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Planning language teaching: An argument for the place of pedagogy in language policy and planning

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Pedagogy

We master what others don't see,
take time to make rough edges smooth,
maintain tools
of the trade, assemble and disassemble, polish,
try again.

We are the business of making ourselves
obsolete,
teaching students to outstrip us, to sign their
own pieces.

Hard work that is never enough.

Laurel Smith

Abstract

Even though pedagogy and language policy and planning are well researched and well-established fields in their own rights, the relationships between these two fields are not systematically addressed. One of the consequences of this situation is that our understanding of the impact of policy on practices of language teaching is not clearly understood. This paper examines a range of articles that address the complexities, the challenges and the gap between pedagogies and language policy and planning and argues for the crucial need to recognise pedagogy as an integral part of the language policy and planning process. In particular, the article suggests the need for language planning to integrate and to articulate clear and coherent pedagogies as well as to communicate policies effectively and provide resources needed for pedagogical change.

Key words: language planning, language policy, pedagogy, macro-level, micro-level,

Introduction

Although pedagogy is an important part of language education and is a well-researched field in its own right (e.g. Ellis, 2012; Ellis & Shintane, 2013; Phipps & Levine, 2012), it has not been much addressed in language planning and language policy research.¹ In pioneering work on language planning (e.g.: Cooper, 1987; Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997) the issue of pedagogy has been acknowledged but the relationship between language policy and planning and pedagogy have not been addressed in a systematic way. However, more recently Kaplan and Baldauf (2003) have further developed the place of pedagogy in their model of language-in-education planning, but it is broadly subsumed in the area of materials and method, which in turn is seen as an element of

syllabuses; that is it is seen as an element of practice but is not given particular prominence within practise. The lack of recognition of pedagogy as an important part of language education policy and planning means that the ways language policy and planning interacts with classroom practice have not been investigated and the result is a partial picture of what is involved when decisions are made about language education in a given polity. The lack of attention to pedagogy in theorising language policy and planning does not mean that pedagogy is absent in language policy and planning practice: language-in-education policy documents do deal with pedagogy. In some cases, language in education policies have nominated a particular language teaching method or approach and seeks to encourage its adoption in schools. In other cases, language policies entail a particular pedagogical approach or have unrecognised consequences for pedagogical practices. In addition, language education policies and pedagogical practice may be in conflict and this may have significant consequences for what can actually be achieved. Moreover, it is often the case that pedagogical decisions are devolved to implementation agents (teachers) whose responsibilities are to address pedagogy issues. This complex situation in which pedagogy is mentioned in policy documents but has not necessarily featured systematically in planning decisions raises the need to explore, investigate, and understand how polities and language-in-education policy and planning intersect, influence and impact on language teaching pedagogies and practices. Because of the lack of sustained research, our understanding of the relationship between language policy and planning and pedagogy and the impact of language policy and planning on pedagogy is therefore currently limited. The omission of such a fundamental component of language education praxis from understandings of language policy and planning has consequences for how we understand the nature of educational language policy and planning and how we theorise the relationship between policy and practice.

This special issue seeks to bridge the gap and examines the ways in which language policies and practices and language-in-education policy and planning intersect and impact on language teaching pedagogies. To address this gap in the language policy and planning scholarship, this special issue brings together a number of studies of language policy and planning and pedagogy and analyses the relationship between these two areas and the way they impact on language teaching. The contributions in this special issue suggest the crucial need to recognise pedagogy as an integral part of language policy and planning.

Pedagogy and language policy and planning

Understanding the relationship between language policy and planning and language pedagogy involves understanding how policy relates to planning and how these in turn relate to pedagogy. Language planning and language policy are two, interrelated aspects of societal intervention in how languages are used. The relationship between the two is complex and understood differently by different scholars. For Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), language planning is a process of future-oriented decision-making to change some aspect of language practice in order to address a perceived linguistic problem, while language policy is a body of instruments such as texts, ideas, discourses, practices, etc. That is, Kaplan and Baldauf see language planning as a process through which policy is established. Djité (1994), however, sees language planning as the processes adopted to implement decisions that have been made. That is for Djité, language planning is consequential upon language policy. Kaplan and Baldauf (2003, p. 6) bring these two views into relationship, stating that “Language planning leads to, or is directed by, language policy”. That is, language planning work is both a precursor to policy in the sense that it is the process through which policy is developed and a consequence of policy in that it is the process through which policy is implemented. The idea that language planning both leads to and stems from policy is consequential for understanding how pedagogy has been positioned in the processes of language policy and planning.

In examining the place of languages in education at the level of the nation-state, language planning as a precursor for policy can be understood as the processes that lead to a decision about how language(s) will be integrated into schooling. This form of language planning is typically an activity of macro-level agents (governments, ministries, etc.), although it is also influenced by social phenomena such as the prevailing ideologies about languages (Liddicoat, 2013), discourses about language (Lo Bianco, 2005), and professional practices and advocacy (Lo Bianco & Wickert, 2001). The input into language planning involves observations about the current state and needs for language learning and theories of teaching and learning are input to policies (that is the micro-level may exist as input into macro-level decision-making). One central issue in language planning as a precursor to policy is the identification of language problems that need to be resolved. Language problems are not simply situations which exist in the world and require resolution: problems, as Watts (1993/1994, p. 119) argues, “only come to be that way when they have become part of a discourse”. This means that pedagogy will only emerge as an issue for decision-making if pedagogy itself is discursively identified as a problem for language education; that is, where pedagogical practice is seen as constitutive of a failure of language education to achieve its desired goals.

Pedagogy therefore comes to be explicitly included in policy initially because pedagogy is identified as a problem that needs to be resolved in the delivery of education. However, as Liddicoat (2004) argues, pedagogical practice is implicated in other elements of policy as well and may be implicit in policy provisions relating to policy relating to curriculum, assessment and materials. In fact, pedagogy may only be present in policy in the form of implicit assumptions about practices needed to realise other educational goals. This means that pedagogy may be an invisible component of macro-level policy and planning work, unless pedagogy itself is identified as a problem.

Pedagogy becomes significant in the implementation of language policies as implementation is where policy requirements are enacted in the classroom. It may be the case however that implementation at the macro-level does not engage directly with pedagogy, especially where pedagogy has been included only implicitly in policy provisions. One frequent criticism of language policy in the literature is that provisions for implementation tend to be absent in macro-level policy documents (e.g. Bamgboşe, 2000; 2011; Liddicoat, 2010; Webb, 1999). The implementation of policy provisions in the classroom is frequently left to micro-level agents (e.g. teachers), or in some cases meso-level agents (e.g. teacher education institutions), rather than being an explicit element of language planning, either because pedagogy is not included in policy or because policy provisions are necessarily at a level of abstraction that cannot address the needs of teachers and students in particular contexts. Pedagogy is therefore often treated as a lower level issue in language planning and policy and is assigned to micro agents, becoming invisible at the macro-level.

Major themes for understanding language planning and pedagogy

The wide range of contributions in this special issue highlights the centrality of pedagogy in language-in-education and the important place language planning is expected to play in articulating successful pedagogies. The articles examine the relationships between language planning and pedagogy within and across polities in a range of countries. Despite differences in geographic spread, linguistic history, and socio-political contexts, the contributions show certain common themes that are discussed below.

Theme 1: language planning to integrate pedagogy

One overarching theme in these contributions is the need for macro-level language planning to articulate clear policies that integrate and address issues of pedagogy in language education. The contributions in this volume attest to the fact that the macro-level is generally silent on pedagogical issues. This silence in relation to pedagogy and the absence of pedagogy in planning documents

imply that pedagogical practices are left to individual agents at the micro-level so that they address pedagogical concerns in their classrooms. This is potentially problematic because addressing pedagogical issues requires sustained and systematic solutions integrated within the language-in-education planning framework. In particular, changes in language education policy may require teachers to implement new forms of pedagogy about which they do not have sufficient knowledge and for which they need professional learning. This requires a systematic change in the knowledge and beliefs of the language teaching workforce and addressing pedagogical concerns should not be a random activity nor a series of ad hoc individual efforts. Instead, it needs to be an integral part of a coherent framework on pedagogy clearly articulated to solve collective pedagogical needs.

Theme 2: language planning to articulate a clear, coherent and systematic pedagogy

The second most important theme that emerges from the contributions is the need for the macro-level to articulate clear, coherent and systematic policies on pedagogy. Pedagogy is central to language-in-education and a successful language education largely depends on the ways issues of pedagogy are addressed in policies and implemented in classrooms. The contributions show that in many contexts (e.g. Japan; Indonesia, Vietnam and Ukraine) policy documents elaborated to implement particular pedagogical policy changes may be vague, incoherent and incongruent with other aspects of national education policies. This lack of clarity in policy documents that seek to implement a particular pedagogy is explicit in many contributions such as those by Liddicoat, Glasgow, Hawanti, Goodman and Nguyen. For these contributors the lack of clarity in framing and articulating policies on pedagogy at the macro-level means that implementation agents at the micro-level are required to interpret policies for themselves, but may not have the background needed to do this successfully. The inevitable consequences of this situation can be tensions among teachers, conflicts in the interpretation of policies and poor implementation of pedagogical activities.

Theme 3: Language planning to effectively communicate policy pedagogy

A third important theme in this issue is the need to establish effective communication between the macro-level—the level of government or decision-makers where decisions on and about language teaching are made—and the micro-level—where language policy decisions are implemented in classroom. Effective communication between these two levels is essential in order to ensure that policies on pedagogies are effectively communicated, explained and understood by stakeholders at all levels. This could potentially help prevent tensions that arise from misunderstanding or misinterpreting the same policy, which are identified in the articles on Japan, Vietnam and

Indonesia. In addition, effective communication between the macro-level and the micro-level can give a voice to implementation agents whose input is important in understanding and addressing language issues at classroom level. Empowering language teachers and involving them in pedagogical matters (e.g. planning, policy formulation and implementation, evaluation, etc.) are essential for successful implementation of policies on pedagogy in language classrooms.

Theme 4: language planning to resource pedagogical change

A fourth theme is the need for the macro-level to determine and provide the support and resources needed at the micro-level so that policies on pedagogy can be implemented. As shown by contributors such those by Diallo, Goodman and Hawanti, implementing pedagogies in the classroom requires agents who are proficient in the language they teach and who possess the required pedagogical skills. These contributions show that new pedagogies may fail to have an impact on language education practice not only because teachers' training is not adequate for implementation, but also because of lack of resources to use in implementing a pedagogical change (e.g. in Senegal and Ukraine).

Complexities of pedagogy in language planning

The first article by Liddicoat examines pedagogy in a number of language planning contexts where pedagogy is either an explicit or an implicit feature of policy documents. The paper argues that pedagogy in either case is devolved to micro-level agents because generally the macro-level is silent about pedagogy. Decision-makers at the macro-level are involved in pedagogy issues only when practice at the micro-level comes to be seen as problematic. In his article, Liddicoat reviewed five country case studies that highlight the complex nature of the relationship between the macro-level and the micro-level in relation to pedagogy in policy document. For example, China and South Korea have developed language-in-education policies that explicitly support communicative language teaching, but these were policy changes adopted following the supposed limits and failures of existing pedagogical practices. In contrast with China and Korea, Liddicoat argues that in the European Union and in Japan, pedagogy is treated differently following policy changes. The reticence of the European Union to recommend a particular pedagogy and the fact it has taken an agnostic stand in relation to pedagogy implicitly suggests that there "are many pedagogical approaches that can achieve the desired outcomes". The ambivalent attitude of the European Union, which consists in not prescribing a particular pedagogy, is understandable given the diversity of its membership. Therefore, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) policy proposal is intended solely as a guide as far as pedagogy is concerned and decisions about pedagogical

choices are delegated to micro-level polities. As for Japan, a reform was introduced in 2011 in order to improve the attainment level of Japanese students at an early level. However, with the advent of these changes, there were no clear specifications in relation to pedagogical approaches to implement such changes. The silence on pedagogy at the macro-level, like in the European Union and Japan, means that pedagogical issues are delegated to micro-level agents, mainly to teachers. Liddicoat discusses also the shifts of the Medium of Instruction (MOI) policies in Malaysia and the pedagogical consequences of these changes in language in-education. Between 1960 and the late 1980s, Malay authorities introduced policies to phase out English as the MOI and replaced it with Malay. However, in the early 1990s, the language education policies were changed and the MOI shifted to English because the use of Malay as the MOI was seen as a negative impact on Malaysian students' level of English. Since 2012, English was reinstated as the MOI. Liddicoat argued that these shifts in MOI in Malaysia were not accompanied by clear policies to address pedagogical issues in relation to the MOI changes. The language-in-education issues were seen simply as language planning issues and pedagogy was not considered either as part of the problem or as part of the solution to the language planning problems.

Pedagogical challenges in language planning

With the rise of English as the global language and its dominance in most European Union education system, for many tertiary institutions, internalization means primarily to teach English in Europe. The paper by Goodman addresses English as an international language in Ukraine and the pedagogical implications of introducing English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI). It examines EMI in a Ukrainian university and highlights the pedagogical challenges and adjustment issues faced in implementing EMI. Given its tumultuous history (since 1938) and its geographic location in Europe, Ukrainian and Russian are the two dominant languages in Ukraine. However, envisioning its geostrategic, political and economic interests in Western Europe, Ukraine has closely participated to the Bologna Process since 2005 (even though it is not a member of the European Union). Subsequently, Ukraine has decided to push for a stronger use of English in its tertiary institutions. Based on a comprehensive ethnographic study, Goodman's article shows that changing the medium of instruction from Ukrainian to English have had negative impacts on pedagogy in the Ukrainian university she had analysed. In particular, Goodman highlights key pedagogical challenges such as teachers of English who are expected to deliver their teaching in language they are not conformable in due to their level of English. She also discusses pedagogical issues related to the unavailability of adequate resources to teach in English as a result of sudden

shift in the medium of instruction in English. Interestingly, and unexpectedly, Goodman notes that the shift to EMI has created pedagogical challenges related to managing discipline in classrooms. Given that teachers' competence in English does not allow them to fully express themselves, they find it challenging to take control of their classroom. This situation not only has a negative impact on their pedagogies, but also has adverse effects on their professional identity, including negative self-perception, low confidence and anxiety. Nonetheless, these pedagogical challenges in implementing EMI are seen in positive light by both teachers and students, who see these as opportunities to improve their language skills, develop their creativity, access new knowledge and increase their socio-professional opportunities.

In the same vein, Diallo's article discusses pedagogical challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Senegal. In the 1970s, the traditional teaching methods (CLAD teaching method, Grammar translation and audio-lingual methods) which were implemented were officially abandoned and language education policy-makers recommended the use of CLT in all Senegalese schools. In Senegal, like in other case studies discussed in this special issue (e.g. China, North Korea and Japan), the shift in pedagogy was prompted by perceptions of the limitations of or the failure of existing pedagogies. Similarly to Ukraine, the implementation of CLT was faced with a certain number of challenges in Senegal. These include such challenges as the availability of communicative teaching materials, recruiting and training English teachers to deliver effective CLT teaching activities and implementing CLT in some areas due to contextual cultural sensitivities.

These papers show that implementing a change in language policy has implications for what is to be done in the classroom. Such changes are often not seamlessly applied because the implementation does not take into consideration the realities of the context in which the implementation is to occur. Thus, where policy lacks a clear planning dimension after the policy has been developed, this can lead to significant challenges for educators.

Gaps in implementing pedagogy policies

A number of the papers reveal that there are significant gaps between policy and practice in the implementation of educational change.

Glasgow's paper illustrates the gap between macro-level language policy intention and micro-level implementation of language pedagogy. Based on semi-structured interviews with Japanese teachers of English (JTE), Glasgow investigates teachers' interpretation of the Japanese government's new directives to use English as the medium of instruction in English classes at junior secondary school

level Japan. He also investigated what can be learnt from this between the macro-level language education policy expectations and the JTE—the implementation agents—interpretation of these policies at the macro-level. Even though the aim of the Japanese government through this initiative is to improve English proficiency of the students, Glasgow's article shows that there is a gap between policy intention at the macro-level and the interpretation of the policy at the micro-level. The MOI policy formulated by language-in-education policy-makers lacks clarity as the wording of the policy is vague and therefore problematic. The policy document of the Japanese government suggests that “classes must be conducted in English” but it adds that Japanese can be used also as needed in class. The directive to use English as the medium of instruction and Japanese if needed is vague and this vagueness has led to a range of interpretations of the amount of language to be used by teachers in their classrooms. In addition to the vagueness of this policy document, JTEs identify conflicts between different aspects of language education policy as the government's new initiative is incongruent with assessment policies at university entrance examinations. Similarly to English teachers in Ukraine, JTEs who are required to teach classes in English feel that this policy challenges their linguistic beliefs and their professional identity. They expressed concerns about their proficiency in the target language (as non-native speakers) which has negative effects on their self-perception.

The article by Hawanti analyses Indonesian English teachers' knowledge and beliefs and the ways in which these influence how they implement language teaching policies. She analyses the ways English teachers engage with teaching English in primary schools in Indonesia. This article about teaching English in Indonesia highlights the gap between language policies formulated at the macro-level and their implementation at the micro-level. In Indonesia, English has the status of a local content subject in primary school. This means that the responsibility to teach English and provide a curriculum is delegated to the micro-level (regions and/or schools). This case study illustrates a policy context where issues about language education policy decisions and implementation are devolved to the micro-level with the consequence that the pedagogical issues involved cannot easily be addressed by classroom teachers. In the absence of a curriculum to accompany the implementation of English in primary schools, teachers of English feel they lack guidance as they believe they do not have the necessary knowledge to provide their own curriculum. As a consequence, English teachers in Indonesia use textbooks as substitutes to curriculum which they were supposed to design.

The article by Nguyen examines the teaching of English as a foreign language in Vietnam. In 2008 the government introduced a policy initiative that sought to provide Vietnamese students with the language and cultural skills they need to operate in multilingual and multicultural contexts. To achieve this aim, the Vietnamese government adopted the European Union's Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and emphasised the need to foster the intercultural competence of Vietnamese students. However, the policy change was not well communicated or accompanied by support for teachers dealing with the consequential pedagogical changes. As a result, Vietnamese teachers of English did not fully understand the new changes due to inefficient communication between the macro-level and the micro-level. This lack of understanding of the policy has had consequences for the ways they teach culture in their classroom and each teacher teaches culture according to objectives they have set themselves based on their individual interpretation of culture. In many instances, their interpretation and understanding of culture were not congruent with the macro-level policy intentions. This case study highlights the gap between the macro-level and the implementation of Intercultural competence in Vietnamese schools at the micro-level.

The last article by Ya-ling Chang addresses the gap between language policy and pedagogical practices in Taiwanese classrooms. In contrast with the other articles in this volume that focus on the teaching of English, Chang's paper features Pangcah—an endangered aboriginal language—and Mandarin. Taiwanese government policy intentions expressed in both the Local Language Education Policy (2001) and the Native Education Policy (1994) are important initiatives to raise the profile of Taiwanese indigenous languages and cultures and to provide education and literacy in these languages. Chang's contribution shows that Pangcah teachers' pedagogical efforts to use and construct Pangcah identity in classroom are impeded by the competing status of languages in play—Pangcah (low status) and Mandarin (high status language)—and codeswitching—between Pangcah and Mandarin, Japanese, to a certain extent, and recently English in classroom rituals and school yard. Competing status and code switching in this context not only illustrate power relation, status and hierarchy between languages and identity construction in post-colonial Taiwan, but also call into question the issues of pedagogies in such a complex language context.

These papers reveal that there may be significant gaps between macro-level intentions framed in policy documents and the classroom realities of implementation. They demonstrate that these gaps result from lack of consideration of the pedagogical implications of policy changes and lack of attention to dealing with the pedagogical consequences of policy change.

Conclusion

The papers in this issue demonstrate the ways that language-in-education policy and planning inevitably involves pedagogy, but that decision-making about language education may not give adequate attention to the pedagogical consequences of educational change. This volume has indicated that, while language policy interacts with language teaching pedagogy in complex ways and can have varying influences on entrenching or changing language teachers' practices, depending on how policy is constructed and implemented. The papers demonstrate that where pedagogy is not attended to in the implementation of language policy, this results in problems for implementation that can severely compromise the policy and its objectives. This points to a greater need to understand the issues relating to classroom practice in the language-in-education policy and how issues of practice are conceived and encoded in policy documents. As pedagogy is consequential for the success of language policy, there is a need for scholarship in language policy and planning to engage more with pedagogy in both theory and practice.

Note

1. Exceptions include Gopinathan (1999) and Liddicoat (2004). Corson (1999) includes pedagogy as something that *schools* should consider in education, but does not examine the macro level. The edited collection by Lambert and Shohamy (2000) would appear to be an exception, however, the papers focus on either language policy or pedagogy as parallel topics, rather than bringing them into relation in relation.

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