

# *Switzerland's Multilingual Education Policy and the Implications for China*

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**Abstract:** The language policy is the educational policy of a country and the language policy of a country. Or the missing branches. In terms of education, the policy of language teaching is closely related to the teaching needs. It has a big connection with politics. First, it is related to the stability of the domestic political situation and the national closure. In addition to these, there are correct strategies to treat foreign language teaching will also play an important role in the economic development and the improvement of international status.

## **1. Introduction**

With the development and development of "Belt and Road", the economic and trade exchanges between China and Europe are increasing day by day. People's understanding and mastery of the foreign language teaching of "leading the way" region has increasingly become the focus of academic attention. Switzerland is the core region of "Belt and Road" in Western Europe, and it is also recognized by the world as the best country for English education and multi-ethnic management. Its development strategy of language education is very meaningful. Switzerland, located in central Europe, is a multiethnic and multilingual ethnic group. Switzerland has four official languages: German, French and Italian, La Toroman, German in 17 states, four French and one Italian, and Italian. Our country is also trying to explore and implement policies related to language education. The Swiss language education policy has received wide international attention. A widely accepted and many different civilizations. In addition to its geographical environment, Switzerland also has the respect for the national spirit, the equality of the national spirit, the precipitation of the cultural soil, the consciousness of the traditional democratic mechanism and the economic effect of multiple languages. The process of implementing "multi-language system" in Switzerland has been very smooth and achieved great results. The formulation and implementation of language teaching has been widely recognized by countries around the world, and has been valued by foreign language policy scholars in a considerable scope. Switzerland's education system can be divided into compulsory education and continuing education. "Most students attend local public colleges after completing their compulsory education, and only 5 percent of students go to private colleges." 121 Continuing education includes higher education and higher vocational education. The Swiss language teaching policy includes primary, secondary, and higher education [1].

## **2. Formulate policies for language education**

The compulsory education of foreign language teaching in Switzerland is a long historical process.

### **2.1 The system for formulating education policies for the compulsory education stage.**

Switzerland has not yet established an independent country, so it has the legal rights of the federal and various states; its compulsory education policy is basically implemented in 26 countries. States have a strong autonomy in the development of education, and can make a better evaluation of the reality of the states, and formulate appropriate and comprehensive teaching guidelines. However, this autonomy also causes differences in educational resources, educational level and development level. This will not only have a certain impact and restriction on the overall implementation of national basic education, but also make it more difficult for the federal government to develop a comprehensive compulsory education plan.

In the early 19th century, the Swiss cantons cooperated in education and culture, but the agreements signed at that time did not have any legal force. In order to promote the development of compulsory education, the US federal government has begun to unify the policy of compulsory education in all states to ensure the quality and balanced development of education. In 1897, the Swiss cantonal Education Council (EDK) was formally established. The EDK is the highest decision division and it is federal level education policy. Twenty-six state education ministers, who play an important role in decision-making about education and cultural development, perform their duties during the compulsory education stage, but the states still have some autonomy. When EDK started, it only focused on exchanging culture and education among the states. After the 20th century, the focus of education gradually shifted to the formulation and implementation of education, and its influence on education increased day by day.

The structure of the Swiss-speaking area is so complex that the EDK divides the organizations into two groups: the Roman and Ticino Interstate Public School Council (CIIP). Roman is a French-speaking district in the west of Switzerland, Ticino is an Italian-speaking area, the south of Switzerland, CIIP is responsible for the communication of the two languages. The second is the Academic Affairs Council of Derui District. It cooperates with Bern, Freiburg, Grabingdon and Valle in the German-speaking region, and is divided into three sub-institutions: the Central Swiss Education Council, the Eastern Swiss Education Council, Liechtenstein, and the Northwest Education Council of Switzerland. Each division is responsible for constantly revising and improving the teaching policies in accordance with the teaching policies set by EDK and combined with the specific national conditions of the region.

### **2.2 Procedures for formulating policies on language education**

#### **2.2.1 Develop multiple-language policies**

Ritu had already begun in the Haier Republic. France invaded Switzerland in 1798 and promoted representative democracy based on the Republican system; after the draft, the original piecemeal alliance gradually became a whole and inseparable part and eliminated the boundaries of various countries. The Helvi Republic, though not long established, had a profound influence on all classes of Switzerland. In the war against the invaders, the Swiss gradually formed their own national consciousness, striving to maintain their own language and culture, and striving to achieve their own independence. Since then, Switzerland has been a multilingual country.

The policy of the Swiss multi-speaking countries is a long historical process. On September 12,

1848, the Swiss Federal Parliament promulgated a constitution, in which article 109 stipulates: German, French, Italian, is the official language of Switzerland. In Article IV in 1999, "German, French, Italian, and Romanche" is the official language of Switzerland. "Article 70 states:" German, French and Italian are the official languages of the Federal Government. The Romanshi language is also a full member of the Romanshi language.

### **2.2.2 Develop multiple-language policies**

Since the promulgation of the Swiss Federal Constitution in 1848, the teaching of English and language, there remained a huge gap until after the Second World War. Based on the multilingual policy based on the Constitution, Switzerland has focused on a set of specific policies for English teaching. From the order of historical development, the formulation of the language teaching policy in Switzerland can be roughly divided into four periods. The first stage is the secondary education of English and Chinese. Phase 2: During the reporting period in Switzerland. The third stage: in the 1998 report of the Swiss Education Council. The fourth stage: the implementation of a unified primary school Chinese teaching[2].

## **3. The basic policy of multilingual education**

Switzerland's existing language education system is very mature and is constantly supplemented every year, all based on the Common Strategy for Compulsory Education Foreign Language Education in 2004, the Harnos Coordination Agreement in 2007 and the Federal Education Standards in 2011. In the Federal Education Standards, the 2011 foreign language teaching policies mainly include: language selection, teaching ideas and curriculum setting; teaching principles, teaching objectives, curriculum standards and other aspects. In view of the limited space of the paper, this paper focuses on two levels: the curriculum specification of English teaching and the English test evaluation.

### **3.1 The multilingual curriculum**

The 2011 Federal Education Standard proposes the educational indicators for foreign language development in compulsory education, including: the main purpose and criterion of English education is to enable learners to speak and write in English; according to EDK, according to the guidance of EDK, learning English must be based on European language, and the basic language are German, French and Italian. The second part: written notes / reports, requests / prompts, expressing opinions / debates, and maintaining relationships; Section 3: Language communication resources refer to resources for linguistic, sociolinguistic, and linguistic applications.

In the English proficiency test, there are five abilities that match the purpose of school Chinese teaching: listening, reading and discussion skills; English speaking and writing skills, and other related skills- -cross-cultural and methodological skills in the language. Language translation is divided into seven categories, each with its own specific needs, such as transforming spoken words into words and words into words. In examinations, cross-cultural and methodological skills are difficult. Findators use European languages to support this diverse cultural and methodological training and evaluation techniques. Unlike the school Chinese proficiency test, foreign language ability is divided according to grade. The basic ability of grade 8 is: one foreign language (two foreign languages, more than four years, and equivalent ability level); two foreign languages (English for more than two years, and with corresponding ability level); the basic knowledge of grade 11 test is: 1,2 languages (over 5-7 years old, and have certain ability). In terms of subjectivity, the basic foreign language skills are equivalent to the off-campus language skills. Because only by

listening, speaking, reading and writing can we truly learn a foreign language, which is in line with the basic principles of the psychological and physiological development of the human body, and is also consistent with the needs of the gradual expansion of human understanding. The ability of the auxiliary class is very different. The main purpose of learning English lies in the accuracy of learning, the correctness of orthography and the correctness and standardization of orthography, while the literary law focuses on the accuracy. However, in foreign language teaching, the most important thing is naturally how to use English. Students must have certain language skills, can be competent for translation and oral translation work. In the core teaching tasks of the school, develop different cultures and skills. The purpose of strengthening cross-cultural quality education is to enable students to learn a foreign language and understand the culture behind it, and the purpose of learning skills is to make learners master a language learning style and learning strategy, such as comparing the common and different between different languages.

### **3.2 Evaluation and evaluation of multiple languages**

The Federal Education Standard requires completing an English proficiency test in the final stages of fourth graders 8 and 11, but only at the end of grades 8 or 11. After entering school, children will start learning English in grade 5 to grade 7. After three years, the students will have a language proficiency test. Unlike the guidelines for GRE assessment, the language used in schools is more exhaustive and clear. The listening, speaking and reading abilities of the first and second foreign languages are basically the same: the English level is A1.2 at the end of the eighth grade, and A2.2 at the end of grade 11. However, grade 11 students have a certain demand for English writing ability, which is around A2.1. There is no doubt that the school language is more attractive than other languages.

The Guidelines still follow the provisions of the Harnos Agreement, but there are still differences, focusing on identifying the object of the language of the language. This new teaching goal is to develop students' basic English skills, while also focusing on foreign language and cross-cultural understanding. Switzerland is to increasing the training of various language teachers to ensure the smooth implementation of standards. The promulgation of this standard will help to promote the development of China's social education policy, especially to help to promote the standardization of the teaching policy and educational concept in our country. The implementation of this criterion not only coordinated the level of education in Switzerland, but also improves the overall level of education and education in Switzerland.

## **4. Language education policy in China**

China is a country of multi-ethnic unity, except for the Han nationality, there are 55 ethnic minorities. There are 10,600 ethnic minorities, or 8.41 percent of China's total population. The state has 154 ethnic autonomous areas, 5 autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures, 119 counties and ethnic groups, and another 154 ethnic autonomous areas, which account for 63.75 percent of the country's total area. In more than half of the country, there are more than 80 languages. At the same time, the geographical location of various ethnic groups in China presents the characteristics of large stars and small settlement, and there are innumerable relations between various ethnic groups. At present, in most countries, some people speak their native tongue and Chinese, while some switch to Chinese. Among them, the three ethnic minorities of Manchu, She and Shi family use Chinese the most frequently. From the current domestic language use situation, although in some ethnic minorities, bilingualism has developed more widely. However, at present, most ethnic minorities in China still use their mother tongue for communication[3].

## **4.1 The characteristics of the language teaching policy**

The relationship between the subject and the pluralism. Externally, China's "bilingual teaching policy" focuses on the combination of Chinese teaching and mother tongue; besides, the SAR government also vigorously promotes English teaching and focuses on Chinese teaching. It can be seen that the Chinese language teaching is in the dominant position in the country. All ethnic minority areas and special economic zones should maintain national unity and territorial integrity when enjoying a certain social status. Beyond the subject, the diversity is also evident. In minority areas, the native language is Chinese; their mother language is Chinese, and English is their own race.

## **4.2 Main problems existing in China's language education policy**

### **4.2.1 The formulation of language education policies adopts a top-down model**

In terms of the formulation mode of language education policy, the current language education policy in China basically follows the top-down model, that is, the state and its interests representatives fully reflect the will of the state, which is promulgated and implemented by the state in the form of law. In addition, the state (or the expert group representing the national interests, etc.) directly formulates policies, and other levels of society do not participate in or rarely participate in the formulation of language education policies. In terms of policy makers, the state mainly sets up special research institutions, or selects expert groups to formulate policies on behalf of the state, and its expert team is mainly composed of excellent language education experts in China. Obviously, in the process of formulating China's current language education policy, the people's participation is less, and the voice from the public is less. Language education policy is not systematic enough, the policy making procedure is not democratic, and needs to be further scientific[4].

### **4.2.2 The orientation of language in the language education policy tends to be utilitarian**

The study of the development process of language education since the founding of the People's Republic of China has such characteristics: Chinese language education is influenced by China's political economy and diplomatic situation, and the orientation of language in China's language education policy is more utilitarian. The utility of Chinese language education policy is reflected in the following two aspects:

#### **(1) Insufficient attention is paid to ethnic language education**

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, China has implemented the national language education policy and made remarkable achievements. Especially since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CPC, the freedom of the use and development of ethnic minorities has been further respected and protected. The spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities have always been used more widely, and the standardization, standardization and trust of ethnic languages have made gratifying progress. Institutions for ethnic language education have been strengthened, and more people from ethnic minorities have mastered bilingualism. Ethnic language education has played a positive role in developing political, economic and cultural undertakings in ethnic minority areas, enhancing ethnic unity, and maintaining social stability. However, there are still some problems in the national language education in China, mainly: the lack of language education, the neglect of the implementation of national language education, the lack of effective management, the creation and use of characters, the insufficient staffing and funding also affect the smooth development of national language education. At present, China's language education tends to be international, and insufficient attention is paid to the promotion and

development of Chinese and ethnic minority languages. As the legal common language in China, the more water, the more people forget the Chinese language. Language is a form of expression of culture. When language is slowly disappearing, culture is in danger of extinction. Switzerland's position on Mandarin and English is worth learning small in China. Maintaining the status of the Chinese language is conducive to the inheritance and development of Chinese culture, the diversification of world culture and language, the world, the cultivation of the nation and the enhancement of national cohesion.

## (2) Value English and despise Chinese

With the arrival of the golden ball, China's international exchanges are frequent, and more and more domestic people learn English as an international lingua franca. "In China, English-based foreign language education has been implemented in the third grade or grade of primary school, and it has been a long time, with 220 million primary and middle school students alone." In China, the importance of English is growing. It is no longer simply a tool for international communication, but has the characteristics of socialization and policy. Since the third grade of primary school, foreign language class has become the three main courses in parallel with Chinese and mathematics. From the perspective of the development course of school education, foreign language has gradually developed from 10%, 30%, 30%, 70% and 100% of the total score of the college entrance examination, and then developed as one of the core subjects in the "3 + x" college entrance examination mode together with Chinese and mathematics. Whether active or passive, whether voluntary or helpless, foreign language first "or even" foreign language first, has become a hidden trend, "foreign language is the stepping stone to life" has become a topic of many parents...

At present, China's understanding of the purpose of foreign language learning is biased and the pursuit of utilitarian appears. For a period of time, with the increasing popularity of foreign language, the utilitarian purpose of Chinese language education has become more and more prominent. The whole society now knows the importance of foreign language learning, but China's language education policy is still clearly defined on how important it is, how big the social needs are, and how much foreign language should be learned in the compulsory stage[4].

## 5. Enlightenment to the development of Chinese language education policy

According to UNESCO, countries with a single language have only 10 to 15 percent of the population. In the world, there is a large proportion of the people using multiple languages. In May 2022, at the ceremony of Nanjing University, "today's society, a language, a new language, will gradually die; but" language and culture is an important part of human rich tradition ", it is" the foundation of the world democracy, promote a real peaceful civilization ", it tells us:" if we only accept a single text, will produce a special society, the so-called ' preference of speech '. Switzerland has set an example for China and even the world in dealing with the multilingual teaching.

### 5.1 Scientific democratization of decision-making in Chinese teaching

In terms of the policy formulation method of language teaching, we should formulate the corresponding policies according to the will of the government, and implement them through legislation. At the same time, countries (or their own national groups of experts) will make direct decisions on them. In terms of language teaching policy, there are more national brands. Opinions from the upper echelons of society, from professionals and government agencies. Chinese teaching in our country should expand the opinions of the public and from all aspects. In the process of formulating policies for language education, we should further strengthen the concept that "language is a right".

## 5.2 Change the utilitarian orientation of language education policy on language

Language is a right, it is a resource, and it can also be a problem. The orientation of Chinese language education policy regards language more as an economic resource, and examines language from the perspective of value, utility and benefit. At present, the Chinese government and people pay too much attention to English education and not enough attention and support to national language education. China should try its best to treat Chinese language education, ethnic minority language education and English language education equally from the perspective of long-term national development and multicultural development, so as to maintain the diversified ecology of language education.

## 5.3 The implementation of language education policy should deal with the problem of regional differences

China is four of many ethnic groups and multiple languages, with great differences in regional language education. The government should establish an effective system of dealing with unification and differences. For example, Switzerland takes language area as a foothold to deal with the differences of language education policies. At the same time, China should provide resource sharing and operational methods for different language education to promote the harmonious and healthy development of language education in the whole country.

## 6. Conclusion

Language is an important medium for communication. At the same time, language is the identity of the ethnic group and a precious cultural asset. Language is also an element to improve the level of social development. In today's globalization, many countries develop language education on the basis of different language views. Switzerland is located in the center of Europe, bordering Germany in the north, Italy in the south, France in the west, Austria and Liechtenstein in the east, with a multilingual background. Switzerland has four official languages, which is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, and the formulation and implementation of its language education policies has been highly evaluated by the international community. Switzerland is a country in western West that dealing with language education and multicultural success. The study of the development process, current situation, background, characteristics and problems of Swiss language education policy can see the development track of language education in multi-ethnic and multi-language countries, which has extremely important theoretical and practical significance for enriching the theory and practice of language education policy, reforming China's language education and promoting language teaching. Since the late 1980s, the development of Swiss language education policy has gone through three stages: the report period of the Swiss Federal Government in 1989, the report period of the Swiss Ministry of Education in 1998 and the period of the unified language education policy for compulsory education in 2002. The current language education policy in Switzerland has such characteristics: it attaches importance to the basic position of Mandarin, and maintains the language equality and pluralism. Strengthen English education and enhance national competitiveness. Language education policies have been diversified. Language education policy is highly transparent. At the same time, the current language education policy in Switzerland also has the problems of slow language policy reform and high implementation cost. Swiss language education policy tells us that the formulation and implementation of language education policy is influenced by economy and politics; language education policy should have accurate positioning of language; and language education policy should be rooted in national culture and have international vision. The reform of language education policy in China should

develop towards the direction of scientific and democratic language, change the utilitarian orientation of language education policy in China, and deal with the relationship between unity and difference in the process of language implementation.

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