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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the link between a nation's goals and its language education policy looks at four kinds of language education policies reflecting national goals. The paper examines the language education systems of the Soviet Union and the Philippines for evidence of this link. The comparison reveals striking similarities between the systems, including: use of the national language as a medium of instruction; requirement of literacy in a standardized national language; requirement of a second language that will allow access to current scientific and technological knowledge; problems in training a sufficient number of teachers who are bilingual and able to teach in non-western vernaculars; and centralized education systems that differ greatly from the American model. It is concluded that the United States should consider an official policy statement concerning English as the nation's lingua franca and second language learning as tools for internationalizing the nation, especially if the policy were linked to broader transcendent aims of national cohesion and viability within the global community. (MSE)

A Paper

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE POLICY AND EDUCATION

by

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE
POLICY AND EDUCATION

Nations use their schools to build a national identity mostly because the future of all nations lies in their youth, the young people who will someday be citizens, and in someway, influence governmental policies and behaviors.

The language or languages these future citizens speak, the history they know, and the scientific and technological tools they use all mesh to form a worldview that can advance or retard a nations's progress. Whether schools are controlled by religious groups, state governments, local school boards or private enterprises, they nevertheless serve a national purpose. World powers, such as the Soviet Union and the United States, recognize the nation-building function of their schools and compell parents to enroll their children in school (compulsory education). Dropping-out of school is considered an offense against the state! Consequently, the goals of most nations are directly linked to the purposes of their schools. So it is with

language education. The language(s) taught can serve to build national cohesion and provide access to critical knowledge. Or, the language(s) taught can serve to protect the economic interests of particular social classes or ethnic groups. The language(s) spoken can serve to encapuslate or extend a nation's ability to communicate. As such, the language(s) taught in a nation's schools reflects where a nation wants to be within the global community.

This paper aims to clarify the relationship that exists between a nation's goals and its language education policy by examining four types of language education policies that reflect national goals. Then an overview of the language education systems of the Soviet Union and the Republic of the Philippines are described and analyzed to illuminate the link between national goals and language education policies.

Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Language

Nationalism and ethnicity are similar group phenomena. Both involve group identity, a sense of peoplehood, and an interdependence of fates, requiring allegiance to some group. At times, the two phenomena conflict. Countries throughout the world have had to deal with the issue of how to build national unity while allowing ethnic group diversity. If ethnic groups are given too much autonomy,

then national fragmentation is possible. Ethnic groups might demand too much autonomy and thereby breakway from the nation. Or, ethnic groups may be isolated linguistically and politically from the mainstream national group. Either threatens national unity; if ethnic groups are suppressed too much, then ethnic group dissent emerges; in the attempt to gain some autonomy, the suppressed ethnic groups may form separatist movements. Again, national cohesion is threatened. Some countries have dealt with ethnic group diversity by allowing minority groups to maintain their languages and cultures. In India, for example, one can pledge allegiance to the national government, and without penality or legal recrimination, identify with is or her ethnic gorup. Ethnic and national loyalty require bilingualism, that is, a speaking knowledge of the national language, Hindustani, and one's ethnic group language (Ishwaran, 1969). Other nations, such as Chile or France, have dealt with ethnic group diversity by absorbing minority groups into their majority culture, imposing both their language and culture on the minority groups.

Central to a nation's development of nationalism is the designation of an official language. An official language serves the functions of political and psychological integration on a national scale. A nation's official

language(s) embodies, carries , and conveys the nation's symbols. National anthems, slogans, and oaths of allegiance in the national language(s) meld a nation's esprit de corps. The national language(s) act as the political unification agent and communication medium among the nation's citizens. For national communications and political unification, the requirements for establishing an official language are:

1. A national language should be capable of serving as a medium of economic, legal, and political interchange throughout the nation.

2. It should be a language the majority of the nation's citizens will support.

3. It should have a standardized writing system throughout the nation.

Requirement one above presumes that within any nation, whose boundaries many times cut across ethnic and tribal group lines, one language can be singled out as the language comprehensible to all the language groups in the nation. Requirement two presumes that the majority of the nation's citizens can agree upon one language as the national language. In multilingual nations, the difficulties of language planning depends on the number of language groups

vieing for their language as the national standard. The language competition and conflict emerge from the political ambitions of the various groups. Number three (above) presumes that resources are available to develop a written system for languages or vernaculars that are not written.

National Goals and Language Education Policy

Most nations face at least two basic consideration for survival: how to maintain unity and cohesion of a culturally and linguistically diverse society. If a nation is confounded by citizens who all speak different languages and represent different cultures, how is national unity and cohesion possible? The second basic consideration is how to access important scientific and technological knowledge. If a nation lacks access to these data, how can it survive in a rapidly changing, technological global community? Answers lie in two transcendent aims most (I believe all) nations must achieve to survive in the global community:

A. A nation must be unified, having it unique identity within the global community. This aim requires a lingua franca to provide a common communication system which all citizens can use to conduct business and political affairs;

B. A nation must have access to critically important scientific and technological data. This aim requires a speaking knowledge of the language of the nations that are producing these data. Without access, a nation cannot reap the benefits these data provide.

How these transcendent aims are accomplished depends on the unique circumstances of each nation. Some nations have one or more languages stipulated as their official language(s). Some nations, such as France, have an official language regulated by a language academy. Other nations have an offical bilingual policy, such as Canada, allowing for English and French to coexist as official languages. Some nations, India and Russia for example, have one official language that is used nationally and allow regional languages and vernaculars to be used and taught within their respective regions.

Eighteenth-century powers, such as France, Spain, and England, reconized the importance of languages for political domination and control. Subsequently, they always imposed their languages on the people they wanted to colonize. In the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, feelings about American English ran so

high that many states enacted laws that prohibited the use of any non-English languages in the public schools. During this time English literacy was a condition for immigration into the country. Currently, the United States does not have an offical language although American English by virtue of common practice is the nation's de facto national language.

Educational language policies are inextricably bound with a nation's internal and external political goals. When a nation's goal is to assimilate all citizens so they speak a single language, its language education programs will foster monolingualism in the nation's single, standard language. When a nation's internal goal is to maintain its ethnic and linguistic plurality, then its language education programs will foster knowledge in a national language standard while concurrently fostering literacy in the differing languages or dialects spoken by its citizens and residents. When a nation's external political goal is to develop communication ties with other countries, its language programs will foster literacy in the national standard as well as literacy in other languages generally not spoken by its citizens and residents. When a nation's internal goal is to revive a lost national identity -- or create a new identity -- its language programs will foster

restoration of the nation's preferred language. On a global scale at least four distinctively different forms of educational policy goals pertain to language:

1. Assimilation
2. Pluralization
3. Internationalization
4. Vernacularization

What follows is a description of the policy goals and their consequent language programs.

Assimilation

This type of language policy promotes cultural assimilation. The intent is to assimilate foreign languages speakers into the dominant linguistic and cultural group of the nation. Some bilingual programs in the United States are examples. They are called transitional programs; their intent is to assimilate some linguistic minority group. The linguistic majority group perceives the nation as a monolingual melting pot that has one standard language; other languages, or dialects of the standard, are perceived as nonstandard languages or dialects. The students' nonstandard language is used as the medium of instruction to compensate for their limited English-speaking abilities.

Use of the substandard language is transitional. As soon as the student learns English well enough to receive instruction, then use of the student's language is discontinued and instruction is in English only.

Pluralization

This language policy promotes cultural pluralism. The intent is to allow different language/cultural groups to coexist within a nation. Some bilingual programs in the Soviet Union are examples. In these bilingual programs, the student's national language can be used as the medium of instruction, e.g., Ukrainian. The grammar and literature of Ukrainian as well as the Russian (which is the U.S.S.R.'s lingua franca) are studied. Thus Ukrainian students learn their native language and culture as well as the nation's language of government and business affairs. Under pluralization a nation's language standard is egalitarian; each language has its respective standard and is perceived as having separate and equal status.

Internationalization

This type of language program is multilingual. Schools teach multiple languages. The intent is to create a multilingual nation. Switzerland is an example. In

Switzerland, four languages are taught to students; the nation is landlocked and surrounded by European countries. To communicate with these countries successfully, the citizens need to speak the languages of neighboring countries. Under internationalization, a nation desires to communicate with other nations. It has a multiple language standard; the language standard of other languages is adopted by the country as is its national standard.

Vernacularization

This type of language restores the nation's indigenous language and establishes it as the national standard. The Republic of the Philippines is an example. The country was colonized by the Spanish and United States governments. Each government imposed its language on the nation. Now the Philippine nation is free of colonial rule; it has declared the vernacular language as its standard language. Under vernacularization, the desired national goal is pride in the nation's indigenous language(s) and culture. The new vernacular is established as the nation's language standard. Yet, because its citizens speak the language(s) of their former colonizers, bilingual programs are developed, using both the restored language and colonizer's language(s). The vernacular may be an oral language. A written alphabet, a

dictionary, a lexicon as well as a written literature must be developed so that the vernacular can be used by the entire nation in government, education and business affairs.

What follows is an overview of the educational systems of the Soviet Union and the Republic of the Philippines. This is an attempt to clarify how national goals and language education policies link in actual nations. However, the overviews are superficial and are based on secondary sources mostly, although some primary sources are used.

The Soviet Union

The Soviet Union is a multilingual federation consisting of 35 formerly independent republics and at least seventy sizeable ethnic groups who existed within certain geographic areas and functioned as independent nations. Each of the republics and each of the ethnic groups operated at one time as separate governmental entities having their own languages and cultures. Over the course of time, the Russian republic developed as the Soviet Union's central republic. Through conquest and colonialism, Russia much like the United States, fulfilled its "manifest destiny" of

a nation that stretches across the continents of Europe and Asia (Lewis, 1980).

Russia's effort to fulfill its manifest destiny was continually frustrated by the highly independent nature of the people in the established republics and in the indigenous ethnic groups. Simply, they did not want to be Russian. They prefered their own languages and cultures and were not eager to change them. The last attempts to Russianize the Soviet Union met with moderate success prior to the 1918 Bolshevik revolution but at extremely expensive costs in terms of human lives, resistance movements, and warfare. This last attempt actually provided the Bolshevik revolutionaries support for their cause. Lenin promised the non-Russian people cultural and educational independence if they would support his cause. After the Bolshevik revolution an educational policy of equal educational opportunity was instituted under which non-Russians were entitled to schools taught in their native languages. (Zajda, 1980). A kind of pluralistic compromise was struck making unification possible: all republics and all language groups were assured they could maintain their respective languages and cultures so long as the groups would also learn the Russian language as the nation's language (International Encyclopedia of Education, 1980). Due to

catastrophic events after the 1918 revolution, namely economic depression and World War II, along with Stalin's desire to Russianize the non-Russians, the pluralistic compromise was hardly implemented. With the push of the 1950's to lead the world in science and technology, and after the demise of Stalin's policies, a more concerted effort was made to implement the pluralistic compromise so that the Soviet Union's current language education policy fosters pluralization. In the Soviet Union,

1. All students can be taught in their home language;
2. All students learn Russian;
3. All students learn a second language, usually English, German, or French.

The broad pattern of language instruction for the entire Soviet education system is:

Grades 1-3: Native language is the medium of instruction (M.I.);

Grades 4-10: Native languages M.I. in certain subjects;
Russian as 2nd language and M.I. in certain subjects;
Foreign languages instruction grades 4-10.

For a thorough description of the Soviet Union's language education program see E. Glyn Lewis' Bilingualism and Bilingual Education, 1980.

The Republic of the Philippines

The Republic of the Philippines consists of 51 provinces in which nine regional languages, referred to as "vernaculars," and three foreign languages - Arabic, English, Spanish - are spoken. The vernaculars are indigenous to the Philippines. They are:

Ilokano	Hiligaynon
Kapampangan	Pangasinon
Bikol	Maranao-Maguin Dango
Waray	Tausug
Cebuano	

Arabic was introduced through immigration and Spanish and English were introduced as colonial languages by Spain (1565-1898) and the United States (1989-1898). During the colonial regimes, the language of the colonizers were used in business, governmental, and educational affairs. Many of the indigenous people of the Philippines maintained their loyalty to their native language and culture. Yet, access to

educational and governmental resources required a knowledge of the respective regime's language, Spanish, and later, English.

Before gaining independence from the United States, the Philippine people sought to build a new nation representative of their indigenous language and cultures. A consitutional govenment, patterned after the U. S. Constitution, was established with the addition of a clause stipulating bilingualism as the proposed nation's policy: English would serve as the nation's second language and access to global affairs, and a native language (to be identified with a fair and equitable procedure) would serve as the nation's lingua Franca".

> The Congress shall take steps toward the development and adoption of a common national language based on one of the existing native languages. Until otherwise provided by law, English and Spanish shall continue as official languages. (Constitution, Phillipines, 1935.)

This provision stipulated two important points: 1)That a national language, to be developed, would be based on a native language, and 2) that Spanish and English would continue as official languages only until the new language would be instituted.

In 1935 the Institute of National Languages was formed to select a new language as required by the Constitution and authorized by law to recommend the vernacular basis of the new language that would be "the most developed as regards structure, mechanism, and literature, and is accepted and used by the greatest number of Filipinos (Par.5, Sec. 5, Commonwealth Act No. 184).

After an extensive study of all the vernaculars, Tagalog was recommended as the most appropriate and was adopted as the proposed nation's new national language. The new languge policy went into effect when the U.S. granted the Philippines independence, July 4, 1946. The Department of Education adopted the term "Filipino" to refer to the new national language in 1959. The 1987 policy on bilingual education refers to "Filipino" as "Filipino."

A bilingual education policy (Filipino and English) was instituted. Under this policy, all Philippine students

1. Learn Filipino;
2. Learn English;
3. Can be taught in the native language grades 1-2 or as needed.

The broad curricula pattern runs:

Grades 1-2: Native language as MI;

Filipino introduced;

English introduced.

Grades 3-10: Filipino MI;

Social Studies

Health + P.E.

English MI:

All science + math

Filipino language + literature

English language + literature

The 1987 policy on bilingual education best summarizes the Philippine system. Article XIV Section 7 of the 1987 Philippines Constitution reads:

> For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino, and until otherwise provided by law, English. The regional languages are the auxiliary official languages in the regions and shall serve as auxiliary media of instruction therein.

Based on this provision, the 1987 policy on bilingual education is:

> The Policy on Bilingual Education aims at the achievement of competence in both Filipino and English at the national level, through the teaching of both languages and their use as media of instruction at all

levels. The regional languages shall be used as auxiliary languages in Grades 1 and II. The aspiration of the Filipino nation is to have its citizens possess skills in Filipino to enable them to perform their functions and duties as Filipino citizens and in English in order to meet the needs of the country in the community of nations. (Republic of the Phillipines, 1967).

For a recent case study of the Philippine experiment see G. Richard Tucker, Educational Language Policy in the the Philippines, Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, March 1987.

Summary and Conclusion

There exists striking similarities between the systems of the U.S.S.R. and the Philippines:

1. Both allow use of the native language as a medium of instruction. This approach provides primary students to begin school learning in the language spoken at home. The approach also allows the local ethnic group to maintain its language and culture, thereby, lowering ethnic group alienation and discontent;

2. Both require literacy in a standardized national language. This provides both nations a lingua franca which serves an integrative function,

thereby fostering national cohesion; the lingua franca also provides a common language which all citizens can use throughout the nation. Both nations are enabled through their lingua Franca to conduct nation-wide business, governmental, and educational affairs without need for bilingual intrepreters, bilingual ballots, and other bilingual services.

3. Both require a second language. In both cases students are required to learn a language that will access current cutting-edge knowledge in science and technology. In the Soviet's case, students learn two high access languages, Russian and another western language, such as English, French, or German.

4. Both have problems training a sufficient number of teachers who are bilingual and able to teach in non-western vernaculars. A corollary problem is that both lack sufficient curriculum materials in the non-western vernaculars. These are common problems that serve as major obstacles in schools that attempt to use local vernaculars as the medium of instruction.

5. Both are markedly different when compared to the United States. Both have a centralized education system. The federal governments in both cases make policies for the state operated schools. Thus, these federal governments can link their national goals to an education system that will implement language programs directed at achievement of the goals. Further, both can monitor the education systems to evaluate the extent to which the goals are being achieved.

In the United States, the education system is decentralized. Educational policies are made by fifty different state legislatures. Making a linkage between national goals and language education policies is complicated by decentralization. Some states have chosen English as their official language (California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska, Virginia). Others have chosen not to choose, i.e., they've permitted bilingualism and yet used English as their primary language. Others have chosen bilingualism - New Mexico - which started as a state with Spanish and English as its official languages. Others have encouraged foreign language education for monolingual, English-speaking students and encouraged bilingual education for assimilation into English

of non-English speaking students, a kind of convoluted policy of "bilingualism for monolinguals and monolingualism for bilinguals."

The federal government of the United States has formulated equal educational opportunity policies that focus on language education programs, the Bilingual Education Act and the U.S. District Court decisions, Lau v Nichols. In 1968, Public Law 90-247, The Bilingual Education Act, was enacted. The Bilingual Education Act, the seventh amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title VII) declared that it was "to be the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance to local education agencies to develop and carry out new and imaginative elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet the special education needs...(of) children who come from environments where the dominant language is other than English." (Geffert, 1975). The act stipulated it would be the policy of the U.S. government to assist financially in the development and implementation of bilingual education programs in U.S. public schools and trust territories.

In 1973, the act was changed to the Comprehensive Bilingual Education Amendment Act. The act was extended for training bilingual teachers and bilingual teacher trainers.

The Act's policy recognized that (1) large numbers of children have limited English-speaking ability, (2) many of these children have a cultural heritage that differs from that of English-speaking people, and (3) a primary means by which a child learns is through using his or her language and cultural heritage. The Act is currently undergoing review and changes in Congress. It may appear as an English-only law, or it may stipulate that all bilingual programs are to be transitional, i.e., promote assimilation into English.

A major catalyst for bilingual instruction was the United States Supreme Court ruling of Lau v Nichols that provisions for the same teachers, programs, and textbooks in the same language for all students in the San Francisco school district did not provide equal educational opportunity when the native language of a sizable number of the student body was not English. In part the ruling held:

> There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaninful education...Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the education program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students. (Lau v Nichols, 1974).

The ruling did not mandate bilingual instruction for non-English students, but it did stipulate that special programs were necessary if schools were to provide equal educational opportunity for such students.

During the middle 1950's foreign language programs were included in the elementary grades. By the 1959-1960 school year approximately 8,000 elementary schools offered FLES (Foreign Languages for Elementary Students) programs.' The FLES programs relied heavily on federal funds provided by the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). When federal funding ended, the public schools tried to continue the FLES programs. Primarily for financial reasons the programs did not maintain their initial thrusts, and by slow degrees they were discontinued. Few, if any, existed in the 1970's. (Zeydel, 1964).

Last, on Indian reservations throughout the United States, there are ongoing language restoration projects which are developing a written grammar, lexicon and literature of the respective tribes. I am familiar with Crow, Choctaw, Chereokee, and Navajo projects. These are a type of vernacularization programs. The tribes are restoring their indigenous languages, and as the Phillipines, they are also learning English.

Generally the U. S. Federal government has taken a laissez faire attitude toward language planning and language education policies, unlike the Soviet's and the Phillipines' who have taken a definite stand on the linkage of language education and national goals. The current debate, whether to make English the official language of the United States, is forcing the issue pertaining to the role to be played by second languages and bilingualism within the United States. Regrettably, the proponents of the English language initiative are also opponents of indigenous bilingeralism which confounds the already confused U.S. language education policies (Enuman, 1986).

Actually some type of official policy statement regarding English as the nation's lingua Franca and second language learning as tools for internationalizing the nation may be desirable, especially if the policy were linked to broader transcendent aims regarding national cohesion and viability within the global community. Such a policy could reduce ethnic group tensions and increase the nation's abilities to communicate with other cultures. Such a policy might assuage the fears that the United States is fast becoming a Tower of Babel, and a Factory of Inefficient Muddle. Such a policy might help to re-vitalize the language education curriculum of U.S.schools.

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