

Linguistic policy to contribute to the Spanish-Literature teacher training model

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ABSTRACT

The lack of a national language policy, the disarticulation of current regulations to govern linguistic uses and the implications that this entails for the teaching of language and literature were the conditioning factors in the formulation of the language policy for the training of higher level teachers of Spanish-Literature. Its design is the result of the work of the National Career Commission, seen as a line of research of national scope. It is an intralinguistic, university, sectorial and acquisition-oriented policy, through which the fulfillment of the social mission of the career is favored.

Keywords: Language policy; Spanish-Literature Career; Linguistic uses; Teaching; Training.

Introduction

The aspiration for Spanish-Literature teachers to be recognized and act as linguistic models in any context is expressed in the attachment to good communicative practices that promotes conscious language learning and teaching. This ideal becomes more

complex in the absence of a legislative instrument of national scope that regulates linguistic uses and their scope for school language teaching.

Traditionally, in the social imaginary, the responsibility for good speech, good writing, and encyclopedic knowledge has fallen on the Spanish Language or Spanish-Literature teacher, because he or she is considered to have the most solid linguistic training, with the greatest cultural background; all of this validated by the indispensable and obligatory training in the processes of comprehension, analysis, and textual construction as essential knowledge for the exercise of the profession. For many generations of students, the teacher of this specialty is recognized as the most cultured, the best-spoken, the one with excellent spelling and the linguistic model of the school.

The existence of an explicit linguistic policy for the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literature Education would ostensibly favor the articulation between the aspiration and the concreteness of the teacher training model for this specialty.

In order to approach this topic, the systematization offered by sociolinguistics as a discipline, which has led theoretical research and, on occasion, case studies as an expression of the applicability and relevance of the topic, is essential. Among the most renowned authors is the Frenchman Jean-Louis Calvet with his classic *Les politiques linguistiques* (1974), a text that was republished, corrected and updated in 1997. *Desarrollos de la planificación lingüística en el mundo hispánico con especial atención a los contextos español y latinoamericano*, by José L. Blas Arroyo, (1998). Francisco A. Marcos Marín, author of *Language policy and Ibero-European languages* (2004). Miquel Siguan with the work *The language policy of the European Union* (2004); the text *Language policy and planning* by Bárbara Eizaga Rebollar (2011) is a mandatory reference. David Guadalupe Toledo Sarracino, María Del Socorro Montaña Rodríguez and Liliana María Villalobos González, authors of *Language Policy and the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Higher Education Institutions in Mexico* (2018) and *Basic guidelines for language planning and policy in elementary and middle school education institutions* (2019) by Jenny Bermúdez Jiménez, Aurora Cardona Serrano, Leyder A. Castro Beltrán, Yamith Fandiño Parra. *The Digital Journal of Language Policy (RDPL)*, a specialized scientific publication published since 2009 by the National University of Cordoba and the Universities Association Montevideo Group, provides important data for this research.

In the Cuban context, authors who have dealt with the subject from the perspectives of the relationship between language policy and national identity, the spheres of language policy

and language policy beyond the nation are related. Nuria Gregori Torada, *Valoraciones y actitudes del cubano culto hacia su lengua materna* (1990); Roxana Sobrino: *Actitudes lingüísticas en torno al español de Cuba* (2017); MarthaIvis Sánchez Ortiz (n/d): *El Boletín de la Academia Cubana de la Lengua como intento de promover una política lingüística. La Reforma Ortográfica* by Adolfo Tortoló and *En torno a la nueva política lingüística panhispánica* by Gisela Cárdenas Molina (s/f), among others.

As antecedents of treatment of the subject for the career, there is Rangel (2022) with the master's thesis entitled *Curricular adjustments to the Language Studies program to address aspects of language policy and the research carried out in the former University of Pedagogical Sciences of Pinar del Río: Linguistic policy as a cultural strategy: joint task of the main social patterns* by Barrera and Ruisánchez, (2010).

The objective of this work is to reveal the importance of the formulation of a language policy for the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literature Education.

Development

On language policy

Language policy analyses tend to see it as one of the basic concepts of sociolinguistics as a scientific discipline seen in the strict sense, situated under the umbrella of linguistics and with a more specific object of study: the study of language in its social context, which is why the most recent research and theoretical dissertations, in general, do not circumscribe studies on language policy to a narrow field, preferring to approach them through a more social prism that places them as the content of sociolinguistics.

The scientific consensus establishes that language policy is a topic of sociolinguistics and glotopolitics simultaneously, since it is assumed not only as the result of legislative processes but also as a reliable expression of the relationship between language and national identity. For many authors (Calvet, 1997; Leclerc, 2000; Del Valle, 2014) the right line between one model and the other is lost, a position with which we agree in recognizing the inherent normative and sociopolitical character of any language policy.

Language policies are projects that integrate language decisions made or recommended by governments or authoritative institutions on the use(s), status, recognition and dissemination of certain languages.

Due to the theoretical complexity of the aspects addressed, they have been classified as interlinguistic or intralinguistic policies, taking as a starting point the relations between languages in a broad sense and the recommendations and regulations within the same language, respectively.

The objectives of language policies differ according to the contexts for which they are established: monolingualism or not; defense, purification, positioning, legitimization or preservation of one or several languages; for the teaching of second languages; for the establishment of preferential forms or any other aspiration that may be considered.

In correspondence with the transformation to be achieved, three levels of intervention can be distinguished, which are closely intertwined. On the one hand, corpus planning, which takes into account the decisions affecting the linguistic material, i.e. the code, the form of the language (lexicon, grammar, orthography)? On the other hand, status planning, this deals with interventions in the distribution of language functions in a society. Finally, acquisition policies, which are measures related to the teaching of the language(s) within a community. Thus, the choice of a linguistic variety for the establishment of the norm, the standardization or codification of that variety, the application or implementation of the selected variety at the different levels of the state apparatus, particularly in teaching, in the mass media and in the graphic environment (advertising, signage) become central to the planning and implementation process.

Language policies are almost always constrictive and therefore need the law to be imposed: they do not exist without a legal aspect.

Leclerc (2000) offers a criterion for the classification of language policies according to the scope of their objectives and the soundness of their planning; among the types he proposes are sectoral language policies, so called because they concern only a subset of the possible sectors considered by language policies of general scope. They are specific to a trade or subject.

Language policy in Cuba: its background and importance for education

The relevance of the linguistic policy for Cuba is a very controversial issue, since it is considered that the monolingualism characteristic of the country does not merit a macro regulation for the use of the language.

Regarding the Cuban linguistic reality, it is of singular importance to refer to Sobrino's assessment:

"The historical evolution of Cuba has determined that it is a country without major conflicts in the linguistic order, where Spanish as the dominant language was imposed and has reigned with total and full sovereignty. This is perhaps the fundamental reason why Cuba does not yet have a linguistic policy like other countries with complex linguistic panoramas in terms of the multiplicity of languages" (Sobrino, 2021, p.147).

This position has encountered contradictions in everyday life that transcend purely normative environments such as school education and the media in which theory and practice do not always converge. Faced with the vacuum created by such regulations, decision-making bodies have designed strategies, master programs, style charters, and resolutions that favor or sanction certain linguistic uses. For this purpose, spelling and writing rules are taken as a fundamental reference and, consequently, speakers who do not make "mistakes" in oral discourse and show accepted practices in the construction of written texts are recognized as models of language. This is what has remained in our imagination as a linguistic model.

In this way, the relationship between education policy and language policy has been legitimized in practice, since education and its institutions are popularly considered as the main source for the transmission of linguistic patterns. Educational reforms, curricular adjustments or improvement models of the National Education System have programmatically favored the linguistic training of students.

The only precedent of a language policy project for Cuba is Proposal for a national language policy, a programmatic document establishing language planning for all areas of social life, which reinforces the criterion that "the notion of policy should not only be seen as a product but also as a process and result"(Sierra and Giraldo 2019,p.5).Even when it was not legally established, the quality of the research and the unquestionable results derived from it were recognized, in addition to considering the integrality of the formulation and design for its implementation.

In the body of the proposed Cuban linguistic policy, measures were taken into account in education (related to the establishment of a compulsory Spanish exam for admission to any higher education career, the selection and preparation of students for teaching

careers, the preparation of trained personnel with correct pronunciation and diction in schools, since they play a fundamental role in the acceptance or rejection of the individual in society); in the mass media, (to take into account the creation of university level chairs for the preparation of professions such as announcer, commentator, animator, among others); and in economic and social life, (to take into account oral expression as one of the requirements for access to positions that deal especially with the public). Many of them have been fully or partially implemented and are still in force.

In this sense, the current situation is favorable, since the country's leadership is explicitly interested in the approval of a national linguistic policy, a project that has been led by the Cuban Academy of Language and that has its antecedents in the proposal presented by Gregori in the 1990s, which gives it full validity. The main challenge in formulating a language policy for Cuba is that the Cuban cultured norm has not been described, which leads to a theoretical-practical vacuum regarding the category of linguistic model. This aspect is very well synthesized in the following statement: "the Revolution, in a certain sense, meant a linguistic leveling, and, consequently, a lack of models. This is why the descriptive study of the cultured norm has been difficult, since the parameter "higher level instruction" is not always enough to satisfy the requirement of a high cultural level" (Domínguez, 2010, p. 91).

About language policy in the Bachelor's Degree in Education Spanish-Literature

Since the first attempts at language policy, education, whether school-based or not, has been recognized as an essential scenario for its articulation and coherent implementation. All the proposals studied reveal as a constant that the classroom is a fertile ground for learning model communicative practices and extrapolating them to the rest of the contexts of social interaction. Beyond the specifically linguistic subjects, language is considered to be the support and transversal articulator of the production and teaching of knowledge in any area.

The normative nature of teaching establishes the fulfillment of prescriptions that transversalize the teaching-learning process, so that in the area of language its establishment translates into objectives, contents, methods and results expressed in the

evaluation. The school is the ideal setting for making the language policy known and enforcing it, since there are rules in communication that regulate verbal language and its use, which are learned in the classroom.

In this sense, Spanish-Literature teachers play a fundamental role, as they are professionals who are recognized by the rest of the teachers in the educational centers, since they are called upon for consultations of various kinds on the uses of the language, both oral and written. The existence of a democratic, perspective and internationalist language policy, explicit and consistent with the objective of raising the linguistic culture of Cuban citizens, would be particularly important for language planning in the training of teachers of Spanish-Literature, which would allow us to move more quickly and with legislative support from "the management of language to the discursive management of language" (Ponte, 2019, p 3).

The above arguments are wielded to ensure that from the Bachelor's degree in Spanish-Literature Education, the contribution to the shaping of identity, prestige and rejection linguistic attitudes should be consolidated with greater intentionality. The school has the mission of approaching the less formal and spontaneous contexts, without teaching vulgarity.

The use of language, its care and attention is especially linked to the development of talent in any aspect of life, an issue that is of great significance in relation to the personal success of the individual and his or her ability to ensure that the knowledge achieved fulfills a social function; therefore, it has an impact on the development of humanity and the transformation of nature.

The mother tongue is a social necessity that defines human beings as a species, helps them to integrate into their community, and contributes to building their social, historical and effective identity, without neglecting that its teaching "requires an exhaustive curricular incorporation of its cultured norms; however, an education that does not cautiously attend to internal variation can lead to biased attitudes among students (Rico, 2018, p. 85).

In the context of the career, any language policy project must start from the recognition of the professional nature of training in close relation to the condition that language is the vehicle of thought. Therefore, the actions undertaken will have social and individual impact as language itself, which is further qualified by the contextualization of the realities of Cuban society that impose certain linguistic uses.

A language policy project is considered as an expeditious contribution to the comprehensive training in the performance of the education professional in this specialty. In this sense, it is assumed that for the professional to be successful in his performance, it is essential that comprehensive training be conceived, induced and stimulated with a clear conception of education, teaching and learning that favors it, which allows validating the relevance of the language policy for the university training of the Spanish-Literature teacher.

In the guiding document for the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literacy Education, the theoretical foundations of the curriculum, the general objectives, the value system, and the importance of incorporating and complying with aspects related to the language policy in order to achieve the ideal professional to which we aspire: the Spanish-Literacy teacher, like every teacher, but especially he/she, must be a linguistic model for his/her students and his/her group, both in oral and written communication, and promote the Cuban language policy in his/her classrooms and in the context in which he/she works.

To this end, he/she must master the mother tongue and its importance in cognition and in the understanding of what is read or heard; in speaking correctly and writing with good spelling, calligraphy and coherent writing, in order to serve as a linguistic model in his/her professional and daily work, which will allow him/her to show respect and care for the language as a tool and expression of Cuban cultural identity; to be an efficient communicator in all its forms, to be a good reader, sensitive, humane, honest and to know how to appreciate the arts and science.

The formulation of a linguistic policy in the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literature Education would be the starting point for the planning, execution and control of the actions that allow the fulfillment of the aspirations declared in the model of the professional for this specialty.

The above arguments serve to establish as a linguistic policy in the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literature Education the articulation of planned indications of normative and propositional character in the academic, legal-labor and research-extensionist areas that regulate, stimulate and protect the representative linguistic uses of the Cuban variety of language with the objective of propitiating the metalinguistic reflection expressed in the model sociolinguistic behaviors of the future teachers of Spanish-Literature.

The need to formulate a linguistic policy for the Spanish-Literature teacher led to the systematization of the general background on the use of the language at the social level,

the considerations on teaching and the responsibility of education with its durability. All this linked to the normative regulations in force and to the fundamentals of the training of the education professional, in particular to that of the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literature Education. The non-existence of the norm for Cuba allows the formulation of a linguistic policy exclusive to the degree program, which from its social task meets the requirements that allow this enunciation and for this purpose its design was conceived from the National Commission of the reference degree program -a methodological advisory body in the governing center- in the fulfillment of its functions and attributions as empowered in the Ministerial Resolution 47/2022, so that it has a national scope. According to Calvet (1997), any group can develop a language policy, but not all of these groups are capable of reaching the planning, implementation and application stage. Thus, in most cases, language policies are developed by States or by entities whose political autonomy and economic means allow them to do so.

The formulation of language policy is based on the recognition that we are in the presence of a public policy. Based on this, it is assumed that any set of interrelated decisions taken by an actor or group of actors regarding the selection of goals and the means to achieve them in a specific situation can be considered a public policy (Olabarria, 2007, p. 16). This Chilean author offers a methodology in which it is established that public policies respond to the needs of the context in which they will be developed and must comply with the following stages: identification of the public problem, its characterization, definitions of the addressees, design of its instruments and legal framework, presentation and discussion of the body of the policy, construction of the agenda for its implementation, decision making, implementation and evaluative analysis of the results.

It is classified as a university language policy because it is formulated for implementation in the country's higher education institutions in correspondence with the strategic projection of its training body (MES), of an intralinguistic type since it consists of the recommendation and intentional indication of linguistic uses and stylistic means, in addition to proposing non-stigmatized and socially accepted practices in the use of the language, sectoral because it concerns only a subset of the possible sectors considered by language policies of general scope and is particular to a guild (Leclerc, 2000) and aimed at acquisition because it proposes measures related to the teaching of the language(s) within a community, the choice of a linguistic variety for the

establishment of the norm and is aimed at the recognition and development of positive linguistic attitudes. It has a sociocultural scope (Del Valle, 2014, p.100).

Its general objective is: to formulate a language policy for the Bachelor's Degree in Spanish-Literacy Education. The specific objectives are related to the objectives of the professional's model and the possible ways to achieve them. In correspondence with the social premises of language as a means and as an end, the categories applicable to this career and the following aspects: definition and treatment of the official language; teaching of the mother tongue; cultivation of the language, especially with regard to literary text; social assessment of the uses of the language, with the consequent establishment of preferential forms; attitude towards the teaching and dissemination of foreign languages and regulations for public digital text, the normative and propositional bodies of the language policy were structured for each of the aspects a set of mandatory indications is developed and others that may be adjusted in correspondence with the context in which the career is developed.

Conclusions

The language policy is committed to training competent communicators who know how to express themselves correctly, who make efficient use of the orthological and prosodic resources of the language and of the linguistic structures in the contexts of use, who assume a favorable communicative attitude in the ways of speaking and writing in concrete communicative situations, as an essential tool in interpersonal and professional relationships, use the cultured norm in terms of comprehension, analysis and construction of texts, develop the ability to interact independently and creatively in different communicative situations and value the Spanish language as an essential element of our culture and identity.

It was submitted to the evaluation of specialists from all over the country, who assessed its relevance for its application in the career in question. It has been implemented according to the particularities of each group. The results of its implementation are confirmed in the curricular management of the career and are systematically checked by the National Career Commission.