

# 1 Introduction

## Theorizing Continuity and Change in States' Language Policy

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*Ericka Albaugh, Linda Cardinal, and Rémi Léger*

### 1.1 Introduction

The present volume examines how and why language policies emerge, evolve, and change. Its main objective is to theorize the role of the state, particularly state traditions, in language policy choices. Our title, *States of Language Policy: Theorizing Continuity and Change*, draws attention to the state as a primary actor of language policies. The book asks, Why have some language policies been stable over time whereas others have been substantially contested, revised, or even replaced? It also addresses questions which have been at the forefront of language policy debates such as how to incorporate the legacies of colonialism in the study of language policy choices, as well as the role of institutions below and beyond the state.

These questions follow from and build on significant developments in both (socio)linguistics and political theory since the early 1990s. Researchers in these two disciplines have developed a clear understanding of the importance of language rights and multilingualism as reflected in the principles and values that they believe should guide policymakers (Kraus & Grin, 2018; Seidle, 2023). For example, many challenged the view that in the aftermath of World War II, in the West in particular, with the nation-state ascendant, states would tend naturally toward monolingualism. Building on the politics of recognition, several sociolinguists and political theorists recommended that states address their multilingual and multinational characters in a more positive way (Tully, 1995). This scholarship raised normative and institutional questions about how to recognize and accommodate multiple languages and nations within a single state. What should be the role of the state in addressing the needs of its multilingual citizens? Are language rights exportable from one region to another in any given country, or should they be territorially based? What kind of support should linguistic minorities expect from the state to ensure their continuity?

In the 1980s, neoliberal responses to the welfare state in the West resulted in state retrenchment and, importantly, greater pressures toward decentralization. While this was seen as a threat by some because of the key role of the state in

language policy choices, others saw political opportunities for minority nations and language groups (Keating, Loughlin & Deschouwer, 2003). In this context, efforts favoring the recognition and accommodation of minorities gained traction in some parts of the world, which led to the adoption of new language policies in Catalonia, South Africa, and Wales to name the most obvious cases. In other parts of the world, globalization was viewed as destructive and a major threat to the future of linguistic diversity (Romaine & Nettle, 2002). For Laponce (2006), only those minorities who received state support would survive globalization. This new political context thus presented unique possibilities, as well as perils, to minority groups (Moriarty, 2015; Rubdy & Said, 2015; Kschula & Wolff, 2020; Zhou, 2021).

The turn of the century brought a global economic recession, which exposed fragile economies and provoked unprecedented population movements across the globe (International Organization for Migration, 2019). Majorities witnessing these population movements and feeling threatened by policies favoring minorities sometimes found resonant the populist nationalism that tried to restore unity by spurring divisiveness. These movements generated rhetoric dividing nationals and foreigners, some questioning the value of language rights for minorities and multilingualism altogether (Moriconi, Peri & Turati, 2019; Crawford, 2000). In this climate, the politics of language gained heightened symbolism. Renewed support for the English-Only movement in the United States, conflict between majority and minority language groups in Myanmar, or competing visions of official languages in Ukraine all point to the continuing relevance of the state in guiding language policy choices across the globe.

With the normative justification of language policies and their consequences well theorized (May, 2012; Ricento, Peled & Ives, 2015), we suggest that it is time to return to the state and further address patterns of continuity and change in the area of language policies in different contexts – national, colonial, postcolonial, and international. We believe that if the politics of recognition is to have a future in the area of language, we need to move the discussion further and better explain how language policies evolve across times, looking at patterns of stability and change in state action. In doing so, this book wants to serve as a bridge between the disciplines that have studied language policies from a diversity of perspectives.

The book also builds on discussions and debates generated following the publication of *State Traditions and Language Regimes* (STLR) by Cardinal and Sonntag in 2015. Their volume outlined a neo-institutional approach to the study of language policy choices. Since then, several researchers at two key conferences (Poznan, 2016; Amsterdam, 2017<sup>1</sup>) engaged with and built on the

<sup>1</sup> Research Committee 50 (RC50) of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) is dedicated to studying the Politics of Language. Every two years, IPSA holds a World Congress, at which members of RC50 organize themed panels. In 2016, the Congress was held in Poznan,

STLR framework. These papers confirmed the value of the framework, as well as the areas where more research and reflection were needed. This prompted a dedicated workshop in Ottawa in 2019,<sup>2</sup> which recruited more than twenty established and emerging researchers to present papers and engage in discussions geared toward refining the framework. These papers and discussions served as the basis of the present volume.

## 1.2 Theory Building and Applications

STLR addressed an important gap in debates on language policy by theorizing the key role of *state traditions*. Until that publication, researchers had largely focused on the normative justification of language policies and their consequences (e.g. Spolsky & Widdowson, 1998; Kymlicka & Patten, 2003), and those who focused on policy choices viewed policymaking through the lens of language planning processes (Grin, 2003; Williams, 2007) or group mobilizations (Harguindéguy & Itçaina, 2012; Normand, 2016). State traditions lead us to consider the normative and institutional baggage of the state and its role in framing and guiding language policy choices. However, discussions following the publication of STLR revealed some theoretical ambiguities and also raised questions about how the framework might apply to different regions, to postcolonial countries, and in contexts of multiple levels of governance. It also became evident that we needed to make the approach more accessible to both practitioners and scholars from other disciplines.

The present volume therefore aims to sharpen the analytical force of the original rendition of the approach suggested in STLR and to test its applicability beyond the usual subjects. More specifically, the purpose of the book is to better understand the continued action of states in relation to language policies through rigorous theory building and application. Our approach draws attention to the specificity of historical contexts while also aiming to capture regularity in patterns of state action as well as possibilities of change. The starting point is that states remain decisive actors in the field of language and politics (Hamel, 2010). Whereas others in sociolinguistics or political science may highlight the action of political elites (Laitin, 1992, 1998; Liu, 2015; Carneiro, 2021), bureaucrats (Grin, 2003; Williams, 2007), and organized citizens (Harguindéguy & Itçaina, 2012; Gellman, 2016; Normand, 2016; Sazzad, 2021; Tannenbaum, Shohamy & Inbar-Lourie, 2022), we focus on the material and ideational structures of the state in which each of these actors

Poland. Between the biennial Congresses, RC50 often organizes smaller conferences on specific themes related to language. In 2017, such a conference on Multilingualism in Europe was held in Amsterdam.

<sup>2</sup> This workshop was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

operate. We define the state as a set of institutions, rules, and norms that carry a persistent cultural identity and influence social interactions. It has its own history and relative autonomy (Skocpol, 1985). In that sense, state traditions put a distinctive stamp on the choice of public policies, including language policies. Despite views that globalization has curtailed their realm of action (Ricento, 2015), states continue to make decisions that affect the linguistic recognition and language rights of their citizens and linguistic minorities. They continue to be required to respond to the linguistic demands of their citizens, whether Indigenous, regional, or recently arrived (Spolsky, 2012). In addition to domestic demands, international factors pressure states to make certain policy decisions rather than others. The state sits at the convergence of these demands and pressures, with its own authority to influence policy (Cardinal & Sonntag, 2015).

The volume is organized around three main theoretical challenges: how to better theorize continuity and change, how to incorporate the legacies of colonialism, and how to account for institutional arrangements and norms beyond the state in explaining language policy choices. All chapters in the volume engage in theory building through case study research. While the cases are drawn from across the globe, one of the distinctive features of the volume is how each chapter is testing the theory and pushing it forward. Methodologically, the chapters in the volume deepen and refine the analytical tools by crystallizing definitional concepts and identifying patterns of continuity and change. They challenge the framework to incorporate new terrains, such as postcolonial and post-communist states, subnational groups and territories, and supranational entities. Such extensions themselves serve to emphasize the dynamic nature of the framework.

### **1.3 Theorizing Continuity and Change**

The approach in this book finds its theoretical home in comparative politics, in particular within historical institutionalism, a more specific branch of neo-institutionalism (see Thelen, 1999). Historical institutionalism begins with the context that produces institutions in order then to explain subsequent policy choices that emerge from them. While our approach is decisively distinctive within the field of language and politics, it nevertheless builds on insights from other literatures and ultimately deepens our understanding of language policy choices.

As mentioned above, until recently, the field of language and politics has been dominated by (socio)linguistics and political theory. Joshua Fishman and colleagues pioneered research on both language endangerment and revival, and specifically on the applied theory of “reversing language shift” (Fishman, Ferguson & Das Gupta, 1968; Fishman, 1974; Rubin et al., 1977; Fishman,

1991). Edited volumes on various regions of the world by Baldauf and Kaplan (1999–2008) provide descriptions of language policy and planning processes. Other sociolinguists such as Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (1981; 2000) and Robert Phillipson (1992; 2003) have worked on language endangerment from the perspective of language ideologies and power relations. More recent contributions from these perspectives include Bernard Spolsky's *Language Management* (2009), Lionel Wee's *Language Without Rights* (2010), Thomas Ricento's *Language Policy and Political Economy* (2015), and Leigh Oakes and Yael Peled's *Normative Language Policy* (2017). Others have offered summaries of key debates on endangered languages by reflecting on the processes and ideologies that underpin language shifts as well as the promises of community-based initiatives for language revitalization (Austin & Sallabank, 2014; Jones, 2019; Bradley & Bradley, 2020). Overall, the work emanating from (socio)linguistics has been crucial in describing language loss and its underlying mechanisms, which has served to alert governments to the need to develop policies to support and promote the use of threatened languages (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Our volume contributes to these debates and discussions by providing an approach that unpacks the state and, in the process, draws attention to language policy choices. While some in sociolinguistics have called for a reimagining of the nation-state (May, 2012), our approach elucidates how and why some states revise their course of action in the area of language while others do not, which we term patterns of continuity and change.

In political theory, normative considerations are at the forefront of work on language and politics, especially concerns about the kinds of rights that are appropriate for various societal groups. As a rule, normative political philosophy is concerned with identifying and justifying principles intended to guide political action. It studies the ethical dimensions of social and political issues, including, for example, the distribution of resources or the design of political institutions in diverse societies. In relation to language and politics, the foundational work was Will Kymlicka and Alan Patten's *Language Rights and Political Theory* (2003), which laid out many of the issues that continue to animate debates about language rights and linguistic justice. In recent years, political theorists have clarified the implications of key principles – democracy, recognition, and equality – for language policy and, in the process, have developed competing normative theories of linguistic justice (Van Parijs, 2011; Patten, 2014; Peled & Weinstock, 2020).

While our approach insists on the centrality of the state, contemporary political theorists push us to consider how looking at the state as a self-contained unit of analysis is an essentially Western understanding (Levy & Young, 2011). Conquest – colonialism and imperialism – shapes the character of the states that emerge from such contact. The ability to achieve

representation is deeply compromised and the very self-determined identity of citizens is contested (Mehta, 2011). Margaret Kohn (2011) highlights the work of Ngugi and Mbembe in identifying the centrality of *commandement* that infuses postcolonial politics in Africa. Postcolonial theory (Said, 1978; Spivek, 1988; Mignolo, 2011) is strongly reflected in writers of literature, and, relative to the topic of language, it has been dominated by the question of using English versus Indigenous languages for creative expression (Achebe, 1975; Rushdie, 1982; Ngugi, 1986; Kachru, 2017). Whether advocating for the defiant use of the mother tongue or modifying the colonial language to reclaim agency, the goal is self-conscious resistance. We take from these important literatures an awareness of the constructed hierarchies of language, and we similarly reach to uncover their origins. Yet our goal is not explicitly to critique but rather to expose and explain how certain language patterns and policies are reproduced over time.

These approaches to the study of language and politics are critical, but we want to recapture the *explanatory* aim of comparative political science. Generally speaking, political science has been slow to give serious consideration to language. An exception was Jean Laponce's *Languages and Their Territories* (1987), which laid the foundation for an understanding of the expansion and contraction of languages in contact over time. His work, however, only hinted at language policies enacted by states or linguistic mobilizations from citizens and language groups. David Laitin's contributions on language policy outcomes in Africa (1992) and on new identities forged around language in post-Soviet republics (1998) moved the field more squarely within comparative politics. Others, such as Amy Liu (2015), followed in this vein by highlighting the choices of states and groups within them as rational actors. These approaches focus on the institutional rules, preferences, and resources of interest groups. While our approach is similarly interested in institutions, it interrogates the origin of the rules themselves and adds to material interests the normative preferences of actors. As defined below, the language regime itself exerts constraints on actor beliefs and actions. Zsuzsa Csergo (2007), Ericka Albaugh (2014) and Jean-François Dupré (2017) separately favored a historical institutionalist approach, but they did not explicitly use our conceptual language to explain language policy choices. Furthermore, each of these are regional or case specific.

Historical institutionalism emerged within debates on social and economic policies during the 1980s and expanded to debates on identity and nationalist politics during the 1990s. Among its key features, it conceptualizes the state as having relative autonomy. It also foregrounds the role of norms in explaining policy choices. The function of norms is distinct from that in normative political theory. In debates on linguistic justice, political theorists derive normative theories from abstract principles. For example, Van Parijs's theory

of linguistic justice rests on principles of fair cooperation, equality of opportunity, and parity of esteem. In this book, we argue that norms are influenced by historical context and political traditions. Put differently, norms are grounded in historical context, not in abstract principles. While there is more work to be done to address fully the differences and potential meeting grounds between these two approaches to normativity (Léger, 2023), this volume further theorizes how norms are historically determined.

John Loughlin's work on state traditions was important in this regard. State traditions are "sets of institutions and cultural practices that constitute a set of expectations about behaviour" (Loughlin & Peters, 1997: 45). The relative autonomy of the state was rendered through this concept of *state tradition*, which refers to the normative, institutional, and administrative patterns that shape and guide state actions. Put differently, states are not blank slates; their political institutions contain enduring values and understandings that determine how and why certain decisions are made, and others avoided. In later work, Loughlin (2005; with Williams, 2007) theorized that France's historical approach to economic, social, and language policies was informed by Jacobinism, Germany's by corporatism, the United Kingdom's by pluralism, and that of Canada and the USA was premised on liberalism and federalism. However, demonstrating how state traditions inform policy choices from one country to the other remained to be tested empirically. Building on Loughlin's theoretical insights, STLR initiated a new research agenda focused on the key role of state traditions in framing and guiding language policy choices and the implementation of these choices.

Adding to the Loughlin-inspired concept of state tradition, STLR also introduced the concept of *language regime*. Building on research in comparative politics, political economy, and political sociology, language regimes encompass the whole gamut of a state's practices and representations related to language and language use. These are institutionalized through explicit and implicit language policies. The domains of interventions are far and wide, including public administration, education, health, economic development, and employment. State traditions guide and frame those practices and representations; in turn, the practices and representations are also affected by societal language users.

The concept of regime is familiar to (socio)linguists, who, drawing primarily from Foucault, associate it with governmentality – control techniques that shape individuals' conduct – and the regulation of truth claims (Foucault, 1980; Gal & Irvine, 1995; Kroskrity, 2000; Blommaert, 2006; Costa, 2019; Étrillard, 2019; Irvine, 2019; Mitchell, 2019). Our use of the term language regime incorporates many common foundational insights, but it differs in some assumptions and the purpose behind the term.

The crucial similarities are three: First, along with sociolinguists, we see regimes as *constraining* decision-making. This is the structuring power of



beliefs about what is possible, appropriate, or valued that guides individuals as they consider or eliminate various options. Irvine (2019) suggests that a regime “regulates, organizes, and attributes value, while excluding alternatives or declaring them out of bounds” (68). Second, a regime is *maintained* not only through ideologies or beliefs, but through physical institutions and administrative apparatuses of the state. Third, a regime is also reproduced in *action*, as individuals conduct themselves and thereby participate. Rather than only a static force, a regime is active. The inclusion of material elements and of action distinguish regimes from ideologies, which tend to rest in the realm of ideas and describe more static beliefs.

Nonetheless, we differ also in three ways: First, we question the initial assumption about the nefarious aim of a regime, where political domination is the explicit target of study (Kroskrity, 2000; Étrillard, 2019: 39; Mitchell, 2019). We want to remain agnostic in our judgment of a language regime. Some language regimes indeed may intend to repress minority languages, but others may seek to recognize languages, and they are no less regimenting for it. Second, and related, our starting point is not an overt critique of inequality toward a goal of emancipation, as many from a critical sociolinguistics perspective are motivated. Instead of critical description, we are searching for *explanations* for the language regime, which rest on state traditions and can be gleaned systematically from an investigation of the constitutive context, the guiding normative principles, and the institutional or administrative parameters of a state. Finally, we are looking for regularities in the conditions under which language regimes are *maintained* or *change*, identifying specific causal processes such as path dependency, critical junctures, feedback loops, and incrementalism, among others, as described below. In short, we find ourselves in agreement with sociolinguists over what regimes *are*, but we offer our framework to discover patterns in how they arise, how they are maintained, and how they may change.

Therefore, alongside state traditions and language regime, STLR introduced the analytical tools of *path dependency* and *critical juncture* to the field of language and politics. A state tradition stems from a constitutive event which sets a country on a path, and state action becomes committed to develop in certain ways. This path dependency explains the coherency and consistency in the patterns of state action. Critical juncture draws our attention to situations of uncertainty where important actors can change the policy path. While policy choices are path dependent on state traditions, crises or significant changes in the social, political, cultural, or economic environment present opportunities to establish a new direction and foreclose others. Decolonization and national liberation movements, revolutions and globalization have resulted in situations of uncertainty and opened opportunities to revise policy pathways.

While STLR drew theoretical attention to the relationship between state traditions and language policy choices, including the path dependency of



language regimes, the present volume theorizes the relationship between norms, institutions, and administrative processes in explaining change. STLR had also been criticized for being too state-centered (Royles & Lewis, 2019). This volume responds to this critique by adding chapters on multilevel governance in order to explain how arrangements beyond the state can also play a key role in language policy choices. Multilevel governance helps address how actors can use different structures of opportunities to influence language policy choices. It provides a lens to incorporate in a more dynamic fashion the role of actors including political parties, language groups, and mobilizations into the framework. These additions help uncover how institutions were established and how they reproduce themselves including in postcolonial contexts. They also give more contextual explanatory substance to those who take institutions as given. The volume thus focuses more explicitly on patterns of continuity and change.

STLR relied on critical junctures to explain language policy changes, but change also happens incrementally. In other words, critical junctures cannot capture sequences of marginal change, which can add up to major transformations over time. To better capture and explain the evolution of institutions and policies over time, the present volume draws on concepts such as layering, conversion, and drift that are now widely used in comparative politics, specifically historical institutionalism (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). Layering refers to the introduction of new rules or practices on top of existing ones, whereas conversion denotes when existing institutions and policies are redirected to serve new or updated purposes. Policies may drift when the environment around institutions shifts gradually, rather than dramatically. These analytical tools provide the substance needed to explain patterns of continuity and change.

Overall, this volume is grounded in theories and concepts from political science, particularly the tools of comparative politics (Boix & Stokes, 2011). Each case studied in the volume contributes to the overall theory by testing the framework or some of its analytical tools. Methodologically, the decision to have each chapter engage with both theory and empirical evidence is reflective of how we conceive of theory building in comparative politics: it uses initial cases to build a theory and then tests it on a broader range of cases that contribute to deepening and refining the original theory. The goal is to make these analytical tools accessible to fields outside political science.

## 1.4 Overall Schematic

While avoiding rigidity that would stifle its applicability, we propose two diagrams to elucidate definitions and processes. The first distinguishes between state traditions and language regimes, while the second shows the

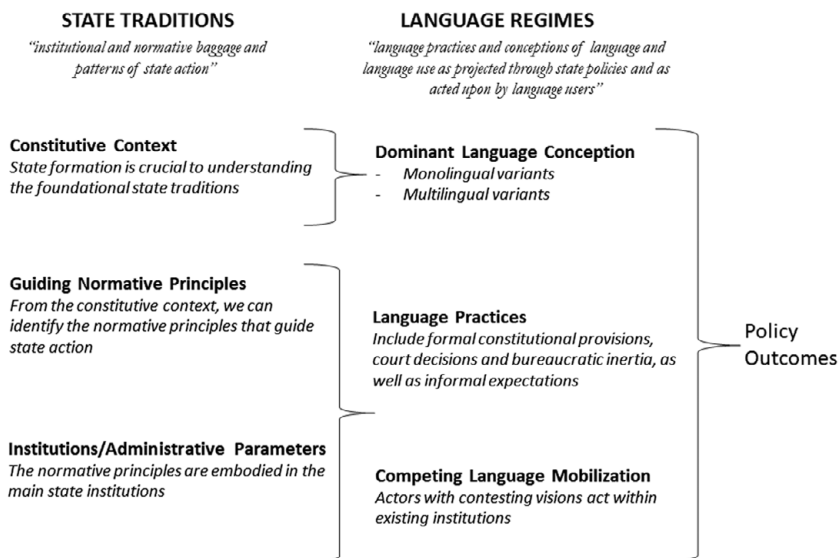


Figure 1.1 Definitions and descriptions

dynamic processes that influence language regimes and explain language policy choices.

In the first diagram (Figure 1.1), we deepen and clarify the original concepts of state traditions and language regimes. The first column reveals that **state traditions** emerge at the deepest level from the *constitutive context* of an individual state. What were the circumstances around its formation? Who were the main founding groups and what was their relative power? Many European states, for example, formed in the aftermath of war, with a victorious dominant group unreflectively imposing its own language within its boundaries. Other states, such as Canada, emerged from a compromise between two unequally sized groups, each with a history of territorial claims that produced a measure of constraint in their linguistic relations with each other, but which did not acknowledge Indigenous language claims until relatively recently. Still other states gained independence from colonial or communist control, where outsiders dominated relations among groups and where external perceptions of boundaries and hierarchies left lasting legacies on these states' traditions.

These founding contexts produce *guiding normative principles* that continue to shape states' actions. Whether this is an expectation of compromise, or the priority placed on individual liberty or the belief in the indivisibility of the nation, these normative principles define the "default" attitude of the state. In our newer cases, states may find it natural to demarcate regions

linguistically, to be dependent on former colonizers, to act more autonomously in relation to their citizens as they reflect their historical experience. These principles are then embodied in *state institutions and administrative parameters*. A state's centralized or federal organization, its capable or deficient bureaucracy, its executive dominance or balance among branches, the extent of its dependence on other states for financing, all contribute to the institutional scaffolding on which a language regime is built.

The second column shows the components of the resulting **language regime**, the language practices and conceptions of language projected by the state and reflected by language users. Combining the historical constitutive context and normative principles on which the state was founded, a state's *dominant language conception* is typically a variation of a monolingual or multilingual regime. Monolingual regimes can range from those that are relatively laissez-faire (though still normatively powerful), as in the United States, or more overtly coercive, as in Jacobin France. Multilingual regimes can also vary, such as those that assume unilingual communities living side by side, as in Belgium, or those that expect individual bilingualism, as in Canada. Our newer cases reveal other multilingual realities, such as entrenched regionalism that privilege specific languages in India, or superficial support for loose multilingual policies in Burkina Faso and Peru. These dominant language conceptions are reified through *formal language practices* that work through constitutional provisions, court decisions, language commissions, bureaucratic inertia or elites and parties acting to protect their interests. We may see *competing language mobilization* of social groups who draw on dominant conceptions of language strategically to frame new policies as falling within acceptable discourse.

Sometimes, however, the language regime itself can change. This can happen incrementally, through processes of layering or conversion, or it can happen relatively suddenly, at critical junctures. These mechanisms of change are depicted in the second diagram of **dynamic processes** (Figure 1.2). The constitutive context is foundational to the state tradition, which sets the language regime on an identifiable path. Such a regime produces policies, whose implementation usually stabilizes and reinforces the language regime, but which, through layering, drift, and especially conversion, can nevertheless destabilize or undermine the status quo and contribute to change. The institutional structure of multiple levels of governance adds new sites of contestation that may produce different language outcomes. In addition, the language regime is vulnerable to both international and domestic pressures, especially during critical junctures, that may coalesce to fundamentally shift its conception of appropriate action regarding languages. Moments of global economic downturns, domestic crises, and ideological shifts create opportunities to alter the regime. Importantly, the state's language regime continues to exert a

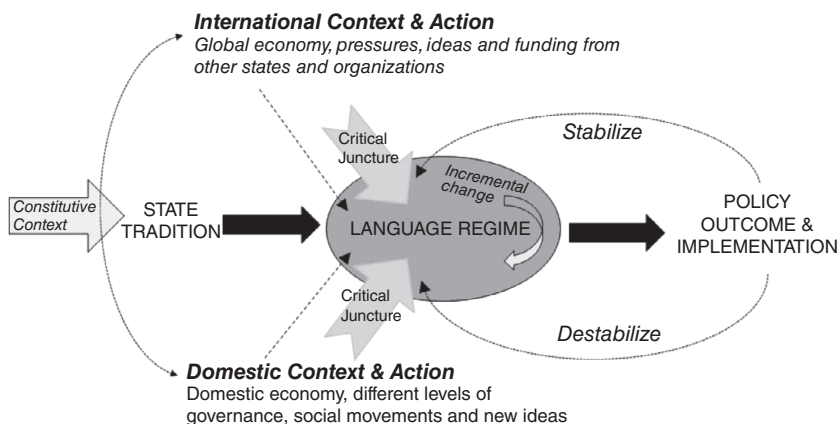


Figure 1.2 Dynamic processes

discernible institutional and normative force beyond the straightforward calculation of actor preferences, and any resulting change will always carry a residue of what came before.

We see here both the durability and contingency of language regimes. They live in a dynamic environment – pressured by changing ideas and new mobilizations within and without, resisting change with default ideas and institutions embedded in their traditions. In turn, the policies these language regimes produce can either strengthen or undermine the regime’s stability through processes of layering and conversion. Critical junctures widen the space and strengthen pressures from within or without; at these moments, we may see deeper changes in the language regime.

## 1.5 The Structure of the Volume

STLR proposed a new research agenda for the study of language policy choices to which this volume adds three areas of major deepening and expansion: clarifying routes of change; incorporating dependent relationships into state traditions; and accounting for interactions between various levels of governance within language regimes.

*Routes of Change:* Historical institutionalism has a perennial difficulty explaining change. Our analytical refinement resolves this by specifying how language regimes evolve and change over time. STLR relied on path dependency and critical junctures to explain stability and change. These remain central, and yet we want to push further. Do critical junctures lead to new policies within an established pathway, to new policy pathways, or to new

language regimes? Where Keating, Loughlin, and Deschouwer (2003) see potential innovations and a new structure of political opportunity for regional and national minorities in the context of globalization, what if those opportunities can happen only within established pathways? *How* will the engagement occur with newly invigorated regional bodies? Even if critical junctures can take policies into relatively new directions, how will they interact with established pathways or state traditions? Finally, can change occur endogenously and incrementally, rather than exogenously and with major discontinuities? This volume confronts these questions directly, demonstrating how these interactions and incremental changes can occur through policy layering and conversion as well as subtle feedback mechanisms. It carefully studies administrative processes in order to understand how change happens where patterns of governance are well established. In a similar vein, as argued in STLR, once language practices and representations are institutionalized, the language regime becomes hegemonic. How do shifting norms contribute to language policy change and innovation? Can shifting norms be counter-hegemonic? Or, as Sonntag (2019) argues, are shifting norms merely variations within a dominant state tradition? Do they alter path dependence and what is the role of critical junctures in shifting norms? How are those shifting norms challenging traditional patterns of language mobilization and relations of power between groups? Our framework foregrounds the causal role of ideas and holds these ambiguities up to rigorous scrutiny.

*Dependent Relationships and State Traditions:* Our volume also asks how we should conceive of the state traditions of post-colonial and newly independent countries. This area was undertheorized in the original STLR framework. Is colonial history a state tradition or a vehicle for imposing external state traditions? For example, in Algeria, the Jacobin state tradition inherited from colonialism competes with a newer state tradition emerging at critical junctures in the state's recent history, which rejects this colonial heritage (see Lacoste, 2007; Chikh, 2017). Similarly, post-communist states retain the residue of particular language ideologies that may be rejected or reinvigorated by the regimes that follow. In other words, how might post-colonial states extricate themselves from inherited colonial traditions and form their own state traditions? The present volume applies our framework rigorously to case studies of language policy choices made in postcolonial and post-communist settings, proving its utility beyond the cases in which it originated. The inclusion of these cases opens space for less rigid dichotomies between monolingual and multilingual outcomes.

*Levels of Governance:* The question of territorial governance has become an interesting theoretical puzzle for the STLR framework (Harguindéguy & Itçaina, 2015; Royles & Lewis, 2019; Mévellec & Cardinal, 2020). For example, Sonntag (2015) treats federalism as a state tradition while others,

such as Cardinal and Léger (2019) and Chouinard (2016), take it as the spatial context in which state traditions such as political compromise have emerged. Williams (2022) points to the importance of geolinguistics for mapping speakers, as this has critical impacts on policy and planning. He notes that even as new technologies allow people to cross spatial boundaries, the state continues to see them as territorially bounded. What, then, are the interactions between territorial governance and a language regime? What is the significance of local governance for language policy choices? Sub-national entities as well as Indigenous groups, with their own modes of governance and expectations about language, may oppose official conceptions of language. Regions with autonomous legislatures and party systems may confront central government institutions to produce different outcomes in different territories. Our framework conceives of local governance as being a pressure point that interacts with and ultimately impacts the language regime. Rather than being a straightforward top-down process, a language regime also faces institutional and ideational constraints from lower levels of governance.

Until now, the STLR framework had only been minimally applied to supranational organizations. In this area, an important question is how international declarations and frameworks concerning linguistic minorities and minority languages interact with state traditions and language regimes. Another important question is whether an institution such as the European Union (EU) has its own state traditions, which have informed the development of an EU language regime? Or is linguistic nationalism so robust in member states that the EU commitment to linguistic diversity is unlikely to serve as the basis for a separate language regime? These questions started to be addressed in STLR (Baker, 2015), but they are further explored and theorized in this volume. Our framework draws attention to how external actors and ideas pressure existing language regimes.

## **1.6 Overview of the Chapters**

The main volume is divided into three parts that correspond to our theoretical contributions outlined in the previous section. The first part discusses ways of explaining change in language policy choices. The second part incorporates legacies of colonialism and other dependent relationships into state traditions that produce language regimes. The third part addresses levels of governance, that is, the role of supranational organizations as well as multilevel governance in influencing the development of language policies. Every chapter contributes to theory building through case study research.

The first part, “Routes of Change,” situates the approach as originally conceived, while refining and deepening its explanatory power around the concepts of state traditions, path dependency, critical junctures, layering, and

conversion. The first two chapters in this section interrogate how *change* occurs in the context of path-dependent traditions, a perennial paradox in historical institutionalism. **Eli Bjørhusdal's** chapter provides a rich description of the constitutive context that precedes the emergence of universalism as a state tradition in Norway as well as how this state tradition framed and guided the development of the language regime. While the language regime has remained path dependent for more than 130 years, the chapter documents changes to the regime which are theorized as mechanisms of layering and drift. In the next chapter, **Martin Normand** grapples with change, especially incremental change. The case of the province of Ontario (Canada) serves to explore how adjustments over time can lead to significant changes to the language regime. This chapter furthers our theoretical framework by explaining how language regimes can change even without a critical juncture. **Gary Wilson's** chapter on the Manx language discusses several dynamic processes which took place on the Isle of Man, including two critical junctures that transformed the relationship with the United Kingdom and, in the process, the island's language regime. In explaining the effects of these critical junctures, the chapter links the changes happening on the island with developments in other parts of the British Empire. The chapter also theorizes the relationship between regional autonomy and language revitalization, explaining how the second critical juncture enabled the regional government to support the acquisition of the language and promote its use, previewing the processes described in the chapter by **Huw Lewis** and **Elin Royles** later in the volume.

**Bartosz Hordecki's** chapter presses the framework's assumption that there is necessarily a single hegemonic conception of language within states, arguing that Ukraine has instead a dominant conception with two distinct competing mobilizations – pro-Western multilingual and pro-Russian bilingual. His chapter reveals the importance of historical norms in shaping present language demands: The effort to reclaim a language previously repressed provides the impetus for the growing strength of using Ukrainian to consolidate a national identity. Importantly, he asks whether the incremental process of change following the critical juncture of Ukraine's independence has consolidated a new language regime. Finally, **Stéphanie Rousseau** and **Eduardo Dargent** offer a case study of how international norms interact with domestic institutions to produce surprising language policy outcomes. Specifically, it explains how international norms such as the protection of human rights have intervened at critical moments during Peru's recent history to advance the recognition of Indigenous languages. The chapter reinforces the need to examine the interactions between context, norms, and institutions in understanding the key role of the state in the development and evolution of language policies. The role of external ideas such as the protection of human rights or language rights as human rights exercise a pressure on existing historical norms. It is an interesting



case of interaction between norms as discussed by political theorists and those norms which are embedded in the fabric of the state.

While the first part refines definitions and causal processes, the second applies the concepts to new terrains: “Dependent Relationships.” The chapters in this part all look specifically at postcolonial settings. **Ericka Albaugh** finds that African language regimes remain deeply informed by the traditions of their European colonizers. Colonial norms expecting fixed groups and hierarchies of languages have persisted, as have the state’s outward orientation and minimal accountability. This chapter highlights a critical juncture that brought about apparent changes to the language regime, though new policies continue to reflect the normative predispositions imprinted by colonizers. In practice, precolonial patterns of multilingualism and the widespread use of *lingua francas* persist, leading to unique models of linguistic hybridity. **Linda Cardinal** and **Djamel Chikh** examine the Algerian language regime in the context of other North African countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya, also showing how it has incorporated past colonial patterns into the development of its own approach to language. Recent changes were made within this colonial path, which has been transformed into a post-colonial path now informed by a particular representation of the Arabic language as the “*langue rassembleuse*” for religious and other reasons. The Algerian language regime remains contested by Tamazight speakers whose language demands are viewed as a form of resistance to the new postcolonial approach to language with its policy of arabization and its war on multilingualism.

India’s linguistic federalism, according to **Selma Sonntag**, derives from its state tradition of “demotic regionalism,” that is, vernacular languages being politically associated with a region. Through a deep historical investigation, she uncovers this tendency in precolonial kingdoms, which was reconfigured by the colonial encounter. The colonizers reified vernaculars as belonging to specific groups and ethnicized the population, transforming state literary projects into linguistic rationalization efforts. She insightfully notes that movements to promote language using this rationalizing lens can be as exclusionary as the nation-state model.

Finally, **Jean-François Dupré** analyzes the evolution of Hong Kong’s language regime from its unique perspective as a city located between two state traditions – one marked by pluralist, *laissez-faire* colonialism and the other by monist, totalitarian state nationalism. Dupré’s chapter recalls Hordecki’s discussion of Ukraine’s dominant conceptions of language. However, in the case of Hong Kong, its Handover from British to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 could have brought about rapid and momentous changes to the existing language regime. Change, however, has for the most part been incremental, maintaining much of the British-era’s language regime. This chapter bridges to the next section, demonstrating both the logic of decolonization and that of multi-level governance.

The third part "Levels of Governance," examines how language regimes interact. Ideas about language emerging from local, regional, and international levels may pressure the state to produce varying policy outcomes. While Canada's policies surrounding French and English have long been a subject of scholarly study, **Miranda Huron** engages with the ongoing denial of official language status to Indigenous languages. To explain the inability of the language regime to incorporate fully Indigenous languages, the chapter focuses on Canada's federal/multilevel governance system and how it affects the rights of Indigenous populations in Canada, and the normative hierarchies that contradict government statements to Nation-to-Nation relationships. While there have been recent changes to the recognition of Indigenous languages, including the adoption of the Indigenous Languages Acts in 2019, the chapter turns to state traditions, especially guiding normative principles, to explain why these changes are less than required for language revitalization. **Huw Lewis** and **Elin Royles** consider how state traditions are translated and applied to different territories through multilevel governance. The chapter suggests that while Loughlin's work on UK state traditions can explain some aspects of language policy choices in Wales starting in the 1960s, other institutional configurations (regional powers, party system, interest group relations) as well as agency need to be considered to explain the development of the Welsh language regime and its evolution post-devolution. Whereas our framework foregrounds the role of the central state tradition and language regime, this chapter focuses carefully on activity at lower levels of governance to explain the specific timing of language outcomes.

**Milena Pandy** shows how state and supranational language regimes have interacted to impact in the case of Romani. The concept of language regime is usually applied to national contexts focusing on normative principles derived from the country's constitutive context and subsequent institutional development. However, the case of the Romani language in Europe is an important test case because the Roms are not concentrated in a single country, and EU institutions, especially the Council of Europe, have developed policies to promote and support their language. This chapter thus adds another layer of complexity to the framework and provides important insights for further theorizing the interactions between the supranational and national levels. **Peter Ives'** chapter pushes the boundaries of the approach ever more widely, showing how the dual concepts of state traditions and language regime are useful tools to explain the rise and spread of global English across the globe. Drawing on original data on national education policies, the chapter highlights how more than 140 states have included the teaching and learning of English in their national education curriculum, which shows the key role of states in the spread of global English. The chapter ends with a call for more micro- and meso-level studies that would focus on explaining the impact of state traditions on how global English was incorporated into language regimes.

The Conclusion is an extended reflection by **André Lecours** on the value of the approach for capturing both the ideas and institutions that influence policy outcomes. The unique iterative process of strengthening the framework through these multiple case lenses confirms the relative autonomy of the state in the area of language policy choices. The case studies also contribute to theory building in language policy choice by focusing on the key role of state traditions in theorizing change. Even as policies shift, the state's patterned role reflects historical norms, which continue to guide institutional and administrative practices. As a national language regime interacts with international norms and other sites of authority, it exerts a force that calls us to explain the historical forces that generated it. Our framework provides the explanatory language for such a task.

In sum, our volume aims to be a bridge between language policy researchers in different fields, in particular political science and sociolinguistics. Both are interested in norms, ideologies, and power relations in language. Departing from political theory, we argue that norms are not abstract principles, but grounded in history. We suggest that external norms, such as the promotion of human rights, can interact with historical norms, in processes of change. Unlike political theorists, however, we are not looking for universal norms that can be applied to all cases. Our approach is contextual, which should be interesting to our colleagues in sociolinguistics. While we appreciate the concern of sociolinguists for underlying mechanisms such as ideologies and interests or power relations, we hope they might find our framework useful to explain how state traditions can inform those ideologies and power relations. Seeking to find regularities in continuity and change, we use concepts from historical institutionalism, such as path dependency and critical junctures, along with more subtle notions of layering, conversion, and drift to explain more incremental change. The cases in the volume apply these tools to new terrains of dependent relationships, including postcolonial states, and to areas where various levels of governance interact. Our framework provides new tools for explaining patterns of continuity and change that can contribute to theory building in the area of language policy studies. Beyond theory building, the cases in the volume display the myriad ways that the state maintains a perennial influence over language policy outcomes.

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