ABSTRACT

Although there has been a not quite short history of language policy and planning, the attention is more paid to the macro-level policy and planning of the national government. However, recent studies have begun to move the eyes to the individual actors in the local context, thus the meso- and micro-level implementation of language policy and planning become the new topic in this field. This study adopts the new framework to analyze the individual actors’ agency in the process of implementing the macro-level multilingual education policy and planning of learning languages other than English (LOTEs). In response to the macro-level language policy and planning shifting, the individual actors conduct agentive or constrained actions to propel or impede the procedure of macro-level language policy and planning. The findings of this study highlight the importance of constructing the dialogue mechanism among the individual actors at the macro-, meso- and micro-level.

Keywords: Language policy and planning; education policy; language education.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of language policy and planning, Cooper owns his well-known analysis scheme called “who does what to whom” [1] and it is Cooper who centered on the people or actors who took part in the language policy and planning activities. Furthermore, Baldauf pointed
out the importance of diverse context and actors in language planning and his recognition of the role of micro-level language planning and individual agency. Actors and their agency at different levels, such as national, institutional, and interpersonal levels largely determine each stage of language policy and planning. Consequently, actors and agencies have received much attention in later studies, particularly with regards to the meso and micro-level language policy and planning [2-8]. Agency is the unique feature of the new model of language policy and planning, according to [9], which emphasizes the parts that individuals play in the process of proposing, implementing, and evaluating macro-level language policy and planning. The framework of exploring actors and agencies not only involves their acceptance or resistance reactions towards macro language policy and planning but also includes their related interpretations and actions from the perspective of the grassroots level [10-11].

Although Kaplan and Baldauf [12] have noted that the failure of taking university setting as an example of analyzing language policy and planning in the micro-local context, there seemed not much attention has been paid to this aspect. Especially, language education policy as a sub-discipline of language policy and planning takes an important part in the way a society designs and plans for the future of its members. Language education planning covers all dimensions of the whole education system, from the macro national language policy and planning to the meso institutions or micro individual students, and from the primary education stage to higher education [13-14]. Thus, a university in China became the research target in this study to supplement the blank in micro language policy and planning. Besides this, the advocacy of multilingualism in mainland China resulting from the ‘Belt and Road Initiative’ is also worthy to be investigated under the actor and agency framework of language policy and planning in tertiary education.

Nowadays, while English seems to act as a dominating education in most educational contexts [15-16], there is a decline in the teaching of languages other than English (LOTEs) in many contexts worldwide [17-18]. However, in mainland China, the government is passionately undertaking a multilingual journey aiming at improving Chinese people’s foreign language repertoire [19] as part of the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative. This initiative focuses on the cooperation with the 64 countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt as well as the Maritime Silk Road on the infrastructure, highways, and other aspects. The data shows that non-Anglophone countries along the routes use more than 50 official languages [20]. Therefore, to gain the instrumental aims of prospecting China’s Belt and Road Initiative by connecting with these non-Anglophone countries, the government leaders and well-known scholars in education and linguistics have raised much awareness of promoting the position of LOTEs in China, encouraging more universities to provide subjects of LOTEs, such as Hebrew and Persian to the students. However, in the face of the shift in macro-level language policy and planning, the individuals in meso- and micro-levels show different reactions towards it and they hold various interpretations of the LOTEs policy and planning. Better knowledge about the actors’ reactions and interpretations of the macro-level language policy and planning and how they exert their agency in the meso- or micro-level language education activities will benefit the outcomes of the national language policy and planning.

2. ACTORS AND AGENCY IN LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING

In the early 1960s, the main language policy and planning frameworks tended to engage in macro-level policy and national planning, often charged by the government. At that time, language was usually to be treated as problems by the new-founded countries who had gotten rid of the colonization periods, and what they pursued was the organized solutions to the language problems via top-down measures [21-23]. However, since the 1990s, critical language planning under a post-modern theory has been triggered by the flood of immigrants to developed nations. The critical language planning replaced the research on language policy and planning beyond the traditional top-down paradigm to a multi-layered way of policy-making [24-27]. Much more attention was received by the role of individuals as actors in language policy and planning, and their agency exerted in different categorizations [2,5,28-29]. Among all the opinions, Kaplan and Baldauf [2] classified three layers of language policy and planning level. That is macro, meso, and micro levels in the whole continuum of language policy and planning. Some others adopted a similar idea of characterizing the different layers within both top-down and bottom-up processes of the language policy and
planning as the metaphorical onion [4] which includes the national, institutional and interpersonal levels of language policy and planning.

According to Ahearn’s [30] definition of agency, it refers to ‘the socioculturally mediated capacity to act’. The further description was proposed by [31] as the ‘socioculturally mediated and dialectically enacted.’ The following scholars then have developed the connotation of ‘agency’ that refers not only reducible to free will but includes a capacity to act regulated by the rules and resources of structure. In this perspective, agency is treated as an analytical tool to explore the interaction between the actors and the structure of the sociocultural context. In Zhao and Baldauf’s belief [5], they named the actors as a group of people ‘who has the power to influence change’. As such, agency seems to be various forms of power in different levels, and the explanation of ‘agency’ involves both the actors and the nature of their power over language policy and planning. Fenton-Smith and Gurney [32] conducted a language policy and planning research in higher education from a local perspective. In their study, agency was exemplified through three strata of macro, meso, and micro, and they suggested that more formal-codified reference materials can be extracted from the concrete analysis. To be specific, macro-level language policy and planning is produced by the government in the form of policy documents; meso-level is executed within and by universities; and micro-level means the activities acted by the specific teachers in the universities. This study paved a novel way to actors and agency in different layers of the model of language policy and planning in the local context. In Baldauf’s work, in collaboration with other scholars in language policy and planning, four broad categories were proposed to name the various types of actors and their agency exerted in the process of language policy and planning. That is people with power, people with expertise, people with influence, and people with interest. [5, 29, 33].

In China, the new approach of viewing the language policy and planning from a multilayered dimension has not attracted much attention. It seems that China is more centralized in language policy and planning which is often documented by the government, and the actors and the agency that actors exert in the process of implementing the macro language policy and planning have not been the focus in the field of language policy and planning. In China, the Ministry of Education is the authoritative governmental agency to implement a macro-level education policy. The distinguished researchers and scholars are often invited to join the design and conduction of such policies. Besides this, people with expertise and people with influence are also supposed to own agency at the national macro-level in productive capacity in the Chinese context of language policy and planning [5]. It is their attitudes and interpretations of the policy that usually appear in the public media or academic journals that normally have a wide influence on the judgment of both the government and the general public. From such perspectives, the people with expertise and people with influence have a limited but significant impact in influencing national policy at the macro-level in China [5]. However, the meso- and micro-level actors indeed play an important role to influence the process and outcome of government policy and planning. Especially in the education field, language is essential in all aspects of school activities.

In this study, we adopted the above framework and apply it to the multilingual education policy and planning in a Chinese university, to explore the following two interrelated questions: (1) in what ways do the individual actors in the local context exercise agency in reaction to the macro-level national language policy of multilingual education policy and planning in China? (2) how is their agency multidimensionally (contextually and individually) mediated?

3. THE STUDY

3.1 The Research Context

In September 2013, the concept of the ‘Silk Road Economic Belt’ was first proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Kazakhstan. He pointed out that China can adopt an innovative cooperation model to jointly build the ‘Silk Road Economic Belt’ to gradually bring regional cooperation from line to piece with points and areas. In October of the same year, Chinese President Xi Jinping further stated in his speech at the Indonesian Parliament that China is willing to strengthen maritime cooperation with ASEAN countries, make good use of the China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund established by the Chinese government, develop a good maritime partnership, and jointly build the ‘Marine Silk Road’ of the 21st century. The above mentioned resulted in the ‘Belt and Road
initiative'. As a tool of communication and a bridge of communication, the proposition of the 'Belt and Road initiative' has profoundly affected the importance of language education, especially the language used by countries along the 'Belt and Road'. For a long time, English has been the dominant player in the history of foreign language education in China. The teaching of LOTEs has not attracted enough attention. Even in China, these languages are habitually referred to as small languages. Under such conditions, with the 'Belt and Road' initiative proposed and promoted, cooperation with all parties in the countries along the route is inseparable from the knowledge and understanding of their language and culture. Therefore, universities, especially foreign language universities in China, have begun to strengthen the recruitment and teaching of LOTEs, and they also have begun to spare more efforts to cultivate the compound talents with both professional skills and language literacy. Many schools have launched a "professional courses + foreign language" training model. Among them, the school under investigation in this study is the one that started the "professional courses + foreign language" training model earlier.

To investigate the research questions aforementioned, a well-known university located in a supersized city in China was selected which offers a "1+3" program involving LOTE courses. This program was launched in 2016 to cultivate needed talents with the professional skills of translation, international trade, and tourism management. In this program, students are expected to study in the domestic school in the first year and after meeting the relevant foreign university language requirements. Then they will be trained in overseas colleges from the second to the fourth year. The Chinese and foreign credits are mutually recognized. Upon graduation, they can obtain two school certificates. For those students, it is very critical for them to master the foreign language skills which can determine whether they can get access to the universities overseas. In overseas universities, they not only have the chance to systematically learn their professional courses but also have the chance to enter internship programs at international organizations in foreign countries. Most of the costs related to this model are covered by the Chinese school and a cooperative enterprise. All the students should meet a certain standard of English. Then French, Portuguese, and Spanish are provided for the students to learn.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

In this research, data were collected from multiple resources. First, the documents including national and institutional educational policies, institutional profiles presenting the program, or enrollment information were closely studied. Among all the documents, some are found on the official website of the Chinese Ministry of Education and some are collected from the focal university offered by the program director. The work of data collection started in September 2016 and continued until September 2019. Besides this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five actors in this program which include the program director (P1), the expert in foreign language education (the language expert: P2), the French teacher: P3, the Spanish teacher: P4; the Portuguese teacher: P5), for 20–40 minutes each. In order to understand their recognitions and evaluations towards this program and the macro-level multilingualism advocacy after the 'Belt and Road initiative'. To be specific, the participants were interviewed around the purposes underlying the launch of the program and the initiatives that they had taken to develop multilingual education in this program. The language expert (P2) was mainly asked around the design of LOTE courses. The three language teachers (P3, P4, P5) were asked to talk about the related questions on their teaching experiences and evaluations in this LOTE course. Inspired by the classification of actors by Zhao and Baldauf [5], the participants in this study were divided into three main types in different layers. In this study, the program director represented people with power at the meso-level. And he was in charge of the policy designing and making for the multilingual education with the students' professional skills. People with expertise referred to the language expert at the meso-level, who was involved in the designing of the LOTE courses in this program. The three language teachers were also named as people with expertise positioned at the micro-level who implement the language education policies in the classroom context. Given that this research aims at investigating the meso-level actors' agency in language policy and planning in reaction to the macro-level shifting language policies, thus the data collection and analysis were mainly focused on the interviews with the actors.

The data were dealt with according to the following steps. Firstly, the actors were categorized by the author as the mentioned
above: people with power at the meso-level (P1), people with expertise at the meso-level (P2), and the micro-level (P3, P4, P5). Secondly, adopting the inductive approach [34] of the thematic analysis, the author sorted out the agentic and constrained actions of the participants around the following themes including LOTE initiative and design and the LOTE teachers' beliefs to the LOTE education policy and planning at the national and institutional level. Finally, combining the actors' understanding and the author's interpretation based on the individual actors' agentic and constrained actions, and the related documents that have been collected before, the structural and personal factors that mediate the individual agency by multiple dimensions at the different layers were explored and presented.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the agency of the individual actors in meso- and micro-level was presented. Overall, the analysis shows that, on one hand, although all of the individuals intend to implement the macro-level LOTE education policy and planning, they have shown a different degree of willingness and intention. On the other hand, the contextual factors and personal beliefs towards the national and institutional LOTE education policy and planning both worked as a double-edged sword. In some cases, they are conducive to the agentic actions of the individual actors, but there are also times when these factors become restrictions that impede the wielding of agency.

4.1 People with Power at the Meso-level: Program Director's Agency

From the interviews with the people with power, the individual agency of the program director about the LOTE courses in this program in reaction to shifting language educational strategies is through the agentive themes: LOTE course initiative. The following sections talk about the program director's exercise of agency, his actions, and mediating factors in detail.

The program director's agentine intention to launch LOTE courses in this program was mainly mediated by the macro-level policy, however, the language-selecting action was more influenced by the meso- and micro-level factors. First of all, in order to actively respond to the Chinese government's initiative on 'Belt and Road' multilingual education at the macro-level, the program director agentively initiated the '1 + 3' model and determined to provide three LOTE courses of French, Portuguese and Spanish. At the meso-level, the program director has the right to choose and decide which foreign language to select for the students' learning. Meanwhile, the choice of these three languages as a foreign language course is partly because the school has schools with partnerships in France and Portugal for docking education. The reason why the Spanish course is set up is because of the program director's language attitudes towards Spanish. In fact, he has the experience of learning Spanish, knowing that Spanish is among the top languages in the world and the most learned language in the United States. And he is also interested in the history and culture of some Spanish-speaking countries in Europe. The program director's agency in launching the LOTE course in the “1+3” model is reflected in the following contents of the interview.

A (Author): What motivates you to develop LOTE courses in ‘1+3’ model at first?

P1 (Program director): In fact, when this idea first emerged, it was relatively vague. I always thought that in today's increasingly globalized era, English cannot always dominate and interactions with other non-English speaking countries also require us to pay attention to understanding their language culture. With the proposal of the 'Belt and Road initiative', the national government has paid more and more attention to LOTEs education and has put forward requirements for the cultivation of compound talents combining language skills and professional skills. In 2016, the Ministry of Education of China issued the document "Promoting Joint Construction of the 'Belt and Road' Education Action" as a national implementation plan in the field of education and announced the key content and measures to promote the construction of the 'Belt and Road' in the field of education. In order to actively respond to the country's call for multilingual education, I once again rediscovered the idea of LOTEs education and discussed my ideas with other school leaders and academic experts. After many discussions, my colleagues and I decided to start the LOTE courses in the ‘1 + 3’ model.

It can be seen from the answer of the program director above that the launch of the LOTE courses is deeply affected by the macro-national education orientation, and the personal factors of the program director also play a positive role in promoting the development of the plan. As for which foreign languages to select for teaching,
the program director also explained his reasons. The specific content can be seen in the following interview.

A: Why do you choose French, Portuguese, and Spanish for classroom teaching in the first year?

P1: In fact, our school has always had cooperative relations with some schools and scientific research institutions in France and Portugal. And we both have exchange places for students to study abroad. Before this project, we sent students to learn the trade and financial knowledge in the two countries. So French and Portugal became the first choice. The establishment of the Spanish course is mainly due to my consideration of the prospects of Spanish. Because I studied Spanish as my second foreign language during college, I know that Spanish is also the world's language with a large number of people, especially Americans who learn Spanish the most, and some Spanish-speaking countries in Europe have prosperous trade and economy. I am also very interested in its history and culture. In addition to my discussions with other teachers, they agreed that the Spanish language has many benefits for the development of students and the country's 'Belt and Road initiative', so I decided to set up a Spanish language course. In this program, we specifically arranged for students to conduct language skills training for a year, in order to allow students to master solid language skills, which is conducive to their professional study abroad and better integration into local life.

Therefore, through the interview with the program director presented above, we can see that the macro-level policy and planning at the national level cannot be separated from the response and implementation of the people with power at the meso-level. Similarly, the measures taken by the people with power at the meso-level are also deeply affected by the national government at the macro-level. Especially, in the specific implementation process, the contextual and personal factors at the meso-level play a more decisive role in the actual implementation process.

4.2 People with Expertise at the Meso-Level: The Language Expert's Agency

On the theme of design LOTE courses, the agency of program director is only reflected in his suggestion of class capacity. The program director decides to adopt a small class teaching mode, and the number of students in each class is controlled between 20-25. Before this, the teaching scale of each class was mostly between 40-45 people, so small-scale teaching is also one of the innovations of this LOTE courses. In terms of specific LOTE course objectives and teaching arrangements, the language expert and the three language teachers exert more agency. Let's first focus on how the language expert who was categorized as people with expertise, wield his agency in LOTE courses in this model.

According to the interview, although the language expert is responsible for guiding the entire process of LOTE courses. In fact, the main part of his exercise of agency is around the course design which includes the setting of course objectives, the arrangement of course content, and the duration of each class. The language experts said that the objectives of all LOTE courses revolve around language skills and the hidden culture of the language. The course contains three parts: language knowledge, professional knowledge and historical culture. The language skills are the one that holds the longest teaching time, the second is the historical culture, and the shortest teaching time is for the teaching of professional knowledge. Besides, this language expert has also reformed the duration of each lesson. Usually, the duration of one lesson is 45 minutes, and the duration of each LOTE course is changed to 55 minutes. The reasons for these agentive actions can be seen in the following conversations:

A: For what kind of considerations did you design the LOTE course objectives and contents?

P2: On the other hand, I design the LOTE course objective with the reference to the document instruction issued by the Ministry of Education of China on “Promoting the Joint Construction of the ‘Belt and Road’ Education Action”. This document is positioned to serve the ‘Belt and Road initiative’ and it is based on the principle of ‘promoting people-to-people communication and providing talent support’. Therefore, I and other related experts agreed that understanding the history and culture knowledge behind the language is more conducive to language learning. And it also contributes to the ‘people-to-people communication’, which means that the language and the history and culture behind the language are equally important. Arrangement of language skills and cultural knowledge occupy more class hours. Because in the ‘1 + 3’ model, students will mainly learn specific knowledge in the next three
years, so professional knowledge teaching spares relatively less time in the first year of the school's course study. On the other hand, the professional skill teachers of our school cannot use the LOTE language or even English fluently, so in order to create a better language environment in the first year, reducing the teaching time of professional skill teachers is also a bold attempt. This puts more stringent requirements on students' study of professional skills abroad.

A: What makes you change the regular 45-minute course duration to 55 minutes?

P2: What I need to explain here is that although the duration of each class has been extended to 55 minutes, this does not mean that the teachers' teaching time is extended by 10 minutes. Because much scientific research has shown that students usually take the most efficient course for 45 minutes, our course design has not changed. The extended 10-minute course is reserved for students to discuss or the teacher to answer questions for the students. The purpose of the LOTE course design is to allow students to better understand the content of the class and solve the students' queries in time. I was also inspired by the course design of my son's school. Then I decided to try it in the LOTE courses. Although we have not gained any feedback on this form in our school, I have asked my son and some of his classmates. They felt that although the course duration was extended, they were also pleased to be able to discuss new knowledge with their classmates and teachers in time.

According to the interview with the language expert in this study, we can see that the agency exerted by the people with expertise is mainly concentrated on the relevant LOTE course design. And he has made specific arrangements in terms of LOTE course objectives and course content. However, it is worth mentioning that although the macro-level policy and planning of the national government makes a guideline for the people of expertise, the personal factors of language experts also have an important impact on the LOTE course design, especially the emergence and implementation of the agitative actions of class time reform is closely related to their personal experience. From this, it once again confirmed the important influence of personal factors on the implementation of LOTE multilingual education policy and planning at the meso-level.

4.3 People with Expertise at the Micro-Level: The Language Teacher's Agency

The macro-level policy and planning are ultimately implemented at the micro-level. In this study, the three foreign language teachers belong to the categorization of people with expertise at the micro-level. They are practically performing the teaching of LOTE courses and conduct with the macro-level recipients of LOTE courses most frequently. The effectiveness of macro-level policy and planning depends on, to a certain extent, the micro-level LOTE course teachers' teaching ability and their quality of teaching activities. In some sense, they are relatively far away from the macro-level LOTE multilingual policy and planning. Therefore, whether they understand the national considerations behind the implementation of the program in their school and their reactions to the national policy have formed a strong intervention on the effect of LOTE courses. At the same time, the frequency of communication with the experts and program director at the meso-level also affects the outcome of the macro-level policy and planning. The details can be seen in the following interviews with the three language teachers:

A: Do you know the reasons for the launch of the LOTE courses in the school? And what is your idea about this course? And the last question is how often do you get communication with the program director or the language expert?

P3: I know that the school launched the LOTE courses mainly to respond to the needs of the national ‘Belt and Road initiative’ for multilingual and multi-skilled talents. The reason why French is a member of the LOTE courses is that our school has long-term cooperation and friendly exchange relationship with some French universities. Cultivating excellent multilingual talents will undoubtedly contribute to the country going to the world. Therefore, I am honored to be one of the teachers of the LOTE courses. I also perform teaching tasks strictly following the school's course design, not only imparting language knowledge but also increasing classroom input to relevant cultural history. In order to achieve the established course objective, I continue to improve my teaching modes in practice, and the students’ feedback is still relatively good. For the last question, almost every week I send emails to the program director to report the condition of the class. Once I have
some questions or suggestions on language teaching, I would discuss it with the language expert. All these communications are very meaningful in promoting the quality of teaching.

P4: I only know that it is in response to the national call, and the specific reasons are not very clear. For the course design, I can't agree to some extent. For example, language knowledge and cultural knowledge account for a large proportion of the course design, but the proportion of professional knowledge is very small. I don't think such a form of course design can help the students to lay a solid foundation on their major learning. In fact, the class time of cultural knowledge can spare some to the courses of professional knowledge. After all, students would have many opportunities to experience and understand foreign cultures after going abroad. To be honest, I don't like to communicate with the top leaders of these LOTE courses. I also don't think they have more say in education and LOTE course teaching.

P5: I don't have any idea about the reason why the school offers this course. In fact, I don't work at this school. I am just a part-time teacher in the Spanish course. But I know that the Spanish course is proposed by the program director out of optimism about the prospect of Spanish and his interest in related cultures. I don't have any special views on this course. I think my responsibility is to teach well and patiently deal with the students' questions. Speaking of this, I have to say that the 55-minute course length of this course is indeed innovative. Most of the students have been very active in the last 10 minutes of the interactive session. I think the teaching effect is not bad. Last, I have some connections with the program director, he always cares about the condition of the students and the teaching contents of my class. As for the language expert, I know he is responsible for the whole LOTE course design, but I have little contact with him.

We also compared the results of several tests in each class. It was found that the French class had the best grades, while the Portuguese class had the worst of the three, and the Spanish class took the middle position. It can be seen from the above interviews that the French teacher in the LOTE courses has a relatively clear understanding of the macro- and meso-level policy and planning, and she also has a positive and affirmative attitude to these policies and policy-makers. Meanwhile, she also habitually communicated with the program director and discussed topics related to class-teaching with the language expert. Under such circumstances, she actively implemented the agentive action, constantly improved her teaching methods, and finally achieved a relatively satisfactory result. The worst performance of the Portuguese teacher is not only ignorant of the macro-level policy and planning but has doubts or even negative attitudes towards the meso-level course design. It is his negative personal attitude that limits his agency to a certain extent which has led him to run counter to the policy-makers at the meso-level. In the end, the unsatisfactory teaching outcome at the micro-level of the class will ultimately affect the outcomes of the macro-level policy and planning of the national government. Although the Spanish teacher interviewed is not familiar with the macro-level policy context, his frequent contacts with the program director have brought him a clearer understanding of the implementation of the meso-level policy of LOTE courses. He can also strictly complete the teaching tasks. However, the constraints of his identity, that is, a part-time teacher, made his agentive actions be restricted to a certain extent.

5. CONCLUSION

Many studies have shown that at the meso to micro levels, local policymakers and implementers also play a key role in language policy and planning [35-38]. In fact, it is these individuals who organize the implementation of policy, seek responses to local needs and in turn influence the trend in prospective policy-making [39]. In this study, the roles of different individual actors at different levels have been explored in the process of multilingual education policy and planning, and implementation in reaction to the shifting macro-level language policy. By investigating a case of LOTE courses in a University in China, the research shows that the agency exerted by the local agents in the context of shifting macro-level language policy is more subjective. At the same time, the macro-level policy and planning of the national government is implemented superficially. Besides this, the study also finds that the contextual and personal factors that can mediate the agency of different categorizations of people. Especially some personal factors may constraint the individual actors to conduct agentive actions.

By investigating the overall and complex situation of micro-language policy formulation, this
research will have some implications on macro-level policy-makers in China or similar countries. For them, the key to policy success is to realize the limitations of the macro-language policy on the implementation in the local context. The smooth implementation of macro-level language education policy and planning in local context will require an in-depth introduction and explanation of national policies to local individual actors by high-level policy planners, helping them to have a deeper understanding of the purpose of the micro-level language education policy and planning. And at the same time taking feasible measures to motivate them to actively fulfill their responsibilities is also expected to be encouraged. In addition, high-level policy planners need to establish and improve supervision and evaluation mechanisms for local individual actors.

On the other hand, macro-level policy-makers should also recognize the constraints of contextual and personal factors on individual actors in the local context. Once realizing these constraints, substantive support should be provided to maximize the lifting of such restrictions. For example, conducting more on-the-spot investigations to find out the real condition in the local context, and provide professional training for teachers in combination with the actual situation. Meanwhile, actively carrying out communications and interactions of various categorizations among the macro-, meso- and micro-levels.

In short, the implementation of macro-level language policy and planning is inseparable from the implementation in the local context. How to ensure that local individual actors have a deep understanding of macro-level policies, and actively to exercise agentive actions are the key to the success of macro-level policy and planning. To solve the restrictive influence of contextual and personal factors on the agency of individual actors requires interaction and mutual understanding of policy participants at all levels. Therefore, strengthening the construction of the dialogue mechanism for policy participants at all levels and providing practical solutions to real-world problems are the critical problems that high-level policy-makers need to pay close attention to and resolve.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents’ written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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