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Ethical dilemmas and language policy (LP) advising

Joseph Lo Bianco

The *Horkos*

The paradigmatic case of ethical professional practice is the *horkos* (ὄρκος), commonly known as the Hippocratic Oath (Edelstein, 1943). Essentially, this involves invoking a curse on violators of commitments made in swearing an oath (or on those who swear insincerely). Originating in Ancient Greece, the Hippocratic Oath is associated with physicians swearing to practice medicine honestly and is the historical source of many formal procedures for ethical practice in western, and a variety of other, cultural traditions.

The *horkos* originally required novice physicians to swear to healing gods that they would comply with high ethical standards in their professional dealings. The gods, usually the Olympian deity Apollo, son of Zeus and Leto, and three medicinal deities, the healer Asclepius, principal god of Medicine in Greek and Roman mythology; his daughter Hygeia (personification of sanitation and therefore of good health); and the deity of remedy, Panacea. Swearing to this mini-pantheon required the presence of witnesses, who functioned as external checks on the essentially internal process of ethical regulation. The overarching goal was to "never do harm to anyone" to find motivation solely in the "good of my patients," to keep "far from all intentional ill-doing and all seduction, especially from the pleasures of love with women or men, be they free or slaves." The World Medical Association (WMA) adopted a version of the oath at its 1948 General Assembly and through five modifications adjusted its language, tone, and character to produce the Declaration of Geneva, converting it into a secular and socially inclusive public declaration (WMA, 2014).¹

The modernization of the ancient *horkos* was also a response to gross violations of professional practice during the 20th century, especially the mass complicity of medical professionals under the Third Reich, though abuse of medical practice was far more widespread than Nazi medicine (Harris, 2002).

Far less conceptually developed or historically grounded is the ethical regulation of academic life in general (Sikes & Piper, 2011), and specifically applied linguistics and language policy (LP) research and advising. When undertaken as university-based research, LP is ethically institutionalized in diverse ways. In my institution, the University of Melbourne, ethical regulation is coordinated (though its administration is distributed across faculties and schools) by a university-wide Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (OREI; see <http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/>). Stressing the importance of "research integrity" the current director informs visitors to the website that the OREI:

is a clearly identifiable home for . . . activities that relate to the responsible conduct of research and research ethics. . . help[s] researchers navigate the sometimes confusing realm of governance and compliance. . . [and that] . . . discussing principles of research integrity amongst your research colleagues and especially with students is a very important part of being a researcher.

(<http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/director-oreis-welcome>)

We can see here an elaboration of the two modes of ethical regulation imagined in the *horkos*, those of internal-personal regulation and its check by external witnesses. The elaboration involves the addition of collegial discussion, supplementing the internal and external regulation with horizontal conversation with peers. In the work I describe here, this kind of locally debated ethical practice has proved to be critically important.

University ethics procedures cover the range of epistemological assumptions and methodological approaches for scholarly research conducted domestically. These procedures are less clearly defined for research activities conducted internationally, though such international projects are usually governed by formal contracts that stipulate the required personal conduct of academics working as consultants beyond their national jurisdictions.

While ethical quandaries and challenges occur in most applied linguistics activities, LP is particularly prone to ethical concerns because it deals with professional decisions about the prestige, standing, and corpus of other people's forms of communication. These decisions are often influenced by the research of applied linguists and, in the cases discussed in the present chapter, are directly shaped by professional advising. Despite the elaborate machinery of ethical regulation that modern universities deploy, many sensitive and important practices in LP advising escape any form of ethical guidance or regulation. This chapter discusses ethical dilemmas in LP in high-stakes settings where I have been commissioned as an external advisor to facilitate writing of language policies. The "external" procedures in university protocols and contractual obligations are generally adequate for research components of such work, but as forms of regulation they are inadequate for the complex fieldwork setting, the often unusual practice of deliberation, the main methodology used, and the sensitive nature of the work.

Ethical Quandaries in LP Advising

The focus of the work here is a series of facilitated dialogues, also known as deliberation conferencing, deliberation, or mediated dialogues (Lo Bianco, 2012), conducted with key stakeholders. The aim is to write problem-solving language policies and propose these to the relevant authorities for implementation. I have been commissioned to facilitate these dialogues in three conflict-affected zones in Southeast Asia: Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand (Heijmans, Simmonds, & Van de Veen, 2004; McCargo, 2008; South, 2008, 2011; Storey, 2007), as part of a wider UNICEF project on language education, democracy, and peacebuilding as means for social cohesion.

The chapter touches only briefly on the general nature of LP, since its focus is professional advising and policy drafting, rather than research directed at new theory, program evaluation, or general analysis of language policies. A host of concentrated ethical dilemmas arise in the project remit that calls for research and analysis into language conflicts, not for academic purposes, but for intervention in problem-solving activity. The facilitated dialogues are formal discussions convened to tackle contentious issues around language problems mostly, but not exclusively, in education. The dialogues bring together three groups of stakeholders: public officials, citizens or civil society organizations (activists or community representatives), and various kinds of experts. The role of facilitator is to guide discussion, aiming maximally to resolve disputes around contested language problems, or minimally, to foster greater understanding of the nature of the issues being debated, as well as acceptance and understanding of the views of different groups and individuals in relation to these problems.

Some of these "contested language problems" are extremely contentious, associated with chronic discontent, and occasionally with violence and civil unrest, whereas others are more technical or specialist in nature. In the course of the deliberations there is frequent need to cite research evidence and to generate research studies to support longer-term solutions to the problems, but the main activity is structured debate and participation activities. I conducted 14 such dialogues and deliberation conferences between June 2013 and October 2014. Ethical challenges, dilemmas, and problems surface at any stage of a dialogue, and it has proved necessary to anticipate, negotiate, and confront questions of ethics as a central component of their planning and implementation. What follows is a reflection on ethical quandaries that I have extracted post hoc from these dialogues, drawing on my journal entries and notes written during and immediately following the dialogues; notes, correspondence, and discussions with participants, interpreters, and assistants; evaluation sheets designed, gathered, and collated by UNICEF officials from several of these dialogues; and finally, outcome reports, press releases, promotion material, and official documents related to the dialogues.

In keeping with the more elaborated ethical notion required by the university, I discuss ways in which my academic background and professional/researcher perspectives influence interpretation of ethics and enactment of ethical practices. Some aspects of the normal ethical requirements of applied linguistics and university based research clearances apply more than others. For example, procedures for securing access to participants are unproblematic, because most are adult activists, public figures, or officials, and their participation is inherent in the contracts that have secured my involvement. Other procedures of research and

practice are more salient; clearest is the disclosure of interests, priorities, views, and perceptions of various roles—those of expert/researcher/facilitator/mediator. Occasionally, there is tension concerning the identity and public role of participants in dialogues. This can be acute when public acknowledgment of contributions made by participants is needed, as with press statements, signing of accords, lists of attendees, organizational affiliations, and provision of contact details. In two cases what was particularly problematic was the formal declaration of outcomes achieved through deliberation, especially when issued publicly. Contentious points revolved around "ownership" of texts written collectively in dialogue sessions and attribution of views or opinions to individuals and organizations. Participant anonymity is sometimes needed, especially when individuals who participate in publicly advertised deliberation work are associated with groups engaged in dispute or even open conflict with authorities. At times there is concern about the physical and reputational safety and security of participants given that tensions around the questions being discussed are the direct cause or are implicated in violent conflict between antagonist parties.

The Settings

The present account concerns ethical dimensions of practice in settings in which I am, culturally and in terms of political citizenship, an outsider. My presence is framed as a LP academic expert, commissioned by and working for an international multilateral agency, UNICEF, invited by the host countries concerned to undertake the work in question. The scope and limits of the work are negotiated in response to the requests by the host country for support in resolving language problems that are the cause of social conflict.

In the discussion that follows it is clear that ethical questions arise not only because of the complexity and tensions inherent in the settings of the work, but because of ambiguity and the shifting nature of roles. The role of "advising" in such contexts carries significantly more ethical ambiguities than normal research assignments because of important practical consequences of the activity. This is exacerbated because participants often include marginalized populations, usually ethnic or indigenous minorities, and part of the role involves facilitating collaborative relations between such groups and public officials. In the best of circumstances, officials seek efficient cost-effective solutions to problems, and see their responsibility to political authorities, and through them, to citizen-taxpayers. However, in practice some are ill informed or hostile to the needs and demands of constituent populations such as minorities, who, in turn, are sometimes untrusting of the intentions, probity, and neutrality of officials. The third category of participant is the expert, interpreted broadly to include teachers, principals, local historians, researchers, writers, and others who are neither in official decision-making positions nor are representatives or delegates of local citizen or community groups.

Deliberation Conferencing

Various kinds of mediated encounters or conversations, especially deliberation conferences, emerge from theories of deliberative democracy and have become an important feature on the agenda of research into collective problem solving and democratic practice in several social science disciplines. Approaches to practical problem solving inspired by principles of "discursive democracy" (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2008) have expanded exponentially to encompass insights from activity theory, communicative theory, argument mapping, critical thinking, applied epistemology, intelligence augmentation, collective wisdom, hive minds, deliberative democracy, and so on (Blackler, 2011; Engeström & Glăveanu, 2012). This outpouring of activity is part of an effort to devise new modes of discursive policy making concerned to overcome communication barriers between the citizens and public or corporate administration with their impenetrable managerialism.

In real-world language problem solving, as Fishman (1994) has observed, "very little language planning practice has actually been informed by language planning theory" (p. 97). In the two decades since this observation, with the intensification of globalization and the greater mobility of populations, the need for language planning to resolve communication difficulties in society has become acute. Yet Fishman's observation remains broadly true today. As such, few trained professional language planners and little of the body of knowledge of language-planning theory is utilized in LP practice. In this context deliberation conferences are a promising addition to the tools and methods of LP because they fuse together research, aimed at discovery, and decision making, aimed at action. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2008) point out that the goal of deliberation should generally be to achieve a "meta-consensus" on the range and structure of beliefs, values, and preferences, as opposed to simple agreement on a course of action, the ranking of policy options, or the content of values.

The facilitated dialogues discussed form part of a Language Education and Social Cohesion (LESC) project

commissioned by UNICEF in Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand under that organization's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme. In each case the aims of LESC are adapted to accommodate the political priorities of the national setting and the basis on which it has negotiated its participation with UNICEF. Accordingly, in Malaysia the focus is to make a contribution to "national unity," in Myanmar to "peacebuilding," and in Thailand, specifically in the restive southern provinces, the aim is to contribute to "conflict resolution" (Lo Bianco, 2013).

Each facilitated dialogue focuses on a distinctive "problem issue," and when run in a sequence, the focus is on sequential aspects of the selected problem issue. Most dialogues involve 25-35 stakeholders, as indicated above, selected from the categories of community representative, public official (or politician), and expert (teachers, researchers, consultants). All involve multiple languages; the Mae Sot dialogue (Michaels, 2014), for example, was run in six languages. The following nine dialogues have informed the writing of this chapter:

1. *Indigenous and Ethnic Rights in Myanmar Education, Yangon, June 27-29, 2013*. This was funded by the Australian aid agency, which hosted the activity. It was conducted within a wider ethnic education seminar, and comprised 2 days of work on principles and practices for ethnic language rights in education, in English, Burmese, Karen, and Mon languages, with smaller group work in several others.

2. *High-Level Policymakers Forum, Bangkok, November 9, 2013*. This dialogue comprised 35 participants from 14 countries, all senior government officials. It was conducted in English, with two tables working in Vietnamese and Khmer.

3. *Language and Peace in South Thailand, Hat Yai, Thailand, February 5-7, 2014*. Violence immediately preceding this dialogue reduced the participant numbers to 23 from the original acceptance list of 35; it was conducted in English with translated materials, activities, and workshops in Thai and Malay.

4. *Language Policy Forum, Eastern Burma Community Schools, Mae Sot, Thailand, February 12-14, 2014*. The focus of this dialogue was Myanmar, but to involve displaced and refugee populations it was held in a small border town in Thailand. The dialogue comprised 68 participants from 12 ethnic groups and 22 organizations working in six languages.

5. *National and Vernacular Schools, Kuala Lumpur, April 9-10, 2014*. Conducted in English and Malay, this involved 34 participants, with two groups of participants working in Chinese and Tamil (KL).

6. *Indigenous Communities, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, May 7-8, 2014*. This was conducted in English, Malay, and Kadazandusun languages, involving 32 participants.

7. *Education and Social Cohesion, Mawlamyine, Myanmar, May 27-28, 2014*. This dialogue was held in Mon State and comprised 35-40 participants, in three languages, English, Burmese, and Mon, with occasional interpretation into Pa'oh and Karen.

8. *Language Planning and Peacebuilding, Naypyidaw, Myanmar 29-30 July, 2014*. This comprised 38 participants and was held in the capital city of Myanmar; it was conducted in English and Burmese.

9. *Education and Social Cohesion, Kuching, Sarawak, August 27-28, 2014*. This was conducted in English and Malay, with some use of Chinese and Iban languages, involving 35 participants.

Prior to most dialogues, research was conducted into current issues, human rights reports, and government policies and plans, as well as meetings with intending participants to ascertain their priority concerns, with visits to workplaces arranged to discuss such issues directly with participants, and to ascertain the relationships of participants to each other and their purposes in participation. The dialogue itself is an intensive process of "discussion organizing." To support this I have designed some new techniques and adapted classical meeting facilitation methods so that the following activities and exercises comprise a "tool kit" available to me as facilitator.

- *Child, nation, "I wish," and "The problem is..."* I have designed these and similar exercises partly as ice breakers and partly as "data gathering" from participants. I have used all of them at some of the nine dialogues discussed here, according to the particular audience involved and the specific focus of the dialogue. The child exercise requires each participant to identify and name (confidentially or publicly, as they choose) a child and to fill out a diagram of that child's language abilities as a 5-year-old; this is often done in the first session, and is later elaborated with a depiction of that child's likely language abilities as a 15-year-old, and occasionally a further one with that child's language abilities in an idealization should the dialogue's LP work be adopted and implemented. The nation activity is similar, but the focus is shifted from a named person to the national setting of the dialogue (this can be modified to make the focus a school, a district, or an ethnic group), with adaptations according to different but realistic scenarios. "I wish" and "The problem is ..." are exercises that can be done on paper, on flip charts, online, or publicly with a rotating microphone. The duration and focus of the elicited comments are decided by the facilitator, collected by assistants, aggregated into a single document, and can form the agenda

for a session or whole day of the dialogue. Small groups organize the statements according to criteria the facilitator sets out at the beginning (e.g., problems for which we have/need information, problems that are tame/wicked, problems that are accepted/denied by a relevant agency or by the government, problems that are contradictory/complementary, etc.). "These and similar exercises ensure that the naming of problems and the focus of the dialogues are not determined by concepts or issues the facilitator imposes, but are inductively generated in the dialogue itself, and form the basis for a "bottom up," elicited agenda and set of arguments.

- *Zomia*. In this activity I describe a fictitious national state replete with language problems and challenges, demography, economy, and politics, all broadly recognizable but different from the actual setting of the deliberation. Participants then write a policy preamble, aims, a research plan, and implementation protocols, distinguishing between "principles," "values," and "facts" (available or needed), and then responding to statements from the minister of education, local ethnic groups, local and international experts, and assorted pressure groups as reported in fictitious newspaper articles. Since devising the Zomia exercise I have refined it several times, varying content and activities and adapting it to levels of official formality required in different settings and the willingness of senior officials to participate in this kind of situation. The exercise has always functioned well, being sufficiently removed from the specific setting to make safe discussion of controversial topics possible, while being sufficiently familiar and recognizable to resonate and provoke, sometimes very passionate, engagement with the real meaning of the activity.
- *Constitution*. This is a facilitator-led activity to set the rules of talk and participation for the dialogue; it sometimes remains on public display for the duration of the dialogue. It consists of a set of statements about our purpose, about the right to speak, the right to disagree, the right of individuals to speak without pressure, the expectation that all should speak, a requirement to listen to disagreement, and other microconversational ethics of conduct, respect, and integrity.
- *Aims ambition*. This exercise is visually displayed on a chart and is used in conjunction with, or instead of, the traditional exercises of mediated conferences such as "expectations checking." It involves the listing and ranking of aims for the dialogue, perceptions of the roles of those involved, and pushes participants to agree on a collective rate of "ambition," meaning, essentially, how hard will we work and what we aim to accomplish. The aims ambition chart can be adjusted each day, and sometimes each session, as a barometer of progress, aim, and level of collaboration.
- *Contours*. I provide an early "map" of how deliberations typically unfold; that is, the predictable or likely stages, phases, problems, information needs, ethical challenges, and reasons for success and failure. The contours exercise has the benefit of allowing all to have meta-understanding of the process and its stages/phases.
- *Hosts and confederates*. For some large multilingual dialogues I have used versions of the World Café format (Brown & Isaacs, 2005), mostly the principle of table host, and added the idea of "confederate." Many configurations are possible, but usually the large group is divided into "table groups" with participants allocated according to lot or facilitator decision, with or without rotation. Each table is attended by a host and a facilitator confederate, who meet at intervals with the facilitator to monitor progress of the dialogue and make needed adjustments. The system allows for "safe" tables for shy or excluded groups, such as young teachers, rural persons, or young females, who in one instance complained privately to the facilitator of intimidation from older and powerful males. The format requires training of hosts and confederates but works well to improve social relations, enjoyment, and equal participation. Along with other processes, the hosts/confederates system and World Café tables can accommodate different communication styles and expressive abilities of individual participants and help improve intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- *Democracies*. I have adapted some principles from discursive democracy writings Dryzek, 1995) to design an activity and presentation on decision-making procedure. The two elements that make up the democracies exercise are "voice" and "vote," which I discuss according to criteria of "efficiency" (voting is faster, gives clear decisions, but has the disadvantage of majoritarian domination) and "effectiveness" (voice democracy, meaning persuasion and agreement, tends to be slower, can be unclear in outcome and half-hearted, but if successful is more effective and durable than simple voting procedures). These are reviewed and applied regularly in a long-duration dialogue.
- *Discussion/conversation arrangements*. I use this term as a catch-all for a series of techniques that aim to organize talk in productive ways and that disperse speaker/listener roles. Familiar activities include brainstorming, storyboarding, and fishbowls, used for different purposes, complemented by procedures I have devised that aim to resolve conflicts between individual

antagonists, deal with confrontational aggressive individuals, or remove sharply divisive issues that threaten to disrupt an entire dialogue.

- *Interests/information/ideology*. This exercise aims to produce deeper understanding of policymaking processes and self-referencing discussions about professional roles. It is discussed in the next section because it forms a discrete element drawn from the policy analysis literature.
- *Perspective taking*. In some dialogues I include activities to "scramble" perspectives and encourage discussion from alternative points of view.

Most dialogues follow an overarching sequence, tracking the outlines of a standard policy writing exercise: day 1, problem identification and elaboration; day 2, goal agreement and specification, especially principles, values, and facts; and day 3, perspective taking, advocacy training, policy text writing, dissemination outcomes, implementation, evaluation, and review.

The aim is to collectively write policy declarations, to disseminate methods of concrete approaches to language problem solving, and to build capacity in evidence-based argument writing. The evaluations confirm that the process of dialogue and practice policy writing and methods for addressing contested issues are considered major benefits of the dialogues and are ranked as high as the information given in mini-lectures and the draft policies that we prepare. The short duration of dialogues often restricts us to writing agreed preambles, rather than extended statements, much less full policies, though in Mae Sot a bilingual Burmese/English, 32-page declaration, policy, and implementation plan was produced and agreed upon (MINE, 2014).

A host of other techniques and activities form part of the moderation repertoire with different activities being deployed when needed for specific purposes while others are "rested." In addition to these exercises and activities, the dialogues include formal input from the facilitator and others provided in a number of mini-lectures, recommended readings, and action research projects conducted before or after the dialogue. These supply research information and summarized findings with explanations and simulated applications on bilingual and multilingual education: within the person, in the school, in the community, in the economy, in the nation; literacy and multiple languages; models of practice; resource requirements; and outcomes evidence.

All of these methods of deliberation conferencing imply a microethics of procedure and a guarantee to participants (De Costa, 2014; Kubanyiova, 2008). This applied ethics of practice is a necessary part of a wider ethical commitment of language planning in the interests of social cohesion, cultural justice, conflict mitigation, and peacebuilding activity in conflict-affected states.

Ethical Quandary

The following two narratives occurred at different facilitated dialogues.

The first narrative features Person 1: Public Official; Person 2: Indigenous Representative; and Person 3: Legal Academic. Person 1, looking directly at one of the indigenous representatives at the meeting, in the latter part of the first day, but speaking directly to me as the facilitator, said, in standard English, loud enough to suggest that it was her intention to be overheard and to be perceived to be an expert user of English, that she and "the Ministry" had agreed to "have them come to our meeting" and she was "surprised that they are reasonable," referring by tone and gesture to a table at which indigenous people wearing traditional dress were seated. However, she resented that the (NATIONAL) language had been called "dominant" and that this should not be permitted, since it was "rude" and "not true." My notes don't recall the other criticisms she levelled at the "ethnic representative" nor the other complaint she had about his descriptions of (the NATIONAL language). Person 2 had spoken about 20 minutes prior to this outburst about how children from his rural indigenous community faced difficulties in maintaining their home languages when (the NATIONAL language) was "dominant" and "influencing" the lives of children and "ethnic languages."

Person 1's words were spoken in my direction but appeared to be broadcast to all, and I had that morning to convince some of the skeptical rural indigenous people present, noting that some of them felt ill at ease in the official environment, that their participation would be worthwhile. I promised them they would be able to speak and be heard and respected.

The comments from Person 1 sparked resentment, and were perceived to be condescending or patronizing and created the serious risk that a response in kind would derail the dialogue even before we had begun to discuss substantive issues. I commenced an exercise entitled "What We Call Things" to try to divert and

channel discussion towards more constructive ends. On one chart we wrote the word "denotation," on an adjacent chart the word "connotation," and we discussed how words "point to or pick out" things in the world, and sometimes how in addition to this "denoting" what things mean words attach layers of value, emotion, feeling, evaluation, and ideologies onto the meaning. An example I gave was how poverty is likely to "point to" broadly shared notions of material deprivation (its denotation), yet in some ideologies it was also noble, and in other ideologies poverty suggested the personal failings of the poor (connotations). One person clarified that this was the difference between "sense" and "reference" and gave a (NATIONAL language) example. Other English examples were what a tree might connote in a desert environment, compared to a forested alpine setting.

We discussed the English word "dominant," its possible meanings, and (NATIONAL language) equivalents. At this point, 20 minutes into an exercise that appeared to be deflecting a damaging stereotyping conversation into a productive direction, Person 3, a senior legal officer from a university, who also advises government, an individual from an "important family" my interpreter later informed me, who was sitting at the table of the official, Person 1, who had made the original remarks, rose, turned to the indigenous speaker who had first spoken, and, while looking broadly at the audience, demanded that people should not say that (the NATIONAL language) "influences" other languages.

A heated and long discussion left my exercise in tatters. Soon discussion reverted to (the NATIONAL language), and my interpreter stopped providing translations to me preferring to participate in the argument. Facing a major dilemma I tried to judge by tone and turn taking when it might be appropriate to intervene. After some 10 minutes I called coffee time early, during which groups had solidified around ethnicity and language, and discussion fluctuated between calm and humor, questioning and answering, and hostility. I moved among the different groups and requested patience and focus on the aims of our workshop. The coffee break extended far longer than scheduled, with some individuals pleading their case to me and to each other.

I called an end to coffee time and reorganized the group around an activity: I asked each of them to take 10-15 minutes and write, in any language, an account of the discussion prior to coffee, and its "fit" with the aims of our dialogue. I requested the interpreter not stray from my side and projected a page image onto a wall and wrote the words "Car Park" at the top. Once the reports of what had occurred were completed I requested participants to name an issue to move to the car park, a space where there would be no fine for leaving a question overnight or longer, and no requirement that it should ever leave the car park, until its owner wished it to. These reports were requested in round-robin turns, alternating the order of table reports so that different positions disputing what to call (the NATIONAL language) and how to speak about it were heard.

Issues or points that could not be resolved were "parked," and individuals could annotate the list, privately or publicly, so long as these comments were distinct from the issue itself and constructive. They could be anonymous or not, as individuals preferred. I suggested that, by voice consensus or by vote, we could then address the car park issues, but we were not obliged to do so. This worked well. The car park was filled with issues, and the process of parking these issues produced refinement. The objection to "influence" was partly resolved through distinguishing between intentional and nonintentional influence, between harmful and extending or refining influences, and with a discussion about how to incorporate, resist, or creatively respond to the influence from the more powerful. One participant stated that we should discuss "adjectives" for "the language of the most people of the country," and in brackets after each adjective to include a question mark. In plenary, participants mentioned the following as possible ways to describe (the NATIONAL language): Uniting? Federal? Colonial? Convenient? National? Common? Official? Shared? Compulsory? Majority? Dominant? This, in turn, led to a productive discussion about what "we should say about the language of most people of the country" and about "who" the "we" saying these things was to be taken to be.

The second narrative features a local academic with a local contract to evaluate programs, an associate of this person from an international nongovernment agency, a public official involved with the management of these programs, and indigenous parent representatives. An ethical dilemma that often arises in LP advising comes from the hurried timeline demands of policymakers, whose often urgent and practical needs for information are dictated by bureaucratic and political situations, contrasting with the more tentative and sometimes highly qualified knowledge base of the field. LP problems are usually wicked rather than tame; that is, they are not readily amenable to solution with the injection of more information from research or a reframing of the problem. Many language problems tap into the subjective worlds and identity attachments of diverse groups, and in the contested situations addressed by the dialogues such problems can be acute. Even commercial interests can be involved.

In one of the dialogues a local academic pursued a line of questioning of a community representative that appeared to me to support a case that the academic was making separately to a public official about future consultancy opportunities. It appeared that the questioning of the community delegate was to ascertain criteria against which to assess experimental programs, or possibly to support a claim that policy was best crafted when it suited individual circumstances or needs, rather than group needs. This was irrelevant to the purposes, agenda, and direction of the dialogue, yet the person persisted with the questioning and attracted the interest and support of the public official. The community representative appeared to be aware of this and demanded to know from me, the facilitator, what research existed to support an early shift to English in ethnic minority schools. In towns and cities, middle-class parents, supported by the ministry, tend to favor a very early start to English. In rural and indigenous areas this inevitably means that English and the compulsory teaching of the national language squeeze curriculum time away from the mother tongue of poor, rural indigenous children.

During a later session, and weeks later in an unrelated activity, the same public official came to me with a series of very specific, written, questions about how to respond to political and community demands for English to be started from the first years of schooling, what should be said to allay public concerns about immediate English, and a suite of other apparently scripted questions.

Some of these questions were:

1. Can we teach all subjects in language x?
2. In Canada they have complete bilingual education, can we do that here?
3. What if our language doesn't have textbooks for Grade 3, should we still start the children in the mother tongue?
4. We have three languages here, the Mother Tongue, the National language, and English, should we teach in all of them?
5. Just because the ethnic minorities want their languages do we have to give up English?

An acute ethical dilemma is engaged in this dynamic via three agents involved in local language politics seeking to appropriate the "independent voice" of an external consultant to validate their particular position. This contest for influence in local policymaking pitted a local academic apparently seeking a commission, a community representative pressing the ministry of education to improve its language policy, and the public official most closely involved with the local policy against each other. By asking a series of extra-contextual questions one party, the "interested academic" was seeking to bolster a case with the authority of an external academic voice.

Information, Ideology, and Interests

These ethical quandaries arise because it is sometimes in the interests of participants to position a facilitator, foreign expert, or academic in ways that sustain existing local interests. For this reason I have included in the dialogues an exercise that incorporates the complex identities of policymaking actors. I have drawn this from a scheme proposed by a policy analyst (Weiss, 1983), many years ago, that captures aspects of the three recurring and inevitable elements of policy positions: ideology, interests, and information. Figure 5.1 is a PowerPoint slide in which I elaborate on the three broad categories that Weiss identifies as being copresent in all participants in policymaking, and which typically jostle for policy influence and shape policy positions. I ask participants to discuss their "speaking position": Are they mostly or most convincingly speaking as C-O-E (C, community representatives [i.e., citizen actors]; O, officials holding executive decision-making roles; or E, experts/researchers)? These are not mutually exclusive categories, but researchers are typically positioned as technical experts and command their presence in policy debates to the extent that power holders deem explicit knowledge of phenomena, and research into those phenomena, to be relevant to their resolution. Power holders may come to this view independently or through citizen demand that officials, elected or appointed, base policy on evidence. In democratic states, officials/policy makers are usually located within bureaucracies where appointed officials operate with devolved power from elected representatives. In nondemocratic states, power holders occupy their positions through other means and can include members of the army, state party, and other authoritarian positions. The citizen actors' influence on language policy derives from the consequences for them and their dependents of policy.

information–ideology–interests

RESEARCHERS	POLICY MAKERS	COMMUNITY
Knowledge produced through investigation	Knowledge produced through practical action	Knowledge produced through experience
Published in academic journals or books	Written in laws, regulations, ministerial briefs, speeches	Discussed and circulated in networks of trust
Using technical language and statistics	Uses both “public” language and “bureaucratic” language	Using ordinary language and felt-experience
Timeframe set by funding or “discovery”	Rapid timeframes	Timeframe set by needs of children, family responsibilities, or culture/religion
“Explanation” most important	Efficiency most important	“Existential aspect” most important
Information-ideology-interests	Information-ideology-interests	Information-ideology-interests

FIGURE 5.1 Policy-shaping forces of ideology, interests, and information by community representatives, experts, and public officials. PowerPoint presentation, Joseph Lo Bianco.

Each of these categories is expandable. For example, the category of "expert", includes all professionals, but is also collapsible, in that each of the categories, as a kind of identity formation, contains unique stocks of knowledge (information), ideas and systems of ideas (ideology), and interests (cultural, symbolic, material, or reputational). Few individuals belong exclusively to one or another category. The framework for discussing the ideologies, information, and interests of these categories has been well received on the many occasions I have used it since devising it some years ago. It allows me to organize role-plays around each of the horizontal categories: knowledge (investigation, practical action, experience); form of dissemination (academic writing, briefs, speeches, laws, etc.; discussion); discourse form (technical language, public and bureaucratic expression, ordinary language, and felt experience); time frames (discovery based, policy influenced and rapid, responsibility shaped); and overarching orientation to knowledge (explanation, efficiency, existential). Taken too far these classifications would give rise to stereotypes, and so the scheme needs to be adopted as an idealized depiction of types for the purposes of discussion around roles that different social actors/agents perform in language policy.

Conclusion: Ethical Dilemmas in Expert "Advising"

An outside facilitator has the advantage of having no obvious history, and therefore no "baggage" of interests and past alignments with disputed questions. However, the outsider has many obstacles to overcome as well. One of these is that no matter how much preparation is done in advance, he or she is mostly relying on public, formal, or academic knowledge, removed from the networks of interpersonal relations, local knowledge, and insider feeling about issues. The risk therefore of "getting things wrong" is high, addressed through disclosure and admission of the positionality of the facilitator/expert, and acknowledgment of the concrete limits of expertise and experience.

Such dilemmas of outside–indeed any–expertise interacting with officials and communities pose significant ethical challenges. This is because the commissioning agents tend to emphasize expertise, partly to justify their selection, and to respond to the various constituencies to which they are answerable. This promotion of

expertise can create distance and diffidence between the expert outsider and the internal and frank conversations he or she must foster to produce viable agreed statements of policy. Expertise, however, is critical; in its absence neither officials nor community representatives have any reason to set aside time to interact and engage in the deliberation or research.

Key challenges have been that local participants in the activities I have been describing are often living in extremely difficult situations, experiencing physical dislocation, poverty, political conflict, and marginalization. They have few resources at their disposal, and inexperience with the practices and procedures, or even the possibility of their existence in some cases, of participatory decision making. There is often an expectation that outside experts are problem solvers with ready solutions. Occasionally the opposite problem is experienced, where there is exhaustion with outside-sourced expertise in physical and social environments that have remained unchanged for decades.

These differences constitute an asymmetry of knowledge and power and impose on researchers/facilitators a clear set of ethical requirements concerning the patient building of mutual comprehension. This understanding is only achievable through reliable sourcing of evidence, citing of authors, works, and examples of practice from settings that are relevant and applicable to the situation and extensive use of examples of practice to explain what is being intended in explanations and drafts. Investing in long-term relationship building in which clear and transparent mutual benefit is exchanged and produced enhances credibility for effective work and honest communication. A clear problem in language policy advising is the counterintuitive nature of some research findings in bi- and multilingual education.

A further problem arises when research is deployed in order to validate already decided policies. This view of research evidence as an instrument to serve already taken political decisions is pervasive in many policymaking circles. There is an inherent danger that professional responses encouraging local research, building local capacity, working with intuitions, in a practice of "let's solve this problem" can be coerced to include held policy "principles" that support ideological decisions rather than local community wishes and needs. Because I am not a citizen of the countries in the Southeast Asian settings in which I work as dialogue facilitator, I am ethically precluded from and reluctant to engage in advocacy, and so my role relies only on the expertise I can provide and the facilitation practices I can deliver. I can speak confidently from portable transferable or international evidence that is applicable or the local evidence where it exists. How one speaks changes because expertise requires the offering of information, and ethical considerations demand excluding myself from decision making.

Evaluation reports of the dialogues note that even when there was contest and strong disagreement it was precisely the productive addressing of ethical challenges, political positions, and information-based LP that was considered most beneficial. In this context, language policy and planning merges scholarship with intervention, and such applied language planning activity, applied linguistics in practice, demands ethical guidance beyond which official regulation can supply.

While rules and guidelines drawn from university ethics regulation and the legal obligations enforced in contracts provide much of the ethical framework for work described here, the modern *horkos*, minus its ancient curse, but with the addition of local debate and collegial discussion, remains useful as an internal, personal inspiration.

Note

1. Declaration of Geneva, as amended 173rd WMA Council Session, Divonne-les-Bains, France, May 2006 (WMA, 2014).

AT THE TIME OF BEING ADMITTED AS A MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION:

I SOLEMNLY PLEDGE to consecrate my life to the service of humanity;
I WILL GIVE to my teachers the respect and gratitude that is their due;
I WILL PRACTISE my profession with conscience and dignity;
THE HEALTH OF MY PATIENT will be my first consideration;
I WILL RESPECT the secrets that are confided in me, even after the patient has died;
I WILL MAINTAIN by all the means in my power, the honour and the noble traditions of the medical profession;

MY COLLEAGUES will be my sisters and brothers;
I WILL NOT PERMIT considerations of age, disease or disability, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, social standing or any other factor to intervene between my duty and my patient;
I WILL MAINTAIN the utmost respect for human life;
I WILL NOT USE my medical knowledge to violate human rights and civil liberties even under threat;
I MAKE THESE PROMISES solemnly, freely and upon my honour.

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