What ROAD-MAPPING adds to our understanding of English-medium educational policy research

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What ROAD-MAPPING Adds to Our Understanding of English-Medium Educational Policy Research

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Abstract

This chapter compares ROAD-MAPPING to traditional multilayered frameworks of analysis for research on English-medium education (EME) policy. Specifically, it contrasts two research projects to elucidate the affordances of using ROAD-MAPPING as a research framework in comparison to a macro-, meso-, and micro-level policy framework. The first exemplar research project illustrates the application of the macro-, meso-, and micro-level framework to analyse EME policy documents (n = 93) and fieldwork visits (n = 8) at universities in China. The second project exemplifies an application of the ROAD-MAPPING framework to analyse EME policy documents (n = 145) and fieldwork (n = 7) at universities in Turkey. The comparison reveals that the multilayered framework allowed for a holistic, but far less focused, investigation of EME policy, whereas the ROAD-MAPPING framework was more adept at explicating the discourses between policy arbitration. Through our comparison of these exemplar research projects, we conclude that while multilayered policy frameworks may be attractive to researchers in their simplicity of segregating educational systems into researchable levels, ROAD-MAPPING offers greater utility, specificity, and nuance for research within EME contexts. ROAD-MAPPING is also more specific to language-related issues in its theoretical grounding in sociolinguistics and ecology of language research.

Keywords

English medium, higher education, Turkey, China, policy

Introduction

The educational practices of academic subjects being taught in a non-majority language—typically a second or foreign language for most students—have a long history in educational systems. For centuries, Latin was the building block of many Western education systems. In the colonial era, English was often established as the medium of instruction in school systems in British colonies despite the widespread use of other first languages. A much more recent phenomenon is the current global expansion of English-medium education (EME) in contexts where educational systems already have extant and well-established mediums of instruction. In such contexts, the implications for language policy and planning are complex due to numerous competing forces such as between (1) local languages and the English language, (2) traditional and new pedagogies, (3) monolingual

and multilingual practices, (4) top-down and bottom-up policy planning, and (5) the roles of different languages in the wider educational system.

Theoretical frameworks have emerged to capture the intricacies of language education policy by breaking these complex systems into multiple levels, including the macro- (national), meso- (institutional), and micro (classroom) levels. As language education policy moves across levels, it is interpreted and appropriated by key policy arbiters who oversee its implementation from one level to the next. Johnson and Johnson (2015) define language policy arbiters as 'any language policy actor (potentially: teachers, administrators, policymakers, etc.) who wields a disproportionate amount of power in how a policy gets created, interpreted, or appropriated relative to other individuals' (p. 225). Thus, while policy implementation may be multilayered, not all individuals involved in the process have the same authority in shaping it; thus, it is the processes and agents between these levels that interest many language policy researchers.

The simplicity of macro-meso-micro layers of analysis has been criticised for implying 'a certain hierarchy in which macro-level phenomena somehow take place on a different plane of existence from micro-level phenomena' (Hult, 2010, p. 18). Thus, the boundaries between 'layers' of policy may not actually be as distinct as the model suggests, and many arbiters who sit within, between, inside, or outside of these layers may not be appropriately captured within the frameworks used for analysis. While the use of the macro-, meso-, and micro-level labels allows EME researchers to explicitly follow the processes of top-down and bottom-up language policy diffusion, many more constructs beyond language are wrapped up in EME policy creation and implementation, which further complicates analysis.

To fill this need, the ROAD-MAPPING framework was developed specially for investigations of EME and consists of six dimensions. Although each dimension can be analysed individually, Dafouz and Smit (2016) state that the six dimensions are dynamically interconnected through discourse, which serves as 'a viable access point to the analysis of social practices' (p. 402). Still in the nascent phases of its application to EME research, there is a need to evaluate what the ROAD-MAPPING framework adds to our ability to interpret EME policy compared to traditional methods of analysis.

This chapter compares ROAD-MAPPING to a traditional multilayered framework of policy analysis in EME research. Specifically, it explores the affordances of using ROAD-MAPPING as a framework for EME research in comparison to a macro-meso-micro-level framework. We do this by comparing the application of the ROAD-MAPPING framework to analyse EME policy documents (n = 145) and university fieldwork at seven universities in Turkey (as reported in Sahan, 2020) with the application of the macro-meso-micro framework to analyse EME policy documents (n = 93) and university fieldwork at eight universities in China (as reported in Rose et al., 2020). Although conducted in different contexts, the two studies offer comparable large-scale research of EME policies and their implementation, incorporating both document analysis and fieldwork at multiple research sites.

The comparison reveals nuances and specificities of policy implementation in EME research. We show that the ROAD-MAPPING framework is more adeptly able to elucidate the discourses between policy arbitration within its key dimensions, whereas the multilayered framework allows for a more holistic, but less focused, investigation. Through this comparison, we conclude that while multilayered policy frameworks are attractive in their simplicity of breaking systems into discrete levels, ROAD-MAPPING offers utility in providing specificity to EME contexts while remaining theoretically grounded in sociolinguistics and ecology of language research.

This chapter begins with a discussion of two analytical frameworks, the multilayered approach and the ROAD-MAPPING framework, as well as a brief summary of each framework's application in

EME research. We then provide a critical review of Rose et al.'s (2020) study in China to examine the strengths and shortcomings of the multilayered approach, followed by a critical review of Sahan's (2020) work in Turkey to investigate the strengths and shortcomings of the ROAD-MAPPING framework. The chapter ends with a discussion of the applicability and effectiveness of the two frameworks.

Frameworks of Analysis

Multilayered analysis of educational policy

A multilayered approach to exploring specific educational phenomena cannot be attributed to a single founding theory, as this approach to analysis has been widely used in sociology, psychology, and education. Bronfenbrenner (1979), for example, articulated micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro systems in his *ecological framework of human development*, which in turn drew inspiration from works in social psychology by Leo Vygotsky. We can also see elements of a multilayered approach in informing the structure of the Douglas Fir Group's (2016) *Transdisciplinary Framework for Second Language Acquisition in a Multilingual World*. Both of these examples hold the individual at the core of a system that consists of multiple layers of social groups and communities. These conceptualisations of language learning into social layers have been referred to more widely as theoretical approaches that represent an *ecology of language* (Hult, 2010).

In educational policy research, these layers have been used frequently to represent educational systems, with policy from macro-level systems (such as Ministries of Education) being fed into meso-level systems (such as school districts) and micro-level systems (such as schools or classrooms) by key policymakers and policy actors (or arbiters). The theoretical model proposed by Johnson and Johnson (2015) uses the analogy of a funnel to represent the influence of language policy arbiters in policy implementation from one level to the next:

> the image of a funnel is used to illustrate that while policy decisions are socially negotiated between multiple actors within and across levels, at some point, there is one language policy arbiter who has singular power with regard to how a policy is interpreted and appropriated.
>
> (p. 226)

Researchers have suggested that teachers act as 'the final arbiters of language policy implementation' (Menken, 2008, p. 5; see also Johnson, 2013). In other words, teachers determine how language policies are enacted as classroom language practices.

Johnson and Johnson (2015) illustrated the utility of their model through an ethnographic study of bilingual education programmes in two school districts in the U.S. state of Washington. The bilingual programmes were 'nominally identical district-level programs, which [were] funded under the same state-level language policy' (p. 222). The researchers collected data through a four-year project which included classroom observations and more than 50 interviews with teachers, principals, and school administrators. Data were also collected from policy documents. The analysis examined how and by whom decisions concerning policy implementation were made. The results revealed different decision-making structures in the two school districts, which affected the scope of the language policy arbiters' ability to influence power. Johnson and Johnson (2015) argued that the beliefs of the language policy arbiters influenced the decisions they made with respect to policy implementation. The study concluded that the 'nominally identical' programmes were different in practice due to the positioning and beliefs of language policy arbiters. The study by Johnson and Johnson (2015) offers a theoretical model through which to understand language policy

implementation at multiple levels. Although the model was not applied to an EME context in their study, it represents a similar theoretical approach to EME research of some policy researchers.

Macro-, meso-, and micro-level frameworks in EME research

A multilayered approach to EME research has grown out of its popular use in language policy and planning. The approach to policy analysis has been perpetuated via the endorsement of key language policy scholars and theorists such as Bernard Spolsky (e.g. Spolsky, 2004) and Thomas Ricento (e.g. Ricento, 2000; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). The three-level division of language policy has been used in previous EME research in Malaysia (Ali, 2013) and Japan (Aizawa & Rose, 2019; Rose & McKinley, 2018) to examine policy arbitration and implementation across multiple levels of educational systems at the macro- (national), meso- (institutional), and micro (teachers) levels.

In the study by Ali (2013), data were collected through policy documents and interviews with participants. The participants included one university administrator and 11 content lecturers; the data were analysed using qualitative content analysis for emerging themes, and the analysis compared policy aims and implementation at the macro-, meso-, and micro levels. The findings indicated that macro-level policy goals were not 'translated' into meso- or micro-level implementation: although macro-level policymakers positioned EME as a means through which to improve students' L2 proficiency, meso-level policies at the case higher education institution (HEI) were not found to support English learning through EME. At the micro level, Ali (2013) found through interviews with content lecturers that EME teachers were unaware of macro-level policy aims with respect to language learning and did not perceive clear directives with respect to language use. The findings from Ali's (2013) study revealed that EME content lecturers were the primary actors in EME policy implementation, but that policy arbitration between layers of implementation was not effective. Ali (2013) concluded that, in the absence of implementation guidelines across policy levels, EME content teachers were responsible for carrying out the language learning aims envisioned by macro-level policymakers, although these language learning aims were not realised in EME classrooms.

Similarly, Rose and McKinley (2018) and Aizawa and Rose (2019) provided complementary studies on EME policy and its implementation in Japan; together, these two studies illustrate how macro-level policy is interpreted at the meso level and implemented at the micro level. Rose and McKinley (2018) analysed policy documents related to the 'Top Global University Project' (TGUP), an internationalisation initiative in Japan. They collected English-language policy documents from 37 Japanese universities and found that internationalisation policy through TGUP allowed universities to establish their own agendas and practices. As a result, the study found that the relationship between EME and internationalisation in meso- (institutional) level policy was not always straightforward or explicit.

Building on the findings of Rose and McKinley (2018), Aizawa and Rose (2019) examined the implementation of EME at the meso- and micro levels through a case study of a Japanese university included in TGUP. Data were collected from institutional policy documents, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with students (n = 7) and teachers (n = 3). Supplemental data were also collected from a questionnaire administered to students (n = 108). Aizawa and Rose (2019) used qualitative content analysis to code data from policy documents and interviews for emerging themes. The findings indicated that teachers and students experienced language-related difficulties, regardless of whether their L2 proficiency level was above or below the threshold suggested by policy. Moreover, teachers and students reported that mixed-language use was common in EME classes, despite policy declarations of an 'English-only' form of EME in the curriculum. Based on their findings, Aizawa and Rose (2019) concluded that meso-level EME policy aims were not translated directly into classroom-level practices. Rather policies were adapted by lecturers and students to meet their specific educational needs.

Both Ali (2013) and Aizawa and Rose (2019) employed single case studies to examine EME implementation; what is missing from their analyses is an investigation of how national-level policies are interpreted and implemented across HEI contexts—particularly given Rose and McKinley's (2018) finding that HEIs set their own agendas in interpreting macro-level policy. In other words, it is not clear whether the results of these studies are transferable to other HEIs in the same national context (Malaysia for Ali, 2013; Japan for Aizawa & Rose, 2019).

ROAD-MAPPING framework

The ROAD-MAPPING framework consists of six dimensions: (1) Roles of English, (2) Academic Disciplines, (3) Management, (4) Agents, (5) Practices and Processes, and (6) Internationalisation and Glocalisation (Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 403). In this chapter, we will not provide a detailed description of ROAD-MAPPING and instead refer the reader to Chapter 1 in this volume for an in-depth overview of the framework. The ROAD-MAPPING framework was created with an intention to capture the complexities and dynamism associated with specific dimensions of policy planning in EME settings (see Dafouz & Smit, 2020). It is theoretically positioned within sociolinguistic research but offers specificity to core issues at the heart of EME. Although it is a relatively new framework compared to the multilayered approaches outlined in the previous section, the ROAD-MAPPING framework has already been applied to several empirical studies.

The ROAD-MAPPING framework presupposes that all six dimensions are relevant and should be taken into consideration for any study of EME, allowing for a holistic view. At the same time, in conducting empirical research, some researchers have chosen to foreground certain dimensions in relation to their research interests. Baker and Hüttner (2017) used the *Roles of English* dimension of the framework to investigate students' language beliefs in EME programmes in three countries via questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Similarly, Komori-Glatz (2015) explored the *Roles of English* and other languages in a business programme at an Austrian university via interviews and document analysis. Dafouz (2018) used several dimensions (*Agents*, *Practices and Processes*, and *Academic Discipline*) of ROAD-MAPPING to explore a teacher education programme in Spain to investigate the perceived benefits of EME in relation to teaching practices and teacher identity. Dafouz et al. (2016) applied three dimensions of the framework to interview data with 18 teachers to further investigate lecturer perceptions of EME across four HEIs in different countries.

Most of the previous research that have used ROAD-MAPPING for empirical explorations of EME have focused on the beliefs of teachers and students, or the use of language in classroom settings. Furthermore, while each dimension of the framework is considered during analysis, some studies have prioritised one dimension of the framework in their findings (e.g. Baker & Hüttner, 2017; Komori-Glatz, 2015). There are very few examples of empirical research that apply all dimensions of the framework to investigate EME in large-scale research projects. While the entire framework has been used at a conceptual level to structure country-level analysis, such as in Bradford and Brown (2017) in Japan, and Kuteeva (2019) in Sweden, it has less frequently been used to investigate EME implementation from national-level policy to classroom practices.

A need to compare frameworks to explore EME of a larger scale

A number of studies (Ali, 2013; Costa & Coleman, 2012; Gill, 2006; Hu & Lei, 2014; Kırkgöz, 2009) have suggested that a gap exists between policy aims and classroom practices, although the existing research has not examined variations in classroom practices and language use across HEI contexts under the same conditions of a guiding national or regional policy: in other words, the implementation of 'nominally identical' (Johnson & Johnson, 2015) EME programmes. Rather, the

existing research is dominated by single case studies or questionnaire and interview data that lack examination of classroom practices in comparison to policy. Alluding to this research gap, Hu and Lei (2014) note that there is a lack of research concerning the alignment of EME policy goals and classroom practices.

Without this research, it is difficult to ascertain what each of the above frameworks offers in terms of analytical strengths to complex, large-scale EME research. The next two sections of this chapter address this gap by examining the 'alignment' of policy and practice across a sample of university contexts in China and Turkey, each adopting a different framework of analysis to achieve its goal (a multilevel framework in China versus the ROAD-MAPPING framework in Turkey). We engage in researcher self-reflection to compare the use of frameworks in each of our two studies to interrogate their affordances and limitations in revealing the complexities of EME policy and planning.

Multilayered Framework: A Critical Review of Rose et al. (2020)

The study by Rose et al. (2020) utilised a tripartite multilayered framework to explore EME implementation in Chinese higher education at the macro-, meso-, and micro levels. It set the lens of analysis so that the macro level represented the university level, the meso level represented the school or programme level, and the micro level represented the classroom. This level of analysis was set because, unlike Ali's (2013) exploration of Malaysia and Rose and McKinley's (2018) exploration of Japan, China was an enormous higher education context, in which top-down EME-specific policy planning most often occurred at the university level. When university decisions were governed by a national-level policy, it was mostly in the form of government decrees associated with internationalisation of higher education which had EME planning implications, rather than EME-specific initiatives (e.g. China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Information, 2009, 2012; Ministry of Education et al., 2017).

At each of the macro-, meso-, and micro levels, data were collected to explore issues underpinning policy planning and policy implementation, with a focus on policy arbiters. At the macro level, the research analysed university-level policy documents, positioning policymakers as the arbiters, and the policy itself as the source of data. At the meso level, fieldwork included visits to a selected sample of Chinese universities, where interviews took place with arbiters who were in positions such as EME programme directors, heads of departments, deans of divisions, and other senior management roles. At the micro level, research data were collected via questionnaires with EME teachers and EME students, who were positioned to be in the prime arbiter roles concerning how EME policy was enacted in the curriculum and the classroom.

Sources of data

The total sample of universities for the policy scan included 140 universities in China which were designated as leading the internationalisation of higher education in China as established via national-level funding initiatives (such as the *Double First Class University Project*). A total of 63 of these universities were found to have publicly available documents about EME implementation at the university. These documents were the main sources of data to analyse EME at the macro level.

To explore EME at the meso level, fieldwork was conducted at eight Chinese universities, which were purposively sampled to represent a range of university types: two elite universities, two *Double First Class* universities, two language-oriented universities, and two transnational universities. Interviews were conducted with 26 policy arbiters in senior roles across the eight universities. These fieldwork interviews were the main sources of data to analyse EME at the meso level.

To explore EME at the micro level, questionnaires were distributed to university lecturers and students via a national higher education organisation in China, through a partnership with British Council China, who had funded the research. In total, 152 valid questionnaires from EME lecturers and 561 valid questionnaires from EME students were collected on the micro-level practices in EME classrooms.

Application of the analytical framework

Each source of data was analysed using separate analytical methods. The macro-level policy data were subjected to qualitative content analysis. The meso-level fieldwork interviews were analysed thematically for implementation challenges and areas of affordances and friction. The micro-level questionnaire data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to explore general trends in the data on topics such as language use in the classrooms, driving forces of EME, and student and lecturer language-related challenges.

The results indicated that there was a policy shift in macro-level university planning to facilitate greater amounts of EME across all of the universities, instead of historically bilingual Chinese-English programmes. However, the micro-level data indicated bilingual practices in the classroom were still very much the norm, especially for classroom interaction. Macro-level policy seemed to indicate that EME growth was starting to slow in terms of top-down policy directives; however, meso-level fieldwork interviews indicated that many departments still felt substantial pressure to create new English-medium programmes, which were positioned as success indicators in annual reports to the university.

Macro-level policy indicated that a major driving force of EME was associated with cultivating the abilities of students in answer to pressures associated with globalisation. However, the meso-level interviews revealed that a central focus of EME was to meet the university's internationalisation goals, and, at the micro-level, students saw EME as a means to access better career and study opportunities. While macro-level policy situated a main goal of EME to improve the quality of teaching, the micro-level data revealed concerns that EME might, in fact, lower the quality of education by diluting in-depth engagement with subject matter. There were a number of provisions of incentives and support for teachers in the policy data, but little policy for the provision of language support for students, which was worrying considering the micro-level data revealed several areas of concern surrounding a lack of linguistic preparedness for local and international students to learn via the medium of English.

Strengths and shortcomings of the analysis

A critical reflection of the analytical methods and findings of Rose et al. (2020) reveal a number of strengths and shortcomings of utilising a multilayered analytical approach to EME policy research.

A strength of the framework is the ability to simplify the complex nature of policy creation and implementation into separate strata, and then perform analysis within each stratum to then compare and contrast across the policy system. By dissecting policy implementation into distinct levels of governance, the framework can allow a researcher to identify key policy arbiters between each level to explore the theoretical spaces in between each layer to investigate how policy is interpreted and implemented at various stages of policy diffusion (i.e. from the meso level to micro level by specific arbiters such as course directors or EME lectures). This allowed the study to neatly represent themes such as 'EME driving forces' or 'language use' at each level to reveal synergies and frictions in policy implementation.

The neatness of a multilayered approach to policy analysis is, ironically, one of its biggest shortcomings. By pre-defining the actors of EME policy into separate levels of the analysis, the framework may misrepresent the governance of EME policy and planning at many universities. That is, the framework might falsely place actors in one level, even though in practice their roles allow them to operate across multiple levels. For example, while we positioned the various deans and heads of divisions and departments as meso-level policy arbiters, they may—in fact—have played a central role in policymaking at the macro level, due to sitting on various committees higher up the university hierarchy. Moreover, some heads of programme were also teaching on the programmes they oversaw and thus were simultaneously involved in a 'meso-management' policy role as well as implementing EME at the micro level in their own classes.

The multilevel approach also has shortcomings when comparing policy implementation at structurally different institutions. At some of the universities we visited in our fieldwork, faculties and departments were given a great deal of autonomy in educational policy and planning, with some departments given central prominence with leading EME at the university. This means that the direction of policy planning was not uniform at all universities, and in many ways, micro-level decisions may have fed up into meso-level policy planning. Further to this, at large universities, it is not always a simple matter to dissect policy-making structures into three discrete categories. More complex vertical decision-making layers might exist that are not captured in the tripartite sampling strategies, such as decisions at the levels of university groups, universities, divisions, faculties, departments, schools, centres, and programmes. Horizontal structures might also be missed through application of a simplified vertically layered framework if, for example, EME policy is created and enacted by working groups or committees that operate across the assumed layers.

ROAD-MAPPING: A Critical Review of Sahan (2020)

The study by Sahan (2020) examined the policies, practices, and perceptions of EME in engineering departments at state universities in Turkey to investigate the variation with which EME is implemented. The research design for the study included three phases. In the first phase, national and institutional policies regulating EME were analysed to understand the aims and expectations of EME programmes. In the second phase, this study explored the classroom language practices of teachers and students at EME engineering departments in Turkey. The third phase examined EME lecturers' and students' perceptions of EME for teaching and learning in order to triangulate the findings and incorporate stakeholders' perspectives on EME implementation. To analyse EME policy, data were collected from national and institutional policy documents and, when available, classroom syllabi were collected from participating lecturers during fieldwork. Data concerning policy were examined using qualitative content analysis, and the ROAD-MAPPING framework was applied to guide the analysis of EME policy.

Sources of data

The total sample of universities for the study included seven universities in four cities in Turkey, which were purposively sampled to provide a range of geographic locations and institutional characteristics that were deemed important to EME. Data were then collected via a number of methods at the universities, including policy scans, fieldwork interviews with EME teachers, and classroom observations. Focus groups with students in the observed classes were also conducted.

In terms of the policy scans, documents were accessed via the university websites and included texts such as university directives, annual reports, and strategic plans. During fieldwork, other documents were also collected, and made available, including course curricula and classroom materials. For a 'bigger picture' analysis, official government documents from *The Council of Higher Education*

(YÖK) concerning EME were also analysed to provide a wider context within which to situate the institutional documents. In total, 145 policy documents were collected.

During fieldwork at the seven universities, 85 classroom observations were conducted, which were accompanied by post-observational interviews with 21 lecturers and focus groups with students from each of the lecturers' classes. The observations mainly focused on the role of languages in the classrooms, and the post-observation interviews allowed the researcher to delve deeper into issues such as the policies and practices shaping EME at the departmental level.

Application of the analytical framework

The ROAD-MAPPING analyses incorporated all six dimensions of the framework to explore EME implementation on a large scale. In terms of the *Roles of English*, the study revealed that policy documents obscured the true role of English as the dominant medium of instruction, by referring to it as 'foreign language education'. Fieldwork made the true role of English in EME more visible as a key top-down policy initiative across the HEIs.

In terms of the dimension of *Academic Discipline*, the policy documents clearly demarcated subject learning from language learning. When other L2 mediums of instruction were mentioned in policy, the subject matter generally related to topics associated with the language or culture used (e.g. the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction for Quranic studies). This demarcation was reflected in the data collected through fieldwork, in which teachers and students characterised English language teaching as the responsibility of language instructors in the School of Foreign Languages and described academic subject teaching and learning as the primary aim of EME courses.

In terms of the dimension of *Management*, national-level policy had a clear influence on each HEI's management of EME, in particular surrounding language competencies. EME language admission requirements were managed through a mandated *hazırlık* programme (a one-year preparatory programme), which had clearly established L2 proficiency benchmarks. A further layer of management of language in EME was facilitated via English language proficiency exam regulations for EME students, and through language requirements in academic recruitment and promotion regulations.

In terms of the dimension of *Agents*, once again, the national-level policymakers played a key role in the decision-making processes, rather than lecturers, or even deans and heads of department. This meant that decisions surrounding admissions, recruitment, and budget were largely under the jurisdiction of YÖK, and individual HEIs had little autonomy. However, decisions made at the level of department and programme moulded the *Practices and Processes* of EME within each university. Individual lecturers had a good amount of autonomy in developing the departments' EME programmes, and observations revealed a good deal of variation in practices within the same departments as a result. Finally, in terms of the dimension of *Internationalisation and Glocalisation*, the national-level and institutional-level policies revealed that EME seemed to be situated as a distinct phenomenon from the internationalisation goals of both YÖK and the HEIs. In other words, internationalisation goals did not seem to be embedded within or aligned with EME policies.

Overall, the policies that centred on EME at the national and HEI levels were predominantly concentrated on English learning via the *hazırlık* system. This system was typically run by schools of foreign language, which were separate from departments of the university that taught content in the EME programmes. This created a system whereby English language support was offered *prior* to commencement of EME programmes rather than *after* students actually started to participate in EME courses. In general, there was a noted friction between policy that aimed for language learning

through EME and the systems in place which positioned language learning to occur *before* students undertook EME.

Strengths and shortcomings of the analysis

Evaluating the analytical methods and findings of Sahan (2020) reveals a number of affordances and shortcomings provided by the ROAD-MAPPING framework.

In Sahan (2020), ROAD-MAPPING was applied as an analytical framework, and its six dimensions facilitated the analysis of large-scale policy research by providing dynamic categories for deductive analysis. In other words, the ROAD-MAPPING framework allowed the researcher to draw from a wide range of policy texts, including national-level directives and classroom syllabi, which encompassed various educational activities associated with EME across a number of institutions. The ROAD-MAPPING framework was adaptable in providing specificity across these multiple institutions by providing an integrated thematic—rather than layered—analysis.

Whereas the multilayered approach used in Rose et al. (2020) simplified the complex nature of policy creation into neatly defined levels, the ROAD-MAPPING framework allowed for a more nuanced and dynamic understanding of policy implementation by deconstructing the boundaries that exist between 'levels' and instead prioritising the activities of individual actors according to dimensions of EME implementation. An example of this complexity is captured in Sahan's findings with respect to so-called meso- or micro-level actors such as department heads and EME lecturers, who were found to have less agency in explicit policy development but more agency in shaping the processes and practices of EME programmes in their departments and classrooms. The strength of the ROAD-MAPPING framework lies in its ability to allow for dynamic connections between dimensions. In the case of Sahan's study, these interconnected discourses revealed a tendency for EME policy to separate language and content learning, and the strength of the ROAD-MAPPING framework lies in the illustrative detail with which this phenomenon is captured in context.

Although the advantage of this approach is that it provides for more nuance in the analysis of EME policy implementation, an associated weakness with the adaptability of the framework is that it offers the researcher less guidance in terms of identifying and synthesising the data. When applied as an analytical framework, each dimension of the ROAD-MAPPING framework can be approached on its own, in a self-contained manner. However, the novelty of the framework comes in synthesising multiple dimensions to offer a more holistic perspective, although methods for integrating multiple dimensions remain less clear, perhaps because the framework is still in its nascent stage. The process of synthesising multiple dimensions across multiple research sites remains largely determined by the researcher. Moreover, although the structure of its six dimensions provides a clear analytical starting point through which to approach EME practice, the researcher must also ask what aspects of EME implementation are not captured by the dimensions of the framework. These elements will likely vary by context but may include aspects such as pedagogy, institutional resources, and access to EME programmes.

The Applicability and Effectiveness of the Two Frameworks

A comparison of the frameworks used in Rose et al. (2020) and Sahan (2020) presents an opportunity to explore the efficacy of both frameworks as ways in which to analyse the phenomenon of EME, especially in multilingual settings. One of the shortcomings of the framework used in Rose et al. (2020) is its lack of detailed criteria of analysis, as it adopts a broad ecological conceptualisation of language policy, which lacks specificity. As Hult (2010) observes:

> The ecology of language has been put forward as a useful orientation to the holistic investigation of multilingual language policies because it draws attention to relationships among speakers, languages, policies, and social contexts at varying dimensions of social organisation. As such, it is an orientation that stands to facilitate the integration of micro- and macro-sociolinguistic inquiry in language policy and planning (LPP); however, *it is not a method*.
>
> (p. 1, *emphasis added*)

An example of its variable use as a method can be seen across educational studies in which it is used to explore layers as strata of educational systems, rather than an individual's social system. Although the framework embodies the core conceptualisations of *ecology of language* (Haugen, 1972) or *ecology of human development* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the focus of language policy and planning research is on arbiters and educational systems, rather than individuals' ecologies, so the methods of analysis become less clear in terms of who and what should be the focus.

The multilayered approach used in Rose et al. (2020) had clear strengths in the simplification of the complexities of EME policy and planning, by pre-defining discrete levels of analysis. However, as demonstrated in this chapter, this simplification might misrepresent complex realities where levels are not so discrete, and other agents exist across levels, in-between levels, and outside of the systems being investigated via a tripartite approach. In contrast, the ROAD-MAPPING framework used in Sahan (2020) facilitated a more contextualised and dynamic analysis of EME policy implementation. By focusing the analysis on dimensions of theoretical interest, rather than on levels within an educational system (e.g. macro, meso, micro), the ROAD-MAPPING framework breaks down the very notion of 'levels'. Instead, it explores discourses in policy and planning by giving priority to the activities of actors within a system that consists of dimensions of EME implementation.

Conclusion

Sahan (2020) notes that a central contribution of her study was that it 'demonstrated the robustness and effectiveness of the ROAD-MAPPING framework as an analytical tool to examine EMI policy' (p. 307). In this chapter, our comparison of a study of EME in Turkey with a comparable study of EME in China draws similar conclusions of the efficacy of the ROAD-MAPPING framework. However, the application of ROAD-MAPPING in EME policy research is not problem-free. Our comparison has highlighted some challenges in applying the framework as a method of analysis, especially in terms of a general lack of guidance for researchers to adapt the framework to collect and synthesise research data across multiple dimensions. Specifically, the ROAD-MAPPING framework provides limited guidance in terms of moving from the level of analysis for each individual dimension to a more holistic approach integrating multiple dimensions. As a result, initial analyses may be largely descriptive, and researchers may find it difficult to produce a more critical analysis incorporating the framework as a whole.

Many of these difficulties could be considered teething issues due to the newness of the framework and a lack of empirical examples for research to build on, especially research that applies the whole framework to a large educational system. Much of what we know about the framework in use is via studies that have focused on a single dimension, so we have a few examples of methods used to integrate the dimensions to explore the dynamic nature of EME policy and language. However, as our empirical basis grows, so too will our understanding of the research possibilities for use of ROAD-MAPPING in EME research.

We would like to conclude this chapter with the important message that a multilayered approach to policy research and the ROAD-MAPPING framework are not exclusive of one another. They are not necessarily competing paradigms, but alternative ways to theorise the social world. In other realms of ambitious theorisation in applied linguistics research, such as the aforementioned work of the Douglas Fir Group (2016), attempts have been made to mesh ecology of language ideologies within macro-, meso-, and micro-level dimensions of importance to SLA. While this approach is not without criticism, there is an opportunity to use other mechanisms and analytical approaches in conjunction with it (see Hult, 2019), so that research does not become too narrowly focused on single moments or participants and become blind to broader connections (see Scollon & Scollon, 2004). In a similar vein, EME researchers who are seeking to explore policy over educational strata may find new opportunities to mesh a layered analytical approach with the ROAD-MAPPING framework, while being cognisant of the limitations that such conceptual simplifications might afford. ROAD-MAPPING is an ambitious conceptual theory that should continue to be scrutinised and developed as a research tool for EME analysis, which includes a thorough exploration of its synergies with other methods of investigations.

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