Equality in English language education policy for minority students in Vietnam

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(http://www.pictures88.com/back-to-school/back-to-school-cartoons)
Outline

- The context: Language and education policies
- Methodology
- Participants
- Issues in implementing the policies
- Lack of consideration of language and culture factors
- Lack of assessment of students’ needs and attitudes
- Implications
Vietnam is a multi-ethnic and multilingual country.

Many ethnic minority people have been bilingual in their own language and Vietnamese.
The context: Language and education policies

One school system is applied for students of all ethnicities (Kinh majority and other minorities)

The context: Language and education policies

- Vietnamese is the only language of instruction.
- Minority languages are devalued.
The context

Hmach ! or Chào bạn ! or Hello !

(Bahnar language) (Vietnamese language)

How do minority students deal with different languages?
Methodology

Qualitative approach
Case study
Student interview
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Year of birth</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>L1 (Home language)</th>
<th>L2 (School language)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-Anton</td>
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<td>Rengao</td>
<td>Rengao</td>
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<td>Y-Nom</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jeh</td>
<td>Jeh</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Issues in implementing the policies

Lack of consideration of language and culture factors

“In early days of Grade 6, it's more difficult for them [minority students], because... they haven't mastered Vietnamese yet, but had to speak English” (A-Anton).
Issues in implementing the policies

Lack of consideration of language and culture factors

The cultural contents of the curriculum are mainly designed for Kinh majority students.
Issues in implementing the policies

Lack of assessment on students’ needs and attitudes

English did not play any considerable role in the students’ daily communication in secondary and high schools.
Issues in implementing the policies

Lack of assessment on students’ needs and attitudes

Many students believed that English was useful for them because this language was ‘the trend’ of the society.
Policy implications

- Applying L1-based education.
- Repositioning languages and cultures used in the curriculum.
- Understanding the roles and costs of English education for minority students.
- Targeting multilingualism.

(https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2008/11/18/anachronism-and-american-indians/)
References


Thank You!