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Language planning in universities: Teaching, research and administration

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Language planning in universities: Teaching, research and administration

Introduction

The work of universities is fundamentally mediated by language and there has been growing interest in how universities plan their language use (e.g. Barrault-Méthy, 2012; Bull, 2012; Cots Josep, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012; Gill, 2006; Källkvist & Hult, 2016; Pereira, 2013). The focus on universities as language planning actors represents a focus on the ways that language is planned at the meso and micro levels (Baldauf, 2005, 2006; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997) as universities as institutions can be conceptualised as language planning actors at a number of levels. They may be seen as micro-level actors, implementing macro-level policy locally or they may be seen as meso-level actors, standing between the macro level and the micro-level made up of individuals or groups of academic and/or administrative staff or students. The emerging focus on universities as language planning actors, at whichever level, reflects a move by universities in many parts of the world to develop more explicit language policies in response to a changing language context. These policies have variously responded to the ways the academy uses languages for teaching and learning, for creating and disseminating knowledge through research and for administration. These issues form the focus for the papers in this volume.

Language planning in universities – responding to internationalisation

Of all levels of education, higher education has been the most internationalised. This internationalisation is, however, not a new phenomenon and the international nature of universities' work can be seen from the inception of the university. In fact, the idea of the itinerant scholar is one that predates the founding of universities as educational

institutions. In the mediaeval West, foreign students and foreign academics were an indispensable part of the earliest universities (Welch, 2005). Nonetheless, contemporary universities are characterised by a focus on internationalisation at an unprecedented level that influences the profile of the student body and of academic staff, the curricula being offered and the sorts of educational experiences that universities offer to their students (Källkvist & Hult, 2016; Liddicoat, 2004). For universities, internationalisation has meant a substantial increase in multilingualism and a need to respond to changes in both the language profiles of university populations and in the languages of universities' work. This means that universities have increasingly been faced with the need to plan languages as part of their work to respond to the changing linguistic context in which they work.

The internationalisation of the contemporary university exists within a wider context of demographic, cultural and economic internationalisation that has been accompanied by a greater focus on education as a tradable commodity, on research as a global endeavour and on the ideology of English as the lingua franca of commercial, cultural and educational life. The growing role of English as an international language has, in particular, been a feature of contemporary universities in all aspects of their work and has become a central focus of many universities' language planning. In fact, all of the papers in this volume engage with the role of English in academia either explicitly or implicitly.

The impact of the globalisation of the English language on contemporary education is not, however, equal for all universities. In countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia, where English is not only an academic lingua franca but also the dominant language of public communication, universities have often shown little interest in the linguistic consequences of internationalisation.

For example, universities in Australia, the context in which I have worked most, have seen internationalisation largely in terms of ‘business as usual’. In fact, where language issues have surfaced for such universities they have usually been couched in terms of the ‘deficient’ linguistic abilities of international students (e.g. Birrell, 2006; Bretag, 2007). Such universities’ language planning has therefore focused mostly on remediation of students’ deficiencies in the form of academic support programs (Andrade, 2006; Baik & Greig, 2009), of increasing English language scores on standardised tests for admission to degree programs (Benzie, 2010) or of assessing the English language capabilities of currently enrolled students (Murray, 2014). These can all be considered as monolingual responses to the linguistic diversity that exists within Australian universities (Liddicoat & Crichton, 2008). Moreover, the focus on internationalisation does not seem to have strengthened the teaching and learning of additional languages in Australian universities as the period of internationalisation has seen the reduction in both the number of students taking languages and the number of languages offered in most Australian universities (Diller, White, & Baldauf, 1997; White & Baldauf, 2006). The approach to internationalisation in Australian universities can thus be seen as an instance of a monolingual habitus (Gogolin, 1994) that constructs internationalisation as something that occurs mainly through a single language (English) and requires only knowledge of that language for full participation in the internationalised academy. In my personal experience, this English language monolingual habitus has also been reflected in the ways that universities evaluate research published in other languages. Thus, internationalisation seems to have led to a heightened focus on monolingualism rather than on multilingualism. The only exceptions would be in the development of marketing materials in the languages of

significant markets as a way of attracting students to Australian universities, and even here, marketing in English is more often the norm.

In countries where the national language is not English, however, the impact has been much different and there has been a move to increasing multilingualism, where multilingualism often a focus on the addition of English to the linguistic repertoires of academics and students (Källkvist & Hult, 2016; Ljosland, 2007). The impact of internationalisation on the language planning of universities can be seen in all areas of academic work, in teaching and learning, in research and in administration.

In teaching and learning, the primary language planning issue confronting institutions in many countries is the question of the medium of instruction. Universities are increasingly adopting English as a medium of instruction in some courses or in some disciplinary areas as either the main or an auxiliary medium of instruction. The rationales put forward for this are usually framed in terms of the need to internationalise but there appear to be two different positions put forward. The first relates to the desire to attract international students, who it is believed will not be attracted to universities that teach in their local languages (Byun et al., 2011; Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2011; Le Lièvre & Forlot, 2014). This locates the use of English within an economic motivation, a desire to attract fee-paying students, and allocates to English a greater economic value than the local language(s). English may also be chosen as the medium of instruction because it is in some way considered to be more appropriate for teaching a particular area, either because English is seen as the language in which knowledge is created or because it is seen as the prototypical language in which such knowledge will be used in the world of work (Doiz et al., 2011; Wilkinson, 2013). Such policies thus represent a normalisation of English as

the language of work, both inside and outside the academy, at least in some disciplinary areas such as business studies or the sciences.

Questions of medium of instruction have not, however, always focused only on the use of English alongside national languages. There have also been instances where universities have adopted minority languages as languages of instruction, especially official minority languages (e.g. Bull, 2012; Mgqwashu, 2014; Nkosi, 2014). Such language planning is, however, relatively rare and may not be well accepted by local communities and students, who value education in majority official languages, especially those with international reach more highly than education in a local minority language (Nkosi, 2014).

Universities' language planning may also consider the place of foreign language learning in university curricula. One feature of this in contemporary universities has been the focus on foreign language learning for students who are not majoring in a language. This has broadly meant in many countries that such students are required to study English at some point in their university program of study. Such policies have often meant that English is the only language studied by the majority of higher education students and that other languages may have only a marginal position in university curricula. This may be the case even in contexts where English is not a mandated subject for university students. For example, in Japan, although English is not a required subject for university students in Japan's macro level educational policy, it is widely studied as part of university-specific policies and study of other languages is quite restricted (Kakuharu, 2007; Koishi, 2011; Sugitani, 2010). Thus, the language planning for the learning of additional languages in contemporary universities is increasingly geared to the teaching of English, either as the only foreign language studied by students or in combination with other languages, while in

the English-speaking world, language study is usual only for students with a special interest.

In research, university language planning has increasingly come to emphasise English as the language of publication (Hamel, 2007, 2013). Such language policies reflect a larger shift within the academy that shows publication practices increasingly coming to focus of English as the normal language of knowledge production in the academy, with many journals shifting from publishing in the national language to publication in English. This was for example the case with the French journal *Revue de physique*, which began publishing in both French and English from the 1970s (Langevin, 1981) and eventually ceased using French by the beginning of the 1990s (Liddicoat, 2008). Studies of publication over time have tended to show a decreasing presence of most languages in favour of English (e.g. Ehlich, 2001; Lee & Lee, 2013; Sano, 2002).

One of the factors leading universities to shift increasing to publication policies focusing on English has been the development of national research evaluation processes that have sought to rank publications as a way of measuring research quality and such rankings have tended to privilege research developed in English (González-Alcaide, Valderrama-Zurián, & Aleixandre-Benavent, 2012; Tietze & Dick, 2012). In fact, in the ideological construction of internationalisation of research in contemporary universities, ‘internationalisation’ has come to mean publishing in English and publications in English are seen as being of high quality (Lillis & Curry, 2010) or at least as of higher quality than publications in local languages. There is also evidence that language of publication can influence citational practices of researchers publishing in English, even in disciplines where such practices would seem to be less warranted (Liddicoat, 2016). The language planning of universities is

thus done in the context of the hegemony of English in knowledge creation and the resulting policies are developed in ways that typically reinforce that hegemony at the expense of multilingual research practices. Such practices may work to diminish or marginalise the place of local languages in academic discourses and may also diminish or marginalise local epistemologies as they fail to recognise the role languages play in the ways that knowledge is both created and disseminated (Liddicoat & Zarate, 2009; Thielmann, 2002).

The language planning of universities in relation to administration is probably the least well developed area of the language work of any universities. Often the working language of the nation in which the university is located is the language of administration, reflecting a national rather than international influence on language decisions. Such language policies may create particular difficulties for aspects of university administration, especially where English is not a working language of the university, but where it has been promoted for either the recruitment of international students or of English-speaking academic staff. In some cases, universities adopt a policy of employing bilingual staff who can communicate with students in a local language and English (as reported, for example, for Denmark by Haberland & Preisler, 2015), but this is not always the case.

In officially multilingual contexts, it may be the case that not all languages used in the society will have equal use in the administration of universities. In some cases, less dominant official languages will be used only for more symbolic aspects of administration such as signage, or for communication associated with specific groups of students. Alternatively, it may be the case that some official languages are not used at all in university administration (Cots Josep et al., 2012; Weber & Horner, 2013) or

that their use may be dependent on the local language practices and capabilities of individuals rather than on an explicitly articulated policy.

In some administrative contexts, English may be used as an additional language alongside the national language(s) as a way of developing international visibility, particularly in the case of university websites, which increasingly commonly have parallel English versions and may also have specific material in other languages targeting very specific audiences (Callahan & Herring, 2012). English websites typically exist only for external communication, with the material produced in the local language(s) serving as the mode of communication with the local students and communities. This external communication may be supplemented by additional languages used to target specific markets, especially for international students.

Internationalisation of universities is presented ideologically as an opening of university, which have essentially been national institutions, to a wider world. While this ideology is one of internationalism, it does not appear to be obviously an ideology of multilingualism and university language policies do not really seem to have engaged deeply within multilingualism. In fact, in many contexts, it would appear that internationalisation is often reduced to a form of bilingualism in a national language and English, with only peripheral roles for other languages in many institutions, or to a monolingual, monocultural form of internationalisation in universities in many English speaking-countries.

About this volume

The contributions to this volume examine the ways that universities have planned their use of languages in different aspects of their work.

A number of the contributions examine the direct consequences of internationalisation on the language practices of universities, especially in terms of teaching and learning. The first ~~two papers~~ focuses on the use of English in Japanese universities. Higgins and Brady examine the impact of globalisation and internationalisation on Japanese universities by examining how local actors implement internationalisation policies focused on using English as a medium of instruction at a private university in Japan. They identify a number of issues in language planning work at the university that lead to inconsistency and a lack of clarity about how language policies will be implemented. They present a situation in which macro level language planning has produced a particular set of decisions that need to be implemented at the micro level, but in which the university considered as a meso-level actor does not engage in consistent ways with the macro level decisions. The result is that micro-level actors are often left to their own devices in interpreting and delivering policies in an environment of conflicting messages that hinder effective curriculum and pedagogical change. ~~Ng's paper considers the place of English in the internationalisation of Japanese universities by exploring the efforts required and the constraints experienced in implementing English as a medium of instruction programmes. Ng's study shows that while local actors had worked to achieve things ranging from developing curricula and pedagogy to dealing with university management, what is possible is constrained by a number of factors including a lack of academics who are able to teach content in English, the limitations of students' English language proficiency, the nature of students' motivation in learning English, the institutional culture, and a lack of understanding of what is involved in teaching content through English among top level management. In view~~

~~of the constraints, he questions whether the effort required to develop English language programs in Japan repays what they can achieve educationally.~~

Carroll moves to consider the use of languages in teaching and learning in an officially bilingual context study and analyses the language policies of the university system of Puerto Rico, where Spanish and English hold co-official status but where the majority of islanders use Spanish as their first language. In Puerto Rico's higher education system, English has held a privileged role but institutions have de facto policies that allow classes to be taught in English, Spanish or a combination of each. These policies have allowed academics themselves to decide which languages will be used for teaching, for materials and for assessment. While such a policy allows space for each language, as language choice are made locally by individuals rather than an institutional policy, it also creates problems as it can be difficult for students to know which language of instruction will be used for any particular course. Carroll argues that while such a language planning approach may be beneficial for students and academics who are bilingual, the lack of clarity around language of instruction can pose problems for students who have yet to develop academic language proficiency in both languages and advocates for more explicitness in the articulation of language policies.

Hamel, López and Carvalhal examine the language policy challenges faced by universities as a result of internationalisation in the context of two universities, UPIITA, a technology unit in the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) in Mexico City, and the University of Latin American Integration (UNILA) in southern Brazil. The analysis shows that the two universities have developed significant multilingual practices in their responses to their local sociolinguistic situation and to the linguistic correlates of internationalisation. They argue that such plurilingual responses to

internationalisation provide an important counter to the beliefs that internationalisation of academia means privileging English over other languages.

Kamwendo and Dlamini move the focus to Africa and cross-border delivery of university programs. They examine the language policy of a Zimbabwean university that offers courses in Swaziland as a part of an educational partnership. Although, each of the countries involved in officially multilingual, Zimbabwe with English, Shona and Ndebele, Swaziland with English and siSwati, they find that this multilingualism is not well reflected in the program offered in Swaziland. They find that English is the dominant language in teaching, research and administration, with siSwati being included only as a subject within the university's program and in relatively minor ways in administration. They argue that this situation does, however, reflect the local Swaziland realities in which English plays a more significant role than siSwati in public contexts.

The next three contributions examine the ways that minority languages are addressed in universities' language planning. Han, De Costa and Cui examine the ways that Chinese universities respond to the language needs of linguistic minority students by examining the provisions made for Uighur students at one Chinese university. The university has developed policies of preferential treatment for students from ethnolinguistic minorities that are intended as forms of affirmative action, but Han, De Costa and Cui argue that these policies have not actually opened higher education to minority students in the ways intended because of a combination of problems in the ways such minorities have been educated and in the linguistic ideologies that prevail in Chinese higher education. They argue that rather than leading to inclusion, the language policies and language ideologies of Chinese higher education combine to further marginalise and alienate linguistic minority students.

While Han et al. present a context in which minority languages are constrained by policy, Sterzuk and Fayant look at how a university has opened spaces for a minority language. They present an analysis of a Canadian teacher education program for teachers of Michif, a French-Cree contact language. They locate their study within the context of the role of higher education in developing reconciliation between settler colonial societies and indigenous peoples. They argue that in order to develop teacher education programs for indigenous people that work to achieve reconciliation, it is fundamental that universities incorporate traditional knowledge and cultural expertise and give a place of value and legitimacy to indigenous languages and pedagogies within the academy. This means addressing the monolingual and monocultural assumptions of the academy about the nature of knowledge and expertise and opening universities to multiple intellectual traditions and to the use of multiple languages in their educational work. Willans similarly looks at the idea of how universities can open spaces for languages that are not represented in the official policies of universities and examines how the teaching of linguistics opens spaces for local languages in a university context in which English dominates academic practice. She focuses on the University of the South Pacific, which is a university catering for twelve countries characterised by high levels of linguistic diversity and with a highly multilingual body of staff and students. While the university's policy and rhetoric support the maintenance and development of this linguistic diversity, Willans identifies a number of institutional factors that unintentionally stifle the opportunities to study, learn and use multiple languages, notably the impact of English as the lingua franca of the university and as the language of international academic communication. She examines how academics in the university's linguistics program work in a

context in which linguistic diversity is both valued and constrained to open new spaces for languages by engaging with the macro and the micro simultaneously.

The next three contributions examine the ways that universities in English-speaking societies plan for students who may need to develop their English language abilities further to undertake higher education courses. Finn and Avni focus on the work of instructors and examine a universities academic literacy program as a language planning context by investigating how language policy interacts with daily classroom decisions at a community college in the United States. They investigate a situation in which students' success is based on the results of a summative, high-stakes assessment of their writing that functions as the de facto policy. This assessment as policy perspective is one in which a monolingual view of academic literacy prevails as notions of what counts as literacy knowledge are determined solely through English proficiency policies, thereby devaluing the role of multilingualism. Finn and Avni show that academics teaching developmental writing respond to the de facto policy in a range of ways and that the ways that writing instructors define academic literacy and translate it into classroom practices does not always align with university language policy. For Finn and Avni (as for other authors in this volume), language educators are significant policy actors making significant language planning decisions as they implement policy that comes from above. In their paper, Moore and Harrington shift the focus to universities' assessment of language capabilities. They analyse the ways that English language proficiency is understood in Australian universities and argue that university language planning has produced a tripartite construct in which English language proficiency is viewed simultaneously in terms of academic literacy, interpersonal communication and future workplace language use. Their paper questions the theoretical and empirical bases of this

tripartite conception as a way of organising support for international students who speak English as an additional language and they argue that the ways universities have constructed language proficiency has led to a model in which the various components are in competition and conflict. They believe that the source of this conflict is university policy makers' poorly conceptualised understanding of language and language use, which is not based on sound linguistic research. Finally, Fuentes examines the problems posed for students in an American university when they are labelled as "English learner" and "limited English proficiency". He examines a particular cohort of students – those educated in the USA but who are not US citizens – and the consequences of the university's policy of requiring all such students to submit results from a standardised test of English. He argues that institutional policies and practices assign such students labels based on their citizenship status and that these labels then affect their identities and sense of place within the university in negative ways. In response, the students attempted to shape and dictate their university engagement by exercising agency in the construction of more advantageous identities. The resulting practices, however, promoted assimilation, reproduced stereotypes, and thus contributed to student marginalization that at times furthered their alienation from university life.

The next ~~two~~ contributions looks specifically at the place of foreign language learning. In their paper, Miranda, Berdugo and Tejada investigate the process that occurred as a Colombian university developed a policy on foreign language learning. They argue that policy creation is a complex process in which external policies coming from international and national organizations and governmental bodies at the macro and meso levels exert power over universities that restricts their autonomy and in which they are required to respond to market, knowledge-based economy demands

that need to be balanced against the university's educative mission. To negotiate such complexity, requires the participation of different actors in language planning, which in turn legitimizes the creation of a language policy. They argue that the democratic structures of the university provided spaces for the participation of potential policy agents at different levels of the micro-context and that it is important for senior management of universities to provide such spaces but also that academics and students also need to lay claim to them. They conclude that university language planning needs to be a continuous top-down and bottom-up movement to accommodate the various conflicting needs and demands of the language planning context. ~~Phan and Hamid shift the focus to planning language pedagogy and examine the implementation of a macro-level policy relating to language pedagogy by examining the ways in which learner autonomy has been introduced into Vietnamese universities. They argue that what has happened in Vietnam is that policy makers have developed policy without consideration of how it will be implemented with the result that micro-level actors, such as institutions and teachers, become responsible for designing the implementation. For them, micro level actors take on agency in such contexts to interpret, reinterpret, appropriate theories and concepts and translate policies into practice and this agency is motivated by teachers' sense of responsibility towards their students and their academic wellbeing. Teachers are thus policy actors rather than just policy implementers and the significance of their role in language planning needs to be recognised.~~

In the final paper, Siiner considers the ways that internationalisation impacts on the personnel of a university by investigating the positioning of international academics at a Danish university. She examines the complexities created by a form of internationalisation that privileges English as a language of academic work in

societies in which English is not a normal language of communication. She examines a context in which English has been normalised as the language of research and to a large extent teaching, but in which the local official language is the normal language of university administration. She argues that the emphasis on English as the language academic work effectively undermines expectations that academics working in Denmark will learn Danish with consequences for the ways in which they do and can participate in the work of the university. The result is that certain administrative roles can only be performed by those who speak Danish and that as a result local academics and administrative staff often have to take on additional administrative work to compensate for the lack of Danish abilities of their international colleagues.

Many of these contributions highlight the role of micro level actors as language planning agents in universities as macro level policies are adapted to local needs and local circumstances (c.f. Baldauf, 2006; Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008). In many cases, they present cases in which such local actors have been overlooked or undervalued in the language planning of universities but demonstrate how significant they are in fact for the successful implementation of university or national language policies. Collectively the contributions reflect the complexities of language issues for universities as they engage with contemporary processes of internationalisation, but also provide evidence that multilingualism may be overlooked in contemporary university language planning, but also that multilingual solutions are both possible and desirable in internationalising education.

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