense of new policy reforms, they may vary in the degree to which they engage with – or understand – these representations.

2. In addition, teachers make sense of policy based on their *situation, or context* within which they find themselves. Spillane et al. (2002) view sense-making to occur in a social context. As teachers come to make sense of their roles in policy implementation, their cognitions are mediated by the institutions within which they work (Borg, 2006). These institutions may possess specific normalized practices. Therefore, teachers' reactions to a new policy innovation are embedded in social situations, and are influenced by the way in which these new ideas interact with the beliefs, practices and culture of groups in the institution. Groups would need to be in some sort of harmony in order to engage with new ideas, since, according to Spillane et al. (2002), "organizational arrangements can hamper or enable interactions among implementing agents about policy and practice" (p. 408). If there is a culture of conformity that resists reform, then this tension may influence how teachers come to see their roles. The suggestion here is that English LEP initiatives can be subverted at the contextual level unless there is institutional support to advance professional learning and implementation.
3. Thirdly, teachers construct meanings emanating from policies based on their own *individual cognitions*. They are influenced by their previous knowledge, professional backgrounds and identities. A teacher would map his or her existing knowledge onto the new forms of knowledge of teaching that he or she is expected to acquire. Based on teachers' individual cognitions, teachers adapt, interpret, transform or reject policy messages as they attempt to put them into place (Coburn, 2005). The fact that teachers interpret policies in a variety of ways is a manifestation of their individual agency, however this is mediated by the immediate context and by the way in which they engage with the representations of the policy they are expected to implement.

We find this cognitive perspective useful in exploring English LEP in Japan to provide a nuanced account of how teachers negotiate their roles based on the nature of their policy environment. Therefore, while some (Li, 2008) may not see teachers as able to play a role in making or influencing policy-making in a centralized education system like China, we raise the question of whether or not teachers *are* playing a role in policy-making by actively choosing to accommodate to their micro situation in the best way that they can cope. We draw upon the framework to describe the situation in Japan after we give a brief historical overview of English education in the Japanese context.

3 A Historical Overview of English Education in Japan

English has been the main foreign language ever since the modernization of Japan in the Meiji period (Gottlieb, 2013). In fact, Kubota (2002) has contended that "foreign language" is essentially synonymous with "English" in Japan. English became the major foreign language taught by native speakers of English who were Christian missionaries (Butler & Iino, 2005). The acquisition of the English language was seen as critical for the advancement of the nation at that time, with Japanese statesmen such as Arinori Mōri even proposing that English become an official language (Seargeant, 2011). Furthermore, according to Butler and Iino (2005), "[d]uring this period, virtually everything Western was thought to be advanced while traditional Japanese systems (whether they dealt with education or other social aspects) were seen in a negative light" (p. 27), further prompting Japan to determine how best to position itself as a nation in a rapidly modernizing and competitive world.

After the turn of the century and wars with China and Russia, however, the roles of Japanese teachers became more prominent, as they replaced native English speakers (Koike & Tanaka, 1995), and their teaching of the language employed the use of Japanese texts (Kitao & Kitao, 1995). The years leading up to World War II and during the war saw ultra-nationalistic tendencies in Japan, which eventually led to the suppressing of English, as it was seen as the enemy language. However, after Japan's World War II defeat in 1945, and during the post-World War II period, interest in the language began to rise again. During this time, as the schooling system changed to a 6-3-3-4 system, which was known as the second major educational reform after 1868, elementary and junior high school became part of compulsory education. In 1947, English became a subject, with its inclusion in the Course of Study[1] as an elective. Nine years later, English became a subject on the university entrance exams, establishing English as the *de facto* foreign language of study (Butler & Iino, 2005). Therefore, its position as an academic language of study remained entrenched in the education system.

The popularity of English continued to grow through media and public interest (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; Yoshida, 2003), as the re-emergence of Japan to the world stage came through the hosting of the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and then the 1970 World Expo in Osaka. The need to communicate in English and to interact with the outside world was realized even more. However, it was not until considerable revisions to the Course of Study for Foreign Languages in junior and senior high schools were made in 1989 that the word *communication* (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; Yoshida, 2003) appeared in the national curriculum for foreign languages. Japan's economic rise on the world stage prompted the government to

[1] The *Course of Study* is the Japanese national curriculum. It is revised approximately every ten years and encompasses what subjects and courses are to be taught. There is a Course of Study formulated for elementary and secondary education in foreign languages.

further make decisions to upgrade the country's English skills and to improve its integration with the global community, leading to major policy initiatives implemented to promote internationalization, or *kokusaika*. One initiative, The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET Programme), was established in 1987 in order to expose Japanese youth to foreign cultures and improve their communicative English skills, stemming from its precursors known as the Mombusho Fellows Program and the British English Teachers scheme (MEXT, 2002). The idea for JET rose out of the well-known "Ron-Yasu" summit, in which U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone held a series of meetings to mend U.S. – Japan relations, which had soured by trade disputes due to Japan's rising competitiveness in the global market (McConnell, 2000).

Another initiative spearheaded in 2003, The Action Plan to cultivate "Japanese with English Abilities", was a comprehensive reform effort that sent teachers overseas for in-service training opportunities, created Super English Language High Schools (SELHi), public and private institutions intended to enhance curriculum innovation, promote the use of English in EFL classes and increase the presence of native English-speaking teachers in junior and senior high schools. English activities at the elementary level were also promoted through the Action Plan, although not at a national level (Honna & Takeshita, 2005). The Action Plan intended to improve students' communicative abilities, with the main initiatives in achieving this goal being (1) using English to teach English; (2) dividing classes based on students' ability and smaller class sizes; (3) promoting innovative programs and teaching in SELHi; (4) sharing information between schools on effective and best practices and (5) studying overseas to increase teacher and student exposure to English (MEXT, 2003). Another effect of this comprehensive initiative was to revise the standardized Center Examination for colleges to include a listening component from 2006. In the Action Plan, MEXT made further suggestions to focus on speaking abilities in entrance exams for high schools and universities by using assessments such as TOEFL, TOEIC, STEP EIKEN (Test in Practical English Proficiency), and Cambridge ESOL (Butler & Iino, 2005), demonstrating MEXT's push towards eliminating the negative washback from grammar-centered assessment practices. Some observers have pointed out positive improvement of student skills through the SELHi program (Noguchi, 2015). Nonetheless, these successes, along with moderate changes to the listening component of the University Center Exam were not enough to ensure that most teachers would use English in their classes; Aspinall (2013) cites a 2006 study by MEXT stating that only 1.1 % of Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) in public senior high schools conducted their classes in English.

Even after these initiatives, Japan's current emphasis on reforms in English language-education showed no signs of abating, especially in recent years with the launching of the following initiatives: (1) English education in elementary school under the name of "Foreign Language Activities" in 2011 (Hashimoto, 2011); (2) the senior high school requirement in the new Course of Study that EFL classes be taught in English implemented since 2013; and (3) the "Global 30" Project in higher education to encourage foreign students to pursue degree programs in Japan by through studying content courses with English as the medium of instruction initiated

in 2009. The "Global 30" Project intends to increase Japan's internationalization of its universities (see Rivers, 2010). However, despite the recently announced *English Education Reform Plan Corresponding to Globalization* (MEXT, 2014), the question of how prepared teachers are to deliver them continues to remain critical; LoCastro (1996) contends that "there is a particularly tightly woven web of influences in the Japanese context which makes change problematic" (p. 54). We show next how those influences serve to be problematic, and may cause problems for teachers as they attempt to locate their role in policy change.

4 Representations of Language Education Policy in Japan: Areas of Conflict

Drawing upon our conceptual framework of English LEP representations in the Japanese context, we find three major areas of tension regarding the representation of LEP initiatives in Japan: (1) translation-based versus communicative language teaching methodologies; (2) the continued promotion of so-called "English-only" instructional initiatives and (3) conflicts in policies intended to promote intercultural exchange. We contend that with respect to these three strands of English LEP representation, while policymakers propose pedagogical solutions as a way to address these strands such as curriculum revisions, methodological reforms and recruitment policies, the inherent conflicts within them have the potential to result in teacher misinterpretation and non-implementation at the local level.

4.1 Translation Versus Communication in Policy Implementation

Firstly, in English education in Japan, there has been tension between the representations of English as a language to decode Western texts and contrast them with Japanese, as opposed to English as a language for practical communication. This tension has continued to affect English LEP and practice in Japan until this day. In English education, there came to be two schools of thought known as *hensoku* and *seisoku* in Japanese. *Seisoku* is known as the so-called "regular" way of learning English from native English-speaking teachers through the target language, and *hensoku* is the so-called "irregular" way, learning from Japanese teachers through translation (Butler & Iino, 2005). Koike and Tanaka (1995) note that a struggle exists between those who prefer translation methods and those who prefer communicative methods, and that MEXT supports the communicative orientation, as seen through the language of the Course of Study guidelines for elementary, junior and senior high school ever since 1989. However, it is questionable as to what extent communication in the classroom can actually be fostered if there are conflicts in

terms of implementation; for example, in senior high school, the university entrance exams remain focused on assessing grammatical knowledge, and ministry-approved EFL textbooks influence teachers' instruction by essentially "keeping 'traditional' teaching practices in place with textbooks that predominantly focus on grammar" (Gorsuch, 1999, p. 5), a point which we shall revisit later. The translation-communication debate is a prime example of contradiction in the policy formulation process, where the *de jure* policies manifest in the senior high school Course of Study through the revisions of its subjects and the creation of textbooks, contrast sharply from the *de facto* practices found in both public and private academic senior high schools, which privilege *juken eigo* (or English for the purpose of university entrance exam preparation).

Another issue needing clarification is the actual meaning of "communication" in English education in Japan- a concept that has never been problematized (LoCastro, 1996; Seargeant, 2008). In 1989, a significant revision to the senior high school Course of Study was made and subsequently implemented in 1994; courses with the name *Oral Communication* were added to the curriculum to emphasize the new focus on speaking and listening. Promoting communication through enhancing the oral capabilities of Japanese students was of major importance to MEXT (Yoshida, 2003), as students were required to take one of three new *Oral Communication* courses introduced. According to the 1989 revisions, *Oral Communication A* developed conversation skills with an emphasis on speaking, *Oral Communication B* focused on listening, while *Oral Communication C* intended to improve students higher-order thinking skills in English where students were meant to give speeches and conduct discussions and debates in English. The changes in courses are shown in Table 1, contrasting the 1978 Course of Study for Foreign Languages (implemented from 1982) from its predecessor in 1989 (enacted in 1994) (MEXT, 1978; 1994):

In the 1989 curriculum (see Table 1), one may plausibly infer that "communication" refers to speaking and listening skills. To be sure, the overall objectives of the 1989 curriculum suggest that communication refers to speaking, listening, writing and reading. Wada (2002) determined that a little over a third of the teachers surveyed in a study on curricular implementation actually used English in their classes, and virtually none of the teachers reported teaching *Oral Communication C* classes. Also, with the arrival of native English-speaking Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) from the JET Programme, as well as the educational practice of contracting native speakers to teach in private institutions, ALT roles had become increasingly

Table 1 Course of Study for Foreign Languages (upper secondary school: 1978 & 1989)

1978 Course of Study	1989 Course of Study
English I	English I
English II	English II
English II A	Oral Communication A
English II B	Oral Communication B
English II C	Oral Communication C

associated with teaching oral communication while the JTEs taught English using contrastive, translation-based methods. This suggests that "communication" has a localized meaning in Japan, where it seems to represent the involvement of native English speakers in the teaching of speaking and listening skills rather than both JTEs and ALTs teaching all four skills in an integrated manner, creating a dichotomized curriculum (Sakui, 2004). We return to this point later when discussing curricular organization in senior high school institutions. Though "CLT became the center of attention among general English language educators and policy makers" (Butler, 2011, p. 39) in Japan and several other Asian countries, the Course of Study does not explicitly state that CLT is to be employed as the preferred teaching methodology. Similarly, according to LoCastro (1996), there was no definition of communicative ability articulated in the Course of Study enacted at the time of her analysis. This suggests that "communication" as it is practiced in Japan is not necessarily the CLT that emanates from the west, but it has been localized in Japan in a way that has the potential to circumvent MEXT's policy aims.

Therefore, a major challenge for Japan will be to rethink how to bridge the divide between the *de jure* methods policy (communication) and the *de facto* methods policy (translation-based methods) which will hopefully lead to a pedagogy that melds exported teaching methods with the local culture of learning (McKay, 2012), a central principle of pedagogy in English as an International Language (EIL). Applying communicative practices to the EFL classroom have been challenging as the literature has shown (Gorsuch, 2000; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008), suggesting that a more contextually relevant approach will need to be developed (see McKay, 2012).

4.2 "English-Only" Initiatives

Another major discourse in English LEP in Japan is that of the perceived need for "English-only" classrooms. For example, policy texts such as the Action Plan of 2003 to have called for the majority of an English class to be conducted in English in senior high school (MEXT, 2003). This message has been reinforced by the latest Course of Study implemented in 2013, which states the following:

> When taking into consideration the characteristics of each English subject, classes, in principle, should be conducted in English in order to enhance the opportunities for students to be exposed to English, transforming classes into real communication scenes. **Consideration should be given to use English in accordance with the students' level of comprehension** (MEXT, 2011, p. 7, emphasis ours)

However, the statement above requires further analysis. With phrases such as *in principle* and *in accordance with the students' level of comprehension*, the question arises as to what quantity of English is to be used. The use of such language leaves specifics regarding implementation ambiguous, couched in vague terms that may be interpreted in a flexible way, and potentially result in non-implementation (see

Bamgboṣe, 1991; Glasgow, 2014). As a result, the policy language may raise questions as to the degree to which the ministry fully commits resources to teachers to effectively deliver the 2013 Course of Study establishing English as the main language of instruction. To be sure, while LoCastro (1996) states that it is not such a surprise that courses of study might be written in vague, unclear terms, this issue becomes more problematic when specifying a particular approach to classroom teaching. Furthermore, a more detailed teachers' resource that provides information about the "English in English" initiative states that Japanese *can* be used provided that the lesson is centered on communication and not grammar translation methodologies (MEXT, 2010). It has been reported in local studies on the issue that JTEs have become anxious about the new initiatives (Yamada & Hristoskova, 2011). Additionally, teachers in similar contexts interpret such initiatives in line with their own immediate situations, which may prompt them to opt out of implementing English-only policies (see Chung and Choi, this volume, about the Teaching English in English (TETE) policy in South Korea). JTEs in pre-service teacher education, if not properly prepared, also may be prone to misinterpret the directives as meaning "100 % English-only" classes (Miura, 2010), a further example of how policy representations can be mischaracterized by teachers.

In team-teaching, the ALT role has been viewed as a primary motivator, and a model of the target language. But, studies have shown that JTEs carry out the role of "interpreter" in a class that they share with a native speaker of English (see Tajino & Walker, 1998). In other words, they use Japanese to interpret the instructions of the native English-speaking teacher. By resorting to such a role, JTEs reinforce perceived anxieties in using the target language in the classroom, a problem common to non-native English-speaking teachers, and an issue known to have had a devastating effect on their self-esteem (Hall & Cook, 2012). Therefore, it is unclear how the 2013 curriculum will affect team-teaching, where the ALT has been expected to use the English language in class, and courses that center on reading and writing skills, where the JTEs have tended to use traditional teaching methods centered on grammar translation and Japanese as a language of instruction. More studies are desperately needed to investigate the impact of the new senior high school policy, and how classes are to be transformed into real communication scenes (MEXT, 2011) by teaching English in English.

The "English in English" initiative is part of the revised curriculum for senior high schools implemented since 2013, which is the latest attempt by MEXT to improve the English curriculum with a total revision of the subjects offered (see Table 2). It is said to be quite ambitious, with a higher emphasis on academic proficiency and an increase in the acquisition of vocabulary (Noguchi, 2015; Stewart, 2009; Yoshida, 2009). As shown in Table 2, the current Course of Study can be distinguished from its predecessor due to the renaming of the subjects.

However, the descriptions of the courses themselves shows that their contents may not significantly change, which may further leave teachers with conflicting information. LoCastro (1996) noted that the policy language in the 1989 Course of Study "remains grammar-oriented – paying only lip service to communicative skills", (p. 44), further arguing that "there is little help for teachers in this regard

Table 2 Changes in the Course of Study for Foreign Languages for upper secondary school 1999 and current (implemented since 2013) (MEXT, 2003; 2011)

1999 Course of Study	Current Course of Study
English I	Communication English Basic
English II	Communication English I
Oral Communication I	Communication English II
Oral Communication II	Communication English III
Reading	English Expression I
Writing	English Expression II
	English Conversation

since a clear outline of what the graded syllabus may be for each level is not provided" (p. 44). Glasgow (2014) shows that the course descriptions in the current Course of Study, despite the name changes, differ little from the previous curriculum. In his study of senior high school JTE and native English-speakers' perceptions of teaching English in English, JTEs who teach alone reported that they were more inclined to use predominantly to entirely Japanese in classes in the previous Course of Study, in courses such as English I, English II, Reading, and Writing, and were overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their own language use, which has implications for the implementation of the current Course of Study. Research on this area is still scant, and whether conducting English classes in English is the "best practice" still has yet to be determined, especially in the midst of significant evidence of the reality and benefits of classroom code-switching and use of the first language (L1) (Barnard & McLellan, 2014; Hall & Cook, 2012; Hawkins, 2015).

Another initiative, The "Global 30" Project in Japanese higher education, attempts to promote content courses taught in English to appear internationalized. As pointed out before, Japanese universities that participate in this project aim to attract foreign students to study in Japan. Rivers (2010), however, points out that practical issues surrounding the project remain uncertain such as the assessment of international students, the assessment of Japanese academic staff in their ability to deliver lectures in English, and the extent to which "Global 30" will be truly multicultural, as Japanese nationals are prohibited from participating in it. The exclusion of Japanese students from the program at some universities further accentuates an "us-them mentality" through "ethnolinguistic segregation through the denial of entry into the Global 30 programs for Japanese students" (Rivers, 2010, p. 449). Hence, Global 30 serves as a mechanism to promote Japan by attracting foreign students for study rather than as a tool to foster genuine cultural pluralism. Students in Global 30 are part of a carefully tailored environment that precludes cross-cultural dialogue with Japanese students (Hashimoto, 2013). Also, Ikeda and Bysouth (2013), who investigate the language use of international students at a private Japanese university, note that while some foreign students are choosing to use English as a lingua franca in their school environments, others are determined to use Japanese as a lingua franca between them instead, suggesting that their personal language choices might not be in congruence with policy initiatives.

Therefore, the aforementioned policies in senior high school and university show that Japanese policies in language education have asked for classrooms to be conducted in English only. However, each of them falls short of establishing English as a *medium of instruction* across all subjects in the curriculum, which would clearly require a deeper commitment by the ministry in terms of assessment and resources to ensure that they are implemented systematically and successfully.

4.3 The Paradox of Intercultural Exchange and Understanding

The final representation to be explored here is Japan's efforts to promote intercultural exchange through the study of English. As Japan rose to economic prominence in the 1980s, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone spearheaded the third educational reform in Japan, which was intended to promote intercultural exchange between the Japanese and non-Japanese in the world. *Kokusaika, or* "internationalization", was a major component of this reform, promoting the mutual understanding of Japanese and non-Japanese perspectives through educational, social and cultural opportunities. However, through both content analysis and discourse analysis, researchers pointed out that this form of internationalization was meant to promote the *Japanese language and culture* rather than the acquisition of English skills in particular (Hashimoto, 2000; Kawai, 2007; Liddicoat, 2013). Kubota (2002) notes that *kokusaika* discourses reflect "Japan's struggle to claim its power in the international community through Westernisation (Anglicization in particular) and to affirm Japanese distinct identity" (p. 17). Liddicoat (2013) makes note of the claim that the rationale behind English teaching is to foster Japanese identity in his analysis of the policy texts and discourses behind the senior high school Course of Study, as well as Japanese language spread policy. With statements such as the need for Japan to express itself appropriately to other countries in the world, he asserts that the study of EFL becomes framed in a way that makes "intercultural exchange" mean the monodirectional expression of culture from Japan to the rest of the world.

Conflicts in policy messages regarding intercultural exchange can be further understood through examination of the JET Programme, a government-sponsored program initiated since 1987. The program brings young foreign college and university graduates primarily from English-speaking "Inner Circle"[2] countries (according to Kachru (1985)) such as the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, although recently teachers from Outer Circle countries have been increasing, albeit slowly, to Japan to work with local governments (MEXT, 2002), most of them serving as ALTs in the Japanese education system. The conflict here arises from the fact that there is tension with respect to the main purpose of the program – that is, whether the ALTs are meant to simply expose Japanese students to foreign

[2] We utilize the terms "Inner Circle" and "Outer Circle" derived from Kachru's Three Circles Model for convenience, but fully aware of its possible limitations.

cultures, or to actually help improve the quality of English teaching, a tension in ALT roles that Mahoney (2004) has previously noted in his analysis of JTE and ALT role self-perceptions. Unlike Hong Kong or South Korea, the JET Programme does not require the ALTs to have teaching experience (Jeon & Lee, 2006). Moreover, the term of ALT contracts is three years, with some contracts being extended to five years. Lai (1999) in a critique of these issues of qualifications, asserts that "[t]his further shows that the Japanese Government values no accumulation of teaching experience, nor is it keen to keep competent foreign language teachers in the country" (p. 219). Due to the lack of teaching qualifications of ALTs, and the degree of preparedness of JTEs to host them (McConnell, 2000), intercultural clashes and teachers' problems in interpreting their roles in team-teaching have been documented extensively (Mahoney, 2004; McConnell, 2000; Tajino & Walker, 1998), with ALTs reporting feeling under-utilized as "human tape recorders" who had limited opportunities to actively co-teach, and Japanese teachers on the other hand, feeling linguistically powerless (Miyazato, 2006) due to their negative self-perception of their language proficiency. Lai (1999) maintains that "the JET Program is meant to be an international exchange programme to promote international competence, yet it is a programme to expand the influence of Japan to the world" (p. 225), a further example of the paradox of "intercultural exchange". Therefore, an unfortunate by-product of this contradiction in policy representation is how native English-speaking teachers (whether ALTs or sole teachers) are positioned in their institutions, in which their qualifications (or lack thereof) and their foreign identities may put them at a disadvantage. Literature on intercultural relations in Japan as it relates to English language teaching is becoming more prominent, with Houghton and Rivers (2013) recently noting the existence of a new type of "native-speakerism" in which *native English speakers* find themselves in disadvantaged working conditions that ultimately affect their professional self-esteem and identities, as opposed to traditional discourses of native-speakerism that purportedly privilege them. Therefore, the notion that Japan is actively attempting to encourage cultural pluralism through intercultural exchange through English LEP is undermined by these aforementioned issues.

Problematic issues in the representation of English LEP as it relates to intercultural exchange can also be detected at the elementary school level. Although in 2020 English will become a formal subject in 5th and 6th grade for elementary school (MEXT, 2014), it is presently introduced in these grades as *foreign language activities* in order to expose students to foreign culture through English, officially implemented in 2011. "Foreign language activities" had been finally implemented in the midst of fierce debate amongst some officials about whether learning English at such a young age is acceptable. Many elementary schools had taught English as a result of an Integrated Study Hour program begun in 2002, partially intended to increase intercultural understanding through exposure to English as a foreign language (Honna & Takeshita, 2005). Currently, however, these language activities are officially recognized in the current Course of Study for elementary school for fifth and six graders, where they take 35-credit hours per year. It is stated that the major objective of English in elementary schools is to give students an experience further

leading to a base for communication (Yoshida, 2012). As stated in its Course of Study, the overall objective of the elementary school *foreign language activities* course is:

> To form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through foreign languages while developing the understanding of languages and cultures through various experiences, fostering positive attitude toward communication, and familiarizing pupils with the sounds and basic expressions of foreign languages. (MEXT, 2009, p. 1)

One major issue with this curriculum is its recognition as a subject. According to Yoshida (2012), the elementary school curriculum "is not a formal 'subject' in the sense that qualified English teachers are required to teach it, it is not graded in the same way as the other formal subjects, and there is no Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) censored textbook provided" (p. 23). Furthermore, Hashimoto (2011) asserts that the title *foreign language activities* is peculiar since the Ministry of Education does not actually promote any other foreign languages besides English. Such issues contribute to confusion amongst teachers as to how the curriculum is to be systematically implemented in elementary school if it is not supposed to be a subject. She also points out that the contents of the foreign language activities curriculum have incorporated an emphasis on Japanese, seemingly as a compromise for dissenting views about the potential interference of learning a foreign language before mastering Japanese. Furthermore, recent research on its implementation (Machida & Walsh, 2014), in a study involving questionnaires, observations and interviews of 37 Japanese classroom teachers and three American ALTs, Machida and Walsh found that Japanese teachers felt anxious about their levels of proficiency with no common strategies for coping with these anxieties. Also, concern was expressed over the teaching qualifications and professionalism of ALTs, especially when they had to share the classroom through team-teaching. The fact that their professional preparation was not focused on language teaching exacerbated this anxiety. In addition, working with ALTs served to be problematic since the Japanese teachers often encountered teachers who were "native English speakers with little or no teaching experience or training and little knowledge of Japanese schools" (Machida & Walsh, 2014, p. 11). Often these ALTs were contracted by city boards of education through dispatch companies. So even though, according to the elementary school curriculum, homeroom teachers or teachers in charge of foreign language activities should "get more people involved in lessons by inviting native speakers of the foreign language" (MEXT, 2009, p. 2), there are implementation problems on the ground in desperate need of addressing. The two authors point out in this study that elementary school teachers in their 50s have "tried to take early retirement to avoid having to teach English" (Fukyuama, 2008 in Machida & Walsh, 2014, p. 13).

To summarize, through the aforementioned issues, we contend that inherent conflicts within the representations of English LEP leave teachers with few resources to adapt and respond appropriately to the initiatives, leaving them to their own devices. Policy discourses in Japan have espoused communicative approaches to teaching English-only classrooms and promoting intercultural exchange, when contextual

realities in institutions provide a vastly different picture. The university entrance exams, with their focus on grammatical competence, remained intact even though communication through English-only approaches were supposed to be utilized in the classroom. Similarly, the Japanese government's call for internationalization conflicted with culturally essentialist discourses that promoted the understanding of Japanese values and cultures, manifested in the JET programme. ALTs were positioned as a way to bring intercultural exchange and modernity to EFL teaching in Japan in principle; however in practice they are limited in terms of agency due to their positioning as "exoticized natives" (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011, p. 94) with few opportunities for professional development. In addition, they may encounter implementational challenges in their classrooms, where their lack of qualifications make it difficult to develop a teaching rapport with their JTE colleagues, as noted in the implementation of *foreign language activities* in elementary school. In short, teachers may not possess the professional knowledge, nor sufficient professional support from resources or institutions, to negotiate English LEP change. This point is further illustrated at the institutional level and individually, as shall be shown in the following sections.

5 Institutional Challenges in Policy Implementation in Japan

In this section, we document the challenges found in the organizational context with respect to implementing English LEP in Japan. We center on the following aspects of institutional practice: (1) the organization of the school curriculum; (2) the professional culture of the institution; and (3) the quality of teaching resources and materials. The examples we present draw primarily from the upper secondary school context, though similar issues can be found in elementary, lower secondary and tertiary education as well.

5.1 Curriculum Organization

One of the challenges in implementing English LEP, as intended, is the fact that school curricula are often organized in contradiction to reform initiatives, as suggested before. Nowhere is this issue more evident than in upper secondary schools, where there is a "dichotomous curriculum" that essentially bifurcates lessons traditionally taught by native vs. nonnative speakers: reading or grammar classes where Japanese teachers predominate vs. speaking and listening classes where native speakers do. Gorsuch (2002), Law (1995), and Sakui (2004) have noted this division of labor, which implicitly favors university entrance exam preparation through the reading and grammar classes as they outnumber speaking and listening classes. Therefore, the classes that focus on oral communication become a mere token due to the fact that they meet less often. These issues have also been documented in

South Korea in the English Programme in Korea (EPIK) as well (Jeon, 2009) where the oral communication classes of native English-speaking teacher assistants have not necessarily been well integrated with the school curriculum. At the level of curriculum delivery in institutions, the "communication" promoted through government rhetoric fails to translate into congruent practices at the institutional level. The implicit assessment policies of the university entrance exam essentially serve as the *de facto* language policy in the classroom, further reinforcing the *seisoku-hensoku* divide, where native English speakers and JTEs work in what Stewart and Miyahara (2011) would refer to as "parallel universes". These authors similar divisions in their study of a large private university in Tokyo, in which foreign professors participate in a "taught in English programme" that develops academic literacy practices (presentation, debate) while Japanese professors handle the reading classes, with little collaboration between the two groups. As Stewart and Miyahara (2011) state, "the very name of the English programme is an explicit positioning in contrast with the reading courses, which, it is taken for granted, are generally taught in Japanese" (p. 67). Therefore these tendencies can be found even in institutions that are private, and reflect an established cultural approach to organizing the EFL curriculum in Japan that does not work to promote the type of communication the ministry promotes.

5.2 Professional Culture

Aside from the structure of the curriculum itself, in their contexts, teachers may be pressured to conform to the professional cultures of their schools. They carry heavy workloads, said to preclude their ability to implement innovations proposed by MEXT. This is especially the case for Japanese teachers of English at the upper secondary school level. O'Donnell (2005) found that teachers spent more of their work time on non-teaching responsibilities than the actual courses. Some of these responsibilities include the supervision of after-school activities, student counseling, university entrance exam preparation courses, and teaching their homeroom classes. This intense pressure felt by teachers of getting through the day and completing administrative duties (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; O'Donnell, 2005; Underwood, 2012) has been cited as an impediment to reform. Underwood, in a study that applies the socio-psychological framework of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior to examine teachers' interpretations of the new Course of Study, showed that institutional norms conflicted with teachers' individual intentions. He found that for some teachers implementing the new curriculum would be difficult due to contrasting beliefs about the university entrance examinations, as well as social pressures from their institution.

Issues involving professional culture can be found at the elementary school level. In her dissertation research on how elementary school teachers interpret and negotiate the *foreign language activities* curriculum and how they enact it in their

classrooms, Horii (2012) found differences in policy appropriation. In one elementary school, Horii discovered that teachers with lower English proficiency and heavy workloads were limited in their agency to implement the elementary school Course of Study. The textbook created by the ministry of education at the time served as the "*de facto* policy that shaped the school's curriculum, lessons and instruction" (p. 177). In another school, Horii pointed out that the teachers had more time and autonomy to collaborate and plan using materials in addition to the textbook, and that one of the JTEs in this context saw her proficiency in Japanese and English as a strength rather than a weakness. Clearly more research has to be done in this area, but there is evidence that a professional culture that is more nurturing, and that is supportive of teachers will serve to be a better organizational context to promote policy implementation.

Collaboration between native and nonnative English speaking teachers as proposed by ministry directives may not be effectively promoted in the culture of schools, which has implications for policy implementation. The most recent Course of Study for Foreign Languages for senior high schools states that "team teaching classes, in cooperation with native speakers etc., should be carried out in order to develop students' communication abilities and to deepen their international understanding" (MEXT, 2011, p. 7) Research in this area has begun to depict the experience of ALTs who taught at senior high schools (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011, Geluso, 2013). They showed that though ALTs were intended by MEXT to foster internationalization, they saw themselves as representing essentialized notions of foreign cultures, which influenced the degree to which they felt integrated in their institutions. ALTs viewed themselves as "the exoticized other, unessential to the classroom, interchangeable and foreign" (Breckenridge & Erling, 2011, p. 96) in their institutions through dichotomized curricula. These examples show that in order for new policies to be implemented as intended, some assistance at the local level is required to ensure that teachers in their contexts are not only able to deliver policy directives, but feel empowered to do so with the professional status they attain in their work (see Jeon, this volume regarding Hong Kong native English-speaking teachers in the NET scheme).

5.3 Ministry-Approved Textbooks

In teaching contexts, due to a lack of knowledge for materials development, teachers have struggled with the gap between textbooks geared toward developing grammatical competence and the communicative orientation of the Course of Study (Gorsuch, 1999; McGroarty & Taguchi, 2005), even though the textbooks have been approved by MEXT for release. The textbooks serve as a manifestation of policy representation, or a tangible product of the intended policies, which is why there may be frustration if teachers detect gaps between ministerial intentions and these resources.

In terms of what Kaplan & Baldauf (2003) refer to as *materials policy*, or the subgoal of LEP that involves decision-making about the content of textbooks (as well as teaching manuals), one major issue is that even though communication is the key cornerstone of the Course of Study, the language input of the textbooks may not necessarily reflect curriculum goals. For example, Gorsuch (1999) pointed out the gap between the 1989 Course of Study goals and the representation of communication as shown through ministry-approved textbooks. This is supported by a previous study by LoCastro (1997) in her findings that Japanese EFL textbooks did not contain pragmatic information on politeness strategies, a critical component of the acquisition of communicative competence. McGroarty and Taguchi (2005), in their research on speech act presentation on *Oral Communication A* textbooks found that activities that prompted students to perform grammatical mechanical operations rather than complete open-ended tasks were the norm rather than the exception. From the data in these studies, it can be suggested that compromises are made by materials developers as they negotiate policy directives. Developers may take a more cautious approach so as not to affect their textbook's market share by creating textbooks that do not seem too radical in their changes, and that are still influenced by the content of entrance examinations (Adamson & Davison, 2003; Kennedy & Tomlinson, 2013). In the current senior high school curriculum in Japan, variance in terms of the degree to which the LEP goals are reflected in the organization of the current ministry-approved textbooks has already been noted (Glasgow & Paller, 2014).

Teachers may also be unaware of the ideological messages that promote a dichotomy between Japanese culture and foreign cultures, and may not know how to counterbalance those messages with more pluralistic ones to prepare students for a global society. Schneer (2007) analyzed the content of Japanese senior high school textbooks and found out that ideologies of western and Japanese difference were conspicuous in textbook content, reinforcing ethno-cultural dichotomies. Similarly, Matsuda (2003) has shown how senior high school textbooks fail to expose students to other varieties of English and cultures rather than simply Anglo-American varieties or cultural topics from Inner Circle countries. These problems may result from the problematic articulation of "intercultural exchange" expressed earlier.

To summarize, the context mediates how institutions respond to the dissemination of a new innovation. The tendency of curricula at the local level to be dichotomized (Sakui, 2004) between English for grammar and English for communication reflected the conflict in how the policy intentions were represented at the macro level, with university entrance exams acting as the *de facto* language policy rather than the intentions of MEXT. As Sato and Kleinsasser (2004) suggest, departmental practices where teachers are pressured to get through the day also preclude aspects of new innovations from being implemented. Governmental efforts to change organizational culture are critical in the success of LEP reform. More research also needs to be conducted on the extent to which there is congruity between textbooks and the Course of Study to improve their quality and to support teachers in compensating for the discrepancies. Textbooks are important since teachers use them in

classrooms, and their success will depend on not only the amount of communicative activities present in them, but also how much teachers are confident that the textbooks will positively influence learner acquisition.

6 Individual Agency and Teacher Cognition

Institutions have the ability to enable or constrain human agency in implementation; however, it is ultimately the teachers who have to make sense of their roles. Teachers who interpret their roles in policy implementation are influenced by their beliefs, education as well as their professional identities, and the intersection of these factors with the institution where they work. This section addresses these issues and shows that teachers lack preparation to effectively negotiate policy issues. Perhaps it is time that, as Shohamy (2006) argues, LEP be made a key component in the professional preparation of teachers so that they can effectively interpret and appropriate the current policy environment.

6.1 Teacher Beliefs

What teachers do in the classroom is based on their beliefs and knowledge. The relationships between schooling, professional coursework, contextual factors and classroom practice construct the beliefs, attitudes and knowledge of a teacher (Borg, 2003). As they relate their cognitions to new policy messages, there is sometimes incongruence between teacher cognition and actual practices (Borg, 2003). Sasajima (2012) further explains by pointing out that the "prior language learning experiences which are gained at school may well in some cases therefore have a strong influence on the cognitions of individuals when they become qualified or accomplished teachers at [the schools where they work]" (p. 75). These cognitions may be fixed due to the weak nature of pre-service teacher education which are not based on specific guidelines requiring skills or competencies teachers need to acquire (Sasajima, 2012). Therefore, when teachers make sense of their roles in policy reform, a key point of reference is the set of skills and knowledge they already possess.

Since the implementation of the 1989 Course of Study, with the inclusion of more emphasis on oral communicative output, communicative approaches in the EFL classroom have been challenging for Japanese teachers of English and other teachers in the Asia-Pacific region due to three main factors: (1) conceptual constraints such as perceptions of communication; (2) classroom constraints such as class size (also see Sakui, 2007); and (3) societal-institutional level constraints, such as the grammar-translation oriented entrance exam system (Butler, 2011). These teachers have had difficulties due to the quality of textbooks, language teaching

methodology and the belief that preparing students for entrance examinations is a primary objective for language learning (Cook, 2010; Kikuchi & Browne, 2009; O'Donnell, 2005; Sakui, 2004; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Wada (2002) determined that a little over a third of the teachers surveyed in a study on curricular implementation actually used English in their classes, and virtually none of the teachers reported teaching *Oral Communication C* classes. Furthermore, due to the pressures of university entrance exams, at some schools *Oral Communication C* became known as Oral Communication "G", where "G" stands for grammar (Yoshida, 2003). In other words, senior high school teachers used the intended courses to teach grammar instead, as they were under pressure to enable students to pass the entrance exams. Therefore, as shown here, though the course descriptions in the national curriculum guidelines were intended to change teachers' perceptions of how to teach in these classes, some teachers were unable to perceive of these classes as truly geared towards communication due to contextual pressures.

6.2 Teacher Education and Policy Implementation

Finally, it appears that more needs to be done to educate English teachers about how to negotiate LEP in Japan, as literature on the situation with respect to the professional development of EFL teachers has been lacking in the Japanese context. Clearly, language teacher education is critical, as teachers may not have the procedural knowledge to compensate for perceived gaps between mandated policies and pedagogical practices at the institutional level. Varghese and Stritikus (2005) assert that "spaces must be created in teacher education programs" (p. 84) in order for teachers to explore how they can shape or even create policy. In addition, Johnson (2009) asserts that teachers must be prepared to "scrutinize and navigate the consequences that broader macro-structures, such as educational policies and curricular mandates, have on their daily practices" (p. 114).

Currently, in order to become an English teacher, upon graduation from university, the completion of related coursework and participation in a two to four week practicum, teachers apply to their local school board for a teaching certificate (Major & Yamashiro, 2004). In addition, in-service training opportunities may consist of one-month domestic training programs, and one-year study programs sponsored by MEXT (Wada, 2002). However, Lamie (1998) pointed out in a study of 100 JTEs that 77 % of them did not receive training in communicative methodology, but tended to teach as their teachers taught them, which suggests that the training sessions would have to address this gap in knowledge in some way. Furthermore, in her dissertation on 66 Japanese EFL in-service teachers who participated in a U.S. program sponsored by MEXT, Kurihara (2007) found that the teachers benefitted from exposure to communicative methodologies, but were challenged in appropriating the skills that they learned due to their own individual experiences and the teaching settings in which they were situated. Cook (2010) also found strong contextual influences in her study of the effect of overseas in-service training on teaching

practices; she stated that the three teachers in her study were unable to negotiate the implementation of communicative approaches in their contexts. The aforementioned studies have documented the struggles that teachers have when they attempt to implement policies in their schools from the knowledge that they have acquired abroad. They were essentially unable to translate their newly acquired knowledge into practice when they returned to their contexts. These examples show how closely linked individual cognition and situation are in the implementation of policy. They also show that a more localized form of teacher education may be required to develop teachers' necessary expertise to deal with the local challenges in policy implementation raised in this chapter. Native English-speaking teachers will also need to obtain the type of in-service teacher education that will maximize the likelihood for successful integration into their institutions. Breckenridge and Erling (2011) argue that native English speakers as well need legitimate opportunities at their schools to develop professionally, so that they can be seen for their teaching qualifications and not just essentialised notions of "foreignness".

It is through their beliefs and education, and opportunities for professional development that teachers negotiate LEP. Nagamine (2008) raises a critical point when he documented how the teaching and learning beliefs of pre-service JTEs in a teacher education program could be transformed through a teacher education program. One observation that he made was that teacher educators need to give pre-service student-teachers guidance in their professional identity formation. This guidance may occur by helping student-teachers negotiate the gaps between hegemonic professional discourses in TESOL (eg. traditional native-speakerism) that purport to privilege English-only, communicative approaches, and the contextual realities that militate against their implementation. As it stands, teachers are left to their own devices when LEP is presented to them in an abstract manner without recognition of the complex nature of implementation (Liddicoat, 2014). EFL professional development efforts in Japan must determine a systematic and reliable way to support teachers facing implementation challenges, especially as expectations rise for English education in the future.

7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we perceive that English LEP in Japan is at a crossroads because though governmental initiatives for change continue unabated, as noted with the more recent MEXT *English Education Reform Plan Corresponding to Globalization* (2014), the fundamental question of how teachers will be systematically prepared to respond positively to such changes remains to be answered. Surely the policy changes have the potential to effect English education positively, but not if, as Liddicoat (2014) argues, "limited attention may be given to preparing the ground for policy developments and teachers may not be adequately prepared to implement change through professional learning" (p. 127). We come to this conclusion having discussed all levels of education, in particular the senior high school context, and

related change at these levels to areas such as curriculum organization, professional culture, teaching materials, teacher beliefs and teacher education.

It has already been established that teachers perceive gaps between English LEP and practice in Japan; therefore this area of research is now over-saturated. We propose areas of future research that may aid in a more comprehensive understanding of policy implementation. More research is needed to look more closely at the level of resources and context. For example research should be done on how actors such as textbook publishers interpret policy objectives, since often slippage can be found between policy intentions and textbook representations of policy goals (Adamson & Davison, 2003). Also needed is a further examination of the institutional context and ways that institutional politics enhance or hamper reform initiatives. Research at private lower and upper secondary institutions, which have more autonomy in implementing MEXT curriculum would be particularly useful to determine to what extent their autonomy at the level of departmental organization actually facilitates or precludes their agency in policy implementation. It has been pointed out that the SELHi program has had positive effects (Noguchi, 2015), so more focused research on best practices in similar institutions would be useful. Thirdly, by more closely analyzing the organization of pre-service teacher education curricula in undergraduate institutions as well as in-service initiatives, perhaps we can better understand what sorts of approaches to teacher preparation will better prepare teachers to negotiate the gaps between macro-level policies and micro-level practice. Finally, another area that is under-researched is micro implementation of macro policies at the university level, especially as classes where English is intended to be the medium of instruction in content-based courses. Stroupe's (2014) study on language use in university classrooms is a start in the right direction, especially as English-medium education increases at the tertiary level. Studies on classroom language practices in pre-tertiary education will also be of help to determine what sorts of approaches best suit the Japanese context.

This review of the literature has attempted to provide an overview of the current climate in LEP in Japan. It has been established in this chapter that viewing policy efforts in Japan from a micro language planning perspective is useful, especially when contrasting it with the macro. EFL teachers in Japan are often caught between conflicting messages the divergent realities faced in classrooms, whether in elementary, secondary or tertiary institutions. We have examined the situation from the standpoint of how teachers attempt to make sense of policy messages that are not reconciled with classroom and institutional practices. The literature has also shown that that individual teacher agency is often constrained or enabled by the situation, which is evident from the studies conducted on policy implementation in Japan. As professors and teacher trainers with extensive language teaching experience in Japan, we await further developments that will hopefully lead to more improvements in not only the quality of English language teaching and learning, but also the job security, fulfillment and professional well-being of all language educators.

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The Impact of English on Educational Policies and Practices in Malaysia

Ria Hanewald

Abstract This chapter will report on Malaysia's turbulent changes in its past, present and projected future language education policies while examining their cultural, economic and political context.

It will move from a general description of Malaysian education policies to the specifics of the education system including various school types, curriculum and daily teaching practices. Observations regarding the acquisition of the country's major languages (English, Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and Tamil) will be made, illuminating the key issue of balancing various ethnic communities and their language heritage in a multilingual population.

Furthermore, the division of languages, religions, cultures and ethnic backgrounds are described as well as the desire for national unity and social harmony, and the complications which arise in the need for English as a lingua franca in an increasing global world.

Keywords Malaysia • Bahasa Melayu • English • Education policy • Education practice

1 Introduction

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual country. The largest group is the Muslim Malays (two thirds of the population) who speak the national language of Bahasa Malaysia followed by Chinese Buddhists (one quarter of the population) who speak Cantonese, Mandarin and other dialects, and the Indian Hindus who speak Tamil or related dialects.

In the face of such a multi-cultural population and separateness, national unity was a prime aspiration for Malaysia after Independence from the British in 1957 with the various groups trying to preserve and assert their cultural identity, social and economic power. The struggle for dominance was won by the Malays, with

R. Hanewald (✉)
CfBT Education Trust, Reading, Berkshire, UK
e-mail: r.hanewald@yahoo.com

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Bahasa Malay becoming the national language by law as a symbol of the people's identity as citizens of that nation.

This top-down language policy by the newly formed post-independence government was in contrast to actual language practice, where English served as common language among the diverse populace despite its historically loaded association with the British colonialists.

More recently, this view has been replaced by one of English as the lingua franca of the world, beneficial for global trade, business and education opportunities. The need for English as universal language in multi-lingual Malaysia combined with the paradigm shift of English as a language of the British colonialists to English as an international language is reflected over the years in changing English language policies and practices.

2 The Impact of English on Educational Policies and Practices in Malaysia

2.1 Background Information

This section provides a brief sketch of Malaysia's geographical, political, economical, demographic and social situation to provide background information for readers unfamiliar with the country, its history and current socio-economic landscape.

Malaysia is located in the Southeast Asian region with its neighbors Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei. Its two parts consist of Peninsular Malaysia and the provinces of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The total population according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census of Malaysia was 28.3 million, of which 1.6 million live in its capital Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia is experiencing rapid development, with the urban population increasing by 71 % in 2010 alone. Malaysia is governed by a parliamentary democracy, with the head of State being the King and the Head of Government being the Prime Minister.

The majority of the population are Malaysian citizens (91.8 %), consisting of the three major ethnics groups of Bumiputera (also called Malay) (67.4 %), Chinese (24.6 %), Indians (7.3 %) and others (0.7 %). This multi-racial population acknowledges Islam (61.3 %), Buddhism (19.8 %), Christianity (9.2 %) and Hinduism (6.3 %). The language diversity in Malaysia comprises speakers of 137 living languages including indigenous language such as Iban, Kadazan und Dusunic languages. The major languages are Bahasa Melay, which is the national language, Chinese and Tamil dialects (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2013).

The terms of Bahasa Melayu, Bahasia Malaysia, Bahsa Malay or simply Malay are often interchangeable. However, Bahasa Melayu denotes the language as those of the Malays only, whereas Bahasa Malaysia refers to the language as those of all Malaysians, including Chinese, Indian and others. Initially, the term of Malay or Bahasa Melayu as the national language was chosen by the government after inde-

pendence from the British in 1957 and reflected the strong nationalism at the time. Racial tensions in the 1960s and most notably the 1969 race riots impelled the government to change the name of the national language to the more inclusive Bahasa Malaysia (Omar, 1992).

In summary, language plays a crucial role in the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural mix of Malaysia. The main tensions are between the nation-state's desire to assert its national identity and unity through Bahasa Malaysia, the growing need for English to facilitate economic development in global markets and the increasing concerns for minority language rights and greater tolerance towards multilingualism. Language unity, English for progress and multilingualism make language policy and planning in Malaysia a field of complexity.

2.2 Malaysia's Education and Language Policies

2.2.1 Past Education and Language Policies

The language education polices of English, Bahsa Malaysia and other minority languages have been inextricably intertwined over the last 60 years. The following discussion will provide a timeline of these policies while explaining the reasons for their emergence and subsequent reversals.

The status, role and prominence of English and English language education policies in Malaysia has to be seen in the political, social and economical context of pre-independent Malaysia (before 1957), post-independent Malaysia (1957–2001) and Modern Malaysia (2002 onwards). During British colonialism (before 1957), English was the language of government, education and business. Mastery of the language meant being closer to the British colonials which brought privileges, esteem and wealth. This changed radically after Malaysia's independence in 1957, where English was rejected as it represented the language of colonial powers. Languages such as Chinese, Tamil, Malay, and those of other minorities, as well as schools both vernacular and national became key issues for the many political groups in Malaysia at this time, chiefly as a means to assert power and gain economical advantage.

In 1951, a few years before Independence, the British government had conducted an in-depth study of education in Malaysia, or Malaya as it was known at that time. The Barnes Committee headed by L.J. Barnes from Oxford University, recommended the study of English at secondary and tertiary levels as this would unite all races with the colonial language and thus serve British interests. The Committee also proposed the abolishment of Chinese and Indian vernacular schools and the teaching of their 'mother tongue' as an unnecessary expense. Malay – the language of the dominant ethnic group – was to be allowed only at primary school level. Dissatisfied with the Barnes Report, the Chinese and Indian communities established the Fenn-Wuu Committee, which recommended that Malay, Chinese (Mandarin) and Indian (Tamil) languages should be used simultaneously within the

primary and secondary school system as a medium of instruction. Following that, in 1955 yet another committee was formed; this time by the Malays who were unhappy with the proposed language policies. It was chaired by the then Minister of Education, Tun Abdul Razak who helped design a compromise between the previous proposals. The 1956 Razak Report recommended the acceptance of English as 'necessary evil' and the Malay language as the medium of instruction across the whole education system. Bahasa Melayu was regarded as the newly formed nation's official language as Malay nationalists wanted to project a Malaysian identity. Mother tongue education in Chinese, Indian and other minority schools was retained in primary schools as a concession to maintain social harmony. The Razak Report became the basis for the establishment of the Education Ordinance 1957 and as such the basis to revamp the colonial education system (Yang, 1998).

The decision to switch from English to Bahasa Melayu as the official language had strong social and economic underpinnings. Under British rule, English schools had been established by the colonial government and Christian missionaries. These were usually in urban area and mostly attended by Chinese, Indian or other ethnic groups while only very few privileged Malays were enrolled. The ability to speak English provided social mobility, economic opportunities and potential wealth. In the rural areas, Bahasa Melayu medium schools were associated with poverty and lack of prospects. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Malay nationalist group perceived the concentration of economic power and professional mobility amongst the Chinese and Indians as an injustice, which they tried to address by instituting Bahasa Melayu as the national language. This would endow Malays with linguistic capital in that it gave the language itself a higher status and in turn its speakers with greater economic and professional opportunities. Non-Malays did not oppose this move as they were offered the acquisition of citizenship as part of the bargain, which was previously only available by birth. With this agreement in place, there was little controversy in accepting Bahasa Melayu as the official language, although less than half of the population actually spoke it (Omar, 1987).

After gaining Independence and winning the battle over the national language, the new government of Malaysia embarked on an enthusiastic program to institute Bahasa Melayu as the country's official language. It was seen as necessary in this multi-ethnic nation to work towards a single national language for nation-building, as well as establishing national identity and national unity. This was possible in multi-lingual Malaysia at the time, as the Malays were the largest ethnic group, constituting almost half of the population. The other half was assembled from the Chinese (just over a third) and Indian (a tenth) parts of the population. Furthermore, the Malays argued that they held the country's birthright as 'bumiputera' (the sons of the soil), while the other ethnic groups' heritages were seen as immigrants. The bulk of the population combined with the symbolism of ancestry gave the Malays the power to greatly influence decision-making in the nation building and language choice of their newly independent country (Gill, 2005).

The *Ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy) ideology supported the status of Bahasa Melayu and the special privileges granted to Malays by virtue of their birth as outlined in Article 160 of the new Constitution of Malaysia. On this basis, the

government provided an estimated 53 Million Ringgit in funding to promote and modernize Bahasa Melayu. In 1959, it established the *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (Institute of Language and Literature) with the aim of developing and enriching Bahasa Melayu by incorporating the language in books to promote literacy and foster creative talents. This language agency dealt with corpus planning and the social status of Bahasa Melayu. The modernization of Bahasa Melayu included the coining of scientific and technological terms, which resulted in the development of over half a million new words over a period of 16 years. It was carried out by a group of Malaysian and Indonesian academics, scientist, and language planners from 1972 to 1988 (Hassan, 1988).

As described above, the process of phasing out English-medium instruction in schools was slow. In efforts to quicken the change, another committee was formed to review the education policy in 1960. Malay nationalist demanded the closing of all Chinese and Tamil schools in Malaysia to reduce competition for their schools. Mainly because the Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools were experiencing increases in enrolment as they still used English as the medium of instruction. These schools were not only seen as rivals in the fight for students but also as hindrances to the educational, social and economic advancement of Malays. Subsequently, the 1960 Rahman Talib Report allowed vernacular schools to remain open, at least until primary level, but forced students from these schools to attend an extra year of transitional classes, called 'remove classes', to enable proficiency in Bahasa Melayu before entering secondary school, where it was the medium of instruction (Watson, 1983).

The Rahman Talib Report became the basis for the 1961 Education Act, which was the legal foundation for Bahasa Melayu's compulsory status across primary, secondary and tertiary education. Under the Act, every student regardless of ethnic background needed a satisfactory grade in Bahasa Melayu in order to be awarded a public education certificate. This enforcement of Bahasa Melayu was followed up with the National Language Act of 1963 which made Bahasa Melayu the medium of instruction and administration. As a result, English, once Malaysia's main language, completely lost its role and status. In primary and secondary schools, it fell from being the medium of instruction to a mere subject, specifically English as a Second Language (ESL). The process of the policy implementation was however, slow in practice as the actual phasing out of English and the adoption of Bahasa Melayu took more than two decades since existing teaching materials had to be translated and additional or new materials had to be written in Bahasa Melayu, which was very time consuming.

The conversion of the curriculum and teaching materials from English to Bahasa Malaysia began in 1965 with an interim bilingual system that saw English used as the medium of instruction in science and technology and Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction in Art. By 1983, Bahasa Malaysia was used exclusively. In addition, English schools were converted to Malay-medium schools in West Malaysia by 1983 and in Sabah and Sarawak (East Malaysia) by 1985 on a piecemeal basis (Solomon, 1988).

As the use of English across the education system was gradually replaced by Bahasa Melayu, English was perceived as difficult to learn, even more so in rural areas with little exposure to the language or native speakers. The sole focus on Bahasa Melayu also raised the question of national identity for Chinese, Indians and other minorities, coupled with the concerns about the challenges that these bilingual learners would face in their schooling (Heng & Tan, 2006).

Gradually, dissatisfaction was growing between the non-Malays who wanted to retain their Chinese and Tamil languages and the Malays who saw the sluggish introduction of Bahasa Melayu as hindering their political and economic progress. These tensions came to a head on 13 May 1969 when racial riots broke out in Kuala Lumpur. Following the riots, the government – frustrated with the slow introduction of Bahasa Melayu – renewed its determination to swiftly and strictly implement the national language policy to achieve social cohesion. It renamed Bahasa Melayu (the language of the Malay) to Bahasa Malaysia (the language of Malaysia) to include non-Malays such as Indians, Chinese and other minorities. In an effort to further upgrade the status of the Malay language and to assert national identity, the *Rukunegara* (also spelled Ruke Negara) translated as National Principles were formulated and proclaimed on *Merdeka* (Independence) Day the following year. The 1970 proclamation by royal degree encapsulated Malaysia's national ideology for unity, justice, equity, diversity, democracy and progress and further influenced the development of language policy for the education system. Subsequently, Bahasa Malaysia was enforced by law in 1971 as the medium of instruction across all national schools and universities.

Unlike before, the progress of Bahasa Malaysia was tracked this time. The six-year study cumulated in a 1979 report from a Special Cabinet Committee chaired by Dr Mahathir Mohammad, the then Minister of Education. The Mahathir Report aimed to achieve national unity in a multi-ethnic society, increase patriotism as well as bridge the urban and rural education access and provision gap. It was also intended to produce skilled manpower for the nation's development within a policy framework that aspired to a democratization of education. This report guided reform of the education system in the 1990s with amendments to the Education Act in 1995 and 1996 to address the challenges of the twenty-first century (Karim, 2012).

The tertiary sector also saw language reform with the introduction of the Private Higher Education Act of 1996. It allowed the use of English as a medium of instruction in forming relationships with overseas institutions and offshore campuses. The objective was to enable Malaysia's progress towards an industrialized nation and into the knowledge economy (Tan Ai Mei, 2002).

Despite these corrective measures, three decades of Malay-only policy had caused English proficiency levels among Malaysians to dwindle. This was seen as a massive impediment in the quest to move Malaysia from a developing country to a fully developed country.

Meanwhile, the government's endeavors to institute Bahasa Melayu for social identity, harmony and language unity did not extend into the private sector. Business and industry experienced globalization in the decades between the late 1950s and early 2000s and thus required English to communicate with global markets.

Advancements in technology (Internet, email, Skype, mobile phones) enabled communication, knowledge exchange and transformation of business and trade with new markets but also international competition, with English being the lingua franca or 'tool' to make these connections.

Internationalization of education further strengthened the demand for English as it allowed increasing access to educational services in the world at large, which found its expression in cross-border education. The use of English as an international language was partially addressed by affiliations with international universities in which English was the medium of instruction (Gill, 2005).

Unemployment, particularly among Malays, was high due to their limited English language skills. In an attempt to stop this rapid decline of English language standards, the Malaysian government decided in 2003 to introduce the 'English for teaching Mathematics and Science' policy across all state schools in Malaysia. This surprising decision was a reversal of language policy. It meant a switch back to English as a medium of instruction across primary, secondary and tertiary education. The public responded to this decision on a large scale through the mainstream and online media, either supporting or rejecting the new policy with varying degrees of intensity. The debate split the nation into several fractions with the key question being whether the use of English constituted a progressive or a regressive approach (Selvarajah, 2012). The revival of English was seen at the ideological level as a betrayal to nationalism and the national language. Others saw it as an instrumental tool that would enable Malaysia to enter the global arena and be part of the digital age (Azman, 2006).

It is postulated that mounting pressures such as globalization, the information age, economic considerations and the impact of science and technology forced the Malaysian government to this drastic reversal in language policy and that these factors prevailed over nationalism.

As Lo Bianco and Aliani (2013) pointed out, there is often a huge chasm between imagined policy and its experienced delivery. This gap between policy ambition and implementation regularly leads to massive discrepancies between the glossy, future oriented representations of languages in policy and the here and now realities of languages teaching in schools.

In summary, Malaysia's socio-political and economic context influenced language policies across the education system and caused a switch from English to Bahsa Malaysia in 1959 and back again to English in 2003, which many perceived as a weakness in language policy in the country.

2.2.2 Current Education and Language Policies

As indicated, the Malaysian government suddenly announced in 2002 that the teaching of Science and Mathematics (Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik Dalam Bahasa Inggeris) abbreviated as PPSMI would be conducted in the English language from 2003 onwards. It was a politically charged issue, decreed by the then prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad who acknowledged that his

promotion of the Malay language and identity over his 22 years in power had been a mistake as it led to economic stagnation due to a workforce that was not skilled in English as the language of commerce and technology, which left Malaysia lagging behind its south-east Asian competitors (The Guardian, 2009).

Poor English skills amongst the population were a problem that started in the 70s according to Sen (2011), with a clear decline of English proficiency over the past 20 years. It saw Malaysia ranked third after Singapore and the Philippines, with Thailand coming fourth and Indonesia being fifth on an English level assessment test which comprised 40 questions to evaluate an individual's grasp of English. The test was conducted by the online recruitment company *Jobstreet.com* from November 2009 on 1.5 million workers in the above mentioned five countries.

Another contributing factor to the widespread poor command of English is the pervasiveness of 'Manglish', which is often described as a blend or a co-mingling of Malay and English. This mixture or mangled version of one language on the other, known as code-switching in linguistics, is termed 'bahasa rojak' or 'salad language' in Malaysia (Zimmer, 2006).

The drastic change in language policy just a few months before Dr Mahathir stood down from office was also triggered by the growing public dissatisfaction with English language proficiency levels in Malaysia and the surrounding public debate, the beginning of the new millennium and Malaysia's desire to become a developed nation by 2020.

Malaysia's aspiration and deadline was outlined in a blueprint, 'Vision 2020'. This blueprint provided some of the impetus for the re-introduction of English across the education system, as the country will have to prepare a workforce that is able to communicate within a global environment (Gill, 2005).

The pressure towards globalization invigorated interest in English as it was seen as the language that would allow greater access to global developments in science, technology and business. This underpinned the implementation of the 2003 language policy and its focus on the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2003).

Malay activists feared that the usage of the Malay language would erode and thus opposed the teaching of Science and Mathematics through the medium of English. Chinese educational groups were also against the use of English as they feared that it might replace Chinese as the medium of instruction in Chinese schools. This dissatisfaction with the 2002 language policy and the criticism grew so widespread that it led to a massive rally in Kuala Lumpur on 7th March 2009 where police had to disperse up to 5000 ethnic Malays with teargas. As a result, the government announced the same year that the policy would be reversed in 2012 (Karim, 2012).

This effectively meant the abandoning of the six-year experiment of using English in government schools as a medium of instruction for Science and Mathematics. As discussed, the education policy known as PPSMI (Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik Dalam Bahasa Inggeris/the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in English) was introduced in 2003 across Malaysia and phased out by 2012.

Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin stressed that the decision was based on educational results, claiming that PPSMI had not achieved the desired objectives while denying that the government had bowed to political pressure. The Parents Action Group for Education (PAGE) campaigned to maintain PPSMI and an online poll had 40,000 people responding with 84 % against the change in policy (The Guardian, 2009).

Meanwhile, the government released its National Education Blueprint in 2006 with a number of goals such as establishing a national pre-school curriculum; decreasing class sizes from 31 to 30 students in primary schools; decreasing class sizes from 32 to 30 students in secondary schools; setting up 100 new classes for students with special needs and reducing racial polarization amongst the school population by the year 2010.

In early 2012, Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin commenced the 'National Education Dialogue' to invite views from the general public. It was on a large scale, with a total of 16 town hall meetings, the so called 'Townhall Series' that covered West and East Malaysia over four months and had more than 10,000 people in attendance. Over 2500 responses were received and taken into consideration for the government's blueprint on the national education transformation plan. Under review were nine major areas, namely raising the status of the teaching profession; raising the quality of school leadership; raising the quality of schools; raising the level of education amongst students; raising the levels of involvement with parents; raising the involvement of the community, raising the involvement of the private sector; raising the education delivery system's capacity and capability as well as improving resource management (Karim, 2012).

After this extensive consultation process, the government's new 'National Education Transformation Plan' was made public in September 2012, which is called the 'Malaysian Blueprint 2013–2025' (preliminary report).

2.2.3 Future Education and Language Policies Development

Currently, there is an intense and very public debate about the role of English and the proficiency levels of students, teachers and the general population in Malaysia. For example, it was revealed by the Education Minister II Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh that "…a third of English Language teachers in the country have been classified as 'incapable' or 'unfit' to teach the subject in schools…" (The Star, 11 September 2013) and had been sent to courses to improve their proficiency. This was revealed after 60,000 English Language Teachers had sat the English Language Cambridge Placement Test in 2012, with 70 % performing poorly. In the same vein, THE STRAITS TIMES (12 September 2013) reported that only 20,000 (of the 60,000) teachers passed the test, with the ministry having trained 5000 teachers and intending to train another 9000 soon to improve English proficiency standards (The Star, 2013).

In an attempt to counteract low English proficiency rates amongst school students, the Malaysian government therefore decided to recruit 375 native speakers and allocated funding for this purpose in the 2011 budget (MELTA, 2010).

In the latest attempt to address English language proficiency skills in teachers, 70,000 teachers will be required to pass the Cambridge Placement Test by 2015. Those failing will need to attend eight-week intensive courses or be moved to other roles. Other strategies include English language class streaming by proficiency for primary children in year 1 after an initial assessment, limiting class numbers to 30 students and screening twice a year to ensure their progress is on track. In addition, prime minister Najib Tun Razak announced plans in September 2012 to overhaul the education system with a commitment to ensure that every child will be proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English by 2025 (The Guardian, 2012).

One of the strategies is the government's Teacher Up-Skilling Project to train teachers of English, which – at the time of writing – is in its recruitment stage. For the duration of the 2014 and 2015 academic year, this will involve more than 40,000 teachers and 500,000 students in total. They will be trained by native speaker English Language mentors with two in each cluster of 15 schools that comprises approx. 75 local English teachers across six states of Malaysia. The goal will be to raise standards of English language and literacy in rural primary schools. This will be achieved through coaching and mentoring the professional development of Malaysian teachers of English through professional development, which will we held in a combination of training session, their classes and their schools. There will also be 20 English Speaking Assistants (EAS) who are interns or volunteers that will assist teachers and interact with students in all academic and extra co-curricular activities. Furthermore, there will be 15 English Language Teaching Fellows who will design and implement ongoing training programs with English department staff at various Institutes of Teacher Education in Malaysia. Their duties will also include the modeling of good teaching practices, the creation of education resources and mentoring support in conducting research (Brighton Education, 2013).

Some of these measures to stop the decline in the standard of English are outlined in the final version of the National Education Blueprint 2013–2025. Others include the extension of the school week by 10 h and allocating more time for English as a subject to increase students' proficiency. This is aimed at preparing students for the compulsory pass in English for the SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia/Malaysian Certificate of Education), which is the national examination in the final year of secondary school to be introduced in 2016. The Education Minister Muhyiddin Moh Yassin stressed the continued strengthening of Bahasa Malaysia, acknowledged the importance of English to "produce a global generation" and allayed fears of the Chinese and Tamil communities that vernacular schools would cease to exist (Today Online, 2013).

As these recent developments indicate, the issues of education, language and ethnic identity continue to be sensitive in Malaysia while racial polarization remains in place. Malay groups blame Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools for this, while these ethnic groups fear the loss of their first language if the teaching of Bahasa

Malaysia and English is further institutionalized by the Malay groups. After a volatile time for English language teaching and its rejection due to and the perceived threat to local linguistic purity, English has once again been reinstated in the education system due to the necessity for global communication and the recognition that English proficiency is key for success in a globalized economy.

2.3 *Malaysia's English Education Practice*

2.3.1 The Education System

Independence from the British colonialists saw a newly formed government in 1956, which made education a federal responsibility. However, each state has its own Education Department that coordinates educational matters in its territory. Pre-school, primary and secondary education is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (MoE). However, tertiary education is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). Pre-school playgroups start at the age of three with kindergarten from the ages of four to six. Mandatory primary education (Standard 1 to Standard 6) starts at the age of seven (Standard 1) and lasts for a period of six years until students are 13 years of age (Standard 6). During primary school, students are promoted to the next level regardless of their actual performance. However, at the end of primary school, there is a common public examination – called the *Primary School Achievement Test* – which assesses written Malay and comprehension, English, Science and Mathematics. It is followed by a period of five years at secondary school (Form 1 to Form 5) with the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) examination before graduating. The SPM is based on the British 'O' levels examinations. At secondary level, student must participate in at least two co-curricular activities (i.e. uniformed groups, performing arts, clubs & societies, sports & games) with regular competitions and performances. After these 11 years of free education, students may pursue one or two years of post-secondary education, which serve as a university entrance preparatory course in order to fulfill the basic requirements for a bachelor's degree program at a higher educational institution. At tertiary level, government-funded institutions such as public universities, polytechnics, community colleges and teacher training institutes as well as private universities, foreign branch campus universities and private colleges offer courses that lead to the awards of certificate, diploma, first degree and higher degree qualifications. Almost all primary and secondary education (95 %) is provided by the government as well as more than half (60 %) of tertiary education, with the private sector providing the remainder (Ministry of Higher Education, 2013).

Malaysia's 28.3 million people have access to 7696 primary and 2219 secondary schools. For 2010, there were a total of 405,716 teachers and 5,407,865 enrolled students. The national education budget was set at RM 30 billion. At tertiary level, there were 37 private universities, 20 private university colleges, seven foreign

university branch campuses and 414 private colleges. The Education Act of 1965 covers pre-school, primary, secondary and post-secondary education und the national education system (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2011).

2.3.2 The Various School Types

Initially, religious (Islamic) 'Hut' schools were the earliest form of education in Malaysia. They were followed by secular schools under the British colonial government, which were considered prestigious. Some were boarding schools modeled after the British practice. One of the oldest is the Penang Free School which was founded in 1816. Attendance at the English style schools was for the privileged by birth such as children of the Malay elite or for those with money such as children of wealthy Chinese tin miners and business men or of Indian merchants. Several Christian denominations (Anglican, Josephian, Lasallian Brothers, Marist Brothers, Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Seventh – day Adventist) started mission schools, which provide mostly single-sex education in English at primary and secondary level. Nowadays, they have assimilated into the Malay-medium school system with a mixed student body from diverse backgrounds. Under the British colonial government large numbers of immigrants from China and India arrived. Chinese and the Tamil school were founded by their respective communities to maintain cultural identity and language. They established vernacular schools that taught the curricula of their home countries in Mandarin and Tamil respectively. It could be argued that this separation of the ethnic groups was a deliberate strategy by the British colonialist to 'divide and rule' as this led to four types of schools using four different languages and four different sets of curricula. Others believe that the British were indifferent to the educational needs of the Chinese and Tamil communities as they believed that they would return to their homelands, once they had made enough money in Malaysia (Muhrtz, Abdullah, & Jan, 2011). Apart from the British, the Christian and the vernacular schools, there was also a fourth group of Malay schools. They used Bahasa Melayu – the national language – as the medium of instruction and were therefore called 'national' schools. After the 1956 Razak Report, the vernacular Chinese and Tamil schools were known as 'national-type' school. In an attempt to move towards a single uniform education system after Independence in 1957, the government offered financial aid to schools funded by the missionaries to adopt the national curriculum. Chinese and Tamil schools received the aid if they converted to English-medium schools. This changed after the 1969 race riot in Kuala Lumpur which decreed that English-medium schools were to be phased out from January 1970 without incentives. By 1982, all secondary schools became Malay-medium schools (national schools), including the previously prestige English schools founded under British colonialism. In addition, completely Malay-based institutions such as around 40 residential MARA Junior Science Colleges (Maktab Rendah Sains MARA, abbreviated as MRSM), Technical Schools (Sekolah Menengah Teknik) and the MARA Institute of Technology were set up and received almost

unlimited funding. These were exclusively for Malays as part of the affirmative action that also extended into university and provided employment in the public sector where preferential treatment is given. More recently, international schools have opened in Kuala Lumpur and other major cities for a growing ex-patriot constituency, which is able to afford the costly school fees. Usually, these American, Australian or British schools use the curriculum of their respective country and employ native English speakers who are trained teachers from these countries.

2.3.3 The Curriculum

The school year is divided into two semesters, with the first one running from the beginning of January to the end of June and the second running from July to the end of December. This division also applies to the tertiary sector.

The curriculum is – as in many other Asian countries – strongly exam driven. Malaysia adopted the British education system's Higher School Certificate (A-level) and School Certificate (O-level) examinations. Later, they were replaced by the Malaysian Higher School Certificate (STPM) and the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) respectively. All students – irrespective of ethnic origin – were required to obtain a credit in Bahasa Malaysia to be awarded the SPM certificate, which was the prerequisite for entry into university and jobs in the government (Dumanig & Symaco, 2012).

Centralized examinations are held at the end of Year VI (primary school when the students are 12–13 years old); Form III and From V (secondary school, when the students are 15 and 17 years old respectively). In between, schools hold their own annual or even bi-annual pre-exams to prepare students for the official exams.

The underlying principle of the national curriculum is the "…development of basic skills, the acquisition of knowledge and thinking skills…" while "…subjects must also incorporate the inculcation of moral values and attitudes…" (Rahman & Ahmad, 1996, p. 89)

The latter are documented in the National Education Philosophy (NEP), which aims to produce Malaysian citizens who are balanced, skilful and value the nation's aspiration for unity. Curriculum development is centralized under the Ministry of Education through its Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) oversees the development of the pre-school, primary and secondary school curriculum.

2.4 The English Language Subject

Prior to 2003, English was taught as a subject in a traditional style that is, learning about the language rather than learning through the language. Although this advocated methodology provided an integrated approach with elements of communicative language teaching (CLT), students were not taught how to use the language

for communication. According to the integrated curriculum for primary schools, students in national schools should receive a total of 210–240 min of English per week. At vernacular schools, they should receive 90 min per week. However, Azman's, 1999 study of 400 residents of four rural communities revealed large discrepancies. For example, the Indians were the most multilingual while a number of the Malays and the Chinese did not speak any English at all. The 20 interviewed English teachers used translation as a strategy in teaching English as it helped their students to understand the meaning more quickly. Two of twelve schools had a computer lab but the computers were rarely used for teaching and learning. One school had CD-Roms for students to learn English, Bahasa Melayu and Maths. Nationwide, 90 % of primary and 66 % of secondary schools had no Internet access (Azman, 2006).

The 2002 language policy to teach Science and Mathematics in English created significant pedagogical challenges for the teachers of these subject areas as Othman (2008) found in her study of 53 science secondary school science teachers in Selangor, Malaysia. Her results showed that these teachers lacked skills in integrating their subject's content with English language teaching and proficiency.

The importance of exams and their focus on grammar at the cost of neglecting communicative aspects of language learning were identified by Ambigapathy (2002) in an analysis of the KBSM syllabus. This focus on rote learning of skills to pass examinations produces students that are unable to use English productively in a communicative event once they are at university. Drilling students with examinations from previous years, work sheets and exercise books through chalk-and –talk methods and teacher-centered approaches are part of the problem (Ambigapathy, 2002).

The poor use of learning strategies accounted for Form II students' difficulties in comprehending English texts. They rarely or never used contextual or background knowledge to deduce the meaning of a reading passage but instead relied on direct translation from Bahasa Malaysia and dictionary meaning to help understand the English content (Nambiar, Ibrahim, & Krish, 2008).

Given the findings of these studies, it is not surprising that scholars (Naginder, 2006; Nor Hashimah Jalaludin, Norsimah Mat Awal, & Kesumawati Abu Bakar, 2008) declared that Malaysian students lack reasonable English literacy skills despite studying the language for 11 years and that students, teachers, policy makers and even the public are dissatisfied with the teaching and learning of English (Razianna Abdul Rahman, 2005).

After their years in primary and secondary schools, Malaysian students enter university level with limited vocabulary, a weak understanding of difficult words and difficulty in understanding long sentences. This leaves them unprepared for the requirements of tertiary study. Language anxiety in students is therefore high as they have difficulty expressing themselves in English and are nervous when they have to present or produce written works in English (Nambiar, 2007).

3 Conclusion

This paper outlined the key problems in language planning and language policy for Malaysia as the competing roles of the national language, the international language and the minority languages. Language has always been a contentious topic that brought out ethnic conflicts, ideological pressures and political dogmas. Tensions emerged from the emphasis on the national language of Bahasa Malay to foster national unity and national pride, whereas the international language of English will be crucial for global communication and economic advancement, whereas the cultivation of minority languages (Mandarin, Tamil, indigenous) are important to maintain social harmony.

Language policies in Malaysia have seen several reversals over the last decades with Bahasa Malay being mandated as the official language but being overshadowed by English due to its economic and social benefits. Omar (1985, p 46) argued that the "Malays, as a race, would rather die than lose their language to a foreign one." Therefore, Bahasa Melayu was strongly promoted through language policies due to its symbolic function as it was able to exude emotion such as pride and attachment to one's country. English on the other hand played a utility role as "… passport to employment in the private sector and in international affairs" (Omar, 1985, p 47).

The disadvantages of a top-down language policy and the desired unification can in effect cause inequity and further divide between ethnic groups where the language of the dominant group is enforced (Symaco, 2010), with dire consequences as the 1959 race riots in Malaysia showed. Globalization aggravates the problem in seeking uniformity (Watson, 2007) rather than preservation of local knowledge and culture through multilingual instruction.

An aspect that weakened language policies in Malaysia was and still is the cultural, linguistic and religious divide between the three major ethnic groups, with national integration still being a considerable issue. Having Chinese, Indian and Malay children separated in schools and socialized in different linguistic and cultural traditions continues a form of separatism that has plagued the country since colonialism. A strengthening of language usage in Malaysia could be achieved through the under-utilized potential of cross-ethnic socialization. A greater level of interaction between Chinese, Indian, other ethnicities and Malay would assist in the proficiency of a shared language, whether it is English or Malay. Networking and socializing between these diverse groups would be a useful strategy to enhance the acquisition and use of that language.

In summary, there are three major issues that contribute to the lack of English proficiency in Malaysian schools students. Firstly, the short weekly time allocation for learning English that does not allow sufficient exposure to the language; secondly, the focus on grammar and the mechanics of the language to pass exams that neglect communicative practice of English; and finally, the interference from Bahasa Malaysia with reliance on translation and dictionary use to comprehend English texts. The challenge of teaching English in Malaysia is therefore situated in the

meaningful use of the language in the classroom rather than the heavy emphasis on drilling mechanical aspects of English into students to enable them to pass examinations.

Recommended is a re-examination of language policy to ensure that Malaysia develops its teachers in English to make certain that their students and thus the future generation is equipped with a high level of proficiency while at the same time recognizing the language rights of Malaysia's minorities, namely Chinese, Indian and other ethnicities to preserve their cultural identity and also in the interest of maintaining national unity by promoting Bahasa Malay as the official language.

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Local-Global Tension in the Ideological Construction of English Language Education Policy in Nepal

Prem Phyak

Abstract In this chapter, I analyze ideologies of the de facto English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy in Nepal's school level education system. By situating the current language policy in Nepal's multilingual context, I also discuss how this policy reproduces social inequalities between the rich and the poor, and how it negatively affects children's access to the academic content. My analysis shows that the current de facto English language policy is shaped by two major ideologies – *English-as-a-global-language* and *English-as-social-capital* – that ignore the local multilingual and multicultural realities surrounding students' everyday lives and disregard the evidence that students' home languages can be a resource for learning both content and language. More importantly, the analysis reveals increased tensions between the local and global ideologies by showing that the English language policy contradicts the Ministry of Education's mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) policy, the latter of which aims to promote the use of local languages as the medium of instruction up to Grade 3.

Keywords English-as-the-medium-of-instruction • Language ideology • Neoliberalism • Multilingual education • English-as-social-capital

1 Introduction

The government of Nepal has shown its commitment to recognize the country's multilingual and multicultural resources by participating in various global educational campaigns, such as *Education for All* (EFA) and the *Millennium Development Goals*. In developing its own national action plans to achieve the goals of these campaigns, the government has paid attention, at least in policy documents, to increase ethnic-minority children's access to basic primary education through

P. Phyak (✉)
University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI, USA

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal
e-mail: pphyak@gmail.com

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mother-tongue education. For example, the Ministry of Education (2003), in the EFA *Plan of Action*, states that ethnic-minority languages will be the medium of instruction at the primary level. The Ministry of Education has also developed a mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) policy in 2009 to address the educational challenges – including increased school drop-out rates, non-participation in teaching-learning activities, and educational underachievement – of ethnic-minority children. According to this policy, ethnic-minority languages are used as the medium of instruction up to Grade 3 (Ministry of Education, 2009b). Despite being a transformative, effective, and relevant educational approach to promote quality education (Hough, Thapa-Magar, & Yonjan-Tamang, 2009; Phyak, 2013; Taylor, 2010), the implementational aspect of the MTB-MLE policy is not entirely encouraging; instead of teaching through ethnic-minority languages, English is increasingly used as the de facto medium of instruction from Grade 1 onwards. This raises the important question: Despite the official policy promoting the use of local languages, why does English receive more attention in practice?

This chapter analyzes the ideologies that shape the de facto English-as-the-medium-of- instruction policy in the primary grades of education in Nepal. By considering English language policy as an ideological construct (Park & Wee, 2012; Ricento, 2015), the issue of how symbolic power of English as a global language is reproduced and legitimized in educational policies and practices remain at the center of analysis. While acknowledging the importance of learning English as a foreign language to access wider educational and economic resources, I argue that the current romanticization of English as a panacea for improving public education, as seen in the Nepali language policy discourses and practices, lacks research-based evidences and seems inappropriate in Nepal's multilingual context. More specifically, I contend that English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy from the first grade onwards is unrealistic; this only reproduces the social divide between the high-middle and lower social classes and defies the Ministry of Education's national goal to promote multilingual education in Nepal.

I begin with a brief introduction to language ideology and critical language policy, the theoretical framework of this chapter, followed by the pre-1990 discourse of nationalism and elitism. Then I discuss major findings from the 1984 *English Language Teaching Survey* (ELT Survey) and analyze why these results were excluded from language policy reforms. Following this, I scrutinize how neoliberal ideologies have shaped the current English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy and scrutinize local-global tensions as seen in the policy. In concluding this chapter, I maintain that the neoliberal justification of learning English as a global language to compete in the global market economy disproportionately benefits the high-middle class while the poor still lack access to quality education and literacy skills.

2 Language Ideology and Critical Language Policy

Language ideology has received increasing attention in recent critical and ethnographic studies on language policy (McCarty, 2011; Shohamy, 2006; Tollefson, 2013). While Silverstein (1979) defines language ideologies as "sets of beliefs about language structure and use" (p. 193), Irvine (1989) describes it as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (p. 255). In focusing on commonsensical ideas and beliefs about language, studies on language ideologies analyze how language use, practices, and policies are linked with larger sociopolitical, economic, and cultural contexts. In a broader sense, language ideologies mediate between social structures and language and "link language to identity, power, aesthetics, morality, and epistemology [and] through such links…[language ideologies] underpin not only linguistic form and use, but also significant social institutions and fundamental notions of persons and community" (Makihara & Schieffelin, 2007, p. 14). As a multidisciplinary concept, language ideologies help us to understand how language policies shape and are shaped by the beliefs, political interests, social structures, and cultural dispositions of various groups of people. In other words, ideological analysis contributes to our understanding of language policy not just as an explicit policy text, but as an implicit and covert embodiment of sociopolitical and cultural beliefs and interests.

Blommaert (2013) considers language policy as "ideological complexes" in which social oppressions, marginalization, and discriminations are deeply-embedded. Pennycook (2013) aptly argues that "it is not so much language as language ideology that is the object of language policy" (p. 2). Spolsky (2004) claims that language policy exists "within a complex set of social, political, economic, religious, demographic, educational, and cultural factors that make up the full ecology of human life" (p. ix). From an ideological perspective, social inequality, identity, class, and discrimination are at the core of language policy analysis. As Tollefson (2002) argues, language policy is not simply about the "choice of language as medium of instruction, but instead [is] often central to a host of social process" (p. x). Thus, it is important to undertake a locally situated analysis of how English language policies are connected with global, national, and local ideologies.

Recent studies have critically examined English language policy in relation to sociopolitical, cultural, and economic ideologies (Luke, Luke, & Graham, 2007; Park & Wee, 2012; Phillipson, 2006; Ricento, 2015). Drawing on Bourdieu's (1991) "linguistic market", Park and Wee (2012) argue that the global consideration of English as capital is an ideological construct and deeply attached with social class and prestige. Ricento's (2015) most recent edited volume *Language Policy and Political Economy: English in a Global Context* adopts a political economic approach to examine a wide range of emerging socioeconomic and political issues embedded in the global spread of English as a perceived tool for socioeconomic mobility. Drawing on language policies from post-colonial contexts (India and

South Africa) and countries where English is taught as a foreign and additional language, Ricento (2015) contends that the expansion of English as both subject and a medium of teaching on the grounds of its instrumental value had entrenched the gap between the upper and lower social classes. He claims that "English is often promoted by its advocates as a social 'good' with unquestioned instrumental value; yet access to quality English-medium education in low-income countries is mostly restricted to those with sufficient economic means to pay for it" (p. 1). For example, commenting on language policy in ASEAN countries, Kirkpatrick (2013) argues that forcing children (whose home or community language is other than English) to learn science and mathematics in English is like "sentencing them to failure" (p. 14). Similarly, Ricento (2015) asserts that early English medium instruction in the "low-income countries where it is not the language of the home or community is detrimental to academic achievement and attainment of a high level of literacy in any language" (p. 3). Studies have further shown that this kind of policy contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities based on economy, caste/race, and ethnicity.

In the postcolonial context of India, Annamalai (2013) analyses how English medium education has reproduced educational inequalities between the rich and the poor. He argues that although India focuses on English medium education from the early grades, with a goal to help students to become capable of accessing the Western ideology of globalization and technological advancement, a large number of students from poor family backgrounds and rural areas cannot go on to higher education. Annamalai (2013) unravels the fact that very few students who attend expensive private schools have better access to English education while students in public schools do not receive enough resources and competent teachers. Thus, English medium schools have constructed the "stigma that they are for economically and scholastically limited children" and circulated a myth that "good education means education through English" (Annamalai, 2013, p. 194). Similarly, Ramanathan (2005) finds that the English-vernacular divide in India further inflicts the class- and caste-based social division. Her analysis shows that the current English medium education is a continuation of the British colonial legacy in which English is known as the language of the elites.

Other studies have closely analyzed how English language spread in education is shaped by the globalizing ideology of a neoliberal market economy (Block, Gray, & Holborow, 2012; McGroarty, 2013; Piller & Cho, 2013). As Bourdieu (1991) argues, the expansion of English-as-a-global-language in education around the world is deeply rooted in the unprecedented *economic capital* value it enjoys in the global market economy. As the economic value of languages are dominantly determined by a neoliberal competitive market, English possesses, both covertly and overtly, a greater symbolic capital (than any other language) that influences the policymakers to embrace English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy without analyzing its educational and sociopolitical consequences at the local level (Block et al., 2012; Davis, 2014; Phyak & Bui, 2014). While interpreting neoliberalism as language policy, Piller and Cho (2013) contend that the ideology of competitive market-driven education and university ranking practices serve as a mechanism to force universities in South Korea to adopt English-as-the-medium-of-instruction

policy. They aptly argue that such neoliberal "structures of competition" institutionalize English as a terrain where individuals and institutions must compete to be "deemed meritorious" (Piller & Cho, 2013, p. 39); however, they contend that very few students, teachers, and universities benefit from this policy. More importantly, as the use of languages other than English is devalued, the English-only policy "suppresses [the] free speech" of students that results in a lack of creative and critical thinking in the learning process (Piller & Cho, 2013, p. 40).

The ideological analysis of language policy thus requires us to look into how nation-states define and defend the choice of English as the medium of education. This analysis further calls for a close scrutiny of how language policy is embedded in the local socio-historical context. In the following section, I introduce the historical background of English language policy in Nepal.

3 Nationalism, Elitism and English in the Pre-1990 Era

The pre-1990 era in Nepal is characterized by both a period of modernization and the construction of socio-political hierarchies. The Shah and Rana rulers adopted a *one-nation-one-language* policy and structurally disregarded the multilingual and multicultural ecology of the nation-state (Awasthi, 2008; Eagle, 2008; Sonntag, 2007; Yadava, 2007). Only Nepali was legitimized as the official language in the guise of national unity. As Anderson (1991) argues, such an ideology is guided by the assumption that nationalism can only be fostered when all citizens speak one common standard language. Before 1990, speaking languages other than Nepali were banned in schools, government offices, and other public domains. For example, the first educational policy in Nepal, published in 1956 as the *Nepal National Education Planning Commission* (NNEPC), states:

> No languages [other than Nepali] should be taught, even optionally in primary school, because [only] a few children will need them and they would hinder the use of Nepali… and those who wish and need additional languages can learn them in the sixth grade. (NNEPC, 1956, p. 95)

Since the beginning of the modernization and expansion of formal education, local languages other than Nepali were not given space in education (Whelpton, 2005), yet English was one of the major components of Nepal's education system. The history of English language teaching in Nepal can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. After the first Rana Prime Minister, Jung Bahadur Rana, visited Britain in the early 1850s, he was impressed by their education system and wanted to bring this knowledge back to Nepal. He subsequently hired two British teachers and started the first English language school to his own children in the palace. In 1892, the school was moved to another location and was named the Durbar School [Palace School], and it shows that formal education in Nepal began with English medium education (Weinberg, 2013). However, as the Ranas were against the idea of providing education to the public, they did not pay attention to the expansion of

education nor did they allow the common people to send their children to the Durbar School; instead, only the rich, elites, and royal families had access to this education.

The Ranas' protectionism of education indexes English as an elites' language at the national level; it carries a greater symbolic value that signifies high social status in Nepal's stratified society. Although the government kept imposing a Nepali-only monolingual policy until 1990, English (both as a subject and medium-of-instruction) received increased attention in educational policies and discourses. Private, missionary, and international schools, which are considered *better schools* in dominant educational discourses, are allowed to teach English and use it as the medium of instruction from Grade 1 onwards, while public schools were allowed to only use Nepali. This kind of elitism in the early English language policy constructed and circulated a dominant discourse: learning English contributes to achieving a positive social identity, high social status, and a better education. This kind of social reproduction forced many parents, particularly from cities, to send their children to India for English medium education (Whelpton, 2005).

The one-nation-one-state ideology became even stronger during the 1960–1990 Panchayat regime in which the king had executive power and the multiparty democracy was banned. As a way to systematize education, the government developed the *1971–1976 National Education System Plan* (NESP) and made some significant changes in the existing curricula, textbooks, examination system, and the medium-of-instruction policy. The NESP not only reduced two English language courses into one, but also asked the missionary-run schools to implement the Nepali medium-of-instruction policy. However, this policy did not stop the rich from sending their children to India for an English-medium education; indeed, the kings themselves sent their children to famous schools in India and to other foreign countries. It is clear from this that keeping English as the language of the upper class while imposing a Nepali-only policy on the general public creates a social divide between the rich and the poor.

Although English was taught as a compulsory subject in the Panchayat era from Grade 4 onwards, students in public schools received very minimal English language exposure due to significant challenges, including a lack of competent teachers, textbooks, and other reference materials. The majority of teachers were untrained, unqualified, and not competent to teach English. Consequently, as Malla (1977) observes, more than 80 % of students, mostly from rural public schools and poor families, failed in English in the School Leaving Examination (SLC), a gatekeeping national examination required to enter higher education. To address this issue, the government of Nepal and the British Council jointly carried out the *Survey of English Language Teaching* in Nepal (ELT Survey) in 1983–1984. The results of the first (and, as of 2015, only) survey made a number of far-reaching policy recommendations, but unfortunately these were never discussed among teachers, parents, policymakers, and other concerned people to develop a new English language policy. In what follows, I discuss several critical issues raised in the ELT Survey.

4 Evidence Denied: The Ideological Motive for English Language Policy

English language education policies, particularly in developing countries, are mostly based on political motives rather academic foundations (Coleman, 2011; Davies, 2009). In Nepal, the political motive behind English language education was identified by a group of experts in the early 1980s. The Ministry of Education and the British Council jointly formed a team led by applied linguist Alan Davies to carry out the ELT Survey of Nepal in 1983. Other team members consisted of two British scholars – Alan McLean and Eric Glendenning – and three Nepalese counterparts: Arun Pradhan, Niraj Kumari Bajracharya, and Jai Raj Awasthi. The objectives of the ELT Survey were to: (a) observe and describe the teaching and learning of English in primary and secondary schools; (b) analyze textbooks and other reference materials in terms of their aim, content, and format; (c) comment upon the process of ELT textbook design and production; (d) describe the examination [processes] in English in current use in Nepalese schools; (e) relate the content treated in these examinations to the practice of ELT in schools; (f) assess the actual levels of attainment in English of teachers and students; (g) comment on the performance in English of teachers and students and to indicate factors which contribute to good or poor performance; (h) relate teachers' performance level with ranges of teaching methods; and (i) recommend ways and means for improving English language teaching in Nepal. Although a detailed analysis of each of these objectives is not possible due to a limitation of space, I will discuss the major findings which are highly relevant to the reforming of English language policy in Nepal.

Based on the data collected from classroom observations, interviews, and policy documents, the ELT Survey team found that (a) both teachers and students in public schools had very low English language proficiency, (b) the textbooks were not being used effectively, and (c) the predominant teaching method was grammar-translation and rote learning. Most strikingly, the survey results revealed that the test items in the SLC exams were meant to test the students' memory rather than their English language skills and abilities. Considering these findings, the survey team recommended that "English might start late and…English might become an *optional* instead of a *compulsory* SLC subject. We were happier about both of these" (Davies, Glendenning, & McLean, 1984, p. 5, emphasis added). The survey team has also suggested that English language teaching should be started from Grade 8. They argue that "what is unsatisfactory about the Grade 4 starting date is that it leads to *repeated failure* and loss of motivation to learn. It also leads to a drain on English for school resources" (p. 6).

Although the survey was carried three decades ago, the findings of the survey are still relevant. As pointed out in the survey, there is still repeated student failure in English that eventually contributes to their demotivation in learning English. Most importantly, the survey team argues that this situation will become more serious if English is taught starting in Grade 1. Despite the survey team recognizes the

importance of English in the Nepalese education system, they strongly reject the idea that English should be started from Grade 1:

> In our view it would be more effective and remain fair to start English late, say at *Grade 8* and then give it maximum support by putting all the resources, at present spread over seven years, into three years. It is clear that as much English as is presently learned in seven years by Grade 10 would be learned in three years. … There are many advantages to starting English in Grade 8 and no educational disadvantages, though we recognize that there may be *socio-political ones*. (p. 6, emphasis added)

They go on to argue that:

> Extending the period of language learning may sound *superficially sensible* but in circumstances where so much of the teachers' own English (and their teaching of English) is poor, the problem would be compounded by three more years of *repeated failure*. (p. 6, emphasis added)

These recommendations of the ELT Survey clearly imply that starting English from the early grades is not an academically appropriate policy. The survey team suggests that English should be taught from Grade 8 so that more resources can be invested to teach English for 3 years (Grades 8–10). Despite these findings, the ELT Survey reveals strong *socio-political* pressure to start English from Grade 1. The survey report discloses the fact that the secretary of the Ministry of Education and the representative from the royal palace wanted to introduce English from Grade 1 (Davies, 2009; Davies et al., 1984). Finally, the survey team had to negotiate with the Ministry of Education and they agreed to continue the existing policy; that is, starting English in Grade 4. In his critical self-reflection on the whole process of the ELT Survey, Davies (2009) unravels tensions between the "academic and political motives" for teaching English. His analysis implies that although a start in Grade 4 (let alone Grade 1) is not an academically sound policy, the political motive to legitimize the supremacy of English-knower elites through public education is a more powerful factor to shape the current English language policy in Nepal. As the English language around the globe serves as an index of high social prestige and social class (Park & Wee, 2012), this indexicality has been firmly reproduced in public discourses and educational policies in Nepal as well. What is most striking is that the government has introduced English as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 onwards since 2003, ignoring the findings and recommendations of the ELT Survey. In the remainder of this paper, I focus on the ideologies shaping the current English language policy.

5 Neoliberalism, English and Social Class

Neoliberal ideologies, particularly the privatization of education and decreased government role in providing public services, are considered the most influential factors shaping educational policy in this globalized world (Harvey, 2005; Lipman, 2011). After the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepal has adopted a neoliberal

economic ideology for nation-building and has encouraged the privatization of education, health services, and industries. Consequently, a large number of private schools, popularly labeled *boarding schools* (although all private schools do not have boarding facilities) in public discourses, have been established throughout the country. These private schools, opened primarily for business purposes, mostly cater to the needs of the rich who can afford expensive tuition costs and other fees. As Subedi, Shrestha, Maharjan, & Suvedi, (2013) argue, privatization of education in Nepal is seen as a *mechanism* (Shohamy (2006) for promoting a belief that considers English language learning as the best way to participate in a global competitive educational market (see Luke et al., 2007). Davies (2009) claims that the private schools adopted English as a de facto medium-of-instruction policy to: (a) attract and encourage the return of the large number of Nepali children from rich families currently attending private schools in India; and (b) support and promote English teaching in the Nepali education system. The desire for the return of Nepali children to their home country was heavily influenced by the private schools' marketing strategies that included the adoption of Indian textbooks and recruitment of Indian teachers to teach in English (Sharma, 1990). These practices not only diminished the identity of local teachers, but also created a hierarchy among private schools themselves. Guided by the belief that Indian teachers have better English language proficiency, the evaluative public discourses judge the private schools with Indian teachers as better schools than the ones with local teachers (Caddell, 2006). More importantly, private schools created the structure of competition (Piller & Cho, 2013) in which children from high-class families always excel the children from the poor working class.

Since private schools charge students expensive tuition fees, only rich families can afford to send their children to these schools. About 15 % of total schools in the country are privately run (see Department of Education, 2012); in public discourses, these schools are known as a symbolic space in which students develop high social prestige and construct the identity of being more knowledgeable students. For example, in an interview with the author, a parent from one of the cities in eastern Nepal says:

> I'm sending my children to a boarding school. I know it's expensive, but you know my children don't like to go to public school because most of their friends in this community go to a boarding school. If I don't do so, they don't like to go to school…you know…they feel inferior to their friends. It's social prestige. If we don't send our children to a boarding school, we're known as the poor and uncivilized in society.

Clearly, we see that the present private-public divide in educational policy creates a hierarchy of social identities. As the parent above mentions, the dominant social and educational discourses define the identity of people who send their children to private schools as 'rich', 'elite', 'civilized' and 'more knowledgeable'. Parents and students, who are unaware of such ideological issues, often reproduce the ideologies of dominant discourses and feel social pressure to send their children to private schools. More importantly, these schools have successfully constructed a myth: learning in and through English means receiving a better education (Heugh,

2000; Phillipson, 2006). This myth has further strengthened the symbolic power of English in society and placed increasing pressure on parents and students to opt to attend private schools. Although the issue of whether or not private schools provide children with quality education needs further exploration, the privatization of education has clearly, as mentioned above, entrenched a social divide in terms of class and identity.

The legitimization of the symbolic capital of English in private schools stems from the history of Nepal's stratified and hierarchical social structure. As the poor indigenous people, ethnic minorities and farmers from rural villages have long been excluded from the policy-making process, and are forced to believe in and follow top-down educational policies that might not necessarily address their identities, needs, voices, and ideologies (Phyak, 2013). As social elites influence educational and other national policies, both covertly and overtly, ethnic minorities and the poor often choose what those elites have been adopting. As seen in South Africa, when choices are given, poor parents often opt for English only because they have seen that high-middle class people choose English (see Heugh, 2000; Sonntag, 2003). In analyzing the role of agency in language policy, Zhao (2011) claims that social elites who have access to political and economic power can influence the entire language policy to fulfill their own interests. For example, English medium education that mostly serves the interests of Nepal's middle and upper classes has eventually influenced the Ministry of Education to change its previous medium of instruction policy.

In its revised *Education Act* in 2006, the Ministry of Education has included a provision that allows schools to use English as the medium of instruction (Ministry of Education, 2006). In an interview, one Ministry of Education staff member said that "because of the pressure from private schools, we had to include English medium of instruction policy in the revised education act" by legitimizing the *de facto* English medium policy of private schools. As the revised policy allows schools to use English as the medium of instruction, private schools are spending significant amounts of money in selling education. Every year, they highlight English medium education as one of the 'salient features' in their attractive commercials on the radio, in newspapers, and on television. Such commercials are another important mechanism to construct and circulate a false assumption that private schools provide better education than public schools due to their focus on English medium education. Private schools also sell their students' success rate in SLC examinations: the 2014 SLC results show that more than 90 % of total graduates were from private schools. Every year, private schools have better SLC results than public schools. Although there is no link between the SLC results and English medium education, public discourses have created a false belief that private schools have an improved student success rate predominantly because they teach in English. Such a discursive construction of the English-for-better-education ideology has further contributed to the adoption of English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy.

6 English-as-a-Global-Language Ideology and the Local-Global Tension

While the local construction of English-as-an-elite language already favored English-as-the medium-of-instruction policy in private schools, the discourses of English-as-a-global language have also further contributed to the creation of more space for English in public schools. Nepal's present educational policies embrace and reproduce discourses of 'globalization', 'internationalization', and 'market-economy' (Ministry of Education, 2009a). The Ministry of Education's school-level curricula highlights the importance of English-as-a-global-language to justify its use both as a subject and as the medium of instruction. In its secondary level curricula, for example, the Ministry of Education argues that "English is the appropriate international language for Nepal" and thus students should learn it for "success in local, national, and international communications" (Curriculum Development Center, 2007, p. 19). It further claims that "undoubtedly English is the means of communication *globally* and is also the major *world* language" (Curriculum Development Center, 2007, p. 19, emphasis added). This 'undoubtedly English' phenomenon, however, constitutes the "elite reverence" and "hints at a class-based struggle", as very few social elites have opportunities to communicate globally in English (Sonntag, 2003, p. 98; Giri, 2011). More importantly, the curricula, textbooks, and pedagogical practices are not geared towards helping students develop the level of English language proficiency in order to have access to global economic opportunities (see Curriculum Development Center, 2007). While English language curricula focus on teaching discrete skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), classroom practices are mostly dominated by the grammar-translation method (Davies, 2009). Consequently, contrary to what has been valorized in the dominant discourses and policies, the current English language education is less likely to help students develop an English language proficiency to participate in 'global communication' and international job market. Indeed, only a few children from elite families will be able to get wider socio-economic opportunities through English while the majority of children do not even receive textbooks on time.

The ideology of English-as-a-global language coupled with the neoliberal ideology of education has tremendously contributed to the ongoing switch from Nepali to English-as-the medium-of-instruction policy in public schools. Although there is no exact data, a large number of public schools throughout the country are currently adopting English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy from Grade 1 onwards. For example, *The Himalayan Times* (2010), a national newspaper, reports that "twenty public schools have already started teaching-learning activities in English in Sangkhuwasabha [one of remote districts] and some 401 schools are planning to introduce English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy from the next academic year." The news report further reveals that "the parents have also been *attracted* to government [public] schools after the schools started running classes in English." The news mentions that the District Education Office is "ready to assist the government [public] schools if they wanted to manage [provide] education in English

medium." In another news report in *Republica*, KC (2011) observes a similar situation in Rupandehi district: KC reports that "Kanti Higher Secondary School at Hatbazar, Butwal-6 could not entertain [accept] all the students thronging it for admission after it made arrangements for free education in English [medium]." Quoting the head teacher of the school, Govinda Gyawali, he states that English medium education is necessary in public schools because the current language policy makes them "unable to *compete* with private schools in *quality of education"* and because they "are facing the prospect of *shutting down* for lack of students" (emphasis added). The school also teaches all students [and subjects] up to 4th grade in English. Quoting the District Education Officer, KC further writes "many community [public] schools in the Rupandehi district have started to teach in the medium of English from this [academic] session."

These news reports are a testimony to the reproduction of English-as-global-language ideology and the dominant belief about how English monolingualism is necessary for social, economic, and educational achievement in the multilingual context of Nepal. These reports further show that that public schools are introducing English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy to *compete* with private schools; however, they do not seem to be aware of the negative impacts of this policy on student learning. Kirkpatrick (2013) and other scholars (e.g., Benson, 2014; Cummins, 2006, 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh, 2012) claim that teaching students in a language that is not used in their home and local community negatively affects students' linguistic, cognitive, and educational development. Contrary to this, a plethora of studies reveal that using students' home language as the medium of instruction not only helps them learn both content area subjects and additional languages more effectively, but also and most importantly engages them in cognitive and identity investment (Cummins, 2006; García, 2009; Hornberger, 2010; McCarty, 2006). My own observation of classes and interviews with the teachers and students in a primary public school, which has recently introduced English medium policy, in eastern Nepal shows an extremely limited use of English in the classroom while teaching subjects likes social studies, science, and mathematics. Although English is used as the medium of instruction, students do not understand the language and remain silent throughout the classes. A science teacher from this school says that students in the lower grades do not successfully learn the science content if they are taught in English. He says:

> We [teachers] can't teach in English. How's it possible to teach other subjects [science and social studies] in English? Children don't understand what we teach in English….We [the school] decided that we [teachers] should teach all subjects in English from Grade 1. But it isn't an appropriate policy. I feel that we are following *a fashion*. Honestly, it doesn't work.

The above excerpt clearly shows the gap between English language policy and practice: although the Ministry of Education embraces the ideology of English-as-a-global language and encourages public schools to introduce English medium policy to compete with private schools, the use of English does not help students learn content area subjects effectively. More strikingly, as the teacher above

mentions, public schools are reproducing the monolingual ideology of private schools in the guise of competition and quality of education (Phyak, 2013). However, the English-only medium policy is just like 'a fashion' that everyone wants to wear without analyzing its pros and cons. One head teacher of another primary school mentions that they are 'obligated' to introduce the English medium policy due to growing pressure from parents, especially elites, and the District Education Office. The head teacher himself believes that it is important to teach students in English because it is an "international language." In this sense, as critical language policy scholars (e.g., Shohamy, 2006; Tollefson, 2013) argue, schools are seen as a mechanism to reproduce the neoliberal ideologies of education that invisibilize the identity and value of local languages and disregard the voices and agency of students and teachers.

As Baldauf (2006) and other scholars (e.g., Ager, 2001; Kaplan, Baldauf, & Kamwangamalu, 2011) argue, the gap between policies and micro-level realities occur when language policies ignore the agency of local actors while focusing on the interests of the nation-states. To minimize this gap, language planning should fully embrace local sociopolitical, cultural, and linguistic realities (Baldauf, 2006). However, Nepal's current English-medium-of-instruction policy – which is influenced by the interests of people who do not have a good understanding of how a monolingual policy discriminates against linguistic minorities – enforces linguistic violence and devalues local bilingualism/multilingualism. This policy further resembles inconsistencies and uncoordinated planning in the Ministry of Education's policies.

The Ministry of Education, in its 2005 *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*, states that Nepali, English, or both can be the medium for school-level education; however, it also states that the 'mother tongue' will be the medium-of-instruction for elementary education (Grades 1–3). Similarly, in its major 2009 *School Sector Reform Plan*, the Ministry of Education focuses on the mother tongue-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy for the first three grades; in particular, it mentions that children's rights to basic education through their mother tongue will be guaranteed in at least the first three grades (Ministry of Education, 2009a). The Ministry of Education, though, makes no mention of English medium education, and instead asserts that "English will be taught as a subject from grade one [onwards]" (Ministry of Education, 2009a, p. 81). Here, the Ministry of Education is not clear about its own priority. While it seems to promote multilingual education by providing space for local 'mother tongues', it simultaneously focuses on the English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy to *compete* with private schools. This kind of language policy ambivalence indicates tensions between local and global ideologies. While the Ministry of Education has to address the educational challenges of ethnic and linguistic minorities by using their mother tongue as the medium of instruction, its policies are tremendously influenced by globalized neoliberal ideologies. In this tension, the discourses that promote market-oriented ideologies of education are more powerful than the issue of social justice and the identity of minority children. Thus, public schools are increasingly adopting

English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy, and the Ministry of Education also encourages them to do so.

7 Conclusion

The analysis of Nepal's English language education policy has raised some critical socio-political and educational issues. First, the taken-for-granted legitimacy of English in education is historically rooted in class-based social inequalities. As seen in India (Ramanathan, 2005), a relatively small percentage of the upper class and social elites actually benefit from English medium education in Nepal. As those from the lower social stratum still lack access to political and economic power and literacy skills, the children from poor families do not receive quality education. Although the dominant discourse considers learning in English as an indicator of quality education, most of the public school students do not receive better English language education, predominantly due to a lack of competent teachers. As teaching English as a compulsory subject in the early grades has already been a problem, its expansion as the medium of instruction creates another layer of problems for teachers and students. While public school teachers already seen it as an 'inappropriate' policy, students are not learning what they are expected to learn from the content area subjects through English. In this sense, the current English-as-the–medium-of-instruction policy is an imposed phenomenon with a hidden agenda (Shohamy, 2006) of promoting high-middle class supremacy. As discussed in this chapter, while very few children from upper class families receive better English medium education in expensive international and well-equipped private schools, with competent teachers and enough resources, children from the poor families and rural areas struggle with receiving textbooks on time, let alone other resources. Indeed, such an imposed policy is an embodiment of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991); students are forced to learn in English by discursively projecting it as a symbol of positive social identity and elitism.

The historical-structural condition plays a significant role in reproducing the ideology of English as an elites' language (Blommaert, 1999; Park & Wee, 2012). As seen in the case of Nepal, linguistic restrictionism – limiting the English medium education to a small group of elites – has a hidden agenda of promoting the ideology of linguistic nationalism and citizenship through a Nepali-only monolingual policy in the pre-1990 era (Phyak, 2013, 2015). While the general public was given limited access to English, private/boarding/missionary schools were still allowed to use English as the medium of instruction to cater the interests of the rich. This kind of restrictionism of English sets up a strong foundation for social inequalities and division between the rich and the poor. This social divide is further reproduced in the post-1990 neoliberal discourses of nation-building and educational reforms.

The unprecedented valorization of English as a global language emerges from the structures of competition that the neoliberal discourses on educational policies and reforms have created. As discussed in this chapter, developing countries

worldwide are, like Nepal, embracing the ideology of *English-as-a-global-language* and *English-as-social-capital* and giving it a significant space in education with the imaginary hope to help students participate in a global competitive market education (see Coleman, 2011). Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2012) and others (e.g., Al'Abri, 2011; Al-Jardani, 2012) reveal that Oman's recent educational reform plan (Basic Education System) is heavily influenced by globalizing neoliberal ideologies and discourses that focus on education for a market-based workforce and skills demanded by the global economy; English language teaching remains at the center of this reform. Nunan (2003) and Draper (2012) discuss how the ideology of English-as-a-global language has been the most influential factor shaping the early English language education in the Asia-Pacific region. Their analyses indicate that although the countries in the region are teaching English from the early grades, due to (a) uncoordinated language planning, (b) a lack of resources and trained teachers, and (c) inappropriate pedagogical approaches, students do not receive better English education. A significant number of studies have shown that English-only policy in a multilingual context (where children speak different home/community languages than what is taught in school) threatens the sociolinguistic identities of multilingual/minority children and inflicts linguistic and cultural violence (Heller, 2006; Tollefson, 2013). More importantly, as Piller and Cho (2013) argue, the neoliberal justification of English medium education reproduces social inequalities in terms of class, caste/ethnicity, and race, and promotes differential access to both material and educational resources (also see Ricento, 2015). Analyzing the role of English language policy in African countries (e.g., Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia), Williams (2011) rightly points out that the English language dominance in primary schools has been a "barrier to education, and hence to development, for the majority, since most students fail to acquire adequate academic competence in the language" (p. 45). He further argues that "whether one looks at development in terms of economic progress or of human needs, poor countries…that use English…as a means of 'accessing development' have not hitherto made great strides" (Williams, 2011, p. 45).

Another critical issue that emerges from this chapter is an increased tension between local and global ideologies. As discussed, the current English-as-the-medium-of-instruction policy conflicts with the mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) policy. The MTB-MLE policy embraces local ideologies, multilingualism, indigenous knowledge, and teacher and community engagement and creates space for local languages as the medium of instruction (Hough et al., 2009; Phyak, 2011, 2013; Taylor, 2010). This policy recognizes the linguistic and cultural identities of ethnic minority children and embraces both the theories and practices of language education that show a remarkable significance of using students' home languages in acquiring equitable and quality education (Baker, 2011; García, 2009). Yet the academic and research-based evidence that supports the relevance of multilingualism in education are denied, and English-only policy is being increasingly adopted in both and private schools in the guise of globalization and a competitive market-based economy. Here, discursive power relations between local and global language ideologies and discourses have played a critical role. As the neoliberal discourses and ideologies receive more attention in dominant discourses

and policies, they have a power to influence or persuade the public, which Nye (2004) calls 'soft power'. This power, as Annamalai (2013) argues, "blinds policymakers to certain basic truths about language pedagogy" (p. 203). As in Nepal, where the policymakers are heavily influenced by the neoliberal ideologies, the fact that the use of students' home languages supports their educational and cognitive development has been diminished globally and the symbolic power of English is inflated in education (LoBianco, 2010; McCarty, 2006).

In sum, this chapter critically has examined the role of ideology in the expansion of English medium education in Nepal. While it is pertinent for Nepali students to learn English to access wider educational materials and knowledge-based resources available in English, the way it has been romantically projected as a global language of a market economy and the marker of quality education in the current policy discourses simply reproduces class-based socio-economic and educational inequalities. As Ricento (2015) claims, English medium education 'disproportionately benefits' those who have 'appropriate credentials' and can participate in 'appropriate discourses' of English, but the people who do not have those credentials and skills are 'left far behind' (p. 4). Thus, I argue that privileging the symbolic power of English without considering the local dynamics in education, as is happening currently in Nepal, yields no more than the reproduction of social class and linguistic hierarchies that are deeply rooted in unequal and stratified social structures.

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English Language Teaching in Pakistan: Language Policies, Delusions and Solutions

Syed Abdul Manan, Maya Khemlani David, and Francisco Perlas Dumanig

Abstract English is perceived as a passport to better employment and upward social mobility in Pakistan. In a society characterized by acute class division and intense class consciousness, parents from the lower, lower middle or working strata of society aspire to enroll their children in the English-medium schools. Public demand for English medium schooling has led to an exponential growth of low-fee/low-cost schools over the last two decades where "by the end of 2005, one in every three enrolled children at the primary level was studying in a private school" (Coleman, H. (2010). *The English language in development* (p. 10). London: British Council). Importantly, behind the rapid spread and intense pursuit of English medium schooling is also a belief that the earlier the child is exposed to the English language, the faster she/he will learn the language. Employing a mixed methodology, this study analyzes English-medium policy in 11 low-fee private schools in part of Pakistan. Based on evidence gathered through multiple research tools such as a questionnaire survey, classroom observation and interviews with students, teachers, school principals and experts observers, the study finds that early English-medium policy appears counterproductive as most students demonstrate poor English language proficiency. Factors such as unavailability of qualified English teachers, poor pedagogies, sociocultural dynamics, and overall institutional weaknesses contribute to the failure of the policy. The study concludes that the maximum exposure and greater learning beliefs associated with earlier English teaching are delusional as those beliefs are underpinned neither by theories of bilingual/multilingual education nor by the schools and social environment of the children. We argue that in broader terms, the English-only policy poses potential reductionist effects on existing language ecology, and English-medium private schooling furthers socioeconomic disparities between the haves and the have-nots. Therefore, we propose that the early-English policy may be reviewed, and replaced by mother tongue based

S.A. Manan (✉)
Balochistan University of Information Technology,
Engineering & Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Quetta, Pakistan

University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
e-mail: rm_manan@yahoo.com

M.K. David • F.P. Dumanig
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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multilingual policy. English is an important language; therefore, it may be taught as a language rather than as a medium at the primary level. As quality English-medium schooling stands the preserve of the elites only; therefore, we advocate for the democratization of English and its equitable distribution across all strata of society.

Keywords Low-fee schools • English-medium policy • Mother tongue based multilingual education • Language policy and planning • Pakistan • Early English-medium education • Additive bi/multilingual education • Institutional preparedness • Sociolinguistic/ethnolinguistic realities versus English-medium education

1 Pakistan

1.1 Introduction

Theorists in bilingual and multilingual education propose that the best medium for earlier schooling is child's mother tongue, the language she/he uses at home with parents, siblings and in the social environment. They posit that early literacy in one's mother tongue or L1 has dual benefits: firstly, it results in better academic and overall intellectual development; secondly, the level of literacy and competence acquired in the mother tongue reinforces faster and better development of additional second, third or more languages (Cummins, 2009; UNESCO, 2003). Mother tongue based education has become an established sub-area for research under different disciplines such as education, psychology, sociolinguistics, language policy and planning, and language-in-education. Contrary to the above theorists and researchers from among other related disciplines recommending earlier mother tongue based education, policy makers in Pakistan are yet to recognize the value of mother tongues in education. For instance, "Of the 71 indigenous languages only Sindhi has an official role as medium of instruction in primary schools in Sindh and Pashto is used in government schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province…that approximately 95 % of children in Pakistan do not have access to education in their mother tongue" (Coleman, 2010, pp. 16–23). According to another estimate, 91.62 % children in Pakistan have no access to education in their mother tongues (Pinnock, 2009). Most children attend Urdu-medium government and English-medium public and private schools. Figures suggest that school enrolment in the private sector accounts for 34 % of total enrollment in 2007–2008. According to Pakistan Education Statistics[1] (GOP, 2009b), one in every three enrolled children is studying in the private institutions. Two factors appear to have given rise to proliferation of English-medium private schools: collapse of Urdu-medium government schools and the increasing demand for English-medium education, motivated by both national as well as global imperatives. English is used in the domains of power in Pakistan, and pragmatically

[1] GOP stands for the Government of Pakistan.

most parents view it as "passport" to power, prestige and an array of social, economic and cultural goodies (Manan, David, & Dumanig, 2014; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 2004a, 2005; Rassool & Mansoor, 2007; Shamim, 2008).

In this chapter, we shall first give a background of language-in-education policy in Pakistan. In the subsequent sections, a theoretical overview will situate the interface between language policies, politics and ideology with reference to language policies in Pakistan. Subsequently, contextualizing the sociolinguistic setting and language hierarchy of Pakistan, the perceptions of students, teachers and school principals regarding the use of English language will be critically analyzed through the prism of theory and the views of the key experts. Keeping in view of the sociolinguistic, school infrastructure, English language teaching pedagogies, and sociocultural backgrounds of most children, the concluding part will propose a policy for future direction. The following research questions guide this chapter:

1. What is the theoretical and empirical grounding of the English-medium policy?
2. Is the current medium of instruction policy compatible to the sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic realities of the society?
3. Is the English medium policy suited to the existing institutional preparedness of the schools?
4. Is quality English-medium education being equitably distributed, and does English-medium policy create level-playing ground for all children to move upward socioeconomically?

2 Theoretical Framework

Two different but interrelated research paradigms constitute the theoretical framework of the study that includes additive bi/multilingual education and critical language policy/critical applied linguistics. The study deploys both paradigms to examine the current English-medium education policy specifically from the viewpoint of stakeholders' perceptions, teaching and learning practices, and the compatibility between English language and students' sociocultural ecology. At the end, the study analyzes as to whether the policy creates a level-playing field for everyone or it creates social disadvantages and disparities.

3 Additive Bi/Multilingual Education

Theoretically, additive bi/multilingual education means that children should begin schooling with their mother tongues while any second or third language may gradually be added to his/her repertoire (Cenoz, 2009; Skutnabb-Kangas, & McCarty, 2008). This signifies that additive bi/multilingual education adds rather than subtracts a child's mother tongue from education. The proponents of additive bi/multilingual

education mainly analyze the linguistic and academic advantages of earlier schooling in a child's mother tongue or first language. According to Cenoz (2009), additive denotes that "a language is added to the linguistic repertoire of the students while the first language continues to be developed" (Cenoz, p. 3). Moreover, additive language learning that means that "a new language is learned in addition to the mother tongue, which continues to be developed. The learner's total linguistic repertoire is extended" (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2008, p. 4).

Two hypotheses have gained extensive currency and coverage in debates over the effectiveness of additive bi/multilingual policies, and its potential academic and linguistic advantages. The two hypotheses are the "*threshold level hypothesis*" (Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976), and the "*interdependence hypothesis*" (Cummins, 1984). Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) theorized that when children have reached a threshold of competence in their mother tongues (first language), then they can effectively learn a second or a third language without losing competence in the first language. Further, when children have crossed over a second threshold of competence in both mother tongue and the second language, the competence achieved in both the languages will positively influence academic and overall intellectual development, a state they termed as additive bilingualism. To contextualize Cummins' hypothesis in Pakistan, it proposes that children can potentially learn English, a foreign language, much easier and faster, if they acquire solid academic literacy in their mother tongues. Thus, the interdependence hypothesis also suggests a transition from mother tongue to that of English at the post-primary level of schooling than a straight-for-English policy as most English-medium schools practice currently. Research evidence from a large amount of empirical data suggests that a mother tongue based education has potential advantages than education through a second or foreign language (Annamalai, 2005; Baker, 2001; Benson, 2009; Cummins, 2009; García, Skutnabb-Kangas, & Torres-Guzman, 2006; Heugh, 2009; Hornberger, 1988, 2003; McCarty, 2009; Mohanty, 2013; Mohanty & Panda, 2009; Phillipson, 2009; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009).

The advantages of additive bi/multilingual education include improved quality and quantity of interaction between teacher and student, better critical thinking, better linguistic, cognitive, intellectual and educational development and greater comprehension of the subject contents (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006; Alidou et al., 2006; Benson, 2000, 2002, 2009; Hardman, Abd-Kadir, & Smith, 2008; Heugh, 2006, 2009; Jhingran, 2005). On the same lines, the critics of straight-for-English medium education policy, which subtracts a child's mother tongue, regard it as 'ill-informed and misguided' (Ferguson,2013) and the "faith that an early start in English means good education and ensures success in life is a pernicious myth" (Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, Panda, & Mohanty, 2009, p. 327). In addition, "early primary education and early literacy, is most effectively conducted in a language familiar to the pupil" than in an unfamiliar language to which children have limited or no exposure in their sociocultural ecology.

4 Language Policies and Critical Issues

Critical language policy and critical applied linguistics draw on work of critical social theorists such as Bourdieu (1991); Fairclough (1992); Foucault and Sheridan (1979); Gramsci (1988), and others. Critical scholars on language and education policies focus on critical issues of access, equity, and justice because the medium of instruction policies serve certain agendas and vested interests, and that policies usually "create and sustain various forms of social inequality, and that policy-makers usually promote the interests of dominant social groups" (Tollefson, 2006, p. 42). Research within the critical paradigm determines that which social and political groups have access to quality medium of education, which groups benefit and which groups are disenfranchised as language is a "key means of power (re) distribution and social (re) construction" (Tsui & Tollefson, 2004, p. 2). English language teaching and the access to English-medium education may also be termed as a critical issue in the context of Pakistan. The chapter will also discuss the teaching of English from the viewpoint of whether the system of education provides equitable to access to the English language or it serves the socioeconomic agendas of a certain class.

5 The Context and Methodology

The study used a mixed methodology for data collection. The data draws on a questionnaire survey and interviews. The study was conducted in 11 low-fee private schools in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan province. The rationale behind surveying the low-fee schools was its exponential increase in the market, and an extensive projection of English-medium policy. the study is important because the dramatic expansion of the low-fee private schools has transformed and reconfigured the educational landscape of the country (Andrabi, Das, & Khwaja, 2008). Low-fee schools which are labeled variously in the available literature as *non-elite*, *low-cost*, *low-fee* and *second-tier*, have expeditiously proliferated all over the country especially in the urban and sub-urban areas (Andrabi et al., 2008; Coleman, 2010; Heyneman & Stern, 2013; Rahman, 2004a). The low-fee private schools as Rahman (2004c) viewed are varied to the extent that "they defy classification" (p. 42). Heyneman and Stern (2013, p. 5) defined low-fee private schools "as one whose tuition was lower than half the minimum wage" of the country concerned. A total of 9 school principals, 5 teachers and 20 students participated in the interviews whereas a total of 110 students of higher secondary (ninth & tenth) level also responded to a brief questionnaire. In addition, a total of 4 national and international level experts on language-in-education policy and 2 other key experts from the Balochistan

province were interviewed to ascertain their views about the current language-in-education policies in the country. To maintain confidentiality of the names, their views have been quoted with generic names such as EXPERT1 and so on. Subsequently, the data was analyzed conducting a thematic analysis of interview while frequency counts and percentages were used for the analysis of questionnaire data.

6 Background to Language-in-Education Policies

Pakistan is a multilingual and multiethnic country. According to Ethnologue (2015), there are 77 languages in Pakistan. Urdu is the national language while English is the official language. English is used in the domains of power such as government, education, law, corporate sector, research, and media. The language hierarchy is based on power in which English stands as the most powerful; Urdu occupies the second position, while the rest of the minor and major indigenous languages stand at the lowest rung in the language hierarchy ladder (Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 2002). Urdu and English receive substantial institutional support in the domains of power especially in education; however, the indigenous languages with the exception of the Sindhi and to negligible degree Pashto language remain excluded from all domains of power including education (Mansoor, 2005; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 1996, 2002; Rassool & Mansoor, 2007). The constitutional provision of the 1973 regarding language policy proclaims the official language policy in the following statements:

> The National language of Pakistan is Urdu, and arrangements shall be made for it being used for official and other purposes within fifteen years from the commencing day (1973).
>
> Subject to clause (1), the English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu.
>
> Without prejudice to the status of the National language, a Provincial Assembly may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion, and use of a provincial language in addition to the national language.

Scholars argue that the constitutional caveat ("without prejudice") denotes that no such effort should be attempted for the promotion of regional languages at the cost of the national language Urdu (Abbas, 1993; Rahman, 1999). Urdu receives considerably greater state support vis-à-vis the rest of the local mother tongues, and the state authorities have recurrently dealt with any ethnicity and language-based movement with 'authoritarian crackdowns', and such movements have been 'deemed antinational by the center' (Ayres, 2003, p. 79).

The medium of education policy is still an unsettled problem in Pakistan. Pakistan like many other post-colonial countries is faced with the dilemma of language policy and planning in the education sector (Mansoor, 2004; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 1996; Rassool & Mansoor, 2007). Government policies about the medium of instruction suffer from several limitations of which, the most important is "the

great disconnect between policy and implementation" (Mustafa, 2011, p. 120). Historically, language policy and planning in Pakistan is marked by consistent twists and turns. Scholars regard such inconsistencies as 'dilemma' (Mansoor, 2004), and 'enigma and conundrum' (Mustafa, 2011) and 'controversy' (Rahman, 1997). The flip-flopping is noticeable in the fact that since the independence in 1947, the government of Pakistan has issued at least 22 major reports and policy documents on language-in-education policies (Rahman, 2004a). According to Mustafa (2011), "education authorities are shirking their responsibility of taking a categorical decision on this issue," and she proposes that the language policy needs to be "formulated clearly and pragmatically" (p. 47).

The most latest official document on language and education policy is the National Education Policy (GOP, 2009a). This policy apparently recommends a multilingual education policy at the school levels—Urdu, English and 'one regional language' until primary level. In addition, the policy emphasizes the learning of Arabic (GOP). As the policy reads,

> The curriculum from Class I onward shall include English (as a subject), Urdu, one regional language, and mathematics along with an integrated subject. The Provincial and Area Education Departments shall have the choice to select the medium of instruction up to Class V. English shall be employed as the medium of instruction for sciences and mathematics from class IV onwards. For 5 years, Provinces shall have the option to teach mathematics and science in English or Urdu/official regional language, but after five years, the teaching of these subjects shall be in English only (p. 20).

Although the policy statements, real policy with regard to teaching mother tongues or one regional language has not been implemented nor has a uniform policy across provinces and urban and rural areas occurred yet. The English-medium education policy in most private schools is also outwardly different from broad policy outlines in the National policy (Coleman, 2010; Coleman & Capstick, 2012; Manan, David, & Dumanig, 2015). There are still 'tensions between policy and practice'(Canagarajah & Ashraf, 2013, p. 263).

The education system of Pakistan is not uniform as about four different streams and schooling systems operate in parallel. These schooling systems cut across social classes. There are four categories of schools : private elite English medium schools, private non-elite 'English medium' schools, government Urdu medium schools and dini madaris (religious schools) (Coleman, 2010; Rahman, 2001, 2004a). The features that distinguish these schools from one another are the medium of instruction, quality of education, fee structure, and the social classes to which those schools cater. English language plays a critical divisive role in the process. For instance, Madrasah (religious schools), mostly use the Arabic language, catering to the educational needs of children from the poor and working classes of the semi-urban and rural areas. The Urdu medium government schools accommodate students from the lower middle and working classes. The non-elite English medium schools provide for lower-middle and middle class children. Moreover, the elitist English medium schools largely provide education to children from the upper-medium and upper classes (Rahman, p. 24).

7 Data Analysis

7.1 Language-in-Education Policy: Students, Teachers and School Principals

Having analyzed the data and identified the emerging themes, it transpires that 7 out of 9 school principals reject the teaching of mother tongues in schools while students predominantly favor English-medium from the nursery levels of schooling. Summarizing the interviews and questionnaire data, the following major themes emanate:

- Private schools are better because private schools teach English from the beginning.
- We cannot teach in mother tongues, as it will push children backward because mother tongues have no economic returns.
- Teaching in mother tongue will further add to linguistic confusion.
- We need to teach English from the very beginning because the more they spend time on the English language, the more they will learn the language.
- Children don't need to learn their mother tongues in schools because they already know them.

We find that the respondents demonstrate overwhelming support for the use of English language as a medium of instruction and simultaneously they plainly reject the idea of using the mother tongues in schools. Since English promises greater economic opportunities as a language of power and global scope; therefore, overwhelming support goes to it. The respondents also put forward theoretical propositions arguing that—teaching in mother tongue can cause linguistic confusion; earlier teaching of the English language will make children more proficient in the language, and that since children already know their mother tongues; therefore, there is no logic to teach them mother tongues. Following are some excerpts from respondents' interviews that have led to the above-mentioned themes:

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL 1:

> *I think private schools are doing well because unlike government schools, private schools teach English right from the nursery levels. The results are good, children are learning to read and write English. I don't think parents would like local languages in schools. In my opinion, English is the best language for job and better living. Teaching in mother tongue will limit chances English can create.*

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL 2:

> *There is no harm in teaching English from beginning. It is the only and the best way to make children proficient. I don't favor mother tongue at all because it has no value outside a child's home. They already know their mother tongues; there is no need to burden them with something they already use at home.*

SCHOOL TEACHER 3:

> *If you don't teach English from the beginning, children will not understand to read, write or speak. When you give something more time, you will learn it well. The same is true with English. As I understand, if children study local languages in schools, they will miss on all opportunities English can normally bring. If mother tongue is to be made medium, there will be no need for children to enroll in schools because their parents can also teach them at home.*

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL 4:

> *We are already teaching English and Urdu, if we add up another language to our syllabus, it will result in extra burden and create linguistic confusion. Language is not that much important. In my opinion it is the way you teach it. If too much focus goes to languages, the basic purpose of education will go into background. Only English is best because it guards against any other linguistic burden.*

Like teachers and school principals, students also fondly accentuated their desire for English-medium policy. The following is a brief account of the opinions of the students and the rationale given for the choices they make about language policy:

- *Mother tongue is suitable only at home;*
- *Mother tongue has no value outside home;*
- *Mother tongue has little role in social and economic mobility;*
- *There is no need to learn reading and writing in mother tongue;*
- *All powerful domains including education use English and Urdu;*
- *If we study only English and partly Urdu, we will be more comfortable;*
- *I will lag behind in the race for professional growth if I study only in mother tongue;*
- *English is international while Urdu is national language, but mother tongue is used only at home*

When students were asked to give their views about their desired medium of instruction policy in schools, a vast majority of them opted for the English language while some favored Urdu-English bilingual policy (Fig. 1). The following graph illustrates their responses to a variety of language policy options:

The figure illustrates that favorable opinions overwhelmingly drift in favor of *English + Urdu* medium of instruction policies. Significantly, *only-Urdu* and *only-mother/tongues* receive no support at all. A relatively noticeable segment of students opted for only English while a rather small portion chose a multilingual policy with *English + Urdu + mother tongues*. Collectively, the desired medium of instruction choices is noticeably inclined towards a subtractive bilingual *English + Urdu* medium whereas a multilingual policy did not receive any significant support. The language policy preferences are close to a previous study on medium of instruction choices of undergraduates in Pakistan (Manan & David, 2013). In addition, a countrywide survey by ASER (2012) on the same question also came up with more or

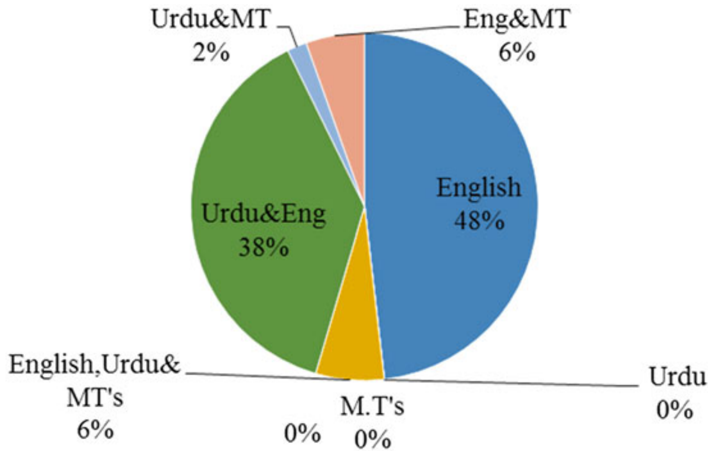

Fig. 1 Desired medium of instruction policy

less the same figures especially with regard to students and parents of the English-medium schools.

Although, the above notions overwhelmingly underlie fascination for the English-medium education, but their notions can be delusional as there is little solid theoretical or research based evidence that would support the earlier teaching of the English language and many researchers on bilingual and multilingual education debunk its validity. Skutnabb-Kangas et al. (2009) suggest that, "The faith that an early start in English means good education and ensures success in life is a pernicious myth" (p. 327). Critics call into question the adequacy of English-medium policy in the context of Pakistan (Coleman, 2010; Coleman & Capstick, 2012; Manan et al., 2014; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 2004a, 2004b). According to Rahman (2004a), this policy is an 'illusive chimera of English'.

7.2 *Language-in-Education Policy in Schools: Experts*

In this part, we report the experts' views about English-medium policy. These experts have been engaged with academia and education sector at different levels in different capacities. In addition, they have been closely studying developments in the language and education policies in Pakistan. Following is a brief account of their profiles:

	Area of expertise/professional profile
EXPERT1	Ph.D., Professor of linguistics, book author, writer and columnist
EXPERT2	Ph.D., Professor of linguistics, book author, writer and columnist
EXPERT3	Book author, freelance journalist, editor and columnist
EXPERT4	Ph.D., Professor of Political Science, book author, writer, columnist, political activist
EXPERT5	Writer, educationist, language activist, freelance journalist
EXPERT6	Secretary in the Education Department of Balochistan, writer, novelist, educationist
EXPERT7	A former Regional chief of UNICEF and educationist

Experts' interviews suggest contrasting belief as compared to students, teachers and school principals. Experts overwhelmingly recommend a mother tongue based multilingual education policy in schools. They consider a mother tongue based policy the most appropriate especially up to the primary level. They put forward proposal for an inclusive policy including mother tongues, Urdu and English, an additive policy which responds to the cultural, social and economic imperatives. They propose a medium of instruction policy that is founded on scientific investigation and, is suited to the school realities of the majority of children in the country. For instance, EXPERT1 endorses that English is a barrier to genuine learning in the context of those schools whose majority comes from uneducated family backgrounds, and whose exposure to English language in the surrounding/family is minimal. EXPERT1 maintains that the policy makers have always turned a blind eye towards the fact that despite extensive solid research evidence about the benefits of mother-tongue based instruction at the earlier stages of schooling, mother tongue based schooling is yet to impress the policy designers and educationists. He argues that, "*Decision-makers do not believe in academic research. They have a feeling that the more English you give the better it is. Thus, they want English from day 1 of their own children and those from the elite*".

Contextualizing the sociolinguistic, cultural or ethnolinguistic landscape of the country, EXPERT2 also proposes a broad-based, pluralistic and additive language policy, which dismantles all the reductionist ideologies we witness in the current top-down language policy discourses. The introduction of mother tongue should be the first measure in the direction of the overall pluralistic policy. He emphasizes that we should accept the linguistic diversity and cultural heterogeneity of the country. He believes that,

> A multilingual schooling environment has manifold advantageous to the child, his/her education and to the state. Children from different linguistic backgrounds will in the first place learn each other's languages, and they would start learning English language much faster than they do now.

A multilingual environment fosters creativity, tolerance, and it cultivates the spirit to accept diversity and pluralism. EXPERT2 shared the successful implementation of mother-tongue based instruction in a network of schools operating under the Bacha Khan Trust Educational Foundation across several districts of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa province. Students of those schools have produced excellent results not only in terms of educational development, but the policy has led to their steady linguistic development too. Parents are happy because their children have learned mother tongues, Urdu and English languages. He is critical over the demand for English-only medium of instruction policy, and argues that the current policy is causing language displacement instead of language learning.

EXPERT3, another renowned proponent of mother tongue based language policy criticizes the low-fee English-medium schools because those schools promote rote learning rather than meaningful inculcation of the concepts. Most children resort to rote learning because they do not know the language well enough to express themselves. She tags such schools as ‘pseudo English medium’ because the child “*never learns to speak English or expresses himself in English. The answers he writes in English are copied or memorized from the book*”. She further proposes that,

> Apart from a very tiny minority where parents speak with their children in English and English is spoken at home, English medium education even in the elite schools should not be encouraged. Education should be participatory which means the students should take part in discussions and express their own ideas about things. Even in the so-called elite schools the students are not comfortable with English and for them to think and speak in English can be quite a challenge.

EXPERT4 also recommends mother tongues at the early stages; however, he cautions that this does not imply that “*English cannot also be taught, these are not mutually exclusive possibilities*”. Alongside reformulating medium of instruction policy, Akhtar also emphasized the schools to disseminate critical literacy and encourage critical thinking among students. He further adds that “*I perceive success/effectiveness to be a function of how well developed critical faculties are and the extent to which human values are inculcated in students. In this regard most schooling experiments in Pakistan have failed, regardless of the language of instruction*”.

Two other experts from the Balochistan province also recommend a mother tongue based multilingual policy. EXPERT7 argued that we should begin teaching our children mother tongues from the nursery levels because “*on the one hand, there is an acute shortage of quality English teachers; on the other hand, mother tongue is the easiest medium for learning as children have greater amount of familiarity with their mother tongues*”. English is entirely alien language to many children. He argued that despite UNESCO’s recommendations for mother tongue based education system, “*the policy makers in this country had always hesitated from introducing mother tongues in schools*”. EXPERT6 who has closely observed the schooling system in the province also proposed that there was a need to teach all children in their mother tongues because a “*child’s learning can increase manifold. Let us say if we teach a child in Balochi language at the primary level properly, he will feel easier and will become sharper than he/she is now*”. In addition, EXPERT5 demonstrated strong support for a mother-tongue based multilingual education policy.

According to him, several institutions were doing research project on global scale on the issue, and the institutions such as UNESCO, Save the Children, SIL, the British Council and Aga Khan Foundation found mother tongue education as the best policy at the earlier stages. EXPERT5 referred to one such program run by the Institute for Education and Development in the Torwali speaking community in Bahrain Swat. Established in 2008, the program is called mother tongue based multilingual education. Until April 2012, 150 students were enrolled from the Torwali community. EXPERT5 referred to one of his articles giving details of the program:

> Here the students start their education in their native language exclusively for a year. After getting literacy in the mother tongue, the learners are transitioned to Urdu. At a specific stage in the second year, the learner is further bridged to English first orally and later on its literacy begins. Besides the languages, other subjects such as Maths, Science, Ethics et al are also taught in the mother tongue. A two track pedagogical system is applied with emphasis both on 'accuracy' and 'meaning', in other words on skills and critical thinking. In the planning stage a 'Language Progression Plan' is designed clearly indicating which language is to be started when, how, how much and at what stage (http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/04/18/comment/columns/my-education-my-language/).

EXPERT5 explained that the program had resulted in significant achievements. At the earlier stages, parents were hesitant to send their children to school, but their feelings of reluctance have subsided now. The program has achieved many positive results. The positives include parents gaining a sense of dignity about their language and culture, connecting children with elderly engendering a sense of affection, and children learning words, proverbs, and riddles from their elders. The expert further explained that there were perceptible socio-cultural changes as more people proudly identified themselves with their native language and native community Torwali. In addition, the endangered language was preserved, documented, promoted, and used as an effective tool to learn other languages. Finally, the students in program performed better than the ones at the government schools.

8 Discussion

In this section, we discuss the English-medium policy with reference to divergent positions different pools of respondents take. In light of the emergent data, we adopt a critical stance, and take a holistic view of the language-in-education policy dynamics. We attempt to juxtapose popular perceptions and passionate pursuit of the English language among parents, students and teachers vis-à-vis the policy propositions as advanced by the key experts in the field. We do so by posing broad-based questions about English-medium education policy in the context of Pakistan, and discuss its potential fallouts. The following overarching questions shall anchor the discussion:

9 What is the Theoretical and Empirical Grounding of the English-Only Policy?

The respondents from the 11 schools surveyed for this study assert their full support for the current English-only policy. Apparently, we assume that their enthusiastic favor for English-only policy are largely motivated by the imagined economic rewards associated with proficiency in the English language at the national as well as international levels. English is an indisputable global language (Crystal, 2003), thus, the respondents' desire for the English language at the school level is a pragmatic and rational choice; however, there also arises a critical question of whether the current policy enjoys the baking of a sound, scientific and real field research contextualizing the socioeconomic conditions of students, school infrastructure and teachers' qualification in the English language? We know that it is an axiomatic notion that mother tongue is the best language for children at the earlier stages of their schooling (UNESCO, 1953, 2003). In addition, theorists of bilingualism and multilingualism defy what the non-expert respondents suggested in their views about the English language:

- 'Mother tongue pushes children backward',
- 'The earlier you expose a child to the English, the more will he/she learn the language',
- 'Studying more languages causes linguistic confusion',
- 'Mother tongues have no value in the domains outside home'.

We would like to argue that the above notions embody typicality and stereotyping rather than a sound scientific and empirical theorization of the issue of language of instruction. Unlike the propositions of students, teachers and school principals, the major theoretical frameworks underpinning this study strongly emphasize the positive role a child's mother tongue can play not only in educational development, but also reinforces learning additional languages. The two hypotheses 'threshold level' and 'interdependence' as advanced by Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) and Cummins (1984) theorize that when children have reached a threshold of competence in their mother tongues (first language), then they can effectively learn a second or a third language without losing competence in the first language. Further, when children have crossed over a second threshold of competence in both mother tongue and the second language, the competence achieved in both the languages will positively influence academic and overall cognitive and intellectual development, a state they termed as additive bilingualism. Cummins (2009) suggests that if instruction develops in an additive bilingual education with L1-L2/3 program, it will not only ease reading and writing, but also develop "deeper conceptual and linguistic proficiency that contributes significantly to the development of literacy in the majority language". Cummins (2009) further articulates that:

> …although the surface aspects of different languages (e.g. pronunciation, fluency, orthography, etc.) are clearly separate, there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages. This 'common underlying proficiency' makes possible the transfer of cognitive/academic or literacy-related skills across languages (p. 25).

The medium of instruction and quality of education are interdependent. Ferguson (2013) argues that there was substantial body of academic research asserting, "primary education, particularly early primary education and early literacy, is most effectively conducted in a language familiar to the pupil" (p. 17). Extensive research evidence shows rhetorically as well as empirically that, earlier instruction in a familiar language at the primary level had numerous advantages, far greater than instruction in any foreign or second language. On the issue of earlier or later teaching of English as a foreign language, a study in Spain demonstrated that despite the same amount of instruction, bilingual learners who began to learn English as a second language later performed better than bilingual students who began earlier. Importantly, despite positive attitudes of the younger learners towards the English language, they performed poorly (Cenoz, 2003; García Mayo & García Lecumberri, 2003). Instruction through home or indigenous language improves the quality and quantity of interaction between pupil and teacher (Hardman et al., 2008). It fosters cognitive development and literacy and eases the transition between home and school, and so on. (Alidou et al., 2006; Benson, 2002). These arguments are increasingly bolstered by empirical evidence from different countries such as Mozambique (Benson, 2000); Burkina Faso (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006); Zambia (Tambulukani & Bus, 2012); Tanzania (Brock-Utne, 2007); Nigeria (Fafunwa, Macauley, & Sokoya, 1989); Botswana (Prophet & Dow, 1994); Zambia (Willaims, 1996).

10 Is the Current Medium of Instruction Policy Compatible to the Sociolinguistic and Ethnolinguistic Realities of the Children?

This is a critical question in the context of analyzing English-medium policy in Pakistan. Language policy and planning are marked by sociolinguistic contradictions vis-a-vis the diverse linguistic/cultural diversity of the country. The policies tend to impose homogeneity. For instance, out of over 70 indigenous languages and dialects, only Sindhi and to some degree Pashto, feature in the education policy. The rest of the languages have remained entirely excluded from the mainstream domains including schooling. The policies thus attest to the disequilibrium between existing sociolinguistic realities and the language policies in Pakistan. The current system of schooling in most parts of the country practices both immersion and submersion (sink or swim) models. Therefore, the policy results in subtractive bilingualism, something peculiar to the language policy in Pakistan. The bottom line remains that the current medium of instruction policy suppresses the linguistic diversity of the country and fails to correspond to existing sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic realities of the country. We presume that the data is very revealing in terms of language ideologies and language attitudes, and the psychological impacts the current hierarchy of languages exerts on respondents. For instance, when the respondents argue that,

- *Teaching in mother tongue will limit chances English can create.*
- *I don't favor mother tongue at all because it has no value outside a child's home. They already know their mother tongue; there is no need to burden them with something they already use at home.*
- *If mother tongue is to be made medium, there will be no need for children to enroll in schools because their parents can also teach them at home.*
- *Social and economic mobility is more important than language.*
- *There is no need to learn reading and writing in mother tongue.*

The roots of above language beliefs can be traced in the macro-level language management policies. Scholars have extensively written about the interrelationship between language policies and politics (Bourdieu, 1991; May, 2008; Mohanty, 2010; Shohamy, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Tsui & Tollefson, 2004). For instance, Shohamy (2006) contends that language policies are essentially the manifestation of hidden ideological agendas promoted by various agents such as governments, educational bodies, media, and other guardians of official language hegemony. Tsui and Tollefson (2004) attribute medium of instruction policies to ideology, politics and economics of the states as they postulate that "medium-of-instruction policy determines which social and linguistic groups have access to political and economic opportunities, and which groups are disenfranchised" (p. 2). Language policies and medium of instruction decisions are "…key means of power (re)distribution and social (re)construction, as well as a key arena in which political conflicts among countries and ethnolinguistic, social and political groups are realized" (Tsui & Tollefson, 2004, p. 2). Similarly, May (2008) refers to the politics that discursively plays out in the modern-day language policy and planning of the state that language policies are "deeply imbricated with the politics of modern nationalism, and its emphasis on the establishment of national languages and public linguistic homogeneity as central, even essential, tenets of both modernization and Westernization" (p. xiv).

In Pakistan too, historical developments surrounding language policy formulation and status planning are fraught with political controversies. Ever since independence, an obvious ideological orientation of the policy makers has been that of homogenization and a kind of denial to linguistic diversity of the country. Rahamn's book (1996) titled "Language and Politics in Pakistan" offers a detailed account of the volatile history, and the language movements of various 'ethnonationalist' groups that typifies the history of language policy and planning in Pakistan. The history is marked by various language movements of the Bengalis, Pashtoons, Sindhis, Siraikis, and the language movements in Balochistan, Punjab and the other minor language movements (Rahman, 1996). Notwithstanding the heterogeneous linguistic and complex demographic terrain of the country, the founding fathers of the country proclaimed Urdu as the national language because Urdu had served as a Muslim identity symbol to rally the people around a unifying factor. The founders of the nation thought to present "uni-national thesis" that would help bring together the ethnolinguistically diverse population of the country (Rahman, 1997, p. 148).

EXPERT2 also refers to the ideological underpinning of the present language policy and planning, which is to turn a diverse multilingual and multiethnic population

into a monolithic homogeneity. This aims to rob off the speakers of indigenous ethnolinguistic groups of their identities, and force them to self-stigmatization. To neutralize ethnic and identity sentiments of the diverse groups, governments tend to minoritize and dialectalize major languages due to politics of state-making (May, 2006). Similarly, the designation of English as the official language and the language of domains of power also carried political orientations, as it would go on to serve the interests of the ruling elite and further their hold on power as the preserve of the elites (Coleman, 2010; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 2004a).

11 Is English Medium Policy Suited to the Existing Institutional Preparedness of the Schools?

In principle, there is no harm using English language in schools; however, given the dearth of qualified English teachers and the lack of resourced infrastructure in terms of good books, libraries, language labs and other essential requirements that usually reinforce the learning of a foreign language such as English, the issue needs impassionate analysis. Although students, teachers and school principals show enthusiastic support for the teaching of English; however, the experts interviewed for this study raise doubts over the quality of English these so-called English medium schools tend to provide. Interviews with students and the observations also suggest that teaching methodologies in such schools are defective, and they are usually characterized by explicit form of grammar teaching and grammar-translation methodologies. The key experts raised doubts over the low-fee English medium schools. EXPERT5 observes that 'street private schools' are imitators of the elite schools, which largely thrive on selling out the "'*English Language Love*' *among the masses who have been disappointed by the government*". On the other hand, EXPERT3 endorses the general impression that it was "*absolutely correct*" that the government schools had failed, and that although such low-fee schools have tremendously expanded all over; however, they do not fulfill "The demand for education of a reasonable quality", but all these private schools are not of a "reasonable quality". Whatever fancy or catchy English names these schools bear, we know very well that "*You may call them by any name. Does it matter? We know they cannot teach in English*". She further underlined that there were some good English medium private schools, but "*They are generally the elite schools*". The low-fee private schools in particular did not address the issues about qualified teachers, salaries, quality of their employment, instructional quality and other issues, which "*obviously affect the quality of education they impart*". Mustafa tagged these types of schools as "*Pseudo English medium*" because, like Rahman (2004a) had argued about deception and illusion, these schools camouflage as English medium while there is no English in practice and in methodologies:

> These are schools which claim to be English medium but they are a hybrid of English medium. The text books are in English but they teach in a local language, generally Urdu, but ask the child to write his answers in English. The child never learns to speak English or express himself in English. The answers he writes in English are copied or memorized from the book.

Rahman (2004a) argues that these schools pretend to be English medium while there is nothing that could genuinely make students proficient in the English language. These schools, in Rahman's (2004s) view, are selling dreams. Can students be expected to cope effectively with English as a foreign language without qualified English teachers? The answer is obviously no. Rahman (2004a) found the English proficiency of teachers in the low-fee (non-elite) schools was intolerably poor. Teachers usually execute translation methods which Mustafa calls a 'Pakistani way' of English teaching. Mustafa (2012) provides a vivid description of how instruction occurs in such schools:

> Children from the middle and lower-middle classes go to second-tier private schools charging relatively modest fees. They adopt a strange mix of languages while pretending to be English-medium. Why else would you see schools in the shantytowns of Karachi announce their Anglicised names and the fact that they are "English-medium" in Urdu script? The teachers explain in their mother tongue while teaching from English language textbooks from which the students plagiarise and memorise passages. (http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/jan/10/pakistan-language-crisis).

Shamim (2008) gives nearly identical portrayal of the way lessons are taught in the classrooms. A text (the 'lesson') is read aloud by the teacher or pupils. We also observed that teachers generally explain the text often in Urdu or a local languages. The meanings of 'difficult words' are given in English, Urdu or a local language. Pupils write follow-up exercises in their notebooks. The teaching of grammar also occurs without contextualizing the discoursal, pragmatic or sociolinguistic concerns of 'when', 'where' and 'how' to use certain grammatical structures. Students seldom get exposure to listening and conversation in the target language. It mainly focuses on deductive methods and much time is spent on description and dictation of grammatical rules. Other limitations include decontextualized vocabulary teaching, rote learning and memorization and absence of communicative approaches. To sum up, there lie discernible paradoxes between schools' purported English-medium policies, practices, and educational outcomes.

12 Is Quality English-Medium Education Being Equitably Distributed? Does English-Medium Policy Create Level-Playing Ground for All to Move Upward Socioeconomically?

Contrary to the 'optimistic traditional research', critical applied linguistics recognizes the policies that generally "create and sustain various forms of social inequality, and that policy-makers usually promote the interests of dominant social groups" (Tollefson, 2006, p. 42). Critical applied linguists tend to "raise more critical questions to do with access, power, disparity, desire, difference, and resistance". There should also be an inquiry into "an historical understanding of how social relations came to be the way they are" (Pennycook, 2001, p. 6). Contextualizing the

theoretical underpinning of a critical approach and viewing the current English-medium policy, school policies and governments' role through a critical lens, there appears to be clear orientations of the policy that may be linked to "inequality, injustice, right and wrongs" (Tollefson, 2006, p. 43).

Historically, there is little evidence on part of governments to create an equitable system of schooling that reaches to every citizen regardless of class, region, or social position. Schooling system in Pakistan is acutely cut across classes—very good English for the rich and affluent children and very poor English and vernacular schools for the lower classes. There is a system of 'educational' (Rahman, 2004a) and 'linguistic' apartheid (Shamim, 2012). Quality English schooling was, and is still the preserve of the powerful and affluent elites in Pakistan and in the subcontinent in general (Agnihotri, 2007; Coleman, 2010; Rahman, 2004a). According to Rahman (2004d), there were two streams of private English medium schools in operation under the British colonizers: those for the hereditary aristocracy called the Chiefs colleges; and those for the newly emerging professional classes called European or English schools. The emphasis in both kinds of schools was the Anglicization with English as the symbolic tool (Lewis, 1962). The primary motives behind establishing such English schools were to strengthen the upper classes, which the British Raj needed as allies for the administrative, bureaucratic, and military services. Such intents are echoed in the assertion of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India (1898–1905) who had said that,

> …the young chiefs (who were supposed to learn the English language and become sufficiently familiar with English customs, literature, science, mode of thought, standards of truth and honour) would be allies of the British (Raleigh, 1906, p. 245).

The privileged status and the domination of elite schools continued after the independence, and the elite class has always used these schools as instruments to perpetuate the hold of their class on the top-notch institutions. According to Curle (1966),

…goal of Pakistani society was not change, but stability. Education was not thought of as a means of promoting democracy, or spreading egalitarianism, or increasing social mobility. On the contrary, its role was to maintain the status quo.

The policies of elite schools are programmed to "better serve the rich and provide knowledge that ensures easy access for their children to the higher echelons of society" (Khattak, 2014, p. 100). Alluding to the elite hegemony and monopoly of English and its affiliated socioeconomic rewards, Rassool and Mansoor (2007) also articulate about the inequitable distribution of opportunities which English creates in Pakistan:

> The ruling elites, that is, all those with power and influence in Pakistan such as the bureaucracy and military, have command in English through their English medium education. English is not only the language of the upper classes in Pakistan; it also provides access to the best jobs in the governmental, non-governmental and international bureaucracy (p. 234).

Expert observers agreed that behind the expansion and liberalization of the private sector is a deliberate policy of disengagement of government. EXPERT3 argues that,

> If you compare the ratio of public sector schools and private schools you will find that the state run schools are growing at a much slower pace as compared to the private schools. The enrolment in public sector schools has also slowed down while the private school enrolment continues to grow rapidly. There is also the new phenomenon encouraged by the government of public-private partnership and adopt-a-school. Don't these amounts to the government disengaging from education and involving the private sector in education?

One may put a critical question in this context—do the low-fee private schools produce the future bureaucrats, CEOs, managers, engineers, and scientists? Realities on grounds portray a dismal scenario. To put more realistically, the kind of English-medium education the low-fee schools deliver, and the level of English proficiency students of the same schools acquire, it appears that this kind of schooling furthers than narrows down class divisions and the level of social apartheid. One may suspect that the students of such schools, with poor teaching and learning environment, would smoothly make to educational progress and cement their place in the competitive job markets. Those children are caught in the quagmire of linguistic and educational/academic deficit. This chasm between promises and delivery, policy and practices has profound socioeconomic implications for the children, their parents, and society. Educational failure is synonymous with capability failure. Zakia Sarwar, an ELT expert argues that, "*Teaching English badly for ten years helps nobody. It will not reduce the gap between elite and lower classes*" (quoted in Coleman & Capstick, 2012, p. 103). On face value, the publicity of English-medium may be an allusion. Mustafa (2011) aptly observes that these schools 'dupe' illiterate parents of children into believing that they teach their children English language. However, very few would understand that "English they are learning is of such an abysmal quality that it will not take them far" (p. 48). Mustafa (2011) rightly notes that Pakistan admittedly suffers from serious educational problems and shortfalls; however, the stark reality is that those problems are not spread across the board. One witnesses acute discrimination that those problems only affect the poor and the voiceless; the problems are "not spread uniformly across society…the students are virtually prisoners of their socioeconomic class." (p. 11).

Given the history with respect to language and education and the role of the state in perpetuation of class-based language and education system confirm what Tsui and Tollefson (2004) argue about the ulterior motives of the policymakers that "behind the educational agenda are political, social, and economic agendas that serve to protect the interests of particular political and social groups" (p. 2). In the case of Pakistan, the state-of-the-art expensive English-medium schools are restricted to the educational purposes of a tiny but a powerful elite class, whose children would subsequently grab the most lucrative and power-oriented positions in the bureaucracy, army and other prestigious institutions. In this context, Rahman (1997) categorically states that, "English remains the language of power and high social status in Pakistan. It serves to facilitate the entry of the rich and the powerful into elitist positions, while filtering out those who are educated in Urdu" (p. 151). More than five parallel class-based and qualitatively dichotomous schooling systems in one society clearly produce '*Denizens of alien worlds*' (Rahman, 2004a), taking on dichotomous trajectories and divergent directions—privileging few

'haves' while filtering out the rest of 'have nots'. It happen because as a '*Passport to Privilege*' English serves to exclude the underprivileged from the circle of the privileges (Mustafa, 2014; Rahman, 2005).

13 Conclusion and Future Direction

This chapter concludes that English language teaching and English-medium policy particularly within different schools cannot be analyzed without taking into account the broader sociopolitical and socioeconomic scenario. Therefore, we propose that while analyzing English-medium policy in schools, researchers need to address the educational, cultural, psychological and ecological concerns. Theoretically and in terms of empirical evidence, the popular notions of early-English and English-only policy are challengeable. Although, English is the most powerful language in institutional terms; however, empirical research from a large number of countries supports mother tongue based rather than a foreign or second language at the primary levels. Most advocates confirm potential linguistic, cognitive, intellectual, and overall educational advantages of additive bilingual/multilingual education system. It leads to 'high-levels of multilingualism', enhanced creativity, divergent thinking, cognitive flexibility, sensitivity to feedback cues, interpreting non-verbal body language, learning of additional languages (Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010, p. 74). Sketching the advantages of additive education, Cummins (2009) proposes that:

> Approximately 200 empirical studies carried out during the past 40 or so years have reported a positive association between additive bilingualism and students' linguistic, cognitive or academic growth. The most consistent findings are that bilinguals show more developed awareness of the structure and functions of language itself (metalinguistic abilities) and that they have advantages in learning additional languages (p. 26).

Several other studies undertaken in identical contexts such as Pakistan also confirm the regressive effects English-medium education leaves on children in Africa and Southeast Asia, and they ultimately recommend an additive multilingual education policy as the policy alternative (Bui & Nguyen, this volume; Coleman, 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2012). For instance, Kirkpatrick (2012) concludes about the ASEAN countries that:

> …it is far better for the child to acquire proficiency and literacy in the local languages before being asked to learn English… it is much better if that child is able to learn content subjects through the local languages, as this will help the acquisition of literacy and fluency in these languages. Using local languages as the languages of education also gives those languages prestige and helps to maintain them (p. 35).

The circumstantial evidence and input both at the micro (within schools) as well as the macro (outside schools) levels suggest that the fundamental flaw lies in the language policy. Putting in place English-medium education policy without the availability of the necessary institutional, academic, infrastructural and cultural platforms, raises questions. Early-English policy in context such as Pakistan is

hinged on myth of English-medium-superiority as Skutnabb-Kangas et al. (2009) posit that, "The faith that an early start in English means good education and ensures success in life is a pernicious myth" (p. 327). In the end, we would like put forward the example of mother tongue based policy and its manifold benefits in the diverse sociolinguistic setting of Papua New Guinea to suggest that the same policy might also turn into success in Pakistan:

> At the end of 2000, Papua New Guinea was providing kindergarten…, Grades 1, and 2 in some 380 indigenous languages, plus Pidgin. There are plans to introduce a further 90 languages this year…Children *become literate* more quickly and easily in their mother tongues than they did in English. They also appear to *learn English* more quickly and easily.…At the end of 1998, the results of Grade 6 examinations in the three provinces which began reform first in 1993 were much higher than results of students from provinces where students were immersed in English from day one of grade one. Skutnabb-Kangas (2002, p. 179).

The example set by Papua New Guinea invalidates the apprehensions many people raise about the viability of mother tongue based multilingual policy in Pakistan. We sum up that medium of instruction policy needs a paradigmatic shift—an inclusive, pluralistic mother tongue based multilingual policy, which reflects the actual sociolinguistic realities, and responds to the manifold educational, sociolinguistic, cultural, and political and ecolinguistic challenges facing Pakistan. Simultaneously, we also underline the need for state-of-the-art teaching of the English language across the board. Distribution of quality English teaching must be ensured equitably. English may be taught as a language rather than as a medium from the primary level alongside mother tongue based policy. After children build sound academic literacy in their mother tongues at the primary level, English may gradually be introduced as a medium in transition. Urdu, which is the national language of the country needs to be taught as a subject. However, one may also add a proviso that the success and effectiveness of English language policy will heavily hinge on large-scale reform agenda that takes into account an array of problematic areas that remain unaddressed—building teachers' proficiency and professional capacity in the English language teaching, designing standardized textbooks and devising sound teaching methodologies, testing and evaluation system.

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English Language Education in the Philippines: Policies, Problems, and Prospects

Marilu Rañosa Madrunio, Isabel Pefianco Martin, and Sterling Miranda Plata

Abstract The integration of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, as well as the United Nation's call for Education for All (EFA) by 2015, has pushed the Philippine government to revamp the country's educational system. Such revamp involves a review of the effectiveness of English language education (ELE) in the country, which may be described as currently at a crossroads, as stakeholders strive to address issues of developing the English language competencies of Filipino students on the one hand, and the strengthening of academic achievement on the other. ELE in the Philippines, which began during the American colonial period in the nineteenth century, has been found wanting in significantly contributing to increased learning outcomes among Filipino students. ELE policies have been beset with issues of alignment and coherence in the areas of curriculum and assessment, as well as challenges in the implementation of genuine reform. In addition, ELE has been implemented at the expense of literacy in the mother tongues. This chapter provides an overview of how ELE in the Philippines is evolving – learning from past mistakes and preparing for the future. The chapter is divided into five major parts, namely, (1) overview of the Philippine educational system; (2) ELE from the American colonial period to Martial Law; (3) Bilingual education and educational reforms from 1974 to 2010; (4) Mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTBMLE) and the K to 12 reform; and (5) prospects and possibilities for ELE in the Philippines. In this chapter, we make a case for Philippine ELE that strives to address the demands of the international community, but also upholds local culture through the use of the mother tongues.

M.R. Madrunio (✉)
University of Santo Tomas, España Boulevard, Manila, Philippines
e-mail: mrmadrunio@mnl.ust.edu.ph

I.P. Martin
Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines
e-mail: mmartin@ateneo.edu

S.M. Plata
De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila, Philippines
e-mail: sterling.plata@dlsu.edu.ph

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Abbreviations

AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AFREP	ASEAN Framework of Reference for English Proficiency
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BEC	Basic Education Curriculum
BEP	Bilingual Education Policy
BESRA	Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
DepEd	Department of Education
EBEP	Enhanced Basic Education Program
EDCOM	Congressional Commission on Education
EFA	Education for All
ELE	English Language Education
ELT	English Language Teaching
EO	Executive Order
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HB	House Bill
K-12	Kindergarten to 12th Grade
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
L3	Third Language
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MO	Memorandum Order
MOI	Medium of Instruction
MTBMLE	Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education
NAT	National Achievement Test
OFW	Overseas Filipino Workers
PCER	Presidential Commission for Educational Reform
PCPE	Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education
PQF	Philippine Qualifications Framework
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
UBD	Understanding by Design

1 Introduction

There seems to be a sense of urgency among the member countries of the ASEAN to develop the English proficiency of their workforce, students, and leaders because of the ASEAN integration in 2015, which establishes the AEC. English is the official language of ASEAN and the language that opens doors "to facilitate the mobility of persons engaged in trade in goods, trade in services, and investment" (Minh, 2013, par 9). It is for these reasons that Brunei has invested $25,000,000 in an English program through a 5-year development scheme that includes a 7-week program for teachers and diplomats (Hodal, 2012). In this program, English teachers will go through modules on instruction and educational materials, while diplomats focus on communications skills for leadership and the work that they do (Hodal). In addition, the *ICEF* Monitor (2012) reports that Thailand is reforming its education system to better prepare for the ASEAN integration by designing an English program for its students and by envisioning the country to be an education hub of the region. Indonesia is organizing an exchange program with other countries for the training of its teachers, while Vietnam is spending 70 billion dong to revisit its teaching materials (Intawong and Lertromyanant n.d.). Like its neighbors in the ASEAN, the Philippines is also preparing for the ASEAN integration and looking forward to being a regional education hub. Thomas (2013) quotes the commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration regarding the increasing number of international students in the Philippines, as follows:

> The bureau attributed much of the rise to the widespread use of English as a medium of instruction in the country's schools and universities (93.5% of Filipinos are said to speak and understand it well). 16,478 of the foreign students last year held student visas, typically aimed at those studying at universities or colleges.

There is also an increasing interest in the Philippines to improve the English proficiency of its people because of other economic reasons. The Philippines is one of the world's BPO hub because of the English proficiency of its citizens. It provides $18.9 billion in revenue (Espina, 2015) and has provided almost one million jobs. Another reason is that English proficiency has brought employment to more than two million OFW (Magtulis, 2013). Their remittances buoy the Philippine economy, boosting it by more than $21 billion in 2012 (Magtulis). Finally, English proficiency has become critical in schools and workplaces because the language is the MOI in Science and Math, as well as in most subjects in higher education. English is also the language of business and law in the country.

However, there is also a general sentiment that English proficiency, as well as proficiency in other subject areas, is declining. The results of the NAT, which is administered annually by the DepEd, reveal this continuing deterioration of learning in basic education in the country (Department of Education, 2012). The tables below of the test performance of Grade 3, Grade 6, and high school students show that scores have not been reaching the desired 75 % passing rate for many years (Figs. 1, 2, and 3).

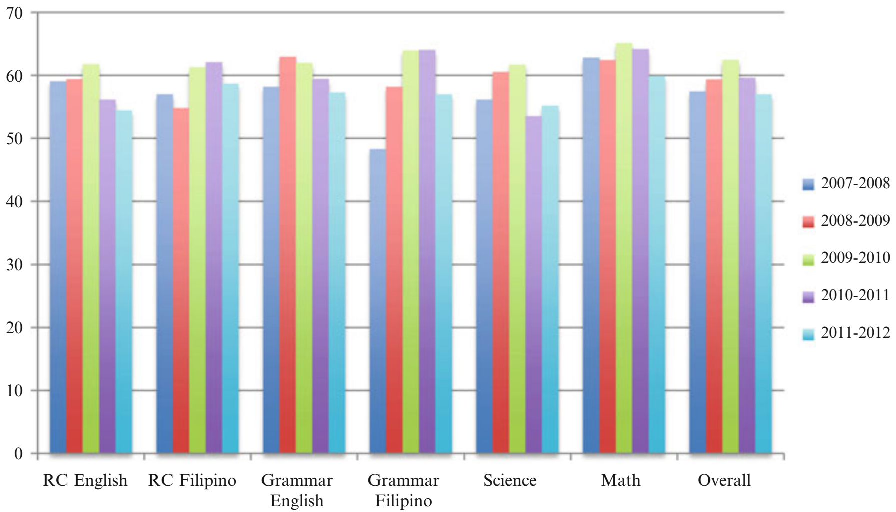

Fig. 1 The national performance of Grade Three pupils in the national achievement test subtests

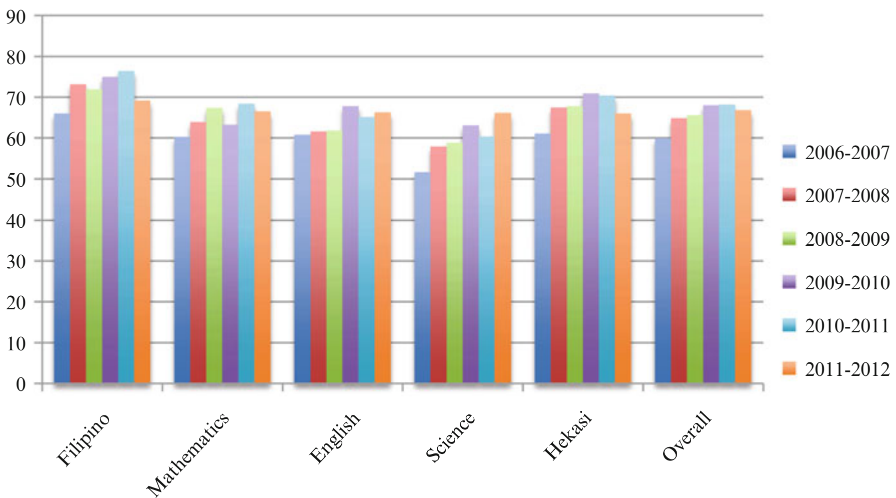

Fig. 2 The national performance of Grade Six pupils in the national achievement test (NAT) subtests

The above-mentioned opportunities and challenges for ELE in the Philippines are the impetus of this chapter, which provides an overview of how ELE in the country is evolving – learning from past mistakes and preparing for the future. The chapter is divided into major five parts, namely, (1) overview of the Philippine educational system; (2) ELE from the American colonial period to Martial Law; (3)

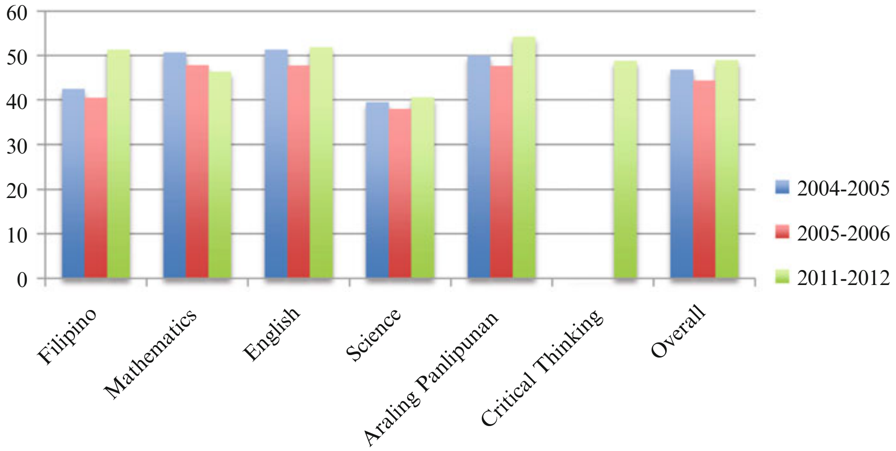

Fig. 3 The national performance of high school pupils in the national achievement test (NAT) subtests

bilingual education and educational reforms from 1974 to 2010; (4) Mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTBMLE) and the K to 12 reform; and (5) prospects and possibilities for ELE in the Philippines.

2 The Local and the Global in Philippine ELE

In their Joint Statement at a meeting in September 2014, the ASEAN education ministers declared that "connectivity, mobility, human resource development, IT and English Language training are important areas that will help narrow development gaps" (8th ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting, 2014) in the region. The ministers underscore the need for education in the ASEAN region to address the external demands for quality workforces from each of the ten member states. After all, ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh has declared that the association's "grand endeavor [is] to make ASEAN a seamless and business-friendly investment destination." (Minh, 2014).

It is in this context of globalization that ELE in the Philippines was and continues to be charted. But because the English language is not genetically native to the country, ELE has also become burdensome to Filipino teachers who must address competing realities in their classrooms. On the one hand, teachers face numerous challenges in teaching English from a non-native position to multilingual learners of the language; on the other hand, they are expected to develop among their students English language proficiency that meet international standards. The situation seems to put the teachers in a bind as the realities of the local stand in opposition to the demands of the global.

However, addressing the global without strengthening roots in the local, or even pitting the local against the global in ELE, may prove unwise. Canagarajah (2005, p. xiv) reminds us that "what is lacking [in discourses about globalization] is a *greater negotiation between global processes and local conditions* [underscore ours], leading to the construction of a diversified knowledge tradition that benefits from the richness of practices and values in the human community." Canagarajah (pp. xxv–xxvi) calls for a re-orientation in ELE policy and practice that observes the following shifts in pedagogy:

- Rather than teach one target language, teachers must strive to develop among their students "competence in a repertoire of codes to manage postmodern communication."
- Both teachers and learners must approach texts and languages as entities that are not homogeneous and static, but hybrid and changing.
- The goal of ELE must shift from developing competence so learners may join a single community, to acquiring the ability to shuttle between communities.
- ELE must shift focus from mastery of rules and conventions for correctness, to developing strategies that allow learners to negotiate meanings more effectively in communicative situations.
- ELE must not approach the use of first languages as problems, but as resources for effectively learning a second language.

The realities that globalization imposes on education in general, and ELE in particular, cannot be ignored. However, the processes and discourses that support globalization, especially in the area of ELE, must also account for the local. This is the position that should direct education systems in the Philippines and other ASEAN nations if they truly wish to develop a citizenry that is rooted in the local and competent in the global.

3 Overview of the Philippine Education System

Before the passing of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, Philippine basic education system covered only 10 years of schooling: Grades 1–6 for the elementary level, and Years I to IV for the secondary level in public schools; however, for most private schools, education starts with pre-elementary levels: nursery, kindergarten, and preparatory grade. Public basic education is free and supervised by the DepEd. Tertiary education courses, on the other hand, are conducted under the CHED, which supervises all state universities and private higher education institutions. The third government agency in charge of education in the Philippines is the TESDA, which provides vocational and technical skills training to help high school graduates and adult students take exams and receive internationally-recognized certification in various trades for local and global employment.

ELE starts early in most private schools as English is a subject in the pre-school levels. Prior to 2012, pre-school was neither required nor offered by the DepEd for

public school pupils. Before the introduction of the MTBMLE policy, English was taught as a subject from the elementary to the tertiary levels. It is taught as a set of communication skills that, through the years in the Philippines, have had varying emphases, delivery, and assessment. Those who teach English take a Bachelor's Degree in either Secondary Education or Elementary Education. Only those who pass the licensure exam for teachers are allowed to teach in public schools. The DepEd is the central agency that designs and implements policies concerning basic education curriculum and reform.

The Philippine educational system in the twenty-first century may be described as being at a crossroads, as it strives to resolve issues in the development of language competencies among Filipino students on the one hand, and the strengthening of their academic achievements, on the other. As such, the country's traditional edge in English language proficiency is slowly being challenged by non-English speaking countries in Asia. While many reasons can be cited as contributory to the inadequacy of the educational system – such as poverty and malnutrition, for instance – the fact remains that the delivery of education to the learners has been wanting, especially in the public schools. Among the indicators is lack of facilities, resulting in class sizes of 75 or more students per classroom in some public schools. In the same manner, learning materials such as textbooks may become so inadequate that the ratio between users and available materials can reach 1:10. This means that one textbook may be shared by up to 10 children.

In an APEC conference held in Xi'an, China in 2006, an education symposium was conducted on the theme "Education to Achieve 21st Century Competencies and Skills for All: Respecting the Past to Move Toward the Future." The focus areas were language learning, mathematics and science, and career and technical education, as well as ICT. The aim was to develop a future program of activities for projects and policies. While ASEAN countries shared the same issues and concerns pertaining to education standards, assessment, curriculum, teachers and policies, the main concern on the part of the Philippines was teacher capacity building. The following have been noted as contributory to the problem of teacher capacity building in the Philippines: (1) exodus of competent teachers to gain better employment in other countries; (2) teachers who lack the requisite degree(s) and training to teach English; and (3) increase in the number of teachers who opt to finish non-thesis graduate degrees due to lack of funding, giving them limited exposure to actual research in the field.

It appears then that language facility is not only a problem of learners but also of teachers who teach the subject/course without adequate training, especially in teaching English in diverse contexts, languages, levels, and regions. Compounding this problem is the length of schooling in basic education, which is essentially short by at least 2 years, compared to that in other countries. At the tertiary level for instance, introductory courses in English, Science and Mathematics are taught as part of the general education curriculum, comparable or equivalent only to secondary education in some countries. Alignment also poses a problem since many of the teachers teaching at the secondary and tertiary levels do not possess the academic degree(s) required to teach the course(s) assigned to them. Another equally pressing

problem is that many of those who enroll in the education degree programs barely passed the entrance examinations given by universities. As for the senior teachers, many seem to have lost interest in trying out new teaching approaches and strategies because their workload do not leave them adequate time to read and make other classroom preparations.

It is not surprising, then, that many of the Filipino students have been described as not being functionally competent in employing the skills needed for the twenty-first century. Their competencies are left wanting in the sense that their problem-solving "mindware" has not been achieved in the subject areas. Even "relating to others" as a key learning competency is not developed, thus hampering effective interaction with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. This competency includes the ability to listen actively, recognize different points of view, negotiate, and share ideas. Students who relate well to others are likely the ones who are open to new learning and are able to take on different roles in different situations. They are aware of how their words and actions affect others, and know when it is appropriate to compete and to cooperate.

Indeed, basic education in Philippines is confronted with a variety of challenges. Among these challenges is the need to formulate and implement an ELE program that is appropriate to the demands of both the local community, as well as the international market.

4 ELE from the American Colonial Period to Martial Law

The history of ELE in the Philippines may be aptly described as beleaguered by "reconciling the competing demands of ethnicity (the vernacular), nationalism (the national language), and modernization (an international language)" (Bautista, 1996, p. 223). English came to the Philippines when the American colonizers arrived in 1898. With the Americans came the widespread introduction of public education, as the English language was systematically promoted through language instruction that made heavy use of an Anglo-American canon of literature. The goal was to "civilize" the Filipinos by exposing them to works of literary greats such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Washington Irving, Ralph Waldo Emerson, as well as Shakespeare, George Elliot, Matthew Arnold, and the romantic poets (Martin, 2008). The American colonial project assumed that a civilized citizenry was not prone to rebellion and that the English language was the key to creating this civilized citizenry. Dr. Fred Atkinson, the first civilian General Superintendent of Education, in his Annual School Reports for 1901–1903, declared the following to justify the promotion of English:

> To confine him (the Filipino) to his native dialect would be simply to perpetuate that isolation which he has so long suffered and against which his insurrection (against Spain) was a protest (Bureau of Public Schools, 1954).

In addition, American teachers made use of language teaching approaches that treated Filipino students as if they were native speakers of the English language. During the first decade of the American school system, Filipino school children had five language-building courses, namely, Reading, Language, Spelling, Writing and Rhetoric. At the secondary level, courses included English, Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Composition, Rhetoric and Composition, and Literature. Some groups criticized this heavy load on language teaching at the expense of industrial training, to which David Barrows, Director of Education in 1903, replied:

> 'To those who advocate "practical instruction," I reply that the most practical thing obtainable for men is a civilized community, and their most desirable acquisition is literacy… Letters and industry may well be the program of the school today, but the training in industrial arts must not be given at the expense of the training in letters (Bureau of Education, 1908).

Meanwhile, the native languages remained in the periphery of public education. The use of the local languages was only allowed outside the classrooms. The 1927 Service Manual of the Bureau of Education (1927) explicitly states this:

> In pushing for the official English language, it must be borne in mind that the government has no intention or desire to supplant the various native dialects. These will probably be used in the home and for many local purposes, and such use will not in the least interfere with the official English program.

A 1925 comprehensive study of the educational system of the Philippines, which is known as the Monroe Report, lamented the absence of the native language in the schooling of the Filipinos. The report recommended the local languages be used as auxiliary languages to teach character education, good manners, and right conduct. However, it also recommended that English be maintained as the MOI in all schools (UNESCO, 1953). As language planning during American colonial rule was "geared towards education and the civil service" (Gonzalez, 2003, p. 2), it was a natural recourse for the colonial project to promote the English language. Thus, English remained the sole MOI during the period of American occupation, until after the Second World War, when the Philippines was granted political independence from the United States.

By 1939, barely four decades since the Americans first arrived in the Philippines, more than 26.6 % of the Filipino population, or about 16 million Filipinos, spoke English. Comparing this figure to the 2.4 % who spoke Spanish in 1870, after more than 200 years of Spanish occupation, one can see the speed with which the English language spread throughout the islands (Bautista, 1996).

In 1938, with the proclamation of Tagalog (later renamed Pilipino in 1959) as the national language of the Philippines, it began to be taught as a subject in schools. The Japanese-controlled Philippine government during the period of World War II also recognized Tagalog (Bautista, 1996; Gonzalez, 1998). However, this flourishing of the national language was short-lived, as English returned to the education scene after World War II, and persisted as the official MOI after the Philippines was granted political independence by the United States in 1946.

In 1974, after a period of student activism and nationalist movements in the 1960s, English began to share its MOI position with the national language. By this time, the national language had already been renamed Pilipino. Nationalists had earlier clamored for an increased role of the national language in education and governance. The popular perception at that time was that the English language alienated the Filipino people from their cultural heritage. The issue was heightened by widespread opposition against Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, who responded by declaring Martial Law in 1972. Soon after, in 1973, a new Constitution was formulated which declared that "…unless otherwise provided by law, English and Pilipino shall be the official languages" of the country.

The language provision of the 1973 Philippine Constitution was implemented in the education domain as DepEd No. 25, which mandated the separate use of English and Pilipino for specific subjects in elementary and high school. Specifically, this meant the use of English for Science, Mathematics, and Communication Arts, and Pilipino for all other subjects. The policy, also known as the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP), aimed to develop proficiency in the two languages among the Filipino students (Bautista, 1996). This was the policy that generations of Filipino students grew up in until the early part of the twenty-first century, when language stakeholders began to push for a more active role of the mother tongues in basic education.

5 Bilingual Education and Educational Reforms in ELE from 1974 to 2010

The BEP was a response to a perceived need to balance the legitimate aspirations of nationalism (symbolized by the adoption of Tagalog-based national language Filipino[1] as a MOI) and an equally legitimate desire to maintain English as a language of wider communication in order to gain more access to the benefits of science and technology through this second language. The policy stipulated the use of two languages, Filipino and English, in separate domains, from the 1st grade to 4th year high school. The specific domains of English in the curriculum were Mathematics and Science; all other subjects were placed under the domain of Filipino (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 153).

This BEP has given rise to heated debates regarding the MOI until this day. This is because first, the Philippines is a multilingual country with more than 170 languages (Nolasco, Datar, & Azurin, 2010), but only English and Filipino are chosen as MOI. Gonzalez (1990) reports impact studies of the BEP and concludes that "this policy favoured only Tagalog and Manila students… and widens the gap between Manilans and non-Manilans on the one hand and between Tagalogs and non-Tagalogs on the other hand." (p. 155) in terms of academic achievement. Second, Filipino is heavily based on Tagalog, a language mostly spoken in the National Capital

[1] In 1987, the national language "Pilipino" was re-named "Filipino" in the new Constitution adopted by the post-Martial Law government of President Corazon C. Aquino (Gonzalez, 1998).

Region and Region 4. Those from non-Tagalog speaking regions question the choice of this national language. Third, studies show that using the mother tongue as MOI in early grades helps students to learn better (Bautista, Bernardo, & Ocampo, 2009; Bernardo, 1998; Walter & Decker, 2008).

Moreover, the language war continues for several reasons. First, the privileging of Tagalog-based Filipino is perceived to cause the marginalization of the literature of other regions and the contributions of these regions to the history of the country (Guinigundo 2013). Second, the privileging of English by top government officials likewise marginalizes Filipino and other Philippine languages, thus hindering the development of nationalism among the citizens. To illustrate, on May 17, 2003 an EO entitled "Establishing the Policy to Strengthen English as a Second Language in the Educational System" was issued by former President Gloria Arroyo. This EO directed the strengthening of English as a subject to be taught at all levels starting with Grade 1, and to be the primary MOI in all public schools. The Filipino language would be used as the MOI to teach the subject Filipino and *Araling Panlipunan* (Social Studies). To support this EO, the DepEd implemented EO 210 by promulgating MO No. 36, Series of 2006. This MO reiterates the policy of using English as the MOI. Quezon III (2007) summarizes the objections to these policies. He reports that those who oppose the EO conclude that the order is "deceptive, claiming, as policy, strengthening English as a second language – but actually it establishes English as the primary language of instruction from the secondary level up. This goes against the Constitution" (par 4). Lastly, Licuanan (2007) claims that the use of English as a MOI will not improve learning and will only widen the gap between the rich and the poor. According to Licuanan:

> The use of English as medium of instruction will not improve the quality of English in the country nor will it represent the opportunities for intellectual and economic advancement as claimed. The ones who benefit most from education in English are those who have high levels of proficiency in English to start with and those who belong to environments where English language inputs, materials and resources are available (p. 3).

Clearly, there is a lack of unity and coherence in language education policies, which only hampers efforts to introduce a systemic reform in ELE in the Philippines. Systemic reform "is a process of aligning the vision, content standards, assessment, instruction, and materials development" (Clune in Plata, 2013). Several reform efforts were implemented by the government from 1974 to 2010. These reforms include the 1974 Department of Education Order 25 which specified that Pilipino (now Filipino) would be used as the medium of instruction for all subjects except English, Math, and Science which would be taught in English. The second reform was the 2002 Revised Basic Education Curriculum that emphasized functional literacy and self-directed learning. The third reform was the 2010 Curriculum that was anchored on Understanding by Design and focused on genres in literature.

There are several issues related to the systemic reform that took place from 1974 to 2010. First, there seems to be an on-going debate regarding the focus of ELE. ELE is known as English Language Arts in basic education and Communication Arts in tertiary education. In basic education, ELE is concerned with language and literature, while in universities and colleges, ELE includes reading, writing,

speaking, listening, grammar, and research, all spread across three subjects and separated from literature subjects in the general education curriculum. Plata (2010) observes from her analysis of the 2010 curriculum ELE in the basic education level is literature-based. This focus on literature affects the alignment of the vision of BEC and the content standards, or what all students should know and be able to do. DepEd MO 43 s. 2002 entitled "The Basic Education Curriculum" states that

> English as a subject is concerned with developing competencies in listening, speaking, reading and writing among the learners. Pupils achieve the desired level of competence when they are motivated to learn and use the language. The specific skills constituting these competencies shall be developed to the point of mastery in communication situations using varied materials (p. 2).

The alignment issue can also be observed in the policies designed to improve classroom assessment. The following DepEd MO illustrate this:

- DepEd MO 37 s. 2003 specified the grade computation system: periodic test (25 %), participation and classroom interaction (30 %), performance (reporting, role play, argumentation, simulation, etc.) (30 %), and project (theme writing, book report, weekly written outputs) (15 %).
- DepEd MO 79 s. 2003 specified the distribution of test items such as 60 % easy, 30 % medium level items focusing on higher level skills, and 10 % difficult items focusing on desirable content and skills that aim to distinguish fast learners. The use of rubrics or scoring guides is strongly encouraged.
- DepEd MO 425 s. 2003 set a Program on Rubric and Portfolio Assessment to train school-based trainers
- DepEd MO 04 s 2003 defined performance-based grading in which for the fourth grading period, tests will be 70 % easy, 20 % moderately difficult, and 10 % difficult.
- DepEd MO 92 s. 2004 set a 5-day training of regional teacher trainers in the use of assessment tools and alternative approaches.

These policies do not seem to be anchored on a clear assessment framework. Grading, for example, can be used not just for reporting but also for learning (O'Connor, 2009). Grading for learning can be a coherent framework that aligns the content standards, assessment, instruction, and grading. In this framework, grades on the report card reflect the content standards per subject, enabling students and parents to understand the current level of proficiency. Such perspective does not seem to be present in the DepEd assessment framework.

In addition, Plata (2007) reports that despite the DepEd orders to shift to performance-based assessment, the department seems to contradict itself by preparing model tests that are mostly "fixed-alternative items on reading, grammar, and vocabulary." (p. 150). This is symptomatic of a perception in the department that proficiency in the English language means knowledge of language structures and ability to select the best answers from a given set of choices. Performance assessment of writing and speaking skills, for example, continues to be neglected. Such assessment models and practices affect the way teachers view their students' ability to use the English language, and consequently, affects the way the teach the courses.

The adoption of the UBD framework in 2010 solved the problem of alignment among content standards, assessment, and instruction. In adopting the UBD framework, DepEd started to use the terms "content standards" and "performance standards". Compared to the learning competencies that are in the BEC Curriculum, the content standards are fewer and there are corresponding performance standards. For example, quarter 4 content standard for fourth year high school states:

> A. The learner understands that the knowledge of the features, content, structures, and other specifics and standards for evaluating a literary work addresses a well-developed and meaningful critical essay.
>
> B. The learner uses parallel and balanced structure sentences to effectively express ideas in writing a critical response (2010 UBD Curriculum).

This curriculum, compared to the 2002 BEC, focused on literacy and expanded communication skills, as described below:

> The 2010 Curriculum states that the overall goal is functional literacy for all and developing listening, reading, viewing, writing, and speaking targeting to achieve communicative competence, literary competence, and appreciation and values (2010 Curriculum, p. 1).

This 2010 Curriculum also defines the theories of learning and language teaching approaches that BEC documents did not employ. The 2010 Curriculum states that this reform is informed by content-based instruction, cognitive academic language proficiency models, and genre-based approaches. It also points out that it is anchored on the theory of language as a means of communication in the real world, and on the theory of constructivism. Finally, it also spells out that this reform is based on the theory of language acquisition, which involves the deployment of learner's linguistic resources.

The implementation of systemic reform in ELE in the Philippines has become quite challenging for teachers. One factor for this, as Bautista et al. (2009) report, is that Filipino teachers are resistant to change. Teachers often complain that the DepEd has yet to address issues such as class size and lack of classrooms and materials. In addition, Waters and Vilches (2008) argue that "instructional design is insufficiently compatible with the teaching situation constraints" (p. 5). Another factor is the mechanism for disseminating information about change, and professional development of teachers. Waters and Vilches point out that the approach for professional development is the "cascade" model. In this model, a national or regional seminar is held to train the trainers, followed by division heads, then principals, and then some core teachers. Waters and Vilches claim that this top-down model is transmissive and "account for the inadequate level of understanding by teachers of BEC principles and practices" (p. 14.). They report that personnel who attended training were also busy with other duties, so that some of them failed to train others in their department. In addition, Tayao (2005) reports that the cascade model, which is popular in teacher training programs, resulted in low understanding regarding the reforms of those on the lowest tier – the teachers.

Still another factor that impedes on genuine reform is the lack of sufficient materials like textbooks, modules, and teachers' guides (Plata, 2010; Waters and Vilches, 2008). Some countries provide these materials online, whereas in the Philippines,

most materials are print copies, which are expensive and therefore inaccessible to members of the public sector. In the meantime, English teachers from private schools have more access to training and instructional materials, as well as teaching guides, because publishers sponsor national, regional, and school based trainings most often for free in order to sell their textbooks and modules to the more affluent academic institutions.

Finally, the Philippine government's tendency to employ top-down approaches in carrying out basic education programs impedes on genuine reform in ELE in the country. Martin (2005) argues that the Philippine education system is a "vertically structured monolith…(where) everything from policy to budget to curriculum to teacher training to textbooks to school uniforms is decided from the distant political center" (p. 275). In ELE, such top-down method of governance is evident in the promotion of the Communicative Approach to language teaching – an approach that draws from native-speaker contexts and consequently, do not have appropriate applications in many school settings in the Philippines. While many private schools in the country may boast of students with native-like proficiency in the English languages, many other schools in the rural areas, especially public schools, treat English as a foreign language. Thus, the top-down system produces "…uneven results – with private schools in the cities having world-class standards of quality and public schools in the far-flung barrios having no water and electricity, no desks, no chairs, no books." (Martin, p. 275)

6 Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTBMLE) and the K to 12 Reform

In 2008, Valenzuela Representative Magtanggol Gunigundo filed HB 3719, known as "An Act Establishing a Multi-lingual Education and Literacy Program." The bill was to counter another HB, known as "An Act to Strengthen and Enhance the Use of English as the Medium of Instruction in Philippine Schools," earlier filed by pro-English lawmakers. Gunigundo's HB 3719 aims to establish a multilingual education program that upgrades the literacy program of the government by making the mother tongue the MOI in the formative years of basic education. In more specific terms, the bill aims to institutionalize the child's first language by its being used as the MOI in all subjects from pre-school up to the end of the child's elementary education. The bill is anchored on local and international empirical studies, which prove that the mother tongue allows children to immediately master the lessons in the school curriculum and value their cultural heritage. The idea being advanced is that the multilingual approach is the best one to take in order to improve the quality of education for all Filipinos, including members of both ethnic and linguistic minorities. As Sibayan (1999) puts it:

> We forget (or do not know, and if we know, we ignore the fact) that most of the rest of the world that we have to compete with, teach and educate their children in one language, their native language (Japanese, South Koreans, Americans, British, French, German, Russians, Malaysians, Thai, Indonesians, and others).

This claim was further supported by Gonzalez (1999) when he stated the following:

> We cannot gear an entire education system for the intellectual and economic elite. There has to be maximum flexibility in MOI and curriculum. Not everything in Philippine Education has to be uniform, in fact, even if we have policies toward uniformity; we never accomplish enough to be able to attain uniformity in results.

In 2009, MTBMLE was finally institutionalized in the country through DepEd MO no. 74. This order was further strengthened by DepEd MO no. 16 s. 2012, which provided guidelines for the implementation of MTBMLE. Lawmakers and other government stakeholders pushed for MTBMLE after learning about reports from public schools in the Lubuagan District (north of Manila) showing that mother tongue literacy had already begun to raise learning outcomes. In 1998, through the initiatives of SIL Philippines (Dumatog & Dekker, 2003), public schools in Lubuagan implemented a First Language Component (FLC) Bridging Program, which introduced the use of the mother tongue Lilubuagen in the primary schools. This was undertaken despite the existing policy of using English and Filipino as MOI in basic education. As a result of the use of Lilubuagen, learning outcomes improved in math, science, as well as in the subjects English and Filipino. In 2007, it was reported that Lubuagan District Grade 3 students ranked No. 1 in the Kalinga Division in the 2006 NAT Grade 3 Reading Test, scoring in the English and Filipino reading tests 15–25 % higher than all other Kalinga Division districts (Dekker & Dekker, 2008).

What exactly is MTBMLE and how does is work? Literacy specialist Diane Dekker (2010) explains that MTBMLE involves more than simply replacing the language of instruction. Instead, an effective MTBMLE program is characterized by the following (Dekker, p. 23):

- Introduces literacy in the first language (L1) which transfers to the second language (L2);
- In presenting new concepts, makes use of what the learner already knows;
- Develops critical thinking in the L1 first before proceeding to critical thinking in the L2;
- Teaches the subject matter in the L1 for concept mastery; and,
- Develops a good bridge for learning the L2 after L1 is mastered.

Three years from now, in 2016, the Philippines would have fully implemented the EBEP, also known as the K-12 program, which introduces a new scheme of 12 years of basic education, in order to be at par with the other countries in the world. Motivated by EFA 2015 goals, MDG 2015 goals, and BESRA 2015, the EBEP aims to uplift the quality of education in the country so that Filipino graduates become truly competitive in the global market. Not only will the program prepare Filipino graduates intellectually, it will also prepare them socially and emotionally in meeting the demands and pressures of the workplace. The EBEP opens opportunities for Filipino children to be educated for two more years, thus offering a way out of poverty and ensuring that high school graduates are employable.

The decision to expand the number of years of basic education was highly influenced by studies such as the 1925 Monroe Survey, the 1949 UNESCO Mission Survey, the 1950 Swanson Survey, and the Education Act of 1982. Other surveys that were likewise influential, including the 1970 PCPE, the 1991 EDCOM Report, the 2000 PCER Report, the 2015 Philippine EFA National Action Plan, and the 2008 Presidential Task Force on Education. The 1925 Monroe Survey yielded the finding that secondary education in the country was insufficient and did not prepare graduates for the life skills they needed. It thus recommended that training in agriculture, commerce and industry be instituted. Both the 1949 UNESCO and 1950 Swanson surveys recommended the restoration of Grade 7, while the Education Act of 1982 mandated that the primary level cover Grades 1–4 and the intermediate level cover Grades 5–7. While the PCPE recommended 6 years of elementary and 5 years of secondary education, the EDCOM recommended 7 years of elementary and 5 years of secondary education. As regards the PCER, the survey recommended a 1-year pre-baccalaureate system, while the Presidential Task Force on Education recommended that with the 12-year pre-university program, the content of the 11th and 12th years be benchmarked with programs abroad. (DepEd Discussion Paper on the Enhanced K+12 Basic Education Program, 05 October, 2010).

The new EBEP (K-12) policy allows for specialization in fields like science and technology, music, arts, agriculture, fisheries, sports, business, and entrepreneurship in the senior high school levels (or Grades 11 and 12) so students can develop skills and competencies needed in the job markets. These basic competencies include literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, creative and critical thinking and the like. The result will graduates with functional skills that are marketable in the local and international employment arenas.

The EBEP is likewise closely linked with the general education program offered at the tertiary levels, which are governed by the CHED, the agency responsible for monitoring and evaluating higher education programs since the 1990s. The CHED has created technical panels and committees that serve as advisory and consultative bodies to the commission. Under each technical panel are technical committees that serve as arms and consultative bodies of the technical panel. For language education, the technical committees for English, Filipino, and Foreign Languages fall under the Technical Panel for Humanities. To date, the technical committee for English has already proposed courses for senior high school, so that only one course, called Purposive Communication, would be offered at the tertiary level.

Recently, a PQF was issued by CHED to guide HEIs by recommending a paradigm shift from traditional education to focusing on life-long learning, in order to better survive the challenges of the twenty-first century. This involves a shift from a competency-based to an outcomes-based approach, that is, identifying the outcomes first before strategies and techniques in teaching are determined. The PQF also involves bench-marking with international counterparts so that Philippine graduates would be able to meet international standards. While much still needs to be done by educational agencies and institutions along this line, the PQF aims to ensure quality educational service and competencies honed by offering certifications at each level.

7 Prospects and Possibilities for ELE in the Philippines

There are several important forces that push for the improvement of English language proficiency of Filipinos. First, the 2015 ASEAN integration puts the Philippines at an advantage. As courses in Philippine universities continue to be offered in English, the country may become an education hub in the ASEAN considering that the cost of education in the country is much less expensive compared to Singapore and Malaysia. Moreover, the Philippines can be a destination for English teacher training programs needed by teachers in other ASEAN countries.

There are also increasing opportunities for Philippine call centers. In fact, Whaley (2012) reports the following:

> A high population growth rate, long considered a hindrance to prosperity, is now often seen as a driving force for economic growth. About 61 percent of the population in the Philippines is of working age, between 15 and 64. That figure is expected to continue increasing, which is not the case for many of its Asian neighbors, whose populations are aging… (par 10) Many of those workers are feeding the country's robust outsourcing industry. The Philippines, where English is widely spoken, surpassed India last year as the world's leading provider of voice-based outsourcing services like customer service call centers (par. 12).

Thus, given these possibilities, there is a need to further reform ELE in the country. The history of curriculum reform in ELE shows a lack of alignment among the overall goal, standards, and assessment. It can also be surmised that there is a need for a clear target for ELE. This is in fact the first step in reform: having a clear target objective, followed by a roadmap. There is also a common misconception in the workplace, as well as in ELE policies and practices, that English proficiency is dependent on linguistic accuracy and knowledge of grammar alone.

The Common European Framework Reference (CEFR) is a good starting point for a coherent framework for Philippine ELE as the country moves towards ASEAN integration. The framework aims to have a common language that stakeholders may use when they discuss standards, instruction strategies, and assessment tools. CEFR also provides a scale that may be utilized to determine and report the level of proficiency in order to evaluate achievements in schools or for assessing the proficiency of job applicants or those seeking promotion. It would help for ASEAN leaders to review the CEFR and create its own ASEAN Framework of Reference for English Proficiency (AFREP). An AFREP may be employed in much the same way as the CEFR in self-assessment, workplace assessment, and school-based assessment, as well as a common framework for teachers to use in their professional learning communities.

Because borders for students, faculty, and researchers, as well as goods and services, open up for exchange between countries, there is a greater need for a system and a process of making decisions on English proficiency skills that matter in certain workplace positions or for certain programs in academic institutions across ASEAN. An AFREP is also critical in evaluating and training English teachers in order to upgrade their assessment literacy. Because an AFREP spells out the content

standards, as well as the assessment framework needed to have a shared understanding of the key concepts, it is a means to achieve coherence of curriculum goals, assessment tools, and instruction strategies.

ELE in the Philippines continues to learn from its past, reframe its present, and transform its future. However, it also needs to be supported by a coherent and united position on the role of English in economic development, facilitating instruction, upgrading academic achievement, as well as in accounting for the challenges of a multilingual and multicultural setting, while addressing the need for English-proficient workforces in a hyper-connected world. Such a view is both critical and urgent.

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Singapore's English-Knowing Bilingual Policy: A Critical Evaluation

Patrick Ng Chin Leong

Abstract The present paper, drawing upon the theoretical framework on why educational language plans fail (Kaplan et al. *Current Issues in Language Planning*,*12*(2), 105–124, 2011), and adopting a wider sociohistorical, sociocultural and sociopolitical analysis, critically evaluates the English-knowing bilingual school policy in Singapore. Implemented in 1966, the English-knowing bilingual policy was made mandatory for all students in Singapore to study English as a 'First Language' and a 'mother tongue' language (Malay, Tamil or Chinese) as a 'Second Language.' Since its implementation, the English-knowing bilingual educational policy has been a highly emotive controversial subject in Singapore as various stakeholders-policy makers, educators, parents, students and administrators-debated on various issues confronting bilingual education in the nation. In this regard, the issues under examination are: the perceived decline in the English standards, the prevalence of Colloquial Standard English or Singlish in schools, the lack of English proficiency of English teachers, the decline of Chinese literacy amongst Chinese students, the loss of Chinese-medium education, the inequalities between the English-speaking and Chinese-speaking citizenry, the decline of the mother tongue learning in schools and the language shift to English in particular amongst Chinese families.

Keywords Critical • Evaluation • Singapore • English-knowing • Bilingual school policy

1 Introduction

The spread of English around the world has prompted countries to implement macro language-in-education planning policy to remain more competitive in the global market. However, language-in-education policy and planning are complex processes and are dependent on several factors for successful outcomes. Such factors include the time dedicated to language learning, proficiency of teachers, methodology,

P.N.C. Leong (✉)
University of Niigata Prefecture, Niigata-shi, Japan
e-mail: leong.patrick8@gmail.com

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attitudes of students, resources available for teaching and the impact of such instruction on other languages in the language ecology (Baldauf et al., 2010, p. 431).

Singapore is an interesting case study for examining the implementation of macro English language-in-education policy as English has a long history of institutionalized functions in the society. The Republic of Singapore Independence Act of 1965 decreed that English would be the official language of Singapore. In 1966, a bilingual school policy was implemented and made mandatory for all students in Singapore to study English as a 'First Language' and a 'mother tongue' language (Malay, Tamil or Chinese) as a 'Second Language.'

The bilingual education policy made English the lingua franca of Singapore, giving the policy the name 'English-knowing bilingualism.' Singapore's bilingual education theoretical framework is essentially additive bilingualism based on the belief that two languages can be functionally compartmentalized, maintaining diglossia (Pendley, 1983).

Students are required to attain "proficiency in English and one other official mother tongue language" (Pakir, 1994, p. 159). In schools, English is the medium of instruction for all subjects except the mother tongue subject. The English-knowing bilingual policy is also fostered through an emphasis on the teaching of the mother tongue subject in schools. Since the Chinese ethnic group constitutes the majority, a Speak Mandarin Campaign was launched in 1979 aimed at persuading dialect speakers to switch to speaking Mandarin.

As encapsulated in Singapore's bilingual school policy, the learning of the mother tongue language is framed within the context of Asian identity (Chinese Language Curriculum & Pedagogy Review Committee, 2004) and is based on the premise that the ethnic language can act as a cultural ballast and thus provides the necessary inoculation against deculturalisation.

However, in recent years, the English-knowing bilingual educational policy has triggered a debate about its effectiveness as evident through the various newspaper headlines: *Have English standards really fallen?* (Chang, 2009) *Going back to the basics of effective English teaching* (Cai, 2009*). Was Chinese wrongly taught for thirty years?* (Oon & Kor, 2009), *Singaporeans split on Mother Tongue* (Chang & Hussain, 2010), *Price of Bilingualism* (Tan, 2009a, 2009b) and *Mother tongue: A hot button issue* (Tan, 2010).

The present chapter drawing upon the theoretical framework on why educational language plans fail (Kaplan et al., 2011), and adopting a majority and minority language framework (May, 2012), critically evaluates the English-knowing bilingual school policy in Singapore. There is a range of issues regarding Singapore's English-knowing bilingual school policy. Some of these issues under examination include: a lack of consideration of the contextual factors in language learning, educating school children in a language they do not speak at home, shortage of teachers, declining motivations of pupils in learning the mother tongue subject and the replacement of English as the home language.

This paper first provides a literature review on why educational plans fail (Kaplan et al., 2011) and the concept of majority and minority language suggested by May (2012). It then explains the methodology of the study followed by an overview of

language planning in Singapore. Next it provides an account of the historical development of the English-knowing bilingual policy in Singapore. It then outlines some of its unintended outcomes. Following this, it critically evaluates the English-knowing bilingual school policy. The paper then concludes with some suggestions to address the weaknesses of the English-knowing bilingual policy.

2 Relevant Literature

Macro language-in-educational policies will become prevalent in the twenty-first century due to the importance of language in an increasingly globalised world. However, language-in-educational policies may not produce its intended outcomes (Kaplan et al., 2011). One important reason for the failure of language-in-educational policies is the lack of teacher training support to equip teachers to teach in the classroom. Kaplan et al observe that in some countries, teacher training rarely exceeds 4 years of instruction; trainee teachers are also expected to learn the language she/he will teach. In most cases, most second language teachers require upgrading of teaching methodology and language skills but such training may not be available. Baldauf et al. (2010) highlighted the need for quality teachers as important resources available for teaching and the impact of teachers' instructions in order for the effective implementation of language-in-education policies.

In addition, language-in-educational policies may also fail because school children may not be prepared for early language instruction. This is especially true when the target language is an isolated school exercise where there is a lack of opportunity for the use of the language. Official language-in-education planners often succumb to the 'earlier is better' hypothesis in their rush to promote English programmes in schools. However Kaplan et al. (2011) claim the 'earlier is better' hypothesis is not supported by research as no single variable can be a salient predictor for success in language acquisition. Ahn (2005) argues that not all children will be equally ready to learn precisely the same age given the same amount of language exposure. Another reason why language-in-education policies fail is due to the inappropriacy of teaching methodology adopted in the classroom. Although there are different teaching methodologies adopted for teaching, most of the models operate on the assumption of the teacher-fronted classroom methodology. However, language-in-educational policies are also a result of social and political forces. In this regard, it is important to pay attention to the concept of minority and majority languages (May, 2012).

According to May, majority languages are constructed as languages of wider communication and lauded for their 'instrumental' value. Learning a majority language provides greater economic and social mobility. On the other hand, minority languages are important only for reasons of 'cultural continuity' and accorded 'sentimental' values. Language decline in bilingual or multilingual contexts occurs when a majority language replaces the range and functions of a minority language (May, 2012, p. 15). The process of language shift usually involves three stages. In stage

one, there is increasing pressure on minority language speakers to speak the majority language. In stage two, there is a decrease in the number of minority speakers as the minority language is employed in fewer domains. In stage three, the minority language is completely replaced by the majority language (May, 2012, p. 2).

3 Methodology

This paper culls information from a variety of sources (i) Singapore's government's documents on language and educational policy (ii) Singapore's census and survey statistics released by the Singapore Government (iii) empirical studies related to language use, bilingual education and medium of instruction in Singapore and (iv) books and journals pertaining to the learning of English and the mother tongue subject in schools. The author will also compare macro English language planning policies implemented in Singapore to other countries in the region, with a focus on the use of the mother tongue language as a medium of instruction. As a way of introducing the broader policy debates on the English-knowing bilingual policy, and to demonstrate the evolving concern for the policy in the political discourse, this paper also quotes a number of texts published in online newspaper websites. Content analysis was conducted to provide a basis for informed interpretations of the problems and challenges faced in the implementation of the English-knowing policy.

4 Language Planning in Singapore

With a population of approximately more than five million, Singapore is a young country of many races whose forebears are from Southeast Asia, China, India and Europe. According to the 2010 census, the four main races in Singapore are the Chinese (74.1.5 %), the Malays (13.4 %), the Indians (9.2 %) and Others (3.3 %) which include Eurasians and other foreign workers (Department of Statistics, 2010). The dominant ethnic group is the Chinese community which comprises more than 76 % of the Singapore resident population (Department of Statistics).

Singapore's language planning policy develops within the context of a set of deep and far ranging ideological presuppositions. Language planning is subsumed as an integral part of national development and entails the development of a Singaporean-Singapore identity which can help reduce the countervailing pulls of race, culture and society (Tan, 2007). A policy of multilingualism was developed resulting in the Republic of Singapore Independence Act of 1965 which recognised Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English as the four official languages in Singapore and formally given equivalent status (Gopinathan, 1998). The policy of multilingualism entailed reconceptualising the internally heterogeneous communities definable in terms of one single language, paired with one associated culture (Ho & Alsagoff, 1998). As a result, the intra-group differences among the Chinese, Malay and Indians were radically reduced by the imposition of a single language for each com-

munity (Clammer, 1985). The Mandarin, Malay and Tamil languages were officially designated as the 'mother tongues' and taught as school subjects and serve as a 'repository of cultural values' within the Singapore ethnic communities.

English was accorded the status of an official working language in Singapore and it grew in power and status. However, the unbridled dominance of English as an official and administrative language was a cause of concern for the nation. In the late 1970s, the Singapore government perceived that under the influence of English education, younger Singaporeans had lost their Asian identity as they absorbed Westernised lifestyles and adopted an individualistic outlook (Ho & Alsagoff, 1998). To counteract the excesses of westernization and deculturalisation due to the dominance of English, the Singapore government implemented the English-knowing bilingual educational policy to encourage the learning of the mother tongue, and to anchor students in their ethnic and cultural traditions (Gopinathan, 1998).

5 The English-Knowing Bilingual Policy in Singapore: A Historical Perspective

Implemented and made compulsory in schools in 1966, the bilingual policy made it mandatory for all students in Singapore to study English as a 'First Language,' and an official mother tongue (Mandarin for Chinese, Malay for Malays and Tamil for Indians) as a 'Second Language' in schools. It should be noted that in the context of Singapore, the definition of mother tongue is specially constructed as the paternal ancestral language, and does not necessarily correspond to the individual's personal experience. The definition of bilingualism is specific to Singapore and is defined by the government as '*proficiency in English and one other official language'* giving the policy the name 'English-knowing bilingualism' (Pakir, 1994, p. 159). In essence, the bilingual policy is based on a functional 'division of labour' between languages (Kuo & Jernudd, 1994, p. 30). Chiew (1980) reported that the imposition of the policy was to facilitate interethnic communication and to foster a Singaporean identity. The requirement of school bilingualism was implemented by a series of detailed guidelines involving exposure time, subject-language matching, examinations and attainment requirements. Except for the mother tongue subject, all other subjects are taught in English. Under the English-knowing bilingual school policy, the teaching of the English language education underwent different phases in response to different educational and pedagogical emphasis as shown in Table 1.

The English-knowing bilingual policy was fostered through the emphasis on the teaching of the mother tongue subject in schools. School children were also persuaded to speak their mother tongue language through the Speak Mandarin Campaign. Launched in 1979, the overarching objective of the Speak Mandarin Campaign was to maintain a sense of a bounded Singaporean Asian community (Stroud & Wee, 2012). However, its specific objective was to persuade Chinese Singaporeans to discard the use of dialects as official language-in-education planners perceived that the use of Chinese dialects would undermine the English-knowing bilingual policy. Although the Chinese in Singapore form a large

Table 1 Different phases of English language education in Singapore

Year	Emphasis
1970	Prescriptive grammar was taught in schools
1971	Teaching of grammar was enforced through drills, repetition and reinforcement
1981	An integrated approach which consisted of reading, writing, speaking and listening was adopted
1985	Communicative language teaching was adopted in the classroom
1991	Classroom teaching focused on learner-centredness and fluency in English
2001	Classroom pedagogy focused on the principle of learner-centredness, process orientation, and integration of the four skills
2010	The teaching of oracy, multiliteracies, grammar, use of text types, and the learning process was emphasized in schools

Source: Rubdy (2010)

demographic majority, they are far from being culturally or linguistically homogenous. The ancestors of Singapore's Chinese residents were from various parts of Southern China who spoke various regional dialects. In the context of Singapore, the term 'dialect' refers to a vernacular variety of the Chinese language, and is spoken by various sub-groups of the Chinese community. The various Chinese dialects spoken in Singapore include: Hokkien (Southern Min), Teochew (Southern Min), Cantonese (Yue), Hakka, Hainanese (Southern Min), Foochow (Eastern Min), Henghua (Puxian Min), Shanghainese (Wu), Hockchia (Eastern Min). In an attempt to persuade dialect speakers to embrace Mandarin, the Singapore Government has proposed that the continual use of dialects in the home would hinder the learning of Mandarin in schools (Bokhorst-Heng, 1998). As a result, television programmes in dialect were replaced by Mandarin to reflect official policy requirements (Gopinathan, 1998). However, Newman (1988) pointed out that a major problem with the educational argument is the assumed subservience of the society at large to the demands of the education system, leading to a conflict between an established pattern of behaviour in society (the use of dialect) and the education policy. Newman believed that the solution being advanced is not to tailor the education policy to suit society, but to transform society so that education policy can be made effective. However, the English-knowing bilingual school policy has led to a decline of the vernacular schools. As English was viewed as bestowing strong socio-economic values, parents began to send their children to English-medium schools. As a result, the Chinese-medium schools suffered from a decrease in student enrolment. For instance in 1978, about 88 % of school children in Singapore were registered in English-medium schools while only 11.27 % were in Chinese-medium schools (Shepherd, 2003). Around 1978, English-educated students began to outnumber their Chinese counterparts by nine to one (Hill & Lian, 1995).

In the late 1970s, it was obvious that the bilingual education policy was not producing the desirable results. The 1978 Goh Report-the most explicit and authoritative critique of Singapore's language policies- reported that at least 25 % of the Primary six population did not attain minimum literacy levels. Various strategies

devised to improve language levels were also found to be ineffective (Gopinathan, 1998, p. 23). The report also stated that the failure of the English-knowing bilingual school policy was due to the various languages (Malay, Mandarin, English and Chinese dialects) spoken by students outside schools. By the late 1990s, the English-knowing bilingual school policy had created several unintended outcomes.

6 Outcomes of the English-Knowing Bilingual Policy

A major unintended outcome of the English-knowing bilingual school policy is the perceived decline in the English standards. Although the English-knowing bilingual policy has been classified as an 'English + 1' policy (Kirkpatrick, 2010), there is a real gap between real and assumed English proficiency amongst Singapore students. In 1999, the Ministry of Education released a report highlighting the declining English standards due to the widespread use of Colloquial Singapore English. Colloquial Singapore English or Singlish, is the basilect variety associated with those with a low proficiency in English. It exhibits particular phonological patterning, syntax and vocabulary and draws its roots from several Chinese dialects, Malay, Tamil and English. A sample of conversation in Singlish is shown below:

[The following conversation occurs at a bar in Singapore.]
Steven: You spend me drink, can or not?.
Hashim: Can
S: Okay. Thanks, man..
H: I see you with girl at hawker centre last night. Your classmate, is it?
S: Friends only. Friday, she got off-day. Usually we take makan and go to disco-la.
H: You are going steady?
S: Not actually, but very closely.
H: She is big sized-la
(source: Honna, 2008, p. 26)

In 1999, the Ministry of Education released a report highlighting the falling English standards due to the widespread use of Singlish. The Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) was subsequently launched in 2000 with the objective of persuading Singaporeans to discard the use of Singlish and switch to speaking a metropolitan variety of English.

Another outcome of the English-knowing bilingual school policy is the decline of the mother tongue literacy in schools especially amongst ethnic Chinese students. Although the English-knowing bilingual policy has produced a number of Chinese students literate in English, the literacy level of Chinese language remains poor. The low Chinese literacy has been attributed to the lack of curriculum time for Chinese students to read and write in Chinese and an emphasis of the English language in Singapore's society (Kirkpatrick, 2010). A report conducted by the Chinese Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Committee in 2004 showed that 77 % of P6 students from English-speaking homes find learning Chinese difficult, compared to 50 % and 36 % of those who speak some or mostly Chinese at

Table 2 Resident population aged 5 years and over by language most frequently spoken at home

Ethnic group/language	Percent	
	2000	2010
Chinese	100	100
English	23.9	32.6
Mandarin	45.1	47.7
Chinese dialects	30.7	19.2
Others	0.4	0.4
Malay	100	100
English	7.9	17.0
Malay	91.6	82.7
Others	0.5	0.3
Indians	100	100
English	35.6	41.6
Malay	11.6	7.9
Tamil	42.9	36.7
Others	9.9	13.8

home respectively (Chinese Language Curriculum & Pedagogy Review Committee, 2004, p. 23).

The energetic and encompassing promotion of English in the English-knowing bilingual policy has also led to a pronounced switch to English in the home environment, particularly amongst Chinese families. The 2010 census shows that English has been increasingly spoken as a home language for resident population aged 5 years and over (see Table 2).

As shown in Table 2, between 2000 and 2010, there has been a shift in the use of English in Chinese families from 23.9 to 32.6 %. There has also been a shift towards English in both the Malay and Indian families.

A recent study on family language policies showed that Singaporean parents feel compelled to place higher expectations on their children to achieve high proficiency in English than the mother tongue language due to the high instrumental value placed on English in schools and society (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). In their study of family use and language attitudes amongst 907 Chinese parents, Zhao & Liu (2008) reported that the Chinese language has lost its 'linguistic capital' to English, and is viewed as a language of 'poverty and marginality' in the household (p. 121). This has resulted in a declining motivation for its use in the family. Zhao & Liu (2008) warned that the polarization of pupils along social class in their formal school years would occur if policy makers continue to allow the prestige of the Chinese language to decline in the local community. The government has acknowledged that as a result of the switch to English in the home environment, a significant number of Chinese Singaporeans are experiencing difficulties coping with the Mandarin language although it is their mother tongue (Lim et al., 2010).

The English-knowing bilingual school policy has also resulted in increasing inequalities between English-speaking and non-English-speaking citizenry. A study conducted by Huang (2009) showed that the prestige accorded to English in

Singapore has resulted in an asymmetry in power between the English-speaking and non-English speaking in society (Huang). Fluent English speakers in Singapore usually have better educational qualifications and come from affluent home environment (Lim et al., 2010, p. 7). As reported in the Census of 2010, among university graduates, 49 % of the Chinese, 47 % of the Malays and 38 % of the Indians speak English most frequently at home. On the hand, only 6.4 % of the Chinese, 4.4 % of the Malays and 21 % of the Indian spoke English most frequently at home. There is a strong possibility that the income disparity between English and non-English speakers may mirror the earlier division between the English-educated and the Chinese-educated in the near future, with English speaking at the center of power while non-English being at the periphery.

7 The English-Knowing Bilingual Policy: A Critical Evaluation

It has been more than 30 years since the implementation of the English-knowing bilingual policy. However, former Minister Mentor Lee has admitted that the bilingual education policy has failed because it did not take into consideration students' attitudes and aptitudes in language learning (Lee, 2009a, 2009b).

A main weakness of the current English-knowing bilingual school policy is a lack of consideration of the contextual factors in language learning. The theoretical assumptions underlying Singapore's English-knowing school policy is based on the premise that there is a critical age for language acquisition which allows children to acquire a second language at native-like fluency. Based on the 'earlier is better' hypothesis, the English-knowing bilingual school policy emphasizes the study of English in the early years of education. As of 1990, the Ministry of Education accorded English the status of a 'First Language' in school. Except for the mother tongue subject, all Singapore school children learnt all subjects in English when they enter elementary school. However, research on the age factor of second language acquisition indicates that the amount of time and the quality of the language input is important in early language acquisition (Munoz, 2010). Skutnabb-Kangas (1987) observes that Singapore school children are learning English in a situation where a more prestigious minority world language is taught to a linguistic majority in a formerly colonized country (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987). For a majority of Singapore school children, the amount of English exposure is limited to the classroom. Thus within a broad linguistic context of learning English, the problem of attaining a reasonable standard of formal English is fairly difficult.

In addition, the English-knowing bilingual school policy does not take into account the pedagogical implications of educating children in a language they do not speak at home. About 85 % of Singapore's school children are educated in English and Mandarin, although both languages are not spoken at home (Bianco, 2007). UNESCO has declared that it is axiomatic that the mother tongue is the best medium of instruction as educationally, a child learns more quickly through a famil-

iar medium (UNESCO, 1953; cited in Bianco, 2007, p. 6). Singapore's medium of instruction policy has been critiqued as 'unnatural' (Bianco). As is oftentimes the case, children from non-English speaking home environment will be academically disadvantaged when the medium of instruction is different from the school languages. Language-in-education planners will have to address some issues: How can language instruction be designed to ensure effective language learning and acquisition of content knowledge? How can compensatory education be implemented for children who come from disadvantaged home environment with no 'literacy' caregivers and learning atmosphere? What can be done to reduce the attrition rate for children from non-English speaking home environment?

There is also a need to consider carefully the relationship between academic performance and home language use. Kaplan et al., (2011) reminds us that macro language policy decisions are rarely about the needs of the learners but reflect the opinions and views of actors in language planning at the highest levels. The current English-knowing bilingual school policy tends to be top-down and does not take into account matters such as 'learners' age, aptitude, attitudes or motivation' (Kaplan et al., p. 931). In addition, there is also a lack of quality language teachers in schools for the English-knowing bilingual policy to be effectively implemented. The increased exposure time strategy in English had pressurised administrators to recruit more English teachers. However, after some years, a liberal approach to recruiting teachers has resulted in a large number of trainee teachers from heterogeneous backgrounds (polytechnic graduates, mid-career personnel from different professions, retirees etc) whose command of English is not always at the desirable level of competence (Cheah, 2003)). The shortage of qualified English teachers is most acute in the primary schools, where teachers are not trained to be specialists in English but yet are expected to teach English and two other subjects such as Mathematics or Social Studies. Kaplan et al. (2011) suggest that the absence of English teacher education and training provides evidence for the failure in language-in-educational policies, and the extent to which they can be implemented within the existing resources and institutional capacity. There is an urgent need for the official language-in-education planners to consider carefully the availability of teachers, an important teaching resource which will affect the quality of English education in the future.

The teaching of the mother tongue subject is also hindered by a shortage of Chinese language teachers. The Education Ministry is aware of the need for better-trained mother tongue teachers and has established the Singapore Centre for Chinese Language to improve the professional skills of Chinese language teachers. However, younger Chinese language teachers are not steeped in the Chinese language compared to their predecessors from the Chinese-medium schools. In 2008, about 40 % of the 4000 Chinese language teachers in service had no university degree in Chinese studies and had limited knowledge of Chinese history and culture (Lee, 2011, p. 195). The current pedagogical practice is to emphasize less on the memorization of Chinese characters and to adopt innovative teaching methods to make the learning of Chinese language fun and interactive. However, the new teaching pedagogy will place some demands on curriculum developers and Chinese language teachers

(Liu et al., 2007). Although the interdependence hypothesis recommends development of academic concepts and skills in both languages for optimal bilingual development (Cummins, 2000), Chinese pupils' motivation to study the mother tongue subject in school has been declining (Ong, 2002; Shen, 2003) due to the increasing dominance of English in the local linguistic landscape. According to Bokhorst-Heng (1999), there are three reasons why English retains its power and status in Singapore:

> *First, English is the major international language for trade, science and technology and proficiency in the language is essential as Singapore to propel Singapore into a leading financial and banking centre. Second English is important at the individual level for workers to advance in their careers as increasing modernization in Singapore will require skilled workers with a command of the English language. Third, at the community level, English is the common language that enables all Singaporeans to communicate with each other* (p. 240).

In addition, as English has elevated demands in academic performance-a high proficiency in English is currently required for admission to tertiary education- students have no choice but to acquire a strong command of English. Emergent post-colonial countries have recognized their educational system had privileged the language of the colonial administration and have adopted an 'authentic' national language as the medium of instruction in schools. For instance, the Ministry of Education in Indonesia has recently announced that English will no longer be a subject taught in elementary schools in 2014 (The Jakarta Post, 2012). The rationale for the omission of English in the school curriculum is to allow Indonesian students ample time to master the Indonesian language first before embarking on the study of foreign languages. Malaysia has also recently declared that all examinations for Science and Mathematics would be taught in the mother tongue-Bahasa Malaysia in stages from 2012 onwards (Gill, 2012). However, while countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia are placing more emphasis in the learning of the mother tongue language, official discourse in Singapore repeatedly emphasized the importance of the English language as medium of instruction in schools. In the early 1990s, renowned educationalist, Dr Lau Wai Har, representing the Chinese-educated community, had lobbied for a balanced development of language education to arrest the decline of the Chinese language. As Dr Lau explains:

They (The Chinese-educated intelligentsia) are pragmatic enough to know that the bilingual education policy is in line with Singapore's political and economic requirements. They also know how important English is to a modern society and they accept what the English language can do in various fields. What they were asking is a balanced development of education under the present bilingual system (Lee, 2011, p. 177).

In recent years, there have been concerns that the bilingual school policy has eroded the ability of students to read and write proficiently in the mother tongue (Kor, 2011). In addition, students are merely studying the mother tongue subject as an examination subject and resent using it in their post school lives (Balji, 2010). However, advocates for restoring the importance of the mother tongue education constituted a minority while an overwhelmingly large majority of the population

continues to support the socio-economic and the cultural importance of English. At the launch of the English Language Institute of Singapore in 2011, former Minister Mentor, Lee Kuan Yew conveyed his expectations that English should become the chief language of most Singaporeans:

We are the only country in the region that uses English as our working language, the main medium of instruction in our schools. This has given our young a strong advantage of growing up in a multi-cultural multi-lingual society, all speaking the international language of commerce and trade, English, and their mother tongues, Chinese, Malay, Tamil, and others as their second languages (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Since 2010, English has become the defacto lingua franca in Singapore with 79.9 % of the population adopting it as a language of use as compared to a mere 21 % of population during the pre-independent era (Alsagoff, 2012, p. 150). May (2012) observes that in multilingual societies, a majority language, usually synonymous with greater political power, privilege and social prestige, will eventually replace the range and functions of a minority language. An increasing number of young generations of Singaporeans recognize the English language as a majority language with a higher status than the ethnic mother tongue language. On the other hand, the ethnic mother tongue has been viewed as a language with 'minority' status and 'enjoy' only a symbolic status within the ethnic communities (Zhao & Liu, 2008). Due 'to the internalization over time of negative attitudes to a minority language,' (May, 2012, p. 10), younger generation of Singaporeans gradually prefer to adopt English as their linguistic repertoire. At the initial implementation of the English-knowing bilingual policy, the functional allocation of English and the ethnic mother tongue was clearly defined. However, the functional allocation has now slipped with English increasingly gaining more domains and the ethnic mother tongue gradually employed in fewer domains in the Singapore society. Official language planners in Singapore have to ensure that the current English-knowing bilingual policy does not in any way damage or erode the ability of the various ethnic segments to sustain their distinctive identities, languages and cultures. Failure to 'steer' the policy to the needs of the community will inevitably attract a strong reaction and result in an ethnic controversy damaging to the integrative agenda of the ruling party.

8 Conclusion

This paper critically evaluates the current English-knowing bilingual policy in Singapore based on the framework on why educational plans fail (Kaplan et al., 2011) and the concept of majority and minority language (May, 2012). The paper first explains the rationale and implementation of the English-knowing bilingual policy. Next, it discusses some unintended outcomes of the policy and then critically evaluates the current policy. In this regard, some of the issues under examination include: the pedagogical implications of early exposure to language education, educating school children in English, shortage of teachers, declining motivations of

pupils in learning the mother tongue subject and the replacement of English as the home language. As the results of this study have shown, the current English-knowing bilingual policy has failed to produce students who are proficient in both the English language and the mother tongue. Initially, the English-knowing bilingual policy emphasized a binary division between English for 'progress and science' and the mother tongue for 'maintaining cultural values and traditions'. However, due to the high linguistic capital of English, there has been a decline of mother tongue literacy amongst the ethnic groups. On the other hand, the English language has also declined due to limited exposure and a broad linguistic context of learning English.

For the English-knowing bilingual policy to produce the intended outcomes, official language-in-education planners will need to adopt both the micro and macro approach to policy implementation. A 'micro' perspective (Chua & Baldauf, 2011) will require official language planners to factor in the various areas of language learning such as the acquisition, retention and use of language (Baldauf et al., 2010). It is also important to examine the motivation of students in the learning of languages and the quality of language instructions in the classroom. In addition, there is also a need to recruit bilingual or multilingual teachers to help students develop metalinguistic awareness (Ng, 2012). The presence of bilingual or multilingual teachers can also raise awareness of critical reflexivity in language choices (Stroud & Wee, 2012). In addition, the Ministry of Education in Singapore should observe how the English-knowing bilingual is enacted in the school domain. Unless official-language-in education planners reauthorize educational acts that truly support dual language education, in the near future, schools may merely pay 'lip service' to the policy.

One way to address the decline of the mother tongue language learning in schools is to establish 'translanguaging' (Baker, 2001) practice in the classroom to highlight the importance of the linguistic and social capital of the mother tongue language in the local school community. To provide a naturalistic environment for dual language learning, there is also a need for school administrators to loosen the boundary between the use of the mother tongue and the English language in the school community. For the bilingual school policy to produce its intended results, it is also necessary to address the influence of the home linguistic environment. The school policy on the learning of the mother tongue subject will 'fall on deaf years' unless official language-in-education planners wake up to the realization that parents expect their children to speak English at home in order to succeed in Singapore's competitive school system (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). The Ministry of Education can do more to cultivate in parents an attitude that the mother tongue language is an important 'resource' and a necessary socio-economic tool for their children and the local community. A 'macro' approach will require policy makers to think of bilingual education beyond the confines of the home environment. As suggested by Dixon (2005), future research in bilingual education will need to address the sociolinguistic situation in Singapore and the actual language use within different contexts. The English-knowing bilingual policy is a unique feature of Singapore's educational system. If official language-in-education policy makers allow the current policy to continue, there is a possibility that it will produce students with different potential levels of linguistic proficiency in the mother tongue (Ng, 2014).

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Patrick Ng Chin Leong Dr Patrick Ng Chin Leong earned an MA in English Studies from the National University of Singapore and his Doctorate in Education (Applied Linguistics and TESOL) from Leicester University, UK. He previously taught English language and communication skills in Singapore. He is currently an Associate Professor in the International Studies and Regional Development at the University of Niigata Prefecture, Japan. His current research focuses on language planning policy, bilingualism and multilingualism. His featured publications include: A study of Attitudes towards the Speak Mandarin Campaign in Singapore. Mother tongue education in Singapore: Concerns, issues and controversies. The planning of English in Multilingual Singapore: Conflicts, Controversies and Challenges. Mandarin Language and the Cultural Identity of Chinese Dialect Speaking Singaporeans.

English Education Policies in South Korea: Planned and Enacted

Jeehyae Chung and Taehee Choi

Abstract In South Korea, the government has actively promoted English proficiency as an indispensable tool in ascertaining competitiveness of individuals and the country. This chapter examines English education in South Korea and its policies as contextualized in its socio-cultural backgrounds. The discussion draws on theoretical insights that view policies as an interactive process among policy documents, the context and the actors in it (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012; Menken & García, 2010). First, the background is laid out by illustrating the symbolic and practical meaning of the English language in the Korean context. Following that, the chapter traces the changes in English language teaching (ELT) policies through a historical survey of curricular reforms and also presents the current agenda of ELT policies, within which the communicative approach is strongly recommended, as reflected in the seventh National Educational Curriculum. In an attempt to investigate ELT practice in context, two case studies, one at the primary level and the other at the secondary level, are presented, particularly to determine the relationship between policy and practice. Both case studies demonstrate that while teachers make efforts to follow the policies, how they actually implement them depends on their unique contexts and individual beliefs. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research and policy making.

Keywords South Korea • English education policy • English language teaching • Medium of instruction • Teachers as actors • Actor agency • Language planning and language policy • Policy enactment

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J. Chung
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea
e-mail: jeehyae@gmail.com

T. Choi (✉)
Hong Kong Institute of Education, Tai Po, Hong Kong
e-mail: choith@ied.edu.hk

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1 Introduction

In South Korea, Korean is the only official language of the country. Still, of all foreign languages, English has the most prominent status, which is reflected in the recursive move to establish English as the second official language (e.g., Shim, 2003), although futile up to the present. The English language is not spoken as much by the general South Korean public, but it is considerably visible in the linguistic landscapes of South Korea and prevalent in popular culture. In South Korea there are also a number of English-medium newspapers, television networks and radio broadcasts. As such, it is safe to say that the English language is quite ubiquitous in South Korea, attesting to its significance in the society. English proficiency is perceived to be an indispensable tool in helping individuals and the country as a whole gain competitiveness in today's globalized world. With so much attention concentrated on English, it is not surprising that English language teaching (ELT) is a key agenda in South Korea's education policies at all levels.

This chapter attempts to provide a holistic picture of English education in South Korea by shedding light on the related policies that have driven it. The discussion is informed by scholarly work on language education policies, particularly that of Menken and García (2010), as well as policy enactment theory (Ball et al., 2012), which is introduced in section two. Section three describes the relative status of Korean and English and the educational system in South Korea to contextualize the chapter. Section four starts with a brief historical overview of English education policies as manifest in the National Educational Curriculum (NEC) and the socio-political factors that influenced them. It is then followed by a description of current English education policies. Section five will look at English education policies in practice at the primary and secondary levels through case studies in the respective contexts. The case studies will show how policy actors – teachers in particular – enact the policy. Implications for future policymaking will conclude the chapter.

2 Theoretical Background

The field of language planning and language policy has greatly evolved throughout the years. Earlier scholarship focused on language planning that was focused on the languages themselves, mostly concentrating on such language planning activities as corpus and status planning. These activities and the policies that drove them were mainly related to nation building, concerning how languages would be used. The role of education in language planning was not as emphasized until Cooper (1989) suggested a new type of language planning called acquisition planning. Acquisition planning concerns the users of the languages that are affected by corpus and status planning, and the policies that originate from acquisition planning are generally called 'language education policies' or 'language-in-education policies.' As conceptualizations within the field have broadened, the field has also seen a shift towards a more dynamic and eclectic approach to language education policies. Menken and García (2010)

highlight such dynamism in language education policies, arguing that they cannot be considered in a vacuum, but should be viewed as a "dynamic, interactive and real-life process" (p. 4) shaped by a particular context and people in it. Within this process they accentuate the central role that teachers take in implementing these policies and also stress that the contexts the teachers are situated in are not simply backgrounds but vital parts of the policies. The teachers are seen as agents of change and true policy and decision makers. We follow this relatively recent conceptualization in this chapter, first because it is congruent with the stance of the South Korean government in relation to curricular innovations. At least in documents, reforms concerning language-in-education always address teacher change by including measures such as recommendations for new teachers' classroom assessment, and revision of pre-and in-service teacher education (e.g., Ministry of Education Science and Technology, ca. 2011). The conceptualization is also relevant, because the case studies that are presented here particularly look at how teachers implement the policies.

We found the agendas and language of policy enactment theory (Ball, et al., 2012) particularly useful for our analysis and discussion. In tune with Menken and García (2010), policy enactment theory is interested in the policy implementation process and takes an eclectic approach in that it looks at the reciprocal relationship between policies and the actors of the policies. To illustrate, Ball, Maguire, Braun, and Hoskins (2011a) discuss how teachers are constrained by policies in their actions, talks, and even thoughts; and at the same time document teachers' adaptation and re-creation of the policies (Ball et al., 2011b).

The other critical issue that we wanted to address is the relationship between globalization and English. It is hard to deny that English has become the lingua franca of global communication. Many entities including governments and large corporations have purposefully adopted the language to propel their interests and needs in a globalizing world. While some say that English can be adopted as a neutral tool to be utilized solely for mutual understanding among peoples with different language backgrounds (Jenkins, 2006), there is also a significant amount of concern surrounding the spread of English and the impact it has. While it is true that East Asian governments have been able to appropriate English for their own purposes, critical perspectives on this trend argue that such avid investments come at an expense, in terms of negative influences on national and indigenous languages and cultures (Baldauf & Nguyen, 2012; Canagarajah, 1999; Piller & Cho, 2013; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). This debate also forms a frame of reference and context for this chapter.

3 The Context

3.1 Korean, the National Language Versus English, a 'National Religion'

Sociolinguistically, Korea is an 'ethnolinguistically homogeneous' society (Lambert, 1999). This implies that most Koreans speak a single language, although there are a relatively small number of linguistic minorities. With the continuous

increase of foreign migrant workers and interracial marriages, the demographic constitution of South Korea is rapidly changing. Nevertheless, the dominant image Koreans have of their country is that of ethnolinguistic uniformity. Koreans generally have a strong sense of pride for their language and the writing system of Hangul. On the other hand, modern South Koreans also have an extremely strong sense of dedication and zeal towards learning English. The enthusiasm is so intense that it has been described as a ‘national religion’ (Demick, 2002). As noted earlier, English is more than a foreign language in South Korea. It symbolizes modernity (Lee, 2006), personal competence, success and socioeconomic status (Choi, 2007). Shim and Park (2008) traced the history of English’s prestige in South Korea up to as early as the modern nation building process, and noted that English has always had a prominent symbolic value in South Korea as a language spoken by the rich and powerful. They argue that as the government propelled its globalization agenda in the early 1990s it appropriated English as an indispensable medium to achieve globalization. Subsequently, large corporations and institutions of higher education followed with the same attitude, further making English proficiency an essential requirement for entering schools, and securing and maintaining jobs. In effect, English proficiency now plays a gatekeeping role that ultimately impacts the real lives of most South Koreans. This led to individual investments in the private tutoring market of English teaching which is estimated to be the equivalent of five million US dollars per year at the K-12 level alone (Statistics Korea, 2012).

In spite of the enthusiasm and the amount of investments put into English education, South Koreans do not seem to be raking in such fruitful results. According to a recent analysis of English proficiency of 60 countries across four continents (excluding North America where English is the first language for most) conducted by the Swiss-based language learning company, Education First (EF), South Korea’s performance is very modest. Within a five-scale proficiency index ranging from very high proficiency to very low proficiency, it was classified under moderate proficiency (Education First, 2013). Among the 60 countries that were surveyed, South Korea was ranked 24th. To compare with other countries in the Asian region, South Korea was far behind Malaysia and Singapore which ranked 11th and 12th respectively. However, it performed slightly better than Japan, which closely trailed behind South Korea at 26th, and Taiwan and China which landed at 33rd and 34th respectively. Recent data from another English proficiency measure, the internet based TOEFL iBT tests released by the Educational Testing Service (2012), confirms the relative ranking of South Koreans’ scores in 2012 in comparison to the same Asian countries mentioned above. Again Singapore and Malaysia scored the highest at 89 and 98 respectively. South Korea lags behind these two countries at 82, but performed better than the other three countries, Taiwan, China, and Japan, which scored 78, 77, and 70. Such results may be explained by differences in the sociolinguistic contexts of these countries and their colonial history (For a comparative study of English language education policies in Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea incorporating these differences, see Choi, forthcoming). While South Koreans seem to be relatively high performing amongst the expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1992), nonetheless these results do not seem to reflect the amount of interest and

investment Korea puts into English education. Such interest and investment are described in the following section.

3.2 Educational System of South Korea

In South Korea, official English education starts in the third year of primary education. However, it is a known fact that children start learning English earlier than that, either through private pre-schools or publicly subsidized pre-schools that all include English education in their curricula. At the secondary level, English is a compulsory core subject until the first year of senior high school. Although English becomes an optional subject from the second year of senior high school, most students decide to take it due to its perceived importance. Students also receive a lot of English teaching outside of the realm of official public education, e.g., through conversation schools, as reflected in the astrological expenditure on private English education noted above.

Two distinctive characteristics of South Korea's English education policies are, first, frequent and numerous innovations, and second, the central role of the Ministry of Education (MOE). Since education, particularly English education, is considered a key agenda for the general public, it is very often utilized for political motives. This tendency contributes to frequent issuing of new educational initiatives and to policy overload. Such overload has found to cause teachers to experience innovation fatigue, burn-out and high levels of stress and hinder teachers from seriously engaging in any of the newly added innovations (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006; Stronach & Morris, 1994), and the findings seem to equally apply to teachers in South Korea. The second characteristic, that is, the centralization of agenda setting and of regulation of the implementation of policies by the MOE, means that regional educational offices need to quickly adapt to these policies, at least at the design and implementation level. This centralization of major decisions has created more coherence in some agendas, such as building students' communicative competence, which has been pursued for the past two decades.

The teacher education and recruitment system are features that have consistently been reinforced by South Korea's English education policy. Strong teacher education and the rigorous procedure of teacher recruitment are often listed as possible contributors to South Korea's global competitiveness in education as measured by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) (OECD, 2013). There are two ways to obtain certification to teach in a primary or secondary public school in South Korea. The first route is attending a 4-year education program at a college of education, a Kyoyukdaehak for the primary level and a Sabeomdaehak for the secondary level. The program covers both subject content and pedagogical theories and practice. If the candidate has undertaken a subject-focused Bachelor's degree, he or she needs to obtain additional education on pedagogy as a minor or double major in the BA program, or pursue an MA degree in an education-related subject.

Certification, however, only allows the applicants the opportunity to take the annual Teacher Recruitment Test in one of the 16 regional educational offices if they intend to work in public schools. The contents of the test are similar across those educational offices due to the requirement set by the MOE (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2006) that has been in effect from 2009. For example, the recruitment procedure for English teachers must include a written test on educational theories in general, an English essay test, an English interview, and microteaching conducted in English. Since 2008, the government has recruited English related degree holders to specialize in teaching conversational English without going through this rigorous recruitment procedure. This has incurred disputes over deprofessionalization of teaching, particularly because in some schools these teachers are also asked to teach English in general, not just conversation. To teach English at a private school, depending on the individual schools' policy, a candidate either directly applies to a particular school with a vacancy or takes the annual Private Teacher Selection Test conducted by the Private Schools Association.

Finally, another larger context which frames English education is the national college entrance exam called Suneung or Korean Scholastic Ability Test (KSAT). South Korean education is suffering from a strong backwash from KSAT, due to a feverish zeal for higher education (Seth, 2002; Tak, 2011). With the English section of KSAT being focused on the receptive skills of listening and reading and grammatical knowledge, English teaching practice in schools also focuses on these rather than the productive skills of speaking and writing. The government, in an attempt to change the goal of English education from learning about English to learning to use it, designed and piloted a test called the National English Ability Test to replace the current English section of the KSAT. However, in 2013, it decided to defer its full implementation, due to the technical difficulties of testing a large number of students simultaneously, and due to the unexpected impact of causing further hikes in individual household's expenditures on English education.

4 English Education Policies in South Korea

4.1 Past English Education Policies

To ascertain a deeper understanding of the present state of English teaching in South Korea, it is useful to look at how English teaching has evolved throughout the years. This history needs to be understood while taking into account the sociopolitical context. As Cooper (1989) argues, not only is language planning and language policy directly associated with political, economic and social considerations, but these "serve as the primary motivation" (p. 35). This section surveys curricular changes in English teaching, as reflected in the NEC after Korea's independence from Japanese occupation in 1948.

4.1.1 The First NEC: 1953–1963

After having been occupied by Japan for 35 years, Korea won its independence after Japan's defeat in World War II. However, while it may have become independent from Japan, the Korean peninsula was arbitrarily divided into two sides; the northern part aligned with the Soviet Union and China, and the southern part temporarily ruled by a US military administration. This situation led to the breakout of the Korean War. After an armistice was agreed to in 1953 the new South Korean government had a strong desire to eradicate vestiges of Japanese occupation and to reconstruct the country. These efforts towards reconstruction were supported by the US. This alignment with the US functioned as a major influence in the first NEC of modern South Korea. The first NEC was characterized by a strong allegiance to the US, exemplified by adopting American English as the standard form of English, and adopting pedagogies and educational philosophies that were in vogue in the US at that time, such as contrastive analysis and behaviorism, which was the basis for the Audio-lingual method (Choi, 2006; Lee, 2004).

4.1.2 The Second and Third NEC: 1963–1981

The 1960s and 1970s were substantially conducive in helping South Korea accomplish the level of development it has achieved today. President Park Jung-hee's authoritative military government, which quickly turned into a dictatorship, lasted for nearly 20 years until his assassination in 1979. President Park was strongly motivated to develop and modernize South Korea. The government's plans aiming at economic growth were forcefully pushed ahead, and a key part of it included cultivating South Korea's human resources.

In terms of English education, the MOE, the main actor in propelling the English education policies, came to acknowledge that instruction focused on grammar was not proving to be effective (Choi, 2006; Lee, 2004). Therefore, more emphasis was put on speaking and listening. This trend was short-lived and overturned by the third NEC when the government desired to strengthen its control over all aspects of the society, including education (Choi, 2006). The values of austerity and loyalty were highlighted, and instead of emphasizing communicative aspects of language learning, such as listening and speaking, as in the second NEC, the emphasis was switched back to grammar (Choi, 2006; Lee, 2004), and therefore creative or individual aspects of learning were restricted (Lee, 2004).

4.1.3 The Fourth and Fifth NEC: 1982–1994

After President Park's death, another military coup d'état placed President Chun Du-hwan in power. His government announced itself as a democratic state, although the authoritativeness of the previous government remained (Choi, 2006). This

political position was clearly reflected in the educational reforms that put weight on human-centeredness, autonomy and creativity. Significantly, the fourth NEC laid the foundation for primary English education. During this time, English was allowed to be taught as an extracurricular activity in primary schools for the first time. The rationale for this decision was to help primary level students develop an interest in English (Lee, 2004). At the secondary level, rather than focusing on one literacy skill, all four skills were emphasized and student-centered topics were introduced into the English teaching content. The hours of weekly English teaching in middle school were also increased. All of these changes were not independent of the preparation for the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988. The Olympic Games were seen as a breakthrough opportunity for South Korea.

Immediately before the Olympics, a new president, Roh Tae-woo, was elected as the first president to have been elected by democratic vote, and his government was fixated on ridding South Korea of remnants of the long history of the military regime (Choi, 2006). Therefore, the fifth NEC emphasized 'democratic' aspects in education. In English, communicative aspects of language were again accentuated, and listening was formally incorporated into the college entrance exam. For the first time the government's stronghold on textbooks was relatively loosened, and private publishers were allowed to develop English textbooks with the government's authorization.

4.1.4 The Sixth NEC: 1995–2000

Entering the 1990s South Korea started to truly claim itself as a competent contender on the global stage, and this was also when many revolutions in English teaching were drafted (Kwon, 2000). These would eventually come into effect in the new millennium. President Kim Young-Sam, elected in 1992, was the first president to be elected from the opposition party. The government adopted globalization as a real goal for the near future of South Korea (Armstrong, 2007; Park, Jang, & Lee, 2007). The government's globalization project was a "top-down reform to cope with the environmental uncertainty of the rapidly changing world" (Park et al., 2007, p. 342), and many changes were implemented in the name of globalization. However, as a result of this hurried globalization, the South Korean economy plummeted in 1997, eventually having to request a bail-out from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Against this backdrop, the sixth NEC was put into effect in 1995. The democratization efforts of the previous administration under President Roh Tae-Woo seemed to have had an effect in that by the sixth NEC, at least in rhetoric, individualism and human rights were underscored in education, and a practical approach to English teaching was embraced. Contrary to past curricula where communicative aspects such as speaking and listening were only emphasized in discourse, English teaching was now set on cultivating the communicative competence of students through methods suggested under the communicative approach (Choi, 2006; Kwon, 2000).

Fluency came to be emphasized over accuracy, comprehension became a focus over production in accordance to the tenets of the communicative paradigm, and a functional syllabus, as opposed to a structural, grammatical syllabus was adopted in textbooks. The hours per week devoted to English were also increased. It was at this time also that the South Korean government started to seek native-speaking English teachers from foreign countries by starting the ‘English program in Korea’ (EPIK). A discourse which urges language teaching at an early age (Choi, 2006) also emerged during this period.

4.2 Current English Education Policies and the Seventh NEC

The MOE’s long promoted goal of developing students’ communicative competence is still active in the current discourse of English education policies, as reflected in the recent series of multi-way plans such as *Yeongeo Gyoyuk Hwalseonghwa 5-Gaenyeon Jonghap Daechaek* [5-year Plan for Revitalization of English Education] in 2005, and *Yeongeo Gyoyuk Hyeoksin Bangan* [Innovation of English Education] (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2006).

The seventh NEC was developed to achieve this long-term goal of building students’ communicative competence, and was announced in 1997. It was put into full effect by 2001 in primary and middle schools, and 2003 in high schools. The most noteworthy feature of this NEC was the introduction of English as a regular subject in primary schools, starting at the third grade level. Despite strong opposition, primary English was to be put into effect in all schools by 2001 (Kwon, 2000). The realization of this policy at this particular time was made possible because of the government’s globalization plans. A “Globalization Steering Committee” was formed in 1995 to design potential reforms (Lee, 2004), and it conceptualized foreign language competence as a key tool for South Koreans to actively participate in the global community. In the seventh NEC, the English curriculum continued to focus on communicative competence and the adoption of the communicative approach with everyday conversational English proficiency set as the goal. At the same time, contrary to the anti-grammar characteristic of the sixth NEC, a grammatical-functional syllabus was adopted in textbooks, acknowledging the recently reclaimed role of grammatical knowledge in language learning.

The infrastructure for English education was further reinforced. With the booming advancement of technology and the internet, a great amount of money was invested to make possible multimedia-assisted learning, and to incorporate the internet into teaching. ‘English villages’ that were meant to provide a short-term full-English-immersion experience to K-12 students came into existence in several provinces throughout South Korea. Many native English-speaking teachers were invited from abroad by the EPIK program and stationed in public schools. The government also allowed diversification in college admission procedures, and students excelling in English were granted automatic admission (Choi, 2006).

Finally, during this period, a general dissatisfaction with the educational climate in South Korea that still hovers around the high-stakes KSAT triggered an expansion in the private sector of education. More and more families, especially wealthy ones, sent their children off to English-speaking countries for a better education. These trends also resulted in widened gaps between classes, causing ever-deepening rifts between the haves, who have the resources to fully provide for their children's education and the have-nots, who have little choice but to rely on public school education. Acknowledging such emerging phenomena, the government encouraged the establishment of relatively affordable after-school programs for those who do not have financial resources to use on private sector education.

Section four clearly shows that English education policies in South Korea are not only results of purely educational concerns but also results of the government's appraisal of national needs. In particular, in recent decades globalization and securing national and individual competitiveness have become key agendas, with English proficiency appropriated as an indispensable tool within this framework. As mentioned in an earlier section, profit-seeking corporations and institutes of higher education have also been adopting this framework following the government's lead, and excellence in English has become a universal goal at all levels, and for most economically active South Koreans.

As explained above, the MOE sets the direction for education, but it is the regional educational offices which design and execute localized plans to realize these government-level policies. In many cases, the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education (SMOE) takes the initiative to present their own practical plans to implement the new policies instituted by the MOE and other regions use the practical plans of the SMOE as bench-marks for their own implementation of the policies. On this basis, the rest of the chapter which concerns the implementation of the policies instituted by the MOE will focus on policy implementation by SMOE and its practice within schools in Seoul.

5 Enactment of English Education Policies

This section discusses two case studies, one from the primary level and the other from the secondary level, which showcase how the directives set by the MOE on developing students' communicative competence are implemented in practice. It also provides insights into why they bring on only modest changes in individual classrooms.

5.1 Case Study of Primary English Education: Seventh National Educational Curriculum

According to the English curriculum of the seventh NEC (MOE, 1997), English teaching at the primary level in South Korea aims to achieve the following overarching goals:

Students should

- Have an interest and confidence in English, and develop the basic skills to communicate in English.
- Communicate naturally with others about daily life and general topics.
- Understand the variety of information coming from foreign cultures, and cultivate the ability to utilize such information.
- Develop a new recognition for our culture by understanding foreign cultures and develop righteous values.

The curriculum is presented to teachers in the form of official curriculum documents, a teaching guide that accompanies the curriculum documents, and textbooks, and it follows the tenets of the communicative approach and emphasizes arousing and maintaining motivation to learn English. The curriculum specifies what and how teachers should teach, along with how they should assess the learning of their students. The literacy skills of listening, speaking, writing and reading are introduced sequentially.

Currently, English teaching starts officially in the first semester of third grade, and begins with listening. More specifically, in the first semester of the third grade students are only required to learn English through listening, therefore the textbooks contain nearly no written text. Then in the second semester of third grade, the alphabet is introduced. Later, after fourth grade, reading and writing are introduced. For each grade and for each literacy skill, the curriculum sets forth standards that should be achieved. The following are the standards that should be achieved in listening, which is the only aspect of language skills that is focused on in the first two years as specified in the NEC:

- Students are able to understand simple conversations in daily life.
- Students are able to understand simple and easy English expressions about objects or people around them.
- Students are able to listen to and act upon one to two sentence instructions or orders.
- Students are able to listen to simple and easy conversations and figure out the location and time the conversation occurred.
- Students are able to understand the contents of simple and easy role plays.
- Students can listen to simple and easy explanations of tasks and carry out simple tasks at hand.

These standards are reflected in the textbooks. Overall, the use of chants, songs and activities in instruction is also emphasized and the textbooks generally have these implanted within the content. In instruction the curriculum recommends that teachers make efforts to use only English and differentiate their instruction as situations permit.

The case study presented here, of which data were collected in 2009, looked at how primary level English teachers in Seoul implemented the policy, the seventh NEC, through observations and interviews with the teachers. The data were collected for a larger study (Chung, 2011) that collected both qualitative and quantitative data looking into how primary level English teachers in Seoul implemented the English

curriculum. Interview data were thematically analyzed and classroom observations were conducted with an observation protocol and subsequently coded to find patterns within and between the teachers. The findings revealed that while in general the teachers all followed the guidelines and believed they should follow them, they also modified how to implement the curriculum according to their own understandings of the curriculum, their own beliefs in terms of English learning, and their surrounding contexts. More specifically, the teachers did adhere to the government's guidelines to teach communicatively. For example, a lot of games, chants, songs, and role play were incorporated into lessons, and most lessons consisted of student-centered group work. On the other hand, the teachers were not mechanically following the promoted practices. The following quote demonstrates how a teacher teaching third grade English responded to her dissatisfaction with the textbooks that were written to reflect the sequential fashion of introducing each literacy skill. She notes that she makes her own material based on the textbook, and also notes that because of the lack of written text in the textbook it is not easy for students to go home and review what they have learned.

> The thing about the English subject is… since the textbooks don't have that much text… the teachers have to continue to develop worksheets. If the textbooks had the alphabet, key points and key sentences, then the students would be able to go home and review. However, because of the textbook, even if they want to self-study, they can't because the textbook is mainly pictures. There is the CD, but I feel like written language is not emphasized enough.

The teacher quoted below also shows how teachers use their discretion in enacting the curriculum. The seventh primary curriculum stresses that students should not feel a sense of pressure or anxiety due to assessment. It recommends formative assessment, as opposed to summative assessment so that results of assessment can help improve further teaching. It also promotes observational assessment. The report cards that students receive at the end of each semester do not give students a specific letter grade or score, but roughly indicate the students' performance by presenting marks such as 'good' or 'very good.' In the following quote, another third grade English teacher expresses the hardship she experiences in carrying out assessment, and explains that teachers can and will figure out their own methods of assessment depending on their circumstances.

> It's not like we can do anything, I mean, we can't put anything else in the formal report cards, but I think teachers who teach English will in their own ways have their own methods of assessment. There will probably be individual differences, but if the teacher feels like he or she wants his or her students to take away some vocabulary, then they will.

The examples of the two teachers above demonstrate that while government guidelines are set up to be abided by and the teachers think they should abide by them, in practice, the teachers do what they feel is necessary in their own contexts, such as assisting students' self-study and informing students of their level of achievement. They understand the policy and implement the policy, but how they implement it depends on their own interpretations, re-creations and negotiations.

5.2 Case Study of Secondary English Education: Teaching English in English (TEE) Scheme

The direction of the current English education policies in secondary education can best be illustrated through the Teaching English in English (TEE) scheme. The TEE scheme certifies in-service English teachers who exhibit their abilities to conduct lessons in English in a communicative way. The scheme was instituted in 2010 nationally at both primary and secondary levels, benchmarking the TEE scheme which the SMOE started the year before. Part of the reasons for its institution is the perceived low take-up of the policy on communicative teaching at the individual classroom level. The scheme has been revised a few times since its institution, and some more changes are in plan which will be in effect from 2015. The scheme described below is the version which was in effect from the end of 2011 (2012 for the advanced level) and will be applied up to 2014 (Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, 2011, 2012).

To briefly introduce the scheme, it is semi-voluntary in that all teachers with experience of 1 year or above are required to obtain the certificate, but there is no official disciplinary action against those who do not possess the certificate. The certification has two levels, basic and advanced. Before applying to receive the certification one needs to satisfy a prerequisite, a record of having attended at least 60 h of teacher training for the basic level and 600 h for the advanced level, heavily emphasizing continuous professional development. The certification procedure varies across the two levels. The basic level applicants should first attend an on-line educational program which discusses theories of language acquisition and some practical suggestions on how to teach English (e.g., teaching vocabulary). Then they are evaluated on their teaching on three different occasions. The advanced level candidates go through a much more rigorous process and also are required to fulfill more prerequisites. To apply for the advanced level, the candidate needs to have at least 10 years of teaching experience, and obtain recommendation from a head teacher, as well as a basic level TEE certificate. The candidates are assessed through interviews and portfolios on their ability to analyze and evaluate classes and mentor other teachers. Once they have passed these assessments, they receive an intensive training which prepares them to mentor other teachers.

The certification (Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, 2012) presents developing students' communicative competence as the goal of English education, and emphasizes motivating students to learn. The promoted ELT is featured by the following four principles (*Ibid*., p. 1) (as translated by the author):

- To maximize use of English, the target language, and utilize the mother tongue in an effective and flexible way;
- To ensure students' comprehension of the learning content and acquisition of English through communication;

- To ensure interactions between the teacher and the students and among students themselves in order to increase the opportunities to be exposed to language input; and
- To adopt student-centered task-based learning.

The principles again clearly reflect the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach which has been promoted from the sixth NEC, particularly Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) which is considered as 'the current orthodoxy' by some researchers of language educational pedagogy (e.g., Andon & Eckerth, 2009; Ur, 2013).

The case study presented below reports secondary school English language teachers' responses to ELT promoted by the TEE scheme as well as the responses from the teacher trainers. The study draws on data which were collected for a larger study which was conducted between 2010 and 2012. The data collected for the larger study include the policy documents of the TEE certification and practical documents generated for the certification, such as the manuals for teachers and the teacher training resources; semi-structured interviews with stakeholders including 13 teachers, assessors, and teacher trainers; and observation of the certification procedure. Teacher participants included both those who applied for the certification and those who did not. (See Choi, 2014; Choi & Andon, 2014 for further details of the scheme, its implementation and impact). The case study in this chapter draws on document data and interviews with teachers and teacher trainers. Thematic content analysis was conducted on the entirety of the data.

Of the 13 teacher participants, ten discussed their plan about future practice. Of those ten, three expressed unreserved adoption of the practice that they thought was promoted by the TEE scheme, whether they thought the focus was on the use of English as the medium of instruction or on the use of communicative activities, or both. The others explicitly or implicitly were expressing their view that the promoted practice was not suitable to the context. One expressed flexible adoption of it. Three did not relate their future practice with the TEE scheme, but described their future practice in terms of the content to be covered (e.g., textbook or NEC) or of the ways to draw students' attention (e.g., using attractive resources from the internet or giving feedback to students' work), indirectly pointing out the gap between the CLT and the teaching context (e.g., the NEC or student needs). The remaining three actively expressed their intention to keep the traditional way of teaching, which is often featured as explicit explanation of grammatical rules and focus on receptive skills of reading and listening.

Interestingly, despite such varied responses, all explained their choices as the effective way to teach English or to address the needs of learners. The three who supported the promoted practice considered that the pedagogic change aimed by the TEE scheme is the right way to teach English, whether they are currently practicing it or not. The one who expressed flexible adoption thought the lesson should be customised to the changing needs of learners, which sometimes may involve using Korean as the medium of instruction despite the policy of maximization of English use. Those who did not engage with the discourse of CLT or English as the medium

presented preparation for the KSAT or responding to lack of motivation to learn English as addressing learner needs. Finally, those who avowed allegiance to the traditional way of ELT all explicitly commented on the perceived incompatibility between the content of the KSAT, which is of significant importance to students, and the promoted teaching style, as the following teacher did:

> In senior high school, the students are under extreme pressure about the KSAT. Therefore, they want the teachers to go over the previous KSAT items, analyse them, and teach how to tackle them, the skills. And the TEE really doesn't work.

This teacher notes students' expectation to focus on the KSAT, which in turn pressures her to adhere to the traditional teaching style. All these responses from teachers show that teachers' perception of what constitutes effective ELT or addressing learner needs shape their practice in the classroom in response to the TEE scheme.

Perceptions of other actors such as the teacher trainers also shape the enactment of the TEE scheme. For instance, one of the teacher trainers of the training program for the advanced level asked teachers to aim at use of English for "5 % or 10 %" of their teacher talk rather than the official target of maximization of its use. During the interview, the trainer commented on his perception that the context is still unfavourable to adopting English as the medium despite the drastic change he observed during the past decade of his work experience in the context. The other factor which has kept a limited number of teachers from adopting the practice is their abilities. For instance, after a full month of intensive training a couple of participants still struggled to adopt the promoted practice, either due to their limited English proficiency or due to their limited understanding and/or abilities to realise communicative lessons (see Choi & Andon, 2014 for discussion of the manifestation of teachers' varied understanding of communicative teaching during the certification procedure). One participant comments on the difficulty she faces when she uses English as the medium even after she finished the whole certification procedure:

> I think I should at least do things like teacher talk in English, but in fact, if you keep using English, you get to speak in English easily, but if not, [the words] do not come out. If I try to use it spontaneously, I end up thinking "What was it?"

Some of those teachers who experienced such difficulties during their attempt to adopt the promoted practice blamed their incompetence. Others, perhaps legitimately, complained about the unreasonable expectation for teachers to adopt the practice right away after the short-term training through the certification process.

This case study of the TEE scheme in secondary education shows the central role played by teachers' beliefs and perceptions in deciding their responses to the policy initiatives, which is explored in depth in Glasgow and Paller (2015) in this volume. The teachers made varied pedagogic decisions in response to the TEE scheme based on their perception of the compatibility between the practice promoted by the scheme and their views of effective teaching. They also considered self-evaluated English proficiency in such decisions.

To conclude this section, the snapshot of teachers' views presented through the two case studies reveal several tensions in context regarding English education. In consideration of the general public's interest in enhancing English proficiency and

also to fulfil the government's agenda to elevate South Korea's status on the global stage by making all South Koreans into proficient English users, the government continues its efforts to make English teaching to be communication-oriented. Nonetheless, the teachers' accounts show that teachers act on their own agenda of significance, which is meeting the needs of students, whether that is assisting students' learning the language or passing the college entrance exam. This results in a variety of practices employed by teachers. As Ball et al., (2012) have depicted through their research, teachers are bound by policy, but in translating the policies into their own practice they also emerge as policy and decision makers in their own right. After all, "language education policies are the joint product of the educators' constructive activity, as well as the context in which this constructive activity is built" (Menken & García, 2010, p. 256). In other words, the end-product of language education policies results from a co-construction between the teachers who teach by and with the policies, and the various contextual factors that exist in their teaching environments. The findings also show that the English language education in South Korea can be seen as a case of linguistic imperialism that is warned against by some scholars (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007), as ELT related policies borrowed ideas of ELT pedagogy such as CLT and TBLT and presented them as the best approaches to ELT perhaps without really examining their compatibility with the context. However, teachers, as change agents, were exerting their own agency based on their local expertise and knowledge, and thus were resisting such imperialism, if any, with or without their self-awareness.

6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have contextualized and described the past and present of South Korea's English education policies. Within a century, South Korea has been able to transform itself from an underappreciated developing country to a trendsetting economic leader. Education, and to larger degrees in recent decades, English education, arguably, have made major contributions in propelling this growth. In effect the South Korean government has appropriated the English language as an essential element in helping South Korea and its people tosuccessfully interact with international communities and raise their visibility around the globe. Its English education policies have been constructed based on the government's assessment of what is necessary for this end. Consequently, following the government's lead, other institutions have also embraced English, and now South Korea as a whole has an intense fervor for the language. Since the 1990s the South Korean government has been aggressively pushing its globalization agenda, and within this framework English has come to be introduced at the primary level of schooling, and a communicative approach to ELT has been endorsed through various initiatives at all levels.

The case studies presented here investigate the degree to which this policy direction has bearing on actual practice as perceived by educational practitioners, particularly teachers. The teachers in both of the case studies agreed to the policies in

principle, but found the details of the policies rather incompatible with the context. For example, the sequential introduction of literacy skills and the recommended methods of assessment at the primary level, and the CLT approach and using English as the medium of instruction at the secondary level were aspects of the policy that teachers found problematic. Consequently, the teachers would choose to implement the policies in their own ways, depending on their unique contexts and their beliefs. In addition, policy actors in the South Korean context were exerting their agency rather than becoming blind adopters of Western-born pedagogical ideas, although their resistance was not always explicit, perhaps due to the influence of the oft-blamed culprit of Confucianism. Culture-bound acts of resistance toward curricular reforms informed by ideas borrowed from other contexts seem to request further research.

The accounts of these teachers and the trainers can have several implications for future policy making and practice. The translation from policy to practice is a convoluted and organic process that involves the interpretations and negotiations of all actors, particularly teachers and teacher trainers as mentioned in the second case study. The understanding that the procession from policy to practice is, as such, multifaceted and dynamic should be established in order for such policies to make any impact. English education policies, and language education policies in general, should not be seen simply as top-down or bottom-up, but interactive (Ball et al., 2012; Menken & García, 2010). The two case studies above show that the teachers, being the actual policy executors, have central significance in determining the outcomes of the policies. Ensuring that feedback from teachers is an imperative and organic element in the policy making and implementation process would enhance the success and satisfaction of all stakeholders in English education, most important of them all, the students.

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English Language Policy and Planning in Sri Lanka: A Critical Overview

Dilini Chamali Walisundara and Shyamani Hettiarachchi

Abstract The focus of this chapter is to provide an overview of English language policy and planning in Sri Lanka subsequent to 1978 with a detailed reference to some of the key historical aspects that led to the current situation. One of the key factors that is explored is the role of English as a link language as imbued in the constitution of Sri Lanka and its significance in the development of English language teaching and learning in the country. For this purpose, a set of key variables in the form of students' performance at national level examinations, the allocation of English teachers in the country, the issue of English language learners with disability and teacher allocation for English medium instruction have been used. The data reviewed covered a period close to 15 years in some instances and the analysis revealed a considerable disparity between policy decisions, investments made and the subsequent results of such actions demanding a need to re-evaluate the implementation of such policies.

Keywords English language policy • Planning • Sri Lanka disability • Link language

1 Introduction

Language can be defined as the single most powerful form of communication among different groups of individuals in the world. It mostly functions as a unifying force among different ethnic and religious groups but has also led to conflicts in many parts of the world where wars have been waged and new boundaries created based on linguistic diversity. Crystal (1997) as cited in Coperahewa (2009)

D.C. Walisundara (✉)
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka
e-mail: dilini_chamali@yahoo.com

S. Hettiarachchi
University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Curtin University, Bentley, WA, Australia (Adjunct Lecturer)

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reiterates this point by suggesting that 'different linguistic groups wish to see their language identities and interests maintained and may actively campaign for recognition' (p. 69). Thus, a strong focus on the rights and liberties of different linguistic communities is warranted within a political, socio-economic and linguistic setting where political identities of many nations are built on ethnic and linguistic identities. Therefore, bilingualism, trilingualism, multilingualism and multi-ethnicism are rapidly becoming the norm if not the necessity in the formation of language policy and practice. Sri Lanka too, like many of its South Asian neighbours, is faced with a number of issues related to language policy and is attempting to find ways to negotiate these new demands on language policy.

In this context, the role of English in Sri Lanka has been a rather contentious issue resulting in numerous ideological definitions relating to its status in colonial and postcolonial Sri Lankan societies. While English enjoyed a privileged status during the colonial era, its status transformed with independence in 1948. Subsequent governments responded to more populist demands and 'dethroned' (Gunesekera 2005, p. 15) English with the anticipation of promoting the vernacular languages. The result of this attempt was the formulation of Sinhala only policy of 1956, which led to divisions among the majority race, the Sinhalese, and other minority language users. Subsequent policy changes have focused more on issues pertaining to two important vernacular languages in the country, i.e. Tamil and Sinhala. A noteworthy policy change in post-independent Sri Lanka in relation to English was the recognition of English as a link language by the 13th amendment to the 1978 constitution in 1987. The term link language has been defined in the local context to be a facilitator of better communication between the different ethnic groups in the country. However, in the broader context, it could also be representative of a more open economic system leading to the link between Sri Lanka and the world. Within this context, this paper hopes to address the following:

1. An identification of the specific English language policy and planning decisions that have been proposed and implemented subsequent to 1978.
2. To analyze some of the key indicators of English language policy implementation. This includes student performance at public exams, allocation of teachers, disability access to learning English etc.

2 Language Policy and Planning: A Theoretical Overview

Many assume that language policy involves political participation in its formation and implementation. Spolsky (2004) offers three considerations in relation to the language policy of a speech community.

1. Its language practices – the habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire.

2. Its language beliefs or ideology – the beliefs about language and language use
3. Any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management. (p. 05)

As per the first two considerations, language policy does not involve the establishment of it being made explicit by any authority (p. 08). It involves affording the choice to the language user, irrespective of the absence or presence of an established system to ensure the right to do so. The third, on the other hand, involves the intervention of the government or other interested parties that is expected to make opportunities available for the learner to learn and use the language. Coperahewa (2009) identifies language policy as that what is 'commonly developed and applied at the national level' (p. 73). Spolsky (2004) (as cited in Coperahewa, 2009) asserts that language policy refers to all the language practices, beliefs and management decisions of a community or polity (p. 09).

Language policies are in most instances politically determined and language planning is inexplicable linked to it (Coperahewa 2009, p. 73). Therefore, the identification of the diverse aspects of planning is essential to better comprehend the process of implementation and the impact of policy.

Language planning has been defined by Rubin (1971) (as quoted in Raheem and Ratwatte 2001) as 'the pursuit of solutions to language problems through decisions about alternative goals, means and outcomes to these problems.' Similarly, Coperahewa (2009) citing Fishman (1974), Jernudd and Das Gupta (1977), explains that 'language planning is a 'decision making' process seeking to solve 'language problems, typically at the national level.' The argument proposed by both is the strong political presence in the process, which supports Raheem and Ratwatte's (2001) claim that 'the nation or government is the sole agent making the choice, and that it chooses from available alternatives ranked according to their value or usefulness in achieving specified goals' (p. 25). However, lately, many researchers have begun to question the presence of political power in policy and planning and its implications particularly in relation to the issue of minority language rights.

Language planning could be broadly defined as 'a body of ideas, laws, and regulations (language policy), change rules, beliefs, and practices intended to achieve a planned change (or to stop changing from happening) in the language use in one or more communities' (Baldauf 1990 as cited in Coperahewa, 2009).

Language planning today mainly focuses on four major aspects, namely status planning, corpus planning, acquisition planning and finally prestige planning. The earliest reference to status and corpus planning was made by Heinz Kloss in 1969 while acquisition planning was introduced by Cooper in 1989 (cited in Hornberger, 2006). Hornberger refers to three of these major aspects in language planning:

> We may think of status planning as those efforts directed toward the allocation of functions of language/literacies in a given speech community, corpus planning as those efforts related to the adequacy of the form or structure of languages/ literacies; and acquisition planning as efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of languages/literacies, by means of creating or improving opportunity or incentive to learn them or both (p. 28).

Similarly, Coperahewa (2009), Cooper (1989) and Haarmann (1990) elaborate on the different definitions of status, corpus and acquisition planning with the inclusion of a new aspect, prestige planning. Accordingly, status planning is said to '… deal with the initial choice of language including attitudes toward alternative languages and the political implications of various choices' (p. 73). Comparatively, corpus planning refers to '… the internal structure of the language and involves activities such as coining new terms, reforming spelling and standardising a language' (p. 73). Acquisition planning looks ' . . . to efforts to enable individuals or groups to learn a language, either as first, as a second or as a foreign language' (p .73). Finally, prestige planning is about '. . . creating a favourable psychological background that is crucial for the long-term success of language planning activities' (p. 73). Balduaf (2006) holds a similar view as he explains status planning to be about society while corpus planning focuses on language and acquisition planning or language – in – education deals with learning and finally prestige planning is about the image.

Language – in – education or acquisition planning is commonly known as language education policy (Spolsky, 2004; Baldauf, 2006). Referring to Language Education Policy (LEP), Shohamy (2006), argues, that it is …'a mechanism used to de facto language practices in educational institutions especially in a centralised education system (p. 76). However, this may seem rather different in a postcolonial situation where language education policy, particularly relating to colonial languages seems comparatively different. As in the case stated by Phillipson (1992), where he argues that 'ELT (English Language Teaching) is mostly funded and oriented by the State, in the Centre and the Periphery (p. 68). In such a situation, there is strong government involvement as well as participation in the introduction as well as the implementation of such a policy. Elaborating further on the issue of LEP, Shohamy (2006), argues that LEP refers to the implementation of LP (Language Policy) decisions in the specific contexts of schools, universities in relation to home languages (previously, referred to as 'mother tongue') and to foreign and second languages (p. 76). Therefore, LEP can be defined as situations where opportunities and decisions regarding the teaching and learning of languages are made available.

There have been numerous theoretical bases in the development of language policy and planning with the earliest being that of Haugen (1959) who argued that language policy dealt with simplistic concerns like orthography, grammar and structure (as cited in Hornberger 2006). Subsequent attempts as those formed at international conferences resulted in publications like *Language Problems of Developing Nations* (Fishman, Ferguson, and Das Gupta, 1968) as well as *Can Language be Planned* (Rubin and Jernudd, 1971). A more recent attempt in this regard would be the intergrative framework cited by Hornberger, 2006 in Ricento 2006 (Table 1).

According to the framework, education/ school and literary that come under acquisition planning, focus on the policy planning approach where as foreign language, second language and literacy come under cultivation planning approach. Therefore, the functions and the formation of the education system in a country including the process of learning and teaching a second or foreign language should be assessed and analyzed in order to comprehend the issues or concerns relating to Language Education Policy.

Table 1 Language planning goals: an integrative framework (Hornberger, 2006, p. 29 as cited in Ricento 2006)

Approaches types	Policy planning (on form) goals	Cultivation planning (on function) goals
Status planning (about uses of language)	Officialization Nationalization Standardization of status Proscription	Revival Maintenance Spread Interlingual communication International, Intranational
Acquisition planning (about uses of language)	Group Education/school Literary Religion Mass media Work ----------------------------------- **Selection** Language's formal role in society *Extra-linguistic aims*	Reacquisition Maintenance Shift Foreign languages/second language/ literacy ----------------------------------- **Implementation** Language's functional role in society *Extra-linguistic aims*
Corpus planning (about language)	Standardization of corpus Standardization of auxiliary code Graphization ----------------------------------- **Codification** Language's form *Linguistic aims*	Modernization (new functions) Lexical Stylistic Renovation (new forms, old functions) Purification Reform Stylistic simplification Terminology unification ----------------------------------- **Elaboration** Language's functions *Semi-linguistic aims*

Describing further, in the process of planning and policy, one can also identify the complex process that involves a variety of agents and decisions at different levels (Raheem and Ratwatte, 2001). This is demonstrated in Fig. 1. Here Ricento and Hornberger (as quoted in Raheem and Ratwatte 2001), explain that

> …at the outer layers of the onion are the broad language policy objectives articulated in legislation or high court rulings at the national level which may then be operationalized in regulations and guidelines; these guidelines are then interpreted and implemented in institutional settings (e.g. schools, businesses, government offices); in each of these contexts individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences and communities interact. At each layer, characteristic patterns of discourse, reflecting goals, and values, institutional or personal identities (sic).

Unlike in the previous framework, this gives a very clear view of the different layers of policy formulation and implementation. The most notable feature of this being the central role played by the school and by extension the teacher in implementing language policy. In this light, Raheem and Ratwatte (2001) observe that 'they

Fig. 1 The dynamics of language planning (Cited in Raheem & Ratwatte (2001) based on Ricento and Hornberger (1996))

unambiguously place the ELT professional at the heart of the whole process.' Therefore, an analysis of teaching and learning methods, teacher training, medium of instruction, language tests and testing mechanism as well as the role of the classroom (Auerbach 2000) are important in comprehending the implementation of Language Education Policies. Elaborating further Auerbach (1995) (cited in Raheem and Ratwatte 2001), argues that 'the day – to – day decisions that practitioners make inside the room both shape and are shaped by the social order outside the classroom' (p. 05). She further explains on other factors that will affect teaching, namely, the classroom setting, curriculum development, instructional content, teaching material and language choice (Raheem and Ratwatte 2001, p. 27). Therefore, one cannot underestimate the significant role played by language teachers, in this particular situation.

3 Development of English in Sri Lanka

The history of English in Sri Lanka is intertwined with the politics of language status, policy, privilege and power. It has been, and continues to be, the language of higher education, commerce and technology, science and private sector employment. It is a language that is both desired and feared, in what Goonetilleke (1983) calls a

'love-hate relationship'. Desired, as it promotes social mobility and feared, as it has the power to exclude from the upper echelons of society.

The fall of the last Sinhalese Kingdom in 1815 witnessed the colonization of the entire island by the British. Introduced at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the British, English became the language of administration, clearly establishing its place as an 'official' language. The situation in Ceylon in relation to the teaching and learning of English was rather poor. It has been recorded that *Swabasha*[1] schools served best, in terms of promoting Christianity and minimal attempts were made to promote the teaching of English (Sumathipala 1968, p. 04). Sumathipala, elaborates a more active and liberal role taken by the American Missionaries, in educating the local community in the Northern Province of the country in the English language, so much so that there was significant teaching of the language in the province (p. 04). However, by the 1830s, 'not more than 800 children attended schools and classes where English was taught (Sumathipala, p. 04).

This was cemented by the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission of 1833, in its recommendation of English as both a medium of instruction within administration and education (Mendis 1956). English also became the language of the courts of law. Knowledge and proficiency in English became the prerequisite to achieve employment in administration. The Colebrooke report affirmed that 'A competent knowledge of the English language should however be required in the principal native functionaries throughout the country' (Mendis, p. 70). This extends to the appointment of native headsman who were required to be literate in English following a directive in 1828 (Coperahewa 2009).

The Colebrooke-Cameron Commission Report is thus the first official decree related to language policy: language status planning and language acquisition planning in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). The Commission championed the dissemination of English for the empowerment of Sri Lankan citizens arguably to the detriment and marginalization of the vernacular or indigenous local languages. The Commission's report appears unconvinced by the merits of the education system in government schools of the time in the vernacular, focusing solely on reading and writing (Mendis 1956). The report, in turn, advocates the founding of English-medium schools. This reflects the colonial perspective at the time of improving and 'emancipating' the colonized through language and religion (Mendis 1956).

The Colebrooke – Cameron Commission is also believed to one of the earliest involvements of the colonial government in terms of education policy in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). The commission recommended that vernacular education be replaced with English medium education in selected schools in Sri Lanka. In the words of Colebrooke (cited in Sumathipala 1968, p. 05), 'to aid the disposition already evinced by the natives to cultivate European attainments, some support from the government will still be required,' stating the importance of government intervention in education in order to ensure the promotion of English language users in the country that would contribute to 'the acquirement of a competent class of candidates for general employment in the public service, who would unite local information with

[1] The policy that promoted the use of only Sinhala as the official language in the country.

general knowledge, and would eventually be capable of holding responsible situation upon reduced salaries (cited in Sumathipala, p. 08). However, the existing situation with regard to English language teaching and learning was insufficient for such purposes as reflected in the words of J.J.R. Bridge (February, 1912),

> At the end of the 7 to 10 years of English education with a narrow curriculum and thoroughly examination centred, only 20% who leave school pass the Junior Local. The other 80% has only a smattering of English, often useless even for a mere clerical job. (Sumathipala, 1948, p. 44)

As such until Independence in 1948, English functioned as the official language in the country with the development of the two vernacular languages (Sinhala & Tamil) being pushed to the periphery. The table given below is a clear indication of the state of language literacy in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century (Table 2).

According to the table, there is no evidence of English language literacy in the early years of British colonialism. However, according to the statistics that are available, English language literacy in the first decade of the twentieth century is less than 4 %. Clearly after almost 100 years of colonial rule which began in 1815, Ceylon could only achieve a very low proficiency in English, especially after 80 years of implementing the Colebrooke – Cameron commission recommendation relating to English medium education.

1948 brought independence to Sri Lanka from British rule and since then, the country has witnessed the introduction of numerous policy decisions in terms of language. A summary of these policies has been presented by Gunesekera (2005) and is given below (Table 3).

Subsequent to independence in 1948, English still remained as the official language of Sri Lanka. However, after close to 150 years of British colonial rule, the literacy in the English language remained quite low. Doric de Souza commenting on this situation, stated,

> …on the eve of the Dominion Status, only 6 % of the population was reported in the census as literate in English, although the test for this literacy was almost elementary (de Souza (1979) reproduced in Fernando, Gunasekera & Parakrama 2010, p. 31)

de Souza's views on English language proficiency is resonant with the information that was made available at the Department of Census and Statistics (1952) as given below (Table 4).

Table 2 Literacy in Ceylon (Taken from Sumathipala (1968) p. 48)

	Literacy in any language			
Year	Males	Females	Total	Literacy in English
1871	23.1	2.0	25.1	–
1881	29.8	3.1	32.9	–
1891	36.1	5.3	41.4	–
1901	42.0	8.5	50.5	3.0
1911	43.3	11.7	55.0	3.3

Table 3 Milestones of English language in Sri Lanka (Gunasekera, 2005, The Postcolonial Identity of Sri Lankan English p. 15)

Date	Event
1948 Dominion Status	Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) gains independence from Great Britain. English remains the only official language of independent Ceylon
1956 Official Languages Act	Sinhala becomes the only official language of Sri Lanka. English is dethroned
1956 & 1958	Language riots to protest against the Sinhala only administration
1971 Youth Resurrection	Rebellion by non-English speaking youth
1972 Constitution	Sri Lanka is declared a Republic. Sinhala remains the only official language, with Tamil as a national language
1978 Constitution	A new constitution is adopted by the government of Sri Lanka. The official language of Sri Lanka is Sinhala. Sinhala and Tamil are declared national languages
July, 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Accord	Sinhala, Tamil and English are declared official language of Sri Lanka
November 1987 13th Amendment to the Constitution	English is the link language, Sinhala and Tamil are the official languages of Sri Lanka
1997 Education Reforms	English is introduced in Grade 1 in schools English medium instruction from Grade 5 permitted in schools with the means to do so. General English Introduced as a new G.C.E. Advanced Level subject

Table 4 Language proficiency in English – 1946 (Source: Department of Census and Statistics (1952) cited in Coparehewa, 2009)

Ability to speak English only	0.2 %
Ability to speak English and Sinhala	2.9 %
Ability to speak English and Tamil	1.9 %
Ability to Speak English, Sinhala and Tamil	2.4 %
Total	7.4 %

The socio-political underpinnings of English have been discussed by many when referring to the issue of language policy and planning in Sri Lanka. English was, until independence believed to be the privilege of a minority of the community who mostly consisted of elites and those who were closely affiliated with the church. English medium education was the norm with limited access to indigenous forms of education for the masses which consisted of Sinhala and Tamil monolinguals. This witnessed a change with independence in 1948 and the emergence of vernacular forms of education as well as its presence in more government places, communication, education, entertainment and social activities. Furthermore, it was the English language that raised these people to their positions of power, and it was the English language that.... ensured that they will remain in these positions (Kandiah 1984, pp. 124–125) as quoted in Raheem and Devendra (2007).

The post independent years in Sri Lanka were probably the most tumultuous in terms of language policy. These policies have led to enormous dissent between the

majority and the minority ethnic, linguistic communities so much so that by the late 70s a policy intervention seemed inevitable. This will be further elaborated later in this chapter.

The 1970s witnessed a critical period in the political history of Sri Lanka. While there were changes in policies towards a socialist orientation with a strong focus on 'home spun' solutions to many of the country's problems, as well as limitations in trade and other relations with many countries, despite the government's preference for a policy of non-alignment. Furthermore, there was a policy of nationalisation which resulted in the taking over of many of the economic assets that were run by large multinational companies. This was also a time of civil unrest in the country, where an insurgency that was headed by many educated unemployed youth from the South of the country. In terms of language policy too, this period witnessed the extension of the some of the post-independence policies on language where Sinhala was given prominence over other languages like Tamil and English. However, several attempts have been made during this time to develop English in the country. The de Lanerolle Report compiled in 1973 titled, 'A Place in the Sun', was a report of the Committee of Inquiry into the teaching of English in schools in Sri Lank which contained a number of useful suggestions. These suggestions included the commencement of teaching English in Grade 06 with a preliminary year in Grade 5, the establishment of regional units to teach English, the modification of the 'structural' method of teaching and the establishment of an English Language Centre for study and research. Unfortunately, although the report was submitted to the government 'it was not published' (Govt. Publications Bureau, April, 1982 p. 162) and therefore the recommendations could not be fully implemented.

4 English as a Link Language

Sri Lanka's political sphere witnessed another important change in 1977 with the election of the new government that initiated a number of reforms. The most significant of these saw a change in government policies where the focus was towards 'global rather than indigenous realities' (Raheem and Ratwatte 2004 p. 28). Many new developments in different areas of the economy, agriculture, irrigation and other programmes were introduced with the involvement and participation of foreign agencies and investors. Furthermore, with the liberalising of trade, investment opportunities were now open to foreign investors. The opening up of Free Trade Zones, and private sector employment and the involvement in the tourist industry demanded an increase in the use of English. A change in policy had its direct impact on language policy where more opportunities were made available for locals as well as overseas investors while encouraging the growth of the private sector which resulted in more private sector employment. As a result, a 'popular outcry for English arose and it was not as a 'library language' but as a language for everyday

communication in a variety of social and job-oriented situations' (Cumarathunga, 1986). The provision of recognising English as a link language was made available in the 1978 Constitution by the 13th Amendment which was brought in to effect in 1987 with the expectation that English would function as a force that could unify the two main ethnic groups in the country. K.M. de Silva (1993) proposes a similar view when he states that.

> While English education had become a badge of social and cultural superiority, and had elevated the English education to the position of a privileged minority …, the English language served a politically useful role as an important unifying factor in the country (pp. 276–77).

Cumarathunga (1986), is of the view that the communal riots in 1983 have also renewed the demand for English as a link language to better enable the communication between the Sinhala and Tamil communities while Canagarajah addresses the specific local and international circumstances where English function as a link language. According to Canagarajah (1999),

> The International hegemony of English still looms over Colombo government's ministries of education, commerce, and communication. It serves as a link language between these institutions and the civilian population, so the Education Ministry, for instance is forced to use English, rather than Sinhala, when corresponding with Tamil parents, teachers and education officers. The Tamil community also needs English as a bridge to the symbolic and material rewards that are tied to the international education and professional centres (p. 71).

Raheem and Devendra (2007) note of similar circumstances in relation to the role of English within the Sinhala community.

> …English functioned at the micro level of social life in the community. At the international level Sri Lanka as a member of the global community needed an international language for communication, for the use of Sinhala on the global scale was limited. Furthermore, Sri Lanka was essentially a trading country, at the national level too, certain branches of state administration (commerce and trade) had necessarily to function in English (p. 191).

The problem with the position of the English language was not limited to trade, commerce, education and administration, there were ideological concerns that deserve attention. A strong affiliation that the language has to the British colonial history of this country and its subsequent impact on the social fabric of the country has led to the emergence of a resistant ideology towards the language. Locals with strong affiliations to the English language earned social prestige and power while dethroning the masses of the country of such similar privileges. There was deep resentment among those who spoke the native languages that 'a potent and particular Sri Lankan metaphor arose for the English Language' (Raheem and Devendra 2007, p. 190) The term '*Kaduwa*' which when translated means sword is referred to English, expressing its 'hostility and bitterness and used as a metaphor for English (p. 190) and the English Language Teaching Units in the local universities are called '*Kammala*', which translated to the ' blacksmith's house'; a place where you go to sharpen your '*Kaduwa*' or sword. Kandiah (1984) explains the metaphor as it crystallizes the socio-political-psychological attitudes of the … man who has no

chance of beating the English dominated system… The sword, he knows, if grasped firmly in his own hands will endow him with the power … to live with dignity in terms of equality with other men; in someone else's hands, it remains the instrument of his oppression, the means of his subjugation (Kandiah, p. 139).

5 Language Education Policy: 1978 to the Present

A number of government policy statements related to education as stated by de Silva and Gunewardene (1986), were among the eight policy statement that had been laid out by the government of 1978 and the last of these focused on the development of the English language and is stated as follows:

> To assure that English and other international languages are taught to an adequate level of proficiency in out – schools so that the country could have every opportunity of taking the fullest advantage of the advancement among the nations in science, technology and arts (p. 01)

In addition, there were a number of legislative acts that were passed in line with some of the early policy statements as well as commission reports to look into the possibility of developing English. The changes covered a variety of areas pertaining to the teaching and learning of English. There were a number of problems that were identified by the late 70s and the early 80s that demanded urgent attention. In keeping with the objectives of the 1977 government policy statement, The Education Reforms Committee (ERC) of 1979 formulated a report titled 'Towards Relevance in Education' which was published in 1982 and looked into all aspects of education in Sri Lanka. Chapter XVI of the report deals with 'The Role of English' and there are a number of useful recommendations that have been made in relation to the development of English in the country. While the report endorses the recommendations made by the de Lanerolle Report; A Place in the Sun, including a realistic approach to the teaching of English Literature and the extended use of the mother tongue in teaching the second language (ERC, p. 162), The ERC further recommended the following:

1. The differentiation of teaching programme for different ability groups in English.
2. The appointment of a Director of Education (English) who will be in charge of the TESL programmes for the nation and also act as advisor to the Regional Boards with regard to their own procedures for the improvement of English.

The ERC made a set of additional recommendations that English be taught in school from Grade 06 onwards and in the event that there is a 'minimal' English environment, teaching can begin from Grade 05 with the support of the Regional Boards of Education who will be conducting introductory courses. The Regional

Boards of Education were also given the authority to start teaching English at lower levels, according to the resources available, so as not to interfere with the policy of providing the students with the best possible grounding in Grade 06 (p. 163). One of the most key recommendations of the ERC which is mentioned in Chapter XVII, which focuses on English for admission to institutions of higher education. It is recommended, that those aspiring to get admission to the university must be required to show proof of their having reached a satisfactory standard of attainment in English for which purpose there should be a general paper in English language as part of the G.C.E. AL Examination. While the Commission did anticipate, a resistance to this recommendation, they suggested that in the event, that it was decided to be implemented, students who are currently in Grade 8 will be those who will be affected first giving the others five years to prepare for the examination. It further adds that since there were students who secured admission to National Universities from highly specialised fields like Medicine and Engineering, securing this entry qualification should not be difficult, provided that the facilities are made available for the schools in rural Sri Lanka. The strongest recommendation of this committee was that teaching English in schools commence from Grade 5 and that English teaching in primary grades be suspended. The committee report contains a number of points in support of this recommendation, both pedagogical and other. However, the Education Proposals for Reforms, submitted by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Youth Affairs & Employment of 1981, recommended that English be taught from Grade 3 upwards with the initial concentration of resources from Grade 6 upwards. In addition to recommendations made for the creation of the English Unit in the Ministry of Education to coordinate all work relating to the teaching of English in schools, preparing text books and other teaching material, curriculum development work, pre-service and in-service teacher training and evaluation (English Unit, NIE, 2001)

The 1980s witnessed many other policy decisions in terms of recruitment of teachers and the establishment of a number of institutes for the development of English. Primarily, amongst them is the decision to provide free text books to pupils studying from Grade 1–10 in all schools, (de Silva and Gunawardene, 1986, p. 19) to establish the National Institute of Education (NIE) which will be responsible for developing curricula and to extend the pre-service training from three weeks to three years (two years within an institution and a year of practical training. In addition, the Higher Institute of English Education (HIEE) was established in 1985 which concentrated on teacher training and TESL courses for teachers at primary and secondary levels. Although, the HIEE lasted for a very short period of five years, it introduced a large number of programmes in the area of teacher training. Many of its staff members were sent overseas for training and postgraduate courses to reputed universities in the UK. The HIEE conducted a number of English teacher training programmes like the Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language, a staff course for Professional In-service English Teacher Training Programme (Prinsett), Certificate courses in Linguistics for English language educators, in addition

to the short term courses for Maldivian English teachers. Given the shortages of English language teachers in the country, District English Language Centres (DELICS) were organised around country, where 19 such centres were established in 18 districts, and training was done with the help of Peace Corps and American Field Service (AFS) volunteers.

By the early 1980s Sri Lanka had re-established some of its links with a number of foreign agencies. Their involvement was mostly in curriculum development, material design and teacher training. The Asia Foundation which had ceased all its activities in the 1970s reopened its office in Sri Lanka in 1980 (Gunawardena, 2009). Many of these foreign agencies worked very closely with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education in order to develop English language teaching and learning in Sri Lanka. The Asia Foundation provided four consultants to the University Grants Commission in 1982 to develop the English language in the nine universities in the country where they designed an intensive course for incoming students as well as 'English for Special Purposes course for different fields of study like science, medicine and law (Gunawardena). In 1980, Key English Language Teaching Programme (KELT) was initiated to train English language teachers to be better in English speech and was organised in collaboration with the British Council. The selection of teachers for this programme was based a selection test. Many of the programmes under the HIEE were with foreign collaborations such UNESCO, British Council, RELC, The Fulbright Foundation, Peace Corps, and AFS (Cumarathunga, 1986).

Much of the material that was developed in the 80s, such as English for Me was done with the assistance of foreign consultants and was designed with the assistance of UNESCO and Norway while English Everyday was done under the direction of Gerald Mosback, a British Council consultant who worked with a large number of local teachers and designed a text books for Grades 7 to 11. A text book titled 'An Integrated Course in English for A-Level was developed for Grades 12–13 with the assistance of the Fulbright Foundation (Cumarathunga, 2012). There was also a need to increase the students who were following English literature as a subject for the Advanced Level examination which was around 500 applicants in the early and mid-80s.

The 90s also brought in a number of new policy decisions. Contrary to policies in the 80s, the 90s witnessed the commencement of teaching English in primary schools as early as from Grade 1 where English will be taught for communication purposes in activity classes. There were also two levels of assessment at the G.C.E. OL for English and measures were taken to make English a compulsory subject to be taught at the G.C.E. AL (English Unit, NIE 2001). The Presidential Task Force on General Education – Sri Lanka published a report titled '*General Education Reforms*' which was published in 1997 and was cited by the English Unit of the NIE, in its policy document published in 2001 which states the following.

1. From 1999, English is used in Grade 1 and 2 for oral communication.
2. Formal teaching of English with the use of necessary texts and guidebooks to begin in Grade 3 and develop from there onwards. Additional material in the form of supplementary books and audiocassettes will be used.

3. English will be a core subject for Ordinary level examination (Grade 10) (sic)
4. An assessment of the capacity of the current English language teachers in the secondary system to teach the General English course.
5. General English introduced for Advanced level from September, 1999.(Grade 13) (sic)
6. An assessment made of the capabilities of the teachers now teaching English at secondary level to teach General English.

Consequently, a number of new projects for the development of English was introduced in the next decade. In 2000, under the Primary English Language Project (PELP) initiated as a collaborative project between the NIE and the British Council, text books for Grade 3, 4 & 5 were published. This project also provided a number of local material developers and writers with the necessary training (Cumarathunga, 2012) and in the words of Fernando (2001), 'training local staff was high on the agenda of the funding agency… its ultimate goal, however, was to break the reliance on outside help for such activities by leaving behind sufficient sustainable capacity in-country at the end of the project' (p. 97). The design of other text books for secondary schools was now done solely by local resource persons under the supervision of a local consultant. Furthermore, a General English text book was also designed with the collaboration of academics from three national universities; the Universities of Colombo and Kelaniya and the Open University of Sri Lanka and the National Institute of Education (NIE). By this time, the ESL material development for secondary and higher grades was solely done by local material developers and consultants.

The National Educational Commission Report of 2003, paid special attention to the promotion of English education, given the success of some of the projects that were implemented in the late 1990s. The Report clearly identifies two factors that had contributed to this change in attitude and promotion.

1. English has emerged as a critical factor in graduate employment, particularly in the context of a shrinking public sector and an expanding private sector.
2. English is currently the main language of information and communication technology and is a gateway to a vast exciting store house of knowledge to students.

(National Education Commission Report, 2003, p. 176)

By 2003, Sri Lanka was prepared to introduce a bilingual system of education. Therefore, many policy reforms were introduced to enhance English medium education in junior secondary and higher classes. The main objective behind the bilingual policy was to 'provide an enabling environment to ensure that all students, irrespective of socio-economic and/or regional disparities, have the opportunity to acquire the level of English proficiency adequate for higher education and career advancement' (p. 178). Find below some of the important recommendations the Report proposed.

1. The introduction of teaching of Science and Technology, Mathematics, Information Technology, Environmental Studies and Social Studies in the English medium in all schools and not only to those who have opted to do so.

2. Schools with no qualified teachers in the English medium subjects are to be provided with teachers from the annual output of National Colleges of Education, the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Universities.
3. Curriculum and materials should be developed in English, and Science, Mathematics and IT materials used in schools in the UK, India, and USA can be adapted where relevant.
4. English will continue to be taught as a compulsory subject in the curriculum.

(p. 180)

In addition, it was proposed that English language continues as a compulsory subject at the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) – G.C.E. OL and that the bilingual policy be extended to Grades 10 and 11.

The NEC report further recommended that General English be given the status of an AL subject with new syllabi, course materials and time-table allocations (p. 180). A special provision was made for the use of media such as the TV, videos and computers for teaching English.

Another significant change in policy was the introduction of the Presidential Initiative of 'English as a Life Skill Programme' in 2008. The programme has been launched under three phases. The programme recognised Sri Lankan English as the informal spoken variety of English in the country, while International Standard English was accepted as the formal or written form of the language (Fernando 2013, p 1). In addition, this programme also ensured the training of 22,500 teachers; 60 % of the English teacher population in the country to teach Spoken/ Communication English. This is part of the plan to test spoken and listening skills at the G.C.E. OL from 2014, the first ever project of this magnitude in Sri Lanka. The year 2009, witnessed the training of 80 Master Trainers at the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) and later an additional 40 was also trained under this programme. These Master trainers were involved in designing material for teaching spoken English and the government also focused on a media campaign to 'dispel the fear of Sri Lankan English from the Sri Lankan mind-set' (p. 2).

This period also witnessed a wider approach to the development of English, such as the design of programmes to develop the speaking in English of school principals and deputy principals with the aim of empowering these school administrators. These programmes are in addition to numerous activities that have been designed to make English accessible for a majority of Sri Lankans thereby dismantling some of the early ideologies of English being accessible only to an elitist minority.

6 Language Education Policy Implementation: An Analysis

While consecutive governments in Sri Lanka has since 1977, made numerous policy decisions at national and grass-root levels to develop English in the country, a statistical analysis of some of the key variables is useful in order to comprehend current as well as future perspectives in terms of policy planning. The researcher has used the following information for this purpose; the pass rates of school student

candidates' at two national public examinations: the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) or G.C.E. OL, General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) or G.C.E. AL, student registration for English medium subjects at the G.C.E. OL and G.C.E. AL examination, teacher allocation for English medium teaching as well as the distribution of English language teachers in Sri Lanka.

7 Performance at GCE OL Examination

The Government Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level), hereafter referred to as G.C.E. OL is the first national examination that offers English as a subject; the first national level assessment of English language proficiency in the local school system. The test, however is not without its shortcomings. It assesses only reading and writing skills and the structure of the paper is rather predictable focusing on very limited language skills. Although a pass in English is not required for the continuation of their secondary education, the implications of these results are important for present as well as future policy planners and implementers in order to comprehend the disparity between policy planning and implementation. Furthermore, there are instances where this qualification is taken into consideration in certain government and private sector employment. The data is presented in two sets; the first, is from 1994 to 1998 and the second, is from 2002 to 2010 following a change in the syllabus. The data from years 1999 to 2001 could not be used due to a technical difficulty encountered by the researchers (Table 5).

Table 5 G.C.E. OL Results (1994–2010)

Year	Total number of registered candidates for English	No of passes in English	Percentage of passes in English	No of failures in English	Percentage of failures in English
1994	324,405	139,923	43.13 %	184,485	56.87 %
1995	305,339	94,927	31.09 %	210,412	68.91 %
1996	340,004	76,912	22.62 %	263,092	77.38 %
1997	347,347	72,325	20.82 %	275,022	79.18 %
1998	345,311	87,628	25.38 %	257,673	74.62 %
2002	330,885	78,876	23.84 %	252,009	76.16 %
2003	334,296	99,762	29.84 %	234,534	70.16 %
2004	402,349	189,551	47.11	212,798	52.89
2005	330,083	115,462	34.98 %	214,621	65.02 %
2006	326,164	116,376	35.68 %	209,788	64.32 %
2007	350,514	139,328	39.75 %	211,186	60.25 %
2008	281,136	86,226	30.67 %	194,910	69.33 %
2009	360,514	134,667	37.35 %	225,847	62.65 %
2010	341,278	141,316	41.41 %	199,962	58.59 %

Source: Department of Examinations, Statistical Handbook (1994–2010) Research & Development Branch, National Evaluation & Testing Service, Sri Lanka

The results clearly reflect an alarming rate of failures, particularly given the investment that has been made by the government and non-government involvement in developing English language teaching in the country. What is interesting to note is that in the first decade starting from 1994 to 2003 the information indicates a considerable increase in terms of the rate of failures from 56.87 % in 1998 to a failure rate of 70.16 % in 2003. Even after 25 years, since Sri Lanka has opened its doors to a more open economic system in 1978, Sri Lanka still seems to struggle with the issue of improving the standards of English in the country. Continuing further on the analysis, there seem to be a significant reduction in the failure rate in 2004 which is at 52.89 which seems to be a lowest in almost a decade. The pass rate of the students seems to fluctuate in the years that follow with the highest recorded in 2008 which is at 69.33. However, these rates seem to have reduced to 58.59 % by 2010. While the performance of the students varies over the years, one conclusion seemed inevitable; the performance for English among school candidates is considerably poor. Technically, all the students who sit for the GCE OL examination should have been learning English for more than 7 years of their life in schools where they are taught English for 5 days of the week within 40–45 min class periods. Despite all these attempts, why is it that the pass rate for the English language remains to be so low? Numerous reasons some of which were raised quite some time ago still seem valid. For example, Kandiah (1984) had observed that '. . . classrooms are overcrowded: several classes in several different subjects are sometimes conducted within the space of a single cramped hall. . . . in addition, many schools in the remote areas have no teachers to implement the programme (Reprinted in Fernando, Gunasekera & Parakrama 2010, p. 47). Three decades on, the problems still remain the same. There is still a lack of qualified teachers despite the large projects that have been introduced by consecutive governments and other parties, the use of inappropriate teaching methods is another problem and disparities in the distribution of teachers in schools is believed to be another concern: anecdotally, there are schools in rural Sri Lanka without any qualified teacher to teach English in their schools while most urban schools have excess teachers. Therefore, many of the urban children have support within the school as well as other forms of learning opportunities, like individual or group tutoring which gives them the opportunity to learn and use the language compared to that of students from the rural schools.

In summary, a look at a recent evaluation report published by the Research & Development Branch of the National Evaluation & Testing Service on the performance of candidates at the G.C.E. OL examination for 2010 deserves attention. The report analyses student responses to the different test activities in the test paper. There are two test papers; paper I & II. The test activities cover variety of language functions and skills.

According to Table 6 given below, equal marks have been allocated to all the test activities which include vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing. The allocation of marks for each of these sections include 5 marks for grammar and vocabulary with 15 marks each allocated for reading and writing. While there is a considerably better response for the vocabulary, and grammar sections, there seems to be a rather poor response to the writing tasks. According to the report, the writing tasks included

Table 6 Test activities, allocation of marks and student response to English language (Paper I)

Test item	Language focus/skill	Allocation of marks	Student performance
1	Vocabulary	05	Over 50 %
2	Reading	05	Over 50 %
3	Writing	05	31 % (Responded)
4	Reading	05	50 %
5	Language functions & grammar	05	50 %
6	Writing	05	17 % (Responded)
7	Reading	05	Over 40 %
8	Writing	05	15 % (Responded)

Source: G.C.E. OL Examination 2010: Evaluation Report, Research & Development Branch, National Evaluation & Testing Service, Sri Lanka
Information in this table was taken directly from the report and column 4 was added by the authors based on the information available in the report

Table 7 Test activities, allocation of marks and student response to English language (Paper II)

Test item	Language focus/skill	Allocation of marks	Student performance
09	Vocabulary	05	Over 50 %
10	Grammar	05	27 %
11	Grammar	05	Less than 30 %
12	Reading	05	Less than 40 %
13	Reading	07	Less than 30 %
14	Writing	10	14 %
15	Reading	10	50 %
16	Writing	15	9 %

Source: G.C.E. OL Examination 2010: Evaluation Report, Research & Development Branch, National Evaluation & Testing Service, Sri Lanka
Information in this table was taken directly from the report and column 4 was added by the authors based on the information available in the report

50 word paragraphs where students were expected to write a descriptive paragraph, an informative note and a paragraph on a given topic. Of the total number of candidates who had sat for the paper, only 30 % had responded to the first test activity which included a brief description using the information given. The other two writing activities which included writing paragraphs, only 17 % and 15 % of the total candidates had responded to this question. The report clearly indicates a poor response in terms of writing test activities.

A further analysis of the second part of the test paper reveals more information about student information which is given in Table 7.

According to Table 7, the test activities have focused on testing vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing with the distribution of marks to be 5 for vocabulary, 10 for grammar, 20 for reading and 25 for writing. In terms of student responses, there seem to be higher response for vocabulary which is over 50 % as was the case

with Paper I. Grammar activities have had moderate responses of over 30 % with similar responses for the reading activities which is around 40 %. However, the most significant observation is the response for the writing test activities which is at 13 & 9 % respectively.

These responses to test activities reveal the core problem with English language teaching in the country; the poor performance in a key skill; writing. While there is no data in relation to testing speaking at the national level, there is however, a constant reference to the lack of proficiency in speaking skills, i.e. communication skills in English. Therefore, the task of our policy makers seems challenging. Particular, given the objectives of the national curriculum for the English Language which are as follows:.

1. To create the need to learn English as a Second Language in a Multilingual society.(sic)
2. To create opportunities for the Sri Lankan child to achieve the competencies in a link language.
3. To create facilities to learn a language which can be used to build ethnic harmony.
4. To enable the students to learn an international language (sic) which could be made use of in their later life for employment.
5. To empower the learner to communicate confidently, fluently and effectively in the English language (sic).

8 Performance at GCE AL Examination

One of the strongest recommendations of the Educational Reforms Committee (ERC) in 1986 was the introduction of a General English Paper for the General Certificate of Education – Advanced Level Examination hereafter referred to as G.C.E. AL. The G.C.E. AL is the only qualifying examination available to enter any of the national universities in Sri Lanka. While there was trepidation in the introduction of this paper, given the shortage of qualified teachers to teach the course, the test was introduced in 2001. The breakdown of the test gradings for the General English paper is A: Very good pass, B: Good pass, C: Pass, S: Weak Pass. F: Fail (Table 8).

According to the data available, information relating to years 2001 to 2004 covers all candidates and the rest of the years from 2005 to 2010 cover only information relating to school candidates. While there is a relatively lower rate of failures in the initial year when the test was introduced in 2001 where the failure rate was at 58.91 %, in the subsequent years that followed, the failure rate has remained above 70 %.

A number of reasons have been identified for the lack of interest as well as the low performance of students at the G.C.E. AL examination. Primary among them is

Table 8 Performance at G.C.E. AL 2001 to 2010

Year	Total number of registered candidates for English	No of passes in English	Percentage of passes in English	No of failures in English	Percentage of failures in English
*2001	127,058	52,210	41.09	74,848	58.91
*2002	180,185	43,214	23.98	136,971	76.02
*2003	187,275	45,160	24.11	142,115	75.89
*2004	173,608	47,283	27.24	126,325	72.76
2005	157,363	37,703	23.96	119,660	76.04
2006	156,673	37,826	24.14	118,847	75.86
2007	155,657	46,351	29.78	109,306	70.22
2008	165,419	46,769	28.27	118,650	71.73
2009	162,572	45,829	28.19	116,743	71.81
2010	179,537	53,409	29.75	126,128	70.25

Source: Department of Examinations, Statistical Handbook (1999–2010) Research & Development Branch, National Evaluation & Testing Service, Sri Lanka

the non-availability of qualified teachers to teach the subject. Furthermore, there is a focus on the other main subjects that would ensure admission to the national university (de Silva et al., 2013). A similar study titled ‘Evaluation of G.C.E. Advanced Level English Programme’ published in 2003 had made similar observations. Among its recommendations the ones made in relation to teaching and learning is most noteworthy. According to the report, it is recommended that teachers play a less dominant role while adapting more adult learning strategies in teaching and learning. It also recommends the development of listening skills, urges teacher not to be too dependent on the prescribed text book and to focus on designing activities independently to suit learner needs. Finally it also recommends that teachers convey the value the importance of the subject (Wijeratne, Cumarathunga, & Perera, 2003, p. 3).

These recommendations seemed valid even today; therefore policy implementers should focus on the development of learning – teaching methods.

A further comparison of the results in the first year of test administration, the candidates performance at the year in which the test was introduced in comparison with 2010, ten years after the introduction of General English to the secondary system gives rise to a number of concerns relating to the impact of language education policy implementation (Figs. 2 and 3).

In both instances where the statistics have been obtained ten years apart, it seems that the pass rate at the highest level of A or B passes remain unchanged at 4 % with a 1 % increase in the level B passes while there is a decrease in the pass rate at lower levels and the most significant observation being the stark increase in the number of failures in 2010 which as at a staggering 70 % compared to that of 59 % in 2001. All these statistics reiterate the argument made by Kandiah in 1984 that ‘the vast

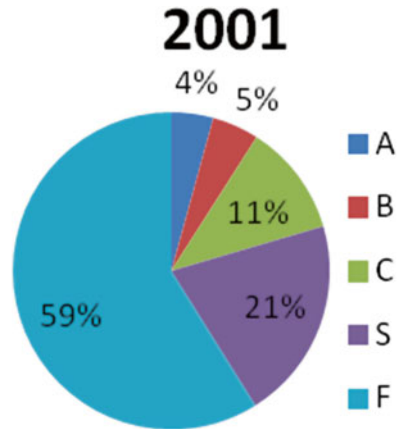


Fig. 2 Performance at general English G. C. E. AL – 2001 (Author constructed)

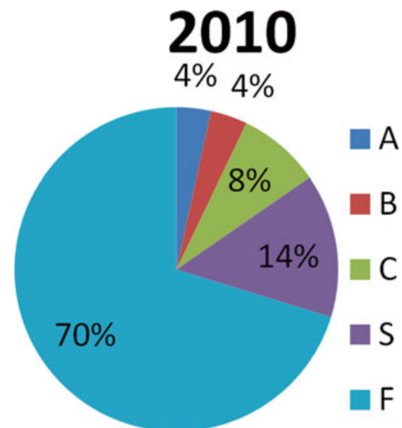
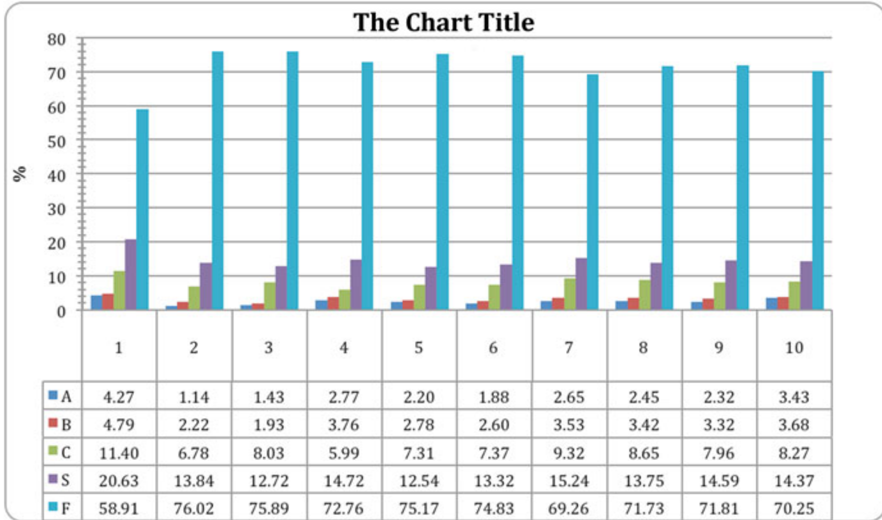


Fig. 3 Performance at general English G.C.E. AL – 2010 (Author constructed)

majority of the success achieved in English at the examination are concentrated in a comparatively few schools in the more cosmopolitan and urban areas of the country' (reproduced in Fernando, Gunesekera, & Parakrama, 2010, p. 46). Therefore, there is a need to go into grass – root level policy implementation and monitoring to be done and the researcher is aware that such attempts are currently being made at the policy level. A further research of this capacity should be carried out in order to comprehend the impact of policy implementation.

According to the Fig. 4 given below, we see a significant decline in the pass rate and a gradual increase in the failure rate. For example, the percentage obtaining higher grades in the past ten years have remained at less than 10 % collectively (A combination of the percentage obtained for grades A & B). Similarly, the percentage pass rate for a C grade has been less than 10 % with the exception of 11.40 % in



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	4.27	1.14	1.43	2.77	2.20	1.88	2.65	2.45	2.32	3.43
B	4.79	2.22	1.93	3.76	2.78	2.60	3.53	3.42	3.32	3.68
C	11.40	6.78	8.03	5.99	7.31	7.37	9.32	8.65	7.96	8.27
S	20.63	13.84	12.72	14.72	12.54	13.32	15.24	13.75	14.59	14.37
F	58.91	76.02	75.89	72.76	75.17	74.83	69.26	71.73	71.81	70.25

Fig. 4 Candidate results G.C.E. AL 2001–2010 (Source: Department of Examinations: Statistical Handbook (1999–2010))

2001. Finally the percentage of students who obtained a fail grade is, on most occasions with the exception of 2001 & 2007 over 70 %.

In the perspective of these results and its implications seem to indicate that there is greater need to evaluate the teaching methods as well as teacher training in overcoming some of these problems. Despite, the efforts made, there needs to be a concentration on more alternative forms of teaching and learning. However, while these pedagogical issues deserve attention, consensus on ideological issues such as the general attitude towards the English language as well as a greater awareness among the teaching learning community on the role and functions of English as an international language.

In the introduction of English medium teaching in a number of selected subjects in the secondary level, thus leading to bilingual educational policy took root in Sri Lanka in 2003. Table 9 demonstrates the number of bilingual schools in 2004, subsequent to the introduction of the policy with that of 2012, a more recent year.

According to Table 9, there is a significant increase in the schools with bilingual education in all provinces of the country. The most noteworthy, is that the number of schools in all the provinces has doubled since 2004, with the exception of the North Central Province, where the number remains unchanged. The increase is such that it represents the ethnic composition of the provinces. For example, in the areas where there is a predominant representation of a Sinhala speaking community, Sinhala/ English bilingual schools have been increased. Similarly, areas where there is a predominant Tamil speaking community consisting of Tamil and Muslim ethnicities witnessed an increase in bilingual schools. Trilingual schools are found

Table 9 Provincial representation of English medium schools in Sri Lanka (2004 & 2012)

	2004				2012			
Provinces	Sinhala/English	Tamil/English	Sin:/Tamil/Eng:	Total	Sinhala/English	Tamil/English	Sin:/Tamil/Eng:	Total
Western	68	11	10	89	119	12	13	144
Central	39	7	11	57	49	17	12	78
Southern	33	1	1	35	61	2		63
Northern		26		26		61		61
Eastern	2	18		20	10	42		52
North Western	36	5	1	42	68	6	1	75
North Central	14			14	16			16
Uva	19	2	1	22	36	5	1	42
Sabaragamuwa	23	5	1	29	44	7	2	53
Total	234	75	25	334	403	152	29	584

Source: Data Management Branch: Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka

to be of considerable number in the cosmopolitan provinces like the Western and Central provinces of Sri Lanka. There is an absence of trilingual schools in provinces that are ethnically and linguistically mutually exclusive like the Southern and Northern provinces of Sri Lanka. A most noteworthy observation is the absence of a trilingual school in the Eastern Province which consists of three districts representative of the three ethnic communities, the Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslims.

According to the above Table 10 which shows the distribution of students and teachers according to the medium of instruction in different provinces in Sri Lanka is indicative of the problem in relation to English language proficiency in the country. According to the table, the vernacular schools, both Sinhala and Tamil are based on the ethnic linguistic composition of the provinces. However, the largest number of bilingual English medium schools are found in the Western Province, the most cosmopolitan Province in the country. As such, the largest number of schools, the student population as well as the teacher population is found in the Western Province. Furthermore, the absence of trilingual schools in the Northern, Southern and the Eastern Province is indeed noteworthy as was observed before in the analysis.

However, given the current emphasis on bilingual education, it is worthwhile to investigate the performance of school candidates in subjects offered in the English medium. The following table gives a breakdown of the performance of school candidates from 2008 to 2011.

According to Table 11, unlike in the case of student performance on English language at the G.C.E. OL examination, there seem to be better performance by the students in English medium subjects. However, it must be noted here, that the number of candidates who have sat for the English medium subjects is less than 10,000 and there by represents approximately a percentage between 2 and 3 % of the total number of candidates who sat for the English language paper, thus representing a minority of the entire student population who sit for the exam annually. The fact that English medium education is a choice and not mandatory could also be a reason for the better performance of the students, particularly since the learner feels more responsible to follow certain courses in a medium of their choice.

9 Access to English for Children with Disabilities Within Inclusive Educational Settings

The paradigm shift from segregated instruction to ‘inclusive education’ for children with special educational needs worldwide reflects the move towards achieving Education for All (EFA) by 2015 (UNESCO 2010). In this context, we would like to briefly highlight the challenge to mainstream teachers of English (and by extension, policy makers) and the barriers faced by children with disabilities when accessing English in Sri Lanka.

Within the context of inclusive education, the hitherto ‘general’ mainstream teacher of English needs ‘special’ or particular pedagogical knowledge and compe-

Table 10 Distribution of teachers according province and medium of instruction

Province	Sinhala			English			Tamil			No. of schools (Sinhala, & Tamil)	No. of schools (Sinhala, English & Tamil)	Total		
	No. of schools	No. of students	No. of teachers	No. of schools[a]	No. of students[b]	No. of teachers	No. of schools	No. of students	No. of teachers			No. of schools	No. of students	No. of teachers
Western	1072	839,579	37,805	131	19,814	3965	106	78,947	759	15	13	1337	938,340	42,529
Central	881	340,062	21,954	66	8876	9231	527	177,279	450	11	12	1497	526,217	31,635
Southern	998	489,426	28,105	63	6733	713	38	14,655	492	4		1103	510,814	29,310
Northern	20	2499	185	61	2714	14,425	863	243,507	218			944	248,720	14,828
Eastern	251	75,973	4535	52	3090	15,938	759	306,938	288	1		1063	386,001	20,761
North Western	983	398,953	24,213	74	9680	3277	149	70,261	522	6	1	1213	478,894	28,012
North Central	673	236,228	13,503	16	2141	1438	86	27,490	192	1		776	265,859	15,133
Uva	620	222,900	16,109	41	3988	2680	195	51,471	269	1	1	858	278,359	19,058
Sabaragamuwa	870	315,160	19,487	51	6322	2294	191	49,460	286		2	1114	370,942	22,067
Total	6368	2,920,780	165,896	555	63,358	53,961	2914	1,020,008	3476	39	29	9905	4,004,146	223,333

Source: Sri Lanka Education Information 2013: Data Management Branch, Ministry of Education

[a]Schools in group are those in Sinhala & English medium schools and Tamil & English medium schools (Bilingual schools)

[b]Primary education of these students was in Sinhala or Tamil medium

Table 11 Performance of school candidates by English medium subject

Subject	2008			2009			2010			2011		
	No sat	Pass %	Fail %	No Sat	Pass %	Fail %	No sat	Pass %	Fail %	No Sat	Pass %	Fail %
Mathematics	8693	94.82	5.18	9725	93.73	6.27	9777	95.67	4.33	9810	94.15	5.85
Science	8704	90.95	9.05	9484	90.49	9.51	9500	92.83	7.17	9807	91.78	8.22
Business & Accounting	359	96.10	3.90	693	94.66	5.34	732	95.36	4.64	1370	94.38	5.62
Geography	688	95.20	4.80	815	90.67	9.33	690	97.68	2.32	642	97.66	2.34
Citizen Edu. & Gov/Civic Gov	386	94.30	5.70	325	95.38	4.62	299	91.30	8.70	440	96.14	3.86
Western Music	1392	97.41	2.59	1389	95.54	4.46	139	92.81	7.19	66	95.45	4.55
Entrepreneurship Education	114	92.11	7.89	47	91.49	8.51	1480	97.97	2.03	1523	98.56	1.44
Information & Communication	4703	97.24	2.76	5552	94.49	5.51	6392	94.32	5.68	5590	93.27	6.73
Health & Physical Education	1701	99.71	0.29	2022	99.55	0.45	1984	99.40	0.60	2755	99.67	0.33

Source: National Symposium on Reviewing of the Performance of School Candidate (GCE OL Examination 2011) Research & Development Branch, National Evaluation & Testing Services, Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

tence to support children with disabilities within their learning environment. Barriers to establishing inclusive education in resource-limited countries such as Sri Lanka have included the low teacher-pupil ratio, poor physical access to buildings, limited specific training in inclusive pedagogical methodologies, preconceived prejudicial attitudes among parents of mainstream school children and teachers as well as the perceived negative effect of inclusion on the academic success of mainstream students (Cornelius & Balakrishnan 2012; Das, Gichuru, & Singh, 2013; Eleweke & Rodda 2002; Furuta 2006, 2009; Modern, Joergensen, & Daniels, 2010). Teacher attitudes have been highlighted as a crucial factor determining the success of inclusive educational policies (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003; Sideridis & Chandler

Vignette 1
Surani is 14 years old. She attends a mixed school with a Special Education Unit attached to the mainstream school. She is 3 years older than her peers in the class. Surani is tall for her age and is placed at a desk at the front of the class. As the teacher moves forward to teach or walks around the class, she is facing her back to Surani. I was told that I could see Surani for an assessment of her speech and language skills during the English lesson as the teacher does not include Surani in her class as 'there is no point'.

1996; Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker 2001). This is highlighted in the following vignettew, based on an on-going research study.

10 Conclusion

Many postcolonial nations like Sri Lanka are today grappling with a number of unresolved issues relating to language policy. In the context of Sri Lanka, there is clear evidence of attempts being made by consecutive governments to address these issues with greater impact. Therefore, it can be observed that policies have been formulated and implemented with this intention in mind. Since, independence, the efforts made by consecutive governments and other stakeholders towards the development of English is indeed praiseworthy. However, more remains to be aspired to. The disparities in the performance between those of the rural vs the urban still continues to be at large. While there is evidence of the involvement of the government and other institutions in the development of English language proficiency in the country, the problems still remains at large. The argument brought forth in the World Bank publication; The Towers of Learning: Performance, Peril and Promise of Higher Education in Sri Lanka, in identifying some of challenges to development in Sri Lanka states that

> General skills are critically important for the labour market of a middle income country, but also especially scarce in Sri Lanka. Highest among these scare general skills are English Language and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills. (Towers of Learning: Performance, Peril and Promise of Higher Education in Sri Lanka: E2)
>
> Athurpana, Millot and Team (2009)

The problem then in the development of the language is still limited to an urban minority who might no longer be elitist but based on demographic advantages have more opportunity to learn and use the language as opposed to the rural majority for whom English still remain a distant foreign language with no ideological affiliations expect as a means of providing better employment. While the attempts made to promote English as link language is widely acknowledged, the measurable output does not essentially indicate a clear development in terms of English language users. Therefore, the task at hand for many of our policy planners as well as implementers is the challenge to ensure that a majority of English language users meet the communication demands of the different spheres where English is commonly used.

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English Language Education Policy in Timor-Leste

John Macalister

Abstract In Timor-Leste four languages are recognised in the constitution and compete for space, both in education and in society generally. While the adoption of Portuguese as the co-official language (with Tetun) is understandable in light of the country's recent troubled relations with Indonesia and with a wish to distinguish itself from English speaking Australia to the south, it also marks Timor-Leste as different in a region where an emphasis on English language learning is the norm. While education policy tends to favour the Portuguese language, arguably at the expense of Tetun, there is a feeling among students and parents that English and Bahasa Indonesia have more practical use. For this reason, and because many school teachers are not sufficiently fluent in Portuguese, English has remained the second language of choice and private English classes are common. In public spaces, too, English is the prevalent language. As a result, and also because of a feeling that current language policy is contributing to educational failure, there remain questions about the future of languages in education in Timor-Leste. A case can be made, for example, for moving to mother tongue based education leading to additive multilingualism. Consideration also needs to be given to the role of Portuguese in shaping a national identity for this relatively new state. Generational change may contribute to future changes in language policy, as a Portuguese-speaking elite retires from political life.

Keywords Portuguese • Multilingualism • Mother tongue based education • Additive bilingualism • ASEAN

Timor-Leste is one of the world's newer states, having achieved independence in 2002. Among the challenges facing the country is that of managing its complex language situation, which to a large extent reflects its history, and particularly recent history since 1945. This post-World War II period has been a time of considerable political change in Timor-Leste, with each change bringing a new language policy. While there had been a Portuguese presence in the country since the early 1500s,

J. Macalister (✉)
Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
e-mail: john.macalister@vuw.ac.nz

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it was only after the end of the Second World War that Portugal sought to introduce the Portuguese language as part of a 'civilising mission' in an attempt to counter emerging anti-colonialism (Hajek, 2000, pp. 402–403). In 1974, however, there was rapid change in Portugal with the fall of the right-wing dictatorship that had been in power for almost half a century. The new government swiftly withdrew from the Portuguese colonies. Indonesia seized this opportunity to expand east, and invaded the country in 1975. The occupation lasted for 24 years, and during this time the Indonesian authorities sought to eliminate Portuguese and replace it with Bahasa Indonesia. A referendum on independence in 1999 marked the end of the Indonesian occupation, but triggered the violence that was the catalyst for a United Nations presence, with English employed as its working language, as was the case with many of the international agencies that followed (Hajek, pp. 409–410; Taylor-Leech, 2008, p. 156).

This brief summary of almost 70 years of recent history should not, of course, obscure the fact that the language situation in Timor-Leste is more than the story of competition between three exogenous languages. These languages only add to the country's multilingual richness for there are also the many indigenous languages. While different sources provide different answers to the number of indigenous languages in Timor-Leste (Hajek, 2002, p. 182), with variability introduced by decisions as to what constitutes a distinct variety and what constitutes a dialect, the currently accepted figure for indigenous languages appears to be 16 or 17, depending on how the two dialects of Tetun are treated. One variety, Tetun-Terik or Tetun-Belu, is the more conservative of the two and has many speakers in Indonesian West Timor. Tetun-Dili, or Tetun-Prasa, is spoken in and around the capital, Dili, and reflects considerable Portuguese influence (Hajek, 2000, p. 401).

Against such a background it is no surprise that complexity characterises the language situation in Timor-Leste, where one endogenous and three exogenous languages are recognised in the constitution that was adopted in 2002. This declares that both Tetun and Portuguese would be official languages, that Tetun and other national languages "shall be valued and developed", and that both English and Indonesian "shall be working languages within the civil service side by side with the official languages for as long as deemed necessary" (cited in Taylor-Leech, 2009, p. 24). The constitution makes clear, therefore, that English has a lesser role to play in Timor-Leste than Portuguese. This makes Timor-Leste unusual in a region where "a major planning focus … is on English language development" (Baldauf & Nguyen, 2012, p. 627). Thus, before turning attention to English education policy it is necessary to consider the role of the Portuguese language in the country.

1 The Portuguese Language

As noted earlier, while Portuguese were physically present from the early 1500s, it was only after 1945 that serious attempts at Lusophonisation were made and these lasted only 30 years. During the Indonesian occupation, language choice became

political. The use of Tetun was a symbolic expression of opposition (Hajek, 2000, p. 406) and the language became "a symbol of national identity" (Taylor-Leech, 2008, p. 158), reinforced by the adoption of Tetun as a liturgical language by the Catholic Church and its promotion through other church activities (Hajek, 2002, pp. 194–195; Taylor-Leech, 2008, p. 158). At the same time, Portuguese became the language of resistance (Hajek, 2000, p. 406; Taylor-Leech, 2008, p. 157) and following independence in 2002 became, with Tetun, the country's co-official language. In schools, Portuguese is the medium of instruction from Grades 1 to 9, and the language of national examinations at the end of Grade 9 (except for English and Tetun exams). Portuguese language instruction begins in Grade 1 with three 50 min lessons a week, increasing to four in Grade 3, and five in Grade 4. The curriculum space for Portuguese is created by decreasing the time for Tetun instruction, which reduces from five 50 min lessons a week in Grade 1 to three in Grade 4 (Baldauf, Kaplan, Kamwangamalu, & Bryant, 2011).

The decision to adopt Portuguese as an official language reflected the preferences of a political leadership largely educated during the Portuguese period (Macpherson, 2011, p. 189), and active in the resistance to the Indonesian occupation. The adoption of "an elite variety over which the educated (upper) middle classes had control, but which was now imposed on the whole of society" (Blommaert, 2006, p. 242) is scarcely unique in the history of language policy, nor was Timor-Leste alone in selecting an exogenous language to assist in a nation-building project where there are multiple indigenous languages.

It also appears that there was a conscious desire to differentiate Timor-Leste from its much larger neighbours, Indonesia and Australia. This view was clearly expressed by a participant in a recent study (Sarmento, 2013, p. 50), who said:

> The decision to adopt Portuguese as an official language was a decision that was understandable, for me, because of many aspects. First of all, because we had a very long violent history with our neighbour Indonesia that makes it impossible, even emotionally hard for our people, to consider using Bahasa. As for English, because we want to maintain our difference, as well as distance, from countries such as Australia and other Anglo-Saxon countries

The decision to adopt Portuguese (rather than English or Bahasa Indonesia) has been criticised in the Australian and Indonesian press (a recent example being Savage, 2012, which elicited some strong opposing comments on-line). Taylor-Leech (2008, p. 160) suggests that such criticism is "more reflective of political hostility to Portuguese than any threat to [the other languages'] actual status in East Timor" but it is also the case that there are reasonable grounds for questioning the preference of Portuguese. The first of these is that Portuguese is not a regional lingua franca, and so has limited utility; in this it is comparable to French in Cambodia (Clayton, 2002). Despite considerable investment by Francophone nations in promoting the use of French, the language has been displaced by English as the preferred international language of communication. This preference was dramatically illustrated when tertiary students effectively went on strike in the early 1990s, burning effigies and demanding English language instruction.

A second potential cause for criticism is that the promotion of Portuguese is likely to be at the expense of the other official language. Tetun is an example of "a newly official language, [that] was not previously used for administrative or educational purposes, must be developed before it can be used effectively" which includes "codifying a standard variety … and, very often, coining and publicizing new words for things that people had previously not talked about in the relevant language(s)" (Thomason, 2001, p. 38). Furthermore, attitudes to Tetun, which Taylor-Leech (2008, p. 162) describes as "self-effacing", "run the risk of reducing the official status of Tetum to symbolic status only". Quite possibly, the use of Portuguese as the primary official source for new coinings may contribute to this outcome.

A further potential criticism lies in the fact that Portuguese was not widely known at independence – Hill and Saldanha (2001, p. 29) estimated that only 5 % of the population may have been Portuguese-speaking at that time, and pointed out that Bahasa Indonesia was that generation's principal language, after Tetun (Hill & Saldanha, p. 31). A World Bank report in 2004 found fewer than 6 % of teachers were fluent in Portuguese (cited in Shah, 2012, p. 35). Given this low base, the re-introduction of Portuguese to Timor-Leste has certainly been a major challenge. Since independence efforts have been made to establish Portuguese in Timor-Leste; in particular, the drive to make Portuguese the language of instruction in schools has resulted in considerable investment in the education sector by Lusophone nations, notably Portugal (Hill & Saldanha, 2001, p. 29), and compulsory intensive Portuguese language courses for teachers. The result has been a considerable increase in the proportion of Portuguese speakers in the country, to 39.2 % according to the 2010 census.

Despite all the effort, and money, put in to establishing Portuguese in Timor-Leste, the results to date are far from successful. Teachers continue to struggle with the language, as the following makes clear.

> Teaching in Portuguese is an obvious challenge for teachers because most of them had their degree in Indonesian and therefore they do not have sufficient command of Portuguese. Provided that teachers' manuals are in Portuguese, most of the teachers cannot use the manuals. As a way out, they have to write in Indonesian and then use Google translation to translate it into Portuguese which in turn transfer it to students. They use Tetun to explain. (Sarmento, 2013, p. 65)

This reinforces and further illuminates the practice found in classrooms by Quinn (2013), of teachers presenting content in Portuguese but then explaining the content in Tetun. A further insight into popular views of official language policy is provided by Macpherson's description of field visits in Timor-Leste during 2009 (2011, p. 188).

> Children commonly described Portuguese as "too hard" and took every opportunity to practice their English. Teachers conducting Portuguese classes using Tetun as the medium of instruction would quickly make a popular switch into an English lesson when a visitor was discovered to speak English. Parents schooled in Indonesian indicated that Portuguese was far less useful as a trading language than Bahasa, and not as "international" as English given the imminent arrival of the internet and opportunities offered in Australia. School directors and teachers explained in Tetun and Bahasa that they resented attending mandatory professional development workshops in Portuguese after school hours

However, the practice of mixing languages in a multilingual country such as Timor-Leste should not, in itself, be taken as criticism of official language policy. In a small-scale study of university English language classes, only one of the four observed teachers used English solely. The others also used Tetun, Bahasa Indonesia, and Portuguese to varying degrees. Comment by the teacher who used the largest proportion of Tetun – an unusually well-informed commentator, it must be admitted – does, however, point to explicit resistance to official language policy.

> I read Phillipson and Canagarajah (as well as Calvet) and I feel that it's good to use Tetum not to resist English but Portuguese, and to show that there is something wrong with our language policy and planning. I believe that it's not languages that kill each other but it's the policymakers and politicians who do the damage. (Barnard, Robinson, da Costa, & Sarmento, 2011)

Overall, then, in the preference of the Portuguese language it is difficult to disagree with Shah's observation that "policymakers have constructed a new state curriculum without broad consensus on what it means to be a nation." (Shah, 2012, p. 31)

2 English Education Policy

The situation regarding English language education is different from that for Portuguese. It has been accommodated in a way that matches its accidental arrival in the linguistic ecology of Timor-Leste; English had not featured in language planning until the arrival of the UN following the violence of 1999. Thus, it is present as a school subject rather than a medium of instruction, and is not introduced until Grade 7, when it is taught for three periods of 45 min per week; there is also provision for English to be introduced in Grade 5, if a school has the capacity to teach the language, for two periods of 50 min each week (Baldauf et al., 2011, p. 315).

The English language curriculum was designed by staff from Portuguese universities, in a UNICEF-funded project, for implementation in 2011 as 1 of 11 subject areas in junior high school (Grades 7–9). The designers consulted with teachers, university lecturers, and an Australian NGO to produce the curriculum, which was not initially supported by a text book. At the same time, senior high school (Grades 10–12) continued to follow the Indonesian curriculum and to use Indonesian text books.

Teacher training, while recognised as an urgent need, did not form part of the curriculum design project, although the challenge of introducing multiple new curricula simultaneously was not under-estimated by the design team. Pre-service English language teacher training has largely fallen to the English Department of the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL), where students majoring in English are expected to pursue careers as secondary school English teachers (although many do not). While unofficial estimates are that 70 % of students do indeed go on to employment as secondary teachers of English, many students are

also reported as leaving the programme after the second year when the focus shifts from English language learning to more academic subjects. Their English has reached a marketable level; they find employment, including as teachers. In its provision of English language teacher training UNTL has received some external support. The University of Waikato, New Zealand, was involved with the English Department for a number of years with a curriculum re-design focus and the use of computer-based resources to assist in the teaching of reading and writing (Amaral, Field, McLellan, & Barnard, 2009; Barnard, Field, & McLellan, 2011). More recently, AusAID has invested in the development of an English Language Centre at UNTL and planned an in-service training project for English language teachers, which has however not yet been launched. Instead, a very small number of teachers have been sponsored on short training courses abroad.

Additional pre-service primary teacher education is offered by the Instituto Catolica para Formacao de Professores, or Bacau Teachers' College, which was founded by Australian Marist Brothers in 2001, and where students can complete a 3-year degree awarded by the Australian Catholic University.

3 English Beyond Education

The discussion up to this point would indicate that many of the mechanisms that Shohamy (2006) suggests mediate between language ideology and language practice are at work in Timor-Leste, promoting the Portuguese language. The rules and regulations stemming from the constitution, the language of instruction, and of examinations, the history of resistance to occupation leading to independence all work to support the role of Portuguese in the country. However, Shohamy also makes the point that it is necessary to consider both official and de facto language policy, essentially a comparison between what the state intends and what the people do. One way of exploring de facto language policy is by examining the language used in public spaces, and this was done in Dili, the capital of Timor-Leste, in a linguistic landscape study (Macalister, 2012) which found that while Portuguese – but not Tetun – had a dominant role in the official domain, it contributed surprisingly little to the linguistic landscape overall. Rather, monolingual English signs formed almost 60 % of the signs included in the study, with this proportion increasing to over 75 % when English-dominant signs were also considered. While the bulk of signs were authored by commercial actors in this landscape, the small number of signs at the 'in vivo' end of the continuum used for categorising the signs, that is individually authored signs that allow for idiosyncratic and 'bottom up' language use, suggested that English and not Portuguese was preferred by these actors. Furthermore, English appeared to be a resource for lexical development, as in the use of English *ice cream* in an otherwise Tetun hand-written sign in a shop window. A similar phenomenon was remarked on by participants in Sarmento's study, where *envaironmentu* has entered Tetun, from the English *environment*, rather than the officially preferred transliteration of Portuguese *meio-ambiente* (Sarmento, 2013, p. 79).

Other evidence of Timorese making choices also suggests that English is popularly favoured over Portuguese. When, for example, parents are dissatisfied with aspects of the formal education system, they are prepared to invest in extra-curricular learning activities for their children (Li, 2006, nicely illustrates this in a Canadian context). In Timor-Leste, and particularly Dili, the success of private English language providers such as the Lorosa'e English Language Institute (LELI) and the Science of Life Systems (SOLS) schools attest to the demand for English language instruction. These two providers serve opposite ends of the market. While LELI operates as a business at the upper end of the market, SOLS is a not-for-profit organisation that caters to the wider community. Fees are low to non-existent, classes are large, and courses are popular, with thousands enrolling during school holidays in Dili. Furthermore, SOLS has schools in all of Timor-Leste's districts, suggesting that demand for English language learning exists beyond the capital. The relative popularity of English was also evident in participant comment in Sarmento's study (2013, p. 62).

> Although English courses are not free, [people] are willing to pay to learn. Portuguese, on the other hand, is provided free of charge but the class seems empty and emptier. This could be a hint for the future of English and Portuguese

As Dubin and Olshtain (1986, p. 11) noted, "An indication that language programs are failing to meet learners' objectives is often signaled by the existence of flourishing schools and courses outside the official educational system." For language policy makers and planners in Timor-Leste, there is ample evidence that the supply of English language education is far out-stripped by demand.

There is also official recognition of the need to learn English for the better operation of the civil service. For example, the Instituto Nacional da Administracao Publica (INAP) is mandated to provide training, including English language training, to the public service. Government officials, albeit small numbers, also participate in the New Zealand Government's English Language Training for Officials programme, which allows participants from a number of mainly South-east Asian countries to pursue their English language proficiency development over a 5 month course in New Zealand.

4 Quo Vadis?

One issue facing Timor-Leste is the general lack of success experienced by children in the education system. Low enrolments, high dropout rates, and high levels of grade repetition tend to characterise the educational experience. Whether fairly or not, the language of instruction receives a degree of blame. Teachers often have relatively low proficiency in Portuguese, and resort to coping strategies outlined earlier in this chapter. Parents who are fluent in Bahasa Indonesia struggle with their children's learning in Portuguese, and experience daily the inter-generational disconnect that has resulted from changing language policy since 1945.

As a result, mother tongue education and the role of Tetun are receiving more attention (Taylor-Leech, 2011). One recent proposal (Comisaun Nasional Edukasaun & Ministry of Education, 2011) is that, resources permitting, education should begin in the mother tongue, with the addition of oral Tetun. Exogenous languages would be introduced later – Portuguese at Grade 5, English at Grade 7, Bahasa Indonesia at Grade 10. The approach is one of additive multilingualism and, if implemented, would mean children being educated in four or five languages. There are, of course, strong arguments for mother tongue education (see, e.g., the case made by Walter & Benson, 2012) but at the same time it must be acknowledged that such a proposal would require a significant investment in resources, and without that investment the risk of failing to achieve the desired outcomes is considerably increased. Furthermore, there are voices arguing against mother tongue education in Timor-Leste; one reason for opposition is the perceived threat to national unity, and to the on-going creation of a national identity (Cabral, 2013, pp. 97–99).

Whether or not they move beyond the discussion stage, it is worth noting that such proposals do envisage a continued role for Portuguese in Timor-Leste. It is not clear, however, whether that will, indeed, be what the future holds. There are a number of factors that may militate against current language policy – the emergence of a new generation of political leaders who are less wedded to the Portuguese language than the leaders who fought against the Indonesian occupation, and the continued role of external agencies that opt for English as the working language, such as the UN and NGOs, are two such factors. It also needs to be noted that entry into ASEAN is a distinct possibility (Government of Timor-Leste, 2013), and remembered that the lingua franca of ASEAN is English, viewed as "an important and indispensable tool" for communication among community members (ASEAN, 2013). As has been the case with Cambodia (Clayton, 2002), regional factors may prove stronger than historical links to a former colonial power, no matter how willing that former power, in determining language policy.

Yet, when considering the future for language policy in Timor-Leste, it is possible that the experience of another former Portuguese colony, Mozambique, may point to future developments. In Mozambique in the mid-1990s, there was persistent discussion of English replacing Portuguese as the official language. However, elite groups with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo resisted; "a notion of citizenship was constructed around the assumption that everybody would have access to Portuguese" with the result being that Portuguese was "even more firmly entrenched in Mozambican realities" (Stroud, 1999, p. 370).

For the foreseeable future, then, and at least until a new generation of political leadership is established, it is likely that the Portuguese language will continue to have a role in Timor-Leste, but its role may diminish in the face of the bottom-up demand for English. Portuguese is likely to occupy an ideological niche – reflecting the idea that to be Timorese means to live in a defined geographic area and to be Portuguese-speaking – and to form part of a citizen's plurilinguistic repertoire. The instrumental value attached to proficiency in English is, however, likely to produce a small, but symbolic, increase in the curriculum space given to that language.

5 Concluding Remarks: Timor-Leste in the Wider Context

Apart from the surface difference of having opted for Portuguese rather than English as an official language, the history of language policy in Timor-Leste, and of language-in-education policy, is similar to that of many other post-colonial, multilingual nations. The choice of Portuguese reflected the language preferences of an elite, and was conceived of as an exercise in nation-building, and although the time frame in this recently independent nation has been relatively short, the probable effect will be as it has been elsewhere, that of reproducing "social and economic inequalities long after colonial rule" (Wiley, Garcia, Danzig, & Stigler, 2014, p. xvi).

The perpetuation of inequalities is at least in part achieved through the restrictions on access to and equity in education that arises from privileging a language such as Portuguese – or English – in a multilingual nation where that language is not common to all. One means of breaking down inequalities in society is through mother tongue education for, as Tollefson and Tsui note, "there is widespread evidence internationally that mother tongue [medium of instruction] can significantly reduce barriers to educational access and equity" (Tollefson & Tsui, 2014, p. 190). While objections can be raised on practical grounds, such as resourcing, such an approach to education is consistent with repeated declarations going back over 60 years when UNESCO (1953) first declared the use of the mother tongue to be "axiomatic" in literacy and learning. This affirmation has, more recently, received fresh attention since the adoption of the concept of Education for All (UNESCO, 1990). In this regard, Timor-Leste does offer some hope in its consideration of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTBMLE).

Adoption of MTBMLE as proposed in Timor-Leste with its additive multilingualism approach may also go some way to address the demand for English language learning, for which there is an evident hunger in Timor-Leste as there is elsewhere. It may not yet be the case, as it is in continental Europe, "that English has become a basic skill that must be mastered and a daily necessity that one cannot do without" (Tollefson & Tsui, 2014, p. 207), but changes triggered through ASEAN membership alone will increase the utility value of English. If inequality is not to be perpetuated, proficiency in English cannot be the preserve of the urban middle classes with the means to pay for their children's language learning.

Language policy in Timor-Leste, then, is subject to the same pressures as language policy in other multilingual nations. Of the four themes identified and discussed by Lo Bianco (2014) three are clearly evident in Timor-Leste, i.e.

- Issues surrounding access, equity, and achievement in education
- Native language literacy as an educational right
- Responses to emerging patterns and shifts of the global age

As the nation considers how to respond to each of these, it has the opportunity to reflect in policy the fluid multilingualism that already exists in practice among the people of Timor-Leste.

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English Education Policy in Thailand: Why the Poor Results?

Amrita Kaur, David Young, and Robert Kirkpatrick

Abstract This chapter gives an overview of the development of the English language in Thailand from its past to its present status in Thailand. With the introduction of education reform through the National Education Act (NEA) of 1999, the Ministry of Education in Thailand sought to improve education standards in Thailand at all levels. Moreover, to prepare the nation to compete with other nations in the era of globalization, emphasis on English language skills acquisition was stressed. The chapter investigates a wide range of efforts, initiatives, national policies and education reforms that demonstrate Thailand's willingness to compete in English language skills internationally. However, the current status of English language in the country shows slow progress in English language skills in relation to the effort made, and the chapter also examines policy related challenges and societal obstacles that inhibit or discourage the progress of English language in the country. Towards the end the chapter provides practical strategies and plans for various levels that may facilitate optimal growth of the English language in the country.

Keywords Thailand • Policy • English language • Assessment • Challenges • Bilingual • English programmes

The development of English language skills for the citizens of Thailand has been an on-going process. Large budgets have been allocated to establish English Programs (EP) throughout the country and various reforms and strategies promise major improvements in education and English studies. However, in spite of these initiatives and efforts indicators suggest that English skills are not improving at a sufficient rate. This chapter will commence with a brief history of English language education in Thailand followed by an overview of the core curriculum as well as

A. Kaur (✉)
School of Education and Modern Languages, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Malaysia
e-mail: kauramritanikki@gmail.com

D. Young
Language Institute, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand

R. Kirkpatrick
English Faculty, Gulf University of Science and Technology, Hawally, Kuwait

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other English language policies and projects. This is followed by an assessment of the current status of English in Thailand and an examination of the challenges and obstacles the country faces in its efforts at English language teaching and learning reform and the implementation of policies. Finally, strategies discussing ways in which the country might achieve its goal of an English-speaking populace are evaluated and discussed.

1 Critical Theory and Language Policy

Ricento (2006a, b) posits that the role of critical theory has been significant and multidimensional in language policy and points out critiques of mainstream research, research for social change and research influenced by critical theory itself. In Thailand, recent language policies have been structured to support a cultural melting pot as a prerequisite for globalization. These language policies are designed to facilitate international communication in light of ASEAN 2015 and to increase social and economic opportunities for the society.

The foundations of classroom pedagogy of English language teaching in Thailand can be traced to a ‘sociocultural theory’ that emphasizes the relationship between community and culture as well as learner activity and context.

A dimension of the critical theory approach propagates the role of language policy in reducing various forms of inequality through a variety of ways. One such way is by promoting bilingualism for promoting and maintaining the indigenous language, culture and heritage (Tollefson, 2013a, b). With a nod in this direction, the Royal Institute of Thailand drafted a policy in 2012 to explicitly reiterate Thai as the national language of Thailand.

2 Background

In order to better understand the challenges that English language teaching and learning face in the modern era, it is necessary to trace its incorporation into society both historically and culturally. During the reign of King Rama V (1868–1910), new concerns emerged regarding the maintenance of a social structure that gave centralized power to the king along with justifying a hierarchy based upon inequality – an essential element within an absolute monarchy (Sattayanurak, 2008). To meet these challenges, King Rama V focused upon the concept of “Thainess.” New meaning was given to royal ceremonies and rituals that placed the king at the center, wielding absolute power over all members of society and making the king as the central point of the nation’s unity. The ideology of “Thainess” succeeded in maintaining the social hierarchy along with ensuring that the political structure would continue to be accepted without question.

It was also during the reign of King Rama VI (1910–1925) that Prince Patriarch Wachirayanwarorot transformed the ideas of "Thainess" and "Thai nation" into Buddhist-based ideas. This world-bound rather than spiritual aspect of Buddhism was promoted in the modern era by such Thai intellectuals as M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, who associated Buddhism with kingship and nation. Additionally, the writings of Pramoj emphasized "Thai-style governance, fealty to the king, reciprocity-based relationships between social classes, as well as other aspects of Thai art and culture that focused on kingship and Buddhism" (Sattayanurak, 2008, p. 13). M. R. Kukrit's definition of "Thainess" and a "know-thy-place" culture proved to be very influential during a turbulent period in Thai history and continues to shape modern-day society and education (Hewison, 2009; Sattayanurak).

3 History of English Education in Thailand

Despite the fact that the English language has never been given the status of an official language, it has remained one of the dominant foreign languages in Thailand. During the reign of Rama III (1824–1851), English-speaking Protestant missionaries helped introduce English to the country (Watson, 1983). The language, however, remained restricted to the royal courts (Baker, 2008). The inclination towards the adoption of the English language continued during the reign of Rama IV (1851–1865) who spoke English fluently and wished for his family to learn the language as well. He therefore appointed an English governess (Anna Leonownes, author of "The King and I"), to teach English at the royal court.

This trend continued during the reign of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) who is credited with the introduction of modern education in the kingdom of Thailand which he accomplished through major reforms. Rama V received his education overseas and his reforms subsequently favoured foreign languages in the country. His vision included equipping his people with linguistic skills that would facilitate commerce and trade with foreigners. Thus, he pioneered bilingual education in Thailand through immersion programs that promoted skills in English language (Fry, 2002). Chulalongkorn University, founded in his name, was modelled after the United Kingdom's education system and ranked 239 worldwide in 2013 (Top Universities, 2013).

Each of the previously mentioned reforms was preceded by an impetus or need. This continued into the twentieth century when a further round of educational reforms occurred following an uprising by university students in 1978. These reforms focused on curriculum revision that facilitated creative thinking and problem solving. Equity and access to education for all was another major concern. In the late 1980s, Thailand began to enjoy an economic boom. As a result, a considerable number of university students were able to receive their education overseas. Upon their return, many of these bilingual graduates attained prominent positions in the government and business sectors in which English was steadily becoming the lingua franca used in confronting the challenges of globalization and

internationalization. In the mid 1990s educational reform was based more on international standards. One of the focus areas of the reforms was to make English a compulsory subject for all primary grades (Punthumasen, 2007). The education ministry became aware of communicative ways of teaching English in the late 1970s but these were not incorporated into the English curriculum until 1996 (Punthumasen). However, many schools have problems implementing communicative methods due to the relatively low level of English proficiency among teachers.

The growing demand for economic recovery after the collapse of the Thai baht in 1998 and a changing education paradigm worked as a catalyst for the Thai Government to introduce education reform through the National Education Act (NEA) of 1999. These reforms sought to improve education standards in Thailand at all levels and moreover, prepare the nation to compete with other nations in the era of globalization. The major areas of focus were (1) ensuring basic education for all (2) reform of the education system (3) learning reform (4) reorganization of administrative systems (5) introducing a system of educational quality assurance (6) enhancing professionalism and the quality of teaching profession (7) mobilization of resources and investment for education and (8) technologies for educational reform (Fry, 2002). Internationalization of higher education was another initiative that accelerated the use of English as a medium of instruction in programs offered by higher educational institutes. Leading public universities such as Thammasat, Chulalongkorn, and Kasetsart also began to offer international programs for Thai and foreign students using English as medium of instruction (Terushi, Fry, & Srivatananukulkit, 2000).

4 The Basic Education Core Curriculum 2008

The NEA's policies were succeeded by the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BEC) in 2008 which effectively replaced the 2001 Basic Education Curriculum following revisions. BEC 2008 was designed to confront the demands of globalization. It focused on preparing Thai students to keep up with the rapid economic, technological, and social transformations that were occurring within the country. The BEC 2008 recommended eight learning areas including a foreign language. While English was approved as a core language, teaching of other foreign languages such as French, German, Chinese, and Japanese was left at each school's discretion. In comparison to BEC 2001, one can see a shift to include teaching English for communication purposes in addition to being taught as a compulsory subject. The English language section in BEC 2008 focused on four major strands: Language for Communication, Language and Culture, Language and Relationship with other Learning Areas, and Language and Relationship with Community and the World. As a whole, the four strands emphasized that learning of English should facilitate learners' communicative competence, enabling them to exchange and present data and information, express their feelings, opinions, concepts and views on various matters. In line with this, BEC recommended use of appropriate teaching

methodologies in accordance with the cultures of native speakers and Thai. It also emphasized the use of English to acquire knowledge from other areas and build relationships with communities around the world for exchange of knowledge, to acquire education and to earn a livelihood (Ministry of Education, 2008).

5 Other English Language Policies and Programs

Besides major reforms and initiatives, there are several mini-programs and strategies that the Thai government has employed to promote the use of the English language throughout the country.

International Schools Since 1957, the Thai government has permitted the opening of international schools in the country (Punthumasen, 2007). The ministry of education allows Thai nationals to obtain their education through international curricula such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE). It also mandates international schools to get accreditation from at least one of the reputable international accrediting agencies such as the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC), and the Council of International Schools (CIS).

EP or Bilingual Program In 1995, an initiative was brought forth by the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) to establish English programs in public and private Thai schools across the nation. These schools teach four core subjects: science, mathematics, English and physical education using English as a medium of instruction. EP or Bilingual schools usually employ foreign teachers to teach these subjects in English (Punthumasen, 2007).

International Program in Higher Education In a similar endeavour, the Thai Ministry of Education (MOE) has also made efforts to internationalize higher education allowing public and private universities to run international programs with English as a medium of instruction. Internationalization of higher education in Thailand is one of the strategies for instilling and promoting job-based skills among Thai students with a focus on improving English language abilities (Chalapati, 2007b). Further reforms by the Ministry of University Affairs targeted the areas of language teaching and learning and development of the English curriculum in Thai universities. One of the proposals was that universities shall recognize English language scores from the English Proficiency Test of the Ministry of University Affairs for university entrance. The changes also emphasized that students – who opt for English as their language – must complete at least four compulsory courses in English. Courses such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) were required as major subjects (Wiriyachitra, n.d.).

Road Map for Education Reforms One of the areas of reform is the promotion of foreign language and teachers' development training. The move involves an initiative known as the Strategic Plan for Reforming the English Learning Process to

Accelerate National Competitive Ability (2006–2010). This plan focuses on building the capacity of Thai people in English communication skills to gain knowledge, increase performance in their profession, and build international competiveness (Punthumasen, 2007).

Establishment of Support Organizations The English Language Institution (ELI) was established in 2007 under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC). Its goal is to collaborate with other agencies to facilitate and promote the English learning process for both students and teachers and to ensure schools meet expected curriculum standards. OBEC has established the English Resource and Instructional Center (ERIC) in order to train and develop teachers in their areas. Similarly, projects such as In-Service Education and Training (INSET) concentrate on training and development programs for teachers to allow them to carry forward the national education agenda. However, success of these projects remains questionable in the Thai educational community (ONEC, 1996).

In addition, the Ministry of Education established a language institute at Thammasat University, which offers a variety of programs that promote correct usage of English. It runs two major programs, an English Course for the General Public (short-term courses for teacher training) and the Master of Arts Program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. The teacher training program covers curriculum, teaching methodology, assessment and evaluation for teaching English. Since then several other universities have started offering similar programs.

6 Other Efforts

Several supplementary initiatives have been launched by MOE and its sub departments during the last decade to encourage use of the English language in Thailand. Distance Learning to teach English at schools in remote area was one such initiative. Others included Self-Access Learning Centers (SALC) established within universities to promote independent study. In 2012, the Thai Government announced an ambitious project called English-Speaking Year 2012. The program recommended English teaching and conversational practice for at least 1 day per week in schools nationwide. The program focused on English communication skills and aimed to reach 14 million students in 34,000 state schools across Thailand from pre-primary to university levels. As part of this drive, MOE offered incentives such as trips abroad for teachers who successfully created 'English Corners' with books and CDs and other resources required in facilitating the acquisition of English. MOE also sought to recruit teachers from countries where English is spoken as a first language and also from countries that have high levels of English language skills (Hodal, 2012).

7 Other Languages

As has been noted in other chapters, English as the global language can be a threat to minority languages. The case is different in Thailand where the Thai language is far more dominant than English and consequently more stifling to minority languages. State convention 9 (June 24, 1940) declared Thai as the national language but it was only in 2010 that it was explicitly reiterated Thai as the national language of Thailand in a policy drafted by the Royal Institute of Thailand. At the same time, the policy gives support to Thailand's various ethnic languages and called for an increase in the study of English, Chinese, and the languages of surrounding countries "It is the policy of the government to promote bilingual or multilingual education for the youth of ethnic groups whose mother tongue is different from the national language [Thai], as well as those from other countries who enter Thailand seeking employment" (cited in Fry, 2013). How effective this is on the ground has yet to be seen.

8 Assessment: Current Status of English in Thailand

English is taught as a compulsory subject across the nation. International conferences, tourism, and global advertising are the domains in which English is spoken. A limited but distinct presence of English can be seen in the media as well. The country hosts a small number of English TV programs and a radio station in English and there are two daily English language newspapers (The Bangkok Post and The Nation). As of 2010, over 880 international education programs throughout the country used English as the medium of instruction. This shows a 50 % increase since 2004 (Hengsadeekul, Hengsadeekul, Koul, & Kaewkuekool, 2010). In 2010, approximately 371.5 billion baht were allocated to the Education Ministry and the current education budget consisting of 29 % of total spending is one of the highest in the world.

Despite these large amounts, the level of English among students and citizens has not shown significant improvement. In a 2013 report by the Education First (EF) English Proficiency Index, Thailand ranked 55th out of 60 (EF EPI, 2013) with a ranking of "very low proficiency" (Education First, 2013). In the year 2010, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) ranked Thailand 116th out of 163 countries. Also, the average test score in ONET for English subjects ranged between 20 % and 30 % (Kaewmala, 2012). According to the British Council, indicators are that Thailand's English-language teaching and learning were falling behind other ASEAN countries (Pattanawimol Israngkura, cited in Assavanonda, 2013). And in the WEF's Global Competitiveness Report for 2012–2013, the quality of education in Thailand ranked worst among the eight ASEAN countries surveyed and was described as "abnormally low," prompting former ASEAN secretary-general Surin Pitsuwan to remark, "We have seen Thailand's scores sliding down the scale in all

categories, survey after survey, year after year." ("Surin says," 2013). Indeed, as other reports indicate (Cheewakaroon, 2011; Iemjinda, 2007; Witte, 2000), similar obstacles to English language learning continue to plague the nation. Moreover, overall English levels are still well behind Malaysia. In most areas, Thai workers are rated as highly by personnel mangers as those in Malaysia, and it is only in English skills where Thai workers are seen as especially deficient. In a study by Yilmaz (2010), 64 % of Thai professionals were rated poor or very poor in English language proficiency while only 4–5 % of Malaysian professionals received this ranking (2010). In short, although Thailand's education spending level is high, the return on investment is low.

It must be noted that ONET scores and TOEFL results do not give a truly accurate indication of the English levels of the Thai population. The fact that over 20 million tourists visited Thailand in 2013 indicates that some level of English is used among Thais involved in the tourist industry. Indeed, many arrivals are pleasantly surprised by the English skills of taxi drivers, bar workers and shop-keepers, whose English proficiency was developed due to economic necessity rather than through government policies. However, the ability to conduct limited English conversation, while highly important for those working with tourist, is not equivalent to genuine proficiency in the language.

9 Thainess

The overall reforms that have been implemented in Thailand attempt to both modernize education as well as preserve traditional values. This pronouncement from the National Economic and Social Development board explains the goals of the Education reforms as follows:

Thai society should be a knowledge and learning society. Learning opportunities should be created for all Thai people, designed to promote logical thinking and lifelong learning. Science and technology should be strengthened, so that Thai society can benefit from local innovation, creativity, and the accumulation of intellectual capital, in order to increase competitiveness and to appropriately supplement Thai local wisdom and national traditions, culture and religion (National Economic and Social Development Board [NESDB] and Office of the Prime Minister [OPM], 2001, p. 13).

The question is how this can be implemented in practice. The concept of "Thainess" is based upon a traditional society. Its application makes the Kingdom a distinctive area in which "its" people define their identity by placing it against an outside world continuously portrayed as unstable, ambiguous, and lacking the safety and security that can be found in "Thainess" (Hamilton, 2002). It does not take into consideration the widening divisions of society or the emergence of new social classes (Renard, 2006). Since it was presented by intellectuals as an inheritance from the past, its core philosophy has remained unchanged over the centuries. Traditional values that do not hold relevance in the modern age are upheld while

new values face condemnation, resulting in a damaging effect on progress (Anderson, 2012). Thais, as Sattayanurak (2008, p. 33) writes,

> … can imagine social changes only in terms of material progress, but cannot imagine changes in terms of social relationships … Instead, Thais see things in the modern system of social relationships that do not fit in the framework of "Thainess" as "abnormal" behavior that must be quelled or corrected; for example, when "children" or those in "low social space" disobey those in "high social space…"

The establishment of Thainess as an "official" national culture has been an ongoing mission. In April of 2012, Prem Tinsulanonda, the 91 year old Privy Council president and statesman, included the ideology of Thainess to his nine principles of repaying the country by stating that "To be Thai, a person must have Thainess" (Gen Prem, 2012).

10 Thainess in Modern Education

A 2001 report by Kaewdang, the Secretary-General of The Office of National Education Commission (ONEC) titled "Indigenous Knowledge for a Learning Society" by Kaewdang, the Secretary-General of The Office of National Education Commission (ONEC) introduced a plan for the inclusion of indigenous teaching in the education system. This included such time-honored practices as agriculture, manufacturing, handicrafts, traditional medicine, and so on. According to Kaewdang (2001), "In the past forty years… Thailand's economic and social development has placed an emphasis on industrialization and technology, which depended too much on Western knowledge and know-how." Furthermore, while the indigenous knowledge that the Thai have accumulated over many years has assisted in solving problems and aided in development, the misguided application of Western knowledge was responsible for trade imbalance, urbanization, and destruction both cultural and environmental. "The economic crisis," writes Dr. Kaewdang, "was the outcome of such mistakes" (2001, p. 32). While the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in education can be justified on many levels, it is difficult to overlook the "Thainess" in Kaewdang's report. It reflects his mistrust of Western knowledge and places blame for the country's problems upon Western knowledge which does not fit into the framework of this value system.

Indeed reactions against western "interference" or even comments on Thai ways of doing things are becoming frequent even in international politics. For example, Kasit Piriomya the previous Foreign Minister responded to statements by the Japanese and American ambassadors who were critical of attempts to stop upcoming elections: "Foreign diplomats [should] keep quiet and accommodate the Thai people's desire for deeper reforms that might not fit some foreigners' conventional take on democracy… the foreign entities should just shut up their comments."

Muangmee (2007) listed a number of problems persistent in Thailand's educational reform:

- A lack of strong leadership
- The influence of politics

- The widely held belief that it is the duty of the government to solve education problems
- The gap between academia and the general public in education reform
- The change in mentality and behavior that education reform requires
- Parents' ideas of traditional education
- A lack of motivation among students.

While these problems are not unique to Thailand, it should be noted that they occur within a society that promotes a system of attitudes, values, goals, and practices that directly perpetuate these problems rather than assist in solving them (Boriboon, 2011). Indeed, the "split personality" of Thai culture was brought to attention in an article on Thailand's Ministry of Culture website titled "How to Raise your Children so that They Become Civilized." The essay was intended to be a "how–to" guide for parents to ensure that their children remain in "contemporary culture." In it, the author stated that parents

> … should teach them the art of *ramwong* (Thai dance) at 3–4 years old. Get them to listen to Thai classical music and wear flower-patterned shirts. When the children are 6 or 7, they should be able to play the Thai flute, xylophone or cymbals. When they are 8 to 10, they must be taught the architectural elements of a Thai temple. At … (16 to 18)… parents should know how to use Thai traditional textiles as part of their kids' everyday outfits. (Achakulwisut, 2011, para. 5)

What is clear from these cases is that the ideology presented by 'Thainess' does not address the challenges presented by modern life (Sattayanurak, 2008, p. 32) but rather encourages dependence on outdated values and discourages critical thinking. While no single factor can be held responsible for the Thai populace's continuous lack of achievement in the field of English language learning, the numerous of initiatives that failed to meet their goals along with unsuccessful attempts at reform are indicators that that problems Thailand face are deeper than initially thought (Fuller, 2013; "Let them," 2012).

11 Challenges for Improving English Proficiency

11.1 Educational Level

Teaching in Thailand is predominantly teacher–centered and exam oriented. Students are given limited exposure to real life learning and also less opportunities to involve themselves in hands-on experiences (Pennington, 1999). A similar situation can be seen in India. Out-dated teaching methods fail to engage students for deeper learning because teachers mainly rely on reading and writing exercises for teaching English rather than focusing on listening and speaking. Hallinger and Kantamara (2000) suggested that "…when faced with implementing new approaches to management, learning and teaching, Thai educators remain subject to traditional Thai cultural values, assumptions, and norms." Again, this situation parallels that of

India (Kannan, 2013). Chalapati (2007) also found educational places and teaching reflect the hierarchical nature of Thai society. Pongsudhirak (Chulalongkorn University) contends that the education system is still top down and designed to produce obedient students devoid of critical thinking faculties (cited in Ahuja, 2011). Some researchers, (Punthumasen, 2007; Snae & Brueckner, 2007) found that a lack of interactive media, relevant textbooks and creative learning materials did not support the promotion of English. While the implementation of e-learning has been slow, the situation is improving as can be seen in the distribution of free tablet computers with preloaded Thai and English language software to primary level students during 2012 (Kirkpatrick, 2011).

A lack of proficient teachers can also be attributed to Thai students' low academic performance (Baker, 2012). A survey conducted in 2006 by the University of Cambridge revealed that 60 % of Thai teachers did not have sufficient knowledge for teaching English while only 3 % had reasonable fluency (Kaewmala, 2012). A similar situation can be found in Vietnam in which the government found that only 10 % of English teachers in public schools passed the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Thailand now has over 650 programs to train teachers many of these are poorly focused or low in quality especially in areas of high demand such as English. Sombat Noparak, president of the Thailand Education Deans Council stated that "It is also difficult for faculties of education to provide quality education to their teachers-to-be, because they don't have enough lecturers with expertise in different fields, especially in Science and English," (Khaopa, 2011, para. 5). According to the Consortium of Sixteen Education Deans of Thailand President, Sirichai Kanjanawasee, shortages of English teachers in remote areas means that "Underprivileged students in those areas receive a worse quality of education," (cited in Khaopa, p ?). Equal shortages of English teachers have also been found in Vietnam (Dudzik & Nguyen, 2013; Le & Do, 2012; Moon, 2009) and Singapore (Cheah, 2003). Furthermore, limited data collected by the British Council (Assavanonda, 2013) suggested that primary school English teachers in Thailand have, on average, "…an English level of around A2 (pre-intermediate) on the CFR (common framework of reference), and those at secondary level have a B1 (intermediate) level of English": or about two levels below Singapore teachers and one level below Malaysian teachers.

Another challenge that educators face is low motivation among their students to engage in the language learning process. Many students consider English a 'fearsome subject' and others reported it as their least favorite subject (Kaewmala, 2012; Punthumasen, 2007). Additionally, shyness or anxiety may occur when students attempt to speak in a native accent which differs from that of teachers or classmates (Young, 2010). Social critic Jitrapas (2009) contends that "the number of children with moral deficiency and personal misbehavior from game addiction to drug abuse to intolerance for hard work, has grown exponentially" and directly blames the Thai education system for this.

The surge in English programs running across the country has led to an equal surge in foreign teachers joining schools with both positive and negative results. From one perspective, cultural differences of individualism and collectivism as

identified by Hofstede (1991) pose a threat to teacher student relationships. For example, the polite and calm attitude of Thai students can be misinterpreted by Western teachers as being passive and uninterested (Chalapati, 2007). From this perspective, in order for teachers to be able to transfer their knowledge, especially language, it is essential for them to identify with students' cultural perspective and use examples from local context. Biggs (2003) suggests that it is teachers' responsibility to adapt teaching methods to suit students' needs in accordance with their culture. Related to this, the Thai government mandated a 20 h compulsory course in Thai culture and language to be taken by foreign teachers in Thailand (Baker, 2012).

12 Policy Level

One factor that is both favorable and unfavorable (depending on context) to English is the decentralization of education. The National Education Act of 1999 stated that the Ministry of Education should "…decentralize powers in educational administration […] regarding academic matters" (section 39, Office of the National Education Commission 1999). This works in favor of schools which have enough skilled and dedicated English teachers as they are free to apply the best methods to their classes. For the remaining (majority) of schools it can mean as Darasawang and Watson Todd (2012) put it, "…a hotchpotch of poorly designed materials with no relation to any other policies" (p. 213).

13 Societal Level

In 2010 the Government turned down a committee's recommendation to make English a second official language under the claim that such a move could lead outsiders to think Thailand had once been colonized like its neighbors, a fact of which the Thai are proud. Rappa and Wee (2006) suggested that Thailand considers Thai to be a language essential for homogeneity in society and thus is reluctant to embrace the English language as a second official language.

There are also areas in day-to-day life which impede the development of English. For example, many Thais struggle with proper pronunciation of English words, which may single them out for ridicule. This threat to one's social identity along with the accompanying anxiety has been shown to significantly relate to proficiency in a second language (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2000). Baker (2008) notes that English is being used as a lingua franca to some degree in tourism and international trade (2008); however, most Thais rarely use it (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hayes, 2008a, b; Kosonen, 2008). This is largely because environmental factors do not support the acquisition of English as most of the popular English movies, documentary and soap operas come with Thai voice translation. International products such as soft drinks and consumer goods such as toothpaste, shampoo, and household cleaners are also transliterated and advertised in Thai.

14 Conclusion

As the English language gains a stronger position in business and politics of Southeast Asia, Thailand will find itself at a disadvantage if it cannot meet the language standards required for international communication. Although numerous reforms in education, policies and initiatives pertaining to ELT have been launched in the past to improve the English speaking abilities of the Thai, progress has been slow. For Thailand to achieve its goal of an English-speaking populace, the following strategies must be adopted that are both relevant and adaptable at all levels of society.

Informal English Although many Thai students have limited opportunities to use or practice English in an informal environment, there are several opportunities presented in the form of print media, the Internet, radio and television. It is necessary that school policies and teachers expose students to out-of-class activities such as viewing English language movies or reading novels in English (Chusanachoti, 2009; Nagi, 2012). Also, the Government could fund local media efforts to include English content.

Teachers' Involvement at Ground Level Weaknesses in the teacher empowerment framework means that teachers rarely contribute significantly to the planning of reform and education policies. This has a direct impact on teachers' willingness to accept reforms and policies. Teachers' direct involvement in educational planning at a national level will help teachers make more sense of new policies and narrow the gap between policies and practices.

Training the Local Workforce In 2004, the number of teachers of English in basic education was 113,957 (OBEC, 2004). However, Thai teachers often feel linguistically incompetent because of what Holliday (2005) calls the "native-speakerism fallacy". This means that they are always measured against native English accents and often feel unmotivated in speaking the language (Methitham, 2009). One way to begin to overcome this lack of motivation is by establishing a network for local teachers who teach English. Such a network can organize seminars, presentations and training sessions for teachers to gain knowledge and skills for ELT. It would also provide a platform for local Thai teachers to meet, interact and share their practices with other teachers. An initiative such as this was put into practice in Japan as part of an Action Plan to improve students' communicative abilities (MEXT, 2003). Moreover, more participation by local teachers in teaching English would be beneficial for Thai students because it would be easier for students to identify and emulate the skills of teachers of their own nationality and cultural disposition (Nagi, 2012). As in the case of Vietnam, regional foreign language centres could be established to improve English language skills of teachers throughout the country.

Experimentation Before Implementation In order for progress to occur, the substandard English language test scores, ratings and rankings that Thailand has received should not be seen as a sickness in which the cure remains a mystery. Rather, reformers should fully grasp the cultural environment in which their initiatives

are expected to take a foothold during both planning and implementation phases. Instead of asking schools to enforce policies which are poorly understood or cause anxiety among teachers or learners, schools could be selected in various regions of the country to experiment with new reforms and evaluate the problems that occur. Feedback from teachers, students and parents could be taken under consideration before initiatives are launched on a nationwide scale. Reforms that have already been met with approval and acceptance at the ground level would undoubtedly have a greater chance at success than those introduced without experimentation.

Expansion of Bilingual Schools According to Kirkpatrick, R. (2012), this could include an arrangement between various countries, including the Philippines and Thai governments through which qualified English teachers from these countries are invited to teach in Thailand. This could carry on until a sufficient number of Thai teachers develop the level of English proficiency needed to be effective in the classroom.

The Recognition of English Speakers The recognition of English speakers in Thai government posts could be achieved by ranking salary to English ability and insisting new staff has measurable ability in English. This initiative by the government would likely spillover into the business world and wider society.

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Standardizing English for Educational and Socio-economic Betterment- A Critical Analysis of English Language Policy Reforms in Vietnam

Thuy Thi Ngoc Bui and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

Abstract The chapter provides a critical assessment on the reality of current teacher quality and the roles of the ELPs in advancing linguistic, education and socio-economic developments for various students, especially those from minority linguistic backgrounds in a remote province. The results reveal the probably unpromising outcomes and tremendous challenges of the present ELPs as teacher professional development in the current ELP reform is, for the most part, controversial, ambivalent, and contested. Furthermore, the chapter argues that, contrary to the state's goal of promoting English for socio-economic and educational advancement, these language policies could largely threaten social, educational and economic development, and minority students' linguistic and cultural ecology. The chapter thus emphasizes the urgent need for a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness among effective teacher professional development; cultural and linguistic complexity; language/literacy education; and socio-economic needs throughout the processes of language policy decision-making and implementation. To the end, the chapter strongly recommends respecting home languages and multilingualism for effective schooling, transparent and transformative education, a strong economy, social welfare, and social security at local and global scales.

Keywords Language policy • Vietnam • English • Teacher professional development • Development • Multilingualism

T.T.N. Bui (✉)
The University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia
e-mail: thuybuihawaii@gmail.com

H.T.M. Nguyen
The University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia

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1 Introduction

The far-reaching currents of neoliberalism, globalization, and transnationalism have found a point of convergence in Vietnam, which now stands at the crossroads of navigating the most appropriate language reform for the nation (Pham, 2009). English in Vietnam has been triumphantly reincarnated; once the language of the enemy, it is now the language widely regarded as best able to help the state and its people achieve their dreams of material success and privilege (Do, 2006).

In early 2000, the Vietnamese government proclaimed English a compulsory foreign language subject for all students nationwide, asserting that Vietnamese citizens have to be equipped with English language skills in order to access a range of professions, compete in the global economic market, advance technology, engage in nation building, and ultimately integrate Vietnam into the global community. Since that time, the government has been opening doors for a broad spectrum of international universities, corporations, and non-government organizations (NGOs) to collaboratively promote English in Vietnam.

Despite the state's accelerating interest in embracing English, the relationship between Vietnam's English Language Policies (ELPs) and socio-economic development, educational equity, and preservation of cultural and linguistic heritage has not yet been widely documented. In such countries as India, Pakistan, the United States,

Cambodia, China, Egypt, and Namibia, by contrast, a large number of scholars have placed special emphasis on unraveling the ideologies that underpin ELPs, as well as their roles within society and their impact in theory and practice on various issues including linguistic and cultural diversity, identity, educational equity, and social welfare (e.g., Erling & Seargeant, 2013; Kirkpatrick & Sussex, 2012). Scholars concerned with indigenous and minority language policies (e.g., Hornberger, 2006), transnational scholars (Appadurai, 2001; Luke, 2011), and critical researchers (Street, 2003) have warned that taking language policies for granted has had serious 'side effects' in a large number of countries, including the failure both to acknowledge students' own linguistic and cultural heritages and to provide them with high-quality English instruction. Consequently, such policies may rob students of valuable opportunities to acquire the content knowledge necessary to attain a secure sense of their own culture, language, and identity, and thereby to preserve their social and economic security (e.g., Appleby, 2010; Shamim, 2011).

This chapter aims to assess critically Vietnam's ELPs by examining their opportunities, challenges, and consequences. In particular, it critically analyzes teacher professional development in language policy implementation. Furthermore, it unravels the roles of the ELPs in advancing linguistic, education and socio-economic developments for various students. To the end, the chapter provides recommendations for developing a language policy toward efficacy, equity, and diversity. In order to obtain a comprehensive assessment of the current ELPs, we begin the chapter with a discussion of the context of English language in Vietnam.

2 Context of Vietnam's English Language Policy

The English language in Vietnam is greatly socio-politically, ideologically, and economically bounded. During the French colonization, and especially the American involvement in Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, English was widely promoted by the U.S. forces in the South through a system of English classes and schools. The status of the English language was sharply diminished after the unification of North and South Vietnam and the gaining of independence from the U.S. occupation in 1975. While English was regarded as the language of the enemy, the Russian language became the most popular foreign language nationwide as the country's alliance with the Soviet Union in a wide range of political, economic, and educational areas became stronger.

English gained its privilege in Vietnam when the state launched the economic reform named *Doi Moi* (Renovation). The Soviet bloc erosion in the late 1980s drove Vietnam to the verge of economic isolation (Kokko, 2004). Since 1986, *Doi Moi* was born with an aim to uplift the country from its 'muddy days' of economic malaise, famine, limited foreign aid, and illiteracy through free-market reform. Under a "socialist-oriented market economy", *Doi Moi* centralized the state control by fostering local and private enterprise. *Doi Moi* further reduced the state's control while fostering freedom to invest in market products and widely opened doors for trade liberation and foreign investment. With the aim of supporting the country's economic transition, the state has adopted ideologies to foster a less authoritarian, more multi-faceted, multi-segmented model of governance (McCargo, 2004; Gainsborough, 2010). In addition to the economic and political shift toward globalization, Vietnam has undertaken a vast array of education reforms that vividly highlight the transition of education. Through national campaigns such as *giao duc la quoc sach hang dau* (education is the national priority) and *xa hoi hoa giao duc* (socialization of education), there has been a speedy development of both public and private school systems. This major shift in economic, political, and educational reform has significantly contributed to the rapidly growing demand to learn English in Vietnam (Bui, 2013; Nguyen, 2012).

The socio-economic, ideologies, and educational reform have actively impacted the ELPs. Since the 1990s, English has been introduced at all levels of education and is widely used for international communication. Within the education system, English is also becoming increasingly emphasized, as seen from the key role of English in the final and entrance examinations at middle school and tertiary levels (Nguyen, 2005). In the national curriculum for junior and senior secondary schools, English is usually taught in three 45-min periods each week from grade 6 to grade 12 as a compulsory subject. The Vietnamese government initiated general curriculum and English language policy reforms in 2000 and 2001 (Decrees Nos. 40/2000/QH 10 and 14/2001/CT-TTg) to "urgently develop and implement the curriculum nationwide to meet the needs of the country's modern development." The reforms further emphasized student-centered pedagogical approaches, stimulating students' creativity with the ultimate aim of developing and globally integrating the nation.

Based on the premise that education should focus on student-centered and self-study approaches similar to those of the West, a new series of Western-oriented textbooks was introduced in 2006 for use by all students nationwide, regardless of their different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Recently, the latest foreign language reform, the National Foreign Language Project 2020, implemented in 2008, has been described as the most notable language reform of the nation. Young Vietnamese citizens are required to be equipped with English language skills in order to improve national and regional employability and to enable them to compete confidently in global job markets, especially in the context of the economic integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). According to the government, therefore, the need to promote foreign languages, especially English, is ever more pressing. According to data provided by the government, as many as 20 million students will benefit from this project (Decision 1400/QD-TTg, 2008). In 2010–2011, as a compulsory subject, a pilot English primary program was implemented from Grade 3 in a number of places in Vietnam. It is expected that in the near future English will be mandated for all students nation-wide from Grade 3 onwards. Going even further to secure the place of the English language as a required subject, in preparation for its future expansion, the Ministry of Education has piloted the teaching of mathematics, physics, and chemistry using English as the medium of instruction. In addition, in an attempt to ensure that by 2020 most school graduates would be able to attain a minimum required level of English, Decision 1400/QD-TTg placed an intensive focus on re-training more than 80,000 English teachers in public schools, after the government discovered that only 10 % of them had passed the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).[1] Some 80,000 in-service teachers need retraining and professional support to boost the current situation of teaching and learning (Dudzik & Nguyen, February 2013). Regardless of skepticism from international commentators (Hayes, 2008; Parks, 2011), and from various Vietnamese educators (Bui, 2009; Le & Do, 2012; Nguyen 2012), all of whom believed that the project was largely unrealistic and entirely impossible to achieve at the present time, these 80,000 school teachers are expected to become confident intermediate-level users of English. On the whole, all of these national English mandates have significantly facilitated the training and re-training of university students, lecturers, and teachers in collaboration with regional and international counterparts to promote English in the nation.

Despite the extreme eagerness for English language expansion, critical language policy researchers (e.g., Tollefson, 2013), indigenous language scholars (e.g., McCarty, 2011), and critical literacy experts (e.g., Luke, 2011) express their grave concern for the neoliberal language agendas for the purpose of consumption and capital benefits. The following section provides a conceptual framework of the neoliberal English language expansion and its consequences in a great number of settings.

[1] For instance, 700 teachers from Ben Tre Province in the Mekong Delta were tested, and only 61 obtained the required score (500). In the capital, Hanoi, teachers' IELTS results showed that only 18 % had achieved the B2 grade (Ed-Parks, 2011).

3 Neoliberal Agendas of English Language Expansion and the Reality of ELPs

Heller (2010) argues that in order to legitimize and maximize the capital benefits and the circulation of resources, the neoliberal agenda works to commodify a form of language capitalism that emphasizes the expansion of the market and increases the importance of English for the following processes:

- managing the flow of resources over extended spatial relations and compressed space-time relations;
- adding symbolic value to industrially produced resources;
- facilitating the construction of and access to niche markets; and
- developing linguistically mediated knowledge and service industries (p. 103).

Consequently, these strategies contribute to governments' intensive and extensive eagerness for the accelerating expansion of English (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). English has been expanding as a multinational and multifaceted tool, performing multiple purposes, such as a vehicle for economic development, increased employability and productivity, nation-building, technological advancement, fulfilling personal needs, and serving the cause of national integration (e.g., Rubdy & Tan, 2008; Baldauf & Nguyen, 2012). A considerable array of such countries as Nepal (Phyak, 2011), India (Agnihotri, 2007) and Korea (Song, 2012), as well as countries in Africa (e.g., Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia) (Coleman, 2011) have adopted English as a main language, official language, and even as the medium of instruction for students of minority linguistic backgrounds. In these countries, children are required to learn English from grade one onwards. The neoliberal English influence is so profound that local stakeholders such as parents and teachers show their strong preference for English education (e.g., Trudell & Piper, 2013). English serves as a symbol of quality education and as a mechanism for fuller participation in national and international opportunities.

As a backdrop for the rapid expansion of English, critical language policy scholars (e.g., Tollefson, 2013; Phillipson, 2012) have expressed grave concerns about the capacity for ELPs to cause the serious depreciation and even extinction of local cultures and languages. The penetration of English has created serious divisions and collisions between Western and non-Western pedagogical and cultural values. For example, Phillipson (2012) claims that few English educational packages from the West align well with Asian teaching contexts, and thus prevent students from accessing the full wealth of knowledge embedded in their own cultural and linguistic tradition. The other damaging consequence of the hegemony of the English language is that it frequently enhances the socio-economic disparity between "haves" and "have-nots" (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Language scholars such as Coleman (2011) and Bui (2013) argue that, in the worst-case scenario, subordinate classes fail to gain both fluency in English and the ability to participate in the world by using it. As a result, they are never able to satisfy the demands of the job market.

Addressing the reality of English usage, Bui (2013) and Hossian and Tollefson (2007) contend that the language's hegemony raises significantly more ethnical questions within countries or populations still struggling with extreme poverty and high illiteracy rates. According to Coleman (2011), rather than convincing people to spend great amounts of time, energy, and money on obtaining English language skills, policy makers should emphasize more practical pursuits, including learning national languages and obtaining vocational training. A number of other scholars in diverse geographic settings in Asia and Africa have warned that ambiguous ELPs threaten the educational opportunities of children, especially those belonging to minority groups and/or from limited socio-economic backgrounds (e.g., Williams, 2011; Hamid, Jahan & Islam, 2013). They argue that the association of proficiency in English with educational "success" is misleading, as more often than not, English merely serves a decorative function. Yet English proficiency is not only symbolic of cultural and linguistic spread, it may prevent children from gaining educational and linguistic capital at school in such countries as Malaysia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh (Agnihotri, 2007; David & Govindasamy, 2007; Hamid & Baldauf, 2011). Furthermore, English is often squeezed into an already-overwhelming curriculum, thereby significantly reducing the time available for students to learn other subjects. Likewise, Williams (2011) reports that the use of English as the medium of instruction in the education systems of three African countries, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambi, has brought no benefits, or few benefits, for children who speak other languages but do not speak English at home. Both Coleman (2011) and Williams (2011) caution that such ambiguous and non-negotiable ELPs may drive children to drop out of school; furthermore, they are less likely to complete their primary education when the languages used at home and school are different, and English is used as the medium of instruction. These policies, therefore, are threatening students' social welfare, and equipping them only for low-wage, low-prestige, and insecure jobs. Accordingly, such policies fail to uphold class, race, and language equality and social mobility (Davis, Phyak, & Bui, 2012).

A review of the literature surveying the spread of the English language reveals that English generally serves to prohibit nations as well as individuals from linguistic minority and segregated backgrounds from gaining access to socio-economic and educational capital, while severely limiting their opportunities of gaining linguistic and cultural affluence. Besides these disturbing influences, another question that should be raised is: What benefits can English language use actually bring to people? It seems obvious that the positive outcomes of English are profoundly limited. Seeking to identify the contribution made by the English language in developing contexts, Coleman (2011, p. 18) and Tsui and Tollefson (2007) propose that English may play such positive roles as:

(a) increasing employability;
(b) facilitating international mobility (migration, tourism, studying abroad);
(c) unlocking development opportunities and accessing crucial information, and
(d) acting as an impartial language in contexts in which other available languages would be unacceptable.

However, these scholars added the clear proviso that these benefits are largely in the hands of middle-class elites and/or of members of the ruling class, rather than those who belong to minority and/or economically disadvantaged groups. It appears that the roles of the English language are still extremely ambivalent; they need to be investigated further in the complex socio-political, linguistic, and economic setting of each country investigated.

Aligning the conceptual framework of English spread and its widely threatening consequences with the context of the current study indicates the urgent need to acquire a nuanced understanding of the roles and consequences of ELPs. In particular, the study scrutinizes the relationship of the professional development of teachers in language policy implementation. Further, it explores whether English has an essential role in facilitating linguistic, socio-economic, and educational betterment for various populations, especially those from linguistic minority backgrounds. The study attempts to address whether and how an English language policy can be designed to address the linguistic, socio-economic, and educational needs and challenges of various populations, without damaging or devaluing their linguistic and cultural uniqueness.

This chapter of ELP analysis is supported by Bui's ongoing and in-depth ethnographic research on language policy advocacy and Nguyen's extensive scholarship on language policy analyses and teachers' professional development. Bui's engagement with various teachers and students in a mountainous province in unraveling the reality of the state's ELPs (e.g., Bui, 2009, 2012, 2013) as well as Nguyen's series of studies on preservice teacher education and in-service teacher professional development (e.g., Vo & Nguyen, 2010; Nguyen, 2007, 2012, 2013; Nguyen, & Hudson, 2012; Nguyen and Baldauf, in press) in Vietnam. Bui's long-term research study has been conducted in a mountainous province in which 85 % of the population derives from 11 linguistic minority backgrounds. These people possess valuable legacies in the form of literature, folk songs, customs, and legends. They often pride themselves on being stewards of a rich cultural tradition related to agricultural practices and fishing customs, and to medical knowledge and healing techniques. Despite these rich linguistic and cultural epistemologies, however, members of these communities often face problems such as severe poverty, land erosion, deforestation, and shortage of clean water. Minority languages are not the languages of instruction, nor are most teachers able to understand these minority languages. Bui discovered that as many as 40 % of the children speak their first languages at home and only start to learn Vietnamese when they begin school at the age of six. Additionally, they are required to learn English as a subject from Grade 3 via Vietnamese. Minority students often face such other issues as irrelevant curriculum, unresponsive evaluation mandates, and inadequately trained teachers (Davis et al., 2012). Bui's position as a transnational language policy scholar, an educator, and a key provincial trainer in this mountainous province for the past six years has greatly facilitated her in unraveling the state's ELPs. Her strong connection with multiple actors (policymakers, local authorities, teachers, students) both at the research site and across time and space further enables her responsively to share new teaching approaches as well as successfully to sustain discursive dialogue with teachers and

students. Nguyen has been working as an EFL teacher, educator and researcher in language policy and teacher education for the past 10 years. Her recent studies have been in primary language planning and language teacher education in Vietnam. Having worked in Australia and Vietnam, Nguyen has attained broad experience and expertise in language education policy and in teacher education. Her strong research dedication and experience have brought her new vision and insight into the issues of language planning and policy in Vietnam. Since this study's principal purposes have been previously explained, in the following section, we provide a detailed analysis of the state's ELPs by uncovering its possibilities and challenges.

4 A Critical Analysis on Policy on English Education

4.1 Possibilities of the ELPs

Vietnam has actively moved toward becoming, economically and educationally, a more confident agent in Asia and the world. Furthermore, the nation can be a promisingly attractive destination to transnational investors when more than 60 % of the population is at the age of employment (from 15 to 59). These progressive and favorable political and social conditions could serve as a favorable foundation for the country's development. Thus a responsive English education policy may vitally enhance both the state's and individuals' educational, socio-economic, and political advancement. These developments, in return, can facilitate the nation's shift towards a knowledge-oriented economy including a more fulfilling social welfare system, as well as advanced education, quality healthcare, and poverty reduction both for the state and for individuals. Furthermore, Vietnam's participation in the ASEAN community and in such international organizations as the WTO would probably create favorable conditions for higher education, mobility, social and cultural exchanges, and especially for trade and business expansions. These developments have been associated with the surge in the popularity of English as a 'world language'. The decision to seek an English language policy reform may consequently serve wide-ranging needs across such sectors as in transnational companies, managing technological systems, and supporting import and export activities. Like many nations in Asia, Vietnam sees capacity in English as necessary for national development and economic competitiveness in an increasingly globalized world (e.g., Le, 2012).

The state has undertaken a significant reform in the English curriculum for public schools in support of the ELPs. Unlike events in the 1990s when the English curriculum placed great emphasis on grammar and reading skills, since 2006 it strongly embraces communicative learning and teacher-centered approaches. The curriculum further covers such wide-ranging topics as economic reform, the environment, and entertainment with the rationale that students need to be equipped with broader socio-cultural, economic, and cultural understanding. Teachers in

professional workshops often indicated that this curriculum reform has created more favorable conditions for learning English, especially for students in urban areas (Bui, 2013; Le, 2004, 2008). This review acknowledges the state's attempt to promote learner-centered communicative task-based teaching to improve students' communicative competence. Although studies on the impacts of such policies on individuals and communities have still been limited, English language teaching and learning may gain in status and domains of use.

Besides these potential and positive changes, the state's ELPs are found to entail various challenges and disturbing consequences. Especially, this analysis demonstrates outstanding challenges between the ELP reforms and teacher education as well as students' educational, socio-economic, and educational betterment.

5 Contested Teacher Professional Development

The empirical data and review of studies (e.g., Bui, 2013; Le 2012; Le & Do, 2012; Nguyen, 2012) on the state's ELPs revealed the probably unpromising outcomes of the present policies. As both language policy and language planning literature show, a variety of specific issues related to conditions for successful language policy and planning implementation need to be considered. Kaplan and Baldauf (2005) propose a comprehensive framework for language-in-education planning that includes seven implementation goals: Access Policy, Personnel Policy, Curriculum Policy, Methods & Materials Policy, Resourcing Policy, Community Policy, and Evaluation Policy. The framework provides the concrete understanding of language-in-education policies and of issues associated with their implementation. Among the critical factors contributing to the effectiveness of language planning implementation, teachers play an important part in realizing the goals set by language policy-makers (Menken & Garcia, 2010). The scope of this paper focuses on the reality of current teacher quality in response to the recent language policy implementation.

The role of language teachers is undoubtedly critical in implementing a new language policy (e.g., Li, 2010). In a critical summary of the reasons for failure in primary English policies in Asia, Kaplan, Baldauf and Kamwangamalu (2011) argue that factors concerning teachers are prominent. These and other researchers (e.g., Chua & Baldauf, 2011) argue that if policy does not deal effectively with issues related to teachers, failure to achieve policy goals is inevitable. A great number of empirical studies from Asia have reported that teacher proficiency and professional capacity has affected English teaching and learning (e. g., in Bangladesh, Hamid, 2010; in Indonesia, Yuwono and Harbon (2010); Sunggingwati and Nguyen, 2013; Kirkpatrick, 2007; in Malaysia, Ali, 2013). In Vietnam, the fact that a great many English teachers are not sufficiently proficient to teach subjects involving English has been identified as one of the most challenging factors in current language policy implementation.

The question is whether the state has prepared sufficient personnel resources to meet the needs created by recent changes in language policy. In a number of recent studies, a shortage of English teachers in primary and secondary schools in Vietnam is reported, and their proficiency appears to be inadequate (Dudzik & Nguyen, February 2013; Moon, 2009; Le & Do, 2012). According to Toan (2013), statistics from a test prepared by the Ministry of Education and Training to assess thousands of teachers in 30 provinces and cities reported the disappointing outcome that merely 3–7 % met the minimum requirement. Even in Ho Chi Minh City, a paltry 15.5 % of 1,100 teachers successfully responded to the test. Under the National Foreign Languages 2020 Project (Hoang, 2012), a recent evaluation of English language teacher proficiency in Dong Nai province reported that only 12.4 % of a total of 1473 primary and secondary English language teachers achieved the required proficiency to be able to use the new textbooks. A similar finding was reported by Le & Do (2012) based on a study that was conducted in a province in the Red River Delta, where English was officially introduced to the primary school curriculum in 2008. In that study, Le and Do (2012) indicate that teachers were not sufficiently prepared to teach English at the primary school level; most of the teachers in that survey showed marked weaknesses in pedagogical skills, oral skills, vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation. The situation is not much better at the tertiary level. In a critical review of the current situation of English as a medium of instruction at tertiary level in Vietnam, Le (2012) indicated, "few lecturers are proficient enough to communicate in English verbally" (p. 111). In a recent report (Nguyen, 2013) on English language teacher evaluation by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)'s executive director of the National Foreign Language 2020, the following percentages enumerated teachers who did not meet the requirements:

- 83 % of primary English teachers,
- 87.1 % of lower secondary English teachers,
- 91.8 % of senior secondary English teachers,
- 44.6 % of tertiary English teachers and
- 55.5 % of English specialized teachers.

This daunting figure challenges the outcome of the current English language project in Vietnam. The shortage of teachers at all levels and the lack of language competence as well as pedagogical knowledge undoubtedly led to failure in language policy implementation.

The results emerging from analyses of the existing studies on English language policy implementation in Vietnam are substantially responsive to Bui's in-depth ethnographic work (e.g., Bui, 2009, 2012, 2013). In particular, her conversations with teachers in a mountainous area heightened their awareness of the limitations of the country's teacher training. Many were candid about their own lack of proficiency in English, but they also described the hasty and unsystematic nature of teacher education in the region. The top-down structure of teacher-training makes the teacher-training system unresponsive to contextual differences: largely, it underestimates teachers' capacity as policy makers (Butler & Schnettert, 2012). During her discussions with the teachers, they identified many areas in need of improve-

ment. For example, "The listening lessons are too difficult. If the teacher cannot understand what the tape says, how are the students expected to understand?" As one teacher pointed out during a group discussion, "Sometimes we feel like we're just pretending to teach our students, because we are not the owners of the knowledge in the English textbooks [i.e., do not know enough about all of the topics in the curriculum]." These compelling expressions illuminate the critical inquiry of what counts as "standard knowledge" of teaching pedagogies for both teachers and students (e.g., Street, 2012). As a result, the ELPs may largely deprive teachers of professional competence and agency, and consequently devalue the role of public education for the masses.

Despite contested and ambivalent teacher education, however, Bui's respectful dialogue with teachers revealed their "hunger" for and dedication to effective and responsible teacher-training and teacher professional development as a means of improving the quality of education. Further, teachers revealed a vast array of difficulties caused by the state's contested policy mandates. Some reported that they "find it very difficult to be creative," and others asked how speaking and listening should be taught, explaining that they "feel very unconfident teaching these skills." Additionally, other questions included "How can I make English more relevant to reality?" and "How should I teach English to minority students who are not yet fluent in Vietnamese?" These inquiries reflect the sincere frustration and confusion caused by the curriculum's demands on teachers, and by the increasingly ineffective quality of their professional training. The in-depth discussion with the teachers increased their desire for more legitimate professional training in ways to work effectively and responsibly with diverse student populations. The teachers' questions about communicative language teaching (CLT) and about working with students of diverse socio-economic backgrounds usually go unanswered by teacher trainers, thereby reducing teachers' capacity to achieve critical language policy changes. The evidence clearly shows the poor preparation and ambiguity of the professional support provided for teachers.

Taking the social contexts of EFL teaching in schools as issues of primary concern and critically looking at socio-political analysis of the language teaching environment at the macro level, several researchers (e.g., Dudzi, & Nguyen, February 2013; Nguyen, 2012; Nguyen & Baldauf, in press, Le & Do, 2012) have come to believe that the poor quality of English language teaching is partly attributable to a lack of sound teacher-training and teacher professional development Regardless of the state's intensive effort and investment in enhancing quality of teacher professional development programs, the outcomes of such programs have largely been seen as evidence of skepticism and controversy. In response to this situation, Decision 1400/QD-TTg promoted the development of an intensive focus on re-training more than 80,000 public-school English teachers. A number of master trainers and university lecturers have been sent abroad to attend short-course training. As much as 85 % the $450m budget will be spent on teacher training, according to the education ministry (cited in Parks, 2011). Regional foreign language centers have been established as part of a major strategy to address teacher development and language teaching quality throughout the country. Lecturers from those univer-

sities have become key players in evaluating and training English language teachers for project 2020. According to the executive director of the National Foreign Language 2020, in 2011–2012 project 2020 sent 23 English language lecturers to take short training courses on language assessment at the University of New South Wales, Australia, and have also organized a study tour to the University of Cambridge, UK. The project trained 106 English language oral and written examiners. These Vietnamese universities have taken on responsibilities to evaluate and retrain EFL teachers all over the country. However, a number of scholars remain skeptical about the quality of this training. Nguyen's (2012) study states that the teachers still reported the lack of opportunities to attend these training sessions. Teachers also feel that most of the short courses were too general; consequently, they did not find them practical with respect to their current teaching.

The loosely regulated ELPs and inadequate teacher education may significantly threaten students' linguistic, educational, and socio-economic welfares. The following section scrutinizes the consequences of the current ELPs on students, especially those from minority and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

6 What Do the ELPs Mean in Supporting Students' Linguistic, Educational, and Socio-economic Advancement?

Similar to the distressingly unresponsive role of English in socio-economic and educational development reported in various post-colonial English contexts and the developmental contexts associated with such situations (e.g., Seargeant & Erling, 2013), the state's ELPs may pose a serious threat to socio-economic, educational, cultural and linguistic well-being for various populations. Charting a variety of tensions between English and development and education in English-using post-colonial environments, various scholars like Bruthiaux (2002) and Ferguson (2013, p. 21) hold that the relationships of English to development are "contested and controversial". Indeed, the state's ELPs seem largely to fail to gain a nuanced understanding of the political, socio-economic, and linguistic complexities of promoting English as well as of addressing local needs and challenges. In particular, analyzing the ELPs uncovers an unresponsive result developing between English language instruction and minority students' opportunities with respect to their socio-economic development. The results from Bui's fieldwork in 2011 in a remote mountainous province indicated that, in dialogues and surveys, as much as 95 % of the students showed that English has virtually no role in assisting them in seeking employment, engaging in economic activities, or in pursuing advanced education. This result is frequently highlighted by teachers of those students. In Bui's dialogue with a group of English teachers, a teacher expressed the utter irrelevance of English in practical activities as follows:

> Learning English does not support minority students in activities such as applying for a job or a scholarship, or developing a local business. In order to apply for a foreign scholarship, for example, minority students are required to pass at least one phase of the interview process in English. In reality, however, very few teachers would be able to participate confidently in the scholarship interviews, not to mention their students […]. Instead, learning English causes minority students tremendous economic and linguistic difficulties. They are very far, therefore, from being able to use English to obtain their educational and socio-economic desires

Such responses as those summarized here confirm the very limited functionality of English in supporting minority students' socio-economic, social, and educational rights while clearly showing the irrelevance of English-language teaching to the needs of students. Rather, this evidence indicates that English occupies merely a symbolic role: English fluency appears to improve the prospects of a tiny proportion of students, but closes doors for many others. The teachers' frank accounts of their experiences, moreover, revealed their feelings of ambivalence, uncertainty and insecurity regarding the endorsement of English for minority students. They were candid about their anxiety that the official language policies can result in disastrous consequences, suffering, and marginalization for remote and minority students.

Not only do the current ELPs reveal the highly limited functionality of English language education for the socio-economic and educational welfare of students, they seem to threaten students' educational capital on a large scale. Sociolinguistic theorist Perrier Bourdieu (1991) considers linguistic capital one of the most essential types of wealth that can be transferred into such other sources of personal capital as social and economic distinction. Building on such a critical perspective, we (language policy researchers, parents, teachers and students) should question whether the ELPs support students or whether they threaten the educational opportunities presumed to be available to students. The research results reviewed here showed that the outcomes of the current ELPs have been extremely limited, especially failing to benefit students of linguistic minority background. Bui observes that, as a result of the imposition of the current ELPs, students are losing valuable time that could be used for studying such other subjects as mathematics and Vietnamese language and literature that could help them directly to navigate confidently in mainstream society. Hence, they will be more likely to be equipped with knowledge required for jobs, advanced education, and socio-economic participations within the Vietnamese context. The results identified in the research further contrast with the theory of human capital to the effect that all levels of education positively enhances benefits for development, for secure social and private returns, and for the elimination of poverty (e.g., Seargeant & Erling, 2013). Thus, ELPs that have not been carefully evaluated and constrained could merely reproduce educational impairment and social inequality for the masses.

The danger of the emphasis on English is that English instruction may threaten to increase socio-economic and educational disparity and yet lead the further erosion of a nation's linguistic diversity and richness of cultural heritage (e.g., McCarty, 2011). Mandating English rather than national languages as medium of instruction may lead to the de facto removal of other languages from the schools. These activi-

ties may significantly weaken people's belief in and respect for their native tongues while simultaneously preventing them from acquiring broader additional educational discourses (Bui, 2009; Phyak & Bui, 2014). As a consequence, students might neither benefit from acquiring English by means of the ELPs nor increase their comprehension of the content delivered through the language of instruction while simultaneously being rapidly dispossessed of the wealth of their linguistic, cultural and ontological tradition. Discussing the interaction of the current ELPs, a space for an effective Vietnamese language education, a minority student in our dialogue made a critical response:

> I think that the English language policy is neither effective nor appropriate for students. I realize that learning English is very difficult although I try very hard to learn it… I would like to ask how am I expected to learn English effectively while I am not yet fluent in Vietnamese (the national language)?

This comment indicates the student's awareness of the complexities and ineffectiveness of the standardized English language policies. Bui's various conversations with other minority youth showed that a large number of them shared the similar perception with the student above. Such student's critical remark required national language policy makers to fully understand the students' linguistic needs and challenges as well as theories of language acquisition in multilingual and multicultural environments. It also called for language policy makers and associated agencies to again a nuanced recognition of the roles of different languages, namely English, Vietnamese and also students' native languages for different semiotic systems, needs, and goals (e.g., Garcia & Sylvan, 2011), that allow them to participate effectively in a global world.

Students' multiple ways of using English can reflect the possibly harmful consequences of the current ELPs in their role in ideological formation and social behaviors. The question we ask arising in this policy analysis: how can one educate students to use English as a critical instrument in the face of rapidly changing media? In sharp contrast with the state's ambition for social-economic and educational improvement, the reality appears to be contested and far from reaching when a large number of young people reported to use English merely for entertainment (Bui, 2013). In addressing the question of what English is for in a mountainous Vietnamese province which has very limited opportunities to use both spoken and written and communicative English skills, as much as 85 % of 300 high school students (16–18 years of age) indicated that they used English to listen to music, to play video games, or to surf the web. Many students admitted that, although they often listen to music with English lyrics, they did not necessarily understand them. As a student, Mua, explained as follows: "Although I use English to listen to music, most of the time I do not understand the lyrics. I listen to English songs because their melodies and sounds are interesting." Such linguistic behavior demonstrates how the state and educators teach the students to be critical consumers of a vast array of information including news and online resources in English. Clearly, students' practices of using English widely contrast to the assumptions underlying the government's goal of promoting English for the individual's social and eco-

nomic resource development. Instead, the language policies create political and social conditions and constraints for the production of power, resources, and distinction for those who are already privileged (Bourdieu, 1991) through privileging English. On the other hand, students' multifaceted approach to English use may also signal the far-reaching and harmful influence of neoliberal English language agendas (Phillipson, 2012); that is, the English language has been commodified for profit in the form of such products as music, games, and other entertainment programs, which may lead young people to become potential victims of market exploitations. Such taken-for-granted English language agendas can also negatively and insidiously shape the beliefs and practices of local youth in the image of the dominant Western culture and lifestyle (Davis et al., 2012). Moreover, the implicit and explicit utilization of English by the students displays their constant struggles with the national "linguistic authority" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 62), negotiations with the dominant Western world culture, and their attempts to safeguard their cultural and linguistic traditions in the face of overwhelming globalization and English spread (e.g., Lee, 2009).

Overall, the analysis presented here reflects the realities, challenges and possibilities of the official language policies. The report discusses the deficient and ill-conceived teacher professional education of the nation's ELP reforms. Further, it suggests that the current ELPs may actually damage social, educational and economic development, linguistic ecologies, and the linguistic rights of the state and of students of various student backgrounds more than it improves them. This chapter argues that, despite the promising intentions of the ELPs, the current policies are, for the most part, incapable of responsibly navigating effective education for diverse populations. In exploring the global, national and local dimensions of language policy, this paper sheds additional light on the English language policy which operates at the national and grassroots levels. The ELPs have largely failed to achieve the government's ambitious goal of nationwide promotion of English as a tool for socio-economic and educational advancement, global integration, and mobility. This study provides clear implications that the shift in official language policies from a localized form to a focus on transnational marketing could cause a wide range of damaging consequences: the decline of students' linguistic repertoires, the threat of assimilation/genocide among indigenous languages and cultures, and the weak ability of education to improve the social and economic equity. Furthermore, considering the standardized ELPs in the context of the single province studied here indicates that the policy, on the whole, has been failing to fulfill the multiple local needs, including linguistic equity, healthcare amelioration, environmental preservation, economic and educational advancement, and the provision of jobs.

The results of this study serve to corroborate the findings of recent scholarship on the English language spread in Asia (e.g., Annamala, 2013; Hashimoto, 2013) as well as in a range of African countries (Coleman, 2011; Rapatahana & Bunce, 2012), which address the economic and global-integration rationales underlying the acceptance of neoliberal ELPs. The synopsis of studies on the global domination of English by Rapatahana and Bunce (2012) warned that the spread of English is a threatening, pervasive, and complex process capable of destroying the epistemo-

logical and ontological foundations of indigenous life. Regardless of whether or not the countries involved are former English colonies such ELPs have largely caused catastrophic damage by perpetuating social inequality, increasing the danger of social instability, and setting into motion an attack on citizens' learning, well-being, advanced education and social participation (Ramanathan, 2013; Rapatahana & Bunce, 2012). On the basis of the findings this account argues that neoliberal ELPs can insidiously perpetuate and threaten the people's ability of self-determination and power, as well as the resources of the nation-state when multinational corporations are increasingly monopolizing the economy through multifaceted strategies, including the hegemonizing and privileging of English.

Not only does this study bring to light a language policy which is controversial as well as inadequate in the sense that it creates a gap between the reality of English as taught and socio-economic and educational development, but it undertakes to offer a constructive discussion intended to provide an alternative direction for the state's ELPs. This is the focus of the following section.

7 Visualizing an Alternative Direction for the State's ELPs

Theories concerning language policy have become increasingly complex as well as becoming contextually, socially, and ideologically reflected in postmodern epistemology (e.g., Davis, 2014; Phyak & Bui, 2014). Given this perspective, the focus in this section falls primarily on three aspects imagining an alternative language policy which is more relevant to this analysis:

(a) the need for literacy programs to be delivered in students' first language and/or in the national language;
(b) the need for consideration of multilingualism (especially with respect to minority languages and the national language) in developing educational, socio-economic, national and ethnic security; and
(c) the need for teacher-professional development.

8 The Need for Literacy Programs in the Students' First Language and/or in the National Language

This study argues that one of the core issues of the apparent language policy failure is a loosely monitored and uncritical vision of the interconnectedness of language/literacy education and social and economic development at both the macro and the micro levels. Such literacy specialists as Luke (2011) and Williams and Cooke (2002) observe that issues of language, education, and development are often addressed separately rather than in connection with each other, especially in low-income countries. In agreement with those researchers, the authors of this study

suggest that literacy is strongly associated with key aspects of individual and societal progress, stability, and security. It appears that it is crucial for the state to support solid literacy programs, paying greater attention to the students' first languages before launching agendas dealing with national languages and foreign languages. Burthiaux (2002), in his study of the role of English in development in several low-income countries in Africa, offered a compelling rationale for paying serious attention to students' first languages, as well as for reimagining the framework of language education. Similarly, Kirkpatrick (2012) offers the following observations in a very recent study carried out across a number of Southeast Asian countries:

> In many ASEAN settings, English may well be the third or fourth language, and I argue that it is far better for the child to acquire proficiency and literacy in the local languages before being asked to learn English. I also argue that it is much better if that child is able to learn content subjects through the local languages, as this will help the acquisition of literacy and fluency in these languages. Using local languages as the languages of education also gives those languages prestige and helps to maintain them. (p. 35)

On the basis of the studies by Kirkpatrick (2012) and Bruthiaux (2002), it is possible to claim that, to democratize equitable education successfully, policy makers must both understand and respect the need to promote multilingualism in schools as a relevant tool for sustainable social participation. An effective literacy/language program with great emphasis on students' first language is central to the well-being, harmony, and success of both the individual and the state. It has been shown in many settings in Africa, Asia, South America and Europe (e.g., Bruthiaux, 2002; Coleman, 2011; Helot & Ó Laoire, 2011) that literacy in the language in which students are most fluent (that is, their first language) makes a crucial contribution to the fulfillment of human needs, as well as socio-economic and cultural advancement. These include

(a) educational equity (e.g., students engage more effectively and with greater cognitive awareness in schools);
(b) the provision of maternal education regarding: (i) children's nutritional requirements and (ii) mortality rates leading to decreased birth rates;
(c) health protection through educating communities regarding the need for pure water and hygiene;
(d) improved literacy (especially for women) to actualize the above efforts;
(e) environmental protection and political participation as a result of encouraging and validating the use of native languages and literacies in schools, and
(f) economic advancement through bilingual/multilingual education aimed at participating in the local economy and beyond as needed and envisioned (García & Sylvan, 2011; Helot & Ó Laoire, 2011).

The results discussed in this chapter indicate the urgent need for an effective literacy program in Vietnam in the national language for general students and in minority languages for linguistic minority backgrounds. Together with various roles of an education in student's first languages as discussed in this chapter, acquiring solid proficiency in Vietnamese is essential for many varied purposes including access to advanced education, social mobility and economic equity. This study

urges policy makers critically to examine and to implement bilingual/multilingual programs. In order to save minority children from serious linguistic and socio-cultural disadvantage resulting from education in an unfamiliar language, scholars (e.g., Pinnock, Mackenzie, Pearce, & Young, 2011) have called for first language based education as a way by which children are able to start learning in the early grades, with a gradual transition to second and other languages as the children progress through schooling. According to Malone (2009), this approach enables indigenous and minority children initially (ideally for at least six to eight years) to develop a strong competence in their first language (ideally for at least six to eight years). Further, such learning creates a strong transition from the first and/or most familiar language to a second or additional language at a higher level later on. Ideally, such a program can tremendously support the development of multilingualism and multiculturalism especially for minority students while preparing them for gradually acquiring academic Vietnamese, and a third or additional language, and consequently of socio-economic advancement. Advocating for the attention of both English and other national and local languages, Ferguson (2013) holds that "… to focus the debate not on which medium is best but on how best to foster bilingual skills across the school years" is of vital importance (p. 36). It is salient not only to foster bilingual but even trilingual competence in various populations, especially those learning English as a third language. In supporting trilingual skills, Kirkpatrick (2012) recommends education that permits and encourages children to become trilingual, particularly a pattern in which with English is the third language. Instead of privileging English as the main language or the medium of instruction, it can be salient to address the question of how English as well as other languages can be approached concomitantly in order to develop citizens who can be versatile with an ability to use different languages. In brief, it is strongly recommended that the state should focus on bilingual/multilingual education for students in general as well as for those who belong to linguistic minorities since such multilingualism permits those students in reclaiming their linguistic human rights, reforming the current education system, providing high-level Vietnamese proficiency, promoting agency and intellectual participation, and transforming education.

9 The Consideration of Multilingual Roles in Developing Educational, Socio-economic, and National and Ethnic Security

This paper further calls for reimagining multilingualism as vital to the processes of securing an equitable language policy and protecting social justice and diversity from the grassroots to the international level. In this section, attention is focused primarily on the need to recognize the roles of different languages. Therefore, multilingualism is discussed here emphasizing the essence and balance of local/minority, national, and foreign languages at the local, national, and global levels.

> This study suggests that the state must achieve a deeper understanding and appreciation of the role of multilingualism in a variety of areas: for example, in diversity, economic development, social and national security, and educational equity. Many researchers, including Kirkpatrick (2012) and Williams and Cooke (2002), consistently report that multilingualism is essential to the successful promotion of local and sustainable economic development as well as augmented school enrolments for socially and economically disadvantaged populations in such settings as Europe, Africa, and Asia. Studies by Kirkpatrick (2012) and Tan and Rubdy (2008) advocate multilingualism to bridge between language usage in local, national, and international settings. These authors argue that a language-in-education policy must be structured to serve different language markets; further, they argue that minority languages can be harmoniously linked with dominant languages not only to protect and nurture diverse cultural identities and traditions but also to benefit local and global economy. The findings reported in this chapter emphasize the necessity for taking into account the linguistic ecologies of indigenous languages together with the roles of non-dominant languages (e.g., students' native languages) and dominant languages (e.g., Vietnamese and English) in formulating and implementing language policy. Mandating English language education for all students, even when some students have not yet achieved proficiency in the national language, precludes both educational and consequently socio-economic opportunities for those students. Ignoring and/or devaluing their native languages cuts off access to and possession of the rich and unique linguistic, epistemological, and ontological resources of the languages of those students. This research concurs with and contributes to a series of studies unpacking the roles of English and other languages. Specifically, these findings suggest that language-education policies must balance and protect the local linguistic ecology, as well as empowering learners and equipping them with the skills necessary to sustain and navigate effectively the various forms of linguistic capital they bring (Rubdy & Tan, 2008). Generally speaking, in advocating the need to reconceptualize multilingualism the essential need for the state's policy makers, educators, and teachers to comprehend the roles of different languages becomes apparent, because those roles are unmistakably complex and inter-independent, while having multidimensional functions in different settings. Respecting different languages in the nation's language ecology can contribute to developing an effective education, a strong economy, resourceful and versatile citizens, and increasing social security and stability at the intersection of local, national, and global scales. (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 2012)

10 The Need for Professional Development

The available evidence suggests that there is a need to reform teacher education at the pre-service level and teacher professional development at the in-service level. The need for reform in English education in Vietnam focuses on the role of pre-service EFL teacher education and in-service teacher professional development. Pre-service teachers must be prepared to meet the challenges and standards for English as a foreign language. Curricular change needs to be supported by appropriate socialization and equally by quality English teacher education including, as part of a larger set of strategies and programs, the assurance that teacher-trainees have English proficiency adequate to the demands of such teaching. In addition, the English language teacher program should go beyond improving merely improving English knowledge and skills among pre-service teachers. It must provide them with life-long learning skills and reflective skills that develop their future

professional learning (Le, 2007; Nguyen, 2013). Pre-service EFL teacher education in Vietnam has been criticized for inadequate attention to pre-service EFL teaching practice and for too much focus on the transmission of knowledge and teaching theory. Critics suggest that pre-service EFL teachers are inadequately prepared or trained (Pham, 2001). Nguyen (2013) in a cross-cultural comparative study between two language teacher education programs in Vietnam and Australia, claims that the current language teacher education program in Vietnam tends to focus on English proficiency and subject matter knowledge, but does not pay sufficient attention to "contextual knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision making" (p.48). The training of foreign language teachers needs to move beyond the provision of professional knowledge and skills to the development of incipient teacher-to-be processes. In essence, language teacher education must be centered on the activity of teaching itself—the teacher who does it, the context in which it is done, and the pedagogy by which it is achieved (Adoniou, 2013)— so that they can develop their teaching repertoire enabling them to make changes assimilation of English education into local practices. More importantly, the required language teacher standard should be used as the exit criteria for language teacher education programs. In other words, pre-service teachers should be measured against the advocated professional standards for language teachers. Such a practice can avoid the situation that the graduates from the language teacher education program may need to be retrained to meet the current language teacher standard.

At the in-service level, the failure to provide adequate teacher training and teacher professional development are among the most common problems found in a number of non-English speaking countries in Asia, including Vietnam. At the moment, most teacher professional development has been provided by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET and foreign-aid agencies— e.g., AusAid, the British Council, or the World Bank). Most of those professional development (PD) programs convene teachers for a short period of time and provide them with knowledge of teaching pedagogy and language enhancement. Most of the master trainers or teacher trainers are university-level lecturers who may have little understanding of the local context. The quality of such professional development programs has yet to be explored. Aligning such training with the Vietnamese language policy situation illuminates the difficulty that teachers cannot identify suitable teaching models and language resources for literacy teaching. Instead, policies should have empowered teachers to make English teaching "more real" and "more creative" (in the words of teachers). Teachers should be trained to cultivate and scaffold the abundant resources that minority students bring with them, e.g., the cultural practices, artifacts and traditional knowledge (Helot & Ó Laoire, 2011).

The necessity and objectives of these professional development programs for teachers are essential. In-service teacher training (INSET) needs to be designed to refine the skills of trainees and to acclimatize them to the surrounding teaching environment. More quality-structured training is needed, encompassing both language skills and language teaching methodology appropriate to individual groups. Those programs have been centrally organized by MOET. One of the issues is that schools, especially public schools, are not able to have access to the financial resources they need to facilitate teachers' professional development. Each school

should expect to organize its own professional development activities, making use of their own in-house learning resources. Interviews with teachers in Nguyen (2012)'s study show that the teachers valued the comments and observation of their colleagues. To this end, apart from INSET training, other professional development models (including peer observation, mentoring, and critical friend groups) may be organized in a number of ways to provide role models among the teachers in the same school or in a cluster of schools.

The notion of organizing in-service development in the form of class observations, seminars, workshops or even informal talks that give colleagues from the same working context the opportunity to exchange ideas and share experiences and innovations, seems to be uncommon in Vietnam. EFL teachers tend not to develop and practice habits of collegiality, perhaps because they were not trained in them in their pre-service teacher education programs. The idea of learning from colleagues and professional development activities such as sharing, reflection, and collaboration among peers is missing from the lives of most EFL teachers (Ha, 2003; Le, 2007). Teachers seem to work in isolation from one another. According to Gemmell (2003), "teachers who work in isolation often resort to familiar methods rather than approaching concerns from a problem-solving perspective in attempting to meet the diverse instructional needs of today's students" (p. 10). In Vietnam, the application of a variety of mentoring models that are based on continuing supportive relationships that can utilise in-house resources for in-service teacher development could constitute an alternative approach that could improve the current situation.

11 Conclusions

This chapter provides a critical analysis of the state's English Language Policies, looking essentially at teacher education and the roles of the policies in advancing students' educational, linguistic, and socio-economic betterment through language implementation. The chapter responds to various studies (e.g., Coleman, 2011; Kubota 2011; Ferguson, 2013) in its claim that the role of English in education and the state's and individuals' educational, linguistic, and socio-economic advancement is extremely complex, ambivalent, contested, and highly politicized, as well as being socially, linguistically, and economically situated. The chapter further suggests that different languages serve different functions across disciplines, space, and time. Throughout the policy analysis, the study argues that it is salient that national language policy makers, transnational education providers and teachers be mindful of the need to value and respect local perceptions and their stewardship of linguistic human rights, and the capacity for self-determination before and throughout the process of language policy creation, implementation, and practice. Policies should be developed upon a robust foundation of public understanding and comprehension, cross-boundary engagement and equitability to ensure the provision of sustainable education that accommodates the shared values and social realities of particular settings.

While numbers of students from linguistic and economical and socially disadvantaged backgrounds have found English to be increasingly irrelevant, at the

national level it has been consistently promoted as a key resource to save the nation from political and economic isolation and in addition promising to enable the state's youth at the age of employment to function effectively in the transnational job market. For individuals, English continues to function as a supportive language in healthcare, technology management, and administrative systems even in remote areas. Therefore, rather than excluding English, it is critical to turn it into a supportive language across domains and populations. In this way, the ecology of linguistic and cultural wealth could be sustained and developed. Understanding local needs, struggles, and resources and remaining sensitive to local needs and practices function as the most sustainable practice for building a democratic and effective language policy.

This chapter provides an in-depth and forward-looking understanding of struggles, inequality, possibilities, and of teacher agency in language policy. It has also emphasized the need critically and reflectively to examine the state's English Language Policies ranging from the stated national policy to its implementation on the ground. The chapter hopes to contribute to theory building in critical language policy analysis while at the same time providing insight for future researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders in the field of LPP and across related disciplines. Furthermore, the article expects to contribute to a movement in scholarship in Language Policy and Planning towards being more interrelated, interdependent, and interdisciplinary (Tollefson, 2013). This study recommends that future researchers continue to collaborate with multiple actors including authorities, NGOs, communities, activists, educators, children, students and parents at intersecting levels to foster critical and reflective analysis of English language policies as well as collaborative intervention toward linguistic, educational, and social equity. It appears to be particularly important to continue making interconnections between language policy and such disciplines as health care, technology, science, law, and environmental studies (e.g., Bui, 2013). Were such an effort to occur, it would illuminates a collective intellectual movement that might enable researchers and language policy makers at multiple levels to assemble nuanced and persuasive evidence about the ways that language policy can support or threaten people's educational, linguistic, human, social, and economic rights and equitable access. Such an approach may further provide resources and concrete initiatives for institutional and policy reform within the researchers' context and beyond.

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