**Level: Master 1LC**

**Academic Year: 2021/2022**

**Language Planning and Policy**

**Some Definitions**

**Language planning**

• All conscious efforts that aim at changing the linguistic behaviour of a speech community (Mesthrie et al 2009: 371)

• Overt, directed, purposeful language change brought about in order to solve some identified problem (Lewis 2011:12)

**Language policy**

• The more general linguistic, political and social goals underlying the actual language planning process (Mesthrie et al 2009: 371)

• What governments (or organizations – both national and international) do through legislation, policies, or legal decisions to determine how languages are used (which languages may be used for what purposes), to cultivate second language skills in chosen languages, or to establish minority language rights (Lewis & Henson 2013)

• Note that some scholars distinguish between overt and covert language policy, where overt language policy refers to the official rules and legislation while covert language policy would refer to the societal norms.

**Types of language planning**

Language planning can be subdivided into the following four areas:

**Status planning**

Decisions and activities aimed at changing the functions or uses of languages (or language varieties) within a particular speech community Example: the decision to use Hebrew as a medium of instruction in Jewish schools in Palestine from the end of the 19th century

**Corpus planning**

Decisions and activities required to fit the forms and structures of languages to the assigned functions Examples: designing an orthography, creating new words, publishing dictionaries **Acquisition planning**

Decisions and activities required to enable current or potential users of the language to implement the status and corpus decisions, including activities aimed at helping people to learn the language, or to acquire specific skills (such as literacy) in the language Examples: Mother Tongue Education programmes, language revitalization activities

**Prestige planning**

Decisions and activities aimed at creating positive attitudes towards the language, which are vital to the long-term success of other language planning activities.

These four areas of language planning do not exist in isolation. Activities aimed at changing the functions of a language (status planning) often require changes in the form or structure of the language (corpus planning), and may also involve education and training (acquisition planning). Status planning activities will only succeed if positive attitudes towards the language are adopted (through prestige planning) by both the speakers of the language and others in the wider society such as government officials, teachers, pastors.

**The process of language planning**

The American linguist Einar Haugen (1966, 1987) suggested that language planning typically consists of the following 4 stages, which are usually (but need not be) sequential:

**A. Selection:** is a process of choosing a certain language variety to be used for certain functions in a society. Example: a selection of a language to be national or official.

**B. Codification**: having selected a variety, this latter is then codified in terms in how it’s written “graphization”, its grammar (grammatication) and its vocabulary (lexicalization).

**C. Implementation:** implementation typically involves using the chosen variety in materials (books, newspapers, pamphlets, websites, radio, broadcasts… etc.

**D. Elaboration:** (also called modernization) covers all aspects of corpus planning in which language is developed to meet the needs of modern society. This can be done by: borrowings from other languages, extension of meanings of existing words, for example, terms for technological items such as mobile phones and computers to go in parallel with technological progress.