

Joseph Lo Bianco

Title :

*What kind of linguistics is language policy and language planning ? A model of analysis and reconciliation between scholarship and engagement.*

Abstract :

The field of language policy and planning, understood as deliberate intervention to change language, its use, or features, has the paradoxical character of being marginal in academic domains and yet centrally important in the cultural, juridical, administrative and education life of many societies. This presentation will distil my work in language policy commissions, theorizations, and real-world practical language problem-solving assignments in multiple international locations. The model of 'deliberate language change' that will be discussed reconciles and accommodates distinctive roles of formal linguistics (explicit language knowledge) and political action (deliberative or executive power). This effort at reconciliation will encompass my analytical model of the characteristic forms of authority that underlie deliberative language change, which can be summarised here as three spheres of authority, which are shaped by four modes of participation and knowledge, and the six characteristic goals that language policy formulations seek to achieve.

A 1.4-million-word corpus study of language policy texts has validated the elements of this model (Fitzsimmons-Doolan, 2019), however, its core method of 'facilitated dialogue' continues to receive practical affirmation in policy assignments in diverse parts of the world, as indicated in two publications currently in press. Based on large corpus and observational data (Helal and Lo Bianco, in press; Wijesekera and Lo Bianco, under preparation) address language problems in Tunisia and Sri Lanka respectively.

Reference cited:

Fitzsimmons-Doolan, S. (2019). *Language ideologies of institutional language policy: Exploring variability by language policy register*. Language Policy.

Brief career statement

Joseph Lo Bianco is Emeritus Professor of language and literacy education at the University of Melbourne Australia. He is past president and current international director of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Professor Lo Bianco is a specialist in language policy and planning with a specific interest in social cohesion, educational equity for immigrant and Indigenous populations, multilingual education and language revitalisation. His academic analysis and theorization of language problems in education and society is complemented by extensive real world policy writing, advising and engagement. In recent years this has included the design and implementation of a multi-year project in Southeast Asia for UNICEF under the title of Language, Education and Social Cohesion, focusing on conflict resolution in multiethnic settings in Malaysia, Myanmar and South Thailand. Prior to this he has designed and managed large scale language policy research and intervention studies in Sri Lanka, and as consultant to a four-year project on Multilingual Cities in 12 European municipalities responding to recent inflows of immigrants. In 1987, he authored Australia's first national language policy, and the first multilingual such policy in an English dominant society. Between 1990 and 2002 was Director of Language Australia/The National Languages and Literacy

Institute of Australia a multi-institutional research enterprise combining specialist research centres distributed in 32 locations across Australia. He was professor of language and literacy education at the University of Melbourne until his retirement in 2020 and has many book and article length publications. He is joint series editor of the Language Policy books for Springer.