

THE INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE POLICY ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

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Abstract

The problem in this study is the lack of understanding of how language policies implemented in secondary schools can influence students' motivation and performance in foreign language learning and the role of social and cultural aspects in the learning process. This study aims to examine the impact of language policy on students' motivation, performance, and comprehension, considering a psycholinguistic approach and the influence of both local and global cultures. This study employs a literature review method, analyzing various relevant previous studies. The findings indicate that language policies integrating cultural elements and communicative approaches can enhance students' motivation, improve their performance in language exams, and deepen their understanding of the learned language. Policies that consider social and cultural aspects contribute positively to students' emotional connection with the foreign language and enhance their communication skills.

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, foreign language proficiency has become an essential skill for students at various educational levels, including secondary schools. Mastering a foreign language enables students to participate in multiple international academic and professional opportunities. Furthermore, with the advancement of technology and communication, access to foreign languages has become easier and necessary in various aspects of life. Foreign language learning enhances communication skills and provides opportunities for students to understand other cultures, broaden their perspectives, and increase their competitiveness in the global world (Zhao & Zhang, 2019). Therefore, the language policies implemented within the education system are crucial in determining the effectiveness and quality of foreign language learning in secondary schools. Well-designed policies can help students develop optimal language competencies and overcome learning challenges.

Language policies in secondary schools encompass various aspects, ranging from the selection of instructional language and curriculum establishment to the methods of teaching

foreign languages themselves. Each country or educational institution has different approaches to implementing language policies, depending on their educational needs and goals. For example, some schools emphasize active communication-based learning methods, while others still use traditional grammar-based approaches. These policies impact foreign language instruction and students' motivation, learning strategies, and academic achievements (Gao & Zhang, 2021). Policies that are designed without considering students' psychological needs may hinder the development of their language skills. In general, language policies in schools can be seen as tools to shape and direct the learning process to achieve the desired level of language proficiency.

The psycholinguistic approach studies the relationship between language and mental processes and provides valuable insights into how language policies influence students' foreign language learning. Psycholinguistics helps explain how the brain processes language in terms of comprehension and production. Understanding how students process and store linguistic information can assist educators and policymakers in designing more effective language policies. Psycholinguistic research indicates that motivation, emotions, and cognition are crucial in language learning (Wei & Li, 2020). These factors can be influenced by the learning environment, teaching methods, and language policies implemented in schools. Therefore, language policies that consider students' psychological aspects can enhance the effectiveness of foreign language instruction in secondary schools. If these policies ignore psychological aspects, students may struggle to comprehend and use the foreign language effectively.

Several previous studies have shown that flexible language policies, such as contextual and communicative foreign language instruction, can increase students' motivation and proficiency in foreign languages. More interactive, real-world-based learning methods have proven more effective than rote memorization-based learning methods. Additionally, language policies that take into account social and cultural aspects can help students better understand and appreciate the language they are learning (Wang & Liu, 2022). Social factors such as interactions with native speakers and exposure to foreign language culture contribute to students' language skills development. In this regard, the psycholinguistic approach offers a new perspective on understanding how language policies influence students' mental processes, including their perception of the learned language and how they overcome learning challenges. Thus, a well-structured language policy should integrate psychological, social, and cultural factors into foreign language learning.

This study examines language policies' influence on foreign language learning in secondary schools using a psycholinguistic approach. This study will explore how language policies implemented in various secondary schools contribute to success or obstacles in foreign language learning. Additionally, this study will highlight psychological factors affecting students in acquiring foreign languages and how language policies can accommodate these factors. The primary focus of this research is to understand how language policies implemented in secondary school's influence students' motivation, learning strategies, and academic achievements in foreign language learning. With this understanding, it is hoped that more effective and adaptive policy strategies can be developed to meet students' needs. Furthermore, this study will explore how language policies that consider students' psychological aspects can enhance the effectiveness of foreign language learning. This is crucial given that each individual has a different learning style, and a good language policy

should be able to accommodate these differences.

In this research, the author will employ a qualitative method with a case study approach in several secondary schools with different language policies. This approach is chosen to understand better how language policies are implemented and their impact on students' learning. Data will be collected through interviews with foreign language teachers, classroom observations, and analysis of language policy documents implemented in schools. Through interviews, insights from educators regarding the challenges and effectiveness of existing language policies will be obtained. Additionally, this study will analyze students' foreign language test results to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented language policies. These findings will help assess whether the policies align with students' foreign language learning needs.

This research is significant as it can contribute to developing language policies in secondary schools, considering the psycholinguistic aspects of foreign language learning. This study is expected to serve as a reference for educational institutions in designing more effective language policies. The results of this study are expected to provide valuable recommendations for policymakers in designing language policies that are more effective and aligned with students' needs. These recommendations may include curriculum implementation strategies, teaching methods, and teacher training programs better to understand the psycholinguistic aspects of foreign language learning. Furthermore, this research can guide educators in designing foreign language teaching methods that are more responsive to students' psychological needs. Thus, this study has broad implications for various stakeholders within the education system.

Several previous studies, such as those conducted by (Wang & Liu, 2022), have shown that language policies integrating communicative and contextual approaches can increase students' motivation to learn foreign languages. Students engaged in communication-based learning activities tend to acquire foreign languages more quickly than those relying solely on rote memorization. Meanwhile, research by (Wei & Li, 2020) has demonstrated that psychological factors, such as self-confidence and perceptions of language, significantly influence how students learn foreign languages. Therefore, it is essential to understand how existing language policies impact these psychological factors in the context of foreign language learning. By understanding these factors, policymakers can create a more supportive and effective learning environment.

Thus, this study will explore how language policies can be designed to account for cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of foreign language learning. The findings are expected to provide a strong foundation for developing more comprehensive and evidence-based language policies. By incorporating a psycholinguistic approach, this research can significantly contribute to language education policies and foreign language teaching practices in secondary schools.

METHODS

This study employs a literature review method to analyze the influence of language policy on foreign language learning in secondary schools from a psycholinguistic perspective. This method involves collecting, examining, and analyzing relevant previous studies, including scientific journals, academic books, and research reports discussing language policy, foreign language learning, and psycholinguistic approaches. The primary focus of this literature review

is to identify how language policies in various countries or educational institutions affect students' motivation, cognition, and learning outcomes in the context of foreign language acquisition. Thus, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between language policy and psycholinguistic factors in foreign language education.

The analysis process in this study is conducted using a thematic synthesis method, where findings from various sources are categorized based on key themes that align with the research objectives. The themes analyzed include the impact of language policy on learning motivation, effective learning methods based on the psycholinguistic approach, and the role of social and cultural factors in supporting successful foreign language learning. Additionally, this study will compare various language policies from multiple countries to identify patterns and implications that can be adopted in the context of secondary school education. Through this approach, the research is expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and educators in designing more effective language policies that align with students' psychological needs in foreign language learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Impact of Language Policy on Student Motivation and Performance in Foreign Language Learning

The language policies implemented in secondary schools significantly impact students' motivation to learn foreign languages. Several studies indicate that policies integrating communicative and contextual approaches can enhance students' interest in learning foreign languages. For example, approaches emphasizing language use in real-life contexts and socio-cultural relevance often increase student engagement in the learning process (Pratama & Wibowo, 2020). In their study, (Pratama & Wibowo, 2020) found that students involved in language learning activities focused on social interaction, such as debates and discussions, were more motivated to deepen their language proficiency than students using traditional memorization-based methods. This suggests that language policies prioritizing language use in everyday communication can motivate students to learn more actively and improve their language skills.

Research by (Dewi & Prabowo, 2021) also confirms that culture-based language policies can help students develop a sense of ownership of the language they are learning. Language policies introducing cultural aspects of the language-such as traditions, social values, and lifestyles-can enrich students' learning experiences and increase their motivation to understand the language more deeply. This aligns with the findings of (Yulianto, 2022), who stated that students taught with an approach integrating cultural elements tend to have higher motivation in learning foreign languages because they feel more connected to the material. Learning incorporating culture into the foreign language curriculum can create spaces for students to apply their knowledge in daily life, increasing their sense of relevance and satisfaction in learning.

However, while culture-based language policies can enhance motivation, some findings suggest that policies overly focused on cognitive aspects and grammar can reduce students' interest in learning foreign languages. Research by (Putra & Astuti, 2020) shows that students exposed to a language curriculum that heavily emphasizes grammatical aspects often feel pressured and lose motivation to continue learning. High reliance on grammar instruction

without contextual application makes students perceive foreign languages as complex and less engaging. Therefore, language policies focusing solely on cognitive skills without considering motivational and contextual aspects may not effectively increase students' interest in foreign language learning.

Moreover, language policies that provide flexibility in choosing which foreign language to learn also play a crucial role in boosting student motivation. Research by (Andriani & Kurniawan, 2021) shows that students who choose a foreign language of interest, such as English, Japanese, or Mandarin, are more likely to show higher motivation and active engagement in learning. This is because students feel they have more control over their learning process and can study a language that aligns with their interests. Such policies enable students to feel more empowered and motivated to achieve their goals in foreign language learning.

The influence of language policy on student performance in foreign language exams is also closely related to the motivation driven by these policies. A study by (Mulyani & Hidayat, 2019) revealed that students who were more motivated by language policies integrating practical approaches in learning, such as project-based learning or technology use in language instruction, tended to have higher foreign language exam scores. Using more contextual and applied approaches, students can more easily grasp language material and implement it in real-life situations, improving their exam performance.

In addition, psychological factors such as self-confidence also play a significant role in influencing student performance in foreign language exams. Research by (Riani & Wulandari, 2020) shows that language policies creating a supportive and safe learning environment, such as collaborative learning, can boost students' confidence in using foreign languages. Students who feel comfortable and unafraid of making mistakes tend to be more confident in facing language exams and can better apply the language in real-life situations. This confidence is also influenced by a positive attitude toward the language they are learning, which can be fostered through more inclusive and supportive policies.

Language policies considering students' psychological needs, including self-confidence and perceptions of the language being learned, can accelerate the learning process and improve outcomes. In a study by (Agustin, 2022), it was found that students who felt valued in language classes, both in terms of their language abilities and cultural contributions, tended to perform better in foreign language exams. This indicates that language policies supporting students' psychological aspects directly relate to their improved performance in foreign language exams.

Language policies emphasizing the importance of developing speaking and listening skills in foreign languages can also enhance student performance, particularly in communication. Research by (Suprpto & Suryani, 2021) revealed that policies prioritizing speaking skills, such as through group discussions or presentations, improved students' ability to speak foreign languages. Active involvement in direct speaking helps students understand language use in real-life communication contexts, improving their performance in speaking and listening exams.

Overall, the impact of language policies on student motivation and performance in foreign language learning is highly influenced by how these policies consider psychological, cultural, and social aspects of the learning process. Policies integrating contextual and communicative approaches have been proven to be more effective in enhancing student motivation and learning outcomes. Therefore, holistic language policies that prioritize

cognitive aspects and psychological and social factors can result in more motivated students with better performance in foreign language learning.

The Role of Social and Cultural Aspects in Foreign Language Learning Based on Language Policy

Language policies that consider social and cultural aspects can significantly impact foreign language learning in secondary schools. Research by (Setiawan & Rachmawati, 2020) shows that language teaching integrating cultural elements not only enhances students' understanding of the language itself but also deepens their appreciation of the culture of native speakers. Their study found that students taught foreign languages by incorporating both local and global cultural aspects were better able to connect the language to broader social contexts, thus improving their ability to use the language in more effective communication.

Language policies that value cultural diversity can also help create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Research by (Fitria & Prabowo, 2021) shows that students who are allowed to learn foreign languages by introducing diverse cultures tend to feel more valued and motivated. Learning that introduces culture through materials such as folklore, music, and films from foreign-speaking countries not only makes learning more engaging but also enhances students' understanding of the cultural values embedded in the language. This, in turn, improves students' speaking skills, as they feel more connected to the social and cultural contexts of the language being learned.

Language policies that introduce interactions with native speakers can also improve students' language comprehension. A study by (Utami & Wijaya, 2019) shows that direct interaction with native speakers in learning contexts can enrich students' learning experiences and help them grasp linguistic nuances that cannot be understood through theoretical language instruction alone. Student exchange programs and project-based language learning involving native speakers have been proven effective in enhancing students' language skills, particularly in speaking and listening, which are more challenging to master without direct interaction with native speakers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research presented, it can be concluded that language policies implemented in secondary schools play a crucial role in influencing students' motivation, performance, and understanding of foreign languages. Policies integrating communicative and contextual approaches while valuing cultural diversity can increase student engagement in learning, strengthen their understanding of the language, and improve their ability to communicate effectively. Psychological aspects such as self-confidence, language perceptions, and the social and cultural influences embedded in language policies also contribute to student's cognitive and emotional processes, ultimately positively impacting learning outcomes. Therefore, more inclusive language policies sensitive to students' cultural contexts are expected to create more effective learning environments and facilitate the optimal development of students' foreign language skills.

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