

Language Policy & Planning: A Road Map for Implementing The National Language Policy of Thailand

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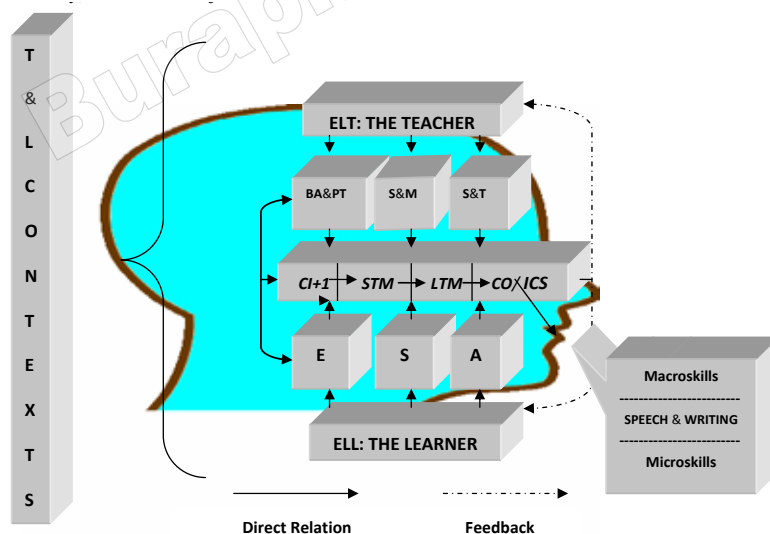
According to the development of NLP (National Language Policy) of the RIT (Royal Institute of Thailand) during 2006-2010, the drafting subcommittee on languages for economic and professional purposes, including the neighbouring languages (cf. Brudhiprabha 1976 & 2007, RIT 2009, Warotamasikkadit & Person 2011) reach a consensus on a ‘trilingual+ policy’ as indicated in the following formula

NLP: MT/L1 (Thai) + 1WL (English) + 1EL (Chinese)* + (1NL—optional)*

With reference to TEGL/TELF/TEWL (Teaching English as a Global Language/ Lingua Franca/ Working Language), our policy goes hand in hand with the ‘Asean Language Policy’ to be implemented officially in 2015 onwards (see Kirkpatrick 2010).

• The question is: ‘How are we going to implement this policy’? While a strategic planning is being prepared in full swing by the RIT (see Minute of the Meeting, 8th Sept.2013 and Report on Frame of Reference & Guidelines of Strategic Planning 2014)—‘a road-map card to revolutionise ELT’ (English Language Teaching) has been laid on the table, i.e. a snap coup must be mounted—the sooner the better (see Brudhiprabha 2013 and S.T. Kosol S.N.E-Sarn 2014 in progress).

• Finally, the ‘MAMELT for Thailand’ has been reconstructed as follows:



SOURCE: “Pedagogical Dialogues with a Guru: พุดจาประสาครู (2014 in progress)

*NB: Thai tertiary students opted for studying Chinese & Bahasa Indonesia 91 & 68%, respectively (Wadsorn 2012)

The **'Model of the All-inclusive Methodology of ELT (MAMELT) for Thailand'** represents a **'theory & practice of English language teaching & learning' (ELTL)** with **'the whole and the sum of its parts'**. The four instructional factors: **'context, presage, process, and product'** (cf. Dunkin & Biddle 1974: 38 and Stern 2009: 500) are bringing influence to bear on this model. The relationships between **'the teacher and the taught'** are integrated with what is going on in the acquirer/learner's brain/mind in terms of a **'computational model of L2 acquisition'** (see Ellis 2000: 35). Indeed, it's holistic and that is the scientific part and parcel of a viable **'theory-into-practice'** paradigm. Also, the model is all-inclusive. **"We [now] see both the wood/forest and the trees vividly"** without simply leaping the harvest or importing ELT methods in vogue out of context from the West any more (Brudhiprabha 2010:12).

All in all, the entire process takes place **'in the social context of teaching/learning English in Thailand—not in a vacuum, or out of its real environment'**. The teaching & learning contexts are the overall coverage of the whole MAMELT, so to speak!

On the teacher's part: the **'Basic Assumptions & Principles of Teaching'** (BA&PT), **'Syllabuses & Materials'** (S&M), including **'Strategies & Techniques'** (S&T) must go hand in hand. On the learner's part: the students must be **'Engaging (E), Studying (S) and Activating (A)'** in the classroom so that a **'Comprehensible Input + 1'** (CI+1) could be fully taken into **'Short-Term Memory'** (STM) or *intake* whereby some of which would be stored in **'Long-Term Memory'** (LTM), i.e. what is called **L2 knowledge/competence or learner language** in the **'black box'** which is the acquirer/learner's brain/mind where **'Communicative Output'** (CO) vis-à-vis **'Integrated Communication Skills'** (ICS) in terms of **'Macroskills & Microskills'** could be interconnected—and finally resulting in actual **'Speech & Writing'** or language using in the real world!

All in all, that is the concrete **'INPUT-PROCESS-OUTPUT'** procedure of language acquisition/learning from the cognitive psycholinguistic standpoints nowadays. In sum, the **'ELTL Theory & Practice'** have come full circle as a new holistic process for the first time in Thailand. *If, and only if, we wish to revitalise our ELTL, I recommend that a sweeping coup must be staged:*

We no longer have any time to waste. The moment for just talking or paying lip-service is over. It's a truism that **'actions speak louder than words'**. I submit that **'there will be no renaissance without revolution'**! We must discard the status quo with our deliberate crusade (Brudhiprabha 2013; 7).

"To be or not to be, that is the question" goes a phrase from Shakespeare's play **Hamlet**. Period!

That's the focus of our sustainable **'International MEd & PhD Programmes'** at the TEG Unit, HRD Centre, Faculty of Education, Burapha University, Chonburi. *[You can surf our Web at <http://ighrd.buu.ac.th> & our E-mail address is: rattanas@buu.ac.th. You are cordially invited to pay us a visit at **Queen Sirikit Building 1J**.]*

By the way, with regard to the implementation of our **NLP**—in the ideal world of **'Globalisation'**—I submit that at least we need a **'3-in-1 person'** as illustrated in the **NLP formula** above. That is to say, an individual who knows her/his mother tongue or L1 very well and having a good command of the global language, *including a fluent user of at least one of her/his neighbouring tongues.*

With reference to Article 34 of the ASEAN Charter, it is stated that **“the working language of ASEAN shall be English”**. We are indeed in complete agreement about the decision. Of course, *the de facto adoption of English as a sole lingua franca (ELF) and working language (EWL)* enshrined by the ten member countries of the ASEAN & the AEC has significant pedagogical implications for & applications to language policy & planning *in terms of the multilingual model and the lingua franca approach to ELT in the region* (cf. Kirkpatrick 2010).

However, **‘language-in-education policy cannot mushroom overnight’!** It takes a very long time to acquire and/or learn a given language until one has **‘fluent command to communicate to a useful level of proficiency’**—*even our mother tongue is no exception*. Hence it’s my earnest plea to start **‘HERE & NOW’**—*today, tomorrow will be too late!*

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