

English Language Policy in Australia

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ABSTRACT

From the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, Australia made great strides in the area of language policy development. By the late 1980s, all States and Territories had developed, adopted and were implementing their own State or Territory language education policies. These developments were significant in that they marked the first time that any English-speaking country had systematically addressed language and language education policy development at the national level.

This paper will discuss the importance of having a language and language education policy and the relationship between a national language policy and a national language education policy. It will briefly discuss the Australian experience of policy development, including both the strengths and the weakness in the steps that were taken and the lessons that can be learned from them. The paper will consider the structure and design of language policy, the basis of its development, and its articulation from the needs of the society and of individuals in the society, to policy formulation, implementation, and on-going evaluation and revision. The paper will also discuss the basic information that is needed as one sets about preparing national language and language education policies including such issues as the needs of the society, industry demands and how they might be established, language audits or needs analyses, and education needs.

The paper will be illustrated with reference to the teaching of English as a Second Language in Australia. The teaching of English as a second language exists in a context of multilingualism and multiculturalism in which the value of other languages (both indigenous and migrant) is also recognised. The teaching of English as a second language acquired great importance with the adoption of a large-scale immigration programme in the years following the Second World War. Innovative approaches to the need to cope with multilingual classes were adopted and the "situational method" dominated ESL education to the 1970s. From the late 1970s, more communicative methods were adopted and developments in methodology, curriculum design and testing occurred to better meet the practical language needs of recently arrived immigrants. While the provision of ESL classes for adult and child migrants has remained important, from the mid-1980s, the provision of ESL classes for overseas students has become a substantial industry. This paper will discuss the policies that have been adopted to meet the English language needs both of Australian residents and overseas students and will also refer to the practical implementation of the policies in terms of methodology, curriculum design, testing and quality assurance.

THE PRESENTER

David Ingram holds a Chair in Applied Linguistics at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, where he is also Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics and Languages. He was President of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations for 14 years to 1996, Vice-President of the World Federation for six years, and, from 1992 to 1996, a member of the Australian Language and Literacy Council, the principal advisory body on language policy to the Federal Minister for Education. He has been a Fellow and Adjunct Fellow of the National Foreign Language Center, Washington DC, since 1993. He has written extensively in applied linguistics. A recent book is *Language Centres: Their Roles, Functions and Management* [Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2001]. In the Queen's Birthday Honours list in June 2003, he was made a member of the Order of Australia *for services to education through the development of language policy, through assessment procedures for evaluation of proficiency, and through research and teaching.*

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I INTRODUCTION

Few political, social or educational activities are so important in today's multicultural, multilingual, globalised and terror-ridden society as are language policy-making and language in education planning [see, for example, Cunningham 2003, Ingram 2001a, 1978, Ingram and Sasaki 2003, Ingram et al 1999]. In the words of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy,

Language and literacy policies are essential to maximise the contribution of .. human resources to national development in education, the workplace and the broader community. [DEET 1991a: xiv]

The fact that English has become, for whatever reasons, the dominant international language and an essential tool for all nations which interact globally whether for cultural, economic, political or any other reason, means that the role, teaching and learning of English are essential features of any language policy, whether that be for a country where English is the national language (as in Australia) or a country whose national language is something else [see Ingram and Sasaki 2003 for a discussion of the importance of English]. However, too often (indeed, most often), one finds that language policy is based on good intentions, on vague notions of the value of languages or a particular language, rather than on the rigorous analysis of real needs and the systematic articulation of policy into practice.

The issues involved in language policy-making and language education are too wide-ranging and complex to be addressed successfully in any piecemeal fashion. It is essential that language policy-making be comprehensive, systematic and permanently in place. It should be carefully articulated from a basis in the nature of the society and its language needs through implementation to on-going evaluation and development. Without this degree of coherence, significant gaps, such as in the quality and supply of language teachers, will occur and undermine the success of the policy [see ALLC 1996]. Australia had made great progress in language policy-making from 1978 to 1996 though the policies, as admirable as they were as first steps, illustrated the "good intentions" approach rather than rigour in design and review. In addition, as is difficult to avoid in a democratic system based around three-year elections and adversarial politics, they lacked a permanent structure for the development, review and updating of the policy. Consequently, with the advent of a conservative, reductionist government in 1996, language policy has been largely rejected or, at best, reduced to a series of questionable assertions about so-called "literacy". At the same time, the pressures of a large-scale immigration programme and the perceived economic benefits to be derived from offering English language learning opportunities to students from other countries have meant that the teaching of English as a second language has expanded and professionalised. Thus, the Australian situation illustrates both the benefits of systematic language policy-making and the defects that occur if the design of the policies and the approach to their development are not systematic or lack rigour and permanency. Successful language policy-making requires a long-term vision, a policy that is seen as evolving, rigorous in design and implementation, and subject to on-going evaluation and development rather than the stop-go of adversarial politics that prevent the necessarily long-term goals of language policy implementation from being achieved.

This paper will review language policy-making in Australia with a focus on English language policy (especially policy on English as a second or foreign language) but it will situate English language policy within the broader context and also consider the essential features of a rigorous and systematic approach to language policy-making.

II LANGUAGE POLICY IN AUSTRALIA

II.1 The Context of Australian Language Policy

The Foreword to the 1991 *Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (ALLP) states:

Proficiency in our national language, Australian English, is obviously necessary for an individual to participate as fully as possible in Australian society. But as important as proficiency in Australian English is for us as Australians, we also need to enhance our ability to communicate with the rest of the world.... Our multilingual population invests us with valuable linguistic resources. But we must not rely simply on the skills of those who are already bilingual. Many more Australians need to learn a second language. [DEET 1991: iii-iv]

In that context, the ALLP envisaged three principal goals: proficiency in English for all Australians, an increase in the number of Australians with facility in other languages, and the special needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait languages [cf. DEET 1991a:1]

Ethnically, Australia is one of the more diverse nations. Australian Bureau of Statistics demographic data show, for example, that 22% of the Australian population of about 19 million were born overseas and a further 27% have at least one parent born overseas, and, in 1998, only 39% of the overseas born had come from English-speaking countries. The 1996 census data indicate that 15% of the population speak a language other than English (LOTE) at home and 81% speak only English though the wording of the question has meant that these figures greatly under-estimate the number of LOTE speakers. The top ten community languages include English, Italian, a Chinese language, Greek, Arabic, Vietnamese, German, Spanish, Macedonian and Filipino but the total number of community languages is 15 to 20 times this. To this diversity are to be added the indigenous languages which, according to the *Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, include some 90 that are “relatively widely” used and another 160 that, in 1990 (and by now the number would be significantly reduced), were seriously at risk and spoken by only a handful of elderly persons [DEET 1991a: 93; see also Clyne and Kipp 2001].

II.2 To the Early 20th Century

Such diversity has always characterised Australia. Before Europeans settled there in the late 18th Century, it is estimated that there were some 300,000 Australian Aboriginal people, speaking approximately 250 different languages and some 600 dialects [cf. SSCEA 1984: 80] though, today, at least a hundred of those languages have been lost and at least another hundred are considered to be endangered [cf. Clyne 1991: 1, Lo Bianco 1987: 10, SSCEA 1984: Chapter 8, DEETa 1991: Chapter 5; see also the various papers in Cunningham *et al* in press]. Even within the immigrant and former immigrant community over the last 215 years, cultural and linguistic diversity has always existed though, as Clyne comments in his detailed account of the evolution of Australian attitudes to multiculturalism, attitudes to linguistic diversity have fluctuated from disinterest to antagonism to positive support [Clyne 1991]. By the 1860s, the main languages, in addition to Aboriginal languages, were English, Irish, Chinese, German, Gaelic, Welsh, French, the Scandinavian languages, and Italian [cf. Clyne 1991: 7]. At that time, the Chinese-born population was second only to English speakers though German speakers were slightly more numerous. Community languages were emerging, often in identifiable communities, community

language newspapers were common (especially in German but also in Chinese, French, Gaelic, Scandinavian and Welsh) [cf. Clyne 1991: 7 – 8], bilingual education existed in many schools, especially in Victoria and South Australia, and the learning of both languages was seen as a valuable asset [cf. Clyne 1991: 8]. The languages of these schools included English together with German, Gaelic, Hebrew, and French. Even Queensland, where there were fewer bilingual schools, was marked by great ethnolinguistic diversity with, by the start of the 20th Century, significant groups of speakers of German, Scandinavian languages, Italian, Russian, Greek and Chinese [cf. Clyne 1991: 8 – 10].

It is significant that even in the second half of the 19th Century, like the second half of the 20th, the concept of an “Australian” allowed for diversity of language and cultural origin, while still identifying as “Australian”. Nevertheless, by the early years of the 20th Century, world political pressures marked by such events as the Boer Wars and the first World War led to the emergence of a dominant Anglophile view in which being Australian was linked to loyalty to the British monarch and English monolingualism [cf. Clyne 1991: 11 – 12]. This attitude, together with antagonisms to the large numbers of Chinese who had come to Australia during the gold rushes and opposition after Federation in 1901 to the use of Pacific Islanders (known as *kanakas*) as forced labour in the Queensland sugarfields led to an increasingly discriminatory immigration policy even when, following the Second World War, a large scale migration programme was adopted. This “white Australia policy” sought to reinforce Australian identity as white, English monolingual and “British”. Within education, these tendencies led to the demise of bilingual education, some State legislation endorsed an “English only” education, and, more positively, this Anglophone attitude led to the adoption of a large-scale migrant education programme with a particular focus on the teaching of English as a second language, not least as a means to assimilate immigrants as rapidly as possible.

II.3 The 1940s to 1960s

The view of Australia as a largely white, English-monolingual society of British origin was further strengthened by the Second World War so that, by the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century, education was aggressively monolingual. Immigrants, almost entirely from Europe, were encouraged to learn English rapidly, to drop their languages of origin, and to assimilate as rapidly as possible [cf. Clyne 1991: 15 – 18].

The Prime Minister of the time stated that the society sought for Australia was one “devoid of foreign communities” and, hence, where only English was spoken [Martin 1972: 14]. Even as late as 1969, the Federal Immigration Minister, Billy Sneddon, is quoted as stating:

We must have a single culture. We do not want pluralism. [Cited in Clyne 1991: 19]

Nevertheless, even though it occurred in the context of turning immigrants into “good Australians”, Australian English language education showed some progressive and, indeed, highly innovative features. All immigrants were entitled to free English language tuition and the Federal Government funded a large-scale ESL education system for adult migrants, the Adult Migrant Education Programme. At its peak, the AMEP enrolled over 100,000 students at any one time and, to cater for the linguistically diverse classes, a new methodology was developed in which all the teaching was in English and the learners’ own first language was not used. This approach was known as the Australian Situational Method and was published in the AMEP coursebooks, *English for Newcomers to Australia*, subsequently re-named *Situational English*. The Australian Situational Method was an analytic approach that owed much to structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology. It reduced language teaching to the teaching of small segments of language (principally short sentences) whose meanings could be conveyed unambiguously by constructing “situations” and using a clever set of drawings, teaching realia and hand signs. It remained in place, officially if not in practice, as the preferred methodology together with *Situational English* until a major review of the AMEP took place in the late 1970s

and led, under the present writer's guidance as academic adviser, to new "on-arrival" and "on-going programmes" based on a form of communicative, proficiency-focussed, and theme-based language teaching.

II.4 The Late 1960s and 1970s

In terms of the evolution of a multicultural society, the 1970s was the most exciting period in Australian history. It was followed in the 1980s by, and undoubtedly gave impetus to, an equally exciting period in the area of language policy. The rigid social and cultural attitudes characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s could not last long in the face of a large and increasingly diverse immigration programme, a programme whose diversity increased as traditional migrant sources in Europe dried up as economic and social conditions improved. In addition, a sense of guilt over its involvement in the Vietnam War and concern for the large numbers of people displaced by that war led Australia suddenly to receive a larger influx of migrants of non-European origin than it had ever received previously; the racial, cultural and linguistic pattern of the migration programme and of Australia itself thus changed irrevocably. In addition, from an economic standpoint, the newly independent Asian nations were starting to strengthen their economies, which increasingly became targets for Australian trade, foreign aid and political attention.

The changing focus towards Asia was signalled by many events but, in language policy, by the first major enquiry initiated by an Australian Government into the teaching of Asian languages and cultures in Australia. This report was published in 1970 [Commonwealth Advisory Committee 1970], strongly reflected Australia's growing realignment towards Asia, and advocated a substantial increase in the teaching of Asian languages and cultures. However, it did not attempt to embed those views within a systematic language or language education policy or to seek to change the view of language learning from an essentially intellectual or literary pursuit towards more societal or utilitarian views. Its impact was, consequently, minimal.

The strongest political sign that the Australian people were ready for a major change of direction came in 1972 with the election of the first Labor Government at the national level for more than twenty years. The period of the Labor Government from 1972 to 1975 is especially significant in the context of the emergence of multiculturalism as a deliberate government policy and an increasingly accepted premise of the Australian people. Thus, during this period, there was a growing recognition of the rights, cultures and languages of all people in Australia and acceptance of all the cultures as part of the shared culture of all Australians [cf. Clyne 1991: 19]. In language education policy, it increasingly was realised, first, that many young Australian residents came to school with little or no English and needed specialist ESL teaching and, desirably, the opportunity to enter into bilingual education programmes. Secondly, it was recognised that Australia had imported a vast resource of language skills, which would be wasted if steps were not taken to enable the languages to survive and be used. Consequently, both bilingual education and language maintenance programmes started to appear, government support was offered to ethnic schools, and the teaching of the so-called "community languages" was made available to all children while adults (especially professionals dealing with people from the communities) were also encouraged to learn "community languages". Throughout the 1970s, enquiries and reports into multiculturalism proliferated, generally advocating increased attention to language education (e.g., the report of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools [Department of Education 1976: 35] and there were many other initiatives to support and develop multiculturalism and the languages and cultures of the community. Such initiatives included, for example, funding for ethnic radio and television to broadcast in the languages of the Australian community, ethnic newspapers were encouraged, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters was established, international covenants to recognize human rights and ethnic equality were signed, legislation outlawing ethnic or racial discrimination was put in place, and commissions and community organisations to counteract racism were established.

Despite a divisive change of government in 1975 the momentum evident in these developments was maintained and, in 1978, one of the most significant reports was adopted. The Galbally Review comprehensively reviewed multicultural policies and, in the language area, advocated support for language maintenance programmes, expanded community language learning in schools, encouraged language learning by professionals, and recommended the employment of bilinguals in public contact positions. This report's essential position was signalled in these words:

...every person should be able to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage and should be encouraged to understand and embrace other cultures...
[Galbally Review 1978:4].

In the context of English language education, the report recommended a major review of the Adult Migrant Education Programme which, despite the numerous other reforms in social policy and language education since the late 1960s, had basically remained unchanged since the 1950s.

II.5 The Language Policy Era: the Late 1970s to 1996

Despite the rapid development of policies to foster multiculturalism and encourage all Australians to learn the languages of their fellow citizens, the overall result for language education was disappointing and, being unsystematic, failed to halt the overall decline in language enrolments in secondary and tertiary education. Consequently, a number of people and organisations started agitating for a more systematic and comprehensive approach to language and language education policy-making and for the creation of a national body, a national language information and research centre, to oversight language policy [e.g., Ingram 1978, 1978a, AFMLTA 1982].

Eventually, on 25 May 1982, the question of "The Development and Implementation of a Coordinated Language Policy for Australia" was referred by the Australian Senate to its Standing Committee on Education and the Arts. The Senate Inquiry was strongly supported within the Australian community [SSCEA 1984: x, 235 – 246], its report was eventually tabled in the Federal Parliament in 1984, and it strongly recommended that a national policy on languages be developed [SSCEA 1984]. Its first and most basic recommendation stated:

Language policies should be developed and co-ordinated at the national level on the basis of four guiding principles, namely:

- *competence in English;*
- *maintenance and development of languages other than English;*
- *provision of services in languages other than English;*
- *opportunities for learning second languages.* [SSCEA 1984: 224]

Following the tabling of the Senate Committee's report in December 1984, some delay occurred but, in 1987, the first national policy on languages was adopted [Lo Bianco 1987]. In the intervening years, the strong public interest and debate that had occurred from the late 1970s led to the fact that, by the time the national policy was adopted, most States and Territories had developed and adopted their own language or language education policies and reformed their language education programmes.

The distinctive features of this first *National Policy on Languages* [Lo Bianco 1987] lie in the stimulus it provided to renewing language education in Australia, the wide-ranging nature of the recommendations made, and the breadth of the social context in which the policy was placed. Like the Senate report, it sought to deal comprehensively with language issues in Australia with chapters on the rationale for a national policy, elaboration of a policy covering the status and teaching of English and other languages, Aboriginal languages, and provision of language

services (including translating and interpreting, the media, libraries and language testing). It recommended the formation of a national advisory council on language policy and briefly discussed the contribution of the States and Territories. The Policy's deficiencies were few but significant. Most fundamentally, while it contained many good ideas, it nevertheless lacked the sort of rigorous framework that the present writer has advocated in other papers [e.g., Ingram 1994 and AFMLTA 1982] and will be described subsequently in this paper. Consequently, significant gaps occurred in such areas as teacher education, teacher supply, adult and child English language literacy, and the on-going evaluation of the policy and its programmes. In addition, though the report makes some reference to the role of language skills in the development of industry and trade, the notion was not developed and, in subsequent years, a number of other reports were commissioned that looked at these issues [e.g., Garnaut 1989; Ingleson 1989; Leal et al 1991; Stanley et al 1990]. These deficiencies led to the Federal Government's commissioning the development of a new policy, the Australian Language and Literacy Policy [DEET 1991, 1991a].

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) was less comprehensive than the 1987 policy but placed greater emphasis on English literacy and on the economic relevance of language skills. This policy focussed around English literacy, the learning of English and other languages as second or foreign languages, Aboriginal languages and Aboriginal literacy, and gave some attention to language services (including interpreting and translation, library services, and the media). It also addressed some implementation procedures and advisory mechanisms including the formation of the Australian Language and Literacy Council as the principal advisory body on language policy to the Federal Education Minister. The basic policy position was summed up by the Minister in a foreword:

We should all aspire to an Australia whose citizens are literate and articulate...

Australian English...is our national language. But Australia's cultural vitality is also the product of other languages spoken in our community...

...as important as proficiency in Australian English is for Australians, we also need to enhance our ability to communicate with the rest of the world. ... Many more Australians need to learn a second language. [DEET 1991: iii - iv]

The policy identifies four goals, the first two of which were:

Goal 1: All Australian residents should develop and maintain a level of spoken and written English which is appropriate for a range of contexts, with the support of education and training programs addressing their diverse learning needs.

Goal 2: The learning of languages other than English must be substantially expanded and improved to enhance educational outcomes and communication within both the Australian and international community. [DEET 1991: 4, 14, 19, 20]

It is very significant that the policy saw the main justification for fostering language skills as their contribution to economic reform. The policy also tried to balance the practical need to set priorities against the desirability of encouraging all language learning and so it identified a number of national priority languages. These included Australian English and fourteen other languages as priority languages. Amongst these, Asian languages were given particular priority. Also of considerable significance was the policy's support for the extension of the teaching of languages into the Primary Schools.

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy is essentially a language education policy rather than a language policy and fails to situate the education policy within general language policy. Like the 1987 document, the ALLP is also deficient in structure with too little attempt being made to integrate the policy into a rational framework involving societal and individual needs, clearly

stated goals, implementation strategies, evaluation, and on-going monitoring. Consequently, it contains inherent weaknesses which in subsequent years can be seen to have undermined its success. In particular, it failed to give systematic attention to the implementation of the policy, not least in the pivotal area of language teacher quality and supply.

The Australian Language and Literacy Policy was supplemented in 1994 by a major report, *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*, on the teaching of Asian languages and cultures [COAG 1994]. This report was thorough in its approach and strongly continued the trend towards economic justifications for language learning and sought to adopt a more rigorous approach to policy design than had earlier reports. Its strengths lay in its recognition of the importance of Asian languages with Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian and Korean identified as of highest priority. It set specific proficiency targets to be achieved in schools (ISLPR 2 or 3 by Year 12 [Ingram and Wylie 1979/1999]), it advocated that foreign language learning commence in early Primary School, it recognised that language teaching can be effective only if the teachers have high levels of proficiency in the target language and appropriate teaching skills, and so it recommended nationally agreed minimum skill levels for Asian language teachers.

II.6 Since 1996

Since the election of the present Australian Government, initially in 1996, there has been a lack of language policy leadership at the Federal level and, consequently, much reduced activity at the State and Territory level. The Australian Language and Literacy Council, the principal advisory body on language policy, was abolished, funding was all but stopped for the National Language and Literacy Institute of Australia (the principal national research organisation), and, in 2002, funding was also abolished for the national Asian languages strategy. However, in the course of 2002, the Australian Government announced a long-overdue review, not of language or language education policy as a whole, but of the more limited Commonwealth LOTE in Schools Programme [see <http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/languagereview/index.htm>]. The review has been completed and the report has just been publicly released. However, in the Federal Budget in May 2003, the Australian Government showed renewed interest in language policy with several new initiatives including funding for a new National Centre for Language Training to provide intensive courses for business and teachers, funding to support language education at all levels of schooling (including after-hours ethnic schools), a new scholarship scheme, the Endeavour Programme, to fund “immersion experience” for teachers in the language, country and culture about which they are teaching, and a loan scheme to assist Australian university students to study overseas [see <http://aei.dest.gov.au/budget/default.htm> for more information on all these initiatives]. It is also notable that the report of the review strongly advocates the development of a new national policy on languages [see Erebus Consulting Partners 2002: 192 – 193].

III LANGUAGE POLICY-MAKING

Through the 1980s and early 1990s, Australia undoubtedly made considerable progress in the development of language and language education. However, as noted earlier, the lack of sufficient rigour in evaluating needs, developing policy, and identifying implementational needs led to critical defects, which undermined the overall success of the policies. It is worth considering briefly the nature of a more rigorous approach to effective language and language education policy-making.

III.1 A Rational Approach to Language Policy-Making¹:

¹ This section is based on Ingram 1993, pp. 85 to 91.

The present writer's approach to language policy-making has been written up in a number of places [e.g., Ingram 1994, 1993] and emphasises the rational nature of language policy-making.

Like applied linguistics in general [cf. Ingram 1980], language policy-making is decision-making or *problem-solving*, i.e., it entails making decisions about languages, about how to satisfy the language-related needs of society and of individuals or it entails solving language-related components of "problems" such as how to maintain and extend the level of a nation's language resources, how to maximize the effectiveness of international trade, and so on. In being problem-oriented, i.e., in seeking to solve particular language-related "problems" that exist in a society, language policy-making, like applied linguistics in general, is essentially a practical activity but, also like applied linguistics, it is theoretical in the sense of being both *theory-based* and *theory-making* [cf. Ingram 1980]. To be rational rather than based on "warm words" and good aspirations, language policy-making is theory-based in the sense that, like applied linguistics, it draws on the fundamental sciences that inform the problem to be solved. In language policy-making, the contributory sciences include the linguistic sciences but also any other field that informs any particular language problem (e.g., political science, demography, psychology, economics, marketing, and so on). The policy-makers' task is to use insights from the relevant sciences to elucidate the essential nature of the problem and deduce possible solutions. To do so, the policy-makers must have available both the theoretical knowledge and the practical experience of the problem situation that make the characteristics of the problem clear and enable them to derive adequate insights and deduce viable solutions.

This *theory-based* notion of language policy-making has implications for the people who may be employed to develop language and language education policies and leads one to question the common practice of applying what is sometimes called the "management principle" to policy-making, i.e., the practice popular amongst Australian bureaucrats and politicians of putting "managers", "eminent persons", political affiliates, general educationalists, or even accountants, into language policy-making positions rather than experienced and qualified practitioners, relevant academics, or similar experts. To the extent that such persons apply their presumed expertise of organization or budget-control to the development and implementation of language policy and accept the advice of applied linguists and language teachers in developing language policy and its implementation, their involvement is appropriate and even necessary but, when they intrude into decisions that involve the nature of language or language learning, they are as prone to error as any other layperson making decisions in areas in which they have had no training. The converse is equally applicable since language policy-making also involves decisions that go beyond the scope of applied linguists. The need is for language and language education policy to be developed by teams that include persons with relevant knowledge and experience in the various areas (including government, education, politics, the community, and industry) whose needs the policy is designed to meet.

Policy-making is also *theory-making* because the policy developed is essentially a theory about the nature of the problem and how to resolve it. National language policy-making, for example, essentially proposes a theory about the nature of the society's language needs at the societal, group or individual levels and how to meet those needs. This notion is important because, if language policy-making is about theory-making, the validity of the "theory" has to be tested and hence monitoring, evaluation and review become integral parts of the implementation of the policy, features that were noted earlier as having been deficient in Australian language policy-making. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the structure of this process for applied linguistics and for language and language education policy-making.

This approach is not only theory-based and theory-making but it is also research-based in three senses: first, research is needed to develop the fundamental sciences on which the whole rational process depends; second, research is needed to identify the nature of the problems to be resolved, the needs to be met, the goals and objectives to be sought, and the methodology or implementation to be adopted; and third, evaluation, which is essentially a form of research in practice, is an integral part of the process and impacts on all stages from the fundamental sciences

to policy formulation and implementation. Thus, a viable national language policy desirably requires the support of a research-based organization, a national language policy centre, or a strong applied linguistics research system through the universities as research institutions to feed research into the development, implementation, evaluation and review of the policy.

III.2 The Structure of Language Policy:

This view of language or language education policy-making leads to clear implications for the structure of a rationally developed language or language education policy. The basic "problem" to be resolved is how to develop and maintain the society's language resources and how to meet the society's and individuals' language-related needs. Hence a policy must be based on the present and changing nature of the society and commence with a description of the features of the society that are relevant in identifying present and future language needs and the steps to be taken to satisfy them. Thence the policy must specify the goals and objectives to be achieved and enunciate the policy proposals. However, idealistic policy statements are worthless if they cannot be implemented and so an adequate policy must include actual implementation recommendations enabling each element of the policy to be related to the actual real-life situation and realised in practice. All elements of the policy and its implementation must also be justified, the rationale made obvious, and, as already discussed, be subject to evaluation and review. Thus, a rational policy should contain at least the following elements:

- a description of the nature of the society the policy is to serve;
- a statement of needs (both societal and personal);
- policy proposals;
- implementation recommendations;
- indicators of success or the basis for the evaluation of the policy and its implementation; and
- a summary rationale for each policy proposal and implementation recommendation.

To emphasize the rational and articulated nature of language policy and to impose rigour on policy development and implementation, the present writer uses a device termed "rational frameworks" [see AFMLTA 1982, Ingram and John 1990]. This device requires the policy to commence with a description of the nature of the society it is to serve and is presented in, and articulated through, a table with interrelated columns headed

- Needs (Societal and Individual)
- Goals and Objectives
- Policy Recommendations
- Implementation Proposals
- Indicators of Success
- Rationale

These are illustrated in the Appendix. The present writer has written at length about this approach to policy design and has illustrated it in major language policy submissions and in the Queensland language education policy produced in 1990 [see Ingram 1994, 1993; Ingram and John 1990; AFMLTA 1982].

IV ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY

English language policy in Australia exists in the social and policy context that has been described earlier. On the global scale, English has become the dominant international language and is used as such by probably as many people as use it as a first or second language. The case for the global importance of English has been argued in other papers [e.g., Crystal 1997, Graddol 1997, Ingram and Sasaki 2003] and its importance to Korea has been underlined by the government policies promoting its teaching throughout the Korean education system. In his detailed discussion of English language policy in Korea, Kwon states:

English has become the world language, and with Korea's globalization campaign, English learning has become one of the most important things in Korea. [Kwon 2000]

IV.1 English in General:

In Australia, as already noted, English is the national language even though the value of other languages is also recognised. According to the 1996 census figures, English is the exclusive language of the home for 81.9% of people. Of the others, 12.4% speak another language in the home but claim "good proficiency" in English while 2.8% claim "poor" knowledge of English [Statistics Section, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2001: 2]. The authors of the report commented:

Those people that speak a language other than English at home present to Australia both a challenge and a resource: the challenge is to ensure that their communication skills in English are adequate to participate in the social and economic life of the Australian community; the resource is the repository of multilingual skills they offer to Australian society and the economy. [Statistics Section, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2001: 2]

As already noted, Australia's population is linguistically diverse, there is an on-going and proportionately large immigration programme increasingly from non-English speaking countries, and so there are clear implications for English language policy if all Australian residents are to have equal access to information, education, resources and employment. The Foreword to the Australian Language and Literacy Policy states:

Australian English, of course, is our national language. ...

Proficiency in our national language, Australian English, is obviously necessary for an individual to participate as fully as possible in Australian society. [DEET 1991: iii]

The 1996 English Proficiency Census [Statistics Section, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2001] emphasised the importance of English for both employment purposes and income level. The overall labour force participation rate for English-only Australians in the 1996 census was 64% but only 32% for those with poor English while the income statistics provided striking indication that those people with poor English had markedly smaller incomes: 73.5% of those with poor English received incomes of less than \$300 a week compared with 47.3% of those who spoke only English. At the upper levels, just 10% of those with poor English received incomes of \$700 or more a week compared with 32.1% of those with English only. [Statistics Section, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2001: 6, 22, 27; see also DEET 1991a: xiv, 9]

The general policy situation outlined in the Australian Language and Literacy Policy is summed up in its first goal:

All Australian residents should develop and maintain a level of spoken and written English which is appropriate for a range of contexts, with the support of education and training programs addressing their diverse learning needs. [DEET 1991: 4]

This goal was then implemented through a range of programmes addressing child and adult literacy, workplace requirements, and the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Though no comprehensive language policy has been promulgated since the current Federal Government came to power in 1996, the focus on literacy in all these areas has increased. However, the principal focus of this paper is on policies in the area of English as a second language and no further reference will be made to English-L₁ literacy.

IV.2 English as a Second or Foreign Language

Though education is a State responsibility in Australia, immigration and trade are Federal responsibilities. Consequently, the provision of ESL programmes for child and adult migrants and policies in relation to English for overseas students fall within Federal policy-making and will be briefly discussed here.

IV.2.1) Migrant English Programme²

Essentially, most newly arrived immigrants and other people granted permanent residence since July 1991 have a right to access appropriate ESL programmes at least to a proficiency level where their survival or vocational needs are met. The child programme is funded by the Federal Government but administered by State and Territory Education Departments. The Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP) provides up to 510 hours of basic English language tuition though there are also other programmes of more vocational orientation for migrants wishing to enter the workforce. The Immigration Department webpage indicates that around 6 million hours of ESL tuition is given to immigrants each year at an annual cost of just under \$100 million.

Two major changes in the AMEP have been occurring under successive governments over the last two decades. First, whereas the adult migrant English programme had been delivered from migrant ESL centres directly funded by the Federal Government and managed, generally, under one of the education services in the various States and Territories, increasingly in recent years these programmes have been put out to public tender and are delivered in most places by consortia of private or public institutions including, in most States, the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Colleges. Recently, for instance, the Federal Government awarded a \$100 million contract to a New South Wales (NSW) consortium of a university, TAFE institutes, and private organisations to provide ESL programmes to some 9,000 migrants and refugees annually in NSW.

Second, increasing demands are being placed on applicants for migration to Australia to demonstrate a specified level of English proficiency (generally assessed using the IELTS Test, specifically the General Training module plus Speaking and Listening). Skilled migrants and their dependents with less than “functional” proficiency (equivalent to about IELTS 4.5) are also required to pay a substantial levy against the future cost of providing them with ESL tuition. Migrants coming under the family reunion programme or under humanitarian conditions are not required to have their English proficiency assessed but the increasing numbers of “skilled” migrants are required to have “vocational” proficiency (equivalent to about 3 on the ISLPR [Ingram and Wylie 1979/1999]). Migrants intending to settle in regional areas are permitted a lower proficiency provided that they are able to take an English course on arrival but even they are required to have at least IELTS 4.5 (adequate for survival purposes). In addition, many

² Most of the information in this section may be found on the webpage of the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs at <http://www.immi.gov.au>.

vocational registration authorities set their own proficiency levels for registration purposes using the IELTS, ISLPR or another test such as the Occupational English Test (OET).

The AMEP offers General English tuition in three broad categories:

1. full or part-time tuition in classes catering for students of different ages, abilities and educational backgrounds;
2. distance learning mode using a package of course materials, audio and video tapes and regular telephone contact with a qualified teacher; and
3. the Home Tutor scheme under which a trained volunteer visits clients in their homes.

The aim of the AMEP is to enable clients to achieve “functional” English, which is defined as the basic language skills necessary to deal with everyday social situations and some work situations in English. The curriculum is competency-based, based on the Certificates in Spoken and Written English, a curriculum framework oriented towards the survival needs of newly-arrived immigrants. The programme is also designed to provide information on the Australian way of life and services available. Specifically designed course materials are available combining ESL tuition with other information needed by new arrivals in the country. Some of the materials, including the distance mode course book *It's Over to You*, are available both in book form and on-line.

Some quality assurance, professional development, materials development, and research support are provided especially through the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) shared by Macquarie University in Sydney and LaTrobe University in Melbourne (see www.nceltr.mq.edu.au). Being a government-funded programme, detailed reporting requirements exist and also provide substantial quality assurance. The AMEP Reporting and Management System (ARMS) entails a comprehensive statistical reporting framework, facilitates client access, and assists in programme planning, the grouping of clients, and the location of courses. It also shows the learning gains by students in the programme using a competency-based reporting system. The *International Second Language Proficiency Ratings* [Ingram and Wylie 1979/1999] were originally developed for use in the AMEP to measure the English language proficiency of persons entering or exiting from the AMEP. It is still in widespread use though the ARMS system requires the use of a competency scale (called the National Reporting System or NRS) based principally around English language competencies required in the workplace: a number of providers use the ISLPR and report using a conversion system proposed by the ISLPR authors to facilitate reporting in NRS terms.

In addition, all centres offering ESL training to migrants, like those offering ESL to overseas students, are subject to accreditation by an authority established by the Australian Government for quality assurance purposes, the National English Accreditation Scheme (NEAS). To be accredited, an ESL provider (whether in the AMEP or in the overseas student programme) must meet certain minimum standards in facilities, staffing (including staff qualifications), curriculum, marketing, and student support services. All centres, even the most reputable based in universities, are subject to regular inspections, regular re-accreditation, and the possibility of unannounced spot checks.

IV.2.2) ESL for Overseas Students

Since the Australian Government changed the student visa rules in 1986 to encourage Australian educational institutions to attract full fee-paying overseas students, the ESL programme for overseas students has expanded rapidly. It is now several times larger than the AMEP in terms of the numbers of students entering the programme each year and serves predominantly five types of clients:

1. overseas students who require additional English prior to undertaking degree studies or other training in Australian institutions;

2. overseas students who come to Australia to learn English for personal, vocational or some other purpose but not to undertake further study in Australia or other foreign countries;
3. groups of overseas students, generally from an educational institution overseas who come to Australia for a short “study tour” which combines some English study with tourism, recreational activities or short academic or vocational training programmes;
4. overseas students enrolled in academic or training programmes who require on-going support either in English language or in the expectations of the Australian education culture; and
5. overseas-based students who attend Australian-run English language programmes at centres located in overseas countries but wholly or jointly owned by Australian institutions.

The first two programmes are commonly known as **English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS)** though the other programmes are generally delivered by ELICOS Centres and so the term ELICOS is commonly applied to the whole English language programme for overseas students. The English language programme is complemented in most centres by the provision of accommodation services based on homestay with Australian families, in particular to enhance the students’ opportunities to use English and to experience “everyday” Australian culture.

The ELICOS industry is closely regulated to ensure its quality. As noted above, all ESL centres are subject to accreditation and regular re-accreditation by NEAS. All courses that centres provide also require accreditation through NEAS. Control over centres’ accreditation and the accreditation of each course is exerted through the student visa scheme: without such accreditation, visas will not be issued to overseas students to study at those centres.

The rapid growth in ESL teaching in Australia has had a major impact on the demand for trained ESL teachers. The NEAS requirements are not arduous, basically requiring an ESL teacher to have an undergraduate degree and at least 100 hours of specialist ESL teacher training. However, many centres (including that directed by the present writer) avoid employing teachers who are not eligible for teacher registration. In other words, the basic qualifications required by serious ELICOS teachers include an undergraduate degree, basic teacher education (e.g., a Bachelor of Education or a Graduate Diploma in Education), the equivalent of a major in ESL teaching methodology, and several years’ teaching experience. In addition, to gain a long term contract position in a reputable ELICOS Centre, teachers generally require a Masters degree in applied linguistics (or its equivalent). Because of the growth in employment opportunities for ESL teachers, many teachers of other subjects have retrained as English teachers and the demand for places in applied linguistics courses for ESL teachers has increased considerably. ESL teaching is very much a growth industry in Australia, with good employment opportunities and strong demand for well-trained staff.

V CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to provide a brief overview of language policy in Australia with particular emphasis on English language policy. It has also sought to situate the experience of language policy-making in Australia in a more general consideration of the nature and structure of rational language policy-making. It is not appropriate for the present writer, as a foreigner, to seek to draw implications for ESL teaching in Korea. Suffice it to say that there probably are lessons to be learned from the Australian experience, not just for ESL policy-making but for language policy-making in general. In particular, one might point to the vital importance of a rigorous, coherent and systematic approach to policy development and implementation and, within that, the critical importance of considering how to maintain the relevance and quality of the programmes offered. Of particular importance in that is maintaining an adequate supply of well-trained,

language-proficient teachers. Kwon [2000] has noted the adverse effects that have been experienced as a result of making the ESL programme in Korea dependent on generalist Primary School teachers with minimal English language proficiency and no specialist training and on professionally untrained native English speakers from overseas. It is also essential that the assessment system match the objectives of the programme. As difficult as it may be where large numbers of students are involved to administer communicative tests, especially proficiency-focussed assessment schemes, if the aim of the syllabuses is to foster practical language skills, then the summative assessment schemes must be compatible with such aims and not be based largely around multiple choice or other analytic tests for reasons of administrative ease: the use of such tests would illustrate a breakdown in language policy implementation where that policy is aimed at developing English proficiency.

In brief, the Australian experience of language policy-making and language education planning would suggest the desirability of adopting a rigorous approach to policy development with careful attention to the articulation of policy from societal and individual need, through policy principles to implementation, evaluation and justification.

Table 1: Extract from the Rational Frameworks of the Queensland Language Education Policy Advice [Ingram and John 1990]

NEEDS (Societal and Individual)	GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS & RECS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	RATIONALE
Adequately trained language teachers to implement this policy	Provision of sufficient teachers adequately trained in language teaching		72. All Primary and Secondary School teachers-in-training who wish to specialise in language teaching to take equivalent of at least two semester units in second language teaching methodology (including classroom techniques, syllabus design and program writing, and assessment procedures) and to be trained to teach throughout the Pre-School, Primary and Secondary School age range.	. Inclusion of suitable units in pre-service training of all specialist language teachers. All language teachers trained to teach at all age levels	- Language teachers will often be required to teach across full age range of children in schools. All language teachers need a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of language teaching
A cadre of highly proficient and professionally competent language teachers	Language teachers with specialist graduate diploma or higher degree in applied linguistics	73. All language teachers should be strongly encouraged to take a specialist graduate diploma or higher degree in the area of applied linguistics (including second language teaching). - A specialist graduate diploma should be regarded as minimum qualification for promotion beyond the class teacher level from January 1995 with, during the interim period, successful completion of substantial in-service courses run by LACU being accepted as an alternative.	- Provision for graduate courses in applied linguistics in universities. Promulgation by Department of these conditions on promotion. LACU to organise substantial in-service courses.	- Availability of necessary courses All language teachers in promotional positions with graduate diplomas or higher degrees in applied linguistics.	- There is an urgent need to upgrade qualifications of language teachers in Queensland to facilitate implementation of the proposals in this report. Qualified and effective teachers are needed to assist colleagues, supervise programs, develop courses, etc.

Table 1: Extract from the Rational Frameworks of the Queensland Language Education Policy Advice (continued)

NEEDS (Societal and Individual)	GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECS	IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	RATIONALE
Language teachers with adequate proficiency for teaching purposes.	All language teachers to meet minimum proficiency levels	74. Minimum language proficiency level for teachers of languages that use ideographic scripts should be S:3, L:3, W:2, R:2 and for teachers of other languages S:3, L:3, W:3, R:3.	<p>Minimum proficiency levels to be promulgated and notified to teacher training institutions.</p> <p>In service programs to be established to up-grade teachers of LOTE.</p> <p>75. LACU to initiate a project to investigate the usefulness of word-processing packages with ideographic script in promoting the development of high levels of proficiency in Reading and Writing by teachers.</p> <p>76. LACU (possibly with assistance for NLIA Testing and Curriculum Unit at Griffith University) should:</p> <p>- initiate a survey to estimate proficiency levels of language teachers in Queensland schools.</p>	<p>Regular in-service LOTE up-grading programs</p> <p>Research findings regarding usefulness of such word-processing packages.</p> <p>All teachers with minimum proficiency levels as specified in Recommendation 76 by 1995 and then by 2000.</p>	<p>- Language proficiency is of fundamental importance for language teachers.</p> <p>- Urgent need to upgrade skills of Queensland Language Teachers.</p> <p>- The LOTE is both the target and the medium of instruction.</p> <p>- Teacher is often the principal (if not sole) model of the language.</p> <p>- Teachers need to use the best of modern communicative methods.</p>

Table 1: Extract from the Rational Frameworks of the Queensland Language Education Policy Advice (continued)

NEEDS (Societal and Individual)	GOALS AND OBJECT- IVES	POLICY RECOM- MENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	RATIONALE
			<p>77. Minister for Education to request Federal Government to amend taxation provisions to encourage language proficiency by travelling to and living in country of origin of their languages.</p> <p>78. LACU to negotiate with Board of Teacher Registration and the Universities to give effect to relevant Recommendations of Section VI.1 and VI.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LACU to negotiate with Queensland Teachers' Union in order to utilise productivity provisions in teachers' award. - to provide incentives for language teachers to obtain recommended minimum qualifications. - to amend its own promotional criteria to the same end. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial incentives to do so are overdue and would be well received

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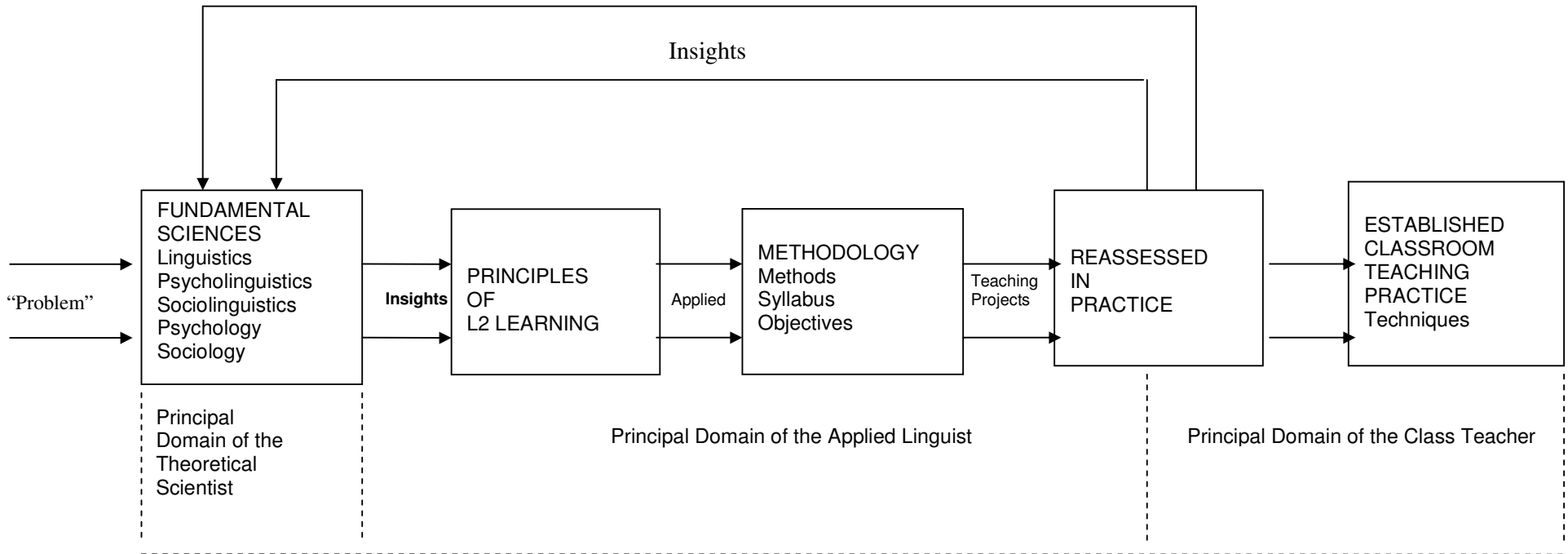
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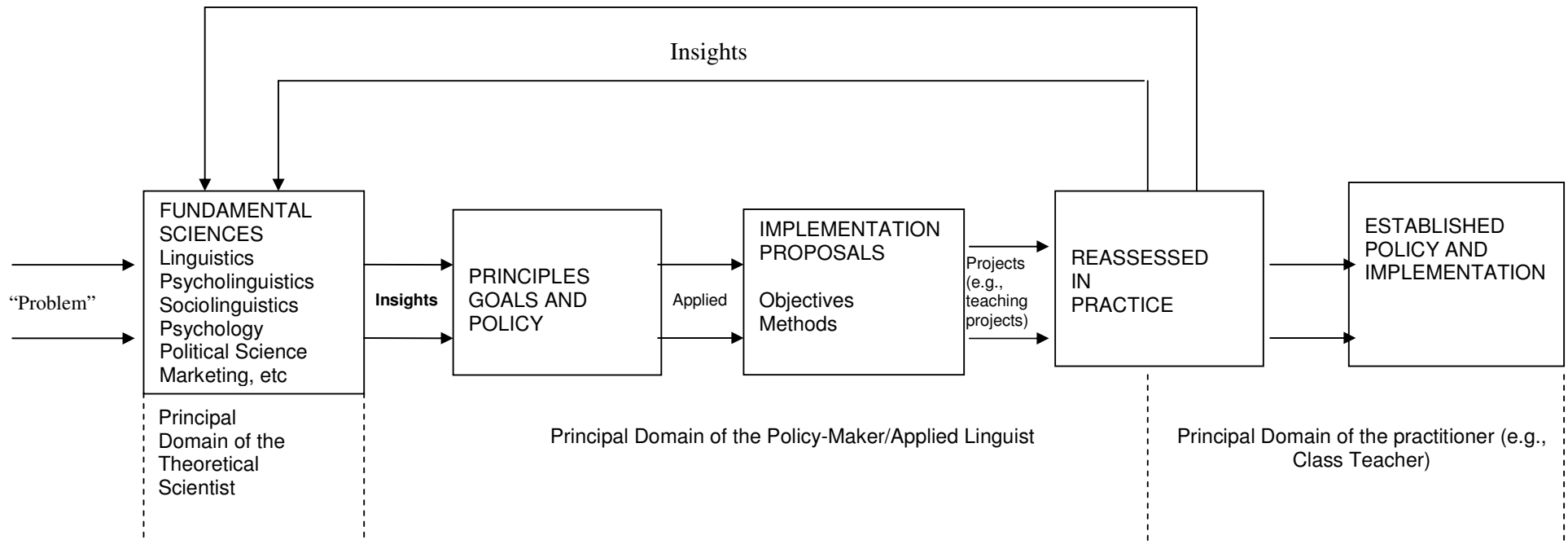
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Figure 1:
 A Model of Applied Linguistics
 (in the context of language teaching practice)



(Based on Ingram 1980:42)

Figure 2: A Model for Language Policy-Making and Language Education Planning



(Based on Ingram 1980:42)