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Language policy spread

Learning from health and social policy models

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Except for a few large scale projects, language planners have tended to talk and argue among themselves rather than to see language policy development as an inherently political process. A comparison with a social policy example, taken from the United States, suggests that it is important to understand the problem and to develop solutions in the context of the political process, as this is where decisions will ultimately be made.

Keywords: language planning, language policy, health policy, social planning, political process, United States

The discussion of issues related to language policy has become very topical in the academic literature (see, for example, Canagarajah 2005, Ricento 2006, Shahomy 2006, Spolsky 2004) with new books and journals appearing with seemingly ever-greater frequency. However, there is no general indication that this rising academic interest in language policy and planning is having the same kinds of impact in the wider community and with governments — outside traditional large-scale language planning focused activities (see, for example, Kaplan & Baldauf 2003) — that other types of planning, for instance health policy or social planning more generally, have had. Yet, it has been argued that language is an important determinant in understanding and providing for the development and implementation of health, education, the economy and good governance in Africa (Paulin Djité, personal communication) and, as we suggest in this paper, elsewhere. This gap suggests we should examine the parallels and distinctions between these more visible instances of policy development and language to see if there are implications for language policy and planning.

Health policy, like language policy, evolved out of the positivistic economic and social science paradigms that dominated the three post-World War II decades. Though we argue that much can be learned from developments in health

policy, particularly health policy's relationship with political processes, the primary concern in this article is not with a theory of health policy development, but with understanding language policy and its impact — or lack thereof.

Initially called “language engineering,” the discipline emerged as an approach to creating programs for solving “language problems” in newly independent “developing nations.” Language planning was portrayed as being done (note that the use of the passive voice leaves the actor anonymous or ambiguous) using a broadly based team approach (see, for example, Fox 1975, Jernudd & Baldauf 1987, Kaplan & Baldauf 1997:87ff.) from within an objective, ideologically and politically neutral technological perspective in which the identity of the planners probably mattered little as long as they had the required range of technical skills. Consideration of the question of exactly who these planners were and what impact their views might have on the goals set to solve language problems has only been raised more recently (by, among others, Baldauf 1982). By the 1970s, it had become apparent that language problems were not unique to developing nations, but were also widely applicable to “macro” (i.e., state-level) language problems and situations in polities worldwide. Since the late 1990s, language policy and planning principles have increasingly also been applied to “micro” situations (for example, to language problems in communities, organizations and companies; see, for instance, Canagarajah 2005).

Even in limited situations, language-planning exercises can be complex. The goals set to solve such language-planning problems may even be conflicting, especially when viewed alternately from dominant or minority language perspectives (Baldauf & Kaplan 2003, Kaplan & Baldauf 1997). A fundamental tension occurs between pluralism and democracy: The United States, ostensibly a democratic society, in principle sanctions the right of ethnic groups to maintain their separate languages, cultures and communities, but it also guarantees individual freedoms and specifically proscribes various forms of discrimination. However, these two sets of rights are often in conflict because those ethnic groups that are in a position of social and economic advantage, when exercising their prerogatives of associating with their own ethnic kind, deprive outsiders of some rights and opportunities protected by democratic norms, and the conflict over language is particularly emblematic in such situations (Steinberg 2001).

What is true for the polity as a whole may also be true for groups within the polity — i.e., groups may hold (and pursue) potentially conflicting goals, without realizing that there are conflicts. For example, in the new nation of Timor Leste (East Timor), there is a need (i) to learn the new national language (Portuguese — widely known by the older generations) which is also meant to

become the universally spoken official language available to the entire population, (ii) to learn the largest indigenous language — a lingua franca and a co-national language (Tetum, which is in the process of being standardized), (iii) to learn a language of wider communication to interact with aid agencies and for trade (predominantly English) and, (iv) for the dozen or so ethnic groups, to maintain those languages and their own cultures. In addition, (v) many younger individuals who were educated in Bahasa Indonesia, the language of their nearest neighbor and their most recent colonial power, may wish to use and develop those skills (see Hajek 2000 for further discussion of this language ecology). In such situations, goal conflicts — alternative perceptions of language as problem, language as right, or language as resource (Ruiz 1984) — occur because there are limits to the time and resources available to individuals, groups and the state: often there are difficult language policy choices to be made.

The existence of such conflicting goals and the feeling that choices of goals have often been made (by planners) — without consultation with those most immediately concerned and affected — have resulted in some very pointed critiques of language planning — particularly under the rubric of ‘linguistic imperialism,’ and especially as the term *imperialism* relates to the seeming domination of the English language in a variety of situations (see, for example, Luke and others 1990, Pennycook 1994, Phillipson 1992, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, Tollefson 1991). Often critics have — perhaps unfairly — portrayed language planners as self-interested, and language planning as self-reproducing, inequitable, monocultural and colonialistic.

However, as Fishman (1994), in the general context, and, more recently, van Els (2001: 26), in reference to English, have pointed out, the arguments about linguistic imperialism “are predominantly of a socioeconomic and political nature, and others have already conclusively invalidated the doom scenarios that were drawn up.” Fishman, Conrad and Rubal-Lopes (1996), in a collection of studies of nearly twenty former British colonies, come to the conclusion that the spread of English in these countries is related to the modern global economy and not necessarily to the interference of a former colonial master (see also Powell 2002). Brutt-Griffler (2002) argues further that the increasing dominance of English as a world language has only occurred since the end of the colonial period. More specifically, Chew (1999:39ff.), at least for the case of Singapore, suggests that a linguistic imperialist view “ascribes too much power to language, as opposed to the language policy makers and the language users.” Language choice, Chew adds, is a “conscious decision” on the part of “leaders and the populace, after careful consideration of world trends and local condi-

tions.” One might argue, for example, that any given language has *no* power; rather, that users of that language have and exert power. Finally, it has been suggested (Francis 2005:211) that these debates about language policy “suffer from a restricted perspective that elevates socio-political considerations above all others.”

Thus, while planners are sometimes described in terms of “colonialism” or “imperialism,” or of some particular language (“English”), these perceptions provide little advance on the traditional view of planners as consisting of an anonymous population. Furthermore, while English provides the most visible target, language spread policy is not unique to English or English-language institutions, since many polities have language spread policies, which may exist at the national level (see, for example, Ammon 1992 for German, Dua 1994 for Hindi), at the regional level (see Barrera i Vidal 1994 for Catalan), or even across polity boundaries (von Gleich 1994 for Quechua; and see the extensive literature on the spread of, among other languages, Chinese, French and Spanish and the role of national language academies and planning bodies [wikipedia.org/wiki/category:language_regulators]). Thus, the politics of language-spread policy constitutes a more general phenomenon that would benefit by being better understood. We believe that an examination of how policy is implemented and disseminated in other areas, for instance in health policy and other social policy types, would benefit our understanding of why language policy remains predominantly an academic discipline and seems not to be taken more seriously in the political arena.

How broad is the field?

Thus, while it is important, and currently quite fashionable, to debate the nature of broader sociocultural problems and their influence in the language planning process, a better understanding of how planning decisions in general are made would be a useful starting point for understanding notions of domination and power when dealing with conflicting goals. For example, it appears necessary to recognize in any policy development:

- that strategies are necessary to move plans through the legislative process,
- that legislation may be required at various political levels of a polity, and
- that the idea of any given plan must be “sold” not only to the members of a legislature, but also to the general public from whom the requisite funding derives.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM	DEVELOPING POLICY RESPONSES	BUILDING POLITICAL SUPPORT
<p>Understanding the cause of the problem.</p> <p>– including understanding what the precipitates (as opposed to the correlates) of the problem may be.</p>	<p>Developing programs that are effective in a range of political settings and in the context of a range of other initiatives.</p> <p>Other initiatives passed or repealed will be unpredictable.</p>	<p>Sufficient political support to enact programs in a form in which they are viable.</p> <p>(1) with compromises that will not endanger the effectiveness of the policies. (2) without changes that will undermine the policy.</p>
<p>Understanding what needs to be changed to address the problem.</p> <p>Mediating factors may be more feasible to address than ultimate causes; it is, however, important to understand when it is necessary to address the ultimate causes.</p>	<p>Programs that are effective in a range of economic situations.</p> <p>In the long run it is inevitable that any program that is sustained will exist against a backdrop of both strong and weak economic conditions.</p> <p>Programs that are effective in a range of demographic settings.</p> <p>Governmental programs need to be effective in each sub-national sector. Sector programs need to be effective in a wide range of localities.</p>	<p>Sufficient political support to sustain the initiative over the time necessary for its effectiveness to become clear.</p>

Figure 1. Ingredients for developing successful programs (after Heymann 2000:373)

Heymann (2000) has developed an analysis of the ingredients needed for the implementation of successful health programs, and we have adapted her analysis for language policy (see Figure 1).

Importantly, Heymann implicitly recognizes that plans (and the funding that their implementation ultimately requires) are enacted by legislatures and inscribed in law. While there is variation in how planning decisions are validated, it can be argued that such decisions still are taken through political processes even in less open systems of government (see, for instance, Zhao 2005, for P.R. China). Thus, in addition to a clear designation of the actors in policy development, it is also important to understand that

- major social change requires sustained public support and political will;

- there is still a good deal to learn about how to combat the key underlying social issues — poverty, social inequalities and discrimination;
- programs, even though enacted, may not receive either sufficient funding or sufficient operational duration to determine whether they are sustainable;
- even successful programs do not necessarily receive sustained support;
- when problems are not adequately addressed — either because of insufficient knowledge about how to address them or because of limitations in implementation — the public may become skeptical of any ongoing or future attempts to address those problems.

Bilingual education programs in the United States perhaps illustrate the validity of these constraints (Crawford 2000, 2005). In fact, bilingual education programs in the United States were not generally designed to address issues of bilingualism; rather, they have normally been envisioned as transitional programs, at best moving learners to English monolingualism as rapidly as possible. This reality results (a) from inadequate research in advance of the legislation, leading to flawed legislation, and (b) from inadequate research on programs after they were put in place (see, for instance, August & Hakuta 1997) as well as (c) from widely varying legal interpretations, resulting from the fact that the legislation was deliberately misnamed to appease the people affected by it and their supporters. The programs were called bilingual because they were concerned with two languages: *getting out of* one language and *getting into* another as rapidly as possible. One needs to consider, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Lau v. Nichols* (414 U.S. 563 [1974]) and a long line of ensuing court decisions at the federal and state levels. In addition to these legal decisions, there is also a long list of agency requirements derived from the legislation, for example the “Lau Remedies” — interpretations of the *Lau* decision — and additional requirements dictated by the Office of Civil Rights, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Bilingual Education Act (1968). What we are trying to suggest is the reality that the process is clearly marked by a blizzard of legislation and policy, sometimes self-contradictory, but a nearly total absence of serious research.

In short, while these language policy issues were in the public eye — and note that the wide public interest occurred more than thirty years ago in a different time frame and a different social milieu (President Johnson’s “War on Poverty”) — there has been little coherent sustained public support and political will — except perhaps in the incremental growth of political noise in the context of the “English Only” movement. Programs, even those enacted (and

many were), did not receive either sufficient funding or sufficient operational duration to determine whether they were sustainable, and the general public became increasingly disenchanted, annoyed and confused about additional attempts to address these topics.

Critical variables

Social policy scholars have identified a number of critical variables that impact on social policy: social and economic inequalities, discrimination and poor working conditions. Normally, these variables have had the greatest impact on groups that have remained on the economic margin, have been insulated from the forces of assimilation and thus have been relatively successful at preserving their ethnic distinctiveness. In contrast, groups that have experienced extensive mobility have encountered such high rates of intermarriage that their futures have been put in doubt. Removing these class inequalities can result in accelerated rates of ethnic defection because the forces of assimilation are released from the restraints of class. Thus, in a sense, those who valorize the preservation of ethnic pluralism depend not merely on the preservation of ethnic traditions, but also on the preservation of the class cleavages that have perpetuated ethnic boundaries (Steinberg 2001).

Surprisingly, however, social policy scholars appear to have ignored *language* as an additional key variable. The reason for such an omission may lie in the fact that language policy practitioners spend all their time and energy “preaching to the choir,” that there is no apparent connection between social policy scholars and language planning scholars, and that high-level decision makers rarely participate in dialogues on language matters with language planners or other language professionals (Kaplan 1997, Peddie 1997), although occasionally it has been argued that there is an intersection between the two fields (for example, Corker 2000, Kilty & Vidal de Haymes 2000, Punches 1985). To understand how social policy is used to address these variables — as opposed to how language policy usually works — it may be instructive to look at examples in the chain of social policy legislative action in one country, the United States. There is, of course, a huge non-U.S. literature on the politics of social policy (for instance, Hall 1993 for economic policy-making in Britain, or Palier 2004 for welfare reform in France) — although, again, language does not seem to be featured as a key variable — from which examples of both language policy and social policy might have been drawn.

A brief selective history of United States social policy

Although early and highly successful US social policy can be said to have been first implemented as part of Social Security legislation, dating back to 1935 as a function of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's (1933–1945) New Deal program, it was not targeted at any particular constituency in the United States, but rather was global in its focus. In addition, much significant social policy legislation arose during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson (1963–1969) and his War on Poverty program. Over the following forty years, four different approaches became prominent.

1. One type of legislation offered **Income Support**, later modified to **Reduction in Income Support**.
 - *Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)* was initially created under the Social Security Act, specifically designed to support widows with children; it was replaced in 1950 by
 - *Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)*, which provided aid to low-income families. But, over time, public attitudes had begun to change. This act survived until 1996.
 - *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)* was enacted in 1996, requiring work in order to receive benefits and imposing a five-year time limit on the duration of welfare. This legislation also introduced
 - *Family Caps* that denied additional welfare benefits to women who bore children while receiving welfare.

It is important to note a major shift in popular thinking. President Ronald Reagan (1981–1989) believed that people were poor because they chose to be; he expressed the conviction that “most people who wanted to escape poverty could ‘pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.’” He seemed to believe that welfare caused people to become lazy and to choose not to work. These political attitudes came to pervade public opinion. In his radio address of February 1984, Reagan said: “By and large, our administration is being criticized for our sincere and, I might add, long overdue attempts to target benefits to the truly needy and to reduce benefits for those who should be able to manage for themselves.” We cannot all pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps, but most can. The term *truly needy* is not defined. George W. Bush called himself a compassionate conservative, but he did not act like one; Reagan too used language to screen his intent. Nevertheless, this much more conservative attitude toward welfare has permeated popular thinking for much of the past twenty years.

2. Another type of legislation was focused on **Training and Employment Programs.**

- *The Manpower Development Training Act (MDTA)* was enacted in 1962 and ran through 1973. Its purpose was to provide classroom training for unemployed skilled workers, with a gradual shift to training low-skilled and minority workers, including disadvantaged youth.
- *The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA)*, enacted in 1973, replaced MDTA. It provided on-the-job training for less-skilled workers. Activity under this legislation reached its high point in 1977–78. It was terminated in 1982.
- *The National Supported Work Demonstration Program* operated from 1975 to 1979 at 15 locations across the USA to serve extremely disadvantaged workers, including long-term AFDC recipients (see above), reformed drug addicts and disadvantaged youth.
- *The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)* was enacted in 1982 to replace CETA. It offered on-the-job training and placement assistance to disadvantaged workers. It was administered by local private industry councils, not by government — local or national.
- *Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN)* was begun in 1985 in California, serving as a model for the
- *Family Support Act* (enacted 1988).
- *Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS)* was a stipulation of the Family Support Act, requiring the States to create mandatory “welfare-to-work” JOBS programs for individuals who had received AFDC funding for any 36 of the preceding 60 months, for parents under 24 years of age who had not completed high school, and for families whose youngest child was within two years of exceeding eligibility for AFDC.

This string of legislation clearly shows a change in public attitudes to welfare and the political impact of that change. It echoes the attitudinal change reflected in the legislation providing welfare — a public attitude initially in favor of giving financial aid to the poor shifting to an attitude requiring welfare recipients to qualify for and accept work.

3. A third kind of policy targeted **Early Education.**

- *Head Start* was initiated in 1965 under the auspices of the Office of Economic Opportunity to serve children from low-income families. The administration of the program moved from the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Administration for Children and Families,

providing comprehensive developmental services to pre-school children three to five years of age and their families. In 1993, the program was amended to *Early Head Start*, serving low-income pregnant women and their families with infants and toddlers.

4. Finally, another series of legislative activity targeted **Tax Credits**.
 - The *Earned Income Tax Credits* program (EITC) was enacted in 1975. The first instance of using tax credits to aid the poor, it was intended to supplement earnings of low-income families with children.
 - *Targeted Jobs Tax Credit* (TJTC) was enacted in 1979, granting a federal income tax credit to employers who hired low-income workers in certain targeted groups. Note that the poor did not receive funding directly: employers were the beneficiaries. The act was not particularly successful since it stigmatized those whom it was intended to help.
 - *Work Opportunity Tax Credits* (WOTC) was enacted in 1994, replacing TJTC, which had expired in 1992. Like TJTC, it offered tax relief to employers who hired welfare recipients, food stamp recipients aged 18 to 24, veterans, residents aged 18 to 24 of one of the 105 designated Empowerment Zones, ex-felons, SSI recipients, and individuals aged 16 to 17 who had worked as Summer Youth Employees. The bill was amended by the
 - *Taxpayer Relief Act* (TRA), enacted in 1997 and reauthorized through 1998. Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit granted a federal tax credit to individuals who had received benefits under AFDC or TANF under certain conditions.

These several pieces of legislation do not by any means capture all social policy legislation in the 70 years between 1935 and the present; they exemplify the period in several senses, however. First, they show the clear drift from the idea that the government needed to support the poor and disadvantaged to the idea that the poor and disadvantaged needed to help themselves by moving from welfare to work. Second, they demonstrate an increasing bureaucratization as each bill specifies in greater detail what is required of welfare recipients and which welfare recipients are eligible for support. Third, although they focus on social and economic conditions, they do not look beyond the consequences to define unambiguously the underlying factors in poverty and disadvantage in social terms.

It is important to note that none of this legislation addresses language; yet there is clear evidence that the poor and disadvantaged, as a class, include large numbers of English varietal speakers, aliens, immigrants and asylum seekers

— frequently, then, individuals who were not born in the United States. It seems a reasonable assumption that at least some individuals in these groups might possess limited English proficiency (see, for instance, the work of Shirley Brice-Heath 1983).

Additionally, there were particular problems surrounding indigenous Native Americans. (Similar issues arise in minority indigenous populations in Canada and Mexico, but they will not be discussed here since the focus is on the United States.) Here is an excellent example of conflicting objectives; the English Only activity was in direct opposition to the desire to preserve Native American languages and cultures (see the Native American Languages Act 1990, 1992). On the one hand, that assumption suggests that Native Americans may not have sought welfare relief because they were unaware that they were eligible for it; on the other hand, given the emphasis on work, it is surprising that the various pieces of legislation cited did not provide second language / bilingual resources to improve the employability of this population.

Thus, in general in the social policy context, federal social legislation has quite happily ignored language-related issues. This was emphasized by a 2002 story on CNN that reported on a meeting of the American Translators Association at which the problem of the language ignorance of the U.S. population was discussed.

“The government commits money to language education only in a time of international crisis, and then interest lags,” said Richard Brecht, Director of the National Foreign Language Center, a Washington think tank. “We’ve never made that investment,” said Brecht, a panelist at the meeting. (CNN at <http://www.cnn.com/> accessed 24 Aug. 2005)

This remark suggests that the most effective way to change the structures that affect action in human affairs is to alter the discourse about those structures. Such a change in the political discourse may be initiated top-down, but to be sustained it needs to be in harmony with the more general constituency. Ideally, this political discourse should include those most likely to be affected by changes in the structure as well as those most likely to be involved in decision-making concerning such structural changes. However, such inclusion often does not occur when dealing with less powerful social minorities.

Indeed, as the policy history clearly suggests, public attitudes change with changing political and economic environments. While we believe that some attention to language matters is essential to public policy, the kind of attention to language matters is important; the English Only movement is — and continues to be — essentially a negative approach, arguing that English should be the sole

official language of the nation and banning all other languages from the public sector, while the English Plus movement had a more rationale approach, recognizing that knowledge of more than one language could be a resource rather than a problem. The English Only movement covered a wide hidden agenda that included ethnocentrism, racism, nativism, and economic fear. In reality, the English Only movement was significantly more successful because its proponents were organized and were aware of some of the initiatives necessary to any political action, while the English Plus movement was not unified and thus was more characteristic of the sorts of language policy behavior discussed in this article.

A brief history of language legislation

This history is thoroughly summarized and analyzed by Crawford (2000); only a few of the highlights are mentioned here. The California propositions are cited on the grounds that they were often the models followed by other states, but it is important to observe that California propositions were not exactly applicable in other states and were not at all applicable at the national level. It is also important to understand that the United States has never had an official language policy. English became the *de facto* national language over historical time. At various times in the history of the nation, language surfaced as a hot-button issue — e.g. in the eighteenth century in anxiety about German, in a second wave of concern about German coincident with World War I and again coincident with World War II, and in the late twentieth century in concern about Spanish. There were other “incidents” not exclusively about language but rather about frankly racist issues — e.g., the Asian exclusion legislation at the end of the nineteenth century and the incarceration of Japanese coincident with World War II (see, for example, Kotani 1985). It is important to observe that anxiety about language issues rises during periods of heavy immigration and subsides at other times.

Admittedly, the list in Figure 2 is far from complete and only covers more recent legislation, but it illustrates two major points: first, that nothing even vaguely resembling a national language policy has ever been enacted in the United States, and, second, that there has been a clear gradual change in popular opinion about language matters over time. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as there was popular acceptance of the government’s role in assistance to the poor, there also was — if not exactly acceptance — at least no strong opposition to a recognition that the U.S. was extremely heterogeneous, that its citizens

1958 U.S. National Defense Education Act	Reaction to Sputnik
1964 U.S. Civil Rights Act	Key legislation
1965 U.S. Elementary and Secondary Education Act	Led to Bilingual Education Act
1965 U.S. Voting Rights Act	Allowed ballots in other languages
1968 U.S. Bilingual Education Act (reauthorized in 1974, 1978, 1984, 1988, 1994)	Key legislation
1974 <i>Lau v. Nichols</i> (414 U.S. 563)	Key Supreme Court decision
1978 U.S. Federal Court Interpreters Act	Provided for interpretation
1978 California Proposition 15	Property tax limitation
1986 California Proposition 63	“Official English”
1988 Arizona Proposition 106	Found unconstitutional 1998)
1990, 1992 U.S. Native American Languages Act	Protected indigenous languages
1994 California Proposition 187	Border Control
1995 H. R. 123 “English Language Empowerment”	Never brought to vote
1996 California Proposition 209	Outlawed affirmative action
1998 California Proposition 227 (English for the Children)	Restricted bilingual education
2002 U. S. No Child Left Behind Act	Killed bilingual education (Based on Crawford 2005)

Proposition 227 was a ballot initiative conceived, financed, and directed by Ron Unz, a multimillionaire software developer and former Republican candidate for governor. In an impressive piece of advertising acumen, he entitled the Proposition *English for the Children*. The title constituted a goal that no one could dispute, because no one wanted to vote against English, or against children. The title, establishing a false choice in voters’ minds, framed the terms of the ensuing debate: either teach children the language of the country or give them bilingual education. Furthermore, the campaign in favor of the proposition focused debate on practical issues of educational effectiveness, avoiding the emotional symbolism of earlier English-only campaigns and broadening the appeal of the initiative. (See Crawford 2005)

Figure 2. Selected language legislative (etc.) activity (1958–2006)

spoke many languages, that it was acceptable for those speakers of other languages to preserve their languages and cultures, and that the multilingualism of the population was not a problem but rather constituted a rich resource.

With the rise of the English Only movement, born perhaps in California Senator S. I. Hayakawa’s Senate Joint Resolution 72 (introduced on 27 April 1981) and formalized in Idaho Senator Steven D. Symms’s 1982 introduction of a constitutional English Language Amendment (S 12643), a number of relatively unpleasant notions surfaced — nativism, racism, and ethnocentrism. These notions were countered by a somewhat belated and somewhat more liberal English Plus movement in the late 1990s (Serrano 1997). But the fact remains

- **Alabama** (1990). Constitutional amendment adopted by voter initiative.
- **Alaska** (1998). Initiative statute; ruled unconstitutional by Alaska Superior Court, 22 Mar. 2002.
- **Arizona** (1988). Constitutional amendment adopted by voter initiative; ruled unconstitutional by federal district and appellate courts, decisions vacated on 3 March 1997 by the U.S. Supreme Court; then overturned as unconstitutional by the Arizona Supreme Court on 28 April 1998; U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear English Only proponents' final appeal on 11 January 1999.
- **Arkansas** (1987). Statute.
- **California** (1986). Constitutional amendment adopted by voter initiative.
- **Colorado** (1988). Constitutional amendment adopted by voter initiative.
- **Florida** (1988). Constitutional amendment adopted by voter initiative.
- **Georgia** (1996). Statute.
- **Hawai'i** (1978). Constitutional amendment declaring the state officially bilingual — recognizing English and Native Hawaiian as official languages.
- **Iowa** (2002). Statute.
- **Illinois** (1969). Statute repealing a 1923 declaration of "American" as the official state language and adopting English.
- **Indiana** (1984). Statute.
- **Kentucky** (1984). Statute.
- **Mississippi** (1987). Statute.
- **Missouri** (1998). Statute.
- **Montana** (1995). Statute.
- **Nebraska** (1923). Constitutional amendment.
- **New Hampshire** (1995). Statute.
- **North Carolina** (1987). Statute.
- **North Dakota** (1987). Statute.
- **South Carolina** (1987). Statute.
- **South Dakota** (1995). Statute.
- **Tennessee** (1984). Statute.
- **Utah** (2000). Initiative statute; appeal by ACLU dropped.
- **Virginia** (1981). Statute, revised in 1996.
- **Wyoming** (1996). Statute.

(Based on Crawford 2005)

Figure 3. State official English laws

that, with the exception of the activity around California Proposition 227, there was no large wave of enthusiasm one way or the other concerning language matters. There were few distinguished spokespersons (except perhaps S. I. Hayakawa), few firebrand leaders. When proponents of language planning sought legislative support, there were no noted figures to involve: Senator Edward M. Kennedy had played a key role in the Bilingual Education movement in the late 1960s but had moved on to other matters by the late 1990s; the English

Only movement had gained the support of some neoconservative Republican leaders, but by the late 1990s, with the assistance of then House Speaker Newt Gingrich, that support had disappeared. As there was little or no action at the national level, several states undertook to act on their own (see Figure 3). The organized English Only constituency, noting the desire of the states to do something, focused their activities at the state level in the hope that sufficient initiative at that level would force action at the national level. Those on all sides of the debate were again back where they had been years earlier; they were talking to each other, unable to capture the attention of national decision makers.

Arizona is a special case. In 2006, President Bush asked the Congress to enact new immigration legislation to deal with the alleged problem of illegal immigration coincident with what has been termed “The War on Terror.” While the Congress was initially unable to agree on the terms of such legislation, a number of states sought to enact their own immigration legislation. In several cases, the issue of declaring English the national or official language of the United States was attached to such legislation. In mid-2006, Arizona was preparing to act on two particularly draconian bills ostensibly designed to deal with illegal immigration but to a significant extent dealing with the English language legislation denied in the 1998 action of the Arizona Supreme Court and 1999 action of the United States Supreme Court.

Broadening the scope of discussion

The scope of the discussion should be broadened in order to look at the potential range of pertinent situations relating to planning more generally and their specific implications for language policy. While there are things that language planners can learn from the social planning sector that we have just examined, there are others to be learned from social programs like those in health. This is not to suggest that planning in these sectors has always been successful or that the implementation of such planning has been without its failures, but there are several major differences between health planning and language planning:

- Health issues are more visible. Sick people in hospitals draw greater public attention than linguistically limited unemployed people.
- Health problems may produce immediate results. For example, the provision of inoculations for specific diseases is apparent in the absence of the disease in the inoculated population almost immediately, while literacy training takes much longer to administer and takes more time to show an effect.

- Health issues may involve fewer conflicting choices than do language issues where there may be greater differences of opinion about the more appropriate course of action. Scientific evidence offered by medical practitioners seems to have greater acceptability than does comparable scientific evidence offered by social scientists and linguists because there is a significant difference in the acceptability of hard science evidence — as in medicine — and soft science evidence — as in social sciences like education, linguistics, psychology, etc.

Clearly, the matter is not as neat as these comments may imply; there are important differences between public health issues and medical issues, and there are external forces that complicate the matter, such as the objectives of insurance companies, moral issues raised by churches, and a variety of other vested interests. The playing out of these issues may be observed in the debates surrounding the new policies defining the availability of prescription drugs as Part D of the Medicare program available to older persons.

The success or failure of policy initiatives is affected by circumstances outside the programs themselves and not exclusively by the characteristics inherent in the programs. Both political will and surrounding economic conditions determine the sustainability of initiatives and of enacted programs (see Figure 1). There are even some in the health care system who recognize that language may have some impact on health care outcomes (for example, Brach, Fraser & Paez 2005; Ku & Flores 2005).

Social policy outcomes such as language planning cannot be measured in the same way that health programs are measured (see, for example, Kaplan & Baldauf 1997: 4–5.) Controlled double-blind clinical research is impossible in the language policy environment. To enact and sustain social policies, political will and public support must be developed and maintained, and the need for such support exists not only at the national level but also at the local level. Programs that succeed in some areas but fail in others are likely to be allowed to expire or are intentionally underfunded on the basis of visible failures and without reference to equally visible successes. This notion may help to explain why the allocation of language policy exclusively to the education sector may not give rise to successful programs, especially when the goals (or the absence of such goals) at the national level may potentially conflict with local goals without any recognition that conflicts exist. Successful social policy (or, specifically, language planning) formation must rely not only on understanding the problem, but also on developing and maintaining political and public support. It is, of course, possible for local political will and public support to instantiate

changes at the national level. Such a development is demonstrated by the events supporting Māori language maintenance and revival in New Zealand; but conflicting goals have arisen, so that Māori language maintenance is sustained at the cost of maintaining other community languages, and an obvious conflict exists between enacted Māori language policy in the Ministry of Education and the total absence of national language policy (Kaplan & Baldauf 2003:167–183, Peddie 1997).

Impediments in policy decision-making

Assumed costs and benefits resulting from policy change can exert even greater influence in political decision-making than can authenticated results. Thus, while research on the factors underlying any proposed change is absolutely essential, research into the assumptions underlying political rhetoric is also necessary. There is a significant difference between an understanding based on scholarly research and the demands of political expediency. Scholars value long-term effectiveness, while practical reality may be quite different in its expectations. A policy will be enacted when decision-makers believe that the impact will be immediately visible — within the time frame of a political cycle — so that the benefits of a program will be apparent before the next budget cycle, before the next election or before the next policy review (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997:5). It is also important to recognize the existence of two quite different types of policy — *substantive* and *symbolic*, where the latter only posits a belief in the general goodness of a process while the former explores the reality of specific kinds of changes. For research results to be useful in the policy sphere, researchers should take note of

- the scope and distribution of expected results;
- the uncommon (including outliers) as well as the common results;
- the extent to which social and economic contexts differ in relation to problems and their causes;
- the extent to which interventions and policy solutions are effective under a wide range of economic and social conditions;
- the extent to which the effects of interventions on the general population can be determined.

It is critical for language planners to understand what factors influence public opinion on proposed policy changes. In New Zealand, for example, a group of classical language teachers objected to changes in policy accidentally resulting

from the successful support for Māori language programs. In short, it is a question of “whose ox is gored” and whether the complaints arise from a population segment whose registered objections can sway broader public opinion. Scholars should be aware of the way in which their work reaches the public sphere: it is apparent that an article (with or without recommendations) in a scholarly journal is unlikely ever to reach decision-makers. Rarely does research magically enter the public debate. A decade ago, Kaplan (1997) tried (unsuccessfully) to suggest some of the reasons why language teachers had little political influence. What Kaplan urged concerning the political awakening of teachers is also true for those who undertake work in language policy development and planning. In the ensuing decade, however, there has been a sea change in the operations of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) because ACTFL has actually succeeded in gaining the attention of national policymakers; however, the climate remains very unfavorable to the objectives of language teachers and language policy planners.

Summary and conclusion

We have tried to show that much more is involved in developing successful language policy than is commonly recognized or acknowledged. Language policy development is a highly political activity. Given its political nature, traditional linguistic research is necessary but not in itself sufficient, and the publication of scholarly studies in academic journals is really only the first step in the process. Indeed, scholarly research itself may need to be expanded, to consider not only the language or languages at issue but the social landscape in which those languages exist. A critical step in policy development involves making research evidence understandable to the lay public; research scholars are not generally the ideal messengers in this context (see the case study developed in Crawford 2000:104–127, esp. 122–123).

Elsewhere (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997), we have argued that language ecology provides a more useful approach to language planning than more conventional approaches which tend to see a language as an isolate, limited by the political boundaries of a polity — that is, the one-nation/one-language fallacy. We have also maintained (Baldauf & Kaplan 2003) that it is important to understand who the actors are. As we have stated above, the mid-twentieth-century belief in the adequacy of a broadly based and ideologically neutral approach is no longer enough. We need to know who the planners are and what impact their views might have (see Baldauf 1982). It is now generally accepted that the

target population should not merely be consulted, but should actually play a significant role in the planning process. But, in addition, the wider population in which the target group is embedded also has to be involved and has to approve the policy initiatives. The study of language policy evolution in Ireland (O'Laoire 2005) offers testimony of the importance of involving the entire population (see also Edwards & Newcombe 2005). Additionally, the actual writers of policy, the legislators, must understand:

- the general desirability for and public approval of the policy,
- the need for adequate funding so that the policy may be implemented,
- the various biases of all the key players and the means by which those biases may be offset,
- the need for sufficient time to permit the policy to survive beyond any particular political cycle,
- the reality that outcomes are not likely to be immediate, and
- the ways in which the policy fits both the economic situation and other legislation that may inadvertently be at odds with the objectives.

This article is intended to suggest that the paradigm on the basis of which language policy and planning is conventionally undertaken may be inadequate to the task. But in the current fiscal environment the funding of public policy activities has become extremely difficult because of the budgetary choices decision-makers in government make and the ways in which government budgeting is structured.

In 1910, the historian Frederick Jackson Turner defined the mission of the public university as “uplifting the state to continuously higher levels.” To do this, he said, “it must have the wisdom to make expenditures for results which pay manifold in the enrichment of civilization, but which are not immediate and palpable” (cited in Smith 2005:71). What applies to the public university applies equally to all areas of education and of public policy, but especially to issues of language policy.

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Sommaire

Diffusion de la politique linguistique: Leçons à tirer des modèles des politiques sociales et de la santé

A l'exception de quelques projets à grande échelle, les planificateurs linguistiques ont tendance à s'engager dans des débats académiques, plutôt que de voir le développement de la planification linguistique comme un processus politique. Une comparaison avec un exemple de politique sociale aux Etats-Unis suggère qu'il est important de comprendre l'enjeu et de trouver des solutions dans le contexte du processus politique, parce que, en fin de compte, c'est dans ce contexte là que les vraies décisions sont prises.

Resumo

Lingvopolitika disvastiĝo: Lerni el sanecaj kaj socipolitikaj modeloj

Krom ĉe kelkaj larĝskalaj projektoj, lingvoplanistoj emis paroli kaj disputi inter si anstataŭ rigardi lingvopolitikan evoluigon kiel propre politikan procedon. Komparo kun socipolitika ekzemplo selektita el Usono sugestas, ke gravas kompreni la problemon kaj evoluigi solvojn en la kadro de la politika procedo, ĉar en tiu medio oni fine faros la decidojn.

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