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Approaches to agency in language policy and management: research trends, issues, methods and theoretical frameworks

Goro Christoph Kimura

Sophia University

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1 Agency as a key topic in Language policy and planning

Agency as the capacity to act is now a central topic in the field of research that is generally known as 'language policy and planning' (LPP). In recent years, books (Lian et al. (eds) 2018, Bouchard and Glasgow (eds) 2019, Glasgow and Bouchard (eds) 2019) and special issues of a journal (*Current Issues in Language Planning* 2021, 22 (1-2)) as well as many individual papers have been dedicated to this topic.

The awareness of the significance of agency on different levels has further motivated to rename the field as 'language policy and management' (LPM), as used in this volume. The structure of this volume reflects this increasing interest in agency by including chapters focusing on various actors on different levels and domains, from the individual to the transnational (see especially the chapters 5-9 and 20). This chapter aims to present the development of theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to agency. After a review of the development of the field from the viewpoint of agency, debated issues and different approaches are presented and discussed, followed by some terminological considerations on the typology of actors.

In literature written in English, LPP or LPM is usually understood as an academic discipline that has emerged in the anglophone scholarship in the 1960s. Though there is a significant accumulation of research on language policy in other languages as well,[1] reflecting the overwhelming influence to other research traditions, this chapter focuses on this particular academic discourse articulated in English. Another restriction is that due to the limitation of space, it concentrates on models and concepts developed in/for LPM, leaving out the vast universe of political science, management studies and sociolinguistics in general, though it has to be acknowledged that LPM has developed with influence from these and other fields and that attention to developments in related fields is indispensable for the evolution of this area of research.

In the following, the term LPM will be used to subsume all research that is interested in interventions into language behaviour in general, and LPP in contexts in which this term has been used.

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[1] In the home country of the author, there is the Japan Association for Language Policy (founded in 2002), which has its own journal *Gengoseisaku* (language policy) with articles mainly in Japanese.

2 Focus on agency on various levels

In terms of agency, the development of LPP research has been described in the way that departing from the initial focus on state-level policy and planning, there has been increasing awareness of the significance of various levels of language policy (Liddicoat and Taylor-Leech 2021: 2-4). Contrary to the impression we might get from some accounts of the development of the field, though, at least some early projects were not so naïve to forget various actors below the state-level. One of those involved in projects from the 1960s recalls that there was already awareness of the importance of micro-level and that the focus on the state level, especially on official language planning agencies, was 'a focus of choice' (Jernudd 2020: 34). This initial attention to the state level at that time was not just a reflection of the general perception that policy and planning were associated primarily with the national government. Language was quite a salient issue in the new independent states, so scholarly engagement with the issue of nation-wide LPP was a due response to that need. At this stage, LPP was conceived as conscious efforts by governments to intervene into language practice, as something additional to ordinary language behaviour. Initiating LPP would mean to abandon a *laissez-faire* stance.

Despite the plausibility of focusing on the state level, it became soon evident that governmental language planning does not turn into social reality as intended, and implementing processes cannot be fully accounted without referring to various societal levels other than the state and actors other than the governmental institutions and agencies. This inevitably led to pay attention to a wide range of LPP actors. Indicative are the statements by Haugen 'that every user of a language is in a modest but important sense his (her) own language planner' (Haugen 1987: 627) or by Cooper who defined language planning as 'deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes' (Cooper 1989: 45), without restricting the planners to particular authoritative forces.

Such recognitions of the relevance of various non-state actors that became evident from the mid-1980s apply not only to LPP but also to social sciences in general and can be linked to postmodernism (Ricento 2000, Liddicoat and Taylor-Leech 2021: 4). But there is also an additional reason specific to language. As language is used by humans constantly, everyone and every organization is continuously somehow involved in issues of language, whether consciously or not. Everyone has some preferences or ideas about proper or appropriate language use in certain situations and about language in general. Accordingly, people act and react to language behaviour of themselves and of others. Further, where there is linguistic variation and diversity – which is the usual case in human society – organizations have to make some choices about how to use what kind of language. The heightened attention to various individual and collective agency in LPP corresponds to this basic feature of human language activity.

This awareness led also to the emergence of the term 'language management'. In the realms of LPP, this term was first developed as a theoretical concept by Jernudd and Neustupný (1987), which became to be known as the language management theory (LMT). Later, others began to use this term as well. While some used the term in a restrictive manner to refer to measures

taken by companies in contrast to those by political authority (e. g. Lüdi, Höchle Meier and Yanaprasart 2016) or as part of business management (see Sanden 2016), others went in a similar direction as Jernudd and Neustupný to see the term as more generally applicable. According to Spolsky, one of those who significantly contributed to familiarize this term in a broader sense, in contrast to planning as a centralized enterprise, 'the management approach is closer to the reality of complex social dynamics' (Spolsky 2018: 305). He concludes:

> I believe therefore that management is a more suitable term than planning and that a management model assuming a range of managers and various levels working to modify the language practices of various members of the community offers the most useful way of analysing the many complex cases that are starting to come under review. (305-306)

The differences between broader concepts of management will be discussed below (section 4). First, however, the consequence of this enlarged LPM conceptualization will be discussed in the next section.

3 Towards the overcoming of the dichotomy of top-down vs. bottom-up

The different levels of society where language planning takes place have commonly been conceptualized in terms of macro and micro. In the typical traditional view of language planning, macro would mean the state level, and the individual ordinary citizen would be at the micro level. Often an intermediate meso level is added, to highlight the role of organizations, for example. Both ends of the continuum can be extended. On the macro side, there is the supranational level, which usually refers to international institutions, but could also include multinational companies. On the other side, the micro side can be extended to include concrete interaction. McCarty (2011: 3), representing an ethnographic approach, provides such a comprehensive conceptualization: 'the micro level of individuals in face-to-face interaction, the meso level of local communities of practice, and the macro level of nation-states and larger global forces.'

According to the current widely shared consensus in the field, LPM is no more regarded as a simple top-down process in which the decision by the central government will be directly implemented. Moreover, it is recognized that a dualistic understanding of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' is too simplistic. As Johnson (2013: 108) argues:

> dichotomizing conceptualizations of top-down and bottom-up language policy that delimit the various layers through which policy develops, and dichotomize divisions between policy 'creation' and 'implementation', obfuscate the varied and unpredictable ways that language policy agents interact with the policy process.

An often-cited metaphor to depict the multiple levels or layers replacing the dualistic understanding is the 'LPP onion' proposed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996). The 'broad language policy objectives articulated in legislation or high court rulings at the national level' (ibid: 409), to which early LPP has focused, is regarded as the outer layer of the onion, and unpeeling the onion up to the individuals at the core, who can implement, but also initiate policy, is postulated as the task or research. Rather than assuming one-way processes, whether top-down or bottom-up, it is now accepted that LPM can occur at any level and can move across

different levels in complex ways. Having language-in-education policy in mind, Kosonen and Benson (2021) propose an 'above-below-side framework' which exemplifies four possible policy change trajectories: from above, from the side and from below.

Thus, the enlargement of the scope of LPM is a major outcome of the development of this field of research. At the current stage of development, which is marked by the so-called ethnographic turn, LPM seems to have arrived at the opposite extreme in comparison to the initial narrow conception, now relinquishing the traditional distinction between policy and practice and encompassing all actors and activities at any level. The suspicion arises that a too messy understanding of LPM will obscure rather than detect agency. As Johnson (2013: 24) states:

> without ongoing conceptual refinement, 'language policy' may become so loosely defined as to encompass almost any sociolinguistic phenomena and therefore become a very general descriptor in which all language attitudes, ideologies, and practices are categorized.

In the next section, attempts of conceptional refinement are presented by taking up some general models and approaches which show an interest in picking out agency associated with LPM out of the totality of language activities.

4 Seeking conceptual refinement

An influential model in line with the above-mentioned tendency to enlarge the scope of LPP was provided by Spolsky. The expansion by Spolsky is twofold. First, the term 'policy' was elevated as a general term of language activity consisting of practice, beliefs (ideologies) and management. The key term of language policy in this sense is 'choice'. Spolsky declares 'language policy is all about choices' (Spolsky 2009: 1). As a research field engaged in the study of choices, language policy becomes *de facto* just another name for sociolinguistics, if '[s]ociolinguistics is the linguistics of choice' (Coulmas 2005: 9).[2] While sacrificing 'policy' to the zeitgeist of all-encompassing language policy, Spolsky reserves the term 'management' as a subcategory of policy to denote 'efforts by people or institutions inside or outside a community to modify the beliefs and practices of members of the community' (Spolsky 2021: 9). In this way, Spolsky saves language management as a distinct field of investigation. In this way, the umbrella term 'policy' as well as the research focus on 'management' was completely freed from any remains of state-centrism. While the domain-based approach to management in Spolsky (2009) was beginning with family, Spolsky (2021) enlarged the scope to start from the individual. Management can now be regarded as a term to recognize the full variety of agents.

Spolsky's framework seems to provide an elegant solution to the current challenge by expanding policy to the extreme and at the same time paying due and apart attention to the significance and heterogeneity of agency. Yet there is discontent with this model from two different directions: from the macro and from the micro side.

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[2] Coulmas takes a traditional stance to LPP, presenting language policy as 'explicitly stated motives for and goals of action on language as opposed to customary laissez-faire practice.' (ibid., 186) and language planning as a specific subfield of sociolinguistics (187).

One criticism coming from the macro-side is the public policy approach (henceforth PPA) to language policy. It opposes 'Spolsky's over-extended definition of language policy and its actors […], because it does not facilitate a clear differentiation between "policy" proper and "practices", and between the roles and decisions of different actors in the policy process' (Gazzola 2023: 46). In fact, this criticism applies not only to the use of 'policy' by Spolsky, but also to his definition of 'management', which is already too broad from the viewpoint of PPA. This approach emphasizes the special traits of governmental agencies, from local to national and supranational (as the European Union), as central in the language policy processes. These should be distinguished from individual practices as well as from policies of companies or non-governmental organizations. Governments' language policy is dealing with more issues, is relevant at a wider societal level, and can use a broader set of policy instruments, including the legitimate use of coercion (Gazzola 2023: 61-62). According to this approach, acknowledging these traits of public policy is indispensable to properly assess agency. Insights from a recent interdisciplinary project based on PPA are compiled concisely in Grin (2018) and more extensively in Grin, Marácz and Pokorn (2022).

The other critique from the micro side was articulated from the viewpoint of Language Management Theory (LMT), pointing to fundamental discrepancies between these two 'management' approaches (Dovalil 2011, Jernudd 2010, Sloboda 2010). Because of the terminological coincidence of these two approaches, which has often led to confusion, this conceptualization will be dealt in more detail here.

LMT starts from the assumption that 'language behavior' or, more precisely, 'production and reception' of language, is accompanied by 'behavior toward language', meaning metalinguistic activities aimed toward language.[3] Instead of seeing language users' practice at the recipient end of LPP, this approach begins with recognizing management in interaction, that is, people do not just use language, but constantly intervene in and modify the use of language. LMT insists that these interventions accompanying language behaviour deserve attention on its own right. According to the LMT approach, Spolsky's concept misses to recognize agency within what has been regarded as 'practice', by separating management from practice. Reacting to the claims by LMT, the management concept of Spolsky has incorporated some elements from LMT, among others the idea of 'self-management' (Spolsky 2021: 15). Yet, still apparently categorizing interaction within the subcategory of 'practice', the basic difference to LMT remains.

The deep concern of LMT with the micro-level of interaction can be explained by its historical roots. Originally, LMT has begun in the 1980s as a counter model to the classical state-centred LPP approach. In contrast to the traditional view of language planning, understanding 'macro' as the state level and everything beneath as 'micro' that could be omitted in LPP research, LMT has taken the opposite direction and regarded interaction as 'micro' and every level beyond to be 'macro', declaring the intention to analyse the interplay between micro and macro. In LMT terminology, the micro management is called 'simple management', as distinct from 'organized management.' Organized management includes also planning by

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[3] General explanation of LMT, bibliography and other materials can be found on the website: http://languagemanagement.ff.cuni.cz

individuals, such as the decision to learn a foreign language, or family language policy. Part of organized management is organizational or institutional management, of which again a part, whereas significant, is governmental language policy. In order to be better equipped to grasp the interplay between different levels, recent developments seek to overcome the dualistic distinction between simple and organized management that has dominated the model from the outset and see micro and macro management as a continuum of intertwining elements (Kimura and Fairbrother (eds) 2020).

PPA and LMT present contrastive alternatives to the framework by Spolsky. For the former, the concept of management by Spolsky is too broad, for the latter it is too narrow. Yet, though coming from opposite directions, both criticisms share a common understanding of agency as pervasive to LPM. The stance of PPA, arguing for a conscious limitation of the scope of language policy research, is not a simple return to the original LPP. First, PPA also considers regional and local governments. Second, and more importantly, contrary to the classic approach which tended to see LPP as optional, PPA is based on the understanding that there is no *laissez-faire* state before language intervention occurs (Gazzola 2014: 22-27). Grin and Civico (2018: 30) emphasize that '[t]here is no such thing as "no language policy"', as state institutions have to make at least decisions about the language they use. The classical view of LPP would miss to recognize agency if it is not explicit and overt. LMT also sees management as an inevitable and integral part of language activities: 'people essentially cannot not manage their language' (Nekvapil and Sherman 2015: 5). This applies to simple as well as organized management. These statements from PPA and LMT, indicating that policy and management are inevitable, are in sharp contrast to that of Spolsky who states that 'language practices *can be* managed' and asks whether language *should be* managed? (2021: 198, 199; emphasizes by the author). As these expressions reveal, the basic stance of Spolsky is in fact similar to the classic approach of LPP, seeing intervention as optional.

Thus, PPA and LMT provide conceptional refinements to LPM that situate 'policy' and 'management' respectively more firmly as integral part of language activities than the framework of Spolsky, that, despite of the enlargement of the scope, risks to overlook the pervasiveness of agency on the macro as well as micro level. The different emphasis on macro and micro levels should not be regarded as contradictions, but could be complementary. Such complementarity might be more promising than generally recognized, as it is pointed out that understanding micro processes is essential to assess macro process and vice versa, which can be called the 'maxim of cross-dimensional analysis' (Kimura and Fairbrother 2020: 265). Let us now address this issue in some more details.

On the one hand, there is a weakness in LMT that can be covered by PPA. PPA focuses on the state level and can embed language policy more profoundly in social, political and economic contexts than usual sociolinguistically oriented approaches like LMT can do. As seen above, LMT claims to provide a general framework of LPM. In research practice, however, LMT is regarded as one of the 'schools' of LPP, especially focusing on micro and meso level issues (Baldauf and Hamid 2018, Ali et al. 2018: 143). And indeed, this applies to a great part of the LMT-based research. As a matter of fact, the engagement with analysis of the micro and meso level often leaves not enough energy and space to dedicate oneself to a profound analysis of state level policies (see He and Dai 2016). LMT papers focusing on the state level and beyond,

for example international organizations, have the same difficulty the other way around and risk to lose the advantage of the LMT approach grounded on interaction, or resign from analysing the phases of the management process (see the next section for the importance of the process model). A remarkable exception dealing with multiple levels, from individual to national, exceeds the usual length of papers (Neustupný and Nekvapil 2003) and still waits for similar accounts about other countries.[4]

On the other hand, PPA has to acknowledge that the effectiveness of language policy by governments will be extremely limited if it does not take into account the language management on the ground. The concern with such management in PPA is necessarily weak and ambiguous. As Gazzola (2023: 47) states: 'From a public policy approach, the decisions of a father and a mother as to what languages to use or not use with their children at home are viewed as practices, actual individuals' behaviour.' From a sociolinguistic view, these decisions are not practice, however. LMT would classify this as a type of organized management. From a LMT view, practice refers to concrete interactions, and even there, LMT will detect simple management in the discourse. LMT claims that such simple management should be the basis for organized management. One of the most cited statements in LMT literature reads as follows (Neustupný 1994: 50):

> I shall claim that any act of language planning should start with the consideration of language problems as they appear in discourse, and the planning process should not be considered complete until the removal of the problems is implemented in discourse.

5 Investigating and analysing agency

Let us now turn to methodological aspects. The awareness of various agencies on multiple levels is closely linked to the thriving of ethnographic approaches. Ethnographic studies have convincingly shown that actors on the ground are not just implementing policy from above, but can accept, adapt, negotiate, resist or reshape policy, or even initiate new LPM processes (see the contributions in *CILP* 22 (1-2)). Glasgow and Bouchard (2019: 3-4) provide an overview of types of data used in these researches. These include survey questionnaires, census and demographic surveys, linguistic databases, policy documents, semi-structured and in-depth interviews, field notes, audio and video recordings, photographs, classroom observation, participant observation, reflexive journals, ethnographic fieldwork, focus group deliberations, sociolinguistic surveys, language curricula, textbooks and lesson plans, articles in various media outlets, parliamentary debates, and multimodal and mediated sources of discourse. As specific types of introspective methods connected to concrete interaction, LMT research has often utilized interaction interviews and follow-up interviews (Fairbrother, Nekvapil and Sloboda 2018). The nexus analysis which seeks to map discursive connections across scales provides a meta-methodology for collecting and analysing various types of data (Hult 2015).

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[4] The general weakness in state-level analysis may be one reason why LMT is not mentioned in some publications that aim to provide an overview of LPP research, as this particular conceptualization of the macro level has been the benchmark of LPP research.

In order to elicit and analyse LPM out of all language related activities, process models have been proposed. According to Haarmann (1990: 106), as language planning is a process rather than a state of affairs, '[a]ny sociolinguistic approach to applied or methodological matters in this field should aim at illustrating the processual character of planning.' From a methodological point of view, phases of process models can be used for drafting research questions as well as locating the data (Dovalil 2022: 40-41). With regard to agency, the actors involved in each phase and their role will be a focus of analysis. As Gazzola (2023: 48) states:

> Studying LPP as a public policy means focusing on the action of the government in addressing language issues, identifying and explaining the different phases of the policy process and how these phases are related to each other.

Phases in PPA models include (1) emergence of a collective issue, (2) agenda-setting, (3) consideration of policy options, (4) decision-making, (5) implementation, and (6) evaluation (Gazzola 2023: 49). The first stage is rather a precondition to policy, so it could be placed as stage zero. It is also possible to see 'the identification of the elements of the problem at hand' as a pre-stage before proper policy analysis (Grin 2022: 33). The last stage of policy evaluation or assessment is a well-established part of the policy cycle in political science, which should not be missed in the analysis of language policy as well.

LMT is also characterized by operating with a process model. Before a management process starts, there are norms or expectations on language or interaction. These are prerequisites of the management process, rather than part of the management itself, so it is marked as a stage zero (Kimura and Fairbrother 2020: 258). The proper management process begins with (1) the noting of language incongruities that do not match the norms or expectations, (2) the evaluation of those incongruities, leading (or not) to the (3) formulation and (4) implementation of plans to try to remove or resolve those problems. In addition to this initial model, a (5) post-implementation stage of review/reflection/feedback was proposed recently (Fairbrother and Kimura 2020: 6; Kimura and Fairbrother 2020: 260-261). This last stage was added to the management process model mainly due to its practical heuristic value (foregrounding post-implementation reflexivity as an explicit concern) and theoretical compatibility with other policy process models as seen above.[5] With this stage, the policy stages and management stages become roughly congruent, which is a precondition of the claim of LMT to provide an integrative framework linking micro and macro processes. The last, post-implementation stage should not be conflated with the first and the second, as new expectations might arise out of the post-implementation stage, or put the other way around – because review is the precondition for new expectations. These expectations might trigger a new noting. So, to confuse review with noting is apt to cause analytical flaw (or short circuit of analysis).

As there are no objective criteria for determining minimal necessary stages, there can be models functioning with less stages, as a policy model consisting of just three stages centring

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[5] Research using the former 4-stage model tended to end analysis with implementation, reflecting the stages the model presents. Even if there was awareness that the process can be cyclical, without special attention, this aspect gets lost easily without a stage pointing to this possibility. Also for this reason, the post-implementation stage cannot be argued to be superfluous. A recent handbook of LPP (Gazzola et al. (eds.) 2024) arranges chapters according to 'the language policy cycle' consisting of five stages, including the final 'evaluation' stage.

implementation and adding stages before (ex-ante) and after (ex-post) it (Civico and Grin 2018: 41). But it could be argued that dividing the process in more stages as above would enable more fine-grained analysis.

Process models can also be tailored according to research purposes. With the aim of setting out a typical procedure for accomplishing planning goals, Zhao and Baldauf (2012) propose an 'I-5' model: Initiation, Involvement, Influence, Intervention and Implementation. For ethnography of language policy, there is a proposal of tripartite division with the terms creation, interpretation and appropriation (Johnson 2023). 'Appropriation' indicates that the policy is not just automatically implemented, which is a crucial point stressed and examined in ethnographic research as mentioned above. In any case, it has to be kept in mind that a process model is a theoretical construct to help research, not a straitjacket to adapt data to it. A flexible application is necessary according to the object and aim of research. However, the stage of identifying language problems, apparent in the initial stage, pre-stage or stage zero of PPA and LMT approaches, should not be easily omitted, because 'the question of how language problems are defined and addressed poses deep conceptual challenges for analysis' as language problems are not 'objectively discernible and uncontentious' (Lo Bianco 2015: 72).

When focusing on how agency proceeds, as can be done with the process model, one has to be cautious also not to overvalue the role of actors and prioritize agency over structure, ignoring the wider context in which concrete processes occur. In the past, the study of LPM has seen some oscillation about the significance of agency. Some of the early classical approaches about language planning, displaying technocratic tendencies, were probably too optimistic about the effects of decisions and actions by state-level policy makers. In contrast, the historical-structural approach (Tollefson 1991), which was proposed as an alternative to some linguistic surveys taking individual decisions as a basis, could be interpreted as overly emphasizing sociocultural constraints. The ethnographic approach foregrounds the role of agency again and on a wider scale encompassing different levels, but embeds it in broader societal contexts and enhances a more balanced way by seeing policy as 'a situated sociocultural process' (McCarty 2011: xii). Putting forward this line of thoughts, Bouchard and Glasgow (2019: 70) reject determinism, but equally warn against mispresenting agency as free will. They propose the following flow diagram for studying agency in LPP:

> Context and domain of language use -> Policy as cultural and structural resource -> Agency, types of reflexivity, emotions and rationalizing processes -> Enabling and/or constraining effects of policy -> Agentive response(s) to policy and possible outcomes -> Impact(s) of agentive responses to policy on the creation of subsequent policies.[6]

Though not so deeply engaged with structure and culture in a sophisticated theoretical way as Bouchard and Glasgow, LMT has made measures in similar direction by incorporating power, interest and ideology as part of the model in a practical manner (Nekula, Sherman and

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[6] Their extensive theorization is based on a critical realist perspective, conceptualizing structure, culture and agency as intricately related yet separate social strata. It seems that generally, social theories on structure and agency did not have much real impact on concrete research in LPM so far (but see Nekvapil and Nekula 2006 for an example from LMT). On the discussion on this topic see also Liddicoat and Taylor-Leech (2021).

Zawiszová (eds) 2022). Spolsky has gone a similar way in his model to include beliefs/ideology along with practice and policy.

6 Types of actors

The issue of power and interest is relevant also in distinguishing different actors, which is the next topic to be discussed. With increasing attention to agency, there have emerged various proposals to distinguish different actors and agents. These two notions are often used without defining them. The suggestion of Moriarty (2015: 21) to reserve the term 'agent' to 'someone who knowingly appropriates, challenges, resists and/or adopts a language policy' can be a reasonable distinction from 'actors', who may be involved unknowingly in LPM processes. Everyone and every organization make choices, but some are consciously made, others not. In Moriaty's term, individuals and organizations are inevitably actors in LPM processes, but not all are consciously engaged agents.

Another basic distinction is that between individual and collective agency. It is pointed out that due attention should be paid to the crucial role of individuals in LPM (Zhao 2011, Liddicoat and Taylor-Leech 2021: 4), while the power of collective agency that can function as constraining and enabling forces upon individual agency is stressed as well (Glasgow and Bouchard 2019: 298). Yet, the distinction between these two types is not absolute. When dealing with collective agency, it is necessary to keep in mind that those acting in institutional settings are also individuals, though incumbents of the institutionally based categories.

In LMT, individual agency and ordinary language users have been associated primarily with simple management, collective agency and specialists/experts/representatives of institutions with organized management. In order to avoid dualistic conceptualization, these basic divisions of agency and actors have been integrated as part of a broader framework of the elements constituting a multidimensional micro-macro continuum together with other elements like object and locus, duration of management (Fairbrother and Kimura 2020: 19).

Apart from these basic distinctions, there have been attempts to elaborate on the types of actors. In his framework for the study of language planning, Cooper mentions several types of actors: formal elites, influentials, counter-elites, and non-elite policy implementers (Cooper 1989: 88-89, 98). Recent proposals have tried to distinguish the roles and characteristics of various actors more clearly. In virtually all typologies, the issue of power is involved. A simple distinction according to authority is provided by Spolsky. Based on his concept of management, those individuals or institutions who have or assume to have authority over members of the community, such as parents in a family or school boards and education ministries, are called 'managers', while those without the authority assigned by government or institutions, who wish to promote a language variety or persuade others to use it, are 'advocates' (2021: 128).

Similarly pointing to power differences among actors, Johnson and Johnson (2015: 225) distinguish 'language policy arbiters' as 'any language policy actor (potentially: teachers, administrators, policy makers, etc.) who wields a disproportionate amount of power in how a policy gets created, interpreted, or appropriated, relative to other individuals in the same level

or context' from mere implementers. Identifying language policy arbiters can be a key in the analysis of agency in language policy processes (Weinberg 2021).

There are situations, however, where the term 'arbiter' may not be appropriate. Badwan (2021) presents a case of higher education where there can be found neither clear official language policy nor people with real authority. To denote actors in such situations, she uses the term 'influencers' as a broader term than arbiters. This term can encompass various actors as 'people with power', 'people with expertise', 'people with interest' and 'people with needs' (Badwan 2021: 113-114).

The subcategories of influencers used here are partly derived from Zhao and Baldauf (Zhao 2011; Zhao and Baldauf 2012), who categorized individual agency into the following four types: people with power, people with expertise, people with influence and people with interest. People with power are typically those holding public office and having judicial power. People with expertise include (applied) linguists and other experts. People with influence are those who are influential in society because of their knowledge, personality or carrier. Finally, people with interest are ordinary citizens at the grassroots level. In spite of their marginal participation in official language policy, their role should not be neglected, as 'their individual attitudes toward language use taken as collective can affect societal language behavior in a significant way' (Zhao 2011: 910). Badwan elevated one of these subtypes, people with influence, as an umbrella term, slightly reshaping it as 'influencer', adding for her case study university students as people with needs, while classifying parents as people with interests.

Combining these categories with the multi-level conceptualization of LPP from macro to micro, Cheng and Li (2021) have divided individual players in educational language policy into five groups. On the macro level, there are policy makers, people with expertise and people with influence in society. Then there are people with power at the meso level of institutions. Finally, there are people as implementers and micro policy makers, like teachers in the educational context. In addition to these agents in policy making and implementation, the authors also mention students/learners, pointing out that in their role of receivers of language education and final evaluators of LPP, they deserve more attention as key actors in LPP (Cheng and Li 2021: 130). The focus on 'side agents' by Kosonen and Benson (2021) is another attempt to combine levels with actors. They summarize a wide diversity of actors like advocacy groups, academics and NGOs as side-level actors.

These typologies of actors should not be taken as verified and universally applicable, but as possible orientations in analysis that should be adapted flexibly. This applies also to the process model, as stated above, but even more to the categorizing of actors, as the categories presented here, with the exceptions of Spolsky's basic division, were developed for particular research contexts and aims and do not claim general theoretical status. It is also evident that the categories are neither clear-cut nor exclusive. There can be people with influence or experts who act as policy maker, for example, and above all, everyone is, apart from his/her social role, also a person with interest, as no one can be neutral to language.

While it is important to recognizing these limitations, it is also needed to seek ways to utilize these orientation tools. A possible scheme of analysis is to investigate how different types of actors function in different phases of the LPM process. It is evident that different types

of actors play key roles in different stages (Gazzola 2023). Zhao and Baldauf (2012) demonstrate the role of actors in the various stages of the language planning and implementation process, combining the stage and actor models. Kiss (2022) attempts to integrate this actor-stage model further within research questions derived from LMT.

7 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the development of the field of LPM has been reviewed as displaying an increasing concern with agency on different levels. The efforts to pay attention to a whole range of actors has gone so far to relinquish the contours of LPM as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. Three contrastive theoretical attempts have been presented to retain LPM as a distinctive part of language activities and field of research.

Spolsky's attempt was to terminologically complete the trend to expand language policy while saving the term management for a wide range of interventions by various actors. Through restoring the classic stance to regard intervention into practice as optional, his approach may be criticized to misrecognize the pervasiveness of agency.

PPA and LMT exemplify alternative approaches that seek to foreground essential agency on the macro and micro level respectively. The different priorities and accents can be utilized to cooperate in a complementary way. The potential of collaboration is far from being exhausted.[7]

Methodologically, the ethnographic approach has provided a broad range of methods that can be combined to analyse agency. Process models and actor typologies can be used for analytical orientation. When applying these conceptional tools, it is important to reflect the diversity of processes and actors.

In sum, how to collaborate among different, complementary approaches to LPM as well as how to combine the various approaches and methods will be a challenge to tackle the complex issue of agency, especially the interplay among actors on various levels within structural constraints and enablements.

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[7] Sloboda et al. 2010 provides an interesting example to combine theoretical frameworks from applied linguistics and political science – language management framework and advocacy coalition framework (ACF).

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