

Language Policies in Education

Critical Issues

Second Edition

Edited by
James W. Tollefson



LANGUAGE POLICIES IN EDUCATION



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Second Edition

*Edited by James W. Tollefson
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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The enthusiastic response of readers and reviewers to the first edition of *Language Policies in Education: Critical Issues*, published in 2002, was deeply satisfying to everyone who worked on the project, especially the authors, who marshaled their effort, expertise, and experience in the complex task of understanding language policies in social, political, and economic context. Their research had the ultimate aim of contributing to the development of progressive language policies that respond to the concrete social, economic, and political concerns, as well as the profound fears, of individuals everywhere facing an increasingly uncertain future. In this effort, the authors devoted their work to finding alternatives to language policies that grant privilege to some through structural forms of inequality. All authors faced the underlying question of how progressive language policies might contribute to a vision of a realistic and workable democratic pluralism in which language rights are assured, multilingualism is protected, and language use – in all of its astonishing complexity – is openly and enthusiastically protected for all. This was the motivation for that first edition, and it continues to drive critical research in language policy today.

This second edition continues that commitment to critical language policy analysis – what Tom Donahue in the first edition called the aggressive analysis of policies to identify and characterize their underlying aims and ideologies. To that end, this new volume seeks an understanding of the links between language policies and broader social, economic, and political processes.

Several of the authors who contributed to that first edition again present their work: David Welchman Gegeo, Alamin Mazrui, Teresa L. McCarty, Mary McGroarty, Karen Ann Watson-Gegeo, and Terrence G. Wiley. All of their chapters are completely new for this second edition. Wiley's history of language policy in the United States includes some historical material from the previous

edition, along with significant new analysis of recent, dramatic changes in language policy in several states.

New contributors offering new case studies for this second edition are E. Annamalai, Serafin M. Coronel-Molina, Jane Freeland, Kayoko Hashimoto, David Cassels Johnson, Nkonko Kamwangamalu, and Beth Lewis Samuelson. These scholars were invited because their previous work fits well with the goals and the theoretical frameworks that unify this volume, and because their published research has been important and compelling.

In selecting contributors, I sought case studies of countries with a range of historical experiences of socioeconomic and political development. I am especially pleased that this edition includes chapters focusing on Rwanda, Lesotho, Swaziland, Nicaragua, and Solomon Islands, all of which have been underrepresented in the research literature on language policy. The other cases – Native America, Kenya, Japan, India, the Andes (Quechua and Aymara), and the United States – address fundamental issues with broad implications for language policies in many contexts worldwide. The authors of the chapters are among the most experienced scholars working on the cases presented here, and offer what I believe to be the best available analysis.

This new edition will be of interest to scholars and advanced students in language policy, education, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and critical language studies. It may be adopted as a textbook in graduate and advanced undergraduate courses on language policy, language education, and sociolinguistics.

Readers may find it useful to begin with Chapters 1–3, which present the historical, theoretical, and analytical framework for the case studies. The final chapter summarizes the major research issues that emerge from this volume, and may be fruitfully read before or after the case studies.

The chapters are divided into six parts. Part I, “Language Policy in Education,” begins with the editor’s introduction to the volume, including a brief overview of the chapters. Chapter 2 presents a critical historical analysis of the impact of nationalism and identity on language policy, the transformations currently taking place under globalization, and the implications of these changes for language policy research. In Chapter 3, Mary McGroarty explores the involvement of multiple actors (both public and private) in language policy and important trends in contemporary education, even as language policies in schools continue to be constrained by traditional ideologies, shifting political and economic pressures, institutional practices, and shrinking resources.

In Part II, “Competing Agendas,” Chapter 4 by Terrence G. Wiley provides an overview of the historical and contemporary contexts for educational language rights in the United States. A key focus of this chapter is the link between language policies and related social policies, dominant beliefs, and power relationships among groups. In Chapter 5, Jane Freeland discusses the development and implementation of minority language rights policy in Nicaragua’s multiethnic and

plurilingual Caribbean Coast region, where a rights-based language policy has revealed critical differences between its underlying ideology and the local language ideologies and practices of the people it was intended to serve. In Chapter 6, David Cassels Johnson uses ethnographic methods to examine changes in language policy in the School District of Philadelphia that were associated with restructuring of the central administration and changes in key personnel. Johnson's analysis particularly explores the influence of individuals in language policymaking and implementation.

The chapters in Part III, "Indigenous Languages in Postcolonial Education," explore current transformations in language policy in Kenya, Swaziland, and Lesotho. In Chapter 7, Alamin Mazrui offers a historical analysis of the recent changes and the important political and economic implications of provisions in the new Kenyan Constitution that make Kiswahili co-official with English. In Chapter 8, Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu compares language policies in the nations of Swaziland and Lesotho, arguing that many of the factors that influence policymaking in multilingual states are also crucial in these largely monolingual nations.

Part IV, "Language and Global Capitalism," includes two cases in which language policies are closely linked with the processes of globalization. Examining the discourse of English-promotion policies in Japan, Kayoko Hashimoto, in Chapter 9, examines the central paradox of recent policy changes: that the spread of English takes place within a broader framework of the promotion of the Japanese language. In Chapter 10, E. Annamalai shows that the goal of equal access to economic opportunities through English in India threatens to produce unequal educational outcomes that will exacerbate social and economic inequalities.

In Part V, "Language and Social Conflict," two chapters examine the efforts of state officials and everyday citizens to manage the complex issues of language in education within the context of political violence and social change. In Chapter 11, Beth Lewis Samuelson explores the social and political forces underlying Rwanda's recent shift from French-medium to English-medium education. Samuelson examines the important historical connections between current medium of instruction debates and ethnic identity, including issues underlying the Rwandan genocide of 1994. In Chapter 12, David Welchman Gegeo and Karen Ann Watson-Gegeo examine what happened to an indigenous educational program in Kwara'ae, Malaita, that was disrupted by the violence that has plagued Solomon Islands for the past decade. Their analysis reveals creative and innovative local efforts to reconstruct and restructure education in the midst of massive social disruptions and political violence.

Part VI, "Language Policy and Social Change," examines two cases of innovative community efforts to revitalize threatened languages and the communities that speak them. Teresa L. McCarty, in Chapter 12, offers a detailed historical and contemporary analysis of language revitalization in Native American

communities in the United States. In Chapter 13, Serafin M. Coronel-Molina examines mass media and new social media in Quechua and Aymara in the Andes region. Both authors document the important process of bringing endangered languages into new sociolinguistic domains. In the final chapter, I offer an integrative summary of the key themes and conclusions of this book. In particular, the chapter examines the importance of language policies for democratic political movements around the world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Like the first edition, this new edition of *Language Policies in Education* is the result of a collaborative effort by the impressive group of scholars who wrote these chapters. To them I am grateful, not only for taking on challenging and important research, but also for revealing how language policies are implicated in some of the most important issues facing humanity today. I am fortunate to be able to work with the best editor I know, Naomi Silverman at Routledge, whose commitment over many years to critical, educational, sociolinguistic, and pedagogical research has helped to shape and give direction to language policy studies. For encouragement and financial support of this project, I thank the following units of the International Christian University in Tokyo: the Department of Media, Communication, and Culture, especially Professor John Maher; the Institute for Educational Research and Service; and the 21st Century Center of Excellence Program on Research and Education for Peace, Security and *Kyosei*. For offering a supportive new home, I thank the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong, especially Dean Stephen Andrews and Chair Professor Amy B. M. Tsui. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the Department of English at the University of Washington, especially Professor Sandra Silberstein, for three decades of unwavering encouragement and support of my work.

I dedicate this project to the memory of Charles A. Ferguson. Through his remarkable knowledge of linguistics, his unwavering decency and humanity, and the wisdom he so willingly shared, Fergie taught a generation of linguists to care about languages *and* the people who speak them.

James W. Tollefson
Hong Kong and Tokyo

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xii

PART I

Language Policy in Education **1**

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1 | Critical Issues in Language Policy in Education | 3 |
| | <i>James W. Tollefson</i> | |
| 2 | Language Policy in a Time of Crisis and Transformation | 11 |
| | <i>James W. Tollefson</i> | |
| 3 | Multiple Actors and Arenas in Evolving Language Policies | 35 |
| | <i>Mary McGroarty</i> | |

PART II

Competing Agendas **59**

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 4 | A Brief History and Assessment of Language Rights in the United States | 61 |
| | <i>Terrence G. Wiley</i> | |
| 5 | Righting Language Wrongs in a Plurilingual Context: Language Policy and Practice in Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast Region | 91 |
| | <i>Jane Freeland</i> | |

- 6 Positioning the Language Policy Arbiter: Governmentality and Footing in the School District of Philadelphia 116
David Cassels Johnson

PART III

Indigenous Languages in Postcolonial Education 137

- 7 Language and Education in Kenya: Between the Colonial Legacy and the New Constitutional Order 139
Alamin Mazrui
- 8 Language-in-Education Policy and Planning in Africa's Monolingual Kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland 156
Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu

PART IV

Language and Global Capitalism 173

- 9 The Japanisation of English Language Education: Promotion of the National Language within Foreign Language Policy 175
Kayoko Hashimoto
- 10 India's Economic Restructuring with English: Benefits versus Costs 191
E. Annamalai

PART V

Language and Social Conflict 209

- 11 Rwanda Switches to English: Conflict, Identity, and Language-in-Education Policy 211
Beth Lewis Samuelson
- 12 The Critical Villager Revisited: Continuing Transformations of Language and Education in Solomon Islands 233
David Welchman Gegeo and Karen Ann Watson-Gegeo

PART VI**Language Policy and Social Change 253**

- 13 Language Planning and Cultural Continuance in Native America 255
Teresa L. McCarty

- 14 New Functional Domains of Quechua and Aymara: Mass Media and Social Media 278
Serafín M. Coronel-Molina

- 15 Language Policy and Democratic Pluralism 301
James W. Tollefson

List of Contributors 311

Index 312

PART I

Language Policy in Education

The three chapters in this part of the book examine the following critical issues: What are the major factors affecting language policies in education, and how do these factors constrain policy alternatives? How have the processes of global capitalism, such as migration, increasing economic inequality, widespread state violence, and the severe economic crisis in the system, affected language policies in schools? What is the role of corporations and other non-governmental agents? What methodologies in language policy research are appropriate for current issues in language policy?

In Chapter 1, the introduction to this book, James W. Tollefson explains the organization and the major themes of the book, including the key ideas that recur throughout the chapters. Chapter 1 also offers extended summaries of each of the subsequent chapters. In Chapter 2, James W. Tollefson presents a critical historical analysis of the impact on language policy of nationalism, globalization, and changing conceptions of identity. The chapter emphasizes the historic transformations currently taking place under globalization, and the implications of these changes for language policies in education and for language policy research. In Chapter 3, Mary McGroarty explores major contemporary trends in education, such as privatization, development of alternative forms of teacher education, and the role of corporations and non-profit foundations. Her analysis raises profound questions about the future of education, particularly the capacity of educational institutions to adequately develop the language abilities learners need for democratic participation, critical awareness, and human imagination.

1

CRITICAL ISSUES IN LANGUAGE POLICY IN EDUCATION

James W. Tollefson

In the first edition of *Language Policies in Education*, six critical issues guided authors as they prepared their chapters. These issues, formed as questions, were as follows: (1) What are the major forces affecting language policies in education, and how do these forces constrain policies and public discussion of policy alternatives? (2) How do state authorities use educational language policies to manage access to language rights and language education, and what are the consequences of specific programs and policies for language minority communities? (3) How do state authorities use language policy for the purposes of political and cultural governance? (4) How do language policies in education help to create, sustain, or reduce political conflict among different ethnolinguistic groups? (5) How are local policies and programs in language education affected by global processes such as colonialism, decolonization, the spread of English, and the growth of the integrated capitalist economy? (6) How can indigenous peoples and other language minorities develop educational policies and programs that serve their social and linguistic needs, in the face of significant pressures exerted by more powerful social and ethnolinguistic groups?

In seeking to answer these questions, the authors of the 16 chapters in the first edition articulated four major generalizations about language policies in education: (1) multilingualism is commonplace in contemporary states, despite widespread ideological programs supporting monolingual policies; (2) language policies are a key mechanism for managing social and political conflict; (3) conflicts over language policies usually have their origin in conflicts in which language symbolizes some aspect of a struggle over the distribution of economic resources and political power; and (4) policy and ideology have crucial connections that must be explored if we hope to understand policymaking processes,

constraints on policy alternatives, and the socially constructed meanings of specific policies and practices.

While continuing to address these important questions about power, inequality, and the struggle by ethnic and linguistic minorities for social, political, and economic well-being, the chapters in this second edition explore additional questions that have emerged from the crisis of the economy and politics in the past decade: (1) How have the processes of global capitalism, such as migration, increasing economic inequality, widespread state violence, and the severe economic crisis in the system, affected language policies in schools? (2) What is the role of corporations and other non-governmental agents in language policy-making? (3) How have nationalist, anti-immigrant, and similar political movements affected language policies, and how can ethnolinguistic minorities and their progressive allies resist these movements? (4) How has the spread of the discourse of human rights affected language policymaking? (5) How are newly emerging conceptions of identity linked with language policies in education? (6) What methodologies in language policy research are appropriate for the study of current issues in language policy? Such questions confront some of the most profound issues in the world today: the crisis of capitalism, political extremism and violence against minorities, the overwhelming dominance of corporate power, transformations in national and social identities, and the struggle for human rights.

As they examine individual cases of language policies in education, the authors of the chapters in this volume explore three recurring ideas: (1) the transformed role of nationalism and identity in language policies in many contexts; (2) the weakening of the institutions of the nation-state and other traditional forms of social organization by the overwhelming power of global capitalism, with significant implications for language policies in education; and (3) changing paradigms in language policy research. These ideas are explored in detail in Chapter 2.

Preview of the Chapters

The chapters in this collection deal with a wide range of important issues in quite different contexts. All of the contexts, however, have been profoundly influenced by the major social, economic, cultural, and political changes that have accelerated since the last two decades of the 20th century. Often grouped under the term “globalization,” these fundamental transformations, especially migration, urbanization, language loss, and language shift, have created new political movements and forms of resistance, new social relations, emerging social identities, and deep personal anxieties. In “Language Policy in a Time of Crisis and Transformation,” I explore the implications of these major transformations for language policies in education. The chapter includes an overview of the history of research on language policies in education, focusing specifically

on changes in research questions and research methods. This historical summary also examines ideological shifts, in particular the increasing attention to power and inequality, which have characterized language policy research since the 1990s. The chapter analyzes the impact of the current economic and political crisis on language policies in education, the implications of the weakening of the nation-state and its associated forms of nationalism, and new methods of language policy research.

In recent decades, the number of actors involved in language policymaking has expanded considerably, along with the social domains, including education, in which language policies are important. In "Multiple Actors and Arenas in Evolving Language Policies," Mary McGroarty examines these new actors, particularly in the private sector. She emphasizes that policies are increasingly contingent and multilateral, although in public education they remain tightly constrained by traditional ideologies, shifting political pressures, institutional inertia, and a shrinking resource base. In many settings, public institutions are ceding control of educational language policies to private institutions and influence, and to various forms of public-private partnerships. Although medium of instruction policies remain crucial in many settings, new factors, including the fragmentation of education, the growth of alternative forms of teacher education, micro-level processes and local contingencies, raise fundamental questions about whether current educational systems can develop the language abilities required for democratic participation, critical consciousness, and human imaginative capacities.

The weakening of public institutions is particularly evident in the United States. In "A Brief History and Assessment of Language Rights in the United States," Terrence G. Wiley summarizes the history of two main rights: (1) the right to access an education, which allows for social, economic, and political participation; and (2) the right to an education in one's mother tongue(s). His chapter argues that both rights are necessary if language minority students are to participate in the economy and sociopolitical system, and to maintain continuity with their communities and cultures. In his analysis, Wiley locates educational language policies in their relationship to other societal policies (e.g., immigration), dominant beliefs, and power relationships among groups. The analysis includes implicit, covert, and informal practices, which can have as much impact as official policies. The chapter identifies and explains the importance of key federal cases involving rights for educational equity, access and accommodation, and it chronicles the rise and fall of federal support for bilingual education. A major focus of Wiley's analysis is the negative impact of policies during the past 20 years that have increasingly restricted language minority rights. In particular, he focuses on the role of the state of Arizona in promoting regressive policies. This movement to restrict minority rights is linked with the revival of the concept of "states' rights," which throughout US history has shaped policies affecting minority education.

Language rights are a focus of language policy debates in many other contexts as well. One of the most explicit debates about language rights has taken place in Nicaragua, particularly in minority and multilingual communities on the Caribbean Coast. In "Righting Language Wrongs in a Plurilingual Context: Language Policy and Practice in Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast Region," Jane Freeland discusses the development and implementation of minority language rights policy since the Sandinista revolution in 1979. As a result of centuries of multilingual interaction, the Coast's indigenous and ethnic minorities have developed dynamic, multifaceted identities expressed through complex multilingual repertoires and practices. The region's history and sociolinguistic ecology, including three indigenous and two African-Caribbean minorities and a Spanish-speaking Mestizo majority, is highly complex, yet sufficiently small to enable detailed observation of the effects of policy decisions. Especially noteworthy are the intercultural-bilingual education programs in the region's state schools. As a rights-based language policy was implemented in the region, crucial differences emerged between its underlying language ideology and the local language ideologies and practices of the minorities the policy was intended to serve. The resulting tension reveals the gulf between language policies based on European and American conceptions of a direct relationship between distinct languages and stable group identities, in contrast with local language ideologies that emerged from a history of resistance to assimilation and community-centered notions of identity. As a result, state policy focusing on relationships between each minority language and Spanish cannot accommodate the multilingual practices and highly fluid, changing social identities of the Coast's residents.

While rigid language policies in some settings fail to address the complex sociolinguistic ecologies of local communities, in other settings we find that language policies themselves may be fluid, changeable, and subject to interpretation and appropriation. In "Positioning the Language Policy Arbiter: Governmentality and Footing in the School District of Philadelphia," David Cassels Johnson presents findings from a three-year ethnographic study of bilingual education and language policy in the School District of Philadelphia that focuses on the role of governmentality in language policy processes (Foucault, 1991). Johnson argues that language policy must be understood as extending from macro-level texts and discourses through the micro level of discursive practices. His analysis addresses an important current issue in language policy research: the tension between theoretical conceptions of language policy as a form of social control of minority languages and minority language users, and empirical research that focuses on the power of educators to serve as active agents in policy processes. Through his analysis of the impact of changes in personnel in the midst of the School District's implementation of the federal education law No Child Left Behind, Johnson argues that this tension can be fruitfully explored by combining critical analysis of macro-level policy texts and