



Spotlights on the ‘practiced language policy’ in the international university: a case study of multilingual interaction in higher education

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Classroom Interaction at the Internationalised University

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Study background, aims and questions

- Internationalisation of higher education characterised by globalisation, transnational flows of people and services as well as a commodification of knowledge and skills, attracting a “multilingual elite” (Barakos & Selleck in prep) to study and work in the UK.
- Larger project: We aim to examine whether UK HE institutions’ concerns for an ‘internationalisation strategy’ translate into a multilingual language policy in discourses and practices.
 - Little is known about actual multilingual practices in HE.
- This paper: A focus on the ‘practiced language policy’:
 - How are multilingual classroom practices possible and legitimate in a Higher-Educational institution where English is the medium of instruction?

Context

- A Russell Group University from the UK
- An “international” university: a quarter of its student population is from overseas.
- Focus on a particular School: 2,861 students in 2017-18
- Two Masters: 170 students (140 are overseas)
- One course in Semester 2:
 - Group 1: 20 students (17 from Mainland China; 1 from Spain; 1 from Mexico; 1 from Taiwan)
 - Group 2: 20 students (1 from Singapore; 1 from Taiwan; 18 from Mainland China)
 - Teacher/Researcher: French and English bilingual speaker. Insider’s knowledge.

Data set

- **A corpus of 12 hours of audio-recordings** of the two groups meeting twice for a pre-workshop (1 hour) and a workshop (2 hours).
 - Group 1: 6 students (3 Chinese students; 1 Taiwanese student; 1 Mexican student)
 - > linguistically heterogeneous
 - Group 2: 6 students (1 Singaporean; 1 Taiwanese; 4 Chinese students)
 - > linguistically homogeneous

Conceptualising Language Policy

Language policy as text

Language Management

The declared language policy

The formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use” (Spolsky, 2004 : 11)

Language policy as discourse

Language Beliefs

The perceived language policy

“Language ideology is language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done” (Spolsky, 2004: 14)

Language policy as practice

Language Practices

The practiced language policy

“what people actually do” (Spolsky, 2004: 14)

‘Practiced’ language policy (Bonacina-Pugh 2012 and 2017)

- Conceptualising a policy at the level of practices:
 - “Practice forms a recognisable and analysable set of **patterns**” (Spolsky and Shohamy, 2000: 29; see also Spolsky, 2007).
 - From these patterns, speakers deduce **a set of implicit rules** that they draw on to know what language(s) is appropriate and when (e.g. Spolsky and Shohamy, 2000: 2).
 - **A Practiced Language Policy is this set of implicit rules** that speakers draw on interaction to know what language(s) is appropriate or not (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012, 2017).

A Conversation Analytic approach to PLP

“Practice forms a recognisable and analysable set of **patterns**” (Spolsky and Shohamy, 2000: 29).



Interactional practices

“recurrent activities that have their own structures” (Young 2008: 61).

From these patterns, speakers deduce a **set of implicit rules** that they draw on to know what language(s) is appropriate and when (e.g. Spolsky and Shohamy, 2000: 2).



Interactional norms

that is, “a point of reference or action template for interpretation” (Seedhouse 2004: 10).

A Practiced Language Policy (PLP) is the **set of interactional norms** that speakers orient to in interaction to know what language(s) is appropriate and when (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012, 2017).

Teacher-led participation framework

Extract 1 (teacher-led → student schisming in monolingual medium)

S2,4: Chinese-speaking student
T: teacher

Shift of participation framework
(Goodwin 2007):

- S2 and S4 --- whispered schisming (Egbert 1997) and switch to Mandarin as medium;
- Students orient to the norm:

“English is the shared preferred language and therefore only an English monolingual medium can be used in a teacher-led participation framework.”

1 T : L (.) that's right (.) so that's
2 ability to take part in the
3 conversation that hangs together (.)
4 so it's to be coherent and cohesive
5 (.)
6 T : [yeah
7 S4 : [哪个啊 (.) 这个吗
 which one (.) (is it) this one
8 S2 : (.) 就这个
 (.) it is this one
9 (.)
10 T : narrative discourse

What is the PLP in teacher-led participation framework?

“The shared preferred language is adopted as the medium of classroom interaction”

In teacher-led participation framework:

- The shared preferred language is English, which is therefore used as the medium of classroom interaction;
- There are cases where languages other than English are seen as legitimate, however:

➤ Group 2 Workshop – Extract 1

When students encounter a problem to be resolved --- a schisming (Egbert 1997) is initiated to shift participation framework and enable medium switch.

Peer-led participation framework

Extract 2 (linguistically heterogeneous group)

S1: Chinese-speaking student

S3: Mexican Spanish-speaking student

S5: Chinese-speaking student

- S3 calls for the use of English;
- S1 apologises;
- S3 and S2 both display orientation to the norm:

“English is the shared preferred language and should therefore be used as the monolingual medium here.”

1 S1: I like the story so much
2 (.)
3 S5: “turn left turn right”
4 (.)
5 S3: [“turn left turn”-
6 S1: [呃 (.) “中文向左走向右走”
uh (.) Chinese turn left turn right
7 (.)
8 S3: whaha- [haha
9 S1: [haha sorry
10 S3: [hahahahaha
11 S1: [that was- (.) the nam-(.) the original name
12 S3: ohhh

Extract 3 (linguistically homogeneous group)

S1: Chinese-speaking student

S2: Chinese-speaking student

- S2 --- English;
- S1 --- Mandarin;
- No signs of repair/translation:
‘Parallel medium of classroom interaction’ (e.g., Bonacina & Gafaranga 2011)

“The preferred medium of classroom interaction is a parallel one.”

- 1 S1: () 小孩子的书就 () 一大堆 (.) 哈哈哈哈哈
children's book () lots of them (.) hahahaha
- 2 S2: hahahaha
- 3 S1: 我拿几个不同类型的=
I took various types
- 4 S2: =so- (.) so this i[s your own book
- 5 S1: [拿过来借一下
I borrowed them
- 6 (.)
- 7 S1: [呢 (.) 有些是借
uh (.) some of them are borrowed
- 8 S2: [or how do you-
- 9 S1: (.) 有些是 (.) 自己的
(.) some of them are (.) my own

What is the PLP in peer-led participation framework?

*“The shared preferred language is adopted
as the medium of classroom interaction”
→ the same norm applies*

In peer-led participation framework:

- Linguistically heterogeneous group: the shared preferred language is English – ‘English Monolingual medium’:
 - [Group 1 Workshop – Extract 2](#)
- Linguistically homogeneous group: the shared preferred languages are English and Mandarin
 1. English monolingual medium;
 2. Mandarin monolingual medium;
 3. Bilingual medium:
 - [Group 2 Workshop – Extract 3](#)

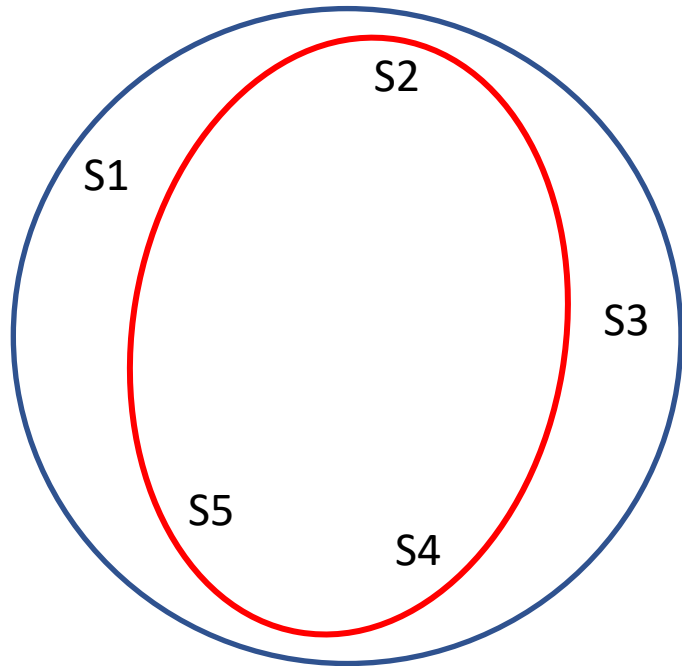
So far...

- Teacher-led: a case of English monolingual medium
- Peer-led:
 - A case of English monolingual medium
 - A case of bilingual medium
- The inter-relationship between the choice of medium and participation framework of classroom interaction:
 - Switch of medium --> shift of participation framework

Extract 4 (a shift of participation framework enables a switch of medium)

S1, 2, 4, 5: Chinese-speaking student

S3: Mexican Spanish-speaking student



- S5 initiates a schisming with S2 and S4, asking for explanation of 'tracing';

→ 1 S3: so (0.2) do you know what tracing is right~
→ 2 S2: ~yeah~
3 S3: ~yeah so (0.2) it gives you different worksheets
4 (0.2) with di[fferent themes]
5 S2: [ohhh]
6 S2: ohh~
7 S1: ~ah[hh]
8 S3: [for] tracing
→ 9 S3: (0.2) but I cannot open them
(0.3)
→ 10 S5: tracing 该怎么描述呢
how do you describe it
11 (0.3)
12 S2: 嗯 umm
13 S4: ~嗯?~ um?
14 S5: (.) 是- (0.3) 描
is- (0.3) trace
15 (0.2)

Extract 4 ctnd. (a shift of participation framework enables a switch of medium)

S2, 4, 5: Chinese-speaking student

S3: Mexican Spanish-speaking student

- S3 continues the original sequence in L16, 23;

Mandarin can become a legitimate choice of medium through a shift of participation framework:

- S1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – English as the shared preferred language, therefore English monolingual medium;
- S2, 4 and 5 – Mandarin as the shared preferred language, therefore Mandarin monolingual medium.

→ 16 S3: maybe I can send [it to] your [email]≈

17 S2: [嗯 um]

18 S4: [描] *trace*

19 S5: ≈描 *trace*

20 S4: [嗯] *um*

21 S2: [嗯] *um*

22 (0.5)

→ 23 S3: a[nd you can see] it

24 S4: [怎么 了]
what's the matter

25 (0.2)

→ 26 S2: like

27 (1.7)

28 S2: learning to write with [proper gui]dance

29 S3: [yes]

30 (0.6)

Concluding remarks

- What is the declared language policy in UK HEIs?
 - No explicit language policy formulated in the institutional policy discourses on internationalisation;
 - The practiced language policy as we have shown:
 - English is used as the medium of instruction, especially in a teacher-led participation framework.
 - Multilingual practices are seen as legitimate, because participants orient to a practiced language policy whereby the shared preferred language(s) in a given participation framework can be used.
 - We have shown examples in peer-led participation framework where participants see the following mediums as legitimate: English monolingual medium, Mandarin monolingual medium, English and Mandarin bilingual medium...
 - We've also found examples in teacher-led participation framework when the teacher sees other languages as legitimate.
- The need to further explore language policy and its interplay with multilingualism and HE internationalization (Bonacina-Pugh, Barakos & Chen, in prep).

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Extract 5 (teacher-led → student schisming in parallel medium)

- Teacher requests translation in Chinese;
- S1 --- minimal response;
- Teacher resumes talk in L13;

Shift of participation framework:

- S1, 2, 3 --- schisming (Egbert 1997) into a parallel conversation;
- Both Mandarin and English are used as medium in this participation framework --- bilingual parallel medium --- compare to Extract 1;

Students orient to the norm:

“English is the shared preferred language and therefore only an English monolingual medium can be used in a teacher-led participation framework.”

→ 1 T : does it have a Chinese equivalent (.) a name
→ 2 S1: yeah
3 (.)
4 S2: 是- (.) 嗯
it is- (.) uh
5 (.)
6 S2: [拼字游戏吗
is it spelling game
7 S1: [我每天都玩这个游戏=
I play this game everyday
8 S2: =怪不得
no wonder
9 (.)
10 S3: scrabble (.) it's quite famous in
11 (.)
12 S2: [哎 (.) 是不是 (.) 和那个spelling bee有一点点像
oh (.) is it (.) a bit similar to that spelling bee
12 S3: [in English
→ 13 T : so it's basically (.) you have a bag of letters