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Assimilation or Pluralism ? Changing Policies for Minority Languages Education in Australia and the Philippines

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I GLOBALISATION AND LINGUISTIC PLURALISM

The paradox of ethnic upsurge in a globalising culture and economy has perplexed opinion leaders who have confidently expected that the whole world would tend to become more and more culturally homogeneous until a convergence of cultures eventuated. Instead, the reduction of the nation-state's authority has generated forces that counteract at least some of the homogenising effects of globalisation (Ben-Rafael & Sternberg, 2001). The tenacity of national identity and attachment to the language of one's group are evident in most parts of the world, with the rising voices of self-assertion originating from a great variety of regional, indigenous and immigrant minorities around the world. Through demands for language rights and the teaching of home language in the school, a number of minority groups have been succeeded in gaining varying degrees of acceptance in the educational systems of their countries. Others have been less successful, while continuing to strive for recognition. There are still other groups, however, which have remained strangely silent in stating their linguistic claims, being overwhelmed by centuries of negative evaluation and subordination to the languages and cultures of the dominant colonial or domestic elites.

Different countries have responded in different ways to this "ethnic challenge" (Safran 1995:2). While most countries of the world are multi-ethnic and multi-lingual, not every state recognises that its political boundaries do not necessarily coincide with cultural divisions within its own borders (Dogan, 2000). Some try to deny their existence (as in the case of Kurds inTurkey). Some consider their plurality to be temporary (as in the case of guest-workers and refugees in Germany). In still other cases every effort has been made to assimilate the minorities out of existence (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1996, 1998). The assimilation policy may be applied to historic regional language groups, as well as to new immigrant minorities. France is by no means the only country which upholds in the 'republican ideal' that equality can best be achieved in a linguistically homogenous society in which there is no 'space' for any cultural or linguistic alternatives.

In Asia there has been a traditional recognition of multilingualism which many European states lack. This does not mean that Asia has been free of strife, even if much of it could be attributed

to the unfortunate importation of the outdated European model of a monolingual nation-state (Tombiah, 1996; Smolicz, 1998).

From the pluralist perspective adopted in this paper, the maintenance and development of a group's ethnic identity presupposes support for its language and culture. Particularly vital is the survival of what we have previously referred to as the central elements or 'core values' because of their essential role in each culture's integrity and its creative force (Smolicz and Secombe 1989). Many ethnic groups are very strongly language-centred, so that their existence as distinct cultural and social entities depends on the maintenance and development of their ethno-specific tongues. In the case of some other groups, there may be some debate about which particular aspect of their culture is of prime core value significance. Indeed, a number of cultural factors, such as a specific religion, social structure or the group's 'visibility' markers may assume to be of comparable significance to that of language (Smolicz, Secombe and Hudson, 2001).

While there are grounds for disputing whether the "soul" of every nation resides in its particular ethno-specific tongue, there is no doubt that it is the linguistic core which animates not only the French and Quebecois of Canada, but also the Poles, the Greeks, the newly independent Baltic peoples, and many other ethnic groups. The French Nobel Prize winner, Maurice Allais (1989), for example, expressed his absolute conviction that the French language was the core of his culture, in view of its role in sustaining that nation's identity and vital powers of creativity, as well as its economic well-being.

II LINGUISTIC TRADITIONS OF AUSTRALIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

This present paper examines the legal and educational standing of languages in Australia and the Philippines - two culturally plural countries which both share a colonial past, but in which different geo-political factors and educational approaches have produced contrasting linguistic outcomes. In reviewing their policy responses to linguistic pluralism, it is necessary to remember that each one of them has gone through a number of different phases of development, reflective of their different cultural traditions and adaptations to political conditions prevailing at that time. Included in this review are **two case–studies**, one of the linguistic experience of **Cambodian refugees in Australia**, as an exemplar of Australian multicultural policies, and the other of two regional linguistic communities (**Cebuano and Waray**) on the island of Leyte in the **Philippines**, as an example of language maintenance in the absence of any support from the country's educational system.

Indigenous Languages. ***Both Australia and the Philippines were invaded and occupied by leading European powers - Great Britain and Spain respectively. In the case of the Philippines, there was a second dose of colonialism from another former European colony, the United States of America. Both countries were named by the Europeans and the names given to their inhabitants - Australian and Filipino - were originally reserved for the European settlers, a nomenclature which has remained unchanged in the case of Australia.***

In both instances, the indigenous population consisted of local, rural, pastoral or nomadic communities which could not present viable resistance to the conquerors (Zialcista, 1995; Bourke, Bourke and Edwards, 1994). The fate of indigenous languages in the two countries differs markedly, however. The numerically small Aboriginal population of Australia (under 2% of the present population) is divided into a number of linguistic groups, with a great number of languages already extinct. Despite current efforts to save those that remain, most "languages

of Australia" are still moving along the path towards extinction (Fesl, 1988; Jupp, 1988), reflecting the world-wide shrinking of linguistic diversity at a rate that is relatively even faster than the disappearance of biological diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1998). In contrast, the major indigenous languages of the Philippines have survived. One of them, Tagalog - in its "intellectualised" form renamed Filipino - has acquired the functions of both official and national language (Gonzales, 1996a; Sibayan, 1994), with the proportion of those able to speak it rising from 55% in 1970 to 84% in 1995. The others, often labelled as "vernaculars" in the Philippines, are more appropriately regarded as regional languages or referred to by the acronym PLOT, Philippine Languages Other than Tagalog (Smolicz and Nical, 1997).

English Language Ascendency. Australia and the Philippines both share the impact of an English linguistic heritage, with over four fifths of the Australian population in 1996 reporting that they use English only as their home language (Clyne and Kipp, 1996, 1997). In 1994 some three quarters of the Filipino people declared an ability to understand English (overwhelmingly as a second or third language) and somewhat fewer than two thirds the capacity to speak it (Gonzales, 1996a: 42, 1998: 489). In *Australia*, English monolingualism was used as the rallying point in the homogenisation of Australian society. The 'White Australia' Policy and the assimilationist model of settlement laid the foundations for Australia to develop into a predominantly English-speaking country, until the advent of multiculturalism in the 1970s which recognised that languages other than English (LOTE) could co-exist and develop alongside English (Smolicz, 1995a).

In the *Philippines*, the rapid spread of English was observed from the start of the American occupation in 1898. Under the 1935 Constitution, English was adopted as the official language of government and as a medium of instruction in school, although only 26.6% of the population claimed to be speakers of English in 1939 (Gonzales, 1998, 495). Mirroring the situation in other Asian countries, the current status of English in the Philippines remains ambiguous. As in many other former colonial settings (Phillipson, 1992), Filipinos have long complained about the loss of identity, the alienation from cultural roots and the distortion of education when so much of the formal learning continues to be in English (Constantino, 1982). Although such sentiments are often used to justify its gradual replacement in government and education with the emerging national language, Filipino, English still occupies the place of dominance not only in public office transactions and in higher education, but also in many areas covered by mass media, entertainment and technology.

Despite the dominance of English in most official spheres of life, *both countries* are to a varying degree *multilingual* and have adopted national language policies that take note of this, but in a very different manner. While in Australia the dominance of English is taken for granted, so that it is not even mentioned as an official or national language in the constitution, the 1973 Constitution in the Philippines formally named Filipino as the national language (theoretically conceptualized as based upon a synthesis of all the regional languages of the country), with English fulfilling the role of an official language alongside Filipino.

The multilingualism of the Philippines is much more ramified and deeply embedded in the community than could be inferred from the widely reported rivalry between the two official languages, English and Filipino. In fact, the emergence of Tagalog (under the name 'Filipino') and its adoption as the only national language (Gonzales, 1996b: 231) have eventually led to the virtual exclusion of Philippine languages other than Tagalog from schools (Quisumbing, 1989).

In Australia at present, the teaching of minority languages, often labelled as 'community languages other than English', is not excluded from the school but, in practice, English dominates the scene and other languages are generally taught as separate school subjects, either in mainstream, independent or 'ethnic' schools (Clyne, 1991; Smolicz, 1995b). Although the English language is ascendant in both countries, the school and societal manifestations of multilingualism in Australia and the Philippines can be seen to have followed contrasting pathways.

III LANGUAGES EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA: FROM ASSIMILATION TO MULTICULTURALISM

Before the introduction of multicultural policies in Australia during the mid 1970s, immigrant groups from non-English speaking backgrounds had encountered the culturally and linguistically monistic climate which had prevailed since the time of Federation in 1901. The hostility to "foreign" languages had become particularly pronounced during World War I, when German, and by implication all languages other than English, came to be viewed with suspicion and their use regarded as an act of disloyalty, or at least, un-Australian (Selleck, 1980). It was during that epoch that legislation was passed forbidding the use of other languages as the medium of instruction in private schools, with the result that, in South Australia alone, some 80 German Lutheran schools were forced to close. This law remained on the statute books of that State until the mid 1970s (Selleck, 1980; Clyne, 1985).

Into this culturally monistic climate came the waves of European immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds who arrived following World War II. They were met with the expectation that before long they would become almost completely assimilated. Although Australia prided itself on being a democracy, the policy adopted in relation to linguistic rights can only be described as minimalist. Minority group members were permitted to make use of their tongues merely in a domestic situation and in the restricted area of ethnic clubs and part-time, after-hours community-organized "ethnic schools". Such schools received no state support, while students were discouraged from studying there by their regular school teachers. Those who dared to speak languages other than English in public often received reprimands for not behaving in 'un-Australian' way (Clyne, 1991; Smolicz, 1995b). The whole approach was based upon the assumption that linguistic transmission would be short-lived and that a language restricted in usage to the home would become extinct in subsequent generations, without disturbing the monolingual texture of society as a whole.

Many immigrants refused to obliterate their home languages, demonstrating a simultaneous desire to acquire English and become fully Australian, without giving up their own distinctive cultural identity. Their successful adaptation eventually helped to persuade Australian governments to change course by officially abandoning the notion of a monolingual and mono-ethnic nation-state and adopting multiculturalism (Smolicz, 1998). In ideal terms, this policy sought to uphold and develop an overarching framework of Australian values in which the right of individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds to maintain their ethnic identity was assured.

Australian Multiculturalism and Language Policies. The balance of sharing and diversity in Australian multiculturalism can be seen to rest on the degree of consensus which has developed on a number of cultural and political issues in areas such as democratic forms of government, the economy and the law. Moreover, since the belated incorporation of Aboriginal-Australians as citizens with full civil rights and the abolition of the White Australia policy, sealed by the acceptance of Indo-Chinese refugees as settlers over the 1970s, the overarching

framework has excluded any requirement for uniformity in relation to race, descent or religion (Fraser, 1981; Smolicz, 1997, 1998).

The special feature of the Australian over-arching framework is that it includes English as a shared language for all people, but without excluding from education and community use the languages other than English that are spoken in the country. After the official government adoption of a multicultural orientation in the mid-1970's and the acceptance of the Galbally Report (Committee of Review of Migrant Services and Programs, 1978), advances were made in the articulation of language policies during the 1980's. Initially this resulted in per capita federal and state grants to community-run after-hours 'Saturday language schools' often labelled as 'ethnic schools'. Australia's National Policy on Languages (Commonwealth Department of Education, (Lo Bianco Report) 1987), and the language policies of states such as South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, promised to make up for at least some of the glaring omissions of the past through the gradual introduction into the school curricula of the languages other than English (LOTE) that were more widely spoken in the Australian community (Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education, 1990; Clyne, 1991).

While there still appears insufficient acceptance of the need to make the study of languages (LOTE) (let alone any of those regarded as "community languages") as a compulsory school subject, some states did formulate specific plans to teach at least one LOTE to all primary school students. By 1995 this aim was successfully accomplished in South Australia, which since 1984 had actively affirmed the need to promote cultural and linguistic diversity for all students through the application of culturally inclusive education. This included a plan to expand the existing LOTE instruction into the secondary school system, by making languages education compulsory for all students up to grade 10 by the year 2007 (Department of Education, Training and Employment, (DETE), 2000). Through this provision, it was hoped to rectify the slower progress of languages education at secondary level, where no more than 35% of government schools were teaching LOTE and enrolments were eroding from 86% at the end of primary school to less than 10% by the final 12th grade (Multicultural Education Coordinating Committee, 1997).

The protagonists of Australia's policy on languages have always stressed the need for two-way bridge-building which they perceived as a dual focus approach in relation to LOTE (Commonwealth Department of Education (Lo Bianco Report, 1987). One focus is on the creation of conditions which permit those Australians, who already speak a language other than English as their first language, to consolidate and develop it further through literacy, with the chance to learn a third language, in addition to English, if they so desire. The other is for people from English-speaking backgrounds to have every opportunity and incentive to build a linguistic bridge towards their fellow citizens in Australia, to Australia's neighbours in the region, or to people of interest elsewhere - with the possibility that one and the same language may fulfil all these functions (community, trade, geopolitical) (Lo Bianco, 1990). The National Policy on Languages offered a balanced and coordinated approach, which combined the elements of social justice, the economic and international needs of the nation and access to a variety of cultural and linguistic perspectives for all Australians.

The Multicultural Focus in Languages Curriculum. The formulation of the National Languages Policy represented the culmination of Australia's belated "discovery" of its ethnic, linguistic and cultural complexities within its own shores - some of them already of second and third or even fourth generation vintage. In practical terms, this marked the eventual acceptance of a curriculum focus upon Australia's own plurality of languages and cultures.

This approach did not conflict with the already established teaching of classical and geo-political languages since they could be, and usually were, co-existing, although there arose a competition for resources between those who favoured the rapid development of languages that fostered relationships with **other** societies and those who primarily favoured bridging the linguistic gap **within** Australian society (and hence advocated the teaching of 'community languages'). With the advent of many Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees of Chinese background, some languages such as Chinese came to be regarded as both geopolitical/trade and community languages.

The first community language introduced in South Australia was Italian, which became a Year 12 subject counting toward university entrance in 1967. Italian was followed by Dutch in 1969, Hebrew in 1973, Ukrainian and Lithuanian in 1975, Modern Greek in 1976, Latvian and Polish in 1977, Hungarian in 1978 and, later still, Vietnamese in 1984. Khmer was introduced in 1986, Croatian in 1988 and Persian in 1991, in response to requests from these language communities, some of whose members were recent arrivals in Australia. Three states, Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales have also successfully introduced Schools of Languages run by the State Departments of Education which offer a wide range of community languages outside school hours.

Moreover, there have been moves to rationalize final school year syllabus and examinations in thirty community languages so that one state examining authority becomes responsible for assessing students in that language throughout Australia. Under these arrangements Arabic, Czech, Macedonian, Maltese, Serbian, Slovenian and Swedish have become available to all students in most Australian states for examination purposes, with South Australia, for example, taking responsibility for national syllabus development and examining in Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian and Khmer.

The positive aspects of the "multicultural focus" policies have resulted in making Australian society aware that children of non-English-speaking backgrounds do not come empty handed, but bearing cultural gifts, chief among them being their linguistic resources. There is a growing realisation that it makes sense to build upon the languages concerned and to utilize the great potential locked in over two million Australian bilinguals, rather than see those linguistic treasures squandered, only to try to painfully re-construct them later from scratch through foreign language instruction.

The efforts to maintain Australia's languages other than English have been complemented by a policy of making English language courses available to all migrants arriving from non-English speaking backgrounds and their children. The introduction of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in schools began in 1971, with ESL becoming a fully fledged Year 12 subject in 1983. This reform made amends for the past neglect when children of post World War II refugees were left to their devices in schools, which tested them in English for intellectual ability, often disregarding the fact that they spoke another language at home and had no or only rudimentary knowledge of English.

IV CAMBODIAN REFUGEES AS AN EXEMPLAR OF AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL POLICY

The introduction of languages other than English (LOTE) into Australian schools represented a major achievement of Australian Multiculturalism which has benefited those immigrant groups which settled in Australia over 1980's and 1990's, as can be illustrated by reference to the immigrants from the war torn Cambodia (Smolicz and Secombe, 2002).

The arrival of Cambodian refugees in Australia during the 1980s could be regarded as providential in its timing, since it came shortly after the official rejection of the earlier policy assumption that Australia, as a nation-state, was to be identified almost exclusively with the Anglo-Celtic Australian dominant group (Smolicz, 1997, 1999). The respondents in our Cambodian study were among the first immigrant children to experience Australia's newly introduced multicultural policies, which were in the early stages of implementation in the education system. After years of civil war, the oppression of the Pol Pot regime, foreign invasion and stagnation in refugee camps, Cambodian refugees represented probably the most deprived group of immigrants to reach Australian shores. On arrival they had been provided with the facilities for the intensive learning of English, alongside the opportunity to acquire literacy in Khmer (Clyne, 1991). Compared to the conditions prevailing in Australia during the immediate post-war period of cultural assimilation, the Cambodian refugees enjoyed distinct advantages over the post World War II Central and Eastern European refugees who had found none of the facilities and opportunities that were available to the Cambodian group thirty years later (Martin, 1978, 1981).

To examine the effects of Australian multicultural policies in education, a small scale study was conducted using Cambodian-born young people who were currently participating in higher education, or who had recently completed university studies in South Australia. Data on their family background, schooling and refugee experiences revealed the extent of deprivation at the time of arrival. Most of them had arrived in Australia after spending two or more years in refugee camps in South-East Asia, with over half having fathers dead or missing, and half the mothers either dead or retired. While approximately half of the parents had some secondary education, the majority of respondents themselves had received no education at all and were illiterate in their home language, with the remainder having no more than two years of schooling in Cambodia. In terms of ethnic background, the majority of our Cambodian respondents were of Chinese ancestry and spoke one of the Chinese regional languages as well as Khmer. A small number identified themselves solely as Khmer.

In Australia, all of the respondents spent at least six months in intensive English program, before going to mainstream schools. The study revealed that the students' subsequent success in reaching the university entrance standard depended on high grades obtained in two out of the requisite five subjects, namely Khmer and English as a Second Language (ESL) and, for some of them, Mandarin as well - subjects which only became available as a result of Australia's multicultural policies. The respondents had been accepted into courses at one South Australian universities and over half of them had already graduated mostly in Science, Maths, Computing or Engineering, while the remainder were still pursuing their university studies. Among graduates, all but one had found employment related to their field of study.

Another outcome of their years of participation in Australian educational institutions was that the respondents had became proficient in English, in both its oral and written forms. A number of them did comment on difficulties they had experienced with English during their university studies. Yet English had became the language of their academic achievement, professional work and general social interaction.

What is noteworthy is that Cambodian respondents' acquisition of English did not come at the expense of their home languages, as had been the experience of many earlier immigrant children (Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools, 1976; Smolicz and Secombe, 1986: 52). In most cases, indeed, the competency of these respondents in Khmer (and Chinese for some) had not simply been maintained, but further developed here in Australia. In fact, many had gained their Khmer literacy skills in Australia rather then in Cambodia.

The opportunity to consolidate and develop their home languages had generally not come directly through the mainstream Australian schools, but through the initiative of the Cambodian community, which had been quick to follow the pattern developed by earlier immigrant communities and establish an ethnic school. This school was held outside of normal school hours, but with financial support from both federal and state governments. Advice and help was also forthcoming from the established network of other ethnic schools, which had been formally established in South Australia under the auspices of the government appointed Ethnic School Board and through the community based Ethnic Schools Association. Subsequently Year 11 and 12 classes in Khmer were provided by the government School of Languages, which had been set up specifically to teach the smaller community languages.

The Cambodian community was also able to take advantage of the formal recognition accorded to community languages as subjects examined following the completion of final Year 12 schooling and counted towards university entry. Khmer was added to the list of these languages in South Australia within a few years of the refugees' arrival. Such opportunities to study their home language and gain full credit and status for a successful language and cultural maintanance had not existed for children who had arrived as refugees from the displaced persons' camps of Central Europe or for the Greek and Italian children who had arrived in Australia as economic immigrants in the fifties and sixties.

Although the introduction of Australian community languages as university entrance subjects greatly enhanced educational opportunities for speakers of these languages, the Cambodian students' comments showed that the study of Khmer had not generally been undertaken for instrumental purposes alone. For many of the respondents Khmer represented an autotelic and identificational value that was studied because it was their mother-tongue. The high degree of attachment which so many of the respondents accorded to Khmer demonstrated its core value significance for the Cambodian group as a whole, including all those of Cambodian ethnic origin, as well as most of those of Chinese background who cultivated the knowledge of Khmer as well as Chinese.

The Australian schooling and university system of the 1980s made it comparatively easy for any student who had reached the required academic standard to participate in higher education. These Cambodian respondents, who had lived through the hardships of the Khmer Rouge Regime and experienced the loss of many years of schooling, eagerly took up the educational opportunities for university study provided in Australia, as most important step in the process of starting a new life for themselves and their families. It could be argued that the multicultural policies then being implemented in education helped them to achieve their goal in two ways. The intensive English language programme given to them following their arrival, together with the opportunity to consolidate and extend their learning in Khmer, enabled them to complete their secondary education in minimum time and with scores high enough to gain university entrance. Furthermore, the dual opportunity for simultaneous development of their English and Khmer languages (and in some case Mandarin Chinese as well) meant that their success in the English speaking world of the Australian university was not at the cost of their Cambodian languages and culture. Their achievements in completing their university studies and gaining subsequent employment substantially increased the number of university graduates and professional workers within the Cambodian community in South Australia.

Australian Overview. Although the existence of the plurality of languages is now probably more accepted than at any time in the history of the English language dominance of Australia since the period of *laissez faire* pluralism in the mid-nineteenth century (Clyne, 1982, 1991), toleration of languages is less firmly entrenched in the Australian ethos than religious pluralism.

Minority languages still remain vulnerable and it is difficult to assess the extent to which schools have contributed to stabilising the country's linguistic pluralism.

The weakness of Australian bilingualism lies in the fact that despite the range of languages which is being offered as examination subjects that can count for university entrance, some of these languages have quite small enrolments and are taught in very few mainstream schools, which have often been rather grudging and vacillating in their support. Languages other than English still remain an unpopular option at senior secondary school level. This is particularly striking for students from the majority English speaking background, many of whom see no obvious benefits of investing the effort required to learn a new language, in view of the availability of what they perceive as 'easier options' as well as the global dominance of English. This often results in the perception of 'community languages' as related to migrants or refugee and of 'multiculturalism' as essentially a minority interest pursuit (Secombe, 1997). With no formal language requirement for final school leaving certificate or university entrance, only 10-20% of students take LOTE as university entrance subjects. Linguistic erosion at community level (as revealed by census data from 1976 to1996) is best demonstrated by the shift away from the use of community languages towards 'English only' in the home of the second generation Australians of minority ethnic background (Clyne and Kipp, 1997). Despite, therefore, the significant multicultural reforms in Australian schools, the multilingualism of the country, from the perspective of minority community languages, appears to be transitional, especially in the case of second generation children born from exogamous families.

V LANGUAGE CONTEXT OF THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines presents a contrasting picture to the Australian scene, with census data confirming the vitality of indigenous languages in the everyday usage of the population, even for those languages which have been virtually excluded from the school curriculum (Gonzales, 1996a, 1998). Unlike the situation in Australia, where most immigrant groups of European or Asian origin could be regarded as fragments of nations with a long history of the literary development of their languages, many of the linguistic dilemmas that currently face the Philippines are the product of the double exposure to colonial domination which has delayed the literary development of all the eight major indigenous languages of the country (sometimes regarded as ten, with the addition of two less numerous languages from Mindanao).

The Situation of Indigenous Languages in the Colonial Era. The Spanish members of the religious orders in the Philippines used the indigenous languages in their missionary work, through which they succeeded in making the Philippines one of the most Christian countries of Asia, while at the same time helping those tongues to acquire their first written records (De la Costa, 1961). Literary development was, however, slow due to the restriction of literacy to a small elite, with literature mainly confined to religious subjects, in a way that precluded many aspects of the indigenous culture as pagan. Until the educational reforms of 1863, the education of the indigenous peoples was confined to elementary schooling, and only the children of Spaniards were able to receive higher education.

While the American policy which propagated compulsory education in English for all Filipinos was initially directed mainly against Spanish, it was almost equally hostile to the indigenous languages of the country, with penalties imposed upon pupils using their home languages on the school premises (Manhit, 1981, 1982). Although excluded from school and universities and most forms of public life, the indigenous languages survived and gradually a movement arose demanding the recognition of the rights of the Filipinos to their own national language(s).

Independence was conceptualised in terms of the European model of the monolingual nation-state. When the search for one national language through the fusion of eight major languages of the Philippines failed (Gonzales, 1974), the adoption of one of them was perceived as the only way to prevent total domination by the colonial language, English (Bautista, 1981). This move was interpreted by the native Tagalog speakers, in general, as an advantageous and inevitable outcome, while most of the elite members of other language groups were eventually reconciled to accept such a compromise, provided English remained dominant in government, universities and business life. Those who supported the adoption of Filipino, often pointed to the negative impact of English on Philippines society (Sibayan 1994). The time spent learning English most often meant not only that the learning of indigenous languages was neglected, but also that the children from rural non-elite "masses" found it most difficult to reach adequate standards in other subjects since these were being studied in what to them was a foreign languages (Constantino 1982).

The Bilingual Education Program. In the Philippines, the language issue has been debated for decades and remains controversial to this day. The Bilingual Education Program (BEP), which involves the expanded use of Filipino alongside English as a medium of instruction, was formally implemented in the elementary and secondary schools in 1974 and re-affirmed in 1986, with the aim of developing a bilingual nation. Although the Constitution of 1987 provides for Filipino as the national language, continued resistance from the south, especially among those from the Cebuano speaking areas of the Visayas and Mindanao is still evident.

The 1987 guidelines of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (reprinted in Sutaria, Guerrero and Castano, 1989) stated that English and Filipino were to be taught in all grades of elementary and secondary schools. Filipino was to be the medium of instruction in Social Studies/Social Science, Character Education, Work Education, Health Education, and Physical Education; English was to be the medium of instruction in all other areas, in particular, Science and Mathematics. A provision in relation to the Muslim regions of the country was added, whereby "Arabic was to be used in areas where it was necessary". Some allowance continued to be made for schools to use the local non-Tagalog "vernacular" or regional language of the area "as auxiliary to the media of instruction, but only when necessary to facilitate the understanding of concepts being taught in English, F(P)ilipino or Arabic" (Quisumbing 1989: 300).

The latent dysfunction of the bilingual policies, built on education in Filipino/Tagalog and English, has been the continued inferiorisation of all the other languages of the Philippines. Smolicz and Nical (1997) have argued that in this way, the centuries-old submission to Spanish culture and later to the English language has been compounded by a further subordination to the new national tongue "Filipino", which has resulted in all other languages being relegated to the home and market place.

Sibayan's view(1994: 80) that "the Filipino who reads and writes in Filipino will have no difficulty in reading and writing in his own language if necessary" is contradicted by the common practice in provincial schools of turning around the blackboard to hide the vernacular explanations when inspectors are expected to call. The unofficial reliance on the vernacular is also referred to by Gonzales (1998: 497) who describes the alternating language usage in the classroom, whereby "the teacher explains in Filipino or in English depending on the subject matter…then repeats the same content in the local vernacular to make sure the students understand the materials".

The Minister at the time, Lourdes Quisumbing, however, acknowledged the difference between "Tagalog-speaking" students, for whom the "national language education actually starts from childhood and continues throughout life, [with] the school serving to reinforce and refine such language education", and the non-Tagalog speaking students. Rather than encouraging the latter to become literate first in their home languages, Quisumbing (1989: 314) reassured them that "compensatory education has been set up for the purpose of equalizing competence in Filipino among Tagalog and non-Tagalog groups through the development of appropriate teaching materials, the offering of special language teachers, the offering of special classes and the establishment of incentives for teachers of Filipino for acquiring minimum standards of language proficiency." The implication that the students' home languages, if other than Tagalog, were a handicap, which must be ameliorated by compensatory programs, recalls some of the assimilation-driven policies towards migrant children in the USA and Australia (Clyne, 1991; Smolicz, 1995a).

The fact that bilingual education appears to have been accepted without too much turbulence over the last two decades would suggest that at least the more influential sections of the population have been able to accommodate themselves to its demands. In upper and middle class homes throughout the country English is often used, so that children have a background knowledge of the language when they start school at six, or even earlier where they have their formal introduction to English in a fee-paying pre-school. Private schools have often been able to increase the time allocated to English without incurring too much trouble with those responsible for monitoring the ministerial directives.

Voices of dissent against what is perceived as Tagalog/Filipino nationalism have taken two main forms - one championing indigenous languages and the other English. Probably the most provocative has been a statement coming from a former Governor of Cebu, who declared his full support for Filipino, provided this label referred to Cebuano. Instances have also been recorded in Cebu of the Philippines national anthem being sung in Cebuano, a move supported by the Cebu provincial government (Nical, 2000: 24). At the other end of the non-Tagalog spectrum of opinion, fear of what has been perceived as the downgrading of English has caused some elite Ilocano-background public figures to attack the Bilingual Policy – although such fears are misplaced, according to Gonzales (1996: 42). Our previous study revealed significant differences in the way various speech communities evaluated the two languages of instruction, with some communities (such as Ilocano) favoring Filipino and others (like Cebuano) English (Smolicz and Nical, 1997).

Bilingual education remains a controversial, if often understated, issue in the Philippines. Reports of the failure of bilingual policy appear in the press with reference to the perceived decline in the standard of English in the schools. This is usually attributed to the time which needs to be allocated to Filipino and the influence of Filipino linguistic structures upon English usage. The learning of Mathematics and Science is said to have become consequently more difficult, as these subjects are taught in a language that is not fully comprehensible to the students. The Congressional Commission on Education (1991: xii) expressed concern about the decline of educational standards in the country as a whole, when it bluntly stated, "Our elementary and high schools are failing to teach the competence the average citizen needs to become responsible, productive and self-fulfilling."

Public criticism, however, rarely speaks about the handicaps experienced under the present Bilingual Education Program by native speakers of non-Tagalog languages, especially those who come from areas of rural poverty or low socio-economic status. With only limited or no English or Tagalog within their home setting, they face a double linguistic barrier in learning in the school context, a handicap which inevitably affects their scholastic performance so that only the most able and dedicated can hope to advance to and successfully complete their higher education studies (Gonzales 1998: 520; Smolicz 1986).

VI BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND RURAL YOUTH IN NON-TAGALOG REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY

In order to probe the impact of the Bilingual Education policy on Filipinos in non-Tagalog regions of the country, an investigation was carried out to ascertain the exclusion of their home regional languages from school instruction was perceived by those most closely involved with it (Nical, Smolicz & Secombe, 2002). The focus was on young people from provincial rural backgrounds, their parents and their teachers, who were asked their perceptions about the current bilingual education policies in terms of their proficiency in, their activation of, and their attitudes towards the two languages of instruction at school and their regional home language. Of particular interest was identification of any possible changes in literacy levels across generations, given that at least some of the parents would have had a modicum of literacy instruction in their home language during their early schooling years prior to the bilingual education reforms. The responses also provided a useful comparison with those of young people and their parents from provincial urban contexts who participated in an earlier study on the same language issues (Smolicz and Nical, 1997).

By locating the research on the island of Leyte, a province far removed from metropolitan Manila, with two clearly delineated linguistic communities (Cebuano and Waray), it was hoped to gain valuable insights into the differential perceptions of the school language policy and the degree to which the local languages were being maintained. The study focussed upon senior secondary students whose home backgrounds provided them with little or no direct initiation into English and for whom Filipino was not the everyday home language. The schools they attended were located in small towns ("poblaciones") which drew their clientele from rural municipalities scattered over a wide area of the country side, and made up of smaller units or "barangays". Most of the parents were small farmers, with a sprinkling of small business people.

The student respondents, numbering almost one thousand, were drawn from 28 randomly selected public schools, 10 of which were located in the Cebuano speaking region, where they constituted over half the total number of schools in that area. The other 18 were in the Waray speaking community. Also asked to complete the questionnaire were the students' parents (over 700) and teachers (over 200), providing almost two thousand participants in all (Nical, Smolicz & Secombe, 2002).

The proficiency and activation data from these respondents confirmed one of the key findings from the earlier studies (Smolicz & Nical, 1997; Gonzales, 1996, 1998) in that all the respondents were trilingual and activated all three languages in the communication activities of their everyday lives. Overall, the pattern of spoken language activation showed that no one language was being used exclusively, but that all three were being activated with varying frequency in different domains. Even in the school, where Filipino and English were the official languages of instruction, the regional languages were not being excluded from use in informal interaction with teachers and fellow students, although overall students and their parents claimed to speak their regional language more often than the teachers.

Although the Bilingual Education Program (BEP) would seem so far to have had little negative influence on the use of regional languages for oral communication in everyday life, particularly in the home domain, there was evidence for a negative effect emerging in relation to attitudes. The parents in both communities were significantly more positive to their regional language than the students and teachers. Even more noteworthy were the low attitude means for regional language as used in school, indicating that respondents generally were unsure of the relevance and/or appropriateness of these languages in formal education.

The effects of the BEP, with its emphasis on Filipino literacy, can best be observed in the way students who had been brought up under the program displayed significantly higher scores in both activation and proficiency for Filipino. The results obtained for English, however, showed that the students' gains in Filipino literacy had not been matched in English. While parents were, not surprisingly, the least skilful in English activation and proficiency, the students' scores were quite mediocre and well below those reported by their teachers. In fact, it is clear that teachers were most comfortable in employing English and their scores for English activation and proficiency were significantly higher than the other respondents in all three communication activities.

In summary, the generational differences demonstrated the longer-term outcomes of BEP, with *teachers* standing out in relation to both proficiency and activation of English. *Parents*, in contrast, were seen as those who relied upon their regional language literacy to the greatest extent, while showing significantly lower proficiency scores in both Filipino and English. Their higher activation of regional languages (Cebuano and Waray)for reading and writing no doubt reflects, at least in part, the fact that some of them would have been taught to read and write in their mother tongue in the first two years of primary school, an advantage which had been denied to those from the younger generation. Although *students* had benefited from the BEP in relation to literacy skills in Filipino, their lower levels of proficiency and activation in English could be regarded as a danger signal for their tertiary aspirations, since all university instruction is in English.

There was also evidence of differences in usage, skills and outlook between the two linguistic communities which share the same island of Leyte. Waray respondents achieved significantly higher scores in Filipino than Cebuano in every respondent category in all three communication activities. This result was in agreement with the well-known Cebuano antipathy to Filipino, as the enforced national language, and in accord with the finding from our previous study, where the Cebuano respondents came from the city of Cebu (Smolicz and Nical, 1997). The fact that this result was replicated for the Cebuano respondents of Leyte, which lies at the periphery of the Cebuano linguistic community in the Visayas, can be taken as indicative of the latent tensions that underlie the ostensibly peaceful acceptance of BEP, which in its current form discriminates against regional languages.

These results reflect the general Cebuano sentiments, which see no necessity for Filipino, when they can rely on English in conjunction with their own native tongue which, unlike Waray, has its own rich literary heritage and which provided the Cebuano respondents with more literacy materials than were available for the Warays. The same perception, of a certain disdain for Filipino was glimpsed in the fact that the Cebuano teachers in the present study achieved their highest activation score in the speaking of Cebuano, obtained a proficiency score for reading Cebuano which was significantly higher than the other respondents, while their scores for the speaking of Filipino were lower than for any of the others. A similar trend was clearly evident in the attitudinal scores which demonstrated that the Cebuano respondents were much less positive to Filipino, both as a language and in the school context, than their Waray counterparts.

While differing from the Cebuanos in their more sympathetic acceptance of Filipino, the Waray respondents shared the positive sentiments of the Cebuanos towards English. This consensus was particularly evident in the case of Cebuano and Waray teachers whose scores for both activation and proficiency in English were significantly higher than those reported by the other sets of respondents. While making inroads among youth, Filipino was accepted by Cebuanos only on sufferance, with English as a favoured literary supplement to their native tongue.

A *rural-urban* comparison of language patterns among students and parents in rural settings with their city counterparts in our previous study showed that speaking the regional language had the highest mean frequency for both rural and urban respondents. Rural students, and particularly their parents, however, demonstrated greater activation of regional language literacy than their urban counterparts. In all communication activities, rural students and parents indicated higher literacy activation and proficiency in Filipino.

The situation was reversed in the case of English, which was the language of lowest activation and proficiency levels among the rural respondents. Although the student means were higher than those of the parents, especially in relation to speaking and writing, the school would appear to have been much more effective in developing rural students' proficiency and activation in Filipino than in English, perhaps reflecting the lack of domains outside the school in rural areas where English could be activated. It is also noteworthy that English usage among rural teachers was less extensive than that claimed by urban parents and students. For these reasons, it is hardly surprising that rural students and their parents showed an even lower frequency in the proficiency and activation of English, confirming the observation that the rural poor are the people who suffer disadvantage under the current BEP, a deprivation which is not shared by their middle class urban counterparts. It should also be noted that lower proficiency and fewer opportunities for activation did not lead to negative attitudes towards English. The attitude means for English were higher for all sets of respondents in both rural linguistic communities than those reported for the other two languages.

Philippines-Australian Overview. The initiators of the Bilingual Education Policy which designated Filipino/Tagalog as the only indigenous language in the curriculum appeared to have been under the assumption that by omitting regional languages other than Tagalog (PLOT) from formal education, and official functions and relegating their speakers to virtual illiteracy in their home tongue, they were preventing English from completely dominating the life of the country (Bautista, 1981). In fact, it would appear from the data presented here that, by such policies, they may be producing the opposite effect. Denied the opportunity to study and advance in their own languages, educated young people, especially in the Visayan provinces, were turning to English in preference to Filipino, which they did not perceive as of core value significance for their non- Tagalog communities. Rather, they regarded it as much less useful than English in their quest for education and work outside of the Philippines. In this way, advocates of Tagalog/Filipino as the only worthy partner alongside English, would appear to be furthering the interest of those forces within their country and outside of it, which already acknowledge English as the global language and as sufficient on its own for most of the needs of the Philippines.

The attitudinal data from the Cebuano-Waray study suggest that the regional minority communities in the Philippines interpret the opportunities offered by education in different ways. For many of the Visayan respondents, Filipino was regarded as the language imposed on them by the central authorities, while English was seen as the language which opened up to them global possibilities for interaction and employment. In other regional communities, such as Ilocano, English was more frequently seen as one of the languages of the former colonial domination, a perception which could have had its historical origin in the bitter struggle of Ilocano nationalists against Americans at the turn of the nineteenth century (Smolicz and Nical, 1997).

Overall, in the perception of the groups under investigation, neither English nor Filipino could be regarded as fulfilling the role of a core value of the Philippines as a whole. Although English was respected for its global, educational and occupational significance, there is no evidence of Philippine people regarding it as the symbol of their identity; instead, except for a small minority,

it remains a high status but essentially foreign tongue, even in its evolving "Philippine English" form (Gonzales, 1998: 493). As for Filipino, it has been accepted as a national lingua franca, but there is little evidence of its being embraced as a linguistic core for the whole nation among the non-Tagalog groups under investigation. In our study the reservations in this regard were particularly evident among Cebuano respondents, a number of whom thought Filipino unnecessary, since English and their own language appeared adequate for most of their needs.

VII LANGUAGES POLICY OUTLOOK: AUSTRALIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

The current official Philippine language policy in education appears to be based upon the premise of Tagalog/Filipino assimilation being pursued under the 'umbrella' of the ex-colonial and globally dominant language, English. The research reported in this paper shows, however, that the regional languages of the Philippines other than Tagalog/Filipino continue to be maintained among students in their family, local community and regional settings. Although there have been no pressing or vociferous demands for changing current policies, varying degrees of discontentment were evident in our research among respondents in the Visayan linguistic regions of the country, suggesting a potential for more vigorous requests for linguistic equity in future. In view of world trends in rising minority demands for cultural and linguistic recognition, it may be salutary for the Philippines to learn from the example of other multilingual countries which have demonstrated the way plurality of languages may be fostered alongside a national tongue.

Such exemplars of multilingualism are provided, in their different ways, by both Australia and Spain. During 1980's, Spain was reorganized from an authoritarian centralist state that had repressed regional cultural variation into a democratic state with a framework of autonomous communities which upgraded their long forbidden languages to an official category, ensuring their presence in the educational systems within their respective territories (Lecours, 2001: 210). However, as regional boundaries do not totally coincide with linguistic ones, those who found themselves outside their 'home' region failed to benefit from the new policies. Research on the linguistic outcomes of students who had Catalan home linguistic background, but were confronted with one set of school policies within Catalonia (where Catalan was the language of school instruction) and a different one in Aragon (where it was not part of the regular school curriculum) has revealed the significance of the teaching of mother-tongue, even on a part-time and voluntary basis, for maintaining students' cultural identity and developing their biliteracy in both Catalan and Spanish (Huguet and Llourda, 2001: 267).

While the data presented in this paper showed that, at this stage in their cultural identity development, most speakers of regional languages of the Philippines lacked the level of confidence in the literary status of their languages exhibited by Catalan speakers, an enlightened course would be to follow the Spanish pluralist, rather than French assimilationist, language policy exemplars and devise ways for including regional languages in the educational curricula. A policy of working towards the development of literacy in the Philippine languages other than Tagalog through school instruction at primary level appears to be receiving experimental support from the Philippine Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). The Institute has gathered data indicating that "the use of the mother tongue results in better initial literacy" (Nical, 2000). This approach would be a departure from the current official policy that "the development of literacy in their native language is not deemed to be cost-effective or practical" (Gonzales, 1998: 496-97). The Australian example provides evidence that such 'market' approach is short-sighted, both in economic and socio-political terms - not to speak of its inherent educational disadvantages.

From a comparative perspective the achievement of Australia lies in the extent to which it has been able to reshape itself as an emerging multicultural country. It has demonstrated that tolerance of diversity and gradually developing pluralist policies in languages education are a better guarantee of stability than forced assimilation to one dominant language and culture. The continued fragility of Australia's linguistic pluralism can be attributed in part to the lack of a regional or territorial base for the immigrant community languages, except English, and a lack of domains where they can be activated. In this regard, the Philippine example provides a lesson on the importance of a well-integrated regional community support that ensures oral retention even in the absence of any school literacy support. In Australia, those young people of non-English speaking backgrounds who complete school and tertiary studies of their home language (eg. Italian or Chinese), ultimately find their minority language domain restricted to their families and a scattering of fellow group members in ethnic organisations, with very limited opportunities for using their linguistic skills in the Anglo-dominated "mainstream" society (Smolicz, 1995a, 1995b; 1999).

In more recent years the globalisation of so many businesses has unexpectedly created new avenues for engineers and computer specialists in companies with international clientele and branch networks. In order to exploit such opportunities and encourage more young Australians to study languages other than English (LOTE), it would be necessary to provide more co-ordinated policy directives, as was forshadowed in the 1987 National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987) which recommended that all Australian students, including those of the majority background, should be required to study LOTE. Subsequent policy developments which sought to provide incentives for public servants to maintain or acquire another language in addition to English have been adopted by some of the State governments. Similarly, a review of the university sector's multicultural and multilingual policies in South Australia (Tertiary Multicultural Education Committee, 1995) recommended series of reforms to stregthen both languages education and the permeation of multicultural materials into curricula of all subjects, but particularly those in the social sciences.

Unfortunately, such important initiatives have not been followed up with any great vigour. The heyday of multicultural leadership, at both political and educational levels which Australia enjoyed over the late 1970s and 1980s has not been sustained over recent years. The policy of 'Reconciliation' with Australia's indigenous inhabitants has also stalled, with some of the bilingual schools which had been established with such enthusiasm in Northern Territory, required to revert to monolingual English programs - all with the supposed intention of enhancing opportunities for Aboriginal youth in largely non-existent positions, except within Aboriginal community organisations, which would, in fact, benefit from knowledge and literacy in indigenous languages. It is also impossible to deny the contrast between the reception which the Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees received in Australia during 1970s and 1980s and the treatment currently being meted out to the so called "illegal immigrants" from the Middle-East.

Despite such setbacks, the momentum for multiculturalsim and linguistic pluralism has advanced too far to be arrested by the hesitancy of indecisive leadership. As the former Governor-General of Australia affirmed, "Australian multiculturalism sustains the nation [in that it] both protects and promotes respect and tolerance for the [linguistic and cultural] backgrounds of all Australians - for people who came from Britain as much as those from other parts of the world" (Deane, 1997).

The examples of Australia and the Philippines provide some useful lessons on how to set policy directions on a pluralist wave-length and demonstrate the need to integrate social and economic management with pluralist educational initiatives. Australian policies that emphasize multilingualism in the community as a human resource that enhances Australia's economic and trade relations with its Asia-Pacific neighbours, as well as with the heritage countries of Europe, have already proved a useful argument by pointing to the way bilingual Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds can enjoy a triple advantage in trade negotiations because of their linguistic facility, knowledge of the cultural context and the maintenance of social and business contacts with prospective partners in their countries of origin (Lo Bianco, 1990).

The fruits of Philippine bilingual policy, with its emphasis upon English language skills, have made the Philippines into a great 'export country' of mainly manual and semi-skilled labour and semi-professionals, providing much needed sources of funds through the remittances which migrant workers send home to their families (Alburo, 1993). The essential tension in the Philippine bilingual policy rests in its neglect of the students' home languages and their inadequate competence in English, especially in the rural areas, on the one hand, and the continued use of English and Filipino as the only languages of education, on the other. The economic loss to the country through so many rural youth dropping out of school before they reach school leaving age, and the linguistic deficiencies of those who succeed in completing only part of their school education, represents a loss to the social and economic well-being of the country. No amount of remittances being sent home by those "lucky" enought to get employment in the Middle-East and elsewhere can compensate for the failure to develop the country's human resources.

Successes that have been achieved in Australian language policy planning, in the absence of a complementary socio-economic base, have proved to be just as insufficient to ensure future development as the Philippines' maintenance of a local linguistic community infrastructure, deprived of any formal educational support. The educational language policies that a country pursues can, therefore, be seen to require close integration with social planning grounded in pluralist values, and support from both the government and business sectors of economy. The harmonious co-existence of diverse linguistic groups in a pluralist country depends upon the achievement of such cross-sectoral co-operation, a direction which has been recognised in those countries which have already embarked on a 'voyage of discovery' toward the full range of human rights - linguistic and cultural, as well as civic and political (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994; Kirby, 1998; Smolicz, 2001).

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