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Preparation

Assigned reading: Ricento, T. (2000). Historical and theoretical perspectives in language policy and planning. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 4(2), 196–213.

Read the article (see next page) and answer the questions below. Bring your answers to the Experience day.

Questions

Please prepare the questions below, they will be addressed in the tutorial following the lecture at the Experience Day.

During the lecture, we discussed the common idea that all countries have an official language and found out that this is not true. But *should* a country have an official language?

- a. what are the advantages for a country if it has an official language?
- b. what are the disadvantages?

- c. what are the advantages if it has two or three official languages?
- d. what are the disadvantages?

- e. what are the advantages for a language if it has official status in a country?
- f. what are the disadvantages?

Historical and theoretical perspectives in language policy and planning¹

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This paper explores the evolution of language policy and planning (LPP) as an area of research from the end of World War II to the present day. Based on analysis of the LPP literature, three types of factors are identified as having been instrumental in shaping the field. These factors – macro sociopolitical, epistemological, and strategic – individually and interactively have influenced the kinds of questions asked, methodologies adopted, and goals aspired to in LPP research. Research in LPP is divided into three historical phases: (1) decolonization, structuralism, and pragmatism; (2) the failure of modernization, critical sociolinguistics, and access; and (3) the new world order, postmodernism, and linguistic human rights. The article concludes with a discussion of current research trends and areas requiring further investigation.

KEYWORDS: Epistemology, critical social theory, intellectual history, language ecology, language planning, language policy

INTRODUCTION

My purpose in this paper is to examine the evolution of language policy and planning (LPP)² as an area of research roughly since World War II. In doing so, I will consider important developments in several areas of the social sciences and humanities which have informed and helped shape the kinds of questions, methods, findings and controversies that have animated language policy studies.

In analyzing the LPP literature, I find three types of factors have been instrumental in shaping the field, that is, in influencing the kinds of questions asked, methodologies adopted, and goals aspired to. I group these under the headings: (1) the *macro sociopolitical*, (2) the *epistemological*, and (3) the *strategic*. The macro sociopolitical refers to events and processes that obtain at the national or supranational level, such as state formation (or disintegration), wars (hot or cold), population migrations, globalization of capital and communications, and the like. Epistemological factors concern paradigms of knowledge and research, such as structuralism and postmodernism in the social sciences and humanities, rational choice theory and neo-Marxism in economics and political science, and so on. Strategic factors concern the ends for which research

is conducted; they are the explicit or implicit reasons for which researchers undertake particular kinds of research. Examples of such purposes could include uncovering the sources of structural socioeconomic inequality, demonstrating the economic costs or benefits of particular language policies, or justifying the implementation of particular language in education policies. I reject the idea that research is unconnected to strategic purposes, and concur with Cibulka (1995: 118) that 'the borderline between policy *research* and policy *argument* is razor thin.' These descriptors serve as heuristic devices to help reconstruct the intellectual history of LPP. As with any reconstruction of intellectual history, there will be disagreements about categories and time lines, and about the relative importance of the variables themselves. Clearly, there is interaction among the three approaches and continuity of themes in the three 'stages' of LPP development. In what follows, I will identify some of the more salient macro sociopolitical, epistemological, and strategic factors that have informed LPP research, beginning in the post World War II period up to the present day. I realize events and ideas I will describe often have antecedents extending well into the past, in some cases, several centuries; where appropriate, such links are noted. I will conclude with some thoughts on possible future research directions. The discussion offered is meant to be illustrative rather than inclusive.

1. EARLY WORK: DECOLONIZATION, STRUCTURALISM, AND PRAGMATISM

The three central elements in this first phase in LPP work are: (1) decolonization and state formation (*macro sociopolitical*), (2) the predominance of structuralism in the social sciences (*epistemological*), and (3) the pervasive belief, at least in the West, that language problems could be solved through planning, especially within the public sector (*strategic*).

The confluence of several factors contributed to the development of LPP as an identifiable field in the early 1960s. The expertise of linguists had been enlisted in many parts of the world to develop grammars, writing systems, and dictionaries for indigenous languages. Corpus planning (graphization, standardization, modernization) presented theoretical as well as practical challenges to the field. Scholars trained in structural linguistics with interests in language typologies and sociolinguistics (especially issues of domain and function, which led to the development of language planning models) realized the great potential for advancing linguistic theory and exploring language-society connections in new ways. Fishman spelled out the possibilities quite explicitly:

Precisely because the developing nations are at an earlier stage in development . . . the problems and processes of nationhood are more apparent in such nations and their transformations more discernible to the researcher. As a result the developing nations ('new nations') have come to be of great interest to those sociolinguists who are interested in the transformations of group identity in general as well as to those

interested in societal (governmental and other) impact on language-related behavior and on language itself. (Fishman 1968a: 6)

Fishman saw developing nations as providing an 'indispensable and truly intriguing array of field-work locations for a new breed of genuine sociolinguists' (1968a: 11).

Given the perceived needs of these 'new nations', much of the early work focussed on typologies and approaches to language planning. Particularly influential in this period were Einar Haugen's (1966) language planning model and Heinz Kloss' (1966) typology of multilingualism. Representative research is found in Fishman, Ferguson and Das Gupta (1968) and Rubin and Jernudd (1971). A focus of much attention in status planning centered on the selection of a national language for purposes of modernization and nation-building. A consensus view, at least among Western sociolinguists,³ was that a major European language (usually English or French) should be used for formal and specialized domains while local (indigenous) languages could serve other functions. This solution – stable diglossia – was evident in the more established African states (and elsewhere), and, it was argued, should be tried in the new African nations as well. A widely held view among Western(ized) sociolinguists in this period was that linguistic diversity presented obstacles for national development, while linguistic homogeneity was associated with modernization and Westernization. Fishman (1968b: 61) asked somewhat rhetorically if it were possible 'that an appreciable level of linguistic (and other cultural) homogeneity may have facilitated the "Westernization" of the West?' The formula, roughly, for successful nationhood entailed cultural/ethnic unity within a defined geographical boundary (state), and a common linguistic identity among the citizens of a polity. Further, only 'developed' languages (or ones that were capable of being developed) were suitable to fulfill the role of 'national' language; developed languages were written, standardized, and adaptable to the demands of technological and social advancement. In other words, the idealization of one nation/one (standard) national language, popularized in Europe beginning in the 1820s in the works of von Humboldt (especially *On the National Character of Languages*) but extending to the present day, was the model which at least implicitly informed language planning in decolonized states in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

In general, this approach was viewed by practitioners as non-political (at least not in the narrow partisan sense), technical, oriented toward problem-solving, and pragmatic in its goals. Fishman, commenting on the goals of language planning with regard to 'new nations' (as opposed to 'old developing nations' with Great Traditions), revealed a widely held view that the problems were relatively straightforward:

The language problems of the ethnically fragmented 'new nation' reflect its relatively greater emphasis on political integration and on the efficient *nationism* on which it initially depends. Language selection is a relatively short-lived problem since the

linguistic tie to technological and political modernity is usually unambiguous. Problems of language development, codification, and acceptance are also minimal as long as these processes are seen as emanating justifiably and primarily from the 'metropolitan country . . .' Although some attention may be given to the pedagogic demands of initial literacy (or transitional literacy) for *young* people . . . the lion's share of literacy effort and resources is placed at the disposal of spreading the adopted Western tongue of current political and . . . sociocultural integration. (Fishman 1968c: 492)

Fishman (1968c: 494) believed the language problems of the 'old developing nations' differed from those of new nations, principally because old nations had literate traditions, and so the task for language planners was to modernize the classical standard languages to 'cope with Western technology and procedure, and [to simplify it] to hasten widespread literacy and participation.' If citizens could speak the same modernized language, it was argued, both unity (by virtue of having a national language) and economic development, keyed to Western technology, financing, and expertise, were more likely. Interestingly, Fishman believed it would be more efficient to import a Western language *in toto*, if possible, to expedite modernity, but that a compromise position was to modernize the classical language, something bound to be resisted by guardians of the classical tradition. Countries that did not fit neatly into either category, so-called intermediate types (e.g. India and Pakistan), were considered to present the greatest challenge to planners, because no single indigenous national language nor a stable pattern of bilingualism with diglossia seemed to be feasible. This latter prediction has turned out to have some validity; however, this tri-partite categorizing of nations concealed a whole range of beliefs and attitudes about national development (especially the ways development served Western economic interests), and the role of languages in that development, that would not be systematically explored for several decades. While theoretical linguists claimed all languages were created equal, a number of sociolinguists and policy analysts devised taxonomies of languages according to their relative suitability for national development (for example, see Kloss 1968), thereby facilitating (wittingly or not) the continued dominance (if not domination) of European colonial languages in high status domains of education, economy, and technology in developing countries, a situation which persists to the present day.

To summarize, the scholarly literature in this early period of language policy and planning studies can be characterized in the following ways (I rely here on an analysis of several contemporary edited volumes (especially Fishman, Ferguson and Das Gupta 1968; Rubin and Jernudd 1971), monographs (notably Haugen 1966), as well as more recent critical discussions by Tollefson 1991 and Pennycook 1994):

1. Goals of language planning were often associated with a desire for unification (of a region, a nation, a religious group, a political group, or other kinds of groups), a desire for modernization, a desire for efficiency, or a desire for democratization (Rubin 1971: 307–310).

2. Language was characterized as a resource with value, and as such, was subject to planning (Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971: 211).
3. Status and corpus planning were viewed as more or less separate activities, and ideologically neutral (although not without complications).
4. Languages were abstracted from their sociohistorical and ecological contexts (ahistoricity and synchrony).

It should be noted that many LPP researchers active during this period, such as Rubin, Jernudd, Fishman and others were aware of the problems inherent in language planning, and were at times critical of their contemporaries. For example, Jernudd and Das Gupta (1971) distanced themselves from Tauli (1968), who disapproved of existing languages and of the irrationality of their patterns of emergence, claiming that 'our (Jernudd and Das Gupta's) definition of language planning excludes search for universal linguistic 'means' to achieve 'results' like 'clarity', 'economy', 'aesthetic form', and 'elasticity' (Tauli 1968: 30–42; cited in Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971: 199). Jernudd and Das Gupta also critiqued Haugen's (1966) three criteria for language decisions, namely, 'efficiency,' 'adequacy,' and 'acceptability', in the absence of explicit valuations for these terms. The basis for these and similar criticisms, however, was more technical than substantive, and essentially related to matters of implementation and decision-making, thus by-passing the more complex yet fundamental issues dealing with language choice, individual and group identities, and socioeconomic structures and hierarchies of inequality.

2. THE SECOND PHASE: FAILURE OF MODERNIZATION, CRITICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS, AND ACCESS

The second phase in LPP research, roughly from the early 1970s through the late 1980s, saw a continuation of some of the themes current in the first phase, with some important new developments as well. Some have used the term neo-colonial to characterize the socioeconomic and political structures that became dominant in the developing world. Rather than a flowering of democracy or economic 'take-off' to use Walter Rostow's (1963) term from his stages of modernization and national development (which had become gospel by the 1970s), newly independent states found themselves in some ways more dependent on their former colonial masters than they had been during the colonial era. Hierarchization and stratification of populations were themes identified by scholars as worthy of investigation; the role of language(s) and culture(s) in this process has been well-documented (e.g. Phillipson 1992; Said 1993; Pennycook 1994). Faced with this reality, several language planners (especially academics) formulated responses. For example, Cobarrubias (1983b: 41) made the assertion that 'certain tasks of language planners, language policy makers, educators, legislators, and others involved in changing the status of language or language variety are not philosophically

neutral.' Fishman (1983: 382), in a somewhat defensive mode, noted that some linguists 'still view language planning as immoral, unprofessional, and/or impossible'. There was a growing awareness among scholars that earlier attempts in language planning, including models proposed by Haugen (1966) and Ferguson (1966), were inadequate, purely from a descriptive perspective (see Schiffman 1996 for a retrospective analysis). Indeed, Haugen admitted that even the revised version of the original model he presented does 'not amount to a theory of language planning' (cited in Cobarrubias 1983a: 5). There was a number of factors that caused the field to reconsider where it was, and where it might be headed. The failure of modernization policies in the developing world was clearly one factor (although Tollefson 1991: 28, 29 notes that such failures may have served to protect and preserve dominant economic interests). To the extent that language planning theory was thought of as a branch of resource management, it was bound to fail (this point is developed in Kaplan and Baldauf 1997), given the complexity of the task, the countless and uncontrollable variables involved, the difficulty of evaluating the effectiveness of policies, and the virtual impossibility of engineering society in nations with long and complex colonial histories.

Developments in linguistics and related social sciences that started in the 1960s and gained prominence in the 1980s also had an impact on scholarly thinking and problematizing in LPP research (see Hymes 1996/1975 for a discussion). Among important developments was the continuing challenge to autonomous linguistics as a viable paradigm for research in language acquisition, use and change, with direct relevance to developing models of language policy and planning. Cherished notions such as 'native speaker', 'mother tongue', and 'linguistic competence' were called into question, problematized (Fasold 1992), and even abandoned (see, for example, *The Native Speaker is Dead*, Paikeday 1985). All this had important implications for language policy and planning studies. The notion of language as a discrete, finite entity defined by standard grammars was characterized by a number of scholars as a function of the methods, and values, of positivistic linguistics (e.g. Harris 1981; Le Page 1985; Sankoff 1988; Mühlhäusler 1990, 1996; Fettes 1997). The importation of the largely Western notion of language in language policy studies helped perpetuate a series of attitudes which became ideological (Pennycook 1994). Even the apparently neutral sociolinguistic construct *diglossia* has been criticized (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 69) as 'an ideological naturalization of sociolinguistic arrangements,' perpetuating linguistic (and, hence, societal) inequalities. Pennycook (1994: 29) views language as 'located in social action and anything we might want to call a language is not a pre-given system but a will to community.' Autonomous linguistics, Pennycook notes, while claiming a neutral descriptivism, actually embraces a prescriptivism which Harris (1981) traces to post-Renaissance Europe, that reflects the political psychology of nationalism, and an educational system devoted to standardizing the linguistic behavior of pupils (cited in Pennycook 1994: 29).

Mühlhäusler (1990, 1996) describes the role that such prescriptivism has played in places like Papua New Guinea, in which local notions of language (i.e. where one language stops and another begins) contrasted sharply with the views imposed by anthropologists and linguists (see Siegel 1997 for a critique of Mühlhäusler 1996). As Crowley (1990: 48) notes, 'rather than registering a unitary language, [linguists] were helping to form one.'

This critique of linguistics was coupled with a broader critical analysis of approaches to language planning research and to language policies throughout the developing, as well as the developed world (e.g. Hymes 1975/1996; Wolfson and Manes 1985; Tollefson 1986, 1991; Luke, McHoul and Mey 1990; among many others). Whereas many scholars in the earlier period were concerned with status planning and issues connected with standardization, graphization, and modernization, during the second phase a number of scholars focused on the social, economic, and political effects of language contact. The papers in Wolfson and Manes (1985: ix), for example, were concerned with the ways that 'language use reflects and indeed influences social, economic or political inequality.' Rather than studying *languages* as entities with defined societal distributions and functions (with some languages designated as more appropriate than others for certain high status functions), sociolinguists focused on the status and relations of *speech communities* in defined contexts. In this approach, the connections between community attitudes and language policies were analyzed to explain why language x had a particular status – High or Low – and the consequences of this status for individuals and communities. In short, the status (and utility) of language x, as well as its viability in the short or long term, was correlated with the social and economic status of its speakers, and not just with the numbers of speakers or suitability for modernization. The supposed neutrality of stable diglossia as a means of furthering national development and modernization was called into question; historical inequalities and conflicts did not diminish with the selection of an indigenous language for Low variety functions, and designation of European languages for High functions tended to perpetuate socioeconomic asymmetries based on education, access to which was socially controlled by dominant groups (internally), and influenced by regional and global economic interests (externally).

We could characterize the second phase of work in LPP as one in which there was a growing awareness of the negative effects – and inherent limitations – of planning theory and models, and a realization that sociolinguistic constructs such as diglossia, bilingualism, and multilingualism were conceptually complex and ideologically laden and could not be easily fit into existing descriptive taxonomies. The choice of European languages as 'neutral media' to aid in national development tended to favor the economic interests of metropolitan countries, often with negative effects on the economic, social, and political interests of marginalized minority language speakers. The de facto privileging of certain languages and varieties in national language planning had the effect of limiting the utility and, hence, influence of thousands of indigenous languages

and their speakers in national (re)construction. Further, it became apparent that language choices could not be engineered to conform to 'enlightened' models of modernity; linguistic behavior was *social* behavior, motivated and influenced by attitudes and beliefs of speakers and speech communities, as well as by macro economic and political forces.

3. THE THIRD STAGE: THE NEW WORLD ORDER, POSTMODERNISM, LINGUISTIC HUMAN RIGHTS

The third period in language policy research, roughly from the mid-1980s to the present day, is still in its formative stage, and therefore difficult to characterize. Nonetheless, several important themes and issues have already been established in the literature.

The dominant global events during this period include massive population migrations, the re-emergence of national ethnic identities (and languages) coinciding with the breakup of the Soviet Union and the repatriation of former colonies, such as Hong Kong, along with countervailing movements to forge new regional coalitions, such as the European Union, in which local and regional languages must compete with supranational languages, such as English, French, and German (in the case of Europe). Operating along with geographical and political changes are forces associated with the globalization of capitalism, such as the domination of the media by a handful of multinationals (Said 1993). Some scholars find this centralization in the control and dissemination of culture worldwide to be a greater threat to independence than was colonialism itself:

The threat to independence in the late twentieth century from the new electronics could be greater than was colonialism itself. We are beginning to learn that decolonization and the growth of supra-nationalism were not the termination of imperial relationships but merely the extending of a geo-political web which has been spinning since the Renaissance. The new media have the power to penetrate more deeply into a 'receiving' culture than any previous manifestation of Western technology. The results could be immense havoc, an intensification of the social contradictions within developing societies today. (Smith 1980: 176, cited in Said 1993: 291–292)

These developments – devolution of the Soviet Union, evolution of national (and supranational) identities in Eastern and Western Europe, penetration of Western – especially North American – culture and technology in the developing world – have had consequences for the status (and in some cases, it has been argued, the viability) of languages, large and small. One area in LPP that has received particular attention is language loss, especially among so-called 'small' languages (Hale et al. 1992; Krauss 1992). Of the estimated 6000 languages spoken today, 95 percent of the world's population speak 100 languages, with 5 percent speaking the remaining thousands of languages (cited in Mühlhäusler 1996: 272). In Alaska and the Soviet North, about 45 of the 50 indigenous languages (90 %) are moribund; in Australia, about 90 percent of the aboriginal

languages still spoken are moribund (Krauss 1992: 5). In the United States, Krauss (1998: 11) reports that only 20 (13%) of the 155 extant Native North American languages are spoken by all generations including young children. Supporters of language maintenance draw parallels between biodiversity and cultural/linguistic diversity, with the assumption that 'cultural diversity might enhance biodiversity or vice versa' (Harmon 1996; Maffi 1996). Critics of these views argue that most languages (and species of animals and plants) that have ever existed are extinct; in short, critics claim that cultural (including linguistic) evolution is a 'natural' human phenomenon, influenced by the effects of contact, conquest, disease, and technological developments. Ladefoged (1992: 810) finds it 'paternalistic of linguists to assume they know what is best for the community' (see Dorian 1993 for a critical response to Ladefoged's position). However, the 'benefits of bio/linguistic diversity' versus 'language loss is natural' dichotomy is viewed as reductionist by many critical and postmodern theorists, but for different reasons. Critical scholars, such as Robert Phillipson, examine the links between the imposition of imperial languages and the fate of indigenous languages and cultures around the world. Phillipson (1997: 239) invokes the term 'linguistic imperialism' as a 'shorthand for a multitude of activities, ideologies and structural relationships . . . within an overarching structure of asymmetrical North/South relations, where language interlocks with other dimensions, cultural . . . economic and political.' In his analysis, language becomes a vector and means by which an unequal division of power and resources between groups is propagated ('linguicism': this term was first coined by Skutnabb-Kangas 1986), thwarting social and economic progress for those who do not learn the language of modernity – English – in former British and American colonies. One of the consequences of this process is the marginalization, and ultimately, loss of thousands of indigenous languages. Besides the indirect marginalization of languages through structural economic and ideological means, more direct methods have been adopted to suppress through legislation certain languages in education and in public life (e.g. Catalan, Kurdish, Amerindian languages, to name a few). The 'cure' for linguicism and linguistic genocide, in this analysis, involves a proactive political and moral response, especially the promotion – and acceptance – of linguistic human rights by states and international bodies as universal principles. Although several existing charters and documents protect cultural and social rights, Phillipson (1992: 95) concludes that 'the existing international or 'universal' declarations are in no way adequate to provide support for dominated languages.' Criticism of Phillipson's work has come from two directions. Some have argued that his model lacks empirical support (e.g. Conrad 1996; Davies 1996). Others, mostly sympathetic with many of Phillipson's ideas, have nonetheless argued that his model is too deterministic and monolithic in its assumptions and conclusions. These scholars, often associated with postmodern theoretical approaches, have offered more nuanced contextualized and historical descriptions of events and practices in, for example, India, Malaysia, and Singapore (Pennycook 1994),

and Jaffna, Sri Lanka (Canagarajah 1999). Pennycook (forthcoming) distinguishes between the 'structural power' of English and the 'discursive effects' of English; the latter approach reveals the 'ways in which ideologies related to English are imposed on, received by, or appropriated by users of English around the world.' In this approach, the relations between language policies and ideologies of power are complex; different means of achieving the same goals (e.g. economic control by imperial interests) can result in the support of, or restriction of, indigenous languages, with consequences unforeseen by planners. Canagarajah (forthcoming) uses a discourse analytic methodology to locate language use – choice of code and lexis – to account for the subtle ways in which peripheral communities have negotiated the ideological potential of English in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. In this approach, individual agency – and not impersonal ideological forces – is the locus of analysis.

The role of ideology⁴ in language policy has been investigated in more specific domains as well, whether by context (schools, the work place, the courts) or topic (education, accent discrimination, research methodology). James Tollefson (1989, 1991), influenced by the critical social theories of Jürgen Habermas, Anthony Giddens, and Michel Foucault, has explored the connections between ideologies of power in the modern state and the development of language policies in eight different countries. Terrence Wiley (1996, 1998) explores English-only and Standard English ideologies in the United States, and shows how these ideologies became hegemonic in the twentieth century, particularly with reference to language policies in public education. Other scholars who have investigated the connection between ideology and language policies in education include Giroux (1981); Tollefson (1986, 1991, 1995); Crawford (1989, 1992); Luke, McHoul and Mey (1990); Darder (1991); Cummins (1994); Freeman (1996); and Ricento (1998). Lippi-Green (1997) explores the ideologies that inform attitudes toward language, and hence language policies, in the U.S. and the negative consequences of such (often unofficial) policies for marginalized groups in the education system, the media, the workplace, and the judicial system. Moore (1996: 485), in a detailed analysis of Australia's two national language policies (the National Policy on Languages 1987 and the Australian Language and Literacy Policy 1991), argues for the need to 'bring to light the interestedness of describers of language policies . . . both in the academy and policymaking arenas . . . [since] our interestedness as scholars inevitably influences our choice and interpretation of data, the arguments to which our descriptions contribute, and the values that our analyses embody.' In a similar vein, Ricento (1998) argues that the evaluation of the relative effectiveness of bilingual education policies in U.S. public education varies according to the operating assumptions and expectations of different interested constituencies, but that the underlying and nearly universally shared goal of education policies – the cultural and linguistic assimilation of non-English-speakers – reflects ideologies of language and American identity that have become hegemonic, especially in the wake of the Americanization campaign, 1914–1924.

In all of the research mentioned in this section, the influence of both critical and postmodern theories and research methods is evident. This work clearly distances itself from previous models and theories in the LPP literature. While scholars in the first period of LPP research such as Fishman were aware of issues of hegemony and ideology, they did not position these ideas as central in processes of language planning and policy, nor did they explore the ways in which 'language policy arbitrarily gives importance to language in the organization of human societies' (Tollefson 1991: 2). Responding to such criticisms, Fishman (1994: 93) acknowledges that language planning has tended to reproduce sociocultural and econotechnical inequalities, and that language planning is often connected to the processes of Westernization and modernization. However, the fact that language planning 'can be used for evil purposes . . . must not blind us to the fact that language planning can be and has often been used for benevolent purposes' (Fishman 1994: 94). Fishman (1994: 97) separates the theory of language planning from its implementation, arguing that 'the specific criticisms of language planning . . . that flow from post-structuralist and neo-Marxist analyses of the economy, culture and ideology do not sufficiently differentiate between language planning theory and language planning practice,' adding that 'very little language planning practice has actually been informed by language planning theory.' Critics of classical language planning, such as Tollefson (1991), object to the characterization (whether explicitly or implicitly) of language *planning* as a neutral, often beneficial, problem-solving activity; this is precisely the sort of attitude that post-structural and neo-Marxist critics identify as ideological, and one which easily becomes hegemonic.

To summarize, the synthesis of elements of critical theory with an ecology of languages approach has led to the formulation of a new paradigm. As Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996: 429) put it, 'The ecology-of-language paradigm involves building on linguistic diversity worldwide, promoting multilingualism and foreign language learning, and granting linguistic human rights to speakers of all languages.' Macro sociopolitical forces, including the alleged effects of linguistic imperialism, and strategic factors (the desire to preserve and revitalize threatened languages and cultures) have clearly influenced – if not determined – the types of data collected, analysis of data, and policy recommendations made by researchers working in this paradigm. If the technocrats of LPP in the 1950s and 1960s could be criticized for their naive (or disingenuous) claims of political neutrality in their attempts to aid the program of Westernization and modernization in the developing world, the supporters of linguistic human rights of the 1980s and 1990s are susceptible to charges of utopianism in their ' . . . dream of modernist universalism' (Pennycook forthcoming). Another concern raised by critics of the language ecology/language rights approach is that discussions of language status are couched in the rhetoric of political science. For example, Conrad (1996: 19) argues that 'theories of conflicting nationalisms, imperialism, economic power, and contests of ideology are the products of a study of the

political nature of human beings.' Conrad is troubled that such theories have found their way 'more and more into a linguistics that is attempting to root itself in the social sciences . . . Contact studies become theories of conflicting languages, studies of dominations, and explorations of what Phillipson (1992) called 'linguicism.' As Hymes (1985: vii) noted, 'Were there no political domination or social stratification in the world, there would still be linguistic inequality . . .' He goes on to say that:

Allocation and hierarchy are intrinsic. Nor should the investments of many, perhaps even including ourselves, in some existing arrangements be underestimated. Effective change in the direction of greater equality will only partly be change in attitude, or removal of external domination; it will be inseparable in many cases from change of social system. (Hymes 1985: vii)

In this regard, it should be noted that major developments in the social sciences over the last one hundred years have often been motivated in large measure by the desire to change the social system, to validate existing social policies and practices, or to counteract hegemonic beliefs about human nature. The attempt by critics of language ecology/language rights to separate the 'science' of language from the 'science' of politics harks back to attempts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to separate the 'science' of biology from developments in cultural studies, later to become the 'science' of anthropology. In explaining Franz Boas' conception of culture and opposition to a racial interpretation of human behavior, Carl Degler (1991: 82) demonstrates quite convincingly that '. . . Boas did not arrive at that position from a disinterested, scientific inquiry into a vexed if controversial question. Instead, his idea derived from an ideological commitment that began in his early life and academic experiences in Europe and continued in America to shape his professional outlook . . . there is no doubt that he had a deep interest in collecting evidence and designing arguments that would rebut or refute an ideological outlook – racism – which he considered restrictive upon individuals and undesirable for society.' It took more than fifty years, from the time Theodor Waitz published his first book (1858 – *On the unity of the human species and the natural condition of man* [the first of a six volume work]) outlining the view that all people, black or white, high or low in cultural achievement, were 'equally destined for liberty', for cultural explanations to rival, and eventually surpass (at least in the scholarly literatures), Social Darwinian explanations for differences in societies. In retrospect, the assumptions, methods, and conclusions of both Darwin and Boas – although flawed and incomplete – broke important ground, were often misunderstood and misapplied in other domains, reflected their times and personal histories, and led to entirely new fields of study, viz. evolutionary biology and anthropology. It may take as long for a new paradigm of the sociolinguistics of society to evolve, a paradigm that would account for the political and economic dimensions no less than for the social and cognitive correlates in explaining language behavior.

CONCLUSION

Few fields of study are immune to macro sociopolitical forces; yet, as a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field that embraces the core disciplines of linguistics, political science, sociology, and history, LPP is especially susceptible to such forces. Developments in critical social theory, along with a continuing assault on autonomous structural linguistics that started in the 1960s have at least in part unfolded in reaction to these larger sociopolitical forces and processes (nation-building and nationalism, Western-driven globalization of capital, technology and communications, persistent threats to the viability of marginalized languages and cultures, the break-up of empires and failures of 'modernization' in many countries, the persistence of socioeconomic inequalities and injustices, and so on). Important work in postmodern theories (especially in discourse analysis) has shown how the material and the cultural are interrelated in ways that move the field of LPP beyond the taxonomies and dichotomies which have dominated it since its inception.⁵ Important work in language ecology and human rights has fundamentally shifted the focus of research in the past ten years. Clearly, these advances in language in society and policy studies have permeated the thinking of scholars who consider themselves active in the field. Even when language preservation or language rights are not the focus of attention, research that is concerned with the education sector, with languages of wider communication for purposes of economic development, and with corpus planning for indigenous, or indigenized, languages addresses these concerns (see, for example, Kaplan and Baldauf 1999). Certainly, much of the cutting edge research deals as much with the limitations of language planning (e.g. Moore 1996; Schiffman 1996; Burnaby and Ricento 1998; Fettes 1998) as it does with the promise of language planning in promoting social change (e.g. Freeman 1996; Hornberger 1998; McCarty and Zepeda 1998). Whether the ecology of languages paradigm emerges as the most important conceptual framework for LPP research remains to be seen. What is clear is that as a subfield of sociolinguistics, LPP must deal with issues of language behavior and identity, and so must be responsive to developments in discourse analysis, ethnography, and critical social theory. It seems that the key variable which separates the older, positivistic/technicist approaches from the newer critical/postmodern ones is agency, that is, the role(s) of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, attitudes, and ultimately policies. The most important, and as yet unanswered, question to be addressed by researchers is 'Why do individuals opt to use (or cease to use) particular languages and varieties for specified functions in different domains, and how do those choices influence – and how are they influenced by – institutional language policy decision-making (local to national and supranational)?' The implications of this question are that micro-level research (the sociolinguistics of language) will need to be integrated with macro-level investigations (the sociolinguistics of society) to provide a more

complete explanation for language behavior – including language change – than is currently available. We have a better understanding today than we did forty years ago about patterns of language use in defined contexts and the effects of macro-sociopolitical forces on the status and use of languages at the societal level. What is required now is a conceptual framework (ecology of languages or perhaps some other) to link the two together. The development of such a framework will lead us to the next – as yet unnamed – phase of language policy and planning research and scholarship.

NOTES

1. This is an expanded and revised version of a paper originally presented in March 1998 at the annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics in Seattle, Washington. I would like to thank Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and the editors for their insightful comments and suggestions for improving this paper. However, the author assumes full responsibility for the ideas and analyses contained herein.
 2. I deliberately use 'language policy' as a superordinate term which subsumes 'language planning.' Language policy research is concerned not only with official and unofficial acts of governmental and other institutional entities, but also with the historical and cultural events and processes that have influenced, and continue to influence, societal attitudes and practices with regard to language use, acquisition and status. See Ricento and Hornberger (1996) for an extended discussion.
 3. A reviewer of this article noted the Euro-american bias in the literature review. While a valid criticism, this observation provides yet further evidence of the domination of western(ized) thinking in dealing with issues in the developing world.
 4. The complexity of 'ideology' is explored in Eagleton (1991). In the research cited in this paper, it generally means '[having] to do with legitimating the power of a dominant social group or class' (Eagleton 1991: 5). Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) provide a useful review of the various ways in which the terms 'ideology' and 'language' have been used in anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies.
 5. See Schiffman (1996: 26–54) for a critical review of typologies of multilingualism and language policy. Hornberger (1994) presents a framework integrating three decades of language planning scholarship.
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