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Michele Gazzola. *The evaluation of language regimes: Theory and application to multilingual patent organisations*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 2014. Xxii +380 pp. €99; \$149.

Reviewed by Reynaldo F. Macías

Gazzola's *Evaluation of language regimes* is a recent contribution to the exploding scholarship and literature in language policy and planning. His stated purpose is "to examine the theoretical and empirical implications of applying principles of policy analysis to the selection, design and evaluation of language policies" (pp. 1–2). His aims include theorizing and methodological innovation in language policy and planning. Grounded in recently elaborated "economics of language" frameworks, this dissertation-turned-book has a primary focus on the evaluation of language policies and practices, applying the unique and disciplined economics-defined criteria of "efficiency" and "fairness," with a specific case focus on two multi-national organization's multilingual management of patent applications, granting, and publication.

The book has nine chapters, organized into two major parts between an introduction (Chapter 1: The need for evaluation in language policy) and a conclusion (Chapter 9: Summary and perspectives). *Part 1–Theory: From economic analysis to multilingual communication*, has four chapters (Chapter 2: The criteria of efficiency and fairness; Chapter 3: Multilingual communication as an object of evaluation; Chapter 4: The evaluation process; and Chapter 5: Indicators). *Part 2–Application to multilingual patent organizations*, has three chapters (Chapter 6: Multilingualism and patents; Chapter 7: The language regime of the PCT (Patent Cooperation Treaty); and Chapter 8: The language regime of the EPO (European Patent Office)). There are also 49 figures (mainly flow charts), 39 tables, and a list of 70 "abbreviations" reflecting governmental and evaluation term acronyms, with five appendices, a list of references and a subject index. As with many dissertations, this book devotes nearly half of its pages to introduction, review of different literatures (language policy and planning; economics of language, and public policy analysis), and setting up the case (conceptually and methodologically) for how to carry out the evaluation of these two language regimes. In this case, however, rather than just literature reviews, these early chapters are as much logic and argument for doing evaluations of competing language policy/plan "scenarios" in very specific and detailed ways, that are informed by these literatures and specifically

by very detailed guidelines for the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies recently published by the European Commission. Its results of the evaluation of the two language regimes are very interesting and placed within the context of the research literature on translation and interpretation to give the reader a sense of the significance of the results but more so, the utility of the methodology, and the value of these kinds of rigorous evaluation studies.

One can ask whether this work provides anything new for language policy research, and whether this work was done well enough to provide an exemplar for other future work. The short answer to these two queries is “yes.” Gazzola, himself, brooks his contributions as theoretical, methodological, and empirical. He meticulously explored evaluation in language policy and planning research, critically reviewed both economic research as applied to public policy analysis and evaluations (public or welfare economics), and specific concepts used in the field of public policy analysis, and adapted, not just borrowed, them to language (public) policy. Doing so he argued for a theoretical and conceptual elaboration of the relationships between the policy cycle (formulation, implementation), and the roles of research, analysis, and evaluation (he often collapses these three to “evaluation”), *before* the formulation of policy alternatives (scenarios), *during* implementation, and *after* to assess outputs and impacts. He selected the economics criteria of “efficiency” (financial, material and/or symbolic resource allocation commonly using the techniques of cost-benefits analysis, and more appropriately in language policy and planning, cost effectiveness analysis) and “fairness” (equity or distributive justice) as the principal bases for these evaluations.

Methodologically, Gazzola argues for very fine grained specification of concepts and procedures in evaluation in economics and public policies in general and specifically adapted and applied to language policies. He elaborates in detail on sequential procedures and devotes an entire chapter to “indicator theory” and the specification of indicators in relation to policy goals as well as to data specification, collection, and analyses, which is very useful. He briefly discusses different types of indicators (e.g., social indicators and economic indicators), the varied history of their use in social science research and policy analysis, exploring the relationship between evaluation design, criteria for evaluation, specification of indicators, and data collection and analytic techniques. Utilizing this discussion and providing for operational constructs of “language as a public good” and of “effective (multilingual) communication,” he creatively presents a specific methodology for evaluating translation and interpretation in the language regimes (the configuration of linguistically diverse environments and their “practical” management) of two multinational organizations (the Patent Cooperation Treaty of the World Intellectual Property Organization, and the European Patent Office), as an exemplar of the usefulness and applicability of the methodological approach. Readers

of this book should pay attention as well to the many times Gazzola identifies the absence of adequate models or constructs or methods to carry out this kind of evaluation in language policy, and where he clearly reports on the selection of steps he takes to address these construct absences or methodological weaknesses. From an empirical point of view, Gazzola presents the results of his evaluation research. These results differ from other such studies, especially focused on cost-benefit analyses of translations. Gazzola finds that an increase in the number of languages used in these patent organizations (increased linguistic diversity) can both improve the efficiency of the patent systems and lead to a more balanced distribution of costs amongst member countries.

I also answered “yes” to the question of whether the book provides an exemplar of this research that should be emulated in future work. It is a solid and well-grounded empirical project of evaluating competing policy scenarios for two language regimes. It is well placed within various literatures that make it an interdisciplinary contribution to language policy and planning. And yet, we should note its delimitations and to some extent its shortcomings regards the approach taken. The study still depends on recent characterizations of the history of LPP that are inadequate in their scope and coverage. While this is not a fatal flaw of the study it does limit Gazzola’s understanding of a good part of the LPP research and evaluation that is not much included in these “histories” of the field; something which could provide for a slightly different characterization of the historical role of language policy evaluation in the field. For example, these histories often exclude recognizing and including different approaches to “evaluation” research done in the name of policy needs, like the national language surveys of the 1950s and 1960s. These “histories” often characterize them simply as “technical applied linguistics service” to emerging neo-colonial nation-states. Compare this characterization to Gazzola’s more substantive discussion of contemporary measurement of national multilingual diversity in nation-states like Canada; or those on literacy done in the 1990s and early 21st century in a number of countries; or the “effectiveness” research of bilingual education and instruction; or the use of language testing for different policy purposes, like voting, immigration, and naturalization. What a closer look at these efforts show is the greater role of the politics of evaluation and assessment in the policy cycle by the public authorities themselves, reflecting, to some extent “standpoint” perspectives of the “research.” These works on the history of the field of language policy and planning also often ignore the criticisms of this early “classical” LPP work and the alternative claims made by stakeholder linguistic communities and non-dominant scholars, which were often based on “inductive” approaches, tended to concentrate on outcome and impact of language policies, and which often led to a different “evaluation” of the policies. Again the *politics* of evaluation, and a critique of the contested

culturally-embedded epistemologies disrupt the rationality and the positivistic approach of much of this government funded evaluation.

Gazzola recognizes these different positions and interests in the policy making process, and refers to these as part of the *political* process and not as integrally tied to policy *evaluation*, which takes place after policies have been determined. Yet, these “politics of language” and “politics of language policy,” and “politics of language policy evaluation,” have been the focus of language policy research that has provided, for example, a taxonomy of language policy goals (e.g., promotive, tolerant, restrictive, repressive), and their implementation approaches (e.g., as mechanisms of social control), which could guide different interpretations of the objectives of the language policies, as well as identify the competing interests (valuations) of language policy “stakeholders” who might have “standing” in these policy evaluation processes. These issues were categorized as outside the process of evaluation of specific policies, or as context, or as descriptive rather than evaluative elements of the analyses, but they beg for *greater* attention and integration into the evaluation of LP process especially as applied to various notions of “fairness.”

Otherwise, the contributions of language economics to LPP can very much appear to suffer from a technocratic, positivist, market economics approach to evaluation (with its “culturally” grounded notions of rational choice theory and its reliance on formulaic abstractions and expressions) that it falls prey to some of the previous criticisms of the “classical” language policy and planning research, by some of the critical theorists. Its singular version of comparative economic systems based on the sliding scale role of the state, or the absence of a discussion of comparative legal systems in determining language laws other than those generated through the political “legislative” process, or even a greater discussion of what is policy and its function, within the context of comparative political systems, also beg for more attention as to the applicability of the approach more widely within the field. A greater recognition of this topic of evaluation research done within or as part of the policy making, implementation cycle, in effect by the public authority, as opposed to being carried out as scholarship by those independent of the public authority, would also place many of the weaknesses, albeit criticisms, of LPP in better context.

This study, is not the final word in language policy evaluation, but it is very well done, and moves the LPP field forward by more closely integrating to it the growing sub-field of language economics, and a more disciplined approach to public policy analysis and evaluations. Gazzola is clear about what he leaves out of this study, and he is explicitly clear about where his operational definitions/conceptualizations are placed within contested areas of LPP research and evaluation. These aspects of this work strengthen the value of the study rather than constrain its utility to the field, and makes the book deserving of a close read by

those involved in language policy making, language strategists, scholars, and those aspiring to be such.

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About the reviewer

Reynaldo F. Macías is Professor of Chicana/o studies, education, and applied linguistics at UCLA. He has worked and published in language policy, bilingual education, and literacy, amongst other areas. He has also worked as a language policy “implementer” for the US government as the Assistant Director of the National Institute for Education, responsible for Language studies and Reading research; was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the National Advisory Board for the National Institute for Literacy, and was on the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee for the 1994 National Adult Literacy Survey.