

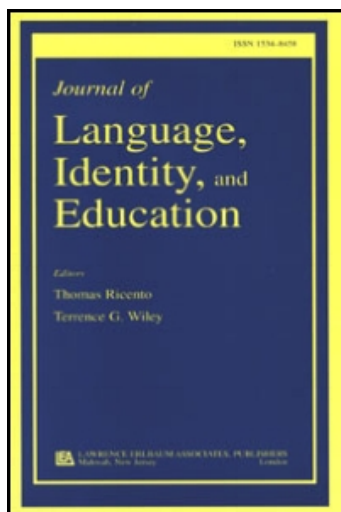
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### Language policy, culture, and identity in Asian contexts, by A. Tsui and J. Tollefson

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Alternatively described by other scholars as the “third space” (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejada, 1999) or as “simultaneous worlds” (Kenner, 2004), the hybrid literacy practices at Storm and Bonham are shaped by the interaction of students, parents, and teachers within a hybridized community. Unlike the many two-way programs involving a middle-class Caucasian population, the programs Pérez studies are two-way programs in which the vast majority of the students are Latinos. I would have appreciated a more explicit discussion of this difference but still highly recommend this unique, readable, and informative book.

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Tsui and Tollefson’s *Language Policy, Culture, and Identity in Asian Contexts (LPCIX)* explores relationships between language policies, cultures, and identities in diverse sociopolitical contexts in Asia. The volume is based on critical approaches to language policies/applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001; Tollefson, 2002, 2006; Wright, 2004). Embedded in critical theory, these approaches connect language policies, which are social as well as ideological requirements, to broader social, economic, and political issues within and outside state territories (Canagarajah, 1998, 2005; Lin & Martin, 2005; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992; Ramanathan, 2005; Ricento, 2000). This is warranted at present as the forces of globalization and English are unsettling existing socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnolinguistic orders in political nations. This is what *LPCIX* does; it shows how language policies of selected Asian nations have responded to globalization and what consequences these policies have for different social and ethnolinguistic groups within these polities.

The relationships between language policies and globalization can have different slants. For example, language policies may accommodate, resist, or ignore globalization. To a large extent, language policies of the polities included in *LPCIX* are characterized by accommodation, or

what Rappa and Wee (2006) call “a balancing act” (pp. 18–23). This means that, although globalization is seen as detrimental to national culture and identity (imperialistic), these nations cannot stay away from it. By the same token, they cannot ignore English, which, despite its hegemony, is necessary. The countries studied in *LPCIx* suggest that Phillipson’s (1992) linguistic imperialism hypothesis is both valid and invalid: valid because imperialistic forces are indeed operative; invalid because nations can protect themselves by formulating appropriate policies and (re)constructing national identities.

Arguably, *LPCIx* does not explore relationships between language policies, cultures, and identities from scratch. In fact, some studies (see aforementioned references; see also Kam & Wong, 2004; Rappa & Wee, 2006; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004) have already dealt with these issues to varying degrees. Nevertheless, *LPCIx* marks its originality and achievement in important ways. First, it has anthologized a large number of original studies that offer a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of the “dialectical relationships between language policy and national cultural identity and the mediating role of English” (p. 4). Second, “the lived experiences” of the authors of the case studies elucidate the complex relationships between language policies, cultures, and identities. The editors present the major themes of *LPCIx* in the form of focus questions (in chap. 1) that are then revisited in the conclusion (chap. 14) in light of the insights accumulated. Finally, the polities are selected in consideration of their socioeconomic and political developments. Particularly, the case studies of the polities that are underrepresented in the research literature generate valuable insights into the contentious topics.

The 12 country studies included in *LPCIx* are organized into three parts. Part I focuses on “Globalization and its impact on language policy, culture, and identity.” This theme derives from the case studies of Japan (Hashimoto, chap. 2), South Korea (Sungwon, chap. 3), Malaysia (David & Govindasamy, chap. 4), Singapore (Chew, chap. 5), and Cambodia (Clayton, chap. 6). As the studies show, language policies in the first four of these developed and/or near-developed nations aim at promoting English for their citizens’ participation in global processes and maximizing their national share of the global economy. Although these policies suggest an acknowledgment of the hegemony of English in the globalized world, they promote particular discourses of English skills (e.g., a mere technical tool unrelated to identity), of global opportunity (e.g., English opens the door to the global economy), of national identity (e.g., Japaneseness is impermeable to external influences), of patriotism (e.g., contributing to Malaysia by learning English), and discourses of national pride (e.g., promoting Korean and Japanese culture in the world). Contradictory forces are thus accommodated, at least apparently, whereas questions of socioeconomic divide or ethnolinguistic groups (e.g., chap. 2) are ignored.

When compared with these four nations, Cambodia looks somewhat different. Whereas Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore design their language policies to enable their citizens to participate in global processes, Cambodia appears to be merely a recipient of whatever options are provided by global forces, with little room for self-determination. Clayton’s outline of the political, economic, and international assistance context of language choice in Cambodia shows that language choices are dictated by external forces (e.g., French by French assistance programs, English by UN assistance programs, Chinese by Chinese investments, and Arabic by Islamic aid).

Thematically, part II (“Language policy and the (re)construction of national cultural identity”) differs little from part I, but the emphasis here is on national languages and identities. The studies underscoring this theme are from Hong Kong, Brunei, and New Zealand. In chap. 7, Tsui

explores the role of language policies in institutional and sociopolitical processes that shaped the Hong Kong people's identities during and after British rule. During the colonial days, the author argues, a distinctive local identity was the result of the competing forces of colonialism and Chinese nationalism, as well as people's resistance to both. Characterized by English–Cantonese linguistic habitus and reinforced by a set of core values, this identity is reasserted by Hong Kongers in the post-handover period when Chinese-medium policies and re-Sinicization attempts are under way.

Similarly, Saxena's (chap. 8) analysis shows that although the national ideology of the Malay Islamic Monarchy (Brunei) aims at assimilating all ethnic communities at the cost of the nation's linguistic diversity, some of the ethnolinguistic groups successfully maintain their ethnic identities and ethnolinguistic vitality through their practices. Then, in chap. 9, Benton discusses the historical processes Māori passed through to be recognized as an official language in New Zealand. Its current status is significant but nevertheless symbolic at best. A distinctive Māori identity is under threat; this threat "lies not so much in the loss of the language, but in its manipulation and damage by the forces of modernization" (p. 178). In response, the Māori weave an English-based Māori identity, "infusing into English a Māori worldview" and adapting English "to their own ends." Thus Māori English symbolizes their distinctive identity, which is comparable to the English-based national identities of Singaporeans.

The country studies of India (Agnihotri, chap. 10), Nepal (Sonntag, chap. 11), Pakistan (Rahman, chap. 12), and Bangladesh (Hossain & Tollefson, chap. 13) in part III focus on issues of language policy and language politics surrounding the English language. Whatever differences in language policies exist between these polities, one inevitable outcome of language policy and language politics in these contexts is the socioeconomic divide marked by the English language. As Agnihotri notes, "If one were to narrow down one's choice to a single list of issues that divide the rich and poor of South Asia, it would without doubt be English" (p. 196). The assertion resonates with Ramanathan's (2005) *English-Vernacular Divide*, which sits well on the socioeconomic cleavage in India.

In the final chapter (chap. 14), the editors reappraise the questions raised in chap. 1 in light of the "lived experiences" of individual contributors. The chapter concludes the volume by summarizing the major research agenda arising from the studies—language policy and approaches to identity, local politics, identity and class, and the English-vernacular debate.

The themes of *LPCIX* as previously presented are judiciously selected, well-researched, and well-argued. The individual chapters delve into the (false) dichotomies between globalization and nationalization, the global language and local languages, and global identities and national identities, and show that their relations are complex, diverse, and heterogeneous. Having said that, there are a few issues that need to be pointed out. First, the studies included in the volume focus on Asia. However, New Zealand is a notable exception. This exception stands out not because it does not officially belong to Asia, but because it is an Inner Circle country. Understandably, practical considerations guide the selection of studies for a particular volume, but one would expect some explanation for this exception.

Second, no matter what sort of insights the case studies generate, it should be noted that these insights are drawn mostly from policies and much less from their implementation or practice. Needless to say, policy and practice not only have tensions between them, but they can also be far apart from each other. Macrolevel policy responses to globalization or its impact on social

construction of identity in *LPCIX* should be understood only as policy responses; the reality can be far different from policy expectations.

Finally, the chapter on Bangladesh (Hossain & Tollefson) requires a critical reading and cautious interpretation. Although the analyses of the secondary data and the arguments appear to be valid in general, there are some factual inaccuracies and questionable claims. For instance, an uncritical acceptance of *Sylheti* and *Chittagonian* (Table 13.1, p. 243) as separate languages and not as dialects of Bangla is problematic and dangerous (see Sikder, 2007). Contrary to the authors' assertion, neither of these dialects is mutually unintelligible with Bangla. In addition, the authors seem to overgeneralize when they say, "The medium of instruction in tertiary institutions is English; curricula, syllabi, and materials are in English. Thus students who attend Bengali-medium schools and wish to continue their education must eventually enter English-medium institutions" (p. 253). It is to be noted that most disciplines of the University of Dhaka and other state universities in Bangladesh follow mixed-medium instruction and students can take exams either in Bangla or English (Hamid, 2006).

These few issues notwithstanding, *LPCIX* is an important addition to studies on globalization, language policies, and national identities in Asia. It provides a comprehensive and focused investigation of the complex relationships between language policies, cultures, and identities that so far have been infrequently and/or inadequately covered in the existing literature. It also provides issues, agendas, and avenues, as well as theoretical and methodological tools, for further inquiries into these issues. The author index, in addition to the customary subject index, provides a quick guide for the reader's further inquiry.

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Aneta Pavlenko's latest work thoroughly explores the nature of the multifaceted relationship between emotion, bi- and multilingualism, and language. The author argues that the field of linguistics is still widely dominated by a Chomskyan monolingual ideology, even when more than half of the world's population speaks and experiences emotion in more than one language. Thus, this work contributes to the body of research that has rejected this monolingual bias, this time through an exploration of the experiences of emotion among bilinguals. Bilingualism is made the norm throughout this work, and as a result, the task of documenting and better understanding the great range of ways bilinguals feel *in* as well as *about* their languages is undertaken. Language socialization theory seems to aid Pavlenko's investigation as bilinguals' life experiences in each of their languages are closely tied to the manner in which they feel *emotion* in their different languages. If a bilingual has suffered a traumatic event in one language, for example, one common finding was for the person to avoid using that language or even reject the language entirely. In short, Pavlenko makes evident how our sociolinguistic histories heavily influence the ways we feel in distinct languages.

Next, Pavlenko disregards the strict disciplinary boundaries found in academia in favor of an interdisciplinary, holistic approach that does not restrict itself to a single methodology. She provides an excellent synthesis of the cross-disciplinary literature on multilingualism, language, and emotion, and investigates the links between emotions and multilingualism at every level of linguistic structure including, but by no means limited to, the vocal expression and decoding of emotions cross-linguistically, the conceptual contents of emotion terms across languages, emotion as expressed in discourse, emotion as embodied language, and emotion and language choice. Finally, she does not restrict her work to either quantitative or qualitative research but chooses both in order to provide the fullest picture of the inseparability of language and emotion.

By beginning each chapter with thoughtfully selected personal vignettes—both her own and those of other multilinguals—Pavlenko successfully juxtaposes theoretical scholarly inquiry with intimate, humanizing stories of multilinguals' personal reflection. These intermittent vignettes, which are clearly relevant to each chapter's subject matter, provide an engaging introduction in a cross-disciplinary work that is bound at some point to venture into areas outside of the reader's familiarity. In addition, before delving into the main themes of the book, Pavlenko supplies a concise review of the oftentimes conflicting terminological definitions found in the