The Ambivalent Placement of a LWUC (Language of Wider Use and Communication) (English) in Content Study at University

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on socio-political and socio-educational positions taken at one discipline-area study (i.e. sociology/social work), at university in Japan with regard to its language of wider use and communication (LWUC) English language provision. An explicit integration of a LWUC English study with Japanese L1 discipline-area and life-issues’ content study is necessary (1) for Japan as a nation, (2) for Japanese people as a citizenry in an increasingly complex and connected Asian region and world, and (3) for the further regional and global development of the university in Japan. The neglect that has existed at one university named “Shimada” and its sociology and social work faculty in conceiving and developing an integrated language and content study reflects what Lindblom (1990) calls a half-hidden conflict. This conflict involves groups of disconnected language and content faculty who stubbornly adhere to preferred solutions regarding the placement and function of English language study in the curriculum. Possible solutions with respect to a more benefical higher education role and responsibility of a LWUC English language study at this particular discipline-area studies’ university can only be approached if, as Lindlom maintains, inquiry and knowledge are brought to bear so as to alter misconceived notions and practices of integrated language and content study.

Key Words: ambivalent placement, language of wider use, content study