



<http://www.diva-portal.org>

This is the published version of a chapter published in *Språkdidaktik: researching language teaching and learning*.

Citation for the original published chapter:

Ivanov, S., Deutschmann, M., Enever, J. (2015)

Researching language-in-education policies: evidence from the Seychelles, Russia and the European Union.

In: Eva Lindgren and Janet Enever (ed.), *Språkdidaktik: researching language teaching and learning* (pp. 85-101). Umeå: Department of Language Studies, Umeå University

N.B. When citing this work, cite the original published chapter.

Permanent link to this version:

<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:umu:diva-104303>

6

RESEARCHING LANGUAGE-IN-EDUCATION POLICIES: EVIDENCE FROM THE SEYCHELLES, RUSSIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Sergej Ivanov, Mats Deutschmann & Janet Enever

Introduction

In this chapter, we consider how the shaping of language policy occurs as an outcome of language planning in three distinctive policy contexts: status planning in the Seychelles, national literacy planning as evidenced by policy documentation in secondary school policies in Russia and soft policy measures for foreign language learning in European Union countries.

Spolsky (2004) proposes that three components of language policy can be identified in any speech community:

- language practices – the languages that a speech community selects as part of its linguistic repertoire and the ways in which these are used;
- language beliefs or ideology – the beliefs the speech community has about languages and their use;
- specific efforts made to modify or influence the practices of the speech community.

In the three examples of language policy discussed here we consider all three elements, drawing out evidence of the dimensions of power that may be employed in the formulation of language policy (Lukes, 2005) and considering the societal implications such decisions may have.

Language planning and language policy as a field of academic research emerged in the late 1950s as former colonial regions of the world began to establish themselves as independent nations. Kaplan et al (2000: 2) report that as the perceived need for a common language of education grew, so the field of language planning and policy became established. More recent research has explored many areas of policy at macro, meso and micro levels, fully acknowledging the complexity of the social context and the symbolic value of languages in the process of policy-making and implementation. With the growth of the research field a number of sub-divisions have evolved. For the purposes of this chapter we will adopt the terminology established by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) in identifying these sub-divisions of language planning, briefly summarised from Liddicoat (2013: 2):

- *Status planning* – language planning activities related to the selection of languages to perform particular functions in a society and the varieties of languages which will be used.
- *Corpus planning* – language planning activities relating to the form of a language.
- *Prestige or image planning* – language planning activities relating to the ways in which particular language or language varieties are perceived and valued by a community.
- *Language-in-education or acquisition planning* – language planning activities relating to the teaching and learning of languages (including literacy development), especially at school.

As global economic forces in the twenty-first century have accentuated the interconnectedness of nations, so the pressure to adapt to increased educational mobility and competition has continued to grow. Varied policy responses to such forces have included: the adoption of new language policies which may in turn lead to restoration of a prior policy paradigm (see case 1); emerging evidence of contradictions between the curriculum objectives and their means (see case 2); national policy formulated in the context of a regional educational market (see case 3). In the following sections we do not attempt to comprehensively cover the field, rather, we bring together some studies recently conducted by the authors, as illustrative of language-in-education policy in three quite different contexts: the Seychelles, Russia and the European Union. Drawing on distinctive theoretical paradigms, we explore (1) issues of language status and prestige in the post-colonial educational context of the Seychelles from a historical perspective, (2) conceptions of criticality as an aspect of literacy development in the educational policy for Russian upper-secondary schools and their potential consequences, and (3) political macro strategies currently shaping early foreign language policy and its implementation in European primary schools.

Case 1: Language policies in the Seychelles

As Cameron (2006: 141) points out, ‘language is not simply a vehicle for other ideological processes but is itself shaped by ideological processes’. This is particularly evident in many post-colonial nations, which had to start anew and faced great challenges with respect to language planning at the end of the colonial era. Such challenges included the selection of national languages as well as language-in-education planning in systems that were previously built on those of the former colonial powers. This case, based largely on interview data collected in November, 2012 (extensive interview conducted with Seychelles Senior Curriculum Development officer Elva Gedeon), offers an example of the politics of language and its impact on education systems in one nation, the Seychelles, a small island-nation off the east coast of Africa. In 1982, Seychelles was the first Creole-speaking nation in the world to introduce a Creole language in schools (Siegel 2005: 144), yet more than thirty years later Seychellois Creole, or Seselwa (hereafter referred to as SC) is still struggling to compete with French and English. Here we explore some of the reasons for this. Although a very specific example, this analysis reveals the presence of Spolsky’s (2004) three components of language

policy, supporting Kaplan's (2002) assertion that the need for language planning was one outcome of a post-colonial era for newly independent states.

Background

A key to the current language situation in the Seychelles is its historical past. The Seychelles has no native indigenous population and was uninhabited until 1770, when the French established a small settlement (Scarr, 2000). By 1815, the population had reached 7000, largely (85-90%) made up of African slaves governed by a relatively small group of French land owners (Scarr, 2000; Fleischmann, 2008). Strategies of 'deculturation', whereby all African languages and cultural expressions were suppressed (Chaudenson 2001: 91), led to the emergence of SC, a French-based Creole closely related to those of Mauritius and Rodriguez. By 1815, when the Seychelles became a British colony, SC had become firmly established as the language of everyday communication.

The British presence was mainly restricted to the administrative sphere, where English also was the official language. French kept its role in religious practices and high culture, areas controlled by the francophone elite of colonial descent, the so-called *Grands Blancs* (Bollée 1993: 88). During the entire colonial period, SC remained a low status language confined to informal discourse, existing only in spoken form.

In education, French remained the medium of instruction until the 1940s, when the church-owned schools were replaced by more formal and organized arrangements, based on the English system and language (Fleischmann 2008: 74). SC was completely banned from education: 'Creole was out of the question. We were punished if we spoke Creole in class' (Gedeon, 2012). A prerequisite for access to positions of power among the general SC-speaking population (94% according to Momou, 2004: 46) was thus mastery of English, and to a lesser extent French.

Establishment of Seychellois Creole (SC)

After independence in 1976, the elevation of SC to the status of a language was not given, even among its native speakers: 'The dominant group, [...], had managed to persuade the Creole-speakers that their speech was so inferior in status as to be a non-language' (D'Offay, 1980: 268). This topic was also a politically loaded issue since the promotion of SC was initially closely associated with the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF), who seized power in 1977.

After intensive efforts of prestige and status planning (Liddicoat, 2013: 2), however, the status of SC gradually improved and began its journey towards becoming an official language with a role in education. This was by no means an easy undertaking and involved substantial corpus planning (Haugen 1966); there was no written standard, no orthography, no formalised grammar and no written literature.

The implementation of SC in education, as a medium of instruction and a subject in its own right, involved intensive processes of language-in-education planning (see Fleischmann 2008: 58-67 for further details of this process). In more practical terms, curricula and learning

materials had to be constructed and teachers had to be trained to use SC as medium of instruction. According to Elva Gedeon, who was closely involved in this process, this mammoth task took less than a year to accomplish, and in January 1982 Seychelles became the first Creole-speaking nation in the world to implement Creole as a medium of instruction in education.

SC in education

There were two primary reasons for promoting SC in education according to Elva Gedeon. Firstly, it was an important part of 'the development of the Seychellois identity'. Secondly, there were good pedagogical reasons for implementing SC: 'when the child learns the basic concepts in his own language he will succeed better' (Gedeon, 2012). With these aims in mind, SC was thus written into the curriculum as medium of instruction from primary 1-4 and was also taught as a separate subject until primary 6. SC thus formed part of a trilingual policy where English still remained the main medium of instruction from primary 5 and French was taught as a foreign language from primary 1 (Purvis, 2004; Campling, Confiance & Purvis, 2011).

Data evidence showed that the strategy of initially instructing children in their mother tongue had many positive effects; in comparisons of the last classes to be taught in English and the first taught under the new system, the latter outscored the former in almost every subject, including French and the sciences, and also performed equally well in English (Bickerton, 1990:48). In addition, literacy rates among 15-24 year olds went up from 57.3 % in 1971 to 84.2 % by 1987 (Campling, Confiance & Purvis, 2011: 51).

Setbacks and challenges

SC's role in education and elsewhere has, however, suffered setbacks in recent years. Following concerns raised by the Language Policy Review Committee (LPRC) report in 1994, SC's role as medium of instruction was reduced to the first two years of schooling in 1996. One of the justifications for this, according to Elva Gedeon, was that policy makers maintained that increased exposure to English in popular media meant that children were better equipped to handle an earlier switch to English. This supports Siegel's claims that a programme of literacy in a Pidgin or Creole in post-colonial countries is transitional and 'not an end in itself but rather [...] a means of acquiring literacy in the European official language(s), which is used for higher education and government [...]' (2005: 149). Indeed, in our interview, Elva Gedeon stressed the importance of English in administration, in economic transactions and in the tourism industry, something that is also supported by the findings of Laversuch (2008).

There were further reasons for the limitations of SC in education. For example, teachers reported finding the transition from one medium of instruction to another challenging, claiming that they had to 're-teach' children basic concepts in primary 5 as they had failed to grasp these in English. Although Elva Gedeon expressed doubts as to the accuracy of these arguments, the transition period is still reported as challenging by a number of primary school teachers (teachers' evidence gathered during a preparatory workshop). Teachers complained about an overloaded curriculum which made it difficult to prepare the children adequately for the language-shift (Deutschmann, 2012). The relatively negative attitudes of teachers and

students towards SC probably also contribute to its low status (Fleischmann, 2008: 130), arguably a consequence of the continued reliance on the British GCSE system in upper secondary education. Elva Gedeon also lists lack of resources (for example, for the production of learning materials) as another primary obstacle for further promoting SC in school.

Analysis of current situation

In spite of the concerted efforts to raise the status of SC and to further its position in Seychelles society, SC is still struggling to find its place in the current trilingual language policy. Laversuch (2008) gives a number of socioeconomic reasons for this, such as a continued strong Franco/Anglo presence in banking and finance, resulting in English, and to a lesser extent French, being the languages used in documentation of official transactions. SC has not found its role in such domains, and while most Seychellois are proud of their language 'they will subconsciously associate development with French and English' (Mahoune 2000:n.p). SC has also yet to find its role in government administration, a result of colonial tradition according to Choppy (2002:17).

The current state of affairs is a balancing act where either recessive or expansive cycles could be the outcome (Bossong, 1980): On the one hand, lack of efforts in prestige and status planning could give further fuel to those that claim that SC is unfit for official purposes, resulting in further limitations to the domains where it is used, ultimately, in a worst case scenario, leaving SC in no better position than that which it had during the pre-independence period. On the other hand, continued and expanded efforts in promoting SC could mean that it grows in status and becomes acknowledged, alongside English and French, as fit for use in official domains such as administration and business, thereby motivating its promotion in education to higher levels.

What the costs and benefits of either model are is impossible to say. Wolff cautions that any developments need to be considered in the 'inescapable context of globalisation' (2006: 33). On the other hand, much research carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa speaks for the promotion of bi- or tri-lingual policies in all stages of primary, secondary and tertiary education in order to maximise the quality of education by learning through a familiar language, and thereby allowing for maximal social mobility and full democratic participation (Wolff 2011: 101-2).

In conclusion, the decisions and undertakings facing the Seychelles in the coming years are complex, but by no means unique. It is yet another example of the challenges facing language policy makers in the post-colonial world as they struggle to 'achieve socioeconomic empowerment without sacrificing their socio-cultural endowment' (Laversuch 2008: 390).

Case 2: Criticality in language-in-education policy in Russian upper-secondary school

In this section, we shift our attention from an island country in the Indian Ocean to a country that covers a substantial part of Europe and Asia to take a sample from the language policy in the Russian upper-secondary education.

School is a stage where the younger generation scores points in their quest to climb the social ladder. The rules of the quest are defined in the national curriculum and other educational policy documents by the older generation that has power to decide what valid knowledge is and control over how it is acquired. In Goodlad's conceptualisation (1979: 61) these are formal curricula whose core features are sanctioned and available in written form. In Russia, upper-secondary school is the last stage of compulsory education, after which young people may progress to higher education or move into paid employment. One of the competences, viewed as crucial to their further success, is criticality (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya i nauki, 2012). Regarding criticality as being incorporated into literacy, the focus of this section is on language-in-education planning (Liddicoat, 2013: 2). Here, we explore what framework is provided for the development of Russian upper-secondary students' criticality and ask what conceptions of criticality are promoted within the formal curricula. This task is undertaken with a heightened awareness of linguistic choices (Englund, 2011) that are evident in the policy documents arguing how these choices might influence the pedagogical practice. The conceptions of criticality will be clarified in the light of interpretations contained in previous and future policy documents.

Lundgren (2011: 17) claims that curriculum is 'the basic principles for cultural and social reproduction', for which pedagogic practice is a fundamental social context (Bernstein, 2000: 3). The notion of control is translated into the pedagogic practice as framing, which was initially understood as anything that sets certain time and space limits for pedagogic practices at school (Dahlöf, 1969: 60). Later, it was used as an explanatory concept, which constrains and directs the pedagogic practice (Kallós and Lundgren, 1979: 30). In current curriculum theory, frames serve not to predict why exactly something has happened but to foresee what cannot happen in the given circumstances (Lindblad, Linde and Naeslund, 1999: 100). This limitation is attributed to the socially constructed nature of the pedagogic practice, i.e. what frames for pedagogic practice exist is a consequence of what is constructed as the frames by the people involved. Jarl & Rönnerberg (2010: 89) argue that the frames are first interpreted in the classroom. In this way pedagogic practice is seen as a result of transactions between the educational actors rather than subordination of the 'lower' classroom level to the 'higher' policy level. Although this might be true, the language use in the formal curricula is assumed to contribute to the actual pedagogic practice, as Goodlad (1979: 26) pointed out: '[T]here probably is more linearity than many teachers would like and less than some legislators might prefer'.

According to the federal law, eleven-year education is compulsory in Russia until the age of 18 (*Federalny zakon "Ob obrazovanii v Rossiyskoy Federatsii"*, 2012: 201-202). After nine years of schooling, students have to choose either an upper-secondary stream or a vocational stream, both of which qualify students for tertiary education. The latest national curriculum for upper-secondary education was passed in 2012 and has been gradually implemented from the academic year 2013/2014. However, schools may continue to follow the 2004 curriculum until 2020. The relatively long period of transition offers schools time to reconsider their approaches in the design of pedagogic practice. However, it also brings about a significant change when different conceptions of criticality compete and exist simultaneously. A comparative analysis of these two curricula for upper-secondary school offers the potential to

reveal shifts in conceptions of criticality and the degree of significance placed on them. This analysis is achieved through searching for words containing the root 'krit' (from Russian for 'critical') and interpreting their status in these two documents.

In the preamble to the older curriculum, criticality is not mentioned as an objective but referred to as a generic learning skill in information and communication activities and worded as 'critical assessment of reliability of acquired information' (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF, 2004c: 9). Similarly, the latest curriculum stipulates criticality as a generic learning skill, worded as a skill to 'critically assess and interpret information from various sources' (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya i nauki RF, 2012: 6 [author's translation]). However, *being a critical thinker* is also stated as an objective of personality development and considered as a feature of an *upper-secondary student's profile* (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya i nauki RF, 2012: 3). This indicates a wider application of criticality, which transcends the school environment and enters the space of everyday life. Further, it is conceived not only as an external skill that upper-secondary students should master but also as an inner characteristic of their nature. The placement of this conception in the preamble signals that working with students' criticality development should permeate all school subjects. Although the wider application of criticality is evident in the 2004 curriculum in some subject syllabi, the status of criticality appears lower as it is linked more directly to the subject, rather than being positioned as an overarching objective. In curriculum theory terms, the framing in the latest curriculum facilitates students' criticality development in all subjects, whereas the framing in the older curriculum makes it significantly less possible in many subjects. As the more detailed new course syllabi are not yet available, let us consider how criticality is further interpreted at the subject level in the 2004 curriculum.

Bearing in mind that every teacher is a teacher of literacy and that many content area educators are still grappling with the inclusion of literacy development as an essential part of their respective subjects (Draper, 2002), we draw on the example of history to illustrate how language-in-education planning may impact on the realities of pedagogic practice across the curriculum. In upper-secondary school, history is a compulsory subject where criticality is referred to at the subject level. The language use in the history classroom is likely to be particularly interesting as teachers and students engage in building a legitimate picture of the national and international past, situating their country in the world context, negotiating and constructing a national identity. The policy constraints on what should be occurring in the history classroom are investigated here to consider what kinds of criticality might be promoted.

As with any other subject, history can be taken as a basic or advanced course. The course description in the curriculum consists of teaching objectives, an obligatory minimum content, and learning outcomes. In addition, there is a separate history syllabus for each course that states the total number of teaching hours, distributed amongst the prescribed topics, leaving about 14% of the teaching hours in reserve. The reserve is earmarked for the variable part of the syllabus 'to adopt uniquely designed approaches, use various teaching forms and implement modern teaching methods and pedagogical technologies' (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF, 2004a; [author's translation]). At the basic level, the reserve is 10 hours per

year (Ibid.). In practice, these are often used to compensate for the lessons that are cancelled as a result of public holidays and/or frequent annual occasions when school is closed for quarantine due to high incidence of infectious diseases, for instance flu, among the students. The reality of these interruptions may well be a crucial condition preventing teachers from working with anything more than the obligatory minimum content, which is effectively a long list of topics that focuses on the knowledge to be acquired. Given that criticality is regarded as a skill in the curriculum, this might make it extraneous to the pedagogic practice. Further, a striking difference between the basic and advanced courses is that the former does not list criticality as a teaching objective but only as a learning outcome. According to the syllabus, an upper-secondary student should be able (1) to critically analyse the historical source for its authorship and aims, the time of creation and its circumstances; (2) to use the skills of historical analysis to critically perceive the social information in everyday life. At the advanced level, criticality is referred as a teaching objective, conceived as developing the ability to understand the historical context of current events and processes and critically analyse them to form an opinion on the world and to relate it to existing worldviews. In addition to the learning outcomes for the basic course, students are also supposed to critically consider the reliability of the source and critically understand the societal processes and situations (Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF, 2004c: 114, 128-129). It can be seen then, that the advanced syllabus indicates a more complex conception of criticality, which emphasises its application to contemporary phenomena, assessment of reliability of information, and a scaffolding role of criticality in shaping students' worldviews. Provided that criticality is both a teaching objective and a learning outcome at the advanced level, this presupposes that considerable time should be devoted to its development in the history classroom. Nonetheless, similarly to the basic syllabus, most of teaching hours are already assigned to cover the prescribed topics of what appears to be a strongly knowledge-oriented curriculum (see Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF, 2004b).

A further contributing factor to the framing of students' criticality development in the history classroom is the structure of the unified state exam, which provides a bigger picture of the constraints on the pedagogic practice. Taking this exam is an admission requirement for those students who would like to pursue their academic careers in the socio-political field. The design of the exam gives a clear indication that only knowledge is to be tested, with the likely washback effect of moving criticality further down on the priority list for teachers and students.

The analysis of the formal curricula has revealed a contradiction between the aims of education and its structure in relation to Russian upper-secondary students' literacy development in regard to criticality. Although criticality is stipulated as a teaching objective and learning outcome in at least some subjects, the framing factors of the 2004 knowledge-oriented curriculum such as time distribution, criticality conception as a skill, and ways of controlling the learning outcomes may hinder the potential for pedagogic practice to be rich in examples of criticality development. Many schools might find it necessary to allocate their local extra time resources to achieve this objective. However, how much time and effort would be devoted to this, if any at all given that schools' accountability rests heavily upon the results of the state unified exams, might be entirely arbitrary. Some careful language-in-education

planning needs to be in place to facilitate the incorporation of literacy development in all subjects and to encourage content area teachers to engage in a quest for criticality.

Case 3: European foreign language policy and primary implementation

In this section we adopt a wider, regional perspective to explore the mechanisms developed by the current 28 member countries of the European Union (EU) to encourage convergences of language-in-education policy in the early (primary) phase of compulsory education.

In discussing questions of foreign languages in Europe it is important to recognise firstly that ideologies of language continue to be very evident in Europe today – a region where the concept of a national standard language has been employed to define and re-define the boundaries of kingdoms and nation states since the Middle Ages (Swaan, 2007: 3). Blommaert and Rampton (2011: 3) report on a growing body of research which draws on an ethnographic framework for evidence of changing ideologies of language, moving away from concepts of *boundedness*. They propose that named languages such as English or German are ‘ideological constructions historically tied to the emergence of the nation-state’ (op cit, 2011: 4); nonetheless, the ideology of boundedness has consistently gained a central position in much of European policy-making since the advent of an increased focus on languages introduced by the Lisbon Strategy (European Parliament, 2000).

The Lisbon Strategy established a goal for Europe of becoming ‘the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world’ (European Parliament, 2000: 5). Within this framework we can identify a step change in the transfer of policy between the member states, under the auspices of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). This procedure increasingly operated as a key governance strategy for the promotion of multilingualism as an essential tool for future economic success through the production of recommendations, opinions, reports, joint communications, statistical indicators and action plans, employing these tools of soft policy for influencing policy makers at national level. One of the first soft policy influences on languages in the first phase of schooling was the Action Plan 2004-6 Commission of the European Communities (2003) which recommended that ‘member states should move towards ensuring that foreign language learning at primary school is effective’ (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 7). This was followed by a number of guides for language teacher education and language policy. In 2007 a new funding stream of 7 billion euros for language projects and research was established (Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-13), confirming the increasing prioritisation of languages policy in the EU. Alongside this, statistical reports of the provision of languages in education have been published every three years (Eurydice Key Data Series, 2012) and, subsequently, the first European survey on language competencies. *Surveylang*. (European Commission, 2012). A common thread revealed by the indicators in these documents has been the increasingly earlier start to foreign languages (FLs) which has become almost the norm in Europe today. Eurydice Key Data Series (2012: 27) reports that, ‘(b)etween 1993/94 and 2010/11, only nine countries or regions within countries did not lower the starting age for the compulsory learning of a foreign language by all students’.

The production of this plethora of reports, indicators and recommendations has been achieved through a process of coordinated networking meetings, exchange of data, development of shared projects and other similar initiatives. Whilst such mechanisms cannot always hope to be of relevance to all countries, given the somewhat different constructions of national education systems, nonetheless there is evidence of convergence in some areas of education policy. In the following section we will discuss key findings from a study of early language learning in Europe (ELLiE 2006-10) as one example of how European funding has been employed in the development of networks, reports and indices which may contribute to increased convergence in language policy across Europe.

The ELLiE study was set up to explore the implementation of early FL learning across a range of European contexts. The transnational and longitudinal nature of the study allowed the research team to investigate what ordinary state primary schools could realistically achieve over time in various contexts, drawing on a study sample of 1400 children, their parents, teachers, and school principals. An initial scoping year was partially funded by the British Council, with a further three years of funding received from the European Commission (Lifelong Learning Programme, 2007-13). The conditions of the European research grant required the development of indicators to provide guidance on how to address ‘weaknesses in preschools and in obligatory education concerning acquisition of key competences’ (European Commission, 2006: 19). Here we draw on illustrative examples from the ELLiE study, representing four of the main decision areas in policy-making: start age and language choice decisions, teacher education provision and language aims.

Start age and language choice

Of the seven ELLiE country contexts, four had national policies requiring the introduction of the first FL from age six or seven (Italy, Spain, Croatia and Poland). England also planned to make the first FL compulsory from September 2014, whilst Sweden maintains a flexible policy, allowing schools to introduce the first FL at any point between six and ten years, with a requirement for a total number of teaching hours by the end of grade 4. Increasingly, Swedish schools are introducing the first FL from either grades 1 or 2. Interestingly, the Netherlands has the latest compulsory start age – ten years – however, in this context exposure to English outside the classroom has resulted in one of the highest levels of fluency in Europe.

Overwhelmingly, schools in each of the ELLiE countries (excepting England) have chosen to introduce English first. National policies however often offer a choice of languages. For example: Poland specifies that English, German, French or Russian may be taught in grades 1-3, but approximately 93% of schools choose English (ELLiE team, 2010). In the Swedish national curriculum the primary school syllabus talks of the three core subjects of Swedish, Maths and English, later listing modern languages for study from the age of twelve. This wording appears to position English as serving the function of a basic skill rather than a FL. In England, the choice is more difficult as many languages vie for positions of most value to native speakers of English. Finally, in 2014, a decision was taken to allow schools to freely choose which language should be introduced. Given the above evidence, it could now be argued that the goal of overcoming weaknesses in key competences by the introduction of an earlier start to FLs has simply led to more English, earlier, in many parts of Europe.

Teacher education provision

Evidence from the ELLiE study indicates that qualified teacher supply in FLs for this age group is inadequate in most countries. There is little agreement on the most appropriate teacher model for FLs for this age group. Countries, regions and individual schools are uncertain whether a specialist FL teacher (who may teach children from 6-12 years) is more appropriate, or a primary class teacher with additional expertise in teaching the FL to this age group. Consequently, pre-service courses differ in the priority given to FL fluency and methodology knowledge, whilst in-service courses are reportedly insufficiently available in many of the ELLiE countries. From the seven-country sample, only Croatia had made it a requirement that all primary teachers should attend regular in-service courses for teaching FLs. This finding partly reflects the different traditions of teacher education across Europe. However, it also provides evidence of the extent to which policy makers may or may not perceive an early start to FLs as an important priority within their broader education policy remit.

Language aims

Policy statements across the seven ELLiE countries are remarkably similar with regard to anticipated language outcomes. The six countries with full EU membership during the period of the ELLiE study drew on the framework of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to identify expected outcomes of A1, A1+ or A2 levels of language achievement. Croatia (an applicant country for EU membership at the time of the study) similarly referred to the A1 level, whilst also emphasising an age-appropriate view of language learning during the primary phase of schooling, identifying goals, 'based on a multisensory and holistic approach and grounded in situation-based oral communication' (Republika Hrvatska.Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, 2010: 85).

Evidence from classrooms across the ELLiE country contexts indicated quite substantial variations in response to the stated language aims. Frequently, lesson observations revealed broader educational aims not focusing on language goals alone. Teacher interviews in England, Sweden and the Netherlands confirmed that there was little or no tradition of using commercially produced language courses with this age group in these countries, whilst in Spain, Italy, Poland and Croatia coursebooks were frequently used from Grade 1 or 2. Where coursebook-based lessons were conducted by a specialist language teacher a clear language focus was observable, whilst lessons conducted by a generalist primary teacher, drawing on a range of self-selected teaching materials, sometimes resulted in a more broadly educational approach to language teaching.

Linked to the above, the use of the CEFR descriptors as a reference for this age group has been questioned. Linguists have expressed concerns as to their appropriacy (Little 2007:651; Edelenbos et al, 2006: 65), arguing that they fail to capture the true nature of learning at this phase. Longitudinal evidence from the ELLiE study indicated the erratic, sometimes recursive and non-linear nature of children's language learning (Enever, forthcoming) – a feature that the CEFR descriptors is wholly unable to reflect. In this respect, then, the appeal of an incremental set of descriptors appears to have led to unquestioning convergence in

Europe, thus failing to provide well-informed, age-appropriate guidance on which teachers can base their curriculum planning.

The three central themes of language-in-education policy discussed here appear to have been nudged towards convergence with the tools of the OMC to varying extents. Changes in start age policy and language choice decisions have responded both to the influence of comparative data publication, reports from expert groups highlighting the potential benefits of early language learning and to a similar, widespread trend across Asia. Together, these factors have precipitated unprecedented reform of primary curricula throughout Europe. In similar fashion, national policy statements on expected language outcomes by the end of primary school are now very much in agreement throughout Europe. The CEFR has provided a convenient set of descriptors for arriving at this convergence, with little challenge to their appropriateness so far. Evidence from the ELLiE study suggests there remains much to be done in terms of in-service support for teachers in coping with this reform. It will require a substantial allocation of funding by individual nation states if this is to be addressed. In the current economic situation in many parts of Europe it seems unlikely that this will occur in the immediate future.

Discussion

The policy cases introduced in this chapter are illustrative of the diversity of the contemporary field of study. All three reflect patterns of change in language policies that can be found across the world today.

The debate over language status in a small island community is today affected by the growth of digital technologies and the heightened global interconnectivity that has resulted. In this changed world the societal benefits of maintaining a cohesive community through the vehicle of a shared tradition of language may no longer seem so relevant to some, as the advantages to be gained through membership of a globally powerful community, interacting through the vehicle of a widely spoken language. In this instance we can observe what Schattschneider (1960) described as ‘the mobilization of bias’ occurring as influential members of the local community promote ‘a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures (rules of the game) for the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970: 43). Further research will be needed to assess the exact dimensions of power that currently operate to limit SC as the medium of instruction to just the first two years of primary schooling in the Seychelles today.

The application of curriculum theory tools to policy documentation for the Russian upper-secondary school has revealed how language-in-education-planning may help shape the pedagogic practice. This, in turn, may affect development of a young person’s individual sense of identity in more or less desirable ways. Thus, we can again see how the rules of the game (Bachrach and Baratz, *op. cit.*) are played out in the formation of policy through the covert agenda setting that has allowed a particular selection of conceptions of criticality to be included in the curriculum and other conceptions to be excluded. Further research will be needed to evaluate the extent to which this policy documentation actually impacts on

classroom practices, learning outcomes and the shaping of young people's understanding of concepts of criticality and its potential impact on their developing personal identities.

The study of the soft policy features of contemporary national education policy-making in EU member countries reflects a more three-dimensional view of power operating overtly, covertly and latently to control the political agenda, prevent certain issues being discussed and to legitimate particular policy choices over others (Lukes, 2005: 133). In the study of this phenomenon we see a step change in approaches to national language-in-education policy making which has become possible only as a result of the agreement of EU member countries to move beyond a purely economic union, aiming to learn from each other through the mechanisms of meetings, joint projects and expert advisory groups rather than formulating national policy in the isolation of national consultative bodies. In such a complex network of relationships it becomes increasingly difficult to identify where power lies and who is best placed to utilize such power. It is under such circumstances that the potential for the exercise of latent (invisible) power becomes more possible and we find the hegemony of dominant discourse operates to allow dissent and yet prevent, or at least limit, any real change in direction. So, for example, whilst the relevance of the CEFR descriptors for evaluating young children's achievements in FL learning is quite widely questioned, various modified forms of these descriptors are now proving to be influential even beyond Europe. So it is that the OMC in Europe has facilitated the growth of supranational mechanisms that seem likely to further extend their spheres of influence globally, assuming EU member states are able to move forward from the current economic instabilities and find new ways of ensuring some degree of economic union.

Conclusions

The study of language policy inevitably brings the researcher into contact with ideologies of language within specific communities. Reaching an understanding of how a particular ideology contributes to the maintenance, stability and continuing evolution of language in the community is a vital part of the research process. We hope that in this chapter we have introduced some aspects of that process and inspired the reader to explore the field further and contribute new insights.

References

- Bachrach, P. and Baratz, M.S. (1973) *Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bernstein, B. (2000) *Pedagogy, symbolic control, and identity: Theory, research, critique*. Boston: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Bickerton, D. (1990) Instead of the Cult of Personality. *Notes on Linguistics* 49, 47-50.
- Blommaert, J.M.E., & Rampton, B. (2011) Language and superdiversity. *Diversities*, 13(2), 1-20.

Bollée, A. (1993) Language Policy in the Seychelles and its consequences. *International Journal on the Sociology of Languages* 102, 85-99.

Bossong, G. (1980) Sprachausbau und Sprachpolitik in der Romania (Language expansion and language politics in Romania). In Rold Kloepfer (ed.) *Bildung und Ausbildung in der Romania*. München II, 491-503.

Cameron, D. (2006) Ideology and Language. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11(2), 141-152.

Campling, L., Confiance, H. and Purvis, M (2011) *Social Policies in Seychelles*. Social Policies in Small States Series. London: Publication Section Commonwealth Secretariat.

Chaudeson, R. (2001) *Creolization of Language and Culture*. London: Routledge.

Choppy, P. T. (2002) *The Public Service as a Forum for the Development of the Mother Language*. Mahé: Seychelles Institute of Management.

Commission of the European Communities (2003) Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic diversity: An Action Plan 2004–2006*. COM (2003) 449 final. Retrieved 11th May 2013 from http://ec.europa.eu/education/doc/official/keydoc/actlang/act_lang_en.pdf

De Swaan, A. (2007) The Language Predicament of the EU Since the Enlargements. *Sociolinguistica*, 21:1-21.

D'Offay de Rieux, D. (1980) Creole and Educational Policy in the Seychelles. In A. Valdman and A. Highfield (eds.) *Theoretical Orientations in Creole Studies*. London and New York: Academic Press, 268-271.

Dahlöf, U. (1969) *Ability grouping, content validity, and curriculum process analysis*. Gothenburg, Sweden: University of Gothenburg.

Deutschmann, M. (2012) *The Trilingual Situation in the Seychelles -Report from preparatory workshops conducted 5th-6th November, 2012*. Unpublished report. Retrieved 27 April, 2013 from:<http://languageinschool.pbworks.com/w/page/61755702/Report%20of%20workshops%2C%20November%202012>

Draper, R. (2002) Every teacher a literacy teacher? An analysis of the literacy-related messages in secondary methods textbooks. *Journal of Literacy Research*, vol. 34(3), 357-384.

Edelenbos, P., Johnstone, R. and Kubanek, A. (2006) *Languages for the children in Europe: Published research, good practice and main principles*. Retrieved 11th May 2013 from: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/doc/young_en.pdf

- Enever, J. (2011) *ELLiE. Early Language Learning in Europe*. London, UK: British Council.
- Enever, J. (2012) Current policy issues in early foreign language learning. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal, Slovenia*. 4/2012: 9-26.
- Enever, J. (forthcoming). The advantages and disadvantages of English as a foreign language with young learners. Bland, J. (ed.) *Teaching English Language to Young Learners: Critical Issues*, London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Englund, T. (2011) The linguistic turn within curriculum theory. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, vol. 19(2), 193-206.
- European Commission (2006) *Lifelong Learning Programme: Part I – Priorities of the 2007 general call for proposals. Key Activity 1: Policy Cooperation and Innovation*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.
- European Commission (2012) *SurveyLang. European Survey on Language Competencies*. Brussels: European Commission.
- European Parliament (2000) *Lisbon European Council, 23 and 24 March, 2000, Presidency Conclusions* (Lisbon Strategy). Retrieved on 1st May 2013 from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/list_en.htm
- Eurydice Key Data Series (2012) *Eurydice: Key data on teaching languages at schools in Europe*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities. Retrieved 1st May 2013 from http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/key_data_en.php
- Federalny zakon "Ob obrazovanii v Rossiyskoy Federatsii" (Federal law "About education in the Russian Federation")* (2012) Moskva.
- Fleischmann, C. T. (2008) *Pour Mwan Mon Lalang Maternel i Al avek Mwan Partou – A Sociolinguistic Study on Attitudes towards Seychellois Creole*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Goodlad, J., et al. (1979) *Curriculum inquiry. The study of curriculum practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Haugen, E. (1966) Linguistics and Language Planning. In Anwar S. Dil (ed.) (1972) *The Ecology of Language: Essays by Einar Haugen*. Stanford and California: Stanford University Press, 159-190.
- Jarl, M., & Rönnerberg, L. (2010) *Skolpolitik – Från riksdagshus till klassrum (School politics – From the Riksdag to the classroom)*. Malmö: Liber.
- Kallós, D., & Lundgren, U. P. (1979) *Curriculum as a pedagogical problem*. Lund: Gleerup.

Kaplan, R., Baldauf, R., Liddicoat, A., Bryant, P., Barboux, M-T. and Pütz, M. (2000) Current Issues in Language Planning, *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 1:1, 1-10.

Laversuch, I. M. (2008) An Unequal Balance: The Seychelles' Trilingual Language Policy. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 9(4), 375-394.

Liddicoat, A. (2013) *Language-in-education Policies. The discursive construction of intercultural relations*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Lindblad, S., Linde, G., & Naeslund, L. (1999) Ramfaktorteori och praktisk förnuft (Frame theory and practical reason). *Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige*, vol. 4(1), 93-109.

Little, D., (2007) The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Perspectives on the Making of Supranational Language Education Policy. *The Modern Language Journal* 91, 645-653.

Lukes, S. (2005) *Power: A radical view, second edition*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lundgren, U. (2011) Curriculum theory revisited – The Swedish case. In Eva Forsberg (ed.), *Curriculum theory revisited. Curriculum as content, pedagogy and evaluation* (pp. 17-26). Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

Mahoune, J-C. P. (2000) Seychellois Creole Development & Evolution. *IIAS Newsletter* 22. Available at <http://www.iias.nl/iiasn/22/regions/22ISA1.html>. Accessed 25 April 2013.

Ministerstvo obrazovaniya i nauki RF (2012) *Federalny gosudarstvenny obrazovatelny standart srednego (polnogo) obshego obrazovaniya (Federal state educational standard of upper-secondary education)*. Moskva: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya i nauki RF.

Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF (2004a) *Primernaya programma srednego (polnogo) obshego obrazovaniya na bazovom urovne po istorii (Model history syllabus at basic level for upper-secondary education)*. Moskva: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF.

Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF (2004b) *Primernaya programma srednego (polnogo) obshego obrazovaniya na profilnom urovne po istorii (Model history syllabus at advanced level for upper-secondary education)*. Moskva: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF.

Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF (2004c) *Federalny komponent gosudarstvennogo standarta obshego obrazovaniya. Chast II: Srednee (polnoe) obshee obrazovanie. (Federal component of the state educational standard. Part II: Upper-secondary education)*. Moskva: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya RF.

Moumou, M. (2004) Preparing our students for the future: Critical literacy in the Seychelles classrooms. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique* 3(1), 46-58.

- Purvis, M-T. (2004) Education in the Seychelles: An overview. *Seychelles Medical and Dental Journal* 7 (1), 46-51.
- Republika Hrvatska.Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa (2010). *Nacionalni okvirni kurikulum Hrvatska, srpanj 2010. (National Framework Curriculum,Croatia, July 2010)*. Retrieved on 11th May 2013 from <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=3135>
- Scarr, D. (2000) *Seychelles since 1770 – History of a Slave and Post-Slavery Society*. London: Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd.
- Schattschneider, E.E. (1960) *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's view of Democracy in America*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.
- Siegel, J. (2005) Literacy in Pidgins and Creole Languages. *Current Issues in Language Planning* 6 (2), 143-163.
- Spolsky, B. (2004) *Language Policy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tinsley, T. (2013) *Keynote: Teaching languages in primary schools: a view from an English-speaking country*. French Primary Languages conference. Poitiers, France, March 2013.
- Wolff, E. (2006) Language politics and planning in Africa. In H. Alidou (ed.) *Optimizing Learning and Education in Africa*. UNESCO Institute for Education and ADEA 2006 Biennial Meeting Report, 26–55.
- Wolff, E. (2011) Background and history – language planning in Africa. In A. Oane, A. & C. Glanz (eds.) *Optimising Learning, Education and Publishing in Africa: The Language Factor – A Review and Analysis of Theory and Practice in Mother-Tongue and Bilingual Education in sub-Saharan Africa*. Hamburg and Tunis Belvédère: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), 49-100.