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The interface between macro and micro-level language policy and the place of language pedagogies

Anthony J. Liddicoat

Research Centre for Languages and Cultures, School of Communication, International Studies and Languages, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia

Abstract

This paper investigates the place of pedagogy in language-in-education policy through an analysis of how the macro-level of government policy interacts with the micro-level of local educational practice. It argues that pedagogy is typically considered a micro-level activity and policy frequently devolves decision-making about pedagogy to micro-level agents. For this reason, pedagogy is often invisible in policy texts. Pedagogy becomes a concern for macro-level policy when micro-level practice is constructed as being a problem and policy seeks to intervene to reform practice. However, whether pedagogy is explicitly discussed in policy, it remains nonetheless relevant for policy implementation and ultimately for the success of policy change. The silence about pedagogy in policy texts may render invisible the capacity for pedagogical change at the micro-level and the capabilities and resources needed to effect change. The paper will examine these issues through an investigation of a series of language policy contexts in which pedagogy is either an explicit concern or it remains implicit.

Keywords: language-in-education policy; language pedagogies, macro language planning, micro language planning

Introduction

Pedagogy, understood as the “act of teaching together with the ideas, values and beliefs by which that act is informed, sustained and justified” (Alexander, 2008, p. 4), is of necessity something that is both local and contextually dependent. However, at the same time, changes in educational policy have significant implications for pedagogical decision-making at the local level as they influence not only the ideas, values and beliefs that underlie practice but also the objectives towards which practice is oriented. Because pedagogy is local it has not always attracted a lot of attention in language policy and planning research, which has historically focused mostly on the work of governments and associated agencies. As language planning and policy research moves to focus on other levels at which language-related decision-making is undertaken, pedagogy can assume a new focus in language planning and policy scholarship. Baldauf (2005, 2006; Chua & Baldauf, 2011; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997) in reframing the focus of language policy and planning research argues that there are three levels of investigation in which language-related decision-making needs to be investigated and understood. These are the macro-level, the level of governments and governmental agencies, the meso-level of sub-national institutions and the micro-level of local agents whose decision-making influences local practices. In reality all of these levels are relevant for understanding how decision-making about language pedagogies occurs, but this paper will address two of these – the macro level of governmental language-in-education policy texts and the micro-level of local practice – in order to investigate how these two levels are salient for understanding pedagogy as an element of language policy and planning. Macro-level policy frames the educational discourses that shape pedagogical practice, while micro-level agents enact pedagogies as a form of local language planning work in the implementation of language policy. This paper will examine the place of pedagogy in language-in-education

policies and the inter actions between the macro and micro levels in a number of contexts in which pedagogy is a salient feature of policy, whether explicitly or implicitly. It will begin by addressing policies that refer explicitly to pedagogy in the form of requirements for the adoption of a specific method or approach in the classroom. It will then investigate two contexts in which pedagogy is implicit: policies that identify a change in the focus of language education and medium of instruction policies that mandate use of a language that is not the students' first language.

Explicit policy focus on pedagogy

Pedagogy itself may become a subject for language-in-education policy and policy documents may intervene directly and explicitly in matters relating to pedagogy. However, given the overall importance of language in education as an area of policy development, comparatively few polities have language-in-education policies that explicitly state prescriptions for pedagogical practice. Such policies demonstrate a concern at the macro-level for micro-level pedagogical practice and seek to reform such practice with the aim of improving students' attainment in language. In many cases, such policies are found in countries in Asia as a part of a move to develop higher levels of English among school students. This is the case, for example, in both the People's Republic of China and in South Korea.

The People's Republic of China has an established history of intervention in pedagogy since the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976. During the Cultural Revolution, English had been largely removed as a foreign language in Chinese education. When English teaching did re-emerge in the latter part of the Cultural Revolution, the teaching approach adopted was subjugated to ideological demands. The main concern of educational policy at this time was a desire to control educational content and centrally developed textbooks of the time were politically charged and based on the politics of the Cultural Revolution rather than on principles of language teaching and learning (Adamson & Morris, 1997; Hu, 2002b). Textbooks promoted a teacher-centred grammar-translation pedagogy in which text comprehension rather than overall language proficiency was treated as the main goal (Hu, 2002b). At the time of the Cultural Revolution, there was no overt policy statement relating to pedagogy but pedagogical practice was implicit in policies relating to teaching materials.

From 1976, the introduction of the 'Four Modernisations' restored the learning of English in the Chinese schooling; English became a core subject in the secondary curriculum and was included in the National College Entrance Examinations (Hu, 2002b; Ross, 1992). A more explicit focus on pedagogy emerged in the context of the reintroduction of English and a perception that the very low standards being achieved by learners of English resulted from the widespread use of traditional grammar-oriented methods (Hu, 2002b; Liao, 2000/2001). That is, the existing pedagogical practice of language teachers' emerged as a problem in contemporary ways of understanding students' performance and policy was developed to address this pedagogical problem, beginning with the trial English syllabus issued in 1978 (CMRI, 2001). The 1978 syllabus combined elements of grammar-translation and audiolingualism as the preferred pedagogy, with the aim of developing language skills and providing intellectual training through language learning (Adamson & Morris, 1997). This combined pedagogical approach was reinforced in the officially produced English textbook. In this case, language pedagogy was identified as the most significant factor contributing to a perceived problem in the effectiveness of language teaching (c.f. Liddicoat, 2004). In the language planning of the Chinese government, pedagogical change was presented as the solution to poor language learning, without reference to other factors which may have influenced students' level of attainment.

The reforms of the 1978 syllabus and its new pedagogy, however, did not solve the low levels of achievement of Chinese learners of English and the problem continued to be understood in terms of pedagogical deficiencies within the Chinese system. From the 1990s, national curricula began to promote the development of communicative competence. In 1992 a new syllabus (State Education Development Commission, 1992) was issued that focused on communication as the main focus of teaching and the national syllabus for English issued in 2000 (Ministry of Education, 2000) promoted Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the norm. Similar policy proposals at tertiary level have also focused on communicatively oriented pedagogies, and have similarly been problematic to implement (Du, 2012). However, the movement towards CLT at the policy level has not typically been reciprocated by a move to CLT at the level of practice (Hu, 2002b). One problem in moving to CLT as a preferred pedagogy was that teachers who had been educated using grammar-translation or audiolingual approaches did not have the appropriate knowledge base to implement the new pedagogy (Lin, 2000; Yu, 2001). The policy decision at the macro-level required action at the micro-level for its implementation but teachers were largely unable to implement the reform. There is also evidence that teachers resisted CLT because it is not a culturally appropriate pedagogy and does not conform to Chinese conceptualisations of teaching and learning (Hu, 2002a). Burnaby and Sun (1989) reported a number of contextual constraints that have limited uptake of CLT that range from teachers' capabilities in English, to pragmatic problems such as class sizes, lesson schedules and the available resources and equipment and contextual problems such as the influence of traditional teaching methods and the low status given to teachers of communication rather than analysis.

The implementation of CLT has been made further problematic because of a lack of fit between the pedagogies explicitly favoured by policy and the pedagogies implicitly implied in other aspects of language-in-education policy. In particular, assessment policy which has been a significant problem for the implementation of CLT as the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (NHEEE), the central gate-keeping examination for entry into higher education and the College English Test (CET), which is required for graduating from a tertiary institution, have remained strongly grammar focused in spite of some adjustment over time (X. J. Li & Wang, 2000; Sun & Henrichse, 2011), privileging explicit grammatical knowledge over communicative competence. This in turn has favoured a grammar-oriented pedagogy rather than a communicatively oriented one. Given the importance of the examinations, the conflict between explicit policy on pedagogy and the implicit pedagogy of assessment has usually been resolved by teachers' adopting of explicit grammar-focused teaching in Chinese secondary English classrooms. In this way a conflict about pedagogy in different macro-level policies has been resolved at the micro-level by teachers selecting the pedagogy that is most useful for realising local priorities and responding to the perceived educational needs of students.

Like China, South Korea has also developed language-in-education policies that explicitly promote CLT. In 1992, the South Korean Ministry of Education published the *Sixth National Curriculum for Middle Schools* and the *Sixth National Curriculum for High Schools* both of which explicitly recommended the adoption of CLT as the normal pedagogy for teaching English at secondary level. The inclusion on CLT as the required pedagogy was maintained through the curriculum revisions of 1998 and 2008. The pedagogical shift to CLT was accompanied by a medium of instruction policy in the form of Teaching English Through English (TEE), which was implemented from 2001 (Choi & Andon, 2014). The medium of instruction policy was developed as a pedagogical correlate of CLT and emphasised the need for teachers of English to use the language communicatively in their classroom practice and to provide significant input in the target language.

The focus on CLT was an attempt to move teaching practice away from grammar-translation and audiolingualism, which at the time characterised pedagogical practice in Korea's teaching of English, and which were largely seen as causing problems in English language learning, especially the development of communicative abilities (Chang, 2009; D. Li, 1998). Kim (2011) notes that both the 1998 and 2008 curricula explicitly state that the introduction of CLT is a reaction to a situation in which previous students were grammatically knowledgeable but not able to communicate and that communicative ability is not developed from grammatical knowledge. Thus, pedagogy has been seen as a prime cause of learning problems and pedagogical change has been promoted as the way to develop better language learning results.

There is evidence over a long period of time that the introduction of CLT has not been a complete success in Korea as there have been a number of factors that have militated against the use of CLT in language classrooms. Initially, these problems related to teachers' limited knowledge of the new pedagogy and limited ability to use English in the classroom. In order to address such issues, Korean policy work on pedagogy has been accompanied by other policy developments relating to materials and teachers' professional learning that have aimed to support the uptake of CLT. The TEE policy, for example, has sought to influence pedagogical practice through a dual-level teacher certification scheme, which although national in focus, has been implemented in different ways in different regions of the country (see Choi, in press; Choi & Andon, 2014 for more detail on TEE). All teachers are expected to be certified at basic level after three years of teaching experience, while the advanced level is optional. Certification involves evaluation of both language abilities and pedagogical knowledge, with advanced level teachers being required to undertake a professional learning program and an evaluation of teaching practice using English as the medium of instruction and CLT as their pedagogy.

In spite of the focus on professional learning to develop teachers' pedagogical knowledge and language capabilities, there is evidence that teachers' may still prefer not to use CLT in classrooms. For example, Choi and Andon (2014) report that even teachers who have passed TEE certification at the advanced level may be reluctant to implement what they have learnt in class because they feel that it is not relevant for their teaching context. This issue of relevance is revealing because, although CLT is highly relevant in terms of the pedagogical focus of Korea's policy, it is not seen as relevant for supporting the sorts for the learning of English that Korean students require. As in the case of China, it is assessment policy, in the form of the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) that seems to be a major barrier to pedagogical change. The CSAT is strongly grammar focused and only teaching that develops test-taking skills is seen as having validity. In fact, Choi and Andon report that only one teacher in their study planned to implement CLT and this was because he felt that his students had little chance of getting good marks in CSAT and therefore would not be disadvantaged by a CLT approach.

In both China and Korea, language-in-education policies have stipulated a preferred pedagogy for the teaching of English. In each case they have constructed previous pedagogical practice as a causal problem for low levels of learning and have sought to replace one set of pedagogical norms with another that is perceived to be superior. The new pedagogy is as an unproblematic solution that, if implemented, will resolve existing educational problem – method is seen as having an ideal form that are intrinsically better than other pedagogical possibilities. However, as Pennycook (1989) recognises, such a positivistic view that methods develop from 'traditional' (i.e. unsuccessful and outdated) to modern and successful in a linear fashion is a flawed view which does not recognise the cultural, social, economic, and political relations of power involved in the promotion of one pedagogical

model over another and the contextual and cultural forces that influence the acceptability and viability of particular pedagogical practices in local classrooms.

Moreover, policies tend to present pedagogies in abstract and macro-level terms – that is, they outline key elements of a method and the learning goals to be achieved, without recognition of the inherent complexity and internal diversity involved in the pedagogies being promoted. The working through of the macro-level provisions needs to be done at the micro-level by teachers, who are often not well-prepared to do this. That is, the implementation of the macro-level policy may not be well considered. Even in cases where there is recognition that teachers need to develop both pedagogical and linguistic capabilities in order to implement pedagogical change, such as the certification of teachers for TEE in Korea, there is evidence that there is little consideration of how aspects of the local educational context influence processes of implementation. This is especially the case where the explicitly articulated pedagogy is in conflict with the implicit pedagogies that exist in other aspects of language-in-education policy, especially in assessment policy, and cultural assumptions about education and the nature of learning. This means that provisions for pedagogy in macro-level policy ignores the micro-level needs and realities of teachers and renders them as invisible, except in so far as they are either users of appropriate pedagogies or not.

Change of educational focus in language learning

Many language-in-education policies do not construct pedagogy as the problem that needs to be resolved through policy action but focus on other aspects of education and seek to change these in some ways. These policies may seek to reform aspects of language education such as curriculum, assessment or materials, either singly or collectively. These policies may not focus explicitly on changing pedagogy but nonetheless can have consequences for pedagogical practice. The discussion here will review two policy contexts that have sought to introduce curriculum change without explicitly addressing the consequentiality of change for pedagogical practice. The two have been selected because they have treated pedagogy in radically different ways. This first, the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEFR) acknowledges pedagogy but only to exclude it from policy provisions. The second, Japan's extension of English language learning to elementary schools is silent the role of pedagogical change in achieving policy outcomes.

In Europe, macro-level policy on language education covers not only the national level but also the supra-national level and the most significant document influencing the shape and direction of language education is the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference* for languages (Council of Europe, 2001). This Framework is intended to provide a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. The CEFR acknowledges the interrelationship between pedagogy, curriculum, materials and assessment but takes an agnostic approach to pedagogy proposing an approach to questions of pedagogy that is "comprehensive, presenting all options in an explicit and transparent way and avoiding advocacy or dogmatism" (Council of Europe, 2001: 142). The Council of Europe in its framework seeks to influence decisions about pedagogy through descriptions of what is to be achieved in language education and acknowledges that there are many pedagogical approaches that can achieve the desired outcomes.

The CEFR approaches pedagogy not by making policy statements, but rather by framing questions to guide choices. The end result of these questions is a checklist of possibilities to assist in guiding rationales for practice, but without a coherent overarching framework into which choices can be integrated (Liddicoat, 2004). Policy on pedagogy therefore relies on other elements of curriculum for their fullest articulation. In so doing, the document specifically avoids engaging with pedagogy at the macro-level and frames it as a

micro-level consideration. In fact, it argues that decisions about pedagogy must be context dependent. The result is a promotion of diversity in pedagogy and this promotion requires that macro-level policy not engage with matters of pedagogy. In particular, the CEFR ties pedagogy to the objectives of language teaching and learning and seeks to validate any pedagogy that achieves the objectives.

Although the explicit framing of pedagogy is as eclectic, a closer reading of the document reveals that there is an implied pedagogy that is less open to variation and a variety of CLT appears to be advocated as a pedagogical norm, especially in the chapter on assessment, where, for example, the concepts of “communicative assessment” and “communicative testing” are highlighted and linked explicitly with “communicative language activities” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 178). The chapter also provides descriptors for communicative activities for assessing performance. In other chapters of the document, the pedagogical norm is not so explicitly stated but the privileging of CLT is evident in the understanding of the nature of language learning which informs the document (Liddicoat, 2004, 2013). There is however a fluidity in the CEFR in terms of the pedagogies that are implied by the document. While in many places CLT appears to be the preferred pedagogical approach, other parts of the text would suggest a form of intercultural language teaching and learning that adds more hermeneutic dimension to language learning (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). This is most notably the case in the inclusion of Byram and Zarate’s (1994) *savoirs* as description of learners’ competences. Thus, the pedagogical framing of the CEFR remains eclectic even in its implicit articulation of norms and these norms may vary, and potentially conflict, between different parts of the document.

In the CEFR, then, pedagogy is ambiguous in that it is both present and absent. It is present in that the Framework deals with questions of pedagogy but absent in that the very diverse approach of the document has very little to say about explicitly pedagogical choices, other than that they should be appropriate for achieving relevant learning outcomes (Liddicoat, 2004). At the same time, other elements of language-in-education policy, notably assessment policy and curriculum policy are used to provide constraints on pedagogical choices by drawing on the conceptual tools of communicative and intercultural orientations to language teaching. At the macro-level, the CEFR both delegates pedagogical decision-making to local agents and also seeks to influence in implicitly expressed ways the pedagogical choices of these agents. It therefore articulates a preferred pedagogy at the same time as it eschews the idea of a preferred pedagogy.

At least some of the ambiguity found in the framing of pedagogy in the CEFR seems to result from the political context that shaped the creation of the document. The CEFR is intended to be applied in a number of countries, with diverse educational contexts and diverse educational cultures. As a multinational language-in-education policy document it is a compromise between competing positions seeking to ratify all. That is, for political reasons, it has avoided issues of pedagogy at the macro-level and assigned them to the micro-level as a way of avoiding contestation of the framework itself (Liddicoat, 2004). The eclectic approach of the CEFR thus eases the interface between the framework and the language-in-education policies of member states through a delegation of responsibility for pedagogical choices. The conceptualisation of the nature, role and function of language learning allows to CEFR to have an implicit influence on pedagogy by provide an overarching construct according to which language curricula can be planned and implemented although the inherent diversity of the approach to questions of pedagogy may not adequately guide its operationalization as pedagogy is effectively made invisible as a policy issue.

The place of pedagogy in Japanese language-in-education policy looks quite different from the European approach. From 2011, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) introduced ‘foreign language activities’ as a mandatory

requirement in fifth and the sixth grades at elementary school level. According to the Guidelines for foreign language activities (MEXT, 2008), these activities are specifically intended for the teaching of English (for a discussion of the policy see Cohen & Sykes, 2013). The current course of study requires elementary schools to incorporate one 45-minute English lesson into their weekly schedule. The introduction of these activities was an attempt to improve the attainment level of Japanese language learners by beginning the study of English at an earlier level. The focus of foreign language activities is on oral language but the emphasis is not so much on language learning as on experiential learning that develops their awareness of linguistic and cultural differences between English and Japanese and fosters a positive attitude to communication in a foreign language. Other than stating that foreign language activities involve experiential learning, there is little further specification of the pedagogical approach to be adopted in the classes, other than suggestions for using audiovisual materials and some suggested topics to be covered (MEXT, 2008). That is, the reform is represented as the introduction of new content with a specific focus rather than as a pedagogical change. There are nonetheless significant pedagogical consequences of the introduction in terms of how the new content is to be realised. These are not however considered at the macro-level but rather the silence on pedagogy at the macro-level means that such issues are delegated to micro-level agents – the teachers who will implement the activities.

Such delegation is potentially problematic at the micro-level. Foreign language activities are intended to be taught by classroom teachers, however, elementary school teachers have not been prepared by their teacher education programs to work as foreign language teachers. Such teachers do not have the pedagogical formation to work as language teachers, and in many cases, are not proficient in English. The policy addresses the issue of teachers' proficiency in English by requiring them to work together with an English-speaking assistant language teacher (ALT) for one third of their lessons. These ALTs are normally native-speakers of English with little or no pedagogical training and usually limited ability to speak Japanese. This means that neither the classroom teacher nor the English-speaking ALT may have the pedagogical knowledge required to work through the issues raised by the implementation of the policy.

Machida and Walsh (in press) report that one consequence for teachers has been high levels of anxiety that results from their sense of unpreparedness to implement teaching and that this anxiety is heightened by the need to work with the ALT. Teachers' anxiety results especially from their perceptions of their unpreparedness to teach English in terms of their level of English language ability and their inability to communicate effectively with ALTs because of the lack of a shared language. These two factors compromise the teachers' ability to realise an effective pedagogy for delivering foreign language activities and for developing the pedagogical practice of the untrained ALTs with whom they work. In this way, policy that has treated the most salient pedagogical issue as teachers' lack of English have created a solution through the use of unqualified English-speakers that in turn may present a barrier to the development of effective pedagogies. In this way, macro-level policy would appear not only to fail to recognise the pedagogical issues involved in a radical change in curriculum but may also develop barriers to working through pedagogical implications at the micro-level.

In neither the European nor the Japanese policies is pedagogy constructed as a problem that requires policy intervention to resolve. In the case of the CEFR, pedagogy is explicitly deproblematized as a discursive act to remove it from the macro policy context. The problem is constructed as one of achieving similar language learning outcomes across a number of countries. All pedagogical practices are considered equally valid as long as they achieve the desired outcomes and so pedagogy is not a macro-level issue but rather needs to be addressed in local contexts of implementation. The deproblematization of pedagogy in the text does not,

however, produce the pedagogical agnosticism that the document proclaims as there remains an implicit assumption in the text that some pedagogies are more appropriate for achieving particular outcomes than others. This tension between different pedagogical possibilities needs therefore to be resolved at the micro-level by teachers who need to recognise and respond to the implicit pedagogy of the document in shifting their teaching towards new objectives. In doing so, teachers may or may not be supported by national level macro-level or meso-level agents in understanding the pedagogical shifts implied or developing the capabilities needed to adopt new pedagogies. In the Japanese documents, pedagogy is rendered invisible and so unproblematic – the policy issue is the introduction of a new curriculum area into existing teaching. As pedagogy is invisible, except in terms of information about other elements such as materials and topics, the implication is that existing pedagogies are appropriate for working with new content. Teachers' capabilities are problematized not in terms of new pedagogies that may be needed to introduce a substantively different curriculum area but in terms of their content knowledge for teaching, especially their English language abilities. This problem receives explicit attention in the form of the policy on using ALTs, which in turn introduce new pedagogical problems and may undermine professional self-esteem. In both contexts, there are significant pedagogical issues that need to be worked through in implementing the policy, but the silence at the macro-level forces the issue down to the micro-level, at which local agents may or may not be prepared to operationalise new pedagogical practices.

Medium of instruction policies

Medium of instruction (MoI) policies, that is policies that select particular languages as the languages of instruction in schools, are not specifically pedagogical policies, but have significant pedagogical consequences, especially where the language of instruction is not the first language of learners. In many cases, medium of instruction policies have focused most on the introduction of students' non-dominant home languages into school to provide first language instruction for at least a period of education (Liddicoat & Curnow, in press; Liddicoat & Heugh, 2014; Tsui & Tollefson, 2004). While there are pedagogical consequences of such changes, the consequences are even greater in contexts where MoI policy has introduced a language not spoken by students as the normal language of schooling. This has been the case with recent MoI policy in Malaysia.

In Malaysia MoI has become an issue of debate in educational policy and over time, policy development has been characterised by shifts of MoI between Malay and English.¹ The early post-independence educational practice of Malaysia involved a multilingual approach with a number of languages, especially English and Malay, being used as MoI in schools and at the University of Malaya, which was established in 1960. However, national policy favoured strengthened the role of Malay as the language of the dominant ethnic group and as a symbol of post-colonial identity. From the later 1960s, Malaysian MoI policy focused on phasing out English as an MoI and replacing it with Malay. For example, The University of Malaya began to phase out English as the MoI from 1965, first using English for science and technology and Malay for Arts and Social Sciences, and then moving to an exclusive use of Malay as MoI. By 1983 all public universities used Malay as the MoI (Gill, 2004). In schools English was also phased out as an MoI and with the aim of converting all English-medium schools to Malay medium (Gaudart, 1987). English became a compulsory subject that students had to take, but did not have to pass (Gill, 2004). Thus, by the 1980s all Malay students in government schools were educated in Malay, with English only as an additional subject.

The rise of globalisation led to a re-emphasising of the importance of English for Malaysia's development and a consequent problematising of the level of English being

acquired by Malaysian learners (Gill, 1999). The problem came to be seen as one of lack of time being devoted to English in schooling and this was in turn compared to the greater use of English in older models of education. That is, the level of attainment in English in Malaysian schools was seen as a consequence of the use of Malay as the MoI (Gill, 2007). In response, Malaysia began to reconsider MoI policy in the 1990s and from 1993, English was reinstated as the MoI at tertiary level being introduced for the teaching of science, technology and medicine (Gill, 2004). This change was introduced as a political move aimed at fostering national development as English was seen as the vehicular language of modernisation and hence of national engagement and competitiveness in the era of globalisation. Change of MoI from Malay to English was seen primarily as a strategy to improve levels of English language learning.

The globalisation and development discourse that promoted the need for higher achievement in English also influenced educational thinking about maths and sciences at schools so that the three subjects became grouped in a single ideological and discursive frame (Zuraidah, 2014). In particular, English was constructed as the language that would promote access to knowledge, especially scientific knowledge (Gill, 2007). As a result of the association of English, maths and science, English was declared to be the MoI for maths and science at all levels of education from pre-school to university from 2003. For most Malaysian students, Malay as the MoI represents a form of first language instruction while instruction in English is instruction in a foreign language that students are learning as they learn the subject matter being taught through that language. The introduction of English was to be immediate – that is all schools would shift from using Malay to using English at the same time – and was unsupported by professional learning programs for teachers to adjust to the changed context, nor were textbooks or other resources available to support the change (Asmah, 2007).

The change of MoI meant that teachers, who had been teaching in both their and their learners' first language and who had typically learnt the material in their first language, were now required to teach in their second language to students who, especially at lower levels did not speak the language. The change in language has significant pedagogical consequences – pedagogical practices in educating students in their first language are substantively different from those required for educating students in a language that they do not speak. From 2003, teachers of maths and science were expected to be simultaneously teachers of maths and science and teachers of a second/foreign language, but had in most cases been educated only as teachers of maths and science and had neither the pedagogical knowledge nor experience to teach a language. Asmah (2007) reports that the main implementation strategy adopted by the government was to encourage retired teachers who were competent in English to return to teaching. That is, the implementation problem was seen as one of language abilities not one of pedagogy – teaching maths and science content is seen as pedagogically identical regardless of MoI and the crucial variable for educational success lies only in teachers' English language abilities.

The policy of using English as the MoI was reversed in 2012 and Malay was re-instated. The decision to do so was the result of the pressure brought to bear by promoters of Malay, who feared that the change in MoI would undermine the status of Malay as the national language (Zuraidah, 2014). This means that pedagogy did not become a focus of policy decision-making either in deciding to shift to English as the MoI or in the shift back. At all points, pedagogy has been an invisible dimension of Malaysian MoI policy.

The Malaysian case shows an example of a language-in-education policy in which pedagogy has not been considered as concomitant on other changes in policy. MoI policy may not recognise the pedagogical implications of such a change and the pedagogical changes required when MoI is changed may not be well supported in policy or its

implementation. Pedagogy is absent from such policies largely because the discursive construction of language problems at the macro-level does not see pedagogy as a problem that needs to be addressed, but rather the change of language is the solution to the perceived problem. Pedagogy is left to be a local concern for micro-level agents, who need to resolve for themselves the pedagogical consequences of a policy change. They have to do this without support in developing new pedagogical knowledge or without macro-level recognition of the need for such knowledge. In this case, the pedagogic focus is implicit in the policy but the pedagogical needs for implementing changes and the consequentiality of policy change for pedagogical practice may be unacknowledged at the policy level.

Conclusion

Language-in-education policies address issues of pedagogies in fundamentally different ways. Pedagogy itself only becomes a policy issue where pedagogy is seen as a contributor to the education problem that emerges is discourses about language in the society. Where teachers' practice is seen as causative of low levels of attainment, then policies will explicitly engage with questions of pedagogy and promote a new pedagogy as the solution to the existing problem. An exception to this, as was evident in the discussion of CEFR is where pedagogy needs to be neutralised as a contributor to an educational problem in order to achieve some other goal. Here it is diversity of outcomes that is constructed as the problem to resolve not the diversity of practices that lead to these outcomes. What both contexts have in common though is that pedagogy has become politically salient at the macro-level and so needs to be addressed in some way in texts. Where a question about pedagogy is raised in policy texts, policy responses propose a pedagogical solution, which is presented as an unproblematic solution for achieving learning needs, whether the pedagogical solution is the replacement of one pedagogy by another or the continuation of an existing pedagogy. In this way, pedagogies in policy texts are represented as having uniform and fixed meanings that will unproblematically address problems that have been identified in educational attainment. That is, in policy, pedagogies become monologic in the Bakhtinian (1979) sense in that the articulation of pedagogy as the answer to the question of problems in learning has power to negate the possibility of other ways of understanding something that is complex and nuanced.²

Alternatively, pedagogies may become invisible as constituents of educational change at the macro-level of policy texts. Where this happens, pedagogies become issues of micro-level language planning in which local agents need to resolve the pedagogical issues raised by implementation. In this context also, policies treat pedagogies as unproblematic responses to educational change in that lack of explicit recognition of pedagogical issues in implementation can equate with an assumption that pedagogical problems do not exist. This may reflect a lack of awareness of the pedagogical consequences of an educational change or a lack of awareness of the pedagogical needs of teachers and others required to implement a policy change developed at the macro-level. Pedagogy in this way becomes a form of post hoc language planning by which macro-level policy is implemented. Where pedagogical change needs to be managed locally, there may be significant personal and economic resource implications for implementing the change, whether this is a curriculum change, a change in MoI, or a change in any other aspect of language-in-education policy. In implementing a policy, macro-level agents may recognise a need for professional learning for teachers in order for a change to be delivered, but it may be the case that this does not focus specifically on pedagogical and related needs where pedagogy itself has not been recognised in policy.

The silence about pedagogy in language policy may itself cover inconsistencies in implied pedagogies in different aspects of policy. This for example occurs in both China and

Korea in which explicit policy on pedagogy mandates one particular approach, which implicit policy in assessment requires a different pedagogy. This is also the case in the CEFR, where explicit comments on pedagogy seem to be at odds with implied pedagogical norms. Such conflicts can be consequential for how effective any attempt to bring about pedagogical change may be. Where conflicts exist over pedagogy at the macro-level, they inevitably need to be resolved at the micro-level and local contextual issues will exercise a strong role in how these are resolved. For example, when one aspect of policy advocates pedagogical inertia while another advocates pedagogical change, local agents may not see value in investing the time and developing the knowledge to effect the change. Moreover, local agents may not have the necessary capabilities to negotiate a required change and where this happens inertia is likely to result (Bourdereau, 2006).

Pedagogy as an element of language-in-education policy therefore appears to lie at the intersection between ‘planned’ and ‘unplanned’ language policy and planning (R. B. Baldauf, Jr, 1994; Eggington, 2002). It may be found as planned element of policy but most frequently it is unplanned, at least at the macro-level. It is unplanned in the sense that the importance of pedagogy is not acknowledged by policy and that pedagogy therefore developed locally in relatively ad hoc ways depending on the contexts and capabilities of those who are called to implement policy. This planned/unplanned dichotomy is itself a product of the interactions between the macro-level and micro-level that are involved with shaping decision-making about practice in language classrooms.

Notes

- ¹ There are also Chinese and Indian schools in Malaysia that use other languages as MoI, but these will not be discussed here as they are governed by different policies (see (Zuraidah, 2014).
- ² « Вопрос » и « ответ » не являются логическими отношениями (категориями); их нельзя вместить в одно (единое и замкнутое в себе) сознание; всякий ответ порождает новый вопрос. Вопрос и ответ предполагают взаимную внеаходимость. Если ответ не порождает из себя нового вопроса, он выпадает из диалога и входит в системное познание, по существу безличное. [“Question” and “answer” are not logical relations (categories); they cannot fit into one (single and self-contained) consciousness; any answer raises a new question. Question and answer imply mutual outsidership. If the answer does not create a new question for itself, it falls out of the dialogue and knowledge included in the system is essentially impersonal.](Bakhtin, 1979, p. 371)

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