

Fall 2016

**Book Notes: "Language Policy" David Cassels Johnson, New York; Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 291 pp.; \$36 (soft cover); ISBN: 9780230251700 (soft cover)**

Alexandre Couture Gagnon

*The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley*, [alexandre.couturegagnon@utrgv.edu](mailto:alexandre.couturegagnon@utrgv.edu)

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### Recommended Citation

Couture Gagnon, A. (2016). Book Notes: "Language Policy" David Cassels Johnson, New York; Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 291 pp.; \$36 (soft cover); ISBN: 9780230251700 (soft cover). *Jostes: The Journal of South Texas English Studies*, 6(2), 80-81.

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*Language Policy*

David Cassels Johnson

New York; Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 291 pp.; \$36 (soft cover); ISBN: 978-0-230-25170-0 (soft cover)

Alexandre Couture Gagnon

*Language Policy*, by David Cassels Johnson, provides an overview of current research on applied linguistics and language ethnography. Chapters 1 and 2 focus on definitions of applied linguistics. Chapter 3 successively presents contemporary work by other scholars in applied linguistics and language ethnography in the form of commented summaries of various peer-reviewed articles. Chapter 4 revolves around appropriation, a variant of policy implementation. Johnson details language ethnography in Chapter 5 and educational language policy engagement and action research (ELPEAR) in Chapter 6.

This is the book professors are hoping exists when teaching advanced students interested in these fields (or related ones). The text is simple and abstract concepts are defined, often with quotations and references from other academics, in boxes. Chapter 7 presents different examples of future research, with research questions, explanations of potential methodology, and opportunities for engaging the community in the research. In Chapter 8, Johnson lists all possible resources for students keen to embark on their own research. Guiding students to these two chapters will certainly help them write their final papers.

Without explicitly stating it as the main argument of the book (which is difficult to pinpoint as there are no formal introduction or conclusion), Johnson reiterates throughout the text that language policy formulation and implementation are not necessarily equal. In Chapters 2 and 3, the author discusses at multiple points how civil servants can implement a single policy in various ways. In Chapters 4, 6 and 7, he differentiates between policy appropriation and implementation. He writes: "I use the term *appropriation* instead of implementation because the latter implies a linear process with little agency while the former refers to the creative and agentive ways that language policy agents put a policy into action" (p.212, emphasis original). Johnson's definition of appropriation (influenced by Levinson and Sutton, 2001) contributes to the larger literature on the challenges of public policy implementation. It constitutes one example of Lipsky (1980)'s concept of street-level bureaucracy: there exists a gap between how policy (e.g., bilingual education) is expected to function and how civil servants (e.g., teachers) put it into action.

In conclusion, *Language Policy* presents research in applied linguistics and language ethnography, suggests new research venues, and highlights the problems of implementing language policy. It is pertinent to advanced undergraduate and graduate students of this topic.

## References

- Levinson, B.A.U., and Sutton, M. (2001). Introduction: Policy as/in practice—A sociocultural approach to the study of educational policy. In B.A.U. Levinson and M. Sutton (eds.), *Policy as practice: Toward a comparative sociocultural analysis of educational policy*, pp.1-22. London: Ablex Publishing.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street level bureaucrats*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.