

Language profile

Keyan Ding

University of Regina

ELNG 200-030

Ms. Andrea Sterzuk

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Language is a political policy and a convenient tool to manage and govern the country. A language policy can have both favorable and unfavorable consequences for the country and people, because it can cause rapid social and economic development, and can also cause harm to Minority culture. In this article, I compared the language policies and practices of China and Canada, and discussed the popularity of English as a second language in China's public education system. Finally, I shared the impact of language policies on me and my family.

I was born in China. In life in China, Mandarin is the official language and Mandarin is the language I have most contact with, and it is also the language I use most frequently in my life. But this does not mean that there is only one language in China, Mandarin. There are 56 ethnic groups in China, and each ethnic group has its own language, and some ethnic groups even have their own unique scripts. In addition, each village also has its own unique dialect. Maybe two villages are separated by a river, and the two villages will have two different dialects. The problem with this diversification of languages is that it will cause difficulties in communication between people. Therefore, the government has decided to implement a language policy to have a unified language so that people can better communicate with each other, and also in order to unify the languages spoken internationally. Mandarin has become the official language, so for a better quality of life and a better future for future generations, some ethnic minorities choose to learn Mandarin, and let their children learn Mandarin instead of their own national language. This action has caused the destruction of the languages, cultures and knowledge of some ethnic minorities. Therefore, in the Chinese government's policies on ethnic minorities, the learning of ethnic minorities' languages is also actively promoted, and there are also special language schools that teach unique ethnic languages and culture. This period of history reminds me of Canada's education on the culture and language of the indigenous people. The Canada public education

system also started to teach students about first nation culture from a young age. “The language teaching and learning initiatives for ethnic minorities must be 'flexible' and 'responsive to needs' as consistent with the 'self-reliance' of entrepreneurial subjects and must promote job skills and have specific objectives and measurable outcomes.” (Haque & Patrick 2015)

The teaching of Mandarin in China was implemented by my mother when she was in school, so I learned some of her experience in school from my mother. She told me that she start to learn to speak Mandarin when she was in junior high school, but she only mastered Mandarin when she went to university, because university and job search require a Mandarin level certificate. Before she went to school, she always spoke the Liling dialect (the dialect of her hometown), and although she needed to learn Mandarin in junior high school, she was still studying in her hometown, so she focused on writing and listening. In terms of speaking, she can speak, but she doesn't speak often, and every time she speaks, she has a strong dialect accent. These accents were changed by her roommate when she was in college. After going to university, she left her hometown to go to Nanjing to go to university, work, and get married. I was born and raised in Nanjing, so my mother felt that there was no need for me to learn her dialects, because there were not many opportunities to use in life, and the society's requirements for Mandarin were getting higher and higher, so she simply just let me learn Mandarin directly. So I live in a Mandarin environment, my grandparents have to speak Mandarin in order to communicate with me. After I grew up, I tried to learn my mother's dialect, but the learning speed was very slow and often inaccurate

After Mandarin was popularized by most Chinese, the government gradually became in line with the international standards, "English is promoted as the key to modernisation by policy makers. At different periods, English has been highly regarded in military, political and economic terms for nation-building "(Grace Yue Qi, 2016) So they chose to introduce

English into the public education system because English is the most widely spoken language. In recent years, English has always been a priority foreign language for education and society. So "since 2003, English has become a compulsory subject in the third grade of primary schools in China, and has gradually been introduced into the curriculum of many schools"(Grace Yue Qi, 2016), but at the same time, the language is also beneficial to many children. There is a huge learning pressure, because English is regarded as "elite education" and there is a myth that "the younger you are, the easier it is to master a second language." Parents have more in order to make their children's education more prominent than other children so they can have a possible future, let the children participate in private English tutoring from kindergarten, hoping that they will get better results in the school English test and be among the best in the class.

Unfortunately, English is not the most important thing in every child's learning career. Some students may not really use English in their lives for a lifetime. It is not necessary for them to learn English, but in order to stand out among all the students in class, they must learn English and achieve good grades, otherwise they will not be able to get a "good future".

When I started school, because my generation basically grew up from the novel Mandarin, there was no special course about learning Mandarin, but we started to learn the second language English when I was grade 3. I don't know the meaning of learning English, because there is basically no chance to come into contact with this language in daily life. So I lack daily practice and I didn't pay much attention to the language. At that time, my English score was very poor. I often couldn't remember a lot of words when writing silently, so the teacher asked me to copy every word a hundred times, in that night I didn't sleep all night, but I still didn't finish.

My personal opinion is that the language policy is not a bad thing, "it is an expression of the relative value placed on a language by the society that engendered it and on its degree of cohesion with people who speak it, their land, their religion, and their past." (Mackey, 2010). All things must be moderate, for economic and management, language policies are needed, but for cultural diversity, the rights of other languages and cultures must also be protected. Using the same language will not hinder others from using the dialect of their hometown or It is the nation's writing and language, just like the language policy should not be a way to implement genocide, but to implement social and economic development under the premise of protecting other cultures and languages.

Reference

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