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LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY

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Abstract: The article investigates the intricate concept of language planning and policy (LPP), analyzing its pivotal function in facilitating communication within societies and its utilization as a political instrument to exert influence over language usage and identity formation. It further presents empirical data regarding the historical progression of LPP, commencing with Haugen's (1959) seminal contributions to the formalization of language styles and the differentiation between speech communities, alongside research conducted by eminent scholars such as Cooper (1989), Kaplan & Baldauf (1997), and others who scrutinize language planning through the lenses of status, acquisition, or social transformation. Additionally, it underscores the diverse viewpoints concerning the interplay between language planning and language policy, as certain scholars perceive these as discrete entities while others regard them as synonymous. In turn, it also considers the significant role of teachers and educators in language planning procedure, suggesting that they act as agents of change in shaping linguistic policies that address both local and global needs.

Keywords: Language policy, language planning, language construction, language problems, primary, secondary, and tertiary communities, corpus, planning, acquisition planning, post-colonial, post-revolutionary.

Introduction

It is evident that language predominantly serves as a medium of communication among individuals; moreover, it is perceived as a manifestation of the political conduct of citizens and regarded as a mechanism for establishing control. Language additionally fosters cohesion and tranquility within nations, countries, and states; furthermore, Fasold (1987) elucidates the concept of national language as “the symbol of people’s identity” (p.247). Each language possesses a degree of uniqueness relative to others and merits respect; biases and prejudices directed towards one language in comparison to another are intolerable. Nevertheless, the effective language planning and policy facilitate the identification of solutions to language-related challenges. In general, nearly every nation implements strategies to organize language and enhance the standing of the national language. In this sense, language planning and policy are essential in providing assistance. However, the definitions of the terms language planning and language policy have been a dispute among linguists. Some scholars assert that language planning and language policy are entirely distinct concepts, while others contend that the two terms are interchangeable. This debate often centers around the scope and focus of each term, with language planning typically referring to the deliberate efforts to influence the function, structure, or acquisition of languages, while language policy encompasses the broader framework of laws, regulations, and practices that govern language use in a society. In this regard, language policy can be seen as the overarching strategy that

guides language planning initiatives, which are more specific actions taken to implement those strategies. These distinctions highlight the complexity of managing linguistic diversity, as effective language policy must consider cultural, social, and political factors that influence how languages are perceived and utilized within a community. This interplay between policy and planning is crucial for fostering an environment where multiple languages can coexist, allowing for the preservation of cultural identities while also promoting social cohesion and communication among diverse groups. This requires a careful balance, as policymakers must navigate the challenges of ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities for speakers of all languages, while also addressing potential conflicts that may arise from competing linguistic interests. Achieving this balance often involves engaging with community stakeholders to understand their needs and aspirations, thereby creating inclusive frameworks that empower all language speakers. This collaborative approach not only enhances the effectiveness of language policies but also fosters a sense of belonging and mutual respect among community members, ultimately enriching the social fabric of society. Furthermore, linguistically, it is advisable to comprehend the meaning of these two terms by looking at the historical insights provided by scholars.

Differing views on defining the term language planning and policy

Language planning and policy is a critical area of study within sociolinguistics, a rapidly expanding branch of applied linguistics that examines the interplay between language and society. One of the pioneering figures in this field is Einar Haugen, who first articulated the concept of language planning in 1959 during his research on language dynamics in Norway. Haugen posited that the origins of language planning can be traced back to the 5th century B.C., framing it primarily in terms of formal language styles, particularly in written communication. He emphasized the distinction between formal and informal language, suggesting that language planning primarily concerns itself with formal registers. Haugen's analysis also introduced the notion of speech collectives, categorizing them into three distinct speech communities: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Each of these communities exhibits unique linguistic characteristics and varying degrees of communicative efficacy. In a primary speech community, speakers may encounter idiolectal differences—variations in speech that are specific to individual speakers—yet they share a common language and dialect, which minimizes the potential for communicative breakdowns. Consequently, language planning is deemed unnecessary in these communities, as the likelihood of misunderstanding is low. In contrast, secondary and tertiary speech communities present more complex linguistic challenges. In secondary speech communities, there exists a partial mutual understanding among speakers, which can lead to communication difficulties that necessitate some form of language planning. Tertiary speech communities, however, are characterized by a complete lack of mutual understanding, often resulting in significant communicative failures. In these contexts, the role of translators becomes essential to facilitate communication among speakers of different dialects or languages. Haugen illustrated these concepts using England as an example of a secondary speech community, where varying degrees of mutual intelligibility exist,

and Switzerland as a tertiary community, where linguistic diversity can lead to substantial communication barriers. Haugen further posited that the primary focus of language planning is the nation as a whole, while also recognizing the importance of subgroups within that national framework. He defined language planning as “the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in non-homogenous speech communities” (p.7, cited by DJ Kaiser), highlighting the structured approach necessary for effective communication in linguistically diverse populations. Building on Haugen's foundational work, Cooper (1989) shifted the focus towards the role of social change in language planning, proposing three key dimensions: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. Meanwhile, Habermas (2000) emphasized the interconnectedness of language with broader political, cultural, and economic shifts, asserting that these factors directly influence linguistic practices. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) expanded the discourse on language planning by synthesizing insights from Haugen, Cooper, and Haarmann (1990) into a cohesive framework that encompasses 'corpus, status, prestige, and acquisition.' This framework underscores the necessity of addressing language planning at both micro and macro levels, recognizing the varying scales at which language issues manifest. When differentiating between 'language policy' and 'language planning', scholars such as Cooper (1989), Schiffman (1996), and Kaplan & Baldauf (2003) converge on the understanding that these terms represent distinct but interrelated concepts. They assert that language policy pertains to decision-making and goal-setting processes, while language planning involves the practical implementation of these policies to achieve desired outcomes (Abbas Zaidi, 2013, p.1).

In contrast, Rubin (1971) viewed language policy as a subset of language planning, outlining a four-phase process comprising fact-finding, policy determination, implementation, and evaluation (cited by Abbas Zaidi).

Barry further elaborated on this distinction, defining language planning as “official efforts to regulate and control the use of language.” He noted that nearly all nations grapple with language planning and policy issues, albeit in different contexts. Therefore, policymakers must remain aware of the historical, cultural, economic, social, and political nuances specific to each situation, ensuring that language policies align with the fundamental needs of the populations they serve. Additionally, Kamwangamalu (2011) characterized language planning as a government-sanctioned, long-term, and intentional effort aimed at modifying a language's function or form within society to address specific language-related challenges. His definition emphasizes the necessity of addressing 'language problems' and positions language as a dynamic entity that can be adapted to meet the evolving needs of society (cited by DJ DJ Kaiser). This perspective underscores the importance of thoughtful, responsive language planning in a world marked by increasing linguistic diversity and complexity.

Nonetheless, Haugen underscores that the fundamental emphasis of language planning pertains to the nation, while simultaneously, diverse subgroups are also included within the purview of language planning agents' interests (as noted by

Skachkova, 2019). Essentially, Haugen defines language planning as “the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community” (p. 7, as cited by DJ Kaiser).

Cooper (1989) accentuated the sociocultural transformations intrinsic to language planning, proposing three dimensions of this phenomenon: *status*, *corpus planning*, and *acquisition planning*. Habermas (2000) further argues that alterations in the political, cultural, and economic realms exert a significant impact on language dynamics. However, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) presented an alternative conceptual framework that synthesizes the foundational contributions of Haugen (1959), Cooper (1989), and Haarmann (1990) into the discourse surrounding language planning, specifically addressing the dimensions of ‘corpus, status, prestige, and acquisition’, with a predominant focus on the continuum of language planning from *micro* to *macro* levels (cited by DJ Kaiser, p. 8). In their clarification of the concepts of ‘language policy’ and ‘language planning’, Cooper (1989), Schiffman (1996), and Kaplan and Baldauf (2003) collectively assert that these two terms are distinct; they contend that “language policy pertains to decision-making and goal-setting, whereas language planning concerns the implementation of policies to achieve tangible outcomes” (Abbas Zaidi, 2013, p. 1). Conversely, Rubin (1971) proposed that language policy constitutes an integral component of language planning and encompasses four distinct phases: *fact-finding*, *policy determination*, *implementation*, and *evaluation* (cited by Abbas Zaidi).

According to Barry, language planning denotes “official initiatives aimed at regulating and controlling language use.” He further underscores that language planning and policy challenges are encountered by virtually all nations; however, the specific contexts faced by each country are likely to exhibit considerable variation. Consequently, policymakers must remain cognizant of the historical, cultural, economic, social, and political disparities inherent to each distinct context, and they bear the responsibility of aligning policies and solutions with the essential needs of the populace for whom such policies are intended. This alignment requires a nuanced understanding of the local linguistic landscape, as well as active engagement with community stakeholders to ensure that the policies are not only effective but also equitable and inclusive. Furthermore, Kamwangamalu (2011) articulates that “language planning has been characterized as a government-sanctioned, long-term, sustained, and deliberate endeavor to modify a language's function or form within society to address language-related issues,” with a particular focus on the 'language problems' that require resolution. Additionally, his definition situates language as an entity amenable to modification in order to satisfy specific societal exigencies (cited by DJ Kaiser). With the advancement of the domain of language planning, the term “language policy” began to integrate into discourses surrounding language planning, which aligns with DJ Kaiser’s (2018) assertion that “the contemporary field [of language planning] is most frequently referred to as language planning and policy or LPP.” Initially, the term “language policy” within American linguistics was introduced by J. Fishman in 1970, who did not differentiate it from the concept of

“linguistic planning” (Fishman 1975, p. 108). E. Haugen advocated for the analysis of language planning through the prism of applied linguistics, whereas J. Fishman examined language policy within the framework of applied sociolinguistics.

In the endeavor to elucidate the two terms, language planning and language policy, it is essential to recognize that linguists from the Soviet Union first employed the term “language policy” by E. D. Polivanov in 1929, designating it as one of the fundamental issues within social linguistics (Polivanov, 1929). Nevertheless, divergences remain between Russian and Western linguistic paradigms. Certain Russian scholars exhibit skepticism regarding the viability of language planning. The concept of “planning” has encountered criticism, with some researchers deeming the application of ‘*planning*’ to language development as inappropriate (Steglin-Kamensky 1960, p. 56 cited by Skachkova). A.D. Schweitzer (1971) asserts that “apparently, the term language planning” is inadequate, as it may inadvertently imply that the evolution of language can be consciously directed in specific trajectories. It appears that the terms utilized in linguistics, “language policy” and “language construction,” provide a more precise and accurate representation of the phenomenon, as they suggest not the steering of language evolution, but rather an intervention in the organic evolution of linguistic processes, constrained by the varying receptivity of linguistic subsystems to external influences (pp. 71-72). However, he does not wholly dismiss the fundamental nature and methodologies associated with linguistic planning. By Russian sociolinguists, the concept of “language planning” is practically not applied; rather, the term “language construction” is predominantly employed to denote affirmative policies that aim to enhance the communicative and societal functionalities of particular languages. Nonetheless, there exists an alternative perspective, as language policy encompasses both constructive and deleterious ramifications for language as utilized by its speakers. This case occurred in the USA during the early 20th century, when the United States instituted a policy aimed at the assimilation of various linguistic groups, numerous educators operating within bilingual classrooms faced prosecution for their roles in conducting instruction in students’ native languages. Pupils were reprimanded and occasionally subjected to punitive measures for utilizing their mother tongue within educational settings, including classrooms, hallways, and play areas (Crawford, 1995, p. 89). Consequently, some scholars advocate for the adoption of the term “language policy” as a comprehensive descriptor for any intentional intervention in a linguistic environment—encompassing both constructive and destructive (restrictive) influences.

Conversely, various scholars, including E. B. Grishayeva, contend that the term “language planning” carries a more impartial connotation and does not incite negative responses among a significant proportion of ethnically diverse populations across different nations. According to her analysis, language policy is inherently linked to state policy, which is ultimately shaped by the dominant social class and, in the framework of multinational states, by nationalistic ideologies. Consequently, the scholar advocates for the application of the term “planning” (Grishaeva, 2007, p.63) in a manner that is more neutral in both form and essence. It appears justifiable to

endorse her assertions regarding the relationship between language policy and the influences exerted by state policy, the prevailing class, and national agendas. Thus, it is considered appropriate to utilize the term “language policy,” as it highlights the interdependence of the aforementioned policies, discourses, and political entities. In delineating language policy at this point in the discourse, the extensive encyclopedic resource edited by V. N. Yartseva elucidates that language policy comprises a “set of ideological principles and practical measures aimed at addressing linguistic challenges within society and the state” (Linguistics, p.616). Overall, as articulated by Carrol (2011), it is crucial to recognize that language planning is primarily employed as an “umbrella term” that encompasses initiatives aimed at modifying language and its utilization. These initiatives can range from promoting a specific language to ensuring the preservation of minority languages, reflecting the diverse linguistic landscape and the socio-political dynamics at play. Furthermore, the effectiveness of such policies often hinges on the active participation of various stakeholders, including government bodies, educational institutions, and community organizations, all of which play a pivotal role in shaping the linguistic environment. In this context, it becomes evident that collaboration among these entities is essential for fostering an inclusive approach to language use and education, ultimately leading to a more cohesive society.

Brief historical phases of language planning and policy

Historically, the domain of applied linguistics pertaining to language planning and policy has experienced multiple phases. Abbas Zaidi (2013) articulates that “language planning is a phenomenon that can be categorized as post-colonial” and elucidates the contexts that transpired in Pakistan, India, Malaysia, and Algeria in the aftermath of World War II, as well as the subsequent phenomenon termed “post-revolutionary,” which includes the events that unfolded in the Soviet Union in 1917 and in socialist Ethiopia during the 1980s; additionally, the concept of “post-independence” encapsulates the occurrences that took place in Norway in the early 19th century and the Central Asian Republics following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Language planners in these post-colonial nations established diverse objectives regarding language planning and policy in their newly autonomous states. Nations such as the Philippines, Singapore, India, and Papua New Guinea have resolved to perpetuate the utilization of their colonial language, particularly the English language. Abbas Zaidi (2013) presents three justifications for this phenomenon: “(1) the colonial language signified administrative continuity; (2) it was exceptionally advantageous in engaging on the international stage; (3) it could mitigate ethnic fragmentation that the introduction of new local languages (at the perceived expense of other languages) might have incited” (p.6).

Conversely, several post-Soviet nations proclaimed their indigenous languages as official state languages and standardized their national languages to address the needs of newly independent countries emerging from colonialism, thereby establishing their own official language with the objective of fostering economic development and securing a distinct position. Specifically, with regard to language

planning and policy in Uzbekistan, the Uzbek language was designated as the State, official language of the nation. Initially, the concurrent use of the Russian language alongside the national language was mandated in the country; however, the ambiguous designation “language of international communication” was subsequently conceived and formalized in the constitution (shosh.uz). Ultimately, on October 29, 1989, the Uzbek language was officially declared as the State language. This decision marked a significant step towards cultural revitalization and national identity, as it encouraged the population to embrace their linguistic heritage while navigating the complexities of globalization.

Ricento (2000) in his scholarly discourse delineates three historical phases pertaining to language planning and policy:

The initial phase spans the period commencing with the aftermath of World War II extending into the 1960s. The subsequent phase encompasses the timeframe from the early 1970s to the late 1980s. The concluding phase extends from the mid-1980s to the year 2000.

Upon examining the predominant issues within each temporal phase, it is evident that the first phase emphasized corpus planning, decolonization, and structuralism, wherein language planning and policy was perceived as a wholly ‘neutral’ endeavor. In contrast, the subsequent phase interrogated concepts such as the native speaker and diglossia, while critical sociolinguistics scrutinized the shortcomings of modernization (cited DJ Kaiser, 2018). The final phase is characterized by the adoption of a postmodern framework, which prioritized human rights in relation to the phenomenon of language loss.

The principal focus of this stage was agency. In the context of agency, Ricento (2000) articulates it as “the role of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, attitudes, and ultimately policies” (p.208). DJ Kaiser underscores the significance of the third phase in terms of the pivotal role educators play in language planning and policy, asserting that “this new focus on agency is crucial for teacher preparation today so that today’s teachers recognize the important roles they play in LPP in their classrooms, buildings, regions, and sometimes even nationally or internationally” (2018, p.9). Consequently, this paradigm empowers educators and teachers to function as catalysts for reform within the language planning and policy framework.

The role of teachers in language planning and policy

The fourth phase facilitates educators’ influence on language planning and policy by designating them as “agents of change” (DJ Kaiser, 2018, p.10). Prior to assuming the role of agents of change, teachers and educational leaders must comprehend that LPP constitutes a multi-faceted system, as Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) assert that “language planning actually occurs at many different levels,” thereby indicating macro and micro levels of language planning, necessitating an understanding of the specific layer to which they belong. Thus, the role of educators will be delineated with precision, thereby yielding effective outcomes within this domain. This understanding empowers them to navigate the complexities of language policy effectively, ensuring that their contributions are both relevant and impactful

within their educational contexts. DJ Kaiser (2018), in his article "Growing Your Own Onion: Teachers as Writers of Language Planning and Policy Proposals," employs the metaphor of 'growing your own onion' to suggest that "...a way to further empower teachers is to transcend research, analysis, interpretation, and implementation. When teachers grow their own LPP onion, they can craft responsive policies that will not only adhere to national, state, and regional policies but also address local challenges by utilizing available resources or proposing strategies to enhance capacity so that schools, institutes, and districts can provide quality language education experiences" (p.2). This indicates that teachers, as agents or actors, are regarded as central figures within the language planning and policy process. This perspective emphasizes the importance of local knowledge and context, allowing educators to tailor their approaches to meet the specific needs of their students and communities. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, teachers can further enrich the language education landscape, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and integrated into the decision-making process. This collaborative approach not only empowers teachers but also cultivates a sense of ownership among all participants, leading to more effective and sustainable language education initiatives.

Conclusion

Finally, it can be inferred from the scholarly discourse that the implementation of language planning and policy is paramount in preserving linguistic equilibrium within heterogeneous communities and adapting to socio-political dynamics. Scholars have proposed different frameworks and definitions, but there is consensus on the need for effective LPP to address language-related challenges. As the field continues to evolve, educators play a critical role in shaping these policies, making it crucial for them to understand the multi-layered nature of language planning. Through this involvement, educators can contribute to the successful implementation of LPP, fostering better linguistic and educational outcomes. Ultimately, LPP remains a key tool for addressing language problems and promoting social cohesion in multilingual societies.

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