‘French adds to its owner’s culture and general intelligence’. The politics of subject languages in New Zealand schools: The first fifty years.

(1870s – 1920s)

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Language policy and planning

- Field of language policy is about language and its role in social life (Ricento, 2006) (and therefore education as well) and is a field of power
- ‘Decisions about which languages will be planned for what purposes ultimately reflect power relations among different groups and sociopolitical and economic interests.’ (Ricento, 2006, pp. 5-6)
- ‘Language is the architecture of social behaviour itself’ (Blommaert, 2009, p.263)
- ‘And of course education planning in and out of school is a major site for language planning – what happens and what does not -McCarty - 3
- Education in and out of school is a key domain in which language policies play their role (McCarty 2011 p.3)
- Difference between evolved systems and designed systems (Halliday)

As LPP researchers:
- ‘We seek not only amelioration of people’s linguistic conditions, but - with Bakhtin – we need to challenge the foundations of linguistic discrimination and inequity’ – with something fundamental and comprehensive (Hymes as cited in Bell, 2014, p. 329)
- ‘There is no “view from nowhere”, no gaze that is not positioned’ (Irvine and Gal (2000) as cited in Bell 2014, p. 256)
Subject languages in NZ schools

• So the questions here: How/when and where did we get our view on what languages should be taught in schools? How does it reverberate through time to produce what we do today?

• What should the factors be that bring a language into schools?

• Discourses of racism, colonialism recirculating through time and bodies???

• ‘…the traces left by colonialism run deep’ Pennycook (1998 p.2)

• ‘Monolingualism... encourages native English speakers to feel a false sense of superiority, to talk too much, to listen too little. They may even leave the impression of an arrogance, rooted in imperialist attitudes, that is only prepared to communicate on its own terms, under conditions which ensure its own superiority’ (Trim, J. as cited in Pachler, 2007, p.6)
The Aotearoa / NZ language context

• New Zealand is overwhelmingly monolingual in English (about 80% of population)

  **BUT**

• Re-emergent partial bilingualism among Māori (only about 4% of population)

• NZ Sign became an official language – *de jure* - 2006

• Privately NZers speak more than 160 languages

• Growing multilingualism through migration and immigrant groups

• Some presence of multilingualism through education – viz French and Japanese
Growth of ethnic diversity in New Zealand

- Ethnic diversity is increasing in New Zealand - there are more ethnicities than countries in the world in NZ – now considered superdiverse
- Five largest ethnic groups are NZ European, Māori, Chinese, Samoan, and Indian
- Biggest increases within the Asian category since the 2006 Census
  - Chinese – up 16%
  - Indian – up 48%
  - Filipino – more than 50%
- Increases in the largest Pacific ethnic groups
  - Samoan – up 10%
  - Cook Island Maori – up 7%
  - Tongan – up almost 20%
Changes in numbers of students learning ‘additional’ languages in NZ secondary schools


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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>28,245</td>
<td>21,570</td>
<td>-6,675</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>18,157</td>
<td>12,044</td>
<td>-6,113</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>10,900</td>
<td>11,680</td>
<td>780</td>
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<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>6,251</td>
<td>4,477</td>
<td>-1,774</td>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1,891</td>
<td>3,277</td>
<td>1,386</td>
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<td>Samoan</td>
<td>2,311</td>
<td>2,391</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>2,339</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>-838</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>320</td>
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<td>Other languages</td>
<td>1174</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>-721</td>
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<td>Cook Island Māori</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>152</td>
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<td>Korean</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>Niuean</td>
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<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tokelauan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>71,730</strong></td>
<td><strong>58,351</strong></td>
<td><strong>-13,379</strong></td>
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Young, Indian and (maybe?) Hindi speaking in NZ
Indian languages spoken in NZ
Data compiled from 1996-2013 censuses

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<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>12,879</td>
<td>22,749</td>
<td>44,589</td>
<td>66,309</td>
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<td>Panjabi</td>
<td>2,940</td>
<td>5,541</td>
<td>10,713</td>
<td>19,752</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>8,757</td>
<td>11,145</td>
<td>15,870</td>
<td>17,502</td>
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<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>2,007</td>
<td>3,213</td>
<td>3,918</td>
<td>5,220</td>
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<td>Urdu</td>
<td>1,503</td>
<td>2,946</td>
<td>4,248</td>
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<td>Marathi</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>2,565</td>
<td>2,904</td>
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<td>Bengali</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>1,464</td>
<td>2,265</td>
<td>2,418</td>
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Total speakers of Indian languages | 29,757 | 47,922 | 84,168 | 119,151 |
Foucault?

• Foucauldian theory helpful because it challenges us to think differently about the present - avoid a heroisation of the present

• To think how things could be ‘other’ than what they are

• One way is to trace back along the continuities and discontinuities (fractures) of history – a series of ‘accidents’ that could have resulted in something different from what we have today

• The archaeological dig – in this case primarily a policy history (where I have looked)

Taking the ‘long view’ of language learning and teaching

And I’ve found particularly people are so keen to show that their work is on the cutting edge of new developments that they are reluctant to really see to what extent and in what ways the current problems and also possible solutions are grounded in the experience of the past (John Trim in Interview with Smith and McLelland 2014)

Charting the history of language teaching and learning will, in turn, make us all better informed in facing challenges and changes to policy and practice now and in the future. It is instructive in the current climate, for example, to realize that grave doubts were held about whether second foreign languages could survive alongside French in British schools in the early twentieth century (McLelland, forthcoming), or to look back at earlier attempts to establish foreign languages in primary schools (Bayley, 1989; Burstall et al., 1974; Hoy, 1977)

(McLelland and Smith 2014  p.1)
First Education Act 1847

• In every school to be established or supported by public funds under the provisions of this Ordinance, religious education, industrial training, and instruction in the **English language** shall form a necessary part of the system to be pursued therein; No X

• English for all, including Māori - (Mackey 1967)
Māori, language and literacy
1877 Education Act — establishment of free and compulsory primary education and high schools

All the branches of a liberal education, comprising

*Latin and Greek classics, French and other modern languages, mathematics, and such other branches of science as the advancement of the colony and the increase of the population may from time to time require, may be taught in such school. (no 56)*
Auckland Girls’ Grammar 1906
Sir Joseph, speaking at the breaking-up of the Napier High School, to-day, took occasion to refer to the advantages of a knowledge of Esperanto, the universal language. He referred to the perfect babel at the recent International Congress, which he had attended, where interpreters had to be engaged for all kinds of languages, and those who did not understand French missed a great deal of what was being said. He considered that it was highly desirable that the teaching of Esperanto should be introduced into the curriculum of the State schools. He admitted it might take a few years to educate people up to accepting this suggestion, but it was not many years since shorthand and typing were looked upon as almost impossible of adoption, and now, of course, they were almost universal in commercial offices. He had at the moment a letter from a man in a high educational position in the colony impressing upon him the fact that he and many others were agreed upon the point that in addition to teaching French, Latin and German in the schools they should teach this “universal language.” It could be mastered easily in six months, whereas French, Latin and German could not be mastered in less than three years even by smart linguists.

- Advantages of learning Esperanto
  - universal language, mastered in six months
- Perfect ‘babel’ at multilingual congress
- Those who didn’t understand French missed out
- ‘French Latin and German could not be mastered in less than three years even by smart linguists’
LATIN IN SCHOOLS – an absolute necessity for the professional and business man/essential of a liberal education/provided better understanding of mother tongue

German preferable and more important for the modern world than French

‘...I would rather see German taken than French, as I think the German people are going to exercise the greatest possible influence and power in the world, for which reason a knowledge of their language and literature is likely to be more useful than a knowledge of French’

Otago Daily Times, Issue 15108, 3 April 1911, Page 2
I believe that an equally good course may be given, ultimately, at any rate, without the inclusion of a foreign language, but at the present time I do not believe it would be so good. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that the teaching of English is more or less in an experimental stage in education generally. No doubt picked teachers are able to teach it with equal benefit to a foreign language, but I do not believe that is true, generally speaking; and if it is not true in England it is certainly less true in New Zealand. What I believe is that Latin or some foreign language is at present a necessity. I am aware that there are educational experts of name who think differently, but I have on my side the opinion of the majority of educational experts, and the authorities in England, Germany, and, I would say, the United States.
1914 Education Act

• An Act to make Better Provision for the Education of the People of New Zealand. 5th November, 1914

• Included establishment of technical schools and education for differently abled (establishment of special schools)

• Technical instruction" means instruction in the principles of any specified science or art as applied to industries, accompanied by individual laboratory or workshop practice, or instruction in modern languages, or in such other subjects connected with industrial, commercial, agricultural, or domestic pursuits as are prescribed:
The University Senate is to be commended for the action it has taken in establishing a travelling scholarship for the study of the French language and literature. French is the special language of diplomacy. It is the language in which is written one of the richest and noblest of the world’s literatures; it is a language a knowledge of which adds most substantially to its owner’s culture and general intelligence. It is, therefore, a language the study of which is worthy of the highest encouragement by our educational authorities, and that quite apart from the new and permanent bond of national sympathy and union which has been so firmly established by the alliance of the British and French nations during the four long years of fighting for the sacred cause of liberty, truth, and justice.
Trends and issues in language learning

• Continual tussle over who needs to learn Latin and to a lesser extent Greek – not necessary for commercial students?
• Modern languages and particularly French taught in commercial courses
• Primary importance of learning ‘the mother tongue’ – English
• French, German, Latin and Greek taught in NZ secondary schools in different amounts depending on the nature of the school. Classical languages more important for
• Political power and international profile exerts influence on people’s views – German and French at different times
• Some interest in and pressure for Esperanto
• Post war - more pressure for languages (communication for peace) – not just a technical education – viz Christs College
Reverberations through to today

• Emphasis on the importance of English ‘the mother tongue’

• Popular disdain for ‘Babel’ of multiple languages and idea of one perfect language for communication (then Esperanto/now English)

• No LOTEs in primary school – not considered – primacy of English

• Popularity and importance of French – modern, language of our ally

• International profile and history more important than what languages already in country

• Debates over the importance of Latin and Classics, more generally
References

- Education Act 1847.
- Education Act 1877.
- Education Act 1914.