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## Introduction to Part 2

### Redefining language policy as a discipline

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This chapter<sup>1</sup> outlines a new theoretical approach to defining the field of language policy (frequently referred to as “language policy and planning”), extending the work of various scholars, particularly Bernard Spolsky, to allow the discipline to be cross-referenced to the mainstream of research and writing about public policy and decision making. The chapter’s theoretical statement was the point of reference for an invitational seminar that gave rise to the papers in Part 2 of this volume. The discussion begins by an overview of the state of the field of language policy research both in general terms and with specific reference to the decline of its influence in Canada. Using studies of language policy in Canada as a central source of examples to clarify issues, the chapter reviews key formulations from the work of Spolsky and other scholars as the basis for a theoretical extension that traces boundaries for language policy as a new emerging discipline.

#### *Emerging discipline and declining influence*

For several decades scholars working in fields related to language and linguistics have forged basic concepts that originally were clustered under the heading of “language planning” (Haugen, 1966), most of the work dealing with public policy (i.e. policies defined by polities and subordinate entities). The influence of this work on policy making in many countries gradually led scholars to a consensus designation of the field that has taken hold since the early 1990s to describe the *de facto* evolution of research and writing: language policy and planning (e.g. Baldauf, 1994; Kaplan, 1994; Takala and Sajavaara 2000; Ricento, 2006), often presented by authors as a subfield within applied linguistics.

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<sup>1</sup>This text is based in part on the keynote address distributed in full to participants and presented in the first session of the invitational seminar, Language Policy, Language Planning, Public Policy and the Politics of Language, Ottawa, May 29, 2009.

The evolution of such studies is outlined by Wright (2004). For her, three phases of the discipline “language policy and language planning” (LPLP) coincide with the creation of nation states in Europe in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries, the decisions of countries undergoing decolonisation after 1945 and, finally, the current period where globalization is sapping the strength and underpinnings of nation-state sovereignty. In short, her description of the discipline LPLP is all about the nation-state, involving its conception, rise, spread and decline, i.e. the policy of politics.

For Canadians, it is not hard to fit the British North America Act and the events leading up to its adoption into Wright’s first phase, and the period after the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB, 1967) (including patriation of the Constitution with guarantees of certain linguistic rights) dovetails nicely with her second phase of decolonisation, even including what she sees as a postlude of critical studies questioning both authority and the earlier language decisions on diverse grounds (“Feminist studies”, “Black studies”, “Cultural studies”, “Development studies”, ...). Finally, contemporary Canada shares some of the characteristics Wright describes for the third phase, including development of regionalisms, fears for the coherence of state-based cultural policies and the “critique of Anglophone dominance ... termed linguistic ‘imperialism’ by some” (2004, pp. 10–11). She links all these trends with the “minority issue” (which she puts in quotation marks) that has spawned work on linguistic human rights and on topics like the preservation and restitution of languages.

What is missing from Wright’s presentation is clear recognition of the fact that most of the language policy research of the third — globalization — phase has been ineffective in modifying trends in the world of *Realpolitik*. The discussions of world economy at Davos and the meetings of groups such as the G8 and the G20 are still dominated by English, the *de facto* language of diplomacy, business and finance conducted across national frontiers; even the most liberal-minded governments pay bare lip service to preservation of ethnolinguistic diversity; and bitter military and political conflicts continue in dozens of countries, representing clashes between groups who want to maintain or to break away from the mainly unilingual model of the nineteenth century state where all citizens are expected to share the same culture, including religion or religious orientation.<sup>2</sup>

Canada exemplifies the recent decline in the impact of language policy research. Research studies and independent researchers played, in fact, an ex-

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<sup>2</sup>On the rationale and ideology of the romantic state and their implications for contemporary minority linguistic issues in a period of declining state sovereignty, see Churchill (1996) and references therein.

trremely important role in the work of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in the 1960s and the following decade. A recent paper analyzes the extent to which governments and public agencies in Canada have relied upon outside researchers as independent sources of facts, interpretations and perspectives on language issues during recent decades (Churchill, 2008a). As the 1980s drew to a close, the development of in-house research capacity of both federal and provincial-territorial governments resulted in an over-all decline in the impact of individual researchers on major language policy issues, with the notable exception of research on topics affecting minority Francophones. Stimulated in part by the creation of the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, a network of minority Francophone research centres and groupings has emerged, resulting in an abundance of policy-relevant work. The utilisation of minority Francophone research has been primarily to assist educational programming in the provinces and, at the federal level, to help guide reallocation of finances within a framework that alternately shrank, then increased moderately and has since nearly stagnated in real terms. For other language policy issues, the federal and provincial/territorial policy-making bureaucracies almost exclusively use in-house research capacity, augmented through excellent data sources provided by Statistics Canada and through opinion polling (surveys, focus groups) of private consulting firms. In this respect, Quebec is a moderate exception, though the in-house nature of some activities in Quebec, as in all provinces, is disguised by the role of independent academic researchers who work within mandates that are controlled closely by detailed, highly directive research contracts with heavy administrative oversight of intermediate results (Churchill, 2008a).

Canada *needs* good quality language policy research. It may be called a “land of many bilingualisms” (Churchill, 2008b): the pervasiveness of personal bilingualism/ plurilingualism is generally ignored by the public and is often obscured by polemics focused either on French-English relationships or on the difficulties of “integrating” (assimilating) immigrants and their children to ensure they know and use one of the two official languages. Language policy research in Canada has a distinguished record of achievement and Canadian researchers continue to produce highly valuable contributions to the field, even if the discipline as a whole is no longer a major driving force in public policy decision making. My contention is that *language policy research in Canada is destined to have only highly targeted and limited effects on policy if we do not re-think what language policy is, how it can have effect, and how we can act to ensure that it does produce meaningful change*. One step in this process is to develop a new set of understandings regarding the field of language policy that will permit research to focus on issues that affect policy decisions and how the decisions are carried into practice. A preliminary step is to accept that the

term *language planning* reflects outdated assumptions about how politics and societies work in the field of policy.<sup>3</sup> As proposed by Shohamy (2006), a collaborator of Spolsky's, language planning along with *language management* should be treated as sub-categories of language policy.

### ***Language policy as a new discipline***

The coming of age of language policy as a discipline is symbolized by two synthesis volumes authored by the linguist Bernard Spolsky: *Language policy* (2004) and *Language management* (2009). The volumes draw on many sources but owe much to contributions by scholars like Hal Schiffman (esp. 1996) and the never tiring Joshua Fishman. Spolsky's syntheses represent a summation of thinking on policy, mainly by sociolinguists, over the last several decades and are destined to be a long-term point of reference for delimiting the field of language policy.<sup>4</sup>

In Spolsky's view, language policy research is concerned with a much broader field than public policy made by governmental institutions or their dependencies. To borrow his formulation, the objectives of language policy are ultimately about the individual's choices of language variety, which leads his discussion to range over the roles played by a host of actors that influence those choices. He further asserts that language policy research should not be confined to dealing with relationships between so-called named varieties (Spolsky, 2004): Hindi, Pashtun, Cantonese, classical Arabic, Church Slavonic, for

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<sup>3</sup>The popularity of the term "language planning" probably derives from the conjunction of two factors:

- (a) Since the late 1940s, the United Nations Development Program and other aid agencies used the terminology of planning, requiring newly independent nations to formulate comprehensive national development plans. Their bureaucracies were conditioned to communicate about policy decisions using the terminology, even when applied after the fact to rationalize a decision already taken.
- (b) The involvement of linguists and sociolinguists in advising about and studying language policies of newly decolonised countries created a situation where the terminology of planning was the easiest means of communicating their ideas to national decision makers.

More often than not, fundamental language decisions were made with little advance planning but were followed by planning processes designed to implement the policies, often as a means of imposing them in societies where they were often poorly accepted by significant parts of the population (cf. Migdal, 1988).

<sup>4</sup>Spolsky acknowledges the contributions of dozens of scholars to his thinking. Our discussion references primarily Spolsky mainly because of the coherence and consistency of the syntheses, but without ignoring the role played by so many other distinguished academics.

example, or more limited groupings such as standard French, Quebec French, east end Montreal *joual*, 'Newfie' English, Ottawa Valley English, English of the CBC rulebook on diction, etc. Other varieties can be, and are, the object of specific policies, including not only recognized dialects of a named language but variants based upon social and other factors (e.g. "bad grammar", swear words, dense legalese, non-respectful address for elders). Social class differences often result in very different linguistic registers used within the same "named" language, sufficient to have generated an extensive literature on related differences in school achievement (Corson 2000 and references cited).

A significant problem exists, however, with respect to the terminology adopted by these syntheses, reflecting their sources in disciplines related to language and linguistics. In the volume on language management, *most of what Spolsky analyzes as "language management" in terms of activities by governments or their agencies, is what specialists on general public policy call "policy" and "policy implementation."*

As a person who has taught graduate courses in policy evaluation and administration of education, I was struck by the absence of any references by Spolsky to even the most classic authors on public policy or decision making. This is not a personal trait of the author but rather a reflection of viewing language policy as an extension of language-related disciplines. But, on the other side of the divide, language policy is treated as a topic of barely marginal interest in mainstream books and research publications in the English language<sup>5</sup> about public policy, public administration, business administration, organizational theory, policy analysis and decision making. When mentioned at all, language policy is usually treated superficially as a factor in intergroup relations and power struggles in new states after decolonisation and in countries like Canada that have legislated language policies. Language issues play almost no role in formulating the theories and academic perspectives of these fields. As David Corson noted, in the field of educational administration, administering schools with very diverse populations is treated as if unilingualism were the norm, even though many children's home language is not that of the school. "Special" textbooks are written to deal with bilingual populations, and most are premised on the idea that the school's objective is to help the students overcome the "handicap" of being bilingual by becoming unilingual (Corson, 1990, pp. 1–2; Cummins, 2000).

The following outlines how the field of language policy can be enriched by crossing disciplinary "borders" into general public policy, decision making and organizational theory. This synthesis adopts new perspectives derived both (a) from classic theories of decision-making and organizational behaviour

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<sup>5</sup>As well as in French and the other languages with which the author is familiar.

(e.g. Simon, 1965) and (b) from more recent critical approaches like diffuse decision analysis (Weiss, 1982), organizational theory (Hatch, 2006) and post-modern neo-institutionalism (Sergiovanni and Corbally, 1984; Hatch, 2006) with its emphasis on organizational myth, ceremony and ideology (Meyer, 1984; Meyer and Rowan, 1991).

Let us first examine Spolsky's (2009) formulation: "The goal of a theory of language policy is to account for the choices made by individual speakers on the basis of rule-governed patterns recognized by the speech community (or communities) of which they are members" (p. 1). The choices he refers to are choices of language varieties (broadly defined). At the core of it is the preoccupation of sociolinguists with the issue of the survival of mother tongue or birth language communities. Without question, the concern for survival of languages and their communities is a matter of vital interest for language policy, but it is not the only objective pursued by language policies. Let us now examine how to build on this foundational formulation and expand it.

My first observation is about Spolsky's definition of *policy*. Spolsky's uses of the term are maddeningly loose at times. The volume on language management often equates "policy" with individual choices and "management" with attempts to influence the choice, i.e. via "rule-governed patterns". Thus he discusses at length the attempts by governments to influence the behaviour of individuals under the heading of language *management*; both are instances of policy choices in my understanding. The wording can be misinterpreted, particularly since the previous volume on language policy does discuss the same topics in the context of governmental policies. But he is absolutely in agreement with modern conceptions of policy to clarify that *individuals make policy, too*.

My second observation is to say that accounting for the choices of language variety made by individual speakers is only one of the goals of a theory of language policy. Language policies pursue other objectives where language is only a means to the end or where language is not even acknowledged to be a component of the policy. In the latter case, the effect of the policy on language can be examined in the light of its impact on language, not in the light of its stated non-linguistic goals. Kaplan (1997) notes in the foreword to a volume on language policy, that the study demonstrates the subordination of language-related policy to broader, non-linguistic goals: "the learning of the national language is not so much about linguistics as it is about the inculcation of cultural values or about the support of the absolutely undocumented assumption that an equation exists between 'proper' language use and moral behavior" (p. xii). Most countries force the children of immigrants to give up using their own language as part of attending school taught in the dominant language of the country. The practice is usually embedded in policy discourses and policy

directives that have widely varying goals, such as improving school achievement and socioeconomic chances (frequently the wrong means to achieve the goals), reducing perceived threats to social unity from the “foreign” home languages and cultures, or any of dozens of other objectives (cf. Cummins, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Policy decisions made for purposes ostensibly unrelated to language can have far-reaching linguistic effects. The language policy is embedded in larger policies as an almost unacknowledged but often exceedingly powerful component. One need only think of the vast web of policies affecting indigenous peoples throughout the world to see that a variety of policies in every social sphere may have major linguistic impact and are, therefore, language policies in the strongest sense of the term. The disappearance of indigenous languages is a by-product of countless policies that cumulate in a single consequence (Skutnabb-Kangas, Maffi and Harmon, 2003; Burnaby, 2008). Thus, from the example of indigenous peoples, it is clear that failure to establish an explicit policy on language—the preferred mode of operation of many governments and private organizations—constitutes a policy decision: *non-decision is a policy*. The dominance of English in many spheres today, which Philippon (2009) categorizes as linguistic imperialism, is largely a consequence of multiple policies (both public and private) framed for non-linguistic reasons but having major linguistic consequences.

What, then is *policy*? It is important to distinguish between *politics* and *policies* or *policy making*. *Politics* is the study of relationships between different actors in a given public or private arena. The field of study gives rise to manifold theories about different factors and ideologies that affect the actors, traditionally studied as part of political science(s) and more recently dissected by a variety of perspectives drawing on anthropology and discourse analysis to illustrate theories of power and oppression. The politics of countries where groups of actors are differentiated by language, such as Belgium or Canada, obviously require discussion of some aspects of language policy, usually as a means of explicating motivations that lead to political changes.

For the purposes of this paper, *the term policy refers to the processes that govern the formulation and application of rules that govern behaviour, including linguistic behaviour*. Individuals can formulate such rules to govern their own decisions on behaviour (“Je vais insister à parler en français, quoiqu’ils disent” [*sic.*]) or to influence the behaviour of others, as in the case of parents with their children. This power extends through society ranging from governments that adopt regulations on the language of school instruction or the curriculum of study in language courses through intermediate bodies such as businesses that have “codes of telephone behaviour.” Internet websites of all kinds enforce standards of language usage, particularly choice of vocabulary:

no “flaming,” no racist epithets and so on.

*The study of policy is the study of decision-making, including avoiding making decisions.* Formal organizations may find it convenient to distinguish between policy making and policy execution or implementation as a means of establishing rules of administrative accountability. But the separation between the two places an artificial barrier between successive acts of decision-making. In her ground-breaking studies of major governmental policy areas in the United States, Weiss (1982) showed that most policies were the result of what she termed “diffuse decision making”, in which it was impossible to identify one actor, or reduced set of actors, who were responsible for how a policy was gestated, approved and implemented.

The author had a first-hand view of just such a process of diffuse decision making on language policy. In the mid-1980s, he was called upon to review and evaluate the Official Languages in Education Program of the Government of Canada for the period since its inception, roughly 1971–72 to 1986–87 (Churchill, 1987). The program managed the transfer of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal subsidies to provinces and territories for both schooling of official linguistic minorities (Anglophones in Quebec, Francophones elsewhere) and teaching of the two official languages as a second language to the respective provincial/territorial majorities: English in French-medium schools of Quebec, French in English-medium schools elsewhere. The programs were the product of some 15 years of decisions reached by Parliament, the federal Cabinet, a succession of ministers and deputy ministers, and hundreds of different federal and provincial officials, all of it conditioned by repeated negotiations about federal–provincial protocols (financial agreements). The protocol negotiations involved representatives of provinces ranging from premiers through ministers to low-level bureaucrats, all working within legal frameworks controlled by their respective legislatures and provincial/territorial cabinets. After holding public hearings involving several hundred persons and myriad organizations in all the provinces and territories, I would have found it impossible to state who was responsible for the shape of the program and its impact at any point in time during the previous 15 years.

Policies require some form of *authority*, even when the authority is not a single person or readily identifiable entity. *Authority in language policy is diffuse and not limited to public or state authorities.* Schiffman (1996) clarifies this notion of authority in relation to what he calls *linguistic culture*, which subsumes assumptions that embody an unacknowledged, sometimes unconscious, ideology of language. Schiffman’s research, ranging from southern parts of the Indian sub-continent to modern France, clarifies the need to keep in mind two often overlooked sets of factors: linguistic culture and the role played by *non-state language authorities*. In modern western states, the word *authority*



as applied to language is often implicitly equated with actions by the state apparatus or its agents, even though some of the more important foundational studies of language choice have concerned religious settings where decisions did not involve the state. Replacing German by English as the language used in Protestant churches serving immigrant German-speaking congregations in the United States rapidly halted inter-generational language transmission (Schiffman, 1996). Usage of English in Catholic institutions serving minority francophones in Ontario in the late 19th and early 20th century had a severe impact on institutional and community structures (cf. Gervais, 1996). Schiffman provides detailed accounts of non-state authorities (individuals, groups, institutions) and their role in the linguistic culture of certain ethnocultural communities in India and Sri Lanka.

While linguistic culture is an amorphous but real phenomenon and is subject to multiple definitions that need not concern us here, it should be kept in mind as affecting the fundamental understandings and psychological dispositions that underlie all decisions made about language, i.e. the foundations of the decisions of all the actors involved in language policy, either as individuals or as members of discourse communities. The often occult or unacknowledged aspects of diversity inherent in such linguistic cultures explains why it is necessary to avoid hasty generalizations about different ethnocultural communities, particularly about the population of a country like Canada, at the crossroads of so many languages and cultures. Canadian discussions of language often lump together as “Allophones” all persons who speak languages of immigrant origin (other than French or English) to make generalizations that are often grossly misleading. In short, “Allophones” do not speak a language called “Allo” nor do they all behave alike.

Language policy can be studied in what Spolsky terms “*domains*” relevant to the lives of individuals or groups. His list includes: families, school, religion and religious organizations, workplace, supra-national groupings, and nations and states (polities). To the list, one might add the following that are particularly relevant to linguistic community concerns and, therefore, for future language policy research in Canada: ethnoculturally (including linguistically) defined communities; racially defined groupings (whether acknowledged and adopted or imposed and resisted, e.g. as in stereotyping of accents as racially-linked); handicapped or “differently abled” communities, esp. with communication-related differences of hearing, speech, perception, or attention span; social status communities or social class groupings (esp. extreme poverty, outcast, discriminated); formal non-state, non-religious organizations; communication networks and agencies; national and transnational media and cultural products; and affinity defined communities (social clubs, gay and/or lesbian, professional or trade groupings, political and other interest groups de-

fined by issue). All of these domains are characterized by idiosyncratic linguistic patterns used in communication. Language usage within these domains reflects decisions on language usage and choice of linguistic variety that fall within our definition of language policy as a discipline.

Before summarizing the new boundaries of language policy and related research, it is necessary to eliminate a major source of confusion. Policy statements — that is, declared policies — whether oral or written, are often taken to be all of policy, such as when a minister or senior official makes a public announcement about a decision or a formal decision is transmitted through the administrative apparatus of a public agency. Trudeau's famous formulation of governmental policy about multiculturalism within an English-French bilingual framework took the form of a speech delivered before the House of Commons.<sup>6</sup> Its implications for the government of the day and for subsequent cabinets were still unknown: the policy statement was as much an end point of debate from the preceding period as the starting point of debates that endure to the present day. The *decision* to make the speech was followed by literally thousands of governmental and bureaucratic *actions*, each an interpretation of policy directives leading to *decisions* that formulated *policies*. *The policy process, including implementation, is a succession of decisions and interpretations that lead to decisions, some of which are accompanied by actions.* Following Spolsky's formulation, one can trace language policy (and its *management impact*) through the *decisions* of different actors cascading down to the individual's decision about choice of language variety. This is true whether the authority is a government promoting bilingualism in Canada, a ministry of education enunciating what grammar rules are to be taught as part of a curriculum for high schools, or a parent insisting that a child not use swear words.

*De facto policy* is often more important than stated policy. For example, if a policy decision by a government about language use requires resources for implementation but the government does not provide resources, the policy may be considered twofold: (a) to announce an intention and (b) to subvert the announced intention and ensure it cannot be applied. Such statements are often called "rhetorical policy." Conversely, unannounced policies — i.e. no statement of policy exists — can be put in practice and be transformed into *de facto* policy. Jurisprudence, particularly in the United States, has consistently used the test of practice to discount rhetorical policy statements and, instead, to condemn *de facto* policies of discrimination and other violations of personal rights of citizens, particularly in schooling. Public schooling systems through-

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<sup>6</sup>"A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians." (Canada. House of Commons Debates. 1971)

out the world generate large amounts of such rhetorical policies, for example goal statements about “developing the full potential of students,” even in situations where whole categories of students are manifestly deprived of meaningful education on the basis of existing pedagogical practices and lack of appropriate resources for their needs.

The author has had the privilege of seeing his research used in major constitutional cases in Canada that involve setting aside nominally progressive policies whose effects were judged to be *de facto* contraventions of linguistic rights.<sup>7</sup> In the 1984 Constitutional Reference from the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Court of Appeal cited my research as authority and held that Franco-Ontarian school children suffered from inequality of educational treatment (Churchill, Rideout, Gill and Lamerand, 1977, 1978; Ontario Court of Appeal, 1984). All the English-majority school boards studied in the research had policies that claimed to have the objective of giving high quality educational services to French-speaking students; the research demonstrated vast shortcomings in the results of the policies, including spending more money per student on English-speaking than French-speaking students, in spite of provincial grants that were intended to provide additional funds for the latter.

### *A formal statement of discipline boundaries*

The time has come for a formal statement summarizing the elements outlined above to trace the boundaries of the discipline of language policy. The elements are intended to build on the work of Spolsky (and all those on whose contributions he draws) by mapping some of his key theoretical contributions into a terminology that can be related directly to the field of public policy and cognate disciplines. We begin by terminology before turning to domains of application.

*Policies* are essentially rules that govern patterns of behaviour as well as their manifestation in practice, whether the rules affect the behaviour of the individual making the decision or are intended to affect the decisions of others about their own behaviour (*management/power relationships*). *Language policy* refers to decisions to formulate and apply rules that ultimately govern personal behaviour with respect to choices of language variety or that attempt to influence the choices made by others (*language management*). A policy with impact on linguistic behaviour is a language policy even if the overt content of the policy is non-linguistic. The formulation and application of rules is a process that involves repeated acts of *interpretation and decision making*, each decision constituting a new instance of policy formulation. The instances

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<sup>7</sup>For involvement in other constitutional cases, including *Mahé V.R.*, see Churchill (2008a).

stretch from authorities, however defined, down to the individuals affected. Each person's control of his/her own language usage is the final step in the decision making chain. The decision making about personal language usage, in every instance, activates *consciously recognized rules* regarding language but operates within a broader *linguistic culture of the discourse community*, comprising psychological dispositions of actors (persons) and their implicit or explicit ideologies of language.

Failing to make a formal decision to take action in a given situation is, in fact, a policy decision, even if due to inattention. The gap between stated intentions and actual behaviour creates situations where decision making consists of two components, the decision to state an intention and the decision to take an action. For clarity of analysis in most contexts, one is usually obliged to limit research on language policy to cases of *consistent, repeatable patterns of choices of language variety* when dealing with individual behaviours and to *enduring patterns of rule propagation or application* when dealing with activities in politics and other formal organizations.

The discipline boundaries for language policy research, thus defined, are activated by studying language domains of different discourse communities. The list of domains set out above is non exhaustive, since the definition of domain must be determined empirically by examining the behaviour and understandings of the persons who create, organize, maintain and transform discourse communities. None of the aspects of this framework of analysis dictates the normative stance of researchers, the research methodologies they should use or the domains to which they apply the methodologies in studying language policy.

Let us conclude by illustrating how this adoption of originally non-linguistic frameworks may be of use in studying language policies without requiring researchers to abandon their preferred perspectives. We may begin by noting that discourse communities are embedded in organizations, both formal and informal, but organizational theory is rarely used by linguists to study them. Formal organizations—such as governments, agencies, public and private businesses, and voluntary organizations—have traditionally been studied in terms of explicitly approved policies or of *de facto* policies, implicit in actions taken. But organizational theory has now expanded its scope: Policy processes of organizations (formal and informal) may be studied outside traditional frameworks derived from positivist or structuralist premises: Patterns of organizational behaviours can be viewed in terms of the interactions between members of the organization, leaving room for anthropological data gathering and interpretation of policy and actions as ritual, myth or ceremony (Meyer, 1984; Meyer and Rowan, 1991); alternative analyses may activate critical theories (Bourdieu, 1982; Corson 1995) or post-modern theories may be adapted

to traditional disciplines such as economics (Grin, 2003).

### **Conclusion**

The framework provided by the theoretical statement of boundaries given above should be considered the first step in a two-fold process of expanding the discipline of language policy to a new set of frontiers and applying it to research in Canada. One part of the process involves refining the terminology used for discussing language policy — along with the associated underlying conceptual constructs — to make it easier to “map” linguistic policy into the conceptual frameworks used in mainstream public policy and related disciplines. The second step is to apply some of this terminology and empirically adapt it to the practical and theoretical requirements for conducting language-related research: using the most recent formulations from mainstream policy research, we can study language policy as a continuum of decisions and interpretations that no longer is based upon the dichotomy between policy making at a higher level of authority and policy implementation at a lower level. This continuum of decisions — *policies* — extends from the macro levels of politics and community social life down to the level of families and individuals in every aspect of their existence as members of multiple, often plurilingual discourse communities. This expansion of the frontiers — moving from macro all the way to micro levels of linguistic decision making in a broad array of domains — can permit fruitful dialogue between researchers using different normative stances and ideological postures that focus on “how things work in language” and “how the users of language make things work and interpret those workings.” Language research constitutes not only a means for understanding power relationships. The very understandings that arise from language policy research — including personal reflection by each member of society — constitute a form of power that, like language, involves a shared discourse where, ultimately, the individual’s language choices are the arbiter.

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