




Ideology, Politics and
Language Policies

Focus on English

EDITED BY Thomas Ricento



IDEOLOGY, POLITICS AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

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Volume 6

Thomas Ricento

Ideology, Politics and Language Policies
Focus on English

IDEOLOGY, POLITICS
AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

Focus on English

Edited by

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Preface

Several fortuitous events occurred in the spring of 1997 that would lead eventually to the publication of the book you now hold in your hands. Linda Tobash, chair of the Sociopolitical Concerns Committee of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) invited me to organize a colloquium for their annual convention to take place in Seattle, Washington, March 1998. After many e-mail discussions between Linda, me, and several of the scholars I had invited to join the panel, it was decided the title of the panel would be 'Ideological Implications of the Spread of English', and it would deal with the effects (positive and negative) associated with the historical and contemporary spread of English throughout the world. With the publication of David Crystal's *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), which presents a descriptively neutral — if not idealized — view of English in the world, I felt it was necessary and important to offer a richer, more nuanced view, one that sought to explain not only *why* English became the preeminent world language, but *how* this happened and what it has meant for thousands of languages and speech communities — small and large — throughout the world. I felt it was particularly apropos that these papers be presented at the largest conference dedicated to the teaching of English worldwide, an organization of which I have been a dues paying member since 1979.

In the spring of 1997 I was also planning a colloquium on ideology and language policies for the annual meeting of the American Association for Applied Linguistics to be held immediately before TESOL in March, also in Seattle. As it turned out, the scholars I invited to be on that panel were doing interesting critical research on ideology and language policies focussing on English. I asked the TESOL and AAAL panelists (two appeared on both panels) to prepare their conference papers with publication in mind, and received drafts from all participants prior to the conferences. Both panels attracted large and enthusiastic

audiences, much larger and more engaged than we had anticipated. It seemed clear to all of us that this work should be published, the sooner the better.

All but two of the papers presented at TESOL and AAAL are represented in this volume. In order to round out the geographical and theoretical representation, while preserving the focus on English, I included two additional papers, one previously published in *TESOL Quarterly* (Helen Moore) and the other written especially for this collection (Stanley Ridge).

The greatest reward throughout this process has been working with the individuals represented in this volume. Some I have known for a long time, others are new acquaintances. They are all first rate scholars whose work advances our understanding of why and how languages serve particular (often complex) sociopolitical, economic, and cultural agendas. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all of them for their patience and commitment to this project from its inception in 1997.

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June, 1999

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CHAPTER 1

Ideology, Politics and Language Policies

Introduction

Thomas Ricento

The aim of this volume is to examine how ideologies and politics shape language policies in diverse settings, and how and why policies change over time. The general framework within which the scholars in this volume operate is historical structural (Tollefson 1991), with several papers employing postmodern analyses. The research shows that a variety of ideologies may adhere to a dominant language, especially English (since the common thread throughout the collection is the role of English(es) in social life), and that the role (symbolic and/or functional) of that language within a particular social niche — or even within a particular speech event — cannot be determined without a fairly deep understanding of the sociohistorical contexts within which it has evolved. An example of this ‘ideological clustering’ around English is presented in Selma Sonntag’s chapter (‘Ideology and policy in the politics of the English language in North India’). Sonntag describes the complex language situation in North India in which English as the official language is supported by both right and left-wing political parties, but for completely different reasons and with different ends in mind. She makes the point that while the left-right ideological distinction may help us understand English language politics, it is not necessarily a predictor of specific language policies regarding English. Another example is provided in the work of Suresh Canagarajah who recounts a story passed down orally through the generations in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The story concerns the use of English in a particular speech act that signals both opposition to imported colonial cultural values and possession of a valued (English) education, useful for obtaining work in the colonial bureaucratic establishment. In the contemporary national context, code switching between Tamil and English evokes a discourse of cultural

pluralism and internationalism, an antidote to the totalitarian and chauvinistic interests that are promoting a policy of “pure Tamil” for the purpose of establishing a separate Tamil state within the multiethnic island of Sri Lanka.

The case studies and historical analyses presented in these papers make it clear that simple, often deterministic, formulations of relationships between language status and individuals, groups, and nation states are untenable; that language policies are always socially situated and continually evolving; that support of colonial languages, such as English, is not always or inherently repressive or reactionary; and that policies that favor linguistic pluralism do not always have as their goal the promotion of greater social and economic equality.

The authors come from the fields of applied linguistics, education, political science, and sociolinguistics. Data sources include historical documents, contemporary language policies, ethnographic studies, ethnolinguistic surveys, and other statistical information. Theoretical orientations come from a variety of sources and fields, including critical social theory, feminist theory, discourse analysis, and ethnography. While not rejected, notions such as linguistic imperialism, linguicism and ‘oppressive dominant language’ are problematized. The collection as a whole contributes to an evolving language policy research paradigm by teasing out and operationalizing ‘fuzzy’ terms such as ideology and language policy, and by showing that there is no one-to-one correspondence between ideologies and policies. Indeed, the cited (public) rationale for a particular language policy might appear to be ‘liberal’ while the hidden agenda could be quite reactionary or chauvinistic (e.g., economic exploitation, socioeconomic gatekeeping, increasing political power, and so on). Where languages are imposed, communities resist and appropriate them by developing oppositional discourses and ideologies of their own. Analysts from the ‘outside’ (including those from so-called center countries) often misinterpret, or mischaracterize, the function of dominant (colonial) languages in postcolonial settings (for example, in contemporary Jaffna, Sri Lanka). Another important finding is that a particular language policy can be used to achieve very different ends for different groups within a nation state. For example, as Wiley (this volume) notes, promotion of English in North America from the colonial period through the early 20th century had as its aim the *acculturation* of some groups (for the purpose of structural assimilation) and the *deculturation* of other groups (for the purpose of subordination, without structural incorporation).

These general observations can be grouped thematically to serve as heuristic devices, or even as partial explanations, in assessing the development and function(s) of language policies in diverse settings. Since much of the work in language policy and planning focuses on the processes and effects of language (and

culture) contact, the themes identified here should help researchers better explain the complex roles language policies have played — and continue to play — in advancing particular political and cultural interests and agendas. Illustrations of these four themes, taken from the papers in this volume, are presented below.

Theme One: Different language policies may share a common underlying ideology, and similar language policies may derive from competing ideological orientations

Sonntag (Chapter 9), in describing the complex relations between political ideologies (and counter ideologies) and language policies (pro-English vs. anti-English, pro-Sanskritized Hindi vs. pro-Hindustani), demonstrates that “while ideology informs policy, it does not determine it. Nor can one derive ideology from policy... Policies are contingent, adapted to changing material conditions. Ideologies... are more persistent (134).” Current ideological differences between the political left and right in India are deep-rooted despite the superficial and occasional convergence between left and right on policy matters. While “the left-right ideological distinction may help us understand English language politics, it is not necessarily a predictor of specific language policies regarding English (149)”.

In his analysis of colonial language policies, Pennycook (Chapter 4) demonstrates that while the Anglicist ideology supported English medium education and the Orientalist approach favored education in the local vernacular, these positions were two sides of the same coin, both designed to facilitate trade while maintaining social control of the native population. In the South African context, Ridge (Chapter 10) uses historical analysis to show how “both an emphasis on English and an emphasis on African languages can be racist and dehumanizing. By the same token, both can be liberatory and affirmative” (164). Despite its earlier association with Anglicist segregationist social policies, English today in South Africa is informed by its ideological association with the aspiration to a common society and as a language of liberation. English was the language used in negotiating the South African Constitution and continues to be “the main and almost exclusive language of the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures” (167). Ironically, resistance to the *dominant* status of English comes “from activists for Afrikaans, the *dominating* language of the apartheid era and the language of communities which experienced English as a *dominating* language in two periods of aggressive anglicisation in the 1820s and early this (20th) century, immediately after the Anglo-Boer war” (167). While the Constitution names eleven official languages of South Africa, such protections will not

transform sociolinguistic behavior overnight; many factors, including the ability of the education system to respond to the new demands for a multilingual South Africa, will determine the role English and other official languages will play in national consolidation and development.

Wiley (Chapter 5) argues that the ideology of English monolingualism in the United States has served two distinct goals of assimilationist policies in the United States: *deculturation* without structural assimilation, for the purpose of subordination, and *acculturation* for purposes of structural incorporation. The policy for Native Americans (deculturation), for example, was from the beginning designed to strip Indian peoples of their languages and cultures and domesticate them as a compliant, but not seditious, population. When the Cherokee and other tribes succeeded in attaining high levels of literacy in their native language and English, relative to neighboring White populations, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began the English-only Boarding schools in order to insure the destruction of Indian ways. For European immigrants, despite periods of heightened xenophobia in which their languages were suppressed, the policy of linguistic assimilation was linked to the expectation of complete structural incorporation into the dominant society (acculturation). Thus, while the policy of *linguistic* assimilation to English applied to all groups, the implementation and goals of this policy varied considerably from group to group.

Theme Two: Ideologies of language are linked to other ideologies that can influence and constrain the development of language policies

Canagarajah, Moore, Pennycook, Phillipson, and Wiley show how ideologies of language are linked to other ideologies that can influence and constrain the development of language policies. For example, in contemporary Sri Lankan political discourse, the use of English is associated with an ideology of internationalism and cultural pluralism in opposition to the more conservative authoritarian interests that promote a policy of “pure Tamil” for the purpose of establishing a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka (Canagarajah, Chapter 8). In this context, English has been reappropriated from its colonial past; its use symbolizes values and goals altogether different from those typically associated with Anglicist agendas (“civilizing” the natives, and so on). Moore (Chapter 3) provides a critical analysis of Cooper’s (1989) approach to language planning in order to make the more general point that the unreflected interests of academics “inevitably influences our choice and interpretation of data, the arguments to which our descriptions contribute, and the values that our analyses embody” (36).

In comparing two language policies in Australia (the National Policy on Languages (NPL) and the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP)), Moore shows how political ideologies of two different Australian administrations led to very different policy formulations and recommendations; in order to properly understand these contrasting approaches to language policy, researchers need to investigate not only contemporary political ideologies, but also their own political and epistemological biases. Pennycook (Chapter 7) argues that the dominant academic position on the effects of the spread of English — Laissez faire liberalism — denies any ideological implications, or refuses to consider them. Such a view, while appearing to maintain a stance of “scientific objectivity”, is in fact associated with a liberal ideology that favors a market-driven “freedom-of-choice” approach in interpreting human behavior. Wiley (Chapter 5) shows how the monolingual standard language ideology of the U.S. is linked to related discourses of immigration and assimilation that entail detailed, highly ideologized narratives of the “melting pot,” Anglo-Saxonism, racialization, and so on. Wiley shows how policies of language restrictionism, and in particular opposition to bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism, have reflected a different mix among various ideologies over time. In particular, racism and linguisticism have been linked throughout U.S. history, with one or the other more dominant in different historical periods. Wiley cites Schmidt (1995) who argues that racism and linguisticism converged by the end of the 19th century to such an extent that Anglo-Saxonism and English became ideologically unified, so that each entailed the other. Phillipson (Chapter 6) positions the spread of English within “globalization processes that characterize the contemporary post-cold-war phase of aggressive casino capitalism, economic restructuring, McDonaldization and militarization on all continents (87).” Although Phillipson does not posit a direct causal link between English and processes of global enrichment and impoverishment, he finds it irresponsible to deny any connection, the position taken by linguist David Crystal (according to Phillipson), in his 1997 book *English as a Global Language*.

Theme Three: Ideologies in colonial and post-colonial contexts do not flow in one direction from the Center to the Periphery; rather, the direction is two-way and colonial ideologies are shaped as much in the Periphery as they are in the Center

Pennycook makes this case very convincingly in his chapter ‘Language, ideology and hindsight: Lessons from colonial language policies.’ The complexity and contradictions in colonial language policies derive in large measure from the competing demands and interests of the colonizers and the colonized. In fact, different views of what would work best, in the short and long run, to maximize the interests of the colonial powers resulted in different — sometimes competing — language policies. In a sense, this dilemma illustrates the complexity and indeterminacy of the economic, political, and cultural aspirations of the colonial powers. Today, competing aspirations continue to challenge current — and former — colonial powers, and former colonies, notably in India, but also in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and many African states. The difficulty of accommodating cultural and linguistic diversity within the state system, or the supranational systems *in vitro* in Europe, as well as in other parts of the world, while responding to pressures of globalization, pose challenges that have no easy solutions with regard to languages policy development and implementation.

Theme Four: Ideology does not always apply to the efforts of dominant social groups to legitimate their power

In discussing the situation in India, Sonntag (Chapter 9) argues that the “ideology of the lower-caste rural, left-leaning politicians may not be ‘legitimizing the power of a dominant social group or class’ (Eagleton 1991:5), but rather challenging that power, for, as Eagleton notes, ‘not every body of belief which people commonly term ideological is associated with a dominant political power’”(134). Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, or ideology as struggle, can be observed to varying degrees and in various ways where dominant ideologies are contested.

Pennycook (Chapter 4) also shows how counter-discourses in Center and Periphery countries influenced the kinds of language policies and language behavior that were promoted at different times. Canagarajah (Chapter 8) shows in more recent times that counter-hegemonic discourses may be indexed in the language of colonialism. Ridge (Chapter 10) demonstrates that the association of English with liberation and democracy among speakers of African languages has been an important factor in language policy decisions that have favored English over indigenous African languages in the public domain.

Conclusion

The research presented in this volume demonstrates that language policies can never be properly understood or analyzed as free-standing documents or practices; to ignore the role of ideology, or to relegate it to a bin of ‘extraneous’ variables, too fraught with ambiguity to be useful in empirical research, is to engage in ideological subterfuge of the worst sort. To assume that ideologies (for example, standard language ideology) are always repressive or liberatory is also a mistake. A particular language policy may serve different political interests simultaneously. Further, as formal language policies are essentially political documents (Ricento 1999), they have been forged with compromise, based on a series of assumptions and expected likely outcomes, reflecting at least to some degree political exigencies that are likely to change over time. Ideologies inform and shape political decisions, but formal planned language policies do not always — or even often — achieve their objectives, be they liberatory or oppressive. For example, a policy of mandatory mother tongue education might not be the wisest policy in cases where, for example, appropriate and adequate resources are unavailable (see Fasold 1992 for discussion on this point). In other cases, such a policy might have little impact — positive or negative — on language maintenance patterns (e.g., Irish in Ireland or Frisian in The Netherlands). It is simply difficult to legislate language behavior, whether for good or evil purposes.

It is crucial that researchers not succumb to the ‘false consciousness’ view of ideology, which presupposes “the possibility of some unequivocally correct way of viewing the world” (Eagleton 1991: 11). This does not imply, as Pennycook notes, a position of political and moral relativism in which there is no basis to prefer one policy over another. Rather, the appropriate conclusion to draw from the work presented in this volume is that “language policy can only be understood in the complex contexts of language use” (Pennycook, Chapter 4: 64). The approach to language policy research represented in these papers seeks to tease out the contributory roles of ideology and politics to provide a fuller explanation of the functions and goals of particular language policies (or policy approaches) in defined contexts. This approach does not wish to reify ideology, nor to develop one-dimensional or uni-directional relations between well-attested ideologies and policy practices. While ‘ideology’ is itself a contested idea, variously defined and valorized in sociolinguistic research (see Ricento, Chapter 2), its utility in language policy studies does not depend on some final resolution of this intellectual debate. The conceptual tools necessary to conduct explanatory language policy research are well represented in this volume. Such research provides us with a better understanding of how languages — discursively

and materially — serve particular socioeconomic and political interests, and how languages can be (re)appropriated to transform and redefine social (and economic) reality. As importantly, as Helen Moore reminds us (Chapter 3), language policy research and scholarship must be understood as a socially situated practice that reflects particular interests and ideologies. Scholars must examine the implicit assumptions that inform their research agendas as they seek to uncover the ideologies that inform language policies in the contexts they choose to investigate.

CHAPTER 2

Historical and Theoretical Perspectives in Language Policy and Planning

Thomas Ricento

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1. Introduction

My purpose in this chapter is to examine the evolution of language policy and planning (LPP)¹ as an area of research roughly since World War II. In doing so, I will consider important developments in several areas of the social sciences and humanities which have informed and helped shape the kinds of questions, methods, findings and controversies that have animated language policy studies.

In analyzing the LPP literature, I find three types of factors have been instrumental in shaping the field, that is, in influencing the kinds of questions asked, methodologies adopted, and goals aspired to. I group these under the headings (1) the *macro sociopolitical*, (2) the *epistemological*, and (3) the *strategic*. The macro sociopolitical refers to events and processes that obtain at the national or supranational level, such as state formation (or disintegration), wars (hot or cold), population migrations, globalization of capital and communications, and the like. Epistemological factors concern paradigms of knowledge and research, such as structuralism and postmodernism in the social sciences and humanities, rational choice theory and neo-Marxism in economics and political science, and so on. Strategic factors concern the ends for which research is conducted; they are the explicit or implicit reasons for which researchers undertake particular kinds of research. Examples of such purposes could include uncovering the sources of structural socioeconomic inequality, demonstrating the economic costs or benefits of particular language policies, or justifying the implementation of particular language in education policies. I reject the idea that research is unconnected to strategic purposes, and concur with Cibulka (1995: 118)

that ‘the borderline between policy *research* and policy *argument* is razor thin.’ These descriptors serve as heuristic devices to help reconstruct the intellectual history of LPP. As with any reconstruction of intellectual history, there will be disagreements about categories and time lines, and about the relative importance of the variables themselves. Clearly, there is interaction among the three approaches and continuity of themes in the three ‘stages’ of LPP development. In what follows, I will identify some of the more salient macro sociopolitical, epistemological, and strategic factors that have informed LPP research, beginning in the post World War II period up to the present day. I realize events and ideas I will describe often have antecedents extending well into the past, in some cases, several centuries; where appropriate, such links are noted. I will conclude with some thoughts on possible future research directions. The discussion offered is meant to be illustrative rather than inclusive.

2. Early work: Decolonization, structuralism, and pragmatism

The three central elements in this first phase in LPP work are (1) decolonization and state formation (*macro sociopolitical*), (2) the predominance of structuralism in the social sciences (*epistemological*), and (3) the pervasive belief, at least in the West, that language problems could be solved through planning, especially within the public sector (*strategic*).

The confluence of several factors contributed to the development of LPP as an identifiable field in the early 1960s. The expertise of linguists had been enlisted in many parts of the world to develop grammars, writing systems, and dictionaries for indigenous languages. Corpus planning (graphization, standardization, modernization) presented theoretical as well as practical challenges to the field. Scholars trained in structural linguistics with interests in language typologies and sociolinguistics (especially issues of domain and function, which led to the development of language planning models) realized the great potential for advancing linguistic theory and exploring language-society connections in new ways. Fishman (1968a: 6) spelled out the possibilities quite explicitly:

Precisely because the developing nations are at an earlier stage in development ... the problems and processes of nationhood are more apparent in such nations and their transformations more discernible to the researcher. As a result the developing nations (‘new nations’) have come to be of great interest to those sociolinguists who are interested in the transformations of group identity in general as well as to those interested in societal (governmental and other) impact on language-related behavior and on language itself.

Fishman saw developing nations as providing an 'indispensable and truly intriguing array of field-work locations for a new breed of genuine sociolinguists' (1968a: 11).

Given the perceived needs of these 'new nations', much of the early work focussed on typologies and approaches to language planning. Particularly influential in this period were Einar Haugen's (1966) language planning model and Heinz Kloss' (1966) typology of multilingualism. Representative research is found in Fishman et al. (1968) and Rubin and Jernudd (1971). A focus of much attention in status planning centered on the selection of a national language for purposes of modernization and nation-building. A consensus view, at least among Western sociolinguists,² was that a major European language (usually English or French) should be used for formal and specialized domains while local (indigenous) languages could serve other functions. This solution — stable diglossia — was evident in the more established African states (and elsewhere), and, it was argued, should be tried in the new African nations as well. A widely held view among Western(ized) sociolinguists in this period was that linguistic diversity presented obstacles for national development, while linguistic homogeneity was associated with modernization and Westernization. Fishman (1968b: 61) asked somewhat rhetorically if it were possible 'that an appreciable level of linguistic (and other cultural) homogeneity may have facilitated the "Westernization" of the West?' The formula, roughly, for successful nationhood entailed cultural/ethnic unity within a defined geographical boundary (state), and a common linguistic identity among the citizens of a polity. Further, only 'developed' languages (or ones that were capable of being developed) were suitable to fulfill the role of 'national' language; developed languages were written, standardized, and adaptable to the demands of technological and social advancement. In other words, the idealization of one nation/one (standard) national language, popularized in Europe beginning in the 1820s in the works of von Humboldt (especially *On the National Character of Languages*) but extending to the present day, was the model which at least implicitly informed language planning in decolonized states in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

In general, this approach was viewed by practitioners as non-political (at least not in the narrow partisan sense), technical, oriented toward problem-solving, and pragmatic in its goals. Fishman (1968c: 492), commenting on the goals of language planning with regard to 'new nations' (as opposed to 'old developing nations' with Great Traditions), revealed a widely held view that the problems were relatively straightforward:

The language problems of the ethnically fragmented 'new nation' reflect its relatively greater emphasis on political integration and on the efficient

nationism on which it initially depends. Language selection is a relatively short-lived problem since the linguistic tie to technological and political modernity is usually unambiguous. Problems of language development, codification, and acceptance are also minimal as long as these processes are seen as emanating justifiably and primarily from the 'metropolitan country...' Although some attention may be given to the pedagogic demands of initial literacy (or transitional literacy) for *young* people ... the lion's share of literacy effort and resources is placed at the disposal of spreading the adopted Western tongue of current political and ... sociocultural integration.

Fishman (1968c:494) believed the language problems of the 'old developing nations' differed from those of new nations, principally because old nations had literate traditions, and so the task for language planners was to modernize the classical standard languages to 'cope with Western technology and procedure, and [to simplify it] to hasten widespread literacy and participation.' If citizens could speak the same modernized language, it was argued, both unity (by virtue of having a national language) and economic development, keyed to Western technology, financing, and expertise, were more likely. Interestingly, Fishman believed it would be more efficient to import a Western language *in toto*, if possible, to expedite modernity, but that a compromise position was to modernize the classical language, something bound to be resisted by guardians of the classical tradition. Countries that did not fit neatly into either category, so-called intermediate types (e.g., India and Pakistan), were considered to present the greatest challenge to planners, because no single indigenous national language nor a stable pattern of bilingualism with diglossia seemed to be feasible. This latter prediction has turned out to have some validity; however, this tri-partite categorizing of nations concealed a whole range of beliefs and attitudes about national development (especially the ways development served Western economic interests), and the role of languages in that development, that would not be systematically explored for several decades. While theoretical linguists claimed all languages were created equal, a number of sociolinguists and policy analysts devised taxonomies of languages according to their relative suitability for national development (for example, see Kloss 1968), thereby facilitating (wittingly or not) the continued dominance (if not domination) of European colonial languages in high status domains of education, economy, and technology in developing countries, a situation which persists to the present day.

To summarize, the scholarly literature in this early period of language policy and planning studies can be characterized in the following ways [I rely here on an analysis of several contemporary edited volumes (especially Fishman, Ferguson & Das Gupta 1968; Rubin and Jernudd 1971), monographs (notably

Haugen 1966), as well as more recent critical discussions by Tollefson (1991) and Pennycook (1994)]:

1. Goals of language planning were often associated with a desire for unification (of a region, a nation, a religious group, a political group, or other kinds of groups), a desire for modernization, a desire for efficiency, or a desire for democratization (Rubin 1971: 307–310).
2. Language was characterized as a resource with value, and as such, was subject to planning (Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971: 211).
3. Status and corpus planning were viewed as more or less separate activities, and ideologically neutral (although not without complications).
4. Languages were abstracted from their sociohistorical and ecological contexts (ahistoricity and synchrony).

It should be noted that many LPP researchers active during this period, such as Rubin, Jernudd, Fishman and others were aware of the problems inherent in language planning, and were at times critical of their contemporaries. For example, Jernudd and Das Gupta (1971) distanced themselves from Tauli (1968), who disapproved of existing languages and of the irrationality of their patterns of emergence, claiming that ‘our (Jernudd and Das Gupta’s) definition of language planning excludes search for universal linguistic ‘means’ to achieve ‘results’ like ‘clarity’, ‘economy’, ‘aesthetic form’, and ‘elasticity’ (Tauli 1968: 30–42; cited in Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971: 199). Jernudd and Das Gupta also critiqued Haugen’s (1966) three criteria for language decisions, namely, ‘efficiency’, ‘adequacy’, and ‘acceptability’, in the absence of explicit valuations for these terms. The basis for these and similar criticisms, however, was more technical than substantive, and essentially related to matters of implementation and decision-making, thus by-passing the more complex yet fundamental issues dealing with language choice, individual and group identities, and socioeconomic structures and hierarchies of inequality.

3. The second phase: Failure of modernization, critical sociolinguistics, and access

The second phase in LPP research, roughly from the early 1970s through the late 1980s, saw a continuation of some of the themes current in the first phase, with some important new developments as well. Some have used the term neo-colonial to characterize the socioeconomic and political structures that became dominant in the developing world. Rather than a flowering of democracy or

economic ‘take-off’ to use Walter Rostow’s (1963) term from his stages of modernization and national development (which had become gospel by the 1970s), newly independent states found themselves in some ways more dependent on their former colonial masters than they had been during the colonial era. Hierarchization and stratification of populations were themes identified by scholars as worthy of investigation; the role of language(s) and culture(s) in this process has been well-documented (e.g. Phillipson 1992; Said 1993; Pennycook 1994). Faced with this reality, several language planners (especially academics) formulated responses. For example, Cobarrubias (1983b: 41) made the assertion that ‘certain tasks of language planners, language policy makers, educators, legislators, and others involved in changing the status of language or language variety are not philosophically neutral.’ Fishman (1983: 382), in a somewhat defensive mode, noted that some linguists ‘still view language planning as immoral, unprofessional, and/or impossible.’ There was a growing awareness among scholars that earlier attempts in language planning, including models proposed by Haugen (1966) and Ferguson (1966), were inadequate, purely from a descriptive perspective (see Schiffman (1996) for a retrospective analysis). Indeed, Haugen admitted that even the revised version of the original model he presented does ‘not amount to a theory of language planning’ (cited in Cobarrubias 1983a: 5). There were a number of factors that caused the field to reconsider where it was, and where it might be headed. The failure of modernization policies in the developing world was clearly one factor (although Tollefson (1991: 28, 29) notes that such failures may have served to protect and preserve dominant economic interests). To the extent that language planning theory was thought of as a branch of resource management, it was bound to fail (this point is developed in Kaplan and Baldauf 1997), given the complexity of the task, the countless and uncontrollable variables involved, the difficulty of evaluating the effectiveness of policies, and the virtual impossibility of engineering society in nations with long and complex colonial histories.

Developments in linguistics and related social sciences that started in the 1960s and gained prominence in the 1980s also had an impact on scholarly thinking and problematizing in LPP research (see Hymes 1996/1975 for a discussion). Among important developments was the continuing challenge to autonomous linguistics as a viable paradigm for research in language acquisition, use and change, with direct relevance to developing models of language policy and planning. Cherished notions such as ‘native speaker’, ‘mother tongue’, and ‘linguistic competence’ were called into question, problematized (Fasold 1992), and even abandoned (see, for example, *The Native Speaker is Dead*, Paikeday 1985). All this had important implications for language policy and planning

studies. The notion of language as a discrete, finite entity defined by standard grammars was characterized by a number of scholars as a function of the methods, and values, of positivistic linguistics (e.g. Harris 1981; Le Page 1985; Sankoff 1988; Mühlhäusler 1990, 1996; Fettes 1997). The importation of the largely Western notion of language in language policy studies helped perpetuate a series of attitudes which became ideological (Pennycook 1994). Even the apparently neutral sociolinguistic construct *diglossia* has been criticized (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 69) as ‘an ideological naturalization of sociolinguistic arrangements’, perpetuating linguistic (and, hence, societal) inequalities. Pennycook (1994: 29) views language as ‘located in social action and anything we might want to call *a* language is not a pre-given system but a will to community.’ Autonomous linguistics, Pennycook notes, while claiming a neutral descriptivism, actually embraces a prescriptivism which Harris (1981) traces to post-Renaissance Europe, that reflects the political psychology of nationalism, and an educational system devoted to standardizing the linguistic behavior of pupils (cited in Pennycook 1994: 29). Mühlhäusler (1990, 1996) describes the role that such prescriptivism has played in places like Papua New Guinea, in which local notions of language (i.e., where one language stops and another begins) contrasted sharply with the views imposed by anthropologists and linguists (see Siegel 1997 for a critique of Mühlhäusler 1996). As Crowley (1990: 48) notes, ‘rather than registering a unitary language, [linguists] were helping to form one.’

This critique of linguistics was coupled with a broader critical analysis of approaches to language planning research and to language policies throughout the developing, as well as the developed, world (e.g., Hymes 1975/1996; Wolfson and Manes 1985; Tollefson 1986, 1991; Luke, McHoul, and Mey 1990; among many others). Whereas many scholars in the earlier period were concerned with status planning and issues connected with standardization, graphization, and modernization, during the second phase a number of scholars focused on the social, economic, and political effects of language contact. The papers in Wolfson and Manes (1985: ix), for example, were concerned with the ways that ‘language use reflects and indeed influences social, economic or political inequality.’ Rather than studying *languages* as entities with defined societal distributions and functions (with some languages designated as more appropriate than others for certain high status functions), sociolinguists focused on the status and relations of *speech communities* in defined contexts. In this approach, the connections between community attitudes and language policies were analyzed to explain why language *x* had a particular status — High or Low — and the consequences of this status for individuals and communities. In short, the status (and utility) of language *x*, as well as its viability in the short or long term, was

correlated with the social and economic status of its speakers, and not just with the numbers of speakers or suitability for modernization. The supposed neutrality of stable diglossia as a means of furthering national development and modernization was called into question; historical inequalities and conflicts did not diminish with the selection of an indigenous language for Low variety functions, and designation of European languages for High functions tended to perpetuate socioeconomic asymmetries based on education, access to which was socially controlled by dominant groups (internally), and influenced by regional and global economic interests (externally).

We could characterize the second phase of work in LPP as one in which there was a growing awareness of the negative effects — and inherent limitations — of planning theory and models, and a realization that sociolinguistic constructs such as diglossia, bilingualism, and multilingualism were conceptually complex and ideologically laden and could not be easily fit into existing descriptive taxonomies. The choice of European languages as ‘neutral media’ to aid in national development tended to favor the economic interests of metropolitan countries, often with negative effects on the economic, social, and political interests of marginalized minority language speakers. The *de facto* privileging of certain languages and varieties in national language planning had the effect of limiting the utility and, hence, influence of thousands of indigenous languages and their speakers in national (re)construction. Further, it became apparent that language choices could not be engineered to conform to ‘enlightened’ models of modernity; linguistic behavior was *social* behavior, motivated and influenced by attitudes and beliefs of speakers and speech communities, as well as by macro economic and political forces.

4. The third stage: The new world order, postmodernism, linguistic human rights

The third period in language policy research, roughly from the mid-1980s to the present day, is still in its formative stage, and therefore difficult to characterize. Nonetheless, several important themes and issues have already been established in the literature.

The dominant global events during this period include massive population migrations, the reemergence of national ethnic identities (and languages) coinciding with the breakup of the Soviet Union and the repatriation of former colonies, such as Hong Kong, along with countervailing movements to forge new regional coalitions, such as the European Union, in which local and regional

languages must compete with supranational languages, such as English, French, and German (in the case of Europe). Operating along with geographical and political changes are forces associated with the globalization of capitalism, such as the domination of the media by a handful of multinationals (Said 1993). Some scholars find this centralization in the control and dissemination of culture worldwide to be a greater threat to independence than was colonialism itself:

The threat to independence in the late twentieth century from the new electronics could be greater than was colonialism itself. We are beginning to learn that decolonization and the growth of supra-nationalism were not the termination of imperial relationships but merely the extending of a geo-political web which has been spinning since the Renaissance. The new media have the power to penetrate more deeply into a 'receiving' culture than any previous manifestation of Western technology. The results could be immense havoc, an intensification of the social contradictions within developing societies today (Smith 1980: 176, cited in Said 1993: 291–292)

These developments — devolution of the Soviet Union, evolution of national (and supranational) identities in Eastern and Western Europe, penetration of Western — especially North American — culture and technology in the developing world — have had consequences for the status (and in some cases, it has been argued, the viability) of languages, large and small. One area in LPP that has received particular attention is language loss, especially among so-called 'small' languages (Hale et al. 1992; Krauss 1992). Of the estimated 6,000 languages spoken today, 95% of the world's population speak 100 languages, with 5% speaking the remaining thousands of languages (cited in Mühlhäusler 1996: 272). In Alaska and the Soviet North, about 45 of the 50 indigenous languages (90%) are moribund; in Australia, about 90% of the aboriginal languages still spoken are moribund (Krauss 1992: 5). In the United States, Krauss (1998: 11) reports that only 20 (13%) of the 155 extant Native North American languages are spoken by all generations including young children. Supporters of language maintenance draw parallels between biodiversity and cultural/linguistic diversity, with the assumption that 'cultural diversity might enhance biodiversity or vice versa' (Maffi 1996; Harmon 1996). Critics of these views argue that most languages (and species of animals and plants) that have ever existed are extinct; in short, critics claim that cultural (including linguistic) evolution is a 'natural' human phenomenon, influenced by the effects of contact, conquest, disease, and technological developments. Ladefoged (1992: 810) finds it 'paternalistic of linguists to assume they know what is best for the community' (see Dorian (1993) for a critical response to Ladefoged's position). However, the 'benefits of bio/linguistic diversity' vs. 'language loss is natural' dichotomy is

viewed as reductionist by many critical and postmodern theorists, but for different reasons. Critical scholars, such as Robert Phillipson, examine the links between the imposition of imperial languages and the fate of indigenous languages and cultures around the world. Phillipson (1997: 239) invokes the term 'linguistic imperialism' as a 'shorthand for a multitude of activities, ideologies and structural relationships ... within an overarching structure of asymmetrical North/South relations, where language interlocks with other dimensions, cultural ... economic and political.' In his analysis, language becomes a vector and means by which an unequal division of power and resources between groups is propagated ('linguicism': this term was first coined by Skutnabb-Kangas 1986), thwarting social and economic progress for those who do not learn the language of modernity — English — in former British and American colonies. One of the consequences of this process is the marginalization, and ultimately, loss of thousands of indigenous languages. Besides the indirect marginalization of languages through structural economic and ideological means, more direct methods have been adopted to suppress through legislation certain languages in education and in public life (e.g., Catalan, Kurdish, Amerindian languages, to name a few). The 'cure' for linguicism and linguistic genocide, in this analysis, involves a proactive political and moral response, especially the promotion — and acceptance — of linguistic human rights by states and international bodies as universal principles. Although several existing charters and documents protect cultural and social rights, Phillipson (1992: 95) concludes that 'the existing international or 'universal' declarations are in no way adequate to provide support for dominated languages.' Criticism of Phillipson's work has come from two directions. Some have argued that his model lacks empirical support (e.g., Conrad 1996; Davies 1996). Others, mostly sympathetic with many of Phillipson's ideas, have nonetheless argued that his model is too deterministic and monolithic in its assumptions and conclusions. These scholars, often associated with postmodern theoretical approaches, have offered more nuanced contextualized and historical descriptions of events and practices in, for example, India, Malaysia, and Singapore (Pennycook 1994), and Jaffna, Sri Lanka (Canagarajah 1999). Pennycook (Chapter 7) distinguishes between the 'structural power' of English and the 'discursive effects' of English; the latter approach reveals the 'ways in which ideologies related to English are imposed on, received by, or appropriated by users of English around the world.' In this approach, the relations between language policies and ideologies of power are complex; different means of achieving the same goals (e.g., economic control by imperial interests) can result in the support of, or restriction of, indigenous languages, with consequences unforeseen by planners. Canagarajah (Chapter 8) uses a

discourse analytic methodology to locate language use — choice of code and lexis — to account for the subtle ways in which periphery communities have negotiated the ideological potential of English in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. In this approach, individual agency — and not impersonal ideological forces — is the locus of analysis.

The role of ideology³ in language policy has been investigated in more specific domains as well, whether by context (schools, the work place, the courts) or topic (education, accent discrimination, research methodology). James Tollefson (1989, 1991), influenced by the critical social theories of Jürgen Habermas, Anthony Giddens, and Michel Foucault, has explored the connections between ideologies of power in the modern state and the development of language policies in eight different countries. Terrence Wiley (1996, 1998) explores English-only and Standard English ideologies in the United States, and shows how these ideologies became hegemonic in the twentieth century, particularly with reference to language policies in public education. Other scholars who have investigated the connection between ideology and language policies in education include Giroux 1981; Tollefson 1986, 1991, 1995; Crawford 1989, 1992; Luke, McHoul and Mey 1990; Darder 1991; Cummins 1994; Freeman 1996; and Ricento 1998. Lippi-Green (1997) explores the ideologies that inform attitudes toward language, and hence language policies, in the U.S. and the negative consequences of such (often unofficial) policies for marginalized groups in the education system, the media, the workplace, and the judicial system. Moore (Chapter 3), in a detailed analysis of Australia's two national language policies (the National Policy on Languages (1987) and the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1991), argues for the need to 'bring to light the interestedness of describers of language policies ... both in the academy and policymaking arenas ... [since] our interestedness as scholars inevitably influences our choice and interpretation of data, the arguments to which our descriptions contribute, and the values that our analyses embody.' In a similar vein, Ricento (1998) argues that the evaluation of the relative effectiveness of bilingual education policies in U.S. public education varies according to the operating assumptions and expectations of different interested constituencies, but that the underlying and nearly universally shared goal of education policies — the cultural and linguistic assimilation of non-English-speakers — reflects ideologies of language and American identity that have become hegemonic, especially in the wake of the Americanization campaign, 1914–1924.

In all of the research mentioned in this section, the influence of both critical and postmodern theories and research methods is evident. This work clearly distances itself from previous models and theories in the LPP literature. While

scholars in the first period of LPP research such as Fishman were aware of issues of hegemony and ideology, they did not position these ideas as central in processes of language planning and policy, nor did they explore the ways in which 'language policy arbitrarily gives importance to language in the organization of human societies' (Tollefson 1991:2). Responding to such criticisms, Fishman (1994:93) acknowledges that language planning has tended to reproduce sociocultural and econotechnical inequalities, and that language planning is often connected to the processes of Westernization and modernization. However, the fact that language planning 'can be used for evil purposes ... must not blind us to the fact that language planning can be and has often been used for benevolent purposes' (Fishman 1994:94). Fishman (1994:97) separates the theory of language planning from its implementation, arguing that 'the specific criticisms of language planning ... that flow from post-structuralist and neo-Marxist analyses of the economy, culture and ideology do not sufficiently differentiate between language planning theory and language planning practice', adding that 'very little language planning practice has actually been informed by language planning theory.' Critics of classical language planning, such as Tollefson (1991), object to the characterization (whether explicitly or implicitly) of language *planning* as a neutral, often beneficial, problem-solving activity; this is precisely the sort of attitude that post-structural and neo-Marxist critics identify as ideological, and one which easily becomes hegemonic.

To summarize, the synthesis of elements of critical theory with an ecology of languages approach has led to the formulation of a new paradigm. As Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996:429) put it, 'The ecology-of-language paradigm involves building on linguistic diversity worldwide, promoting multilingualism and foreign language learning, and granting linguistic human rights to speakers of all languages.' Macro sociopolitical forces, including the alleged effects of linguistic imperialism, and strategic factors (the desire to preserve and revitalize threatened languages and cultures) have clearly influenced — if not determined — the types of data collected, analysis of data, and policy recommendations made by researchers working in this paradigm. If the technocrats of LPP in the 1950s and 1960s could be criticized for their naive (or disingenuous) claims of political neutrality in their attempts to aid the program of Westernization and modernization in the developing world, the supporters of linguistic human rights of the 1980s and 1990s are susceptible to charges of utopianism in their '... dream of modernist universalism' (Pennycook, Chapter 7). Another concern raised by critics of the language ecology/language rights approach is that discussions of language status are couched in the rhetoric of political science. For example, Conrad (1996:19) argues that 'theories of conflicting nationalisms,

imperialism, economic power, and contests of ideology are the products of a study of the political nature of human beings.' Conrad is troubled that such theories have found their way 'more and more into a linguistics that is attempting to root itself in the social sciences ... Contact studies become theories of conflicting languages, studies of dominations, and explorations of what Phillipson (1992) called 'linguicism.' As Hymes (1985: vii) noted, 'Were there no political domination or social stratification in the world, there would still be linguistic inequality ...' He goes on to say that

Allocation and hierarchy are intrinsic. Nor should the investments of many, perhaps even including ourselves, in some existing arrangements be underestimated. Effective change in the direction of greater equality will only partly be change in attitude, or removal of external domination; it will be inseparable in many cases from change of social system.

In this regard, it should be noted that major developments in the social sciences over the last one hundred years have often been motivated in large measure by the desire to change the social system, to validate existing social policies and practices, or to counteract hegemonic beliefs about human nature. The attempt by critics of language ecology/language rights to separate the 'science' of language from the 'science' of politics harks back to attempts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to separate the 'science' of biology from developments in cultural studies, later to become the 'science' of anthropology. In explaining Franz Boas' conception of culture and opposition to a racial interpretation of human behavior, Carl Degler (1991: 82) demonstrates quite convincingly that '... Boas did not arrive at that position from a disinterested, scientific inquiry into a vexed if controversial question. Instead, his idea derived from an ideological commitment that began in his early life and academic experiences in Europe and continued in America to shape his professional outlook ... there is no doubt that he had a deep interest in collecting evidence and designing arguments that would rebut or refute an ideological outlook — racism — which he considered restrictive upon individuals and undesirable for society.' It took more than fifty years, from the time Theodor Waitz published his first book (1858 — *On the unity of the human species and the natural condition of man* [the first of a six volume work]) outlining the view that all people, black or white, high or low in cultural achievement, were 'equally destined for liberty', for cultural explanations to rival, and eventually surpass (at least in the scholarly literatures), Social Darwinian explanations for differences in societies. In retrospect, the assumptions, methods, and conclusions of both Darwin and Boas — although flawed and incomplete — broke important ground, were often misunderstood and

misapplied in other domains, reflected their times and personal histories, and led to entirely new fields of study, viz. evolutionary biology and anthropology. It may take as long for a new paradigm of the sociolinguistics of society to evolve, a paradigm that would account for the political and economic dimensions no less than for the social and cognitive correlates in explaining language behavior.

5. Conclusion

Few fields of study are immune to macro sociopolitical forces; yet, as a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field that embraces the core disciplines of linguistics, political science, sociology, and history, LPP is especially susceptible to such forces. Developments in critical social theory, along with a continuing assault on autonomous structural linguistics that started in the 1960s have at least in part unfolded in reaction to these larger sociopolitical forces and processes (nation-building and nationalism, Western-driven globalization of capital, technology and communications, persistent threats to the viability of marginalized languages and cultures, the break-up of empires and failures of 'modernization' in many countries, the persistence of socioeconomic inequalities and injustices, and so on). Important work in postmodern theories (especially in discourse analysis) has shown how the material and the ideological are interrelated in ways that move the field of LPP beyond the taxonomies and dichotomies which have dominated it since its inception.⁴ Important work in language ecology and human rights has fundamentally shifted the focus of research in the past ten years. Clearly, these advances in language in society and policy studies have permeated the thinking of scholars who consider themselves active in the field. Even when language preservation or language rights are not the focus of attention, research that is concerned with the education sector, with languages of wider communication for purposes of economic development, and with corpus planning for indigenous, or indigenized, languages addresses these concerns (see, for example, Kaplan and Baldauf 1999). Certainly, much of the cutting edge research deals as much with the limitations of language planning (e.g., Moore 1996c/Chapter 3; Schiffman 1996; Burnaby and Ricento 1998; Fettes 1998) as it does with the promise of language planning in promoting social change (e.g., Freeman 1996; Hornberger 1998; McCarty and Zepeda 1998). Whether the ecology of languages paradigm emerges as the most important conceptual framework for LPP research remains to be seen. What is clear is that as a subfield of sociolinguistics, LPP must deal with issues of language behavior and identity, and so must be responsive to developments in discourse analysis, ethnography, and critical social

theory. It seems that the key variable which separates the older, positivistic/technicist approaches from the newer critical/postmodern ones is agency, i.e., the role(s) of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, attitudes, and ultimately policies. The most important, and as yet unanswered, question to be addressed by researchers is ‘Why do individuals opt to use (or cease to use) particular languages and varieties for specified functions in different domains, and how do those choices influence — and how are they influenced by — institutional language policy decision-making (local to national and supranational)?’ The implications of this question are that micro-level research (the sociolinguistics of language) will need to be integrated with macro-level investigations (the sociolinguistics of society) to provide a more complete explanation for language behavior — including language change — than is currently available. We have a better understanding today than we did forty years ago about patterns of language use in defined contexts and the effects of macro-sociopolitical forces on the status and use of languages at the societal level. What is required now is a conceptual framework (ecology of languages or perhaps some other) to link the two together. The development of such a framework will lead us to the next — as yet unnamed — phase of language policy and planning research and scholarship.

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Notes

1. I deliberately use ‘language policy’ as a superordinate term which subsumes ‘language planning.’ Language policy research is concerned not only with official and unofficial acts of governmental and other institutional entities, but also with the historical and cultural events and processes that have influenced, and continue to influence, societal attitudes and practices with regard to language use, acquisition and status. See Ricento and Hornberger (1996) for an extended discussion.
2. A reviewer of this article noted the Euro-american bias in the literature review. While a valid criticism, this observation provides yet further evidence of the domination of Western(ized) thinking in dealing with issues in the developing world.
3. The complexity of ‘ideology’ is explored in Eagleton (1991). In the research cited in this paper, it generally means “[having] to do with legitimating the power of a dominant social group or class” (Eagleton 1991: 5). Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) provide a useful review of the various ways in which the terms ‘ideology’ and ‘language’ have been used in anthropology, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies.

4. See Schiffman (1996:26–54) for a critical review of typologies of multilingualism and language policy. Hornberger (1994) presents a framework integrating three decades of language planning scholarship.

CHAPTER 3

Language Policies as Virtual Realities

Two Australian Examples

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... with something of the archangelic manner he told her how he had undertaken to show (what indeed had been attempted before, but not with that thoroughness, justice of comparison, and effectiveness of arrangement at which Mr. Casaubon aimed) that all the mythical systems or erratic mythical fragments in the world were corruptions of a tradition originally revealed. Having once mastered the true position and taken firm footing there, the vast field of mythical constructions became intelligible, nay, luminous with the reflected light of correspondences. But to gather in this great harvest of truth was no light or speedy work. (George Eliot, *Middlemarch*)

I have been working against an enemy that I was also part of, to discover how it worked so that I could discover how I was, and am, tied in to the relations of ruling in my practices of thinking about and speaking about people ... Renouncing such methods of speaking and writing is not just a matter of a personal transformation. (Dorothy Smith, *The Conceptual Practices of Power*)

1. Introduction

Mr. Casaubon, a fictional 19th Century theologian, and Dorothy Smith, a real live sociologist, illustrate differences in scholarly enquiry. Mr. Casaubon seeks, by process of comprehensive description, mastery of “the true position” which illuminates his “vast field” of investigation. Smith interrogates descriptions for their implication in “the relations of ruling” (Smith 1990a: 204).

Mr. Casaubon’s belief that the truth resides in description persists in modern language planning studies. Cooper (1989) proposes that a comprehensive

descriptive framework will lead towards a theory of language planning — what Yeatman would call an “origins myth” (1990: 149). But Smith requires a more probing stance. Along these lines, Luke, McHoul and Mey (1990), Phillipson (1992), Pennycook (1995) and Tollefson (1991, 1995) have engaged with seminal work in the social sciences (e.g., Foucault, Giddens, and Habermas) in considering power, the state, class and colonialism. As Luke et al. point out, avoiding these issues makes the study of language planning “the classic incarnation of a linguistics which is blind to the very networks of power through which it operates” (1990: 38).

In this chapter, I use insights from Dorothy Smith and Anna Yeatman, both feminist scholars, to explore the nature of policy formation, using two examples from Australia. Smith and Yeatman start with the premise that all description is partial and interested. My interests stem from my professional commitment to TESOL teacher education in Australia since 1975. My argument in this chapter is double-edged. I want to document how the interests I espouse — pluralism and equity — were not served well by policy developments in the early 1990s in Australia. I also want to demonstrate, using the Australian material as a case study, that conventional approaches to the analysis of language policy, as exemplified by Cooper (1989), are seriously deficient in the insights they offer into policy formation.

In the next section, I describe two language policies developed in Australia and ask why the first was replaced by a second. I then show that Cooper’s approach offers no route into understanding this change. Next I use Smith’s (1990a) analysis to explain why Cooper’s approach fails and to consider how policy texts come about. Finally, I apply Yeatman’s (1990) account of government “meta-policy” in Australia to show why language policy there has changed radically.

2. Two language policies in Australia

Australia is of interest for the study of language policy and planning because, unlike in many other countries, two explicitly designated language policies have been formulated at the federal level:¹ the National Policy on Languages (NPL) (Lo Bianco 1987) and the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) (Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1991). Explicitly designated language policies are not the same as policies that concern languages. Although Australia maybe unusual in having developed the former, almost all policies can have some bearing on languages. This raises the questions of why and how Australia’s explicitly formulated policies came into being, what they

sought to achieve and why one replaced the other. The first two questions will be the main focus of this section.

A starting point is each policy's statement of goals. These statements set the frame for government action. They also encapsulate a policy document's "broad symbolic role as a public affirmation of the values" and the "social description" governments espouse (Lo Bianco 1991: 26). The NPL and ALLP documents were part of the social description used by the federal Labor government (1983–1996) in its response to linguistic and cultural diversity in Australia. The NPL assumed pluralism as a common social good that policy-making on languages would enhance. The ALLP prioritized literacy and "foreign" languages, using these to displace the NPL's commitments.

2.1 *The 1987 National Policy on Languages*

The NPL was adopted by the federal government in 1987. It was organized around four goals, described as (1) English for all (2) support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island languages, (3) a language other than English for all, and (4) equitable and widespread language services (Lo Bianco 1987). These goals were to be realized through four broad strategies: "the *conservation* of Australia's linguistic resources; the *development and expansion* of these resources; the *integration* of Australian language teaching and language use efforts with national economic, social and cultural policies; [and] the *provision* of information and services in languages understood by clients" (Lo Bianco 1987: 70, italics in the original). The policy document justified the NPL in terms of the need for government to support the potential of languages to provide cultural and intellectual enrichment for individuals and society, to offer opportunities for employment and trade, to overcome disadvantage and enhance social justice, and to promote the nation's external relations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region (1987: 44).

In the Australian context, these aspirations were thoroughly pluralist. They proposed that the multiplicity of languages in Australia offered unique opportunities to develop a dynamic society.² Although English was acknowledged as the indisputable language of public life and was therefore seen as an important linguistic resource, it was framed as one language among many others.

Paradoxically, the argument for pluralism lay in showing commonalities across differences. All Australians were portrayed as both language users and potential learners, with all languages being reached by equally valid paths, creating different challenges for different people.

The NPL's aspirations embodied a fifteen-year history of policy responses to linguistic and cultural diversity that were couched in terms of commitments to

pluralism. The first major step was taken in 1972 with the election of a reformist federal Labor government led by Gough Whitlam.³ Reacting against a period of more than 20 years of conservative rule, which had also included an extensive immigration program to meet demands for labour, the new government proclaimed multiculturalism as official policy. New buzzwords such as *strength in diversity* and *the family of the nation* announced pluralism as a social good. The government's commitments stemmed from and included greater access to politicians and bureaucrats for Aboriginal and immigrant organizations, and professionals connected with their education, welfare and legal status. Their advocacy was successful in establishing "programs of intervention targeted at particular groups for equity purposes", the main achievements in language education being in ESL for children and Aboriginal transitional bilingual programs (Lo Bianco 1988: 25–26). Whitlam's emphasis was on rights and redressing disadvantage (Lo Bianco 1988; Clyne 1991), themes and initiatives that the NPL incorporated in its social justice concerns.

In 1975, the Whitlam government was ignominiously sacked by the Governor General, following a constitutional crisis provoked by conservative outrage at its social policies and purported inability to manage the economy. However, on language matters, Whitlam's achievement was to oblige his conservative successor to attempt to gain the policy high ground. Narrowing its main response to linguistic and cultural diversity to immigrant issues (thereby excluding Aboriginal concerns), the incoming Fraser government sought to denaturalize immigrants' alliance with Labor by announcing the most comprehensive package of measures to that point (Galbally 1978). These included expansions in ESL, "community" languages, interpreter services and ethnic radio, and a new multicultural television service. Triennial funding for adult and child ESL ensured program stability, leading, in adult ESL, to an outstanding federally run teaching service and quality curriculum. The Fraser government reendorsed multiculturalism but shifted Whitlam's emphasis on rights to pluralism in the service of social cohesion (Foster and Stockley 1984; Lo Bianco 1988; Ozolins 1991, 1993). This view was central to the NPL.

While its response to Aboriginal concerns was weak, the Fraser government effectively brought about bipartisan agreement at the federal political level on broad directions in immigrant issues. Developed in different ways, the endorsement of linguistic and cultural pluralism had become fundamental to policies' social description. Paradoxically, the undisputed acceptance of English as the language of public life and institutions gave space to support for community languages on grounds of their benefits to individuals, their communities and hence the wider society (Lo Bianco 1988). Challenges to these assumptions were

marginalized and received no support at policymaking levels.⁴ In ESL, research indicating the advantages of bilingualism and mother tongue literacy (e.g. Cummins 1978; Peal and Lambert 1962; Swain and Cummins 1979) became a cornerstone in teacher development and of advocacy to communities, bureaucrats and politicians. Leadership in the ESL profession rejected its previous assimilationist image and agenda and, in schools, promoted ESL as an aspect of bilingual children's development seen in the context of their other language(s). ESL professionals were among the most active in advocating bilingual programs, community languages in the mainstream curriculum, and linguistically and culturally inclusive practices in teaching and schools. The NPL document built on these notions of multilingualism and elaborated them.

The specific history of the NPL arose from this climate of expectation, activism and access to government during the 1970s and early 1980s. Ethnic and language-related professional associations directed incipient rivalries for attention and resources into a push for a national language policy. This strategy reflected what several policy scholars have called Australia's "statist political culture" in which "much political activity that elsewhere happens outside the state, in Australia occurs inside the state" (Lingard, Knight and Porter 1993: viii). Groups, such those with interests in languages, focus their claims in and around governments and the bureaucracy (Yeatman 1993), rather than, for example, the courts or the local community.

Lo Bianco (1990) and Ozolins (1993) describe the complex processes in the formation of the NPL that allowed "specific groups to perceive individual benefit in adhering to a broader constituency" (Lo Bianco 1990: 69). This constituency sought to extricate language issues, firstly, from being simply immigrant and/or welfarist policy (Ozolins 1991: 343), secondly, from "feel good" insubstantive multiculturalism, and thirdly, from antiracist policies, which seemed too politicized to command widespread support.⁵ A policy focused on languages would resolve the previous contradictions that had excluded non-immigrant concerns. It appeared to offer a potentially coherent, substantive and positive response to linguistic and cultural diversity. This policy would encompass the dominant language — English — as a mother tongue and a second and foreign language, together with non-dominant languages, including "community", "foreign", Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and the languages of the Deaf. It would affect domains such as education, interpreting and translating, libraries, the media, foreign relations, trade and exporting educational services (PLAN LangPol Committee, 1983). To draw these aspirations together, the proponents of a languages policy deployed the key notion of *languages as resources* in

achieving national enrichment and economic advantage. This was a strong theme in the NPL document.

This impetus led to a Senate Enquiry, begun in 1982 under Fraser and continued under the Hawke Labor government elected in 1983, a transition that was to prove crucial. In 1984, the Enquiry recommended in favour of a national language policy (Parliament of Australia 1984). However, the new government not only delayed acting on these recommendations but in 1986, took measures to trim the public sector, including community languages and ESL programs. Vigorous reactions by immigrant and professional groups and the forthcoming 1987 election persuaded the then-Education Minister to commission a consultant to prepare an implementation plan for the Senate recommendations. The NPL was negotiated in 1986–87 with State/Territory governments and other agencies. Featured as an election campaign promise, it was subsequently implemented as a 4-year program.

Action under the NPL was authorized as part of the brief of the newly designated Department of Employment, Education and Training (henceforth DEET) and was clearly more limited than its stated goals. The cuts to school ESL were not revoked, although tuition for newly arrived children was extended. Other provisions concerned languages other than English (particularly in primary schools), adult literacy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, Asian studies in schools, and cross-cultural training. In the wake of the NPL, each State/Territory developed its own languages policy.

The NPL's major achievement was as a "social description" and a "public affirmation of values" (Lo Bianco 1991:26). Through its construction of pluralism as a social good benefiting all, it not only met the aspirations of the diverse groups who had lobbied for and contributed to its development. It also articulated a coherent set of unifying principles on which future policy development and these groups' advocacy might jointly build.

2.2 *The 1991 Australian Language and Literacy Policy*

In 1991, the federal government replaced the National Policy on Languages with the Australian Language and Literacy Policy. The reasons for this can be portrayed in various ways, as will be seen below. The document, entitled *Australia's language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* claimed the policy was "a continuation" (DEET 1991: xiii) of the NPL, suggesting that it resulted from the administrative process of reviewing NPL at the end of its four year funding cycle. The summary version of the ALLP goals reads as follows:

1. All Australians should develop and maintain effective literacy in English to enable them to participate in Australian society;
 2. The learning of languages other than English must be substantially expanded and improved;
 3. Those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages that are still transmitted should be maintained and developed, and those that are not should be recorded where appropriate;
 4. Language services provided by interpreters and translators, the print and electronic media and libraries should be expanded and improved.
- (DEET 1991: 4)

These goals can be seen to reframe and atomize those of the NPL. Their implications were not immediately obvious. Clearer definition was provided by the DEET minister, whose hostility to the NPL had been undisguised since he had gained this office following the 1987 election. His speech to launch the ALLP emphasized coherence and the setting of priorities, which he saw as lacking in the NPL:

This policy brings together a number of strands of policy that have been separately administered, separately put together in the past and now this is our attempt to try and make a coherent whole out of these various strands of policy and various programs. And the starting point is that Australia is a nation of many cultures but Australia has but one national language, that being Australian English. Despite the fact that that's a fairly uncontroversial statement, it remains the case that many Australians do not read and write English very well and many Australians do not even speak it. And that has, of course, enormous implications for those individuals in terms of their ability to participate in the education and training system and, perhaps as much as anything, their ability to participate in the wider life of the nation including its democratic institutions. (Dawkins 1991: 1)

The minister then moved to the need “to improve the rigour of English language teaching in schools” and measures to be taken in assessing literacy. He stressed “that English language education, English language training, is by far in a way the most important part of this policy document” (1991: 1). The government's second priority was “that more Australians should speak foreign languages” to enhance Australia's role “as a trading nation” (1991: 2). Prioritizing languages for special support would achieve the necessary “greater focus” (1991: 2).

Minister Dawkins' naming of language issues, carried through in all essential aspects in the policy document itself, marked a number of dramatic changes from the NPL and language policy formation since Whitlam. These are summarized in Table 1. However, despite the claim that separate policy strands

Table 1. *The differing perspectives of the National Policy on Languages and the Australian Language and Literacy Policy.*

| Perspective | NPL | ALLP* |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Expressed in title | <i>National Policy on Languages.</i> Uses pluralist “languages”. | <i>Australia’s Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy.</i> Strengthens nationalistic theme; displaces pluralist “languages” by ambiguous “language” (either English or language in general). |
| Language goals | Committed to broad pluralist goals; developed from a consensus-building process among diverse groups. | Claims to make separate “policy strands” “a coherent whole”; nominates priorities as literacy, assessment, and designated “foreign” languages; aims for ministerial and bureaucratic control. |
| Language and culture | Treats languages and cultures as irretrievably interlinked. | Contrasts Australia’s “one national language” with its “many cultures”, thus separating language from culture, and erasing the many languages associated with the “many cultures”. |
| Language speakers | Proposes all Australians as knowers and learners of languages, distinguishing the paths by which different languages (and associated literacies) are developed. | Frames the main issue as lack of English; groups those who “do not read and write English very well” with those “who do not even speak it”, thus conflating English literacy with second language development, and erasing literacies in other languages. Frames all language other than English as “foreign”, i.e. separate from and alien to “Australians.” |
| Importance of different languages | Articulates multiple values for languages; focuses on the potential of languages as “resources” in a variety of ways. | Foregrounds English and Asian languages; ties English literacy to education, training and employment; views not “speaking” English as a threat to democracy; ties Asian languages to trade. Generalizes and obscures the role of different languages by mythologizing the instrumental value of some (but not specifying what is included as “Asian”), obliterating others and demonizing the consequences of lack of English. |

* Includes the interpretation of the DEET Minister as expressed in Dawkins (1991). Terms in quotation marks from Dawkins (1991).

would become “a coherent whole” (1991: 1), there was no proposal to bring the programs collected under the ALLP title within a single line of authority. In fact, the various bodies responsible became more difficult to locate or access. What the Minister meant was that his starting point — that Australia has “but one national language” (1991: 1) — would direct the work of these bodies.

The ALLP’s main function was to eliminate the inclusiveness of the NPL by prioritizing “literacy”, assessment and “foreign” languages. The actual

document provides an interesting example of an explicitly designated language policy that is largely inexplicit about the actual policy developments that followed its release. These included cuts to immigration quotas; course fees for intending immigrants tested as having less than “survival” English;⁶ a radical change in the basis for funding adult ESL programs;⁷ the near-elimination of child and adult ESL education as a policy, funding and curriculum category through its conflation with literacy (e.g. Coates et al. 1995);⁸ cuts in school ESL programs due to States/Territories’ diverting funds to off-set their overall reduced federal grants (Victorian Association of TESOL and Multicultural Education, 1993); and a decline in work on Aboriginal languages. A subsequent report (Council of Australian Governments, 1994), which prioritized Japanese, Mandarin, Indonesian and Korean as vital for trade, superseded the ALLP’s mandate over languages other than English. In effect, pluralist aspirations no longer had a place in federally sponsored endeavours.

In 1991, few within language advocacy groups foresaw the developments that followed the launch of the ALLP. Nevertheless, there was intense anger and dismay at the ALLP’s divisive prioritization of literacy and selected Asian languages, which erased the coherent and inclusive approach to languages that these groups had worked so hard to set in place.⁹ It will be argued below that their success in establishing an explicit language policy committed to pluralism (viz. the NPL) had created the need to extricate government from the claims that this policy permitted. The ALLP’s role was to replace a pluralist approach with one that set narrower priorities. This move eliminated explicit and coherent policy making about languages overall, and was successful in beginning the process of reversing expectations that any such policy was possible or desirable.

Why did such a dramatic change take place? Cooper (1989), Smith (1990a) and Yeatman (1990) offer various ways to approach this question. I will show that Cooper’s pursuit of a complete descriptive schema leads nowhere. Smith’s and Yeatman’s work demonstrates the insights to be gained from less ambitious but better argued and contextually grounded analyses.

3. Cooper’s path to explaining language policies

Following Cooper (1989), the replacement of the NPL by the ALLP would be best understood by describing each policy in terms of the following framework: what *actors* attempt to influence what *behaviours* of which *people* for what *ends* under what *conditions* by what *means* through what *decision-making process* with what *effect*? (see 1989:98 for a full elaboration). Cooper claims that these

framing questions provide an “accounting” scheme that makes explicit and evaluates the central tasks of describing, predicting, explaining and theorizing in language planning.

An immediate issue is Cooper’s assumption — not made explicit — that such description is unproblematic. For Cooper, the validity of a description is established by cross-verification:

... how is truthfulness in description to be judged? Probably the best solution is to ask a person who is familiar with the events to evaluate the validity of the description. For example, political scientists familiar with the early stages of the Ethiopian revolution could be asked to evaluate the truthfulness of my description of the Ethiopian mass-literacy campaign. (1989: 47)

But a number of questions are unanswered. For example, how do we decide on who/what were the actors, people, ends, behaviours and so on in the formation of the NPL and ALLP, and how might each be distinguished from the other? Cooper claims that these headings help in selecting and organizing “our observations from among the indefinitely large number of observations which could be made” and act “as a template which the investigator can use to impose order on his or her data and which the critic can use to evaluate the description” (1989: 47). In fact, without importing some other criteria for selecting what will be described, these headings set in train an endless and unmotivated task.

Other questions are equally unresolved. What might count as familiarity with events (and is Cooper implying that students of language planning need not be familiar with the events they describe)? Why should someone from another discipline be able to validate a description? What is to be done with different views of the same events? And are we to believe descriptions because they agree with each other? In place of answers to these questions, Cooper presents his descriptive framework using a combination of contradictions, arbitrariness and circular argument.

A central contradiction lies in Cooper’s assumption that events manifest their own truth, at the same time as Cooper proposes a framework that constructs truths in terms of actors, people, ends and so on.¹⁰ Arbitrariness occurs in the ways this framework is introduced and reified and its content selected, without justification, from innovation studies, marketing, politics and decision-making (Chapter 4). Much of this content (and associated imagery) appears to rely surreptitiously on experimental psychology as a research model. For example, explanatory adequacy is to be ascertained through the techniques of correlations, observations and experiments. In fact, these techniques exclude most explanations found in the language planning literature and could not answer why the ALLP replaced the NPL.

Circular arguments are used to justify the utility of descriptive frameworks. Most notably, Cooper claims that descriptive frameworks can contribute to theory-building: Descriptive frameworks nominate the variables to be described, leading to the discovery of “behavioral regularities” (1989: 57), which lead to theories, which tell us which variables should be described. Cooper’s predilection for description leads to a catalogue of theories (see Chapter 8). In the face of their complexity, he asks “Is a theory of language planning possible?” (1989: 182). His answer is akin to Mr. Casaubon’s realization that “to gather in this great harvest of truth is no light or speedy work.” Cooper believes that “such a theory seems as far from our grasp as the philosopher’s stone and the elixir of youth... unattainable at our present level of competence” (1989: 182). Because “to plan language is to plan society”, “a satisfactory theory of language planning ... awaits a satisfactory theory of social change” (1989: 182). This circular argument justifies, one supposes, Cooper’s descriptive approach for the foreseeable future.

Actual descriptions of policies, including my own above, demonstrate that these descriptions are not observations of events from which explanations unproblematically emerge. Rather, descriptions and explanations vary and, even when overlapping, may contradict each other. For example, Eggington (1993/94) and Ingram (1994) agree that the NPL was replaced, despite its strengths, because of its deficiencies. Both appear to assume that policy-making is a process whereby the weaknesses of one policy create the need for the next, whose own weaknesses inevitably lead to yet another. But their descriptions of strengths and weaknesses differ. Reviewing other literature, Eggington cites the NPL’s “top-down” approach, narrow implementation, single authorship and a “narrow developmental base” as making it “vulnerable to severe revision” (1993/4: 139–141). The ALLP overcame these “weaknesses” through the discussion process and departmental consultations with “language planning experts”, leading to revisions and facilitating its current acceptance (1993/4: 141–142), although by whom is not stated. In contrast, Ingram attributes the “need” (1994: 76) for the ALLP to the NPL’s limited attention to literacy, the absence of on-going evaluation, its restriction to short-term program funding, and its lack of a framework to link analysis with implementation proposals. He does not explain how the ALLP was designed to rectify these problems. The ALLP’s strengths are “some excellent and innovative ideas” (1994: 77), which, apart from its attention to assessment, he does not describe. In turn, the ALLP’s weaknesses are its imbalance towards economic goals, its failure to include languages of “multicultural significance” and, like the NPL, its lack of a rigorous framework (1994: 76–77). Further variation can be found in assessments of the ALLP’s significance. My account above paints it as a major shift in language policy,

which, to some extent, accords with Eggington's and Ingram's. In contrast, Lo Bianco (1991) and Clyne (1991) conclude that the ALLP largely preserved the NPL's directions.

These variations point to the problematic issue — passed over by Cooper — that descriptions are inevitably selective because they are interpretative. Eggington (1993/1994) does not mention the history, extensive consultation and consensus-building described by the consultant who authored the NPL (Lo Bianco 1990), whose account is the basis for my description above. What Eggington describes as consultation in the ALLP process, I interpret as co-option and coercion. I do not see the revisions to the ALLP document as substantive, but as strategic and trivial (see also Clyne 1991). Ingram presents as “unbalanced” (1994: 77) what I will argue below are crucial pointers to the ALLP's explanatory principles. His account of the NPL's weaknesses omits reference to the policy's extensive discussion of literacy issues and accompanying budget allocations, preferring the description of the NPL canvassed by Minister Dawkins and his advisors (see also Cavalier 1994). He fails to mention that NPL programs had a four-year funding cycle and that a progress report based on independent evaluations was publicly available within the first three years (Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education, 1990). He did not point out that the ALLP was funded on an annual basis and that evaluations did not appear to be publicly accessible.

Decisions about what will be described are always taken in the context of an argument — whether overt or covert, coherent or incoherent — that the describer is making. Eggington (1993/1994) aims to review literature he considers relevant to an international survey of language planning. Ingram seeks to demonstrate to fellow academics and policy makers the need for his own “rational framework” (1994: 79, 85ff.). Clyne (1991) and Lo Bianco (1990) seem strategically oriented to downplaying the effects of the ALLP and to maintaining the NPL's aspirations. One of my principle motivations is similarly strategic, in that I wish to offer an understanding of what I interpret as a retrograde turn in policy-making in Australia, to highlight its effects and maybe provide some ground for change. Cooper's headings could not help evaluate our descriptions, and cross-validation by other analysts would inevitably rely on their motivations in structuring what is selected, omitted and interpreted.

What a describer chooses to describe, how it is described and what interpretations are made are all problematic. The differences above bring to light the interestedness of describers of language policies in what they describe and what their descriptions can produce, both in the academy and policy-making arenas. Our interestedness as scholars inevitably influences our choice and interpretation

of data, the arguments to which our descriptions contribute, and the values that our analyses embody. As I argue below using Smith (1990a), this interestedness cannot be dismissed as something extraneous or improper to scholars. Scholars must be interested in something, otherwise they would not embark on their work in the first place. The question is not whether scholars are interested, but what they are interested in.

A crucial issue for policy scholars is how they are situated in relation to the state. In Cooper's accounting scheme, the assumption of scholarly objectivity leaves language planning analysts in positions that are multiple, confused and never explicit. Sometimes they are initiators of policies and experiments in planning (1989:48–56), sometimes the evaluators of others' work (1989:49). How or why this comes about is never made clear, nor are its effects. This lack of clarity provides evidence for Smith's (1990a) argument below that the ethic of objectivity obscures the interests that scholars and state authorities have in each other's descriptions.

If scholars, like everyone else, always have interests in what they do, we might ask whether they offer anything special or different. Cooper's (1989) answer suggests endless description, pseudo-scientific methods and grand theory, all in the name of objectivity. An alternative is that, coherently and reflexively, scholars develop and probe the bases of their own and others' understandings. Smith (1990a) and Yeatman (1990) provide examples of this type of scholarship to which I now turn.

4. Smith: Interestedness and policy texts

Smith's extensive work (e.g. 1987, 1990a, 1990b) includes exploration of a fundamental reality ignored by Cooper (1989):

Knowing is always a relation between the knower and known. The knower cannot be collapsed into the known, cannot be eliminated; the knower's presence is always presupposed. To know is always to know on some terms, and the paradox of knowing is that we discover in its object the lineaments of what we know already. There is no other way to know than humanly, from our historical and cultural situation. This is a fundamental human condition.
(Smith 1990a: 33)

The knower's presence cannot be eliminated but it can be obscured in two ways. Firstly, researchers obscure their presence as knowers by separating their work from their personal experiences, interests, values and beliefs: We are trained "to discard our personal experience as a source of reliable information about the

character of the world and to confine and focus our insights within the conceptual frameworks and relevances of our discipline” (1990a: 15). Secondly, researchers treat other people as objects to be examined and classified and whose subjectivities and agency are discounted. Retaining (but disguising) the privilege of agency for themselves as authorized (but limited) by their discipline, researchers create and maintain their frameworks and theories by separating what “people say from the actual circumstances in which it is said, from the actual empirical conditions of their lives, and from the actual individuals who said it” (1990a: 43). Objectivity bestows agency on researchers’ frameworks, while researchers and the researched become simply their different representatives (1990a: 49). These frameworks can be seen to “work”, because, beyond them, there is always “an actual co-ordering of activities that is reflected in them” (1990a: 49). Thus Cooper’s accounting scheme will “work” if researchers co-order their descriptions in terms of “actors” influencing people’s “behaviours” (1989: 98), and because policies do affect people.

Cooper (1989), Ingram (1994) and Eggington (1993/1994) assume that objectivity produces disinterested knowledge, which is therefore credible. Smith (1990a) shows that objectivity does not equate with disinterestedness, and credibility rests on neither. Objectivity is “a convention of the profession requiring that the presence of the subject and the subject’s interest in knowing be cancelled from the ‘body of knowledge’ as a condition of its objective status” (1990a: 33). Rather than being necessarily concerned with the development of “knowledge” or “truth”, the practices of objectivity are committed to their self-extension, namely, to “the constitution of a phenomenal world and a body of statements about it” (1990a: 33). Smith argues, using Marx, that researchers produce “ideological circles” (1990a: 49) if they disguise and further their interests by using human experiences to produce and maintain their own procedures, descriptions and theoretical edifices. Cooper’s (1989) accounting scheme is a particularly clear example. Its effect is precisely to reduce knowing, acting subjects to objects for classification under its headings.¹¹ Its main purpose, as he repeatedly illustrates, is its own self-maintenance and extension.

Smith seeks practices that, as she writes in the epigraph to this chapter, renounce what she critiques. Her alternative begins with and always honours “insider’s knowledge”, that is, how individuals describe and explain the actualities of their lives (1990a: 24). This focus should not be confused with promoting subjectivist interpretations, or rejecting evidence, careful analysis and argument: A concern with the “self as sole focus and object” would perpetuate the very problems Smith seeks to investigate (1990a: 27). Starting with insiders’ perspectives, Smith uses her scholarly knowledge and skills to explore “the relations

beyond our direct experience that shape and determine it” (1990a: 27), particularly how people’s lives are brought under the control of the state in “the relations of ruling” (1990a: 204). But insiders are not simply providers of data. Their interests and insights, as well as the researcher’s, contribute to a dynamic dialogic process from which both may gain.

Smith’s “insider’s knowledge” (1990a: 24) of her own profession of sociology is the basis of her exploration of objectivity and its implication in “the relations of ruling” (1990a: 204). She starts by noting how:

Sociologists ... move among the doings of organizations, government processes, and bureaucracies as people who are at home in that medium. The nature of that world itself, how it is known to them, the conditions of its existence, and their relation to it are not called into question. Their methods of observation and inquiry extend into it as procedures that *are essentially of the same order as those that bring about the phenomena they are concerned with* [italics added]. Their perspectives and interests may differ, but the substance is the same. (1990a: 16–17).

As with her previous account of objectivity, Smith’s alternative order of description focuses on people’s practices. The modern state requires practices that produce “facticity” (1990a: 69). For Smith, “facts are neither the statements themselves, nor the actualities those statements refer to” (1990a: 71). Rather:

They are *an organization of practices of inscribing an actuality into a text* [italics added] of reading, hearing, or talking about what is there, what actually happened and so forth. They are ... properties of a discourse or other organization mediated by texts. ... In scientific contexts, the facticity of statements is guaranteed by generally highly technical procedures that can reliably and precisely produce the state of affairs or events expressed in factual statements. The facticity of statements thus arises from *their embedding in distinctive socially organized processes* [italics added]. (1990a: 71)

Crucial to facticity is that texts are written and read without attention “to what has gone into ... [their] making” (1990a: 107). Thus a factive text exists in textual — as opposed to real — time and “has no apparent history other than that incorporated in it” (1990a: 74). The practices on which objectivity relies — the erasure of the relation between the knower and the known — also operate in producing factive texts. A common interest in the production and use of these texts creates a symbiotic relationship between state authorities and social scientists. This insight points to the core of the blindness in Cooper’s (1989) assumption that description is non-problematic, and to the problem that we saw Luke et al. (1990) diagnose generally in language planning studies.

For both social scientists and state authorities, this organization of practices makes factive texts “virtual realities”, that is, “the account comes to stand for the actuality it claims to represent” (Smith 1990a: 74). Whereas social scientists use facts in their creation of frameworks and theories, state authorities require facts as the basis for what is “properly actionable” (1990a: 125). Examples of state-produced factive texts are population data, hospital and school records, and policy documents. These are the realities by which state authorities act, not people’s everyday accounts of their lives.

The practices that bring facts into existence are likewise directed to maintaining them. Specific procedures allow “an organization ... [to] virtually invent the environment and objects corresponding to its accounting terminologies and practices”, so that if something cannot “be resolved into the appropriate terminology, it cannot gain currency within the system” (1990a: 96, 100). Particular institutions have their own procedures that “warrant” and “enforce” how texts are constructed, read and understood, who is capable of reading and understanding, and how people are trained in doing this (1990a: 73). These procedures are hierarchically organized. They insulate those who mandate the production of factive texts from those closest to “local historical experience”, which has the potential to disrupt how a factive text is constructed or read (1990a: 96). The subordinate status of those closest to “the lived situation” — those actually making particular records and reports — prevents them from challenging, and ensures they actively maintain, the way factive texts mandate realities (1990a: 100).¹²

As is clear from the epigraph to this chapter, Smith places herself with those who are ruled, not those who rule. She does not dispute that factive texts are necessary for the business of the state and other authorities. Her scholarly interests lie in contributing to an understanding of how people’s lives are caught up in this business. If desired, these insights can provide agendas for struggle and change in specific contexts. Applied to the study of policy texts, her approach requires that we do not “take for granted as known” the entities and processes on which these texts rely (1990a: 17). Rather, we should examine how policy texts select and produce virtual realities that authorize particular lines of action by state authorities. In considering the NPL and the ALLP documents, we must go behind their portrayal of the inevitability of their views and their obliteration of the struggles experienced by insiders to their production and those whom they affect (see also Luke et al. 1993; Kress 1985; Lemke 1990; Yeatman 1990: 167). Instead we should ask: How they have produced, warranted and enforced their virtual realities?

The contrast between the NPL and the ALLP shows that their realities are anything but inevitable. These realities were produced from on-going and shifting

struggles over how Australian governments should respond to linguistic and cultural diversity, not the inevitable march of progress, as Ingram (1994) and Eggington (1993/1994) would have us believe. As I have portrayed it, the NPL created a policy reality whose purpose was to bring together the efforts of groups struggling with and close to this diversity. Its history and formation drew from the understandings of these groups, and produced principles for state action that they found acceptable. The ALLP was produced to establish new realities drawn from completely other sources. Yeatman (1990) offers an account of how these realities gained ascendance and why they proved so hostile to the pluralism espoused by the NPL.

5. Consensus politics versus pluralism

Like Smith, Yeatman (1990, 1994) rejects objectivity's "archimedean" judgments (1990: 149) and seeks reflexivity in her own and others' work, particularly in attending to how it intervenes in the constitution and distribution of power relations (1990: 174; 1994: 27–41). She is committed to promoting "the surfacing of claims" and "debate and struggle" over their distribution (1990: 174). Her view of state texts is also similar to Smith's: Policies "are not responses to social problems already formed and 'out there'" but rather "constitute the problems to which they are seen to be responses" (1990: 158).

Yeatman describes modern democratic political activity as a "discoursal politics", that is, a struggle over what is to be named (or nameless) and thereby constituted (or disqualified) as "subject to state agency or intervention" (1990: 153, 155). As we have seen, the NPL named linguistic and cultural diversity as a social good that policy-making would develop towards cultural, economic, social justice and foreign policy goals. The NPL ran headlong into political processes that constructed pluralism as a problem.

These processes — popularly known as *consensus politics* — were central to the Labor government's strategy in gaining and retaining office (1983–1996). Its 1983 mandate was to reverse youth unemployment, strikes and poor economic performance. To achieve this, Labor's traditional relationships with the unions were complemented by a new openness to co-operation with big business. Formal agreements between government and the unions reduced strikes and wage demands, in return for improved conditions, lower inflation and growing employment. Consensus politics named its realities in terms of what Yeatman, using Beilharz (1987), describes as "the discourse of labourism" (1990: 158). Drawn from traditional Marxism (but dispensing with its oppositions), this discourse

naturalizes the interests and understandings of unions, employers and the state, constructing these as producers of policy (1990: 158). Throughout the 1980s, representatives of these power elites were privileged in policy bodies, while other groups were progressively eliminated (Lingard, Knight and Porter 1993: viii). So, for example, following the 1987 election, “corporate managerialist” principles were used to restructure the renamed and enlarged Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), giving its minister and his senior advisors greater power (Considine 1988; Yeatman 1990). Its semi-autonomous policy-making bodies, which included representation from parent, educational and community groups, were replaced by advisory committees dominated by those privileged in the “consensus”, namely, businessmen, unionists and bureaucrats.

This policy elite set “economic restructuring” as Labor’s “metapolicy”, that is, “the policy framework within which all other specific policy challenges are to be located” (Yeatman 1990: 102–3). Economic restructuring aimed to reduce trade deficits and overseas debt, and expose Australian industry to international competition. The government removed tariffs, deregulated financial markets, cut taxes, reduced the public sector, and attempted to promote efficiency and skills in industry, training and education. These policies were intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s in response to recession, worsening trade balances and a return to high unemployment. Common in much of the industrialized world, such policies are frequently described as emanating from New Right ideology or “economic rationalism”, which Marginson defines as “a form of political rationality in which (paradoxically) the market economy is substituted for democratic politics and public planning as the system of production and co-ordination and as the origin of social ethics” (1992: 1; see also Pusey 1991).

Where Australia was distinctive under Labor was in the articulation of economic rationalism with labourism. This precluded the extreme market-oriented policies developed in the USA and Britain, and required “social justice” for “disadvantaged groups.” However, by the late 1980s, the economic rationalist ethic had colonized “social justice.” A central policy document, *Towards a Fairer Australia: Social Justice Under Labor* proclaims that: “The government ... is committed to making social justice both a primary goal of economic policy and an indispensable element in achieving economic policy objectives” (1988: vi–vii, cited in Fitzclarence and Kenway 1993: 91). The new DEET Minister was a key producer of this ideology. As Taylor and Henry describe:

The clear emphasis in Dawkins’ approach ... was that education must be part of a skills-led economic recovery. Equity concerns were peripheral in these policies and where ‘disadvantaged groups’ were targeted for attention they were seen primarily in terms of wastage of human resources. (1994: 109)

Yeatman describes social justice policies as being “specifically for those whom labourist discourse excludes from mainstream modes of participation and distribution” and “a strategy which maintains, and even *develops* ... the exclusions which are built into the dominant labourist discourse” (1990: 158, italics in original). These exclusions allowed the policy elite to both maintain its control and limit others’ claims to policy benefits. In Smith’s terms, social justice policies created “an ideological circle” (1990a: 49) that perpetuated and obscured the interests of their producers, while eliminating the agency of those at whom the policies were directed. This was precisely the effect of reconstituting the NPL’s inclusive “English for all” as “literacy” for the “disadvantaged” (see Table 1). “Language and literacy” (in English) — the authorized policy category that subsumed ESL — devalued and misrepresented the languages and literacies of ESL learners, obscured the needs of English mother tongue speakers, disrupted and divided teachers, and pressured the ESL profession to return to the assimilationist thinking that its leaders had struggled so hard to replace.

Within both the neo-Marxist and right-wing interests privileged by “consensus politics”, there was also outright hostility to the NPL’s pluralism. Aspirations for immigrant language maintenance were aligned with fanatical “ethnic” groups (supposedly let out of control by Whitlam’s irresponsibility) and the spectre of ghettos and social collapse. In place of pluralism and diversity, Labor celebrated its traditional 19th century ethos of mateship, “fellow Australians” and “true believers” (for example, Cavalier 1994). By the end of the 1980s, the NPL’s commitments were side-stepped except on occasions specifically soliciting “ethnic” votes, where weak assurances were given (Ozolins 1991: 348). Immigrant representation in mainstream policy bodies had disappeared. Policy-making on languages other than English was directed to what Minister Dawkins had named as “Australians” learning “Asian languages” (1991: 2) — meaning four such languages — thereby confusing and dividing schools and communities. These programs did not target the skills and needs of native speakers of these languages. Rather, the minister’s sentiment that those who cannot “even speak” English are unproductive burdens and threats to democracy (1991: 1) gained considerable vitality in the public arena (see note 5).

In the public sector, such as education and social services, economic rationalist assumptions made private sector activity both a goal to be served and an operational norm (Yeatman 1990: 32). Corporate managerialism instituted goals that centred on “economy, efficiency and effectiveness” (1990: 27). “Cost efficiency” became value-free “objective necessity”, reducing other values to matters of personal viewpoint (1990: 32). Incentives to meet these goals were combined with devolved responsibility for policy implementation (within generally

reduced budgets) to local sites (1990: 11). These changes created a sophisticated system of top-down controls that rewarded loyalty to management objectives, excluding other demands by emphasizing “technique” (1990: 9). The effect of these controls was, as Yeatman describes, “to offset and limit the influence of ‘content’, namely, commitments and loyalties which are tied to particular departmental or agency portfolios and which acquire authority through the development of specialized experience and links with client groups” (1990: 9). I have described above how the content of the NPL was generated through access to politicians and bureaucrats by advocates from local communities, service and educational providers, Aboriginal, immigrant and professional groups. Such networks are themselves necessarily pluralist and help constitute pluralist policies. The corporatist ideological circle in the public service cut off and circumscribed the knowledge produced by these networks, making their claims objects of suspicion.

The post-1987 DEET became an exemplar of corporate managerialist processes and economic rationalist policies. DEET named its realities in terms of “accountability” and training in “competencies.” For Minister Dawkins and his department, the NPL represented an annoying remnant of earlier times with which they had been saddled as a result of “ethnic” pressures during the close 1987 election. The NPL had succeeded in naming languages as an object of policy-making, so now they would be reconstituted in the ALLP to serve economic restructuring: (Some) Asian languages would meet overseas trade objectives and literacy would focus on skills upgrading and social justice without allowing pluralist claims to surface. Those who did not accept this selectivity and reductionism were eliminated from consultation mechanisms. In this way, the ALLP produced and enforced the ideological circle of DEET metapolicy.

In adult ESL, arguably the country’s greatest achievement in quality language education, DEET promulgated the reality that the program was an expensive luxury serving the interests of its teachers (for career paths, quality curriculum and stable programs). The economic rationalist belief that market principles increased cost efficiency became the unassailable rationale for replacing triennial funding with competitive contracting and admitting private sector organizations (for example, secretarial schools) as ESL providers. The dynamic of competition divided providers, and weakened their ability to understand, articulate and mobilize their claims (Yeatman 1990: 42), destroying previous infrastructure, professional standards, and advisory and cooperative networks. It strengthened bureaucratic control and interventions in student selection and program management, and effectively installed DEET’s preferred curriculum model of competency-based training (Moore 1996b). The new system

was a perfect example of the maintenance and enforcement of an ideological circle. DEET's factive texts enforced its virtual reality of "cost efficiency" by not documenting the time spent in preparing and assessing contract bids, and the almost daily negotiations between providers and DEET officials; nor did they reveal that classes were funded without students to fill them, while others were turned away, had courses discontinued or were not told they had places. As Smith (1990a) predicts, providers actively maintained DEET's virtual reality: Including this information in course reports would have jeopardized their chances with subsequent contracts.

The NPL's major achievement had been in framing language policy as a set of inter-related concerns, including economic ones, which diverse interests could jointly endorse and develop. Labor's consensus politics produced a power elite, whose ideology and processes could not tolerate pluralism: The NPL had to be replaced precisely because it rested on different interests and understandings. The new policy regime had no place for seeking consensus with anyone outside the alliance who had constructed its virtual realities. The ALLP announced to those working within the NPL's assumptions that their concerns were important only insofar as they could be co-opted into the goals constructed, consensually agreed (more or less) and pursued by government, its unionist and big business colleagues, and the senior bureaucracy.

The power of the ALLP's categories and processes in determining programs, curriculum and assessment, and research agendas — and the results of these — were felt in all post-1991 developments in languages. The NPL assumption of diversity as both norm and social good tapped the potential of cooperative and purposeful efforts, whereas the ALLP's priorities generated conflict, confusion and waste. The state's factive procedures ensured that the latter remained undocumented, while protecting those whose interests were furthered by the ideological circles of consensus politics.

6. Conclusion

As explicit language policies — or factive state texts — the NPL and the ALLP constructed very different realities. The NPL's sources lay in realities known to language users and educators. Their aspirations were supported by its processes and embodied in its content. The ALLP's reality lay with bureaucratic interpretations of the economic and political imperatives proclaimed by a powerful elite of government, business and trade union leaders.

Economic rationalist policy solutions to the social and economic challenges

facing Australia have yet to prove themselves. Throughout the 1990s the nation continued to struggle with large scale unemployment and poor trade balances. It is hard to see how the ALLP contributed to economic growth, its stated rationale. However, at the federal level it successfully eliminated comprehensive and explicit language policy making, together with commitments to pluralism, from the political map.¹³ In 1996, the incoming Liberal-National coalition abolished the ALLP's programs. However, its legacy continued in the form of an even more narrowly focused policy on English literacy for children in the early years of schooling (DEETYA 1998). The euphoric promotion of Asian languages (based on dashed assumptions about booming Asian economies' utility in rescuing the Australian economy) was silenced. Meanwhile, the paranoia set loose by images of disadvantaged immigrants and their dysfunction in English gave permission for overt racism in the political arena and its consequent escalation in many public and private domains. Although the public understandings achieved by the NPL now seemed almost anachronistic, the need to recapture them was never more urgent.

No doubt, the account above could be re-arranged under Cooper's (1989) headings. This would yield what Smith describes as an investigation "aimed primarily at itself" (1990a:22). In contrast, my hope is that this analysis, including the argument for more reflexive approaches, enlarges the possibilities for understanding both the Australian example and others in the field.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. Australia is a federation consisting of six States and two Territories. The federal government is known as "the Commonwealth". Because the Commonwealth holds most taxing powers, it has considerable leverage over the States/Territories. Policy documents, such as those discussed here, are used to set out Commonwealth government priorities and programs, and to attempt to harness the States/Territories' cooperation.
2. The NPL documented 17.3% (2,404,600) of the Australian population (total 16 million) speaking a first language other than English (1983 figures) (Lo Bianco 1987).
3. Three major parties contend for federal office as a Westminster-style cabinet government: the Australian Labor Party (ALP), which has a strong union power base, and the conservative

Liberal Party in coalition with the National Party (formerly the Country Party). In this chapter 'Labor' refers to the ALP (in a spelling determined by the party), whereas 'labour' is the spelling otherwise adopted.

4. See Ozolins (1993) for a detailed account of these challenges.
5. In 1998, a blatantly racist party (called One Nation) gained prominence and, having won seats in the Queensland State parliament, appeared to threaten a serious erosion of the major parties' support in the federal elections. In the event, it did not succeed. However, one consequence was anti-racist education initiatives by the (conservative) federal government and also by some States.
6. In 1996, the tuition fee was \$4,000 for the main applicant and \$2,000 for dependents. It was not levied on refugees.
7. Before 1992, the Commonwealth directly funded its own adult ESL teaching service and also signed 3-year contracts (subject to annual review) with other providers. These programs were administered by the department responsible for immigration. In the early 1990s, eligibility for these programs was restricted to new arrivals with low levels in English (most of whom paid the tuition fee — see note 6). This move considerably reduced the number of these programs, which were subsequently allocated by competitive contracting procedures, open to public and private bodies. Other adult ESL provision, which was expanded, came within "labour market training programs" administered by DEET. Regional offices developed course specifications to meet what each office determined as client needs (based on local unemployment patterns) and advertised for bids (from anyone), initially on a 6-month basis. The subsequent chaos persuaded DEET to adopt longer funding cycles and to institute a provider registration system. In 1996, when the Liberal-National coalition came to office, they abolished labour market programs and hence their ESL programs.
8. See Moore (1996a) for an analysis of this process in ESL assessment in schools.
9. The discussion paper leading to the ALLP generated unprecedented opposition, including 340 submissions written over 3 months, 2 of which were the Christmas/summer break. No submission favouring the ALLP was ever identified (Clyne 1991).
10. See Bowe, Ball & Gold (1992) and Burchell, Gordon & Miller (1991) for critiques of policy in these terms. Rubin (1986) makes a similar criticism specifically in the context of language planning.
11. Cooper's account of the mass literacy campaign in Ethiopia concludes with the remark that "If Haile Sillase could view the present scene, he could, perhaps, be forgiven an ironic smile" (1989: 28). Cooper's perspective permits this distanced and callous comment, which makes the actualities of those people's extraordinary suffering irrelevant.
12. Smith gives an example from the Vietnam War (1990a: 99). Those ordering bombing raids devised reporting procedures based on their previous knowledge of warfare. Subordinates followed these procedures, ignoring the considerable differences from their experiences of actual raids.
13. The Victorian State Liberal government continued to vigorously assert its commitments to linguistic and cultural pluralism.

CHAPTER 4

Language, Ideology and Hindsight

Lessons from Colonial Language Policies

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1. Introduction: Colonialism and language policy

This paper looks at colonial language policies in India, Malaya and Hong Kong with an eye to shedding light on language policy more generally, and particularly on the need to understand the complexity of material and ideological contexts of language. Colonial language policies can be seen as constructed between four poles (for much greater detailed analysis, see Pennycook 1998b): First, the position of colonies within a capitalist empire and the need to produce docile and compliant workers and consumers to fuel capitalist expansion; second, the discourses of Anglicism and liberalism with their insistence on the European need to bring civilization to the world through English; third, local contingencies of class, ethnicity, race and economic conditions that dictated the distinctive development of each colony; and fourth, the discourses of Orientalism with its insistence on exotic histories, traditions and nations in decline.

There are a number of important considerations that I wish to draw attention to here before looking in greater depth at colonial language policy: First, the ideological is not reducible to the material, and thus ideologies and language policies existed at times at odds with the demands of economics and politics. This view suggests that although language policies are deeply embedded in complex political contexts, they cannot simply be explained as justifications of prior social and economic goals. Second, support for English or support for local languages was driven by an array of competing demands, and thus we should be wary of mapping a simplistic liberal analysis (pluralism is good, monism is bad) onto complex language policy contexts. And third, there are many lessons to be

drawn from this historical hindsight, but they need to be drawn with great care. Nevertheless, these historical contexts suggest we need to examine competing material and ideological agendas in order to understand the possible implications of different language policies, and we would do well to be wary of an ideological stance that sees support for minority languages and opposition to majority languages as inherently good.

Several important notions emerge from the above comments: First, language policies need to be understood in their *complexity*: language policies both in the past and the present are interlinked with many other social, cultural, economic and political concerns. Second, they need to be understood *contextually*: unless we look at how language policies relate to the particular configurations of each context, we will not be able to understand why they have been constructed in particular ways and what the possible implications may be. Third, we need to understand the *complicity* and *complementarity* of language policies, by which I mean the ways in which apparently competing or oppositional policies may nevertheless on another level be complementary with each other and complicit with the larger forms of cultural and political control. And finally, the effects of language policy in the past have a powerful *continuity* with the present in terms of the ways in which they construct particular views of language.

2. The poles of colonial language policy

It is possible to understand colonial language policy between four poles: the development of global capitalism under the empire; the discourses of Anglicism and liberalism with their insistence on the European need to bring “civilization” to the world; local contingencies of class, ethnicity, race and economic conditions; and the discourses of Orientalism with its insistence on exotic histories, traditions and nations in decline. I shall endeavour in this section to show how these different contingencies were expressed and how they interrelate. As we shall see, there are closer ties between, on the one hand, the concern with the global functioning of the empire and the Anglicist vision, and, on the other hand, between the contingencies of local rule and the interests in Oriental culture. Nevertheless, as also becomes clear, these also interrelate in other complex ways.

2.1 *Imperial capitalism*

As I suggested above, my argument is that despite the very real and very obvious importance of the economic drive behind colonialism, imperial capitalism was not the governing factor in the production of colonial language policy. Nevertheless, it is worth briefly noting the commercial significance of educating a

population to be both producers and consumers of the goods of empire. According to the 1854 Despatch from the East India Company, which was to set the educational policy for the rest of the century and beyond, and which put firmly in place a principal of the moral duty to educate and a policy of vernacular education, there were more material reasons for providing education to the Indian population, since such an education

will teach the natives of India the marvellous results of the employment of labor and capital, rouse them to emulate us in the development of the vast resources of their country, guide them in their efforts and gradually, but certainly, confer upon them all the advantages which accompany the healthy increase of wealth and commerce; and, at the same time, secure to us a larger and more certain supply of many articles necessary for our manufactures and extensively consumed by all classes of our population, as well as an almost inexhaustible demand for the produce of British labor. (Bureau of Education 1922: 365)

Clearly, then, alongside the moral duties and benefits of education, it was conceived in this document as a crucial component in the construction of a global capital empire, with the population of India, and increasingly that of other colonies, as both producers and consumers of goods. While such an argument provided grounds for furthering education in the colonies, however, it had little to say about the languages in which such education should be carried out. To gain insight into arguments over the languages of education, we need to turn to different discourses.

2.2 *Anglicism*

Anglicism — the vehement support for educational intervention through the medium of English — which is often assumed to be the dominant mode of colonial language ideology, was actually far less common. Nevertheless it was voiced by a number of very influential figures, including, of course, Macaulay in his famous Minute of 1835, in which he decried both Indian thought and culture, and argued that English “stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West ... Whoever knows that language has already access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of greater value than all the literature which three hundred years was extant in all the languages of the world together” (Bureau of Education 1920: 110).

Charles Grant (1746–1823), a member of the Clapham Sect (an evangelical group which included Wilberforce, Zachary Macaulay and others), and one of the early and vociferous advocates of strong educational intervention in India, had already made similar arguments in 1797:

The true cure of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant, and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them, would prove the best remedy for their disorders, and this remedy is proposed, from a full conviction that if judiciously and patiently applied, it would have great and happy effects upon them, effects honourable and advantageous for us.
(Bureau of Education 1920: 81)

And the language in which this light should be brought to the people of India was English: “Thus superior, in point of ultimate advantage does the employment of the English language appear; and upon this ground, we give a preference to that mode, proposing here that the communication of our knowledge shall be made by the medium of our own language”. (82). Thus, Grant argued fervently for the importance of English as the language through which such benefits would reach the Indian populace: “The first communication, and the instrument of introducing the rest, must be the English language; this is a key which will open to them a world of new ideas, and policy alone might have impelled us, long since, to put it into their hands” (83). English, he suggested, would open up a new world of literature, reason, history, virtue, and morality, by which “the general mass of their opinions would be rectified; and above all, they would see a better system of principles and morals. New views of duty as rational creatures would open upon them; and that mental bondage in which they have long been holden would gradually dissolve” (84).

It is not, of course, hard to find examples of this Anglicist rhetoric. Apart from the famous Thomas Macaulay, there were other significant Anglicists such as Frederick Lugard, who was instrumental in setting up Hong Kong University before he went on to become Governor of Nigeria. Lugard was known not only for his work as a colonial administrator but also for his development of the colonial theories of indirect rule and the dual mandate. In his most important work, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (1926), Lugard pointed to the importance of understanding “that Europe is in Africa for the mutual benefit of her own industrial classes, and of the native races in their progress to a higher plane; that the benefit can be made reciprocal, and that it is the aim and desire of civilised administration to fulfill this dual mandate” (617).

Lugard remained steadfastly convinced of this idea that while Britain could gain materially from its colonies, the trusteeship of the world had been left to Britain in order that Britain could spread the benefits of its civilization: “I am profoundly convinced that there can be no question but that British rule has promoted the happiness and welfare of the primitive races ... We hold these countries because it is the genius of our race to colonise, to trade, and to govern” (618–9). In his views on the use of English at Hong Kong University he expressed a similar view of this imperializing mission:

In conclusion I would emphasize the value of English as the medium of instruction. If we believe that British interests will be thus promoted, we believe equally firmly that graduates, by the mastery of English, will acquire the key to a great literature and the passport to a great trade. On the one hand we desire to secure the English language in the high position it has acquired in the Far East; on the other hand since the populations of the various provinces in China speak no common language, and the Chinese vocabulary has not yet adapted itself to express the terms and conceptions of modern science, we believe that should China find it necessary for a time to adopt an alien tongue as a common medium for new thoughts and expressions — as the nations of the West did when Latin was the language of the savants and of scientific literature — none would be more suitable than English. (1910: 4)

These are, of course, splendid examples of the arrogance of this line of thinking, with Grant's arguments that Indian beliefs and customs would not only be changed but would also be corrected by Western knowledge, or Lugard's insistence that the Chinese would be better off speaking English. But there are several important points I want to draw attention to here. First, it is important to observe that, as I suggested earlier, the views of such colonial administrators went far further than simply financial benefit; rather they saw themselves as fulfilling a moral duty to the world. These thinkers were at the forefront of the "frenzy of liberal reform known as the 'civilizing mission'" (Singh 1996: 89). This liberalism, as Metcalf (1996: 34) points out, was informed by a "radical universalism": "Contemporary European, especially British, culture alone represented civilization. No other cultures had any intrinsic validity. There was no such thing as 'Western' civilization; there existed only 'civilization'. Hence the liberal set out, on the basis of this shared humanity, to turn the Indian into an Englishman". And this liberal interventionist view of civilization was to form one of the central discourses that continued through the colonial period: "Macaulay and Mountbatten, the last viceroy, were ... linked indissolubly together as the beginning and the end of a chain forged of liberal idealism" (Metcalf 1996: 233). As I shall argue, however, this chain of liberal idealism did not end with Mountbatten in India but needs to be seen in its new guise at the end of the 20th century.

Second, this Anglicist vision forged an indelible link between a civilizing mission and the promotion of English. It is in such discourse that particular constructions of English and its benefits were produced and solidified. And, as I shall argue, it is against such constructions that it is crucial to wage war today. And finally, although it is by no means difficult to find such Anglicist rhetoric in colonial documents, this is by no means the dominant discourse. As we shall see below, while such Anglicist rhetoric probably best matches common stereotypes of colonial discourse, it was in fact both matched by Orientalist discourse and tempered by local contexts.

2.3 *Local Governance*

While the broader economic dictates of empire and the imperializing ideologies of Anglicism were highly influential, policies were often far more influenced by local conditions and concerns. Education was seen as a crucial means for more effective governance of the people. As W. Fraser wrote in a letter to the Chief Secretary (25th September, 1823) on the importance of education in India:

It would be extremely ridiculous in me to sit down to write to the Government or to you a sentence even upon the benefit of teaching the children of the Peasantry of this country to read and write. I shall merely observe that the greatest difficulty this Government suffers, in its endeavours to govern well, springs from the immorality and ignorance of the mass of the people, their disregard of knowledge not connected with agriculture and cattle and particularly their ignorance of the spirit, principles and system of the British Government (Bureau of Education 1920: 13).

While such a statement might appear to lead towards the Anglicist position once again — suggesting that the ignorance of the people could be alleviated by teaching English — this argument is importantly different, for it is concerned first with the problems for governance caused (supposedly) by lack of knowledge, and second with the need for a pragmatic solution via education in local languages.

The development of language policies in Malaya can be seen to have followed a similar tendency to “play safe” and promote local languages rather than English. In the 1884 report on education (Straits Settlements), E. C. Hill, the Inspector of Schools for the colony, explained his reasons against increasing the provision of education in English: Apart from the costs and the difficulties in finding qualified teachers to teach English, there was the further problem that “as pupils who acquire a knowledge of English are invariably unwilling to earn their livelihood by manual labour, the immediate result of affording an English education to any large number of Malays would be the creation of a discontented class who might become a source of anxiety to the community” (171). This position was extremely common and is echoed, for example, by Frank Swettenham’s argument in the *Perak Government Gazette* (6 July, 1894): “I am not in favour of extending the number of ‘English’ schools except where there is some palpable desire that English should be taught. Whilst we teach children to read and write and count in their own languages, or in Malay ... we are *safe*” (emphasis in original). Thus, as Loh Fook Seng (1970: 114) comments, “Modern English education for the Malay then is ruled out right from the beginning as an unsafe thing.”

The other side of this policy — the promotion of vernacular education for the Malay population — although frequently couched in terms of a “moral duty”,

was closely linked to questions of social control and local economic development. As George Maxwell (Chief Secretary to the Government of the Federated Malay States, 1920–26) said in a speech in 1927, the main aims of education in Malaya were “to improve the bulk of the people and to make the son of the fisherman or peasant a more intelligent fisherman or peasant than his father had been” (Maxwell 1927: 406). In an article on vernacular education in the State of Perak, the Inspector of Schools, H. B. Collinge, explained the benefits of education in Malay as taking “thousands of our boys ... away from idleness”, helping them at the same time to “acquire habits of industry, obedience, punctuality, order, neatness, cleanliness and general good behaviour” Thus, after a boy had attended school for a year or so, he was “found to be less lazy at home, less given to evil habits and mischievous adventure, more respectful and dutiful, much more willing to help his parents, and with sense enough not to entertain any ambition beyond following the humble home occupations he has been taught to respect”. And not only does the school inculcate such habits of dutiful labour but it also helps colonial rule more generally since “if there is any lingering feeling of dislike of the ‘white man’, the school tends greatly to remove it, for the people see that the Government has really their welfare at heart in providing them with this education, free, without compulsion, and with the greatest consideration for their mohammedan sympathies” (cited in Straits Settlements 1894: 177).

This sort of policy, favouring vernacular education for colonial governance, developed in interesting ways in Hong Kong. E. J. Eitel, Inspector of Schools from 1879 to 1897, a former German missionary, and a “sound orientalist and sinologist” (Lethbridge 1885: vii), who had written a dictionary of Cantonese and books on Buddhism and *Fengshui*, was most concerned that education should give students sufficient grounding in morality. Indeed, although he clearly supported the teaching of English, he also argued that students in the village schools were getting a better education than those receiving a secular education in English. By studying Chinese classics, students learn “a system of morality, not merely a doctrine, but a living system of ethics.” Thus they learn “filial piety, respect for the aged, respect for authority, respect for the moral law”. In the Government schools, by contrast, where English books are taught from which religious education is excluded, “no morality is implanted in the boys” (Report 1882: 70). Thus, the teaching of Chinese is “of higher advantage to the Government” and “boys strongly imbued with European civilization whilst cut away from the restraining influence of Confucian ethics lose the benefits of education, and the practical experience of Hongkong is that those who are thoroughly imbued with the foreign spirit, are bad in morals” (70).

What also becomes increasingly clear in Hong Kong is the way in which educational policy reacted to local conditions of unrest. Following the massive 1925 strike and boycott of goods in Hong Kong, R. H. Kotewall (CO 129/489)

pointed directly to the schools as the source of problems and recommended increased supervision: “Obviously the first remedy is an increased watchfulness in the schools. Special care should be exercised in the supervision of the vernacular schools in particular, for these can the more easily become breeding grounds for sedition” (455). His recommendations go beyond this, however, for he then goes on to recommend particular orientations for Chinese school curricula: “The Chinese education in Hong Kong does not seem to be all that it should be. The teaching of Confucian ethics is more and more neglected, while too much attention is being paid to the materialistic side of life ... In such a system great stress should be laid on the ethics of Confucianism which is, in China, probably the best antidote to the pernicious doctrines of Bolshevism, and is certainly the most powerful conservative course, and the greatest influence for good” (455–456). Thus, “money spent on the development of the conservative ideas of the Chinese race in the minds of the young will be money well spent, and also constitutes social insurance of the best kind” (456).

This idea was supported most actively by the Governor, Sir Cecil Clementi, a long term colonial administrator in Hong Kong, and a scholar of Chinese folk songs. Inviting senior Chinese literati to Government House in 1927, Clementi addressed them in Cantonese and asked them to help him to develop a curriculum that would emphasize traditional morality and scholarship, a curriculum based on orthodox Confucianism emphasizing social hierarchy and subservience to patriarchal authority (Luk 1991). Clementi’s goal, then, was to counter the rising tide of Chinese nationalism by emphasizing traditional Chinese notions of hierarchy and loyalty. Thus, “appeal was made to the cultural tradition of the native people to help safeguard foreign rule against the growth of nationalistic feelings among the younger generation” (Luk 1991:660). Often far more important, therefore, than the civilizing zeal of English teaching was the conservative use of vernacular education. And crucially, as can be seen from the examples above, such policies were implemented by Orientalist scholars.

2.4 *Orientalism*

Clearly, one aspect of this vernacular education was to promote loyalty, obedience, and acceptance of colonial rule. Another dimension of the promotion of vernacular education was tied to the Orientalist interests of many of the scholar-administrators who were closely connected to educational policies. As we saw above, it was the longterm colonial administrators and Orientalists such as Eitel and Clementi who saw the strongest possibilities of using vernacular language policies for colonial ends. Meanwhile, in Malaya, Swettenham — who, as we saw above, warned against the teaching of English in Malaya — “earned his Knighthood on the strength of his ability to understand the ignorant unspoilt Malays”

while another orientalist administrator, Wilkinson, “believed as many an Englishman has believed before him and since that the native must not be taken away, must not be uprooted from his fascinating environment, fascinating to a brilliant Malay scholar” (Loh Fook Seng 1970: 114). Thus, as Loh Fook Seng goes on to suggest, “Much of the primitive Malay education that continued to be supplied by the British Government was in no small degree due to this attempt to preserve the Malay as a Malay, a son of the soil in the most literal sense possible” (114).

Orientalism has, of course, become a widely studied aspect of colonialism since Said’s (1978) classic study. Singh describes the apparent paradox that lay at the heart of this colonial study of other languages and cultures: “on the one hand, the Orientalists as civil servants shared the standard colonial belief in the superiority of Western knowledge and institutions. On the other hand, these Indologists ‘re-discovered’ a glorious India by identifying a certain resemblance between East and West in a shared ancient past” (Singh 1996: 71). It was from amid these paradoxical studies of Indian, Malay and Chinese culture that conservative policies for the preservation of culture and knowledge — as defined by these colonial scholars — emerged, and, most importantly, policies to promote conservative forms of education were developed.

What emerges from many colonial documents is an apparently balanced educational policy, promoting the spread of European knowledge via English in higher education and via vernacular languages in primary education: “We have declared that our object is to extend European knowledge throughout all classes of the people. We have shown that this object must be effected by means of the English language in the higher branches of instruction, and by that of the vernacular languages of India to the great mass of the people” (Bureau of Education 1922: 392). Although Anglicism, as I suggested earlier, is often taken as the stereotypical colonialist position, it is worth noting that the Anglicist position shares many similarities with the various Orientalist positions: the main point of disagreement was the medium through which colonial populations should be civilized. Thus, although Macaulay’s, Grant’s or Lugard’s patronizing colonialism may seem particularly obnoxious, it is not much worse than the view of Asian despotism and static history held by many Orientalists. In this view, India, Malaya, China and other colonial populations, were stuck in an immutable past and were irredeemably corrupt, despotic and diseased. Macaulay’s patronizing colonialism was at least more liberal and optimistic, even if it implied a cultural imperialism more threatening than the cultural imprisonment implied by the Orientalists.

3. Complexity, contextuality, complicity, complementarity, continuity

Where, then, does this quick look at colonial language policy leave us? Let me summarise briefly what I have been trying to show here: Colonial discourses on language education are interwoven both with broader colonial discourses and with modes of colonial governance. The need to provide education for colonized populations became framed among sometimes competing and sometimes complementary discourses: the liberal discourse of the civilizing mission and the moral obligation to bring enlightenment to backward peoples; the need to provide a productive and docile workforce who would also become consumers within colonial capitalism; the various Orientalist positions, including an exoticisation and glorification of a distant Indian, Malay, Chinese past, and a belief that vernacular languages were the most efficient way to spread European knowledge in the colonies; and the Anglicist insistence that English should be the language of education. This understanding of language policy suggests several important concerns for current language policy debates, issues of complexity, contextuality, complicity, complementarity, and continuity.

3.1 *Complexity and contextuality*

One of my concerns here in looking at colonial language policy has been to shift a common representation of colonial history in which a simple past is contrasted with a complex present. The point here, then, is not to try to show the negativity of colonial discourses in order merely to critique such negative constructions. Rather, we need, as Thomas (1994) points out, “a pluralization and historicization of ‘colonial discourse’, and a shift from the logic of signification to the narration of colonialism — or rather, to a contest of colonial narratives” (37). One of the crucial arguments of this article, therefore, has been to oppose those overly simple accounts of the triumph of Anglicism and the rabid rhetoric of Macaulay. Too often (see, for example, Kachru 1986; Phillipson 1992) the history of colonial language policy has been cast as a victory for English, which explains the current role of English (generally a good thing in Kachru’s view) or the need to develop policies to oppose its spread (in Phillipson’s view). Thus, Kachru (1986: 35) sees the resolution passed as a result of the Minute as “epoch-making” and resulting in the “diffusion of bilingualism in English on the subcontinent”. Phillipson (1992: 110) argues that “Macaulay’s formulation of the goals of British educational policy ended a protracted controversy which had exercised planners both in India and in the East India Company in London”. Yet, without understanding the relationships between support for English or vernacular languages and other material and discursive forces of colonialism, we will not have an adequate appreciation either of colonialism or of current language policies.

A crucial element of the argument has been the attempt to show the significance of going beyond the simple belief that Anglicism is the archetypal version of colonialism. This has several implications. First, it helps us readdress relations between simple pasts and complex presents. By focusing on Anglicism, by labeling Macaulay as the designer of educational policy and showing his bigotry, modern day liberals, leftists, and conservatives alike are able to distance themselves easily from colonial complicity. As I shall discuss below, however, we need in fact to see how different discourses on education and governance intertwined and were complicit with colonialism. Second, we need to understand the complexity of colonial language policies in context. And such an understanding will have important implications for the present, for as I shall argue, there is a tendency to view current language policies within simple dichotomous relationships between monism and pluralism.

One of the lessons we need to draw from this account of colonial language policy, therefore, is that in order to make sense of language policies we need to understand their location historically and contextually. What I mean by this is that we cannot assume that promotion of local languages instead of a dominant language, or promotion of a dominant language at the expense of local languages, are in themselves good or bad. Too often we view such questions through the lenses of liberalism, pluralism or anti-imperialism, without understanding the actual location of such policies. Crowley (1996) compares Gramsci and Bakhtin, who developed very different orientations towards language based in part on the different political contexts in which they worked. For Bakhtin, working in the Stalinist Soviet Union and its massive projects of centralization, including the standardization and spread of Russian throughout the empire, the necessary emphasis was on heteroglossia, on the diversity and differences within language being understood and promoted as a reaction against monoglossic centralization. For Gramsci, by contrast, working (and being imprisoned) in Mussolini's Italy, in which the emphasis was on the promotion of local Italian dialects as an expression of Italian identity (and a means to rule the country by maintaining diversity) the emphasis was far more on the need for a unified language to unite the peasantry.

According to Crowley (1996) "Gramsci's contention is that in the historical and political conjuncture in which he was located, rather than arguing for heteroglossia, what was required was precisely the organising force of a form of monoglossia. In particular what Gramsci argued for was the teaching of prescriptive grammar to the children of the working class and peasantry in order to empower them with literacy as part of a larger radical project" (43). Thus, in the historical situation in which Gramsci was located "a preference for heteroglossia over monoglossia would be a reactionary stance" (45). If, then, an argument for monoglossia or heteroglossia is made in the abstract, without reference to the

actual historical location of the languages and political struggles involved, the political outcomes of such an argument will be unclear. We need, therefore, clear, contextualised understandings of the political contexts of language policies, for “although Bakhtin’s preference for heteroglossia is correct in analysing particular historical examples (say, for instance, the formation of ‘standard English’ in the cultural hegemony of Britain), it is correct only with regard to this specific historical conjuncture” (46). By contrast, “the diffuse and politically disorganised situation of early twentieth century Italy, in which lack of common literacy amongst the national-popular mass served the interests of the governing class, requires a quite different analysis” (46).

A recent comparison of language policies in Estonia and Puerto Rico under the rule of the Soviet and US empires (Clachar 1998) shows similar complexities and divergencies. How, asks Clachar, can we account for much greater learning of Russian in Estonia than of English in Puerto Rico? The answers lie in different formations of language and nationalism in the two countries, different policies of linguistic tolerance (USSR) and linguistic hegemony (USA), different totalitarian and non-totalitarian political systems, and different forms of control over industry and mass communication. Thus, although Soviet language policy “initially supported Estonian and other national minority languages” and “originally adhered to Leninist principles of the equality of all languages” (104), and although US policy was “openly assimilationist from the moment Puerto Rico was ceded to the US in 1898” (105), it seems that the effects of tight centralized control and the later use of Russian as a key tool in political education led to widespread learning of Russian while the assimilationist policies of the US, led to “disruptive shifts between English and Spanish as the media of instruction, an inferior status ascribed to Spanish, ambivalence toward English, and eventually, resistance to the learning and spread of English on the island” (115).

What becomes evident, then, is the impossibility of assuming that certain positions favouring one language or another out of context will have certain effects or are ethically or politically preferable. For example, as I illustrated above, support for local languages has long been a tool of colonial rule. As Barkhuizen and Gough (1996) point out, the apartheid system in South Africa “used promotion of the mother tongue principle, specifically the advancement of the indigenous African languages as subject and medium of instruction, as a central instrument of the policy of divide and rule” (453–4). This does not of course mean that support for local languages is inevitably a tool of state control, but rather, as Clachar’s (1998) exploration of imperial language policies and effects makes clear, language policies occur in complex political contexts.

3.2 *Complementarity, complicity, continuity*

As I have been suggesting, the prominence given the Anglicist position as representing colonial discourse is surely misguided. Importantly, however, just as I have suggested that Anglicism by no means won out over Orientalism, neither was this a victory for Orientalism. Rather, the two positions continued alongside each other, and indeed it becomes clear that Anglicism and Orientalism were complementary rather than antagonistic aspects of colonial discourse. Loh Fook Seng (1970: 108) argues that Macaulay's dismissal of Indian culture and scholarship should not be seen as oppositional to the Orientalist position: "They are but two sides of the same colonial coin sharing the same rationale, to bring light into the native darkness as well as facilitate the exigencies of trade and government". Similarly, Viswanathan (1989: 30) argues that the two positions should be seen "not as polar opposites but as points along a continuum of attitudes toward the manner and form of colonial governance". Ultimately, she suggests, "both the Anglicist and the Orientalist factions were equally complicit with the project of domination" (167).

There are two crucial aspects to this notion of complementarity: First, that Anglicism and Orientalism, while antagonistic opposites on one level, were on another level complementary and complicit discourses of colonialism. And second, that these discourses were crucial in the production of views on language, and in particular a view of a complementary relationship between English and other languages, a view which echoes into the present. Not only do we therefore need to understand the embeddedness of language policy — how educational discourses reflected wider social and ideological conditions — but we also need to see the educational context as *productive* of colonial discourse. Education and education policy were a crucial site of colonial encounter and of the production of colonial discourse. As a result it both helped to produce colonialism more generally and also has had lasting effects into the present.

Colonial language policy thus became another site of colonial knowledge production. This is particularly important to understand since I am arguing that this knowledge was produced in the colonial context as a form of "trial run" for the liberal state of the 19th and 20th centuries. While such knowledge, as Metcalf (1995: 23) suggests in the Indian context, "could effectively subordinate and contain the Company's Indian underlings", the effects of such knowledge went beyond its role in the control of the Indian populace. India, as Viswanathan (1989) argues with respect to the development of the English canon of literature, was a key site for the development of policies that then flowed back to England. Similarly, in terms of general administrative and educational policies, India became a laboratory for liberal reforms, "a laboratory for the creation of the liberal administrative state, and from there its elements — whether a state

sponsored education, the codification of law, or a competitively chosen bureaucracy — could make their way back to England itself” (Metcalf 1995: 29). And, as I am arguing here, the construction of English as a language of higher civilization (the Anglicist position) and the construction of local languages as part of a static, traditional, cultural history (the Orientalist position) were products of colonial relationships that recirculated through the discursive web of empire.

As Frykenberg (1988: 315) argues, the effects of Macaulay’s *Minute* were very limited in India, but as Macaulay’s fame grew in England in subsequent years, “the influence of this *Minute* was probably cumulative, so that it became more pervasive with each successive generation”. That is to say, the significance of Anglicism was not in determining educational policy in Britain’s colonies, but rather in developing a discourse about English as the crucial medium for the purveyance of knowledge. Thus, the effects of Macaulay’s *Minute* and colonial Anglicist discourse were far less significant within colonial language policy than they are today within global institutions of support for English. Anglicism has been able to reemerge in a new world order in which promotion of English has become a far more viable option. And the discourses of Orientalism have also flourished in this new era, positioning other languages as the static markers of identity, a crucial construction of complementarity that has major implications today. It is in this sense that the discourses of colonialism have such salient continuity.

4. Conclusions

The questions of complexity, contextuality, complementarity, complicity and continuity discussed above raise a number of important concerns for current understandings of language policy. What we are often confronted with in current discussions of language policy are various “good guy/bad guy” positions: From the conservative right comes the argument that multiculturalism, bilingual education and so on are inefficient, un-American (un-Australian etc) and lead to ghettoization, while declaring English to be the national and the only language of the United States (Australia, the UK) is to return to American (etc) ideals (see Wiley and Lukes 1996). Meanwhile, from the liberal position we have an argument for pluralism and tolerance, an argument that diversity is inherently good and that minorities should be encouraged to maintain their languages. And from a more leftist position, we have an argument that an English Only policy is a form of linguistic imperialism, and that people have a basic linguistic right to education and use of their first language (see, for example, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1996). But the arguments of this paper suggest various complications that need to be considered.

First, the historical perspective I have drawn on here raises questions about the common claim that the bestowal of education or access to literacy and languages are in some way inherently beneficial (see Pennycook 1996, 1998a). The easy assumptions often made about a “language of power”, or of dominant and dominated languages, become more suspect in light of this historical analysis in which both English and vernacular languages were used to promote particular forms of colonial governance. As became clear here, language education policies were constantly designed to maintain the inequitable social conditions of colonial contexts. Thus, we need a broad understanding of the complexity of social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which language policies occur; attempts to universalize arguments about rights and ideologies, arguments that suggest that pluralism or monism are good or bad irrespective of their contexts, run the dangers of overlooking contextual complexities.

Second, we need to be cautious in discussions of language policy that we do not fall into the trap of dealing simply with questions of languages as if they were nothing but neutral media for the conveyance of knowledge and culture. This has constantly been the problem, for example, in Hong Kong, where debates over the preferred language of instruction — English or Chinese — have been constructed in terms of a reductive argument about the medium of instruction, while a much wider range of cultural and political issues has been swept under the carpet. Languages are often therefore dealt with as if they were discrete objects that can be given to or withheld from people. But as the discussion above has suggested, and as arguments from critical literacy have also suggested, access to a language or literacy are not good things in themselves but are “specific to the political and ideological context and their consequences vary situationally” (Street 1995: 24). My argument, then, is that we need to understand how language policy and use are embedded in a range of different material and ideological concerns, and that the issue cannot be considered only as one of the medium of instruction, of access to a language, of the automatic benefits of schooling in one language or another. Rather, such questions have to be addressed through a much more careful understanding of the complex contexts of schooling and politics.

Third, the way in which both Anglicist and Orientalist discourses, on the one hand, and support for both English and local languages on the other can be seen to have been complicit with the whole colonial project raises some fundamental questions about current language policies. The promotion of both English and vernacular education policies in Malaya and Hong Kong were clearly, in general, in line with broader colonial policies of social stability and exploitation. This suggests that we need to investigate very carefully whose interests are served by different language policies. Thus, it is not enough to simply juxtapose a liberal multiculturalism (possibly the descendant of Orientalism) with a

rapacious, conservative pro-English stance (more obviously a descendant of Anglicism) in terms of the language ideologies that each seems to espouse. Rather, what such policies promote or deny must be looked at within the broader social, political and economic structures and ideologies that they support.

And finally, we need to question the ways in which colonial constructions of language still produce current understandings of language, and in particular a view of a complementary relationship between English, the language of international communication, and local languages, the means of cultural maintenance. I shall address this issue in greater depth in my other paper in this volume, but my argument here is that the Orientalist vs Anglicist dichotomy is reproduced in the common liberal account of the two functions of language, intelligibility and identity (see, for example, Crystal 1997). Unless we work to oppose such simplistic dichotomisation, unless we appreciate that to see local languages as nothing but carriers of tradition, and languages of wider communication as nothing but tools of modernization and development, we remain stuck in a colonial dichotomisation of languages, and we will fail to appreciate that languages are flexible tools of change, not static media of transmission. In this context, then, it is crucial that we escape the continuities of colonialism, the constructions of complementary language use that remain complicit with a broader politics of stasis.

My arguments should not be taken here to be espousing some form of political and moral relativism by which we can never decide whether some policy is preferable to another. Rather, my position here is akin to what I have elsewhere (1998a) called a “situated ethics of language possibilities”, a view that argues that language policy can only be understood in the complex contexts of language use. And the interests served by different ideological positions cannot be reduced to simple reflexes of a prior economic or political order: Discourses and material interests intersect in complex ways. Historical hindsight demands that we ask ourselves harder questions about the ideological assumptions we make about the rightness of our conservative, liberal or leftist positions on rights, plurality or monolingualism. What kind of post-Orientalist essentialisms and exoticisms may guide a pluralist stance? How do such policies fit into both global and local modes of governance? To what extent might we see the “two sides” of current arguments — diversity or English only — as complicit with each other and with a broader politics? How do we understand ways in which language policy and education are tied to forms of culture and knowledge? What else might we be supporting in our self-righteous arguments for rights, plurality, or English Only? Languages are not mere media, but rather stand at the very core of major cultural and political questions. We must seek to understand the complex totalities of these relations.

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CHAPTER 5

Continuity and Change in the Function of Language Ideologies in the United States

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1. Introduction

This discussion builds from my previous work on language ideologies (Wiley & Lukes 1996) and the differential impact of language policies across groups in the United States (Wiley 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999). It revisits and reconsiders the *language tolerance hypothesis* as it has been applied to the context of United States history and its antecedent English colonial history. The chapter focuses on the ideology of English monolingualism as it has been used to rationalize prescriptions and policies for the incorporation and subordination of various groups into the United States.

Historically, there has been considerable consistency in the explicit ideological prescriptions that have been applied to various groups being incorporated into the Anglo-dominant fold. *Linguistic assimilation* into English has been universally held as a panacea and mandate for all groups. However, when the expectations for the economic and political assimilation of various groups are reviewed, a distinction must be made between expectations for mere *behavioral assimilation* and *structural incorporation* (Weiss 1982). Historically, even though the dominant English/Anglo-centric ideology has prescribed deculturation and language shift for all groups, the expectation for structural incorporation has been more selectively applied. Thus, the universal ideological prescription for English linguistic assimilation has been advanced as a singular means for achieving very different ends.

A central tenet of the monolingual ideology is that languages are in competition. It presupposes a contest between languages in which only one

language can prosper, and it assumes that to do so it must conquer all others lest it be conquered (Wiley 1999). This false dichotomy is merely an artifact of the ideology of monolingualism itself, which suppresses the more typical and accommodating tendency toward bilingualism/multilingualism. A historical review of the struggles involving English and other languages, however, reveals a different picture. There has never been a struggle between languages, but only among their speakers. The ideological issue has largely been one of the extent to which there has been tolerance within the Anglo-dominant monolingual culture for bilingualism and for the accommodation of those few who have never had opportunity or reason to learn English.

The dominant ideology of English monolingualism and linguicism (Phillipson 1992, 1998) directed at bilingualism and languages other than English cannot be understood as being merely the equivalent of racism or classism; rather, it must be understood in its relationship to these inhumanities. This paper will briefly explore these issues in terms of how they have affected actual populations by comparing the impact of dominant language ideologies on Native American and European immigrants through the early twentieth century, the period in which the monolingual ideology became fully hegemonic and set a tone for the remainder of the twentieth century.

2. The language tolerance hypothesis revisited

To date the most comprehensive analysis of the unfolding of language policies in the United States has been that of Kloss (1971, 1998/1977). In his review of formal language policies in the United States Kloss concluded that the dominant motif has been one of relative *tolerance*, with the notable exception of the World War I era, when wide-spread restrictions were imposed on European immigrant languages, most notably German. Concluding that a formal policy climate of linguistic tolerance was operative throughout most of U.S. history, Kloss argued that efforts to preserve or promote immigrant languages fell upon the efforts, desires, and resources of language minority groups themselves.

... the non-English ethnic groups in the United States were Anglicized not *because* of nationality laws which were unfavorable to them but *in spite of* nationalities laws relatively *favorable* to them. Not by legal provisions and measures of the authorities, not by governmental coercion did the nationalities become assimilated, but rather by the absorbing power of the highly developed American society. (1977: 283; emphasis in the original)

Based on Kloss' evidence, which relied heavily on the analysis of formal policies, there is substantial support for the tolerance hypothesis, with this important qualification:

The conclusion that is justified is to speak of an American bilingual tradition but it must not be understood to imply that it was the prevailing, let alone *the*, American tradition with regard to language policy. There has always been and still is a powerful tradition upholding the merits and desirability of "one country, one language", a tradition which has been so much in the foreground that the rival tradition has been well-nigh forgotten, especially during its partial eclipse in the years after World War I. (1977: 285; emphasis in the original)

Kloss made passing references to racial prejudice and discrimination in the U.S., but he attempted to limit his analysis solely to *formal* language policies (Wiley 1996b; and Macías & Wiley 1998). In his analyses of U.S. language policies, he concentrated on immigrant groups and deliberately excluded policies he considered to be *racial* laws. By so doing, he attempted to disconnect language policies from ethnic and racial policies. Although his approach lent itself to conceptual neatness, it failed to analyze possible sources of, and motives for, language policies, i.e., their use as instruments of social, economic, and political control (see Leibowitz 1971, 1974). In particular, it failed to deal with the connections between racially motivated ideologies and the dominant language ideology. According to Kloss, deviations from the theme of tolerance were

... *only isolated instances* of an oppressive state policy aiming at the elimination of non-English languages. There were, however, a great many instances in which individuals (including public school teachers) and groups exerted *unofficial moral pressure* upon members of the minority groups, especially children, so as to make them feel that to stick to a "foreign" tongue meant being backward or even un-American (1977: 285; emphasis added)

2.1 *Limitations in the tolerance hypothesis*

There are several important limitations in Kloss' analysis. First, the number of oppressive policies appears to be few because Kloss restricted his focus to formal policies, as opposed to *implicit* or *covert* policies and practices. Secondly, he was concerned mainly with voluntary immigrants rather than with involuntary immigrants and indigenous peoples. Thirdly, he failed to explore the ideological context in which "unofficial moral pressure" achieved the same — or possibly even more thoroughgoing — results than formal coercive policies would have. Because language ideologies are associated with other prevailing ones that

advocate racial, ethnic, religious, and other forms of social domination within the context of competition between groups, the analytical challenge is to ascertain the relationship among these ideologies (see also Macías 1992).

In pointing out these limitations in Kloss' approach, it is necessary to add that interpreting his later scholarship on the U.S., as well as assessing his contributions as an intellectual figure, are further problematized by the fact that Kloss began his work as a scholar in Germany, prior to World War II, under the Third Reich. Although Kloss was to disavow his connections with the Nazi Regime, Hutton (1998) recently has raised a number of important concerns regarding his early career and its implications for his later work and thought. It is somber testimony to the persistent scantiness of historical research on the history of language policies in the United States that Kloss' cataloging of formal language policies remains the major source of reference in much of the literature on U.S. language policy.

3. Beyond formal policies

In order to go beyond the explanatory limitations of the tolerance theme, it is necessary to broaden the scope of historical inquiry by analyzing implicit and covert policies as well as formal or explicit policies, by comparing the experiences of immigrant language minorities to those of indigenous groups and involuntary immigrants, and by analyzing language ideologies within the context of inter-group competition and conflict.

3.1 *Initial mode of incorporation and subsequent treatment of language minority groups*

The initial contexts for conflict include conquest, colonization, annexation, enslavement, and removal of indigenous peoples, and later with the context of a self-consciously expanding national state that would use conquest and annexation as the means to achieve its self-fulfilling "Manifest Destiny." By narrowing his focus to formal language policies, Kloss failed to probe these contexts. In his categorization of groups, Kloss (1971: 253) defined *immigrants* as consisting of "every linguistic minority a majority of whose adult members are foreign born or the children of foreign born" and *indigenous groups* as those consisting of "a majority of whose adult members are natives of native parentage." Again, however, within the ideological context of U.S. language policies, these definitions are problematic and must be reconsidered within the economic, the

nationalist, and imperialist expansion of the United States (Wiley & Lukes 1996). The immigrant category, for example, becomes more complicated if we add to it *involuntary immigrants*, i.e., those who were enslaved and forcibly brought here. The notion of *indigenous* groups also needs elaboration. Macías (1999: 63) maintains that “[i]ndigenous groups are those who occupied an area that is now the United States prior to the national expansion into that area, and those groups who have a historical/cultural tie to the “Americas” prior to European colonization.” Based on the addition of involuntary immigrants and *indigenous* peoples, source populations for language diversity in the United States and its territories would include:

- indigenous peoples residing in what became the thirteen colonies and subsequently became the United States;
- immigrant peoples from Europe who migrated to the colonies that subsequently became United States;
- peoples in Africa forcibly abducted, enslaved, and brought to the territories that subsequently became the United States;
- immigrant peoples who have migrated into the United States and its territories after 1789;
- peoples residing in lands west of the Appalachians and east of the Mississippi, transferred in the Treaty of Paris in 1783;
- peoples residing in the immense territory (contiguous to the Mississippi and Missouri rivers) acquired through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803;
- peoples residing in Florida and parts of what are now southern Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana prior to 1820;
- peoples residing in Oregon Country, which included present-day Washington and Idaho, prior to its acquisition in 1846;
- peoples residing in Texas and other territories north of the Rio Grande prior to 1848;
- peoples residing in the Mexican Cession, including California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of what is now Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado prior to 1848;
- peoples residing in territory acquired in the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, comprising what is now southern Arizona and New Mexico;
- peoples residing in Alaska prior to its purchase in 1867;
- peoples residing in Hawaii prior to its annexation in 1896;
- peoples residing in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands prior to 1898;
- peoples residing in the Philippines prior to its conquest in 1898;
- peoples residing in Guam and other island territories in the Pacific prior to 1945;

- peoples allowed to immigrate to the U.S. after 1965, with the relaxation of racial quotas as a basis for immigration;
- peoples previously undocumented who have subsequently been allowed to seek amnesty.

3.2 *The intersection of the ideologies of racism, monoculturalism/nativism, and linguisticism*

Attempts to establish a hierarchical distribution of privileges and obligations on the basis of race has been called *racialization*. Miles (1989: 74) defines racialization as an ideological “process of delineation of group boundaries and an allocation of persons within those boundaries by primary reference to purportedly inherent and/or biological (typically phenotypical) characteristics.” Weinberg (1990) further notes that racism is a *systematic, institutional procedure* for excluding some while privileging others; thus, it involves more than simple prejudice since it has the power to advantage and the power to disadvantage. Racism is premised on the belief that some are inherently superior to others. From an ideological perspective racism promotes *monoculturalism*, which Haas (1992: 161) defines as “the practice of catering to the dominant or mainstream culture, providing second class treatment or no special consideration at all to persons of non-mainstream cultures.”

Correspondingly, *linguicism*, according to Phillipson (1988), involves “the ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are in turn defined on the basis of language (i.e., the mother tongue)” (339). Phillipson concludes that linguistic ideologies have affinities with racist ones because they permit the dominant language group to confer “an idealized image of itself” while “stigmatizing the dominated group/ language and rationalizing the relationship between the two, always to the advantage of the dominant group” (341).

Given the similarities between racism and linguisticism, the argument may be advanced that discrimination on the basis of language is *equivalent* to discrimination based on race. This conclusion follows to the extent that racism and linguisticism both promote policies that result in dehumanization, as manifested in social and political domination. Despite their similarities, these ideologies differ in one fundamental way in that language, like culture, but unlike race, is perceived to be *mutable*. Leibowitz (1971) has noted that in instances involving language discrimination, language has rarely been a singular focus of conflict and that victims of such discrimination have rarely missed that point. Thus, the issue

of the degree of comparability among linguicism, racism, and other inhumanities should yield to a focus on the relationships among them, because it is rarely the case that linguicism has functioned as an end in itself.

In U.S. history, and in its prior English colonial history, race has always been a more salient marker of group boundaries than language. Nevertheless, in Nativist and Neo-Nativist ideologies, cultural, and linguistic differences have been used as quasi-racial markers to define inter-group boundaries even among European-origin peoples. Well into the twentieth century there was a *two-tiered* system of racialization. One defined boundaries *within* the European-origin population, largely on the basis of religion, culture, social class and language — and sometimes based on what were perceived to be minor physical differences; the other defined racial boundaries *between* European-origin peoples and all others primarily on the basis of perceived physical differences — and only secondarily on the basis of language and culture. As European-origin linguistic minorities assimilated into the English-speaking Anglo-dominant milieu, color and other physical differences persisted as the primary determinants of group boundaries between those of European-origin and all others (Wiley 1998a).

3.3 *Status achievement of English during the colonial period*

A number of commentators (e.g., Fairclough 1989; Tollefson 1991) following Gramsci (1971) have noted that hegemony, i.e., the *manufacture of consent*, provides an effective alternative to *force* as a means to achieving social control. The ideological basis for the dominance and spread of English in the English colonies in the Americas was not a result of centralized official language planning, rather it resulted from its *status achievement*, which was achieved by a combination of factors. This is the conclusion reached by Heath (1976) in an important, but largely neglected, study of colonial language status achievement in the Americas. Heath compared how English and Spanish each achieved dominant status through two very different colonial administrative structures. Among the factors she considered were the status of the conquerors' languages in their countries of origin, Castile and England, prior to the establishment of their colonies, the specific social organizations of the indigenous peoples, and the degree of influence of various interest groups in the colonies. A strength of Heath's analysis is that she defined language policy in terms of what the affected population perceived a language policy to be rather than focusing on the presence or absence of its official sanction as a policy (see Wiley 1999 for elaboration).

Ostensibly, the English approach to language policy formation might be construed as corresponding to *decentralized* policy formation, or as being merely

the outgrowth of the *linguistic culture* of the colonies (see Schiffman 1996 for a discussion of this perspective as an alternative to ideological analysis). However, Heath's analysis demonstrates how language status achievement was used to legitimate "a government's decisions regarding acceptable language for those who are to carry out the political, economic, and social affairs of the political process" and that "the process by which the chosen language achieves this status is the result of the interaction of political and socio-economic forces" (p.51) between the colonizer and the colonized areas. The language status achievement of English as the dominant language was accomplished during conquest and colonization, and affected all subsequent interactions between the Anglo dominant population and all other ethnolinguistic groups.

3.4 *Linguistic acculturation versus deculturation*

Within the context of U.S. history and its antecedent colonial history, racism and linguisticism have been inextricably linked. However, from the perspective of social control, ideologies supporting linguistic assimilation have had different goals, in some cases to promote *deculturation* for the purpose of subordination, without structural incorporation, and in others to promote *acculturation* for assimilation. Notions of racial, cultural and linguistic superiority among the English and Anglo-dominant have a long history. Early manifestations were apparent in racial and cultural ideologies used to rationalize the English conquest, deculturation, and subordination of the Irish (Spring 1994, 1996, and Takaki 1993). Similarly, Jordan (1974) analyzed incipient racist ideologies toward African peoples that were prevalent in English thought during the colonial period. Schmidt (1995) has concluded that by the 19th century linguistic and racist ideologies converged to such an extent that "Anglo-Saxon racialist thought focused on the superiority of the English language as a derivative of German culture" (p. 4). He adds that, in the United States, language has "played an important role in both the ideology and practice of the system of racial domination that held sway in the U.S. prior to the Second Reconstruction of the 1960s" (p. 4). Thus, it is necessary to analyze language ideologies, which form the basis of actual policies, whether formal, covert, or implicit, in terms of their association with other ideologies, such as racism, that have been used for purposes of social control.

3.5 *Race as the principal determinant of immigration and citizenship in the New Republic*

As one of its first important actions the newly established Congress of the United

States passed the Nationalization Act of 1790, which limited citizenship to whites only. The passage of that act was both compatible with, and reflective of, the dominant racial ideologies of the day as well as the colonial past:

English belief in their own cultural and racial superiority over Native Americans and, later, enslaved Africans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asians, was not born on American soil. It was part of the cultural baggage English colonists brought to North America. English beliefs in their cultural and racial superiority were used to justify the occupation of Native American lands. North America acted as a hothouse for the growth of white racism and chauvinism. Again, it is important to stress that this phenomenon was not unique to North America, but it followed the English flag around the world. (Spring 1996: 35)

Although there was some negative sentiment expressed against European language minorities prior to that action, notions of racial and cultural superiority superseded language in the definition of citizenship.

Establishing citizenship criteria for immigrants presented one challenge; determining the status of indigenous peoples proved to be more problematic. Ultimately, the Supreme Court reached the ingenious conclusion that Indian peoples were *domestic foreigners*, who belonged to "... domestic dependent nations. They occupy a territory to which we assert a title independent of their will ... in a state of pupillage. Their relationship to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian" (*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, 1831/1990: 59).

4. 'Indigenous occupants': From initial appeasement, to removal, and subsequent coercive domestication

Prior to resolving the legal status of *indigenous occupants*, there was the larger issue of *appeasement*. European intruders had long attempted to use Indians as pawns in their colonial conflicts, and Indians had learned the value of playing the Europeans against themselves. It should come as little surprise that the first federal expenditure by the revolutionary Continental Congress, in 1775, was for Indian education. A sum of \$500 was allocated to Dartmouth College to promote education for appeasement. Thus, from its inception, Indian education was linked to pacification and the acquisition of more Indian lands in the west (Weinberg 1995). Even so, official rationalizations for civilizing Indians exhibited ambivalence regarding the extent to which Indians were potentially more victims than they were a threat. It was frequently argued that Indian contact with whites had to be regulated to protect the Indians from exploitation, moral corruption, and

eventual extinction. Anxieties for Indian well being and longevity notwithstanding, concern was frequently linked to opportunism, and schemes to “civilize” Indians were hedged with ominous threats to remove them, should the Indians fail to heed opportunities to join civilization. President Jefferson’s view is revealing:

[O]ur settlement will gradually circumscribe and approach the Indians, and they will in time either incorporate with us as citizens of the United States or remove beyond the Mississippi. The former is certainly the termination of their history most happy for themselves; but in the whole, it is essential to cultivate their love. (Jefferson 1803a/1990: 21–22)

Through the acquisition of superior civilization Indians were to experience “the termination of their history” as a “happy” event. Should they fail to become enraptured by that process, they were to be *removed* — as they ultimately were. Initial plans for Indian tutelage in White civilization called for federal regulation of trading posts. Jefferson strategized that Indians would be more willing to surrender their lands if they could be weaned into agricultural production, including the domestication of animals, and into the manufacturing of domestic wares. Through trade Jefferson hoped to inculcate an appetite for “civilized” goods that would alter the life-styles of Indian peoples, making them dependent on their conquerors (1803b/1990).

In the early decades of the eighteenth century the U.S. government became increasingly interested in using education and Christian conversion as the primary means of appeasing and domesticating Indians, particularly in those areas where they increasingly had contact with the encroaching white population. In 1819, Congress passed the *Civilization Fund Act* (1819/1990), which authorized funds for the encouragement of schooling among the Indians. The Act’s overt purpose was to protect against the further decline and extinction of the Indians by promoting schools among them. The plan called for instruction in the “arts of civilization” (p. 33) as well as the promotion of basic literacy skills and training in agriculture. In keeping with Jefferson’s vision, the plan would help to convert the Indians to an economy requiring much less land. From the perspective of their conquerors, trade fostered economic change and dependency. Christianity and instruction in basic English literacy were prescribed as the principal means for pacification, a process that Hernández-Chávez (1994) likened to *cultural genocide*. According to the plan, Indians were to be weaned into civilization, divested of most of their lands, and thereby *saved from extinction*. Some government strategists, however, were less benevolently focused in their support for the *Civilization Fund Act*. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, for example, “viewed the schools as auxiliary to the government policy of removal” because they could be used to

inculcate “the desirability of emigration [i.e., removal]” (Weinberg 1995: 181).

Despite the intention of their conquerors to use education and English as tools for deculturation, Indians saw the obtainment of these devices in a pragmatic sense. They were necessary tools in the struggle for survival. Some tribal leaders in the southeast, many themselves bicultural and biracial, realized the value of literacy — both in English *and* in their native languages — as essential for self-preservation and effective competition with the encroaching white population. As Weinberg (1995) observes, when the education of the conquerors “did not compromise their own self-respect and ethnic identity ... the Cherokee and sister tribes ... were able to retain both, their educational achievements outstripped those of the conquerors themselves” (p. 178).

The first Anglo attempts at schooling the Cherokee were conducted solely in English with predictably unspectacular results. Because teachers had no knowledge of Indian languages, instruction was conducted only in English. However, since most students were unable to comprehend English, “reading became a matter of memory without meaning; writing, of copying without comprehension; and arithmetic, an exercise in misunderstanding. Small wonder that the ‘scholars’ were addicted to running away” (cited in Weinberg, p. 184).

Although initial English-only literacy education was largely a failure, with the invention of the Cherokee syllabary by Sequoyah in 1822, there was a remarkable turn of events. The Cherokee script allowed for the development of bilingual education and for the circulation of *Cherokee Phoenix*, a weekly bilingual newspaper published by the Cherokees themselves. The *Phoenix* became a major instrument in the expression of opposition to the removal of the Cherokee in Georgia (Weinberg 1995).

4.1 *Indian removal*

Through the promotion of Cherokee literacy/English biliteracy in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Cherokee of the southeast had been able to successfully co-exist and/or compete with the encroaching White population. By 1833, missionaries estimated that 60% of the Cherokee were literate in their native language and that about 20% were English literate (Weinberg 1995). From the perspective of U.S. expansionist policies, English education as a tool of pacification and deculturation had fallen short of its goal of facilitating both domestication and removal. Thus, the decisive solution was to order the physical removal of the Cherokee from the southeast to a region west of the Mississippi. Through an infamous saga known as the “Trail of Tears”, Indian removal was accomplished during the decade of the 1830s. During this period the federal

government imposed a series of fraudulent treaties that resulted in the forced uprooting of 125,000 Indians (Weinberg 1995). This exodus constituted the largest forced-migration of indigenous peoples in modern history (Spring 1994). Many resisted and thousands perished due to starvation and disease during the compelled exodus (see Ehle 1988).

Despite their removal, treaty provisions allowed for the expansion of education among the Cherokee, who, by 1852, had established a schooling system under their own administration. Observers during the period concluded that the Cherokee educational system was superior to those in the neighboring states of Arkansas and Missouri. Educational gains were also made among the Choctaw, especially after their removal from the east. Roman script had been adapted to their language by missionaries, who had more of an influence on Choctaw education than they did on Cherokee education. In 1842, the Choctaw developed their own tribal schools. The tribal schools were conducted in English, but Sabbath schools, which continued to be popular for basic literacy education, were conducted in Choctaw (Weinberg 1995).

4.2 *Subsequent coercive assimilation*

Following the Civil War, the United States became more aggressive in forcing English and Anglo culture on Indians. A policy of *coercive assimilation* was implemented to hasten deculturation and domestication of Indians in order to wrench away the autonomy of tribal governance and authority. The policy was implemented during the 1880's when the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) established a system of English-only boarding schools that were fundamental to this purpose (Crawford 1995a; Spicer 1962, 1980; Weinberg 1995; Wiley 1999). As with prior deculturation efforts native languages were to be replaced by English, and Indian customs were to be destroyed. In addition, Indians were to undergo indoctrination for patriotic allegiance to the US government. To ensure the goal of total indoctrination, Indian children were physically removed from their families at a young age so as best to reduce the influence of their parents, grandparents, and tribes (see Spring 1994).

Reflecting on the brutality of the plan, Weinberg (1995) observed that a large number of Indian children resisted their indoctrination through English because “[t]hey had been taught from earliest childhood to despise their conquerors, their language, dress, customs — in fact everything that pertained to them” (p. 206). Spicer notes that during the early stages of coercive assimilation fewer than a dozen native languages died out (p. 117), and the program failed to produce significant “numbers of Indians who actually became bilingual” (Spicer 1962: 440).

Undeterred, the schools steadfastly attempted to teach Indian children to shun their native languages and cultures. In many schools there was an absolute prohibition on speaking native languages. Punishments were harsh, with offenders either being humiliated, beaten, or having had their mouths washed with lye soap (Norgren & Nanda 1988).

One of the more effective devices used to advance English and exterminate native languages involved mixing students who spoke different Indian languages. Although this measure was effective in discouraging native language use, it was often counter-productive for promoting English literacy (Spicer 1962). As noted, by the 1850s, the Cherokee had attained high levels of native language literacy and biliteracy. However, following the imposition of English only instruction in the 1880s, their overall literacy rates plummeted in both Cherokee and English (Weinberg 1995). “[O]ver time ... the English Only policy did take a toll on the pride and identity of many Indians, alienating them from their cultural roots and from their tribes, giving them little or nothing in return” (Crawford 1995a: 27).

Less restrictive policies were not implemented until the 1930s when, under Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier (appointed 1932), there was a shift in federal policy from coercive assimilation to experimentation with cultural maintenance (Szasz 1974). By the late 1960s, many Indian parents, who recalled their own prior educational experiences, met the newly enacted bilingual policies with considerable skepticism, as Crawford (1995a) notes, “among Indians who vividly remember the pain they suffered in school and who hope to shield their children and grandchildren from the same experience” from federally imposed programs (pp. 27–29; see also Crawford 1995b, Ch. 9; and Ruíz 1995)

4.3 *Summary*

To achieve their purposes of taking lands occupied by Indian peoples, the invading Anglo-dominant population created an ideology of presumed cultural, religious, and economic superiority in which the imposition of English was part of the means of destabilization, deculturation, and domestication. In assessing the impact of English-only ideologies on Indian peoples and of the policies derived from them, it is clear that the aim was deculturation through behavioral assimilation, but *not* structural integration. Thus, the imposition of English-only policies was more a means than an end.

From the perspective of Indian peoples, however, the issue was not merely one of whether to replace their native languages with English and English literacy. Rather, the situation was more complex. Leaders among the five so-called “civilized tribes”, some of them bilingual and of dual heritage, recognized

the necessity for English literacy given their disadvantaged position in treaty and other legal transactions without it. At stake was the negotiation and retention of their rights to continue to occupy their ancestral lands. Faced first with the incursion of whites into their traditional lands, and then with the threat of their forced removal, native peoples and their leaders, increasingly of dual ancestry and bilingual, realized that English literacy and native language literacy were necessary tools in dealing with their increasing intruders. English literacy was seen as necessary, but ultimately, biliteracy was even more desirable.

Within the context of increasing contact with the intruders, Indian peoples sought to compete with them by gaining knowledge of their devices, including some of the most barbarous, i.e., chattel slavery. Despite their efforts at self-preservation and resistance, they were forcibly removed in one of the largest forced relocations of Native peoples in modern history (Spring 1994). Once firmly established in Indian Territory, they again established their own schools and successfully competed with white settlers in adjacent areas. This again resulted in policies aimed at the removal of their autonomy through deculturation, based upon an English monolingual ideology, which was not reversed until the 1930s, and which has left a legacy to the present.

5. Americanization and English education as the basis for the amalgamation of European immigrants

In contrast to the underlying agendas for the imposition of English on Indian peoples, for European immigrants the emphasis on English represented an auspicious response to ethnic diversity. It was largely motivated by the desire for *both* behavioral assimilation and structural incorporation of peoples that were deemed worthy of amalgamation.

5.1 Colonial period antecedents of nativism

The theme of a new *American race* emerging from a blending of European immigrant peoples was prevalent at the outset of the early national period. Crèvecoeur (1782/1974) applauded the mixture of “English, Scotch, Irish, French, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen” (p. 813). During both the late colonial and early nationalist periods, English and Christian Education — meaning *Protestant* education — were emphasized as the principal means for achieving this purpose.

Antecedents of linguisticism were prevalent even during the latter period of English colonization. Among the better-known examples are Benjamin Franklin's protestations against Germans and their language: "Instead of Learning our Language, we must learn theirs, or live as in a foreign country" (Benjamin Franklin on the German Immigration to Pennsylvania, 1751/1974). Franklin's expressed concerns included fear of economic competition with the Germans and a distrust of their loyalty and willingness to fight in defense of the English colony. He prescribed English education as a cure for removing their "prejudices." In a reply to Franklin's concerns, William Smith (see William Smith to Benjamin Franklin, 1754/1974) concurred, proposing that a society be founded in London for the purpose of propagating "Christian knowledge and the English Language among the Germans of Pennsylvania" (pp. 631–632), adding that "The method of education 'should be calculated rather to make good citizens than what is called good school'" (p. 632).

5.2 *Language as a marker of difference in the incipient nativism in the early national period*

As the newly established national government sought rapid expansion westward, the theme of amalgamation persisted. Even before the establishment of organized Nativists activities such as those of the Know Nothing movement, anti-foreign sentiment expressed in the popular press attempted to link language with religious intolerance. For example, in 1836 the *American Protestant Vindicator*, an influential newspaper, attacked Catholics noting "the 'papists' were aliens, immigrants with foreign accents or language" (Bennett 1995: 39).

Increasingly, the promotion of English through the common schools was prescribed as the panacea for the perceived foreign threat to the emerging national identity. In 1836, teachers were admonished to teach the children of immigrants "and educate them in the same schools with our own, and thus *amalgamate them* with our community" (Concern for Americanization of the Immigrant in the West 1836/1974: 991; emphasis in the original). Urgency was added by the conclusion that:

It is altogether essential to our national strength and peace, if not to our national existence, that foreigners who settle on our soil should cease to be Europeans and become Americans; as our national language is English, and as our literature, our manners, and our institutions are of English origin, and whole foundation of our English society, it is necessary that they become subsequently Anglo-American... and to acquire uniformity, it must be subjected to the crucible, and the schoolmaster is the chemist. (Concern for Americanization of the Immigrant in the West 1836/1974: 992).

The theme of the English language and the promotion of a common Anglo-American culture imposed through a uniform education was a major motif in the nineteenth century (see, for example, Calvin Stowe on the Americanization of the immigrant, 1836/1974; The President of Middlebury College [VT] on schools and the immigrant, 1848/1974). It continues to be a mantra that persists to the present.

Nevertheless, ethnicity and religion were often more overt targets than language background in anti-European immigrant diatribes of the nineteenth century. For example, Massachusetts teachers were warned in mid-century that amalgamation with the English-speaking Irish population would contaminate the general population unless the negative cultural traits of the group were eliminated through education (an editorial in *The Massachusetts Teacher* on the Irish immigrant, 1851/1974). Nevertheless, in Nativist reasoning, the imposition of English education was often linked to anti-immigrant agendas (a Nativist insists on “America for the Americans”, 1848/1974).

Nativists and Neo-Nativists promoted a more reactionary Anglo-Protestant ideology in response to religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences among European immigrants. These differences were used to racialize immigrants deemed less worthy of structural assimilation and, thereby, to provide a rationale for restrictive immigration policies. Nativism became more prevalent in the decades of the 1840s and 50s under the auspices of the Know-Nothing Movement. It subsided during the Civil War and reconstruction, but reemerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

5.3 *Late 19th and early 20th centuries: Language differences gain salience as markers of difference among the European majority*

Although religion and ethnicity were the primary targets of Nativism among the European-origin population during most of the 19th century, language, as a marker of the same, became a more overt target of Nativists. As early as 1889, several ballot measures to restrict German instruction were passed in the Midwest. Although these actions attempted to restrict the use of the German language in schools, they were primarily anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant in intent, and they were subsequently reversed at the polls (Wiley 1998a; Kloss 1998/1977).

Nativist attacks on foreign languages peaked between the World War I era and the early 1920s. During the war, German Americans were demonized and their patriotism was questioned. War time super-patriotism led to hasty passage of official English policies in 34 states by 1922. Most of these statutes required

overt restrictions on the use of German and other languages in schools, churches, and the press. The attack on German spilled over onto other European immigrant languages. By the end of the war, restrictive policies had accentuated the importance of foreign language and accent as identifiers of “un-American” sympathies. The impact on German instruction in schools was devastating. In only seven years (between 1915 and 1922), German instruction in high schools was reduced from a high of 324,000 students to fewer than 14,000. More importantly, German failed to recover, despite *Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923, which simultaneously guaranteed the right to foreign language teaching and legitimized the official use of English as the common medium of instruction (Wiley 1998a).

5.4 *The World War I era’s impact on subsequent language ideologies and policies*

What has been the legacy of the climate of repression of the World War I era? What significance does it have for today? Some scholars (e.g., Kloss 1998/1977) interpret these events as brief digressions from a more typical climate of tolerance for bilingualism and accommodation of other languages. If these were digressions, they were ones from which the dominant culture never found its way back to a more tolerant course. In hindsight, the World War I era climate of repression definitely accelerated the monocultural and monolingual assimilation of many European-origin peoples into the dominant Anglo culture and accentuated the salience of English as a defining characteristic of American identity.

Although the process of linguistic assimilation had been going on steadily before World War I (Conzen 1980), until that time there had been a higher tolerance for bilingualism and biculturalism as well as tolerance for those not prepared to make the transition to Anglo-conformity. Thus, the World War I era attack on German was an assault on bilingualism, biculturalism and any attempt to accommodate those who did not speak English. By the war’s end, the national shift toward the imposition of official and restrictive English-only policies represented an alteration in the dominant national ideology away from tolerance of language diversity toward an even more rigid monolingualism and monoculturalism. The dominant ideology had, in effect, absorbed several of the long held tenets of nativism, which, until then, had represented the extremist views of a reactionary minority within the Anglo-dominant group (Wiley 1998a).

6. Conclusion

If we were to accept Kloss’ conclusion that language tolerance has generally been the operative principle in the evolution of U.S. language policies, then

recent attempts to restrict languages other than English, and even certain dialects of English, could be interpreted as breaking with the presumably tolerant traditions of the past. However, the more compelling conclusion is that throughout U.S. history there has always been an expectation of linguistic assimilation into English. For indigenous peoples, this expectation was designed to facilitate behavioral assimilation and structural subordination. For European immigrants, it was designed to facilitate both behavioral and structural assimilation. Bilingualism and biculturalism for both populations has been conditionally tolerated, but never endorsed, and at times has been severely attacked. African Americans were the first to experience the full brunt of native language eradication (Weinberg 1995; Wiley 1996a). This forced shift to English resulted in a unique, creolized variety of African American Vernacular English (AAVE, popularly called Ebonics).

For European immigrants, the English-only monolingual tenets of Nativism gradually became part of the dominant ideology. If recent efforts at language restrictionism are viewed from the perspective of prior Nativist ideology, there is considerable consistency over time. The issue then becomes one of the extent to which Nativism has been a minor current or a central part of the ideology of what it means to be an *American*, i.e., a citizen of the United States who is behaviorally assimilated. What appears to have changed in the mix among the ideologies of inhumanity over time is the acceptability of overt prejudice and discrimination on the basis of language, while other prejudices, particularly on the basis of ethnicity and race, have become expressed more covertly. Thus, in recent decades, the acceptability of prejudice on the basis of language allows it to function as a surrogate for other forms of prejudice.

In summary, there has been little competition between English and other languages in the United States, just as there was in its antecedent British colonies. Although the current dominant ideology frames the competition as one of English versus other languages, the historical and continuing contests continue to be English-only policies versus those that accommodate bilingualism. Culturally, this becomes a battle between mandated monoculturalism versus tolerance for biculturalism. Historically, English achieved its unquestioned status achievement over other languages during the colonial period and that standing has never been challenged, except in the paranoid musings of English-only zealots. Nevertheless, the ideology of *English monolingualism* as the principal defining characteristic of the U.S. American identity among peoples of European origin did not become hegemonic until the World War I era, with the rise of the Americanization movement. That movement was largely a Nativist response to unprecedented levels of immigration of non-English speaking peoples from eastern and southern Europe.

Envenomed by wartime hysteria, xenophobia, and jingoistic zealotry, a rash of official English policies, restrictions in the use of other languages as well as widespread persecution of speakers of German and other languages followed (Leibowitz 1971; Ricento 1998; Tatalovich 1995; Wiley 1998a). However, the most blatant precursors were clearly apparent prior to the Civil War in the anti-immigrant Know-Nothing movement, and in the subsequent Nativist and neo-nativist movements (Bennett 1995). Thereafter, the linguistic component of nativism went mainstream.

In both colonial and national history, language and literacy have always been used as means for social control. English has been imposed on all groups, regardless of whether the ideological rationale was to “civilize”, “domesticate”, “raise”, “tutor”, or “assimilate.” However, once the tenets of English monolingualism as a defining characteristic of citizenship and American identity had been incorporated into the dominant ideology, proficiency in standard English became much more important in rationalizing the extent to which various groups would be provided access to an equitable education, even as English was held as the universal panacea.

CHAPTER 6

English in the New World Order

Variations on a Theme of Linguistic Imperialism and “World” English

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1. Approaches to “world” English

This paper considers some of the new forms that linguistic imperialism is taking in the contemporary world, suggests how the dominance of English and inequality can be approached, and reviews three recent books on English as a “world” language (Crystal 1997; Fishman, Conrad & Rubal-Lopez 1996; and Graddol 1997). Analysis of English in the new world order presupposes agreement on the two objects in focus, the language English, and the globalization processes that characterize the contemporary post-cold-war phase of aggressive casino capitalism, economic restructuring, McDonaldization and militarization on all continents. There is a considerable literature on both phenomena, on English in all its diversity, and on globalization and a posited new world order. By contrast there is an alarming absence of literature that brings the two together.

The huge literature on English includes excellent portrayals of the history of how and why the language expanded (Bailey 1991; Mühlhäusler 1996), and many descriptions of its diversity in different parts of the world. There are also radical-critical analyses by scholars in the South who challenge western professional orthodoxies. Dasgupta (1993), for instance, convincingly demonstrates that English is not in an organic relationship with Indian languages or the mass of Indian people; Parakrama (1995) explores the distinctiveness of Sri Lankan English and its distance from an Anglo norm; and Rajan (1992) laments the continuing dependence in India on western content in higher education, not least in the subject English, and its irrelevance to the needs of most Indians.

These *cris de coeur* from globally peripheral cultures have affinities to critiques of linguistics for failing to address the role of language in societal reproduction. Bourdieu (1991) shows how linguists working in a Saussurean tradition cut themselves off from social reality when focussing on a standard language but simultaneously ignoring the processes of state formation that have led to “a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language” (ibid.: 45). In a similar vein, Mufwene (1997) demonstrates that the concepts and terminology used in relation to English, “new Englishes”, and creoles, involve biased processes of hierarchization of “legitimate and illegitimate offspring of English”, and are fundamentally flawed and ethnocentric. There are therefore basic epistemological and methodological questions that need to be addressed: they relate to what it is we are analysing, and to the adequacy and validity of our concepts and procedures. When analyzing English worldwide the crux of the matter is whose interests English serves, and whose interests scholarship on English serves. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, the Kenyan novelist, and a key thinker in the study of linguistic oppression, encapsulates the issues vividly as follows:

A new world order that is no more than a global dominance of neo-colonial relations policed by a handful of Western nations ... is a disaster for the peoples of the world and their cultures... The languages of Europe were taught as if they were our own languages, as if Africa had no tongues except those brought there by imperialism, bearing the label MADE IN EUROPE. (Ngũgĩ 1993: xvi, 35)

In addition to critical voices from the South, there is in the North Pennycook’s work (1994) on the cultural politics of English as an international language, inspired by Foucault and critical pedagogy, and my own linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992), which looks particularly at the role of applied linguistics in maintaining North-South inequity, and attempts to develop a theoretical framework for the analysis of linguistic hierarchisation. Such work in critical applied linguistics represents a challenge to specialists in English to reconsider their/our professional identities. Though this is an uncomfortable process, the evidence from many professional fora seems to be that many are willing to engage in it.

My title refers to English rather than Englishes, though I approve of the principle of celebrating the multiplicity of Englishes, and liberating the languages from narrow conceptions of ownership (McArthur 1998). It is legitimate and valid to consider local uses and functions of English as forming a distinct language. There may be strategic or political reasons for linguistic declarations of independence. Noah Webster blazed this trail two centuries ago, the Australians followed suit about 20 years ago, and any English-using nation-state could have strong reasons for doing the same. This could permit education in post-colonial contexts such as Nigeria or India to build on internal, local uses and

forms of English, and to leave the acquisition of internationally intelligible forms of English until a later stage. When considering globalization, however, it is important to look at English as one language, because we are abstracting from a multiplicity of forms in order to situate English in the wider linguistic ecology, in processes of hierarchization of languages, in the realities of structural power nationally and supra-nationally.

2. Conceptual clarification

We can begin the process of decolonizing our minds by critically evaluating our concepts. What does “English as a world language” refer to? Only a tiny fraction of the population of most countries in the world, including those often described as “English-speaking” countries in Africa and Asia, actually speaks English, meaning that terms like “English as a world language” grossly misrepresent the reality of the communication experience of most of the world’s population. More seriously, such terms as “global English”, “anglophone Africa”, or reference to English as a “universal” lingua franca conceal the fact that the use of English serves the interests of some much better than others. Its use includes some and excludes others.

Language “spread” is another apparently innocuous term that refers to a seemingly agentless process, as though it is not people and particular interests that account for the expansion of a language.

And what is “international” communication? The label “international language” was applied to planned languages like Esperanto long before English, Russian and other dominant languages were referred to as “international”. Probal Dasgupta (1997, 2000) suggests that communication between people of different nationalities would be more appropriately designated as “inter-local” since the language they use permits communication between people from different local cultures, and is in this sense inter-cultural. In much person-to-person communication, one’s national or international identity is not in focus, unlike many other aspects of one’s identity. Nations do not speak unto nations, except in the slogans of missionary societies, bodies that had great difficulty in distinguishing between preaching the word of God and promoting the political and economic interests of their countries of origin. This was as true of missionaries 200 years ago as it is today.

There are thus many terms in the sociology of language that are grounded in implicit, covert value judgements. We need to be constantly vigilant in reflecting on the ideological load of our concepts, and how they relate to, and probably serve to underpin and legitimate a hierarchical linguistic order.

The expansion of English in recent decades has occurred simultaneously with a widening gap between haves and have-nots, and with a consolidation of wealth and power globally in fewer hands. I am not suggesting a direct causal link between English and processes of global enrichment and impoverishment, but to suggest that the two are not connected, which is basically Crystal's position (1997), seems to me to be irresponsible. His book is entitled *English as a Global Language*, a seemingly neutral designation that appears to presuppose that the term "global" is unproblematical, and that we all know what it refers to. Neither premise is correct. The sociology of language has to do better than that. And you don't have to be a sociologist to register that our world is increasingly dominated by Coca Cola, CNN, Microsoft and the many transnational corporations for whom the key language is English, and who through processes of McDonaldisation (see below) are seeking to create and imagine, in Benedict Anderson's sense (1983), a global consumerist culture, a single market.

Globalization has economic, technological, cultural and linguistic strands to it. The globalization of English in diverse contexts, post-colonial, post-communist and western European, is one such interconnected strand in asymmetrical flows of products, ideas and discourses. Thus we live in a world in which 80% of films shown in western Europe are of Californian origin, whereas 2% of films shown in North America are of European origin (Hamelink 1994: 114). The trend towards the creation of the impression of a global culture through production for global markets, so that products and information aim at creating "global customers that want global services by global suppliers" can be termed McDonaldisation (Ritzer 1996), which means "aggressive round-the-clock marketing, the controlled information flows that do not confront people with the long-term effects of an ecologically detrimental lifestyle, the competitive advantage against local cultural providers, the obstruction of local initiative, all converge into a reduction of local cultural space" (Hamelink 1994: 112).

In the contemporary world the imagined community of the nation-state is being superseded by global and regional alliances and governmental, non-governmental and private organizations. It is now the world that is being imagined and shaped by media magnates, transnational companies, drafters of human rights documents, and a variety of grassroots interests (for instance internet, music, amateur radio (Preisler 1999)). At the heart of globalization is the "tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization" (Appadurai 1990: 295).

Globalization and Englishization are discreetly penetrating a mass of economic, political, and cultural domains in complex ways (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1999). As well as being a means of communication and a marker of identity, English is a big commodity, second in importance to the British economy after North Sea oil. Commodities are marketed in a range of

ways, some overt, some more covert. English has powerful advocates. One example: at an informal lunch at our university (Roskilde) in March 1997, the American ambassador to Denmark, Mr Elton, who has a background in the corporate world, stated that the most serious problem for the European Union (EU) was that it had so many languages, thus preventing real integration and development of the Union. No prize for guessing which language he thinks would solve all the EU's problems.

3. English linguistic imperialism

The expansion of English was not left to chance on either side of the Atlantic. Language professionals have willingly contributed to it: Ogden, the inventor of BASIC English (BASIC = British American Scientific International Commercial) promoted his "auxiliary" language in the belief that "what the world needs is about 1000 more dead languages — and one more alive" (written in 1934, cited in Bailey 1991: 210). He was not thinking of a democratic language like Esperanto, which has come to life in ways that I find fascinating and challenging for anyone concerned with language policy and equity. He was thinking of a simplified form of English as a stepping-stone to the language proper. Randolph Quirk's "Nuclear English" is a more recent variation on this theme, which fits well with his insistence on a single standard for global English, one that by his own admission only the few can hope to master, and that he describes and prescribes. The "Comprehensive" grammar of English that he co-authored (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik 1985) is only comprehensive in relation to standardized forms.

To effectuate the spread of English, teachers of English were needed. A key policy document for the post-colonial age was written by an adviser to the British Council in 1941 outlining the case: "a new career service is needed, to lay the foundations of a world-language and culture based on our own ... an army of linguistic missionaries ... a central office in London, from which teachers radiate all over the world" (Routh 1941: 12–13). When I graduated from an elite British university at a tender age I was commissioned into this "army", i.e., into the British Council version of cultural diplomacy. This was at the height of the cultural cold war (Saunders 1999). After a couple of months of pitifully inadequate training I found myself in Algeria and later Yugoslavia in posts referred to as that of an "English Language Officer". The militaristic terminology is not coincidental. Nowadays such rank would be graded in such favourably loaded terms as "adviser" or "expert", implying high status on a professional hierarchy of the kind that Illich warns against:

Professional imperialism triumphs even where political and economic domination has been broken... The knowledge-capitalism of professional imperialism subjugates people more imperceptibly than and as effectively as international finance and weaponry... The possibility of a convivial society depends therefore on a new consensus about the destructiveness of imperialism at three levels: the pernicious spread of one nation beyond its boundaries; the omnipresent influence of multinational corporations; and the mushrooming of professional monopolies over production. Politics for convivial reconstruction of society must especially face imperialism on this third level, where it takes the form of professionalism. (Illich 1973: 56–7)

The British and American variants of TESOL are significant agents in the spread of English, taking over where colonial education left off. Their origins and formative professional ideologies are now well documented (Phillipson 1992; Pennycook 1994, 1998b). The significance and role of the English teaching profession in the current intensive phase of globalization is under-explored and emphatically needs closer scrutiny. Exploring it is a tricky and messy business because of the interlocking of language with so many other dimensions, e.g., in education, the media, “aid”, and multiple commodification processes. Also under-explored is the relationship between the British and American variants of the profession, and how these relate to the strong traditions of teaching English as a foreign language in western Europe and in former communist states. Even though my understanding of linguistic imperialism was developed primarily in relation to the experience of the post-colonial world, there is evidence that comparable processes, ideologies and structures are in force in western Europe (Ammon 1996), and in southern Europe. This is the case in Greece, for instance, where English Language Teaching (ELT) is heavily influenced by British linguistic and pedagogical practice:

There is a systematic construction of reality whereby, by not knowing English, one is excluded from anything of social importance... Greek ELT practitioners persistently evaluate their proficiency in English against the English of the native speaker... This underlying contradiction of a “culturally neutral” language used in a “culturally appropriate way”... the claim that the native speaker is the ideal ELT practitioner construes Greek ELT practitioners as “knowledge deficient”. The monolingualism legacy of ELT discourse ... positions Greek EFL teachers as “information receivers” involved in a process of “ideological becoming” in Bakhtinian terms and of selectively assimilating the [authoritative] word of the other. (Dendrinos 1999: 715–6)

The same pattern is now true of post-communist Europe, which is the most recent region to have been exposed to the impact of western interests:

Until 1989 there was little serious danger of English-American cultural and linguistic imperialism in Hungary but today there are unmistakable signs of

such penetration and voices of concern are heard from a growing number of Hungarians... Most ELT materials produced in and exported from the United Kingdom and the United States disregard the learners' L1, and in this respect we might question their professionalism... business interests override a fundamental professional interest, or business shapes our profession in ways that we know are unprofessional. This puts us, both native and nonnative teachers of English into quite a schizophrenic position. This is an embarrassment that we'll have to live with for some time to come. The challenge that we are faced with is to keep the professionalism and get rid of the embarrassment. (Kontra 1997: 83, 87)

The market economy, "democracy", "human rights" and English were marketed in former communist states as soon as the Iron Curtain was wound down. The present chaos in most of what used to be the Soviet empire has multiple causes, but English was one of several panaceas that were explicitly marketed as the solution to the problems of the economy and civil society in post-communist Europe (explicitly by two British foreign ministers, Douglas Hurd and Malcolm Rifkind). Sadly the promise of what might be achieved in and through English was as much of a hollow sham as it has been in most post-colonial states, where English is the hallmark of corrupt, self-serving governments which are in league with transnational corporations.

Whether linguistic imperialism is in force in a given context is an empirical question. The issue then is whether our concepts are rigorous and productive enough to match up with the relevant data. Only in such ways can we go beyond personal impressions to more informed analyses.

A recent example of cultural globalization aimed at strengthening English and British interests is the "Blair Initiative", announced on 18 June 1999. This aims at increasing Britain's share of the global market in foreign students. They are to study in English, of course. The massive expansion of British universities into distance education, initially in such fields as accounting and business administration, is a related development. Such initiatives mean jobs for British universities and service industries, and are doubtless also seen as an investment in good will, in fostering favourable attitudes to things British among potentially influential people. The imported foreign students are seen as the successors of Gandhi, Nehru, Kenyatta and Nkrumah, colonial subjects who had their academic training in Britain and the USA. Universities must produce the post-colonial, post-national global citizens who will work for transnational corporations, finance houses, and supra-national bureaucracies. This "Initiative" is somewhat intriguing and puzzling, when, according to the British government's own figures, one third of all children in Britain are growing up in poverty and derive little benefit from the education system, and Britain, to a greater extent than many of its partners in continental Europe, is a deeply divided society.

Whether foreign students will be received in culturally and linguistically sensitive ways is a question to which there are probably only anecdotal answers, but recent assessments of TESOL are that it is still “imposing an ethnocentric ideology and inadvertently supporting the essentializing discourse that represents cultural groups as stable or homogeneous entities” (Spack 1997: 773, see also Oda 2000). Such practices perpetuate a colonialist world view in which orientalism operates to position the Other in education:

When students are considered to have cultures, these tend to be fixed and deterministic. Thus, it is common to talk in terms of Asian, Japanese or Hispanic etc. students having certain characteristics as if these emerged from some preordained cultural order. This tendency to ascribe fixed (and often, though not always, negative) characteristics by dint of membership to a certain culture can be explained in terms of the colonial construction of the Other... Culture has become a category of fixity rather than an engagement with difference. (Pennycook 1998b: 188–189)

There are fortunately a number of critical linguists active in exploring our professionalism and deconstructing some of our cherished concepts. Many of the contributions to the book “Standard English, the widening debate” (Bex and Watts 1999), are concerned not only to pin down a slippery phenomenon but also to pinpoint the ideologies, values and interests that are associated with the concept of standards, in language and broader social processes. There is thus a shift from fixing the language to fixing the structures and processes that certain forms of the language are viscerally involved in.

Critical sociolinguists or applied linguists are here doing what Edward Said, the Palestinian-American, regards as the role of the intellectual, namely

to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them), to be someone who cannot easily be co-opted by governments or corporations... someone whose whole being is staked on a critical sense, a sense of being unwilling to accept easy formulas, or ready-made clichés, or the smooth, ever-so-accommodating confirmations of what the powerful or conventional have to say, and what they do (Said 1994: 9, 17).

4. English as a global language

In my view, David Crystal in his book *English as a Global Language* epitomises the powerful and conventional in our professional world. He is an influential prolific author. He is on the board of the British Council, a primary function of which is to promote English worldwide, promote British influence, and make money for Britain. Crystal is widely cited, not least for figures for the number of

L1 and L2 speakers of English, a tricky statistical exercise where others cite different figures (see Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 30–46). He is the “world’s leading authority” according to the blurb on the book’s cover (which pictures the symbiosis of English and Chinese in Hong Kong, the important Asian connection). The blurb suggests that the book is “for anyone of any nationality concerned with English”, but it was initially commissioned by the U.S. English organization in the United States, a body whose intolerance of linguistic diversity is notorious. Crystal announces this intriguingly in his preface, along with proclaiming twin faiths, a belief in multilingualism, and an equally fundamental belief in a single world language for “mutual understanding” and “international cooperation”. As the book in fact focuses on English, multilingualism barely gets a look-in. And why should understanding and cooperation, which are currently mediated in literally thousands of languages, shift in the direction of a “single world language”? This is a dangerously millenarian notion that is primarily likely to serve the interests of the few who profit from the activities of transnational corporations.

Crystal’s book is structured around three basic questions: what makes a world language, why is English the leading candidate, and will it continue to hold that position? There is an introductory general chapter, followed by a historical run-through of the establishment of English worldwide, a chapter on “the cultural foundation”, with sub-sections entitled political developments, access to knowledge, and “taken for granted”; a chapter on “the cultural legacy” with sub-sections on international relations, the media, travel, safety, education, and communications, and a concluding section, “the right place at the right time”; and a final chapter called “the future of global English”, with sub-sections on the rejection of English, new Englishes, fragmentation of the language, and the uniqueness of global English. In fact nearly half of this chapter is devoted to the current debate in the United States about English Only legislation, implying that Crystal’s understanding is that the internal affairs of the present-day U.S. are central to the future of “global” English. This seems to be inadvertently endorsing what George Bernard Shaw presciently wrote in 1912: “what has been happening in my lifetime is the Americanization of the world” (cited in Holroyd 1997: 660).

I have reviewed Crystal’s book in detail for various audiences, for applied linguists (Phillipson 1999a), for a South African language policy publication (Phillipson 1999b), and for discourse analysts (Phillipson 2000b) and will merely note here that the book does not seem to be informed by any clear social science principles, nor would the historical focus win the respect of many historians. Even though Crystal’s general introduction refers to military conquest, his coverage of English in Africa avoids any upsetting talk of bloodshed or apartheid, let alone that what colonizers saw as triumph involved capitulation and domination for others. There is no reference to the many African scholars who have pleaded for

the upgrading of African languages and denounced “aid” that strengthens European languages. Crystal regards an increased use of English as unproblematical.

His coverage of English in the European Union is marred by several errors of fact, but more importantly it does not raise issues of principle. It is true that the use of English is expanding in the institutions of the EU, but as the EU is supposed to be a confederation of member states with equal rights, it would have been important to assess what language rights there are and how equality or symmetry in communication between speakers of different backgrounds can be achieved. This involves reducing English to equality, to adapt a phrase used first by Neville Alexander, a key figure in South African language policy, in relation to Afrikaans.

While acknowledging the strength of American influence, Crystal is confident that “the English language has already grown to be independent of any form of social control” (1997: 139). His optimistic scenario is that in 500 years’ time everyone is multilingual and will “automatically be introduced to English as soon as they are born” (*ibid.*), whereas his pessimistic scenario is a monolingual English-speaking world. My demonstration of the slips and false argumentation (for details see Phillipson 1999a) shows how difficult it is to summarise such a huge variety of complex multilingual settings and issues correctly in a few words, and as the book represents vulgarisation, there is no scholarly apparatus of references, which gives Crystal a free hand to select and narrate for the general public as he pleases. His story of globalising English is fundamentally Eurocentric and triumphalist, despite his protestations to the contrary.

5. English and equality in communication

My impression is that as English expands, users of English as a second language are becoming verbal about their unequal communication rights:

– Ranko Bugarski, a distinguished Yugoslav/Serbian Professor of English and Linguistics, in a review of Crystal’s book (1998: 91) writes that “as a non-native speaker who has used English almost daily for decades I tend to get increasingly reluctant to engage in protracted serious argument with native speakers over subtle non-professional — e.g. philosophical or political — issues ... I would not be surprised to learn that other people in my category have at times experienced a similar uneasiness”.

– Ulrich Ammon (2000) reports that the use of English as the dominant language of scientific communication is experienced by Germans as an additional burden. He has collected a range of types of evidence of inequality, such as reports of matched guise experiments that indicate that in the medical world, texts in English are judged as superior to texts in Dutch and Scandinavian languages, and

information from professors of English in Germany, who report insecurity about the quality of their own manuscripts in English, which appears to confirm Bugarski's suspicions.

– Yukio Tsuda's experience as a Japanese user of English, and as an observer of inequality between Japanese and English in many contexts, has contributed to his elaboration of two global language policy paradigms, a "Diffusion of English" paradigm and an "Ecology of Language" paradigm, which is a productive way of conceptualizing global language policy trends (see Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1996 and further elaboration in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). One constituent of his Ecology of Language paradigm is equality in communication.

– Some recent evidence is from my own experience in the summer of 1996 during which I attended two international conferences, a Language Rights conference in Hong Kong (see Benson, Grundy & Skutnabb-Kangas 1998), and a language policy symposium in Prague as part of the Universal Esperanto Association 81st World Congress (see Fettes & Bolduc 1998). At the Hong Kong conference, English was virtually the sole means of communication. In the question time of one of the plenary sessions a South African participant expressed surprise at why those whose competence in English was less than ideal, particularly Asians who had great difficulty in expressing themselves in English, accepted the unequal communication rights imposed on them by the conference organizers. The answer was that the organizers, who were mainly British, had not given the matter any thought, and the non-native speakers were too polite to protest. A few weeks later at the Esperanto symposium it was amazing to experience participants from all over the world communicating confidently in a shared international language, among them a number of Asians who were manifestly at no disadvantage. As this event was my first experience of Esperanto in action (with interpretation provided for us non-Esperantists), it was a vivid and memorable way of seeing at first hand that Esperanto is not merely utopian but a reality for those who have chosen to make it part of their domestic, national and international lives (in inter-local communication in the sense specified earlier). The juxtaposition of the experience of English working badly and inequitably — and the fact that this for once was being discussed openly in public — and Esperanto working well provides appetizing food for thought.

There is a tendency for those not familiar with Esperanto to reject it without seriously investigating whether it might be a more efficient and equitable solution to some problems of international communication or to making foreign language learning in schools more effective (because of its simple, regular, productive grammar). The scholarly study of international communication and

practical proposals for the solution of the major problems of international bodies ought to take into consideration the use of Esperanto as an alternative to the juggernaut English, which rides roughshod over the rights of many non-native users of the language. There is an extensive literature on Esperanto (see, for instance, Tonkin 1997), which has opened my eyes in recent years to the potential and the reality of this democratic language.

Contrary to popular myths, English is an extremely difficult language to operate in, not least because it is used in so many different ways. Native speakers are not necessarily a suitable performance model. There is masses of anecdotal evidence of lucid L2 users at conferences being more comprehensible than L1 users, simply because the natives are not as sensitive to audience needs. This is probably related to the fact that many British and American people have not experienced the humbling and exhilarating process of learning a second language to a high level. Monolinguals would do well both to learn a foreign language and to heed Ivan Illich (1973: 41):

A language of which I know only the words and not the pauses is a continuous offence. It is as the caricature of a photographic negative. It takes more time and effort and delicacy to learn the silence of a people than to learn its sounds.

Inequality is thus not a simple category, but relates to multiple aspects of identity, authenticity, fluency and appropriacy in a given interactional context, i.e., it is relational. To regard native speaker competence as an authoritative norm is likely to contribute to an inequitable hierarchy. To ensure reciprocity between L2 users and monolingual English speakers ought to be a continuous challenge in native/non-native communication. These terms themselves — native/non-native — are offensive and hierarchical in that they take the native as the norm, and define the Other negatively in relation to this norm. Thus are hierarchies internalized subconsciously and serve hegemonic purposes.

It still intrigues me that the experts on foreign language learning are supposed to be found in the heartland of countries where success in language learning is notoriously thin on the ground, namely the United States and the United Kingdom. This myth is central in TESOL and ELT, and works hand in glove with the myth that the foreign policy of the U.S. and the UK is altruistic. A recent study of British foreign policy since 1945 concludes:

It appears to be a widely held assumption that Britain (and indeed the Western states as a whole) promotes certain grand principles — peace, democracy, human rights and economic development in the Third World — as natural corollaries to the basic political and economic priorities that guide its foreign policy... (This is false) ... One basic fact — of perhaps unparalleled impor-

tance — has permeated a number of studies and is well understood: the mass poverty and destitution that exist in much of the Third World are direct products of the structure of the international system. Moreover, an elementary truth is that the world's powerful states have pursued policies with regard to the Third World which knowingly promote poverty. (Curtis 1995: 236)

The focus of structural adjustment policies has ensured the west of its supplies of raw materials, but has been a raw deal for countries in the South, or at least for the majority of their citizens. Globalization policies serve to ensure that the role of English is maintained and perpetuated. The key player in educational policy is the World Bank:

The World Bank's real position ... encourages the consolidation of the imperial languages in Africa ... the World Bank does not seem to regard the linguistic Africanisation of the whole of primary education and beyond as an effort that is worth its consideration. Its publication on strategies for stabilising and revitalising universities, for example makes absolutely no mention of the place of language at this tertiary level of African education. (Mazrui 1997: 39)

Post-apartheid South Africa is being subjected to similar pressures (Heugh 1995). An understanding of North-South relations requires analysis of the relationship between local languages and English, the dominant language of the economic forces that have propelled this language forward. Thus a key issue in language policy in any given country is whether it is local people setting the agenda, or the transnational corporations which are imposing a late capitalist world order that relegates peripheral countries, economies and languages to a subordinate position. In this scenario elites need to be proficient in English in order to serve their own and "global" interests, and local languages must facilitate internal policing of an export-oriented economy, and attempt to limit social unrest so that this economy can persist. Transnational corporations are increasingly active in determining the content of education worldwide (Spring 1998). This development reflects the predominant interest of corporations in producing consumers rather than critical citizens. Corporations have long dominated advertising and the media. As education is a key site of cultural reproduction, it is logical that the World Bank and the transnational corporations are expanding their influence in education.

Throughout the entire post-colonial world English has been marketed as the language of "international communication and understanding", economic "development", "national unity" and similar positive ascriptions, but these soft-sell terms obscure the reality of globalization, which is that the majority of the world's population is being impoverished, that natural resources are being plundered in unsustainable ways, that the global cultural and linguistic ecology is under threat,

and that speakers of most languages do not have their linguistic human rights respected (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 1994; Kontra et al. 1999). “Understanding” ought to refer to a dialogic process which respects the cultures and languages of our global diversity. In fact the term tends to be used as a smokescreen for the forces behind globalization. The need therefore is to document and analyse how English contributes to and interlocks with these processes.

6. Post-imperial English

The contemporary status and uses of English are the topic of Fishman, Conrad and Rubal-Lopez’s substantial book entitled *Post-imperial English: Status Change in Former British and American Colonies, 1940–1990* (1996). If English is post-imperial, as the book’s title suggests, what sort of world order do its eminent contributors envisage that we live in?

In earlier work, Fishman went to substantial lengths to explore the relationship between language(s) and economic, social and political indicators, and patterns in the use of a former imperial language or local languages in key sectors such as the media, education at various levels and higher education abroad. The “Post-imperial English” volume begins and ends with Fishman’s attempt to bring such work up to date in the light of a statistically-based study of a wealth of such data by one of his collaborators, Rubal-Lopez, and input from the 29 scholars from British and American “spheres of influence” who contribute to this volume. These were given a pretty free hand, so that each paper is *sui generis* rather than proceeding through a constraining template. Contributors were also invited to assess whether “linguistic imperialism” in the sense in which I have used the term applies in their context.

The contributors are primarily sociolinguists, but there are also social scientists such as Alamin and Ali Mazrui, who highlight major differences between language policy in Uganda and Kenya. Many of the other contributors use an impressively cross-disciplinary approach. There are also other local and global heavyweights in the line-up of contributors, such as Bamgbose on Nigeria, Yahya-Othman and Batibo on Tanzania, Chumbow on Cameroon. It is also extremely rewarding to have countries from the British colonial world analysed alongside American colonies. The papers demonstrate the substantial variations on a theme of American dominance (and resistance to it) in Cuba, Mexico, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Quebec, and, further afield, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Several Asian countries are also well covered, and there is a survey article by Ulrich Ammon on English in the European Union.

Several papers point to the limitations of theory in the fields of language policy and language planning, but few probe deeply into what needs to be done over and above description and analysis, which the book presents a vast amount of, and none venture into theory formation. Fishman comes nearest to this in his introduction, where he speculates on English being “reconceptualized, from being an imperialist tool to being a multinational tool ... English may need to be re-examined precisely from the point of view of being post-imperial (as the title of our book implies, that is in the sense of not directly serving purely Anglo-American territorial, economic, or cultural expansion) without being post-capitalist in any way” (ibid.: 8).

In his characteristically astute “summing-up and interpretation” of the contributions to the book, Fishman stresses the limitations of our instruments and concepts, but boldly tabulates the degree of “anglification” in each state on a rough scale and attempts to pull the overall picture into a coherent shape. This is an extremely difficult task in view of the richness and complexity of the national studies, and the various ways in which English co-articulates with elitism, economic success for some, and often the marginalization of (speakers of) other languages, as well as the very different routes along which English has expanded in different countries. “Post-imperial” has also been understood variously by different contributors, in a purely temporal sense by some and a more structural one by others.

Many of Fishman’s reflections are likely to push the analysis of the role of English forward in insightful ways, but I find some of his conclusions debatable. His assessment that the “socio-economic factors that are behind the spread of English are now indigenous in most countries of the world” and that the continued spread of English in former colonies is “related more to their engagement in the modern world economy than to any efforts derived from their colonial masters” (ibid.: 639) seems to ignore the fact that “engagement in the modern world” means a western-dominated globalization agenda set by the transnational corporations and the IMF, and the U.S. military intervening, with or without a mandate from the United Nations, whenever “vital interests” are at risk. World Bank, NAFTA, and World Trade Organization policies contribute to political instability, and provide less favourable conditions for education, democratization, cultural and linguistic diversity. A world polarized between a minority of English-using haves (whether as L1 or L2) and a majority of have-nots is not likely to provide healthy conditions for people who speak languages other than English to flourish, so I have difficulty in sharing Fishman’s restrained optimism about linguistic power-sharing.

The editors of the Fishman volume feel, like Crystal, that since debates about

language tend to become emotionally charged, there is a need for scholarship in the area to be “de-ideologized”, almost as if value judgements and paradigms can be avoided. Both books demonstrate that this is a forlorn, self-deluding hope. Crystal seems simply to be unaware of his own ideological biases and of some of the relevant literature on multilingualism, development studies, hegemony, the sociology of language, and social theory. Scholarship on global English needs to be informed by a great deal of relevant work in the humanities and social sciences, such as is brought together with the specific contribution of various disciplines (economics, ethnography, minority education, history, nationalism, political science, social psychology, sociology, etc) in Fishman’s edited volume *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* (1999), a book which also has a substantial section on regional perspectives.

What the Fishman et al volume seems to show is that many studies of the position (the status, in language planning terms) of English in particular countries are insightful and sophisticated, including the role of external and internal factors that influence language policy, whereas the more positivistically oriented studies such as Rubal-Lopez’s are weak in their explanatory power and their capacity to generate non-trivial findings. The more hermeneutic approach of the other two editors leads to very broad generalizations (which the “post-imperial” label encourages), which suggests that there is a need to link micro and macro processes and structures more explicitly, along with critical analysis of the discourses accompanying and realizing them, including those of sociolinguists (a process that book reviews contribute to).

Conrad demonstrates in his paper in this volume that emotional involvement in a topic or in a response to an author’s work (in this case, my own) can lead to interpretation that is in flagrant contradiction to the Popperian ideals he otherwise espouses. It is also puzzling that he uses his editorial prerogative to denounce my approach to linguistic dominance while the contributors recruited to write for his book apparently have no qualms about operating with it!

Fishman’s final word (ibid.: 640) is to the effect that the world has moved beyond imperialism and neo-colonialism in the traditional sense of foreign rule and exploitation. If this is really so, what seems most urgently needed is to explore the role of English locally and globally in our new world order, so as to combat the very real forms of exploitation between states and within states that exist, and to see how English and other languages can be harnessed so as to promote a healthier language ecology. If English is to be a force for democracy and human rights, much needs to change, in North countries as much as in the South, and in North-South relations. Language policy could and should play an important role in such a transition.

7. English in the future

I will briefly consider another important book, David Graddol's *The future of English?* (1997), which was commissioned by The British Council. Graddol's 66-page book is divided into sections on English today (history, demography, language hierarchies), Forecasting (futurology, chaos, scenarios), Global trends (demography, economics, technology, globalization, the immaterial economy, cultural flows), Impacts on English (workplace, education and training, media, youth culture, internet, time zones), and English in the future (World English, rival languages, transitions, managing the future). The scope and goals of the work entailed immense pressure to select, condense and unite a large amount of material, and present it in graphs and tables as well as text. Graddol's sources throughout are clearly documented, though the work reflects an unresolved tension between the urge to be scientifically sound and to produce a blueprint for an organization whose purpose it is to maximize the use of English. The work also went through a substantial screening process, with a draft commented on by a substantial number of named individuals (myself included). Even so, there are occasional slips, short-cuts and dubious claims in the text, for instance in terminology and classification in the pyramidal hierarchies of language in India, the European Union and the world.

The book contains a quick run-through of language in the workplace, language learning, new technologies in education and the media, youth consumerism and the internet, all of which demonstrate an increased, but by no means monopolistic expansion of English. English is a polycentric language, which means that a British norm for textbooks or teaching materials is not unchallenged (Modiano 1999). Another worry for British economic interests is that British monolingualism may become a liability in a world of increasingly bilingual or trilingual individuals. The native speaker cachet may lose its charm and prove to be a short-lived asset, with little clout as compared to McDonaldization processes.

A number of key questions are raised in the final section: a consideration of which languages may rival English in the coming century, which factors account for language hierarchies and language death, and questions more specifically related to the health of the British English teaching industry. Graddol and his sponsor, the British Council, deserve real praise for raising the issues in an open, critical spirit, and bringing a concern for the ecology of language and an ethical dimension into language promotion work. One can only hope that policy-makers will heed the call for openness, for commercial interests to be balanced by environmental and ethical principles, and acted on more effectively than the present "New" Labour's "ethical" policy on arms sales, which has been a disgraceful

sham (not least in Indonesia). The book can serve as a platform for debate on the topics presented, and has in fact been used for just this purpose on internet courses for British Council staff and others.

What evidence is there for Graddol's claim that if the number of speakers of English as a second or foreign language increases, this will upset existing global linguistic hierarchies? Perhaps the answer can be found by exploring the complex web of factors in changed demographics, urbanization, new forms of communication, a global division of labour, and many related factors that influence language choice. Graddol attempts to mesh these with futurology, scenario planning and existing methods for understanding global trends, and stresses the many uncertainties in this pioneer endeavour. The linguistic exemplification may be rather tenuous, and I suspect that the entire exercise is underpinned by a rather unquestioning acceptance of a neo-liberal economic model. There would, in my view, be a need for more probing into how English, the language of many of the global haves, is causally related to the marginalization of non-English-using have-nots. Is it realistic to believe that the global system, which English is so significantly a part of, can administer and alleviate a global share-out by which 20% of the world's population consume 80% of the resources? One cannot help wondering whether Graddol has remained optimistic in view of many appalling economic, political and military crises since his book was written (Kosova, East Timor, the ex-Soviet Union, central Africa). The notion that globalization entails hybridity would also, it seems to me, need to be connected to fundamental questions about the economic and political forces that are dictating the forms of globalization and McDonaldization — and contributing to the spread of English.

8. Going beyond analyses of linguistic imperialism

I have commented on three very different books, each of which is concerned, more or less explicitly, with English in the new world order. Crystal's regards English as a panacea, for Fishman et al it is a more or less mixed blessing, and Graddol tells the jury to go away and think — but one suspects that the jury is predominantly white, western and male. For reasons that have to do with the marketing of products such as books, and the forces that drive globalization, Crystal's book is likely to be widely read, Fishman et al's to be found only in well-funded libraries, and Graddol's will mainly serve a restricted audience. This will be a global one geographically, backed up by electronic newsletters, distance education, periodic revision of the text and its translation into several languages.

If the book can reach beyond those who are committed to the promotion of English to those with a more open, multilingual agenda, it represents a promising starting-point for disentangling some of the many factors that currently strengthen English and might weaken it. Fishman et al's book provides a wealth of documentation, but their story would need to be counter-balanced by more substantial input from critical scholars working with grassroots forms of English and alternatives to English dominance. Crystal foresees the consolidation of "World Standard Spoken English", which he does not see as replacing other languages or (national) forms of English. For him English has become "global" because the language happened to be at "the right place at the right time" (1997: 110), an assessment which detaches it from inequality and injustice.

There are in the contemporary world many ongoing struggles for a greater degree of linguistic justice. This is basically what South African language policy is designed to achieve (LANGTAG 1996). In principle it is also the case in the European Union, which claims to support multilingualism in its institutions and in the education systems of member states. In both cases there exist a number of key policy statements, but there is a substantial gap between rhetoric and implementation. Scholarly study of the issues is still in its infancy, but there are valuable empirical studies which shed light on some aspects of hierarchization and attitudes to languages in the EU (Schlossmacher 1996; Quell 1997). There have also been instructive compilations of research needs (European Cultural Foundation 1999). It is worrying that although the issues are urgent, language policy is seldom given the attention it deserves in political or academic discourse.

Existing scholarly approaches have serious limitations: tabulating variables nationally, sub-nationally and supra-nationally, and correlating linguistic diversity with economic, cultural and many other factors, are necessary but far from sufficient steps in the study of the issues and the elaboration of scenarios.

All that can be attempted here is to suggest a number of pointers that need to be borne in mind in future work, whether in scholarship or in planning and implementation. At the supra-national, European level there is a major need to hammer out principles of language policy that are firmly anchored in the realities of the new world order, but which can serve to ensure that the linguistic vitality of both national and minority languages in each state is maintained and consolidated. In an optimistic scenario, English is learned additively, in top-down ways through the education system, and bottom-up ways that respect grassroots creativity. Here it needs to be recalled that youth culture and the internet are part of McDonaldization processes where MTV and Microsoft represent commercial interests.

Experience worldwide of multilingual education indicates that it is perfectly possible to make children trilingual by the time they leave school if a range of

relevant criteria are met (Skutnabb-Kangas 1995). If Europeans are to influence the new world order rather than just being at the receiving end of it, they should therefore ensure that all children leaving school have real competence in the mother tongue, English and one other language, so as to provide a counter-balance to globalization pressures. Likewise in post-colonial and post-communist settings, educational policy should have multilingual aims and means, and build on local resources, rather than being articulated in terms of the false dichotomy between a local language and English.

A key constituent of language in education policy would then be a linguistic human rights approach that sets minimum standards which individuals and groups are entitled to, for instance the right to the mother tongue and one of the official languages of a state in education and public services, and the right not to have language shift imposed on one. A human rights approach attempts to counter-balance the market, to ensure observation of ethical principles, which presupposes accountability, and implementation so that declarations do not remain the posturing of pretty words on paper (see Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; Phillipson 2000a).

For us as professionals, it means being attuned to a mass of bottom-up signals and pressures. It presupposes a willingness to subject our own professionalism to scrutiny, otherwise we may be co-opted into new forms of inequitable dominance, which the position of English as the language of global hedonism and success risks making us blind to.

CHAPTER 7

English, Politics, Ideology From Colonial Celebration to Postcolonial Performativity

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Since this book aims to deal with questions of ideology in relationship to language policy, it is important that we distinguish between at least two different meanings of ideology in the context of global language spread. When we talk of the *ideological* implications of the global spread of English, there are (at least) two different interpretations of what may be meant by this. First, ideological may be used here in a general sense to mean “political”. In this fairly popular sense of the term, ideological implications refer to a critical and political analysis of the effects of the global spread of English. Although some people would disagree that the spread of English has political implications, for the contributors to this book, such a position would appear to be an unashamedly a priori assumption. We may disagree on how we analyse the ideological effects of English, but we share a similar view that the global spread of English has immense and complex political implications, and that these need to be addressed. Thus, in discussing the global spread of English, we can’t escape ideological positions; and to claim, as does Crystal (see below, and see Phillipson, this volume) that one is not going to deal with ideological questions is to do exactly the opposite: those who claim that they are not going to deal politically or ideologically with the spread of English are in fact doing what they claim they are not: they are taking an ideological position on the global spread of English, albeit a bland liberal one.

The second understanding of the meaning of ideological implications is a far trickier one. This sense of ideological seems to imply that the spread of English

has ideological effects on people, that is to say, English is the purveyor of thoughts, cultures and ideologies that affect the ways in which people think and behave. Such a notion needs to be treated with a great deal of caution. It implies that we can map relations between English and various cultures, discourses or ideologies. In its strongest version, this view might suggest that English produces inherent ideological effects on its users. A more subtle analysis would try to show ways in which ideologies related to English are imposed on, received by, or appropriated by users of English around the world. If the first of these ways of viewing ideology is more an analysis of the “structural power” of English, the second is an analysis of the “discursive effects” of English.

1. Divergent frameworks

In this paper I shall discuss these two ways of viewing the notion of ideology in relationship to six different frameworks for understanding the global position of English: *colonial-celebration*, a traditional view that sees the spread of English as inherently good for the world; *laissez-faire liberalism*, which views the spread of English as natural, neutral and beneficial, as long as it can coexist in a complementary relationship with other languages; *language ecology*, which focuses on the potential harms and dangers of the introduction of English to multilingual contexts; *linguistic imperialism*, which points to the interrelationships between English and global capitalism, “McDonaldization” and other international homogenising trends; *language rights*, which attempts to introduce a moral imperative to support other languages in face of the threat imposed by English; and *postcolonial performativity*, which seeks to understand through contextualised sociologies of local language acts how English is constantly implicated in moments of hegemony, resistance and appropriation.

2. Colonial-celebration

I do not intend to dwell on this position in detail since a number of us have already documented it at length (see, for example, Bailey 1991; Phillipson 1992; Pennycook 1998b). Simply put, this is a position that trumpets the benefits of English over other languages, suggesting that English has both intrinsic (the nature of the language) and extrinsic (the functions of the language) qualities superior to other languages. I use the term colonial in conjunction with celebratory here because I believe these celebrations of the spread of English, its

qualities and characteristics, have a long and colonial history, and form part of what I have elsewhere called the “adherence of discourses” (1998b): the ways in which particular discourses adhere to English.

Such discourses, as I suggest in my other paper in this book, have tremendous continuity over time, from the Anglicist rhetoric of writers such as Macaulay in the 19th century, to Lugard early this century, and on to views such as those of Claiborne (1983: 3–4), who asserts that since “the English-speaking peoples have plundered the world for words”, they now have “the largest, most variegated and most expressive vocabulary in the world”. And thus, “Like the wandering minstrel in *The Mikado*, with songs for any and every occasion, English has the right word for it — whatever ‘it’ may be”. Thus, “It is the enormous and variegated lexicon of English, far more than the mere numbers and geographical spread of its speakers, that truly makes our native tongue marvellous — makes it, in fact, a medium for the precise, vivid and subtle expression of thought and emotion that has no equal, past or present”. Although I am giving this position short thrift here, it is worth observing that it is backed up by a very long history of glorifying English, and that it remains extremely popular, as shown by the public response to writers such as Honey (1997).

In terms of the two senses of ideological that I outlined earlier, this view would seem to suggest that the global spread of English does indeed have ideological implications (though it is unlikely that they would ever be called such). In terms of the first sense of ideological, they are less likely to be acknowledged: English may have cultural implications but culture can (and should) be kept separate from politics. In the second sense, however, the implication is that the spread of English has clear ideological effects; and these are good effects. From this colonial-celebratory position, English brings all the advantages of a superior language: culture, knowledge, wealth and happiness. This position, therefore, is bound to promote English for the larger benefit of the globe.

3. *Laissez faire* liberalism

The dominant academic line on these matters espouses what I call a liberal *laissez-faire* attitude. Based on a mixture of general political liberalism and more specific academic apoliticism — a view that academic work should somehow remain neutral — this approach will either deny ideological implications of the global spread of English, or suggest that they are not our concern. The most recent example of this line of thinking is David Crystal’s (1997) globally marketed book on the global spread of English. What Crystal tries to argue for

is a complementarity between a support for the benefits of English as a global means of communication and the importance of multilingualism, between the dual values of “international intelligibility” and “historical identity”. On one level, of course, this is an estimable position. But this very seductiveness makes its social and political naivety dangerous.

One problem here is Crystal’s simplistic view of complementary language use: English will be used for international and some intranational uses, while local languages will be used for local uses. As Dua (1994: 132) points out, looking at the context of India, such a view is quite inadequate: “the complementarity of English with indigenous languages tends to go up in favour of English partly because it is dynamic and cumulative in nature and scope, partly because it is sustained by socioeconomic and market forces and partly because the educational system reproduces and legitimizes the relations of power and knowledge implicated with English”. All we need in this way of thinking is to celebrate universalism while maintaining diversity. The TESOL organization also reflects this liberal idealism in its mission statement “to strengthen the effective teaching and learning of English around the world while respecting individuals’ language rights”,

This liberal-laissez-faire stance uncomfortably echoes views such as those of Hogben (1963: 28–9), who claims that all language planners agree that we need a bilingual world “in which one language has priority by common consent as the sole medium of informative communication between speech communities which properly prefer to retain their native habits of discourse for reasons which have little or no relevance to the exacting semantic demands of science”. As Dua (1994: 133) cogently argues, such views immediately condemn other “home” languages to a less significant role. This view is already one nail in the coffin of other languages. In the context of the relationship of English to Indian languages, he points out that “In order to bring about the fundamental change in the complementarity of English ..., it is necessary to learn from the history of English. It must be realized that language is basically involved with class, power and knowledge”.

By the time Crystal’s book is being reviewed by John Hanson, the former director-general of the British Council, we are told “English speakers, relax: English is streets ahead and fast drawing away from the rest of the chasing pack... On it still strides: we can argue what globalisation is until the cows come home — but that globalisation exists is beyond question, with English its accompanist. The accompanist is, of course, indispensable to the performance” (1997: 22). Hanson has, of course, slipped here from the more general liberalism and apoliticism espoused by Crystal, back into a colonial-celebratory mode. But

that is the very problem with this liberal *laissez-faire* approach: it allows such slippage to happen so easily because it has no general theory of society or politics beyond individual liberalism. It is not so much that a liberal view of the world does not have “good intentions” but rather that as Williams (1992: 226) describes the frequent problem with sociolinguistics, there is “evidence of an overriding desire to support the underdog, accompanied by a sociological perspective which reflects the power of the dominant”. As Luke, McHoul, and Mey (1990: 26–7) explain, many linguists and educational planners have seen their task “as an ideologically neutral one”. Thus, while maintaining a “veneer of scientific objectivity” language planning has “tended to avoid directly addressing larger social and political matters within which language change, use and development, and indeed language planning itself are embedded”.

In terms of what it has to say about the two forms of ideological implications, the liberal *laissez-faire* tends to be the most silent. It suggests that we should not engage in ideological/political discussions of language and that we should make freedom of choice our central mode of understanding. Everyone is free to do what they like with English, to use English in beneficial ways and to use other languages for other purposes. This view, then, which is doubtless the dominant framework in TESOL, has virtually nothing to say about ideological implications of the global spread of English. While the colonial celebratory mode discussed above may appear more obnoxious in its disregard for other languages and cultures and its overt glorification of English, the liberal *laissez-faire* mode may nevertheless be the more insidious because of its seductive freedom-of-choice arguments.

4. Language ecology

The notion of language ecology emphasizes the importance of “the cultivation and preservation of languages” (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas 1996: 441) in a way parallel to how we understand natural ecologies. Mühlhäusler (1996) has developed this idea considerably and shows how the introduction of languages and literacy into particular language ecologies may have devastating effects on other languages and their uses. He argues that an ecological approach to language diversity reframes how we think about language maintenance since it focuses not on the preservation of individual languages but rather on the “structured diversity” of languages in relation to each other (1996: 322). From this point of view the problem with the spread of English is a complex disruption to an ecology of languages.

The notion of language ecology is in many ways a very useful one since it appeals to a notion of environmental protection that is shared by many. The promotion of diversity and the protection of species may be a useful way for promoting language protection. Furthermore, the idea that the introduction of a language into a particular ecology of languages may have serious effects on those languages is a powerful argument that militates against any simple view that one more language might not make a difference. In Australia, for example, many of us are aware of the devastating effects of the introduction of European animals (rabbits, foxes, pigs, goats etc) into the delicate ecology of Australian wildlife. This image then allows us to draw a powerful parallel between, for example, ‘feral’ goats eating kangaroos and wallabies out of their natural habitats, and ‘feral’ European languages destroying the rich linguistic ecologies of Aboriginal Australia. And yet there are also drawbacks with an ecology metaphor, since it relies so heavily on a notion of what is “natural”, and relies therefore on what may at times appear a conservative notion of preservation. To the extent that it may lack a broader social and political theory, it may end up relying primarily on a belief in the preservation of a natural order. Conservation may easily slide into conservatism.

In terms of the two questions to do with ideology, it addresses the first in terms by and large of an appeal to ‘environmentalism’ and preservation. But at the same time it makes significant points about the effects of the introduction of other languages. Already we can see here that the liberal laissez-faire approach is inadequate since it cannot deal with the complexity suggested by this notion of ecology. If one views the erosion of linguistic diversity as a political issue, then a language ecology perspective certainly has a political position on this. In terms of the second question, a language ecology perspective has less to say. The argument that the introduction of a language or literacy may greatly affect what other languages get used for suggests that the ideological effects of the global spread of English language and literacy lie not so much in ideological messages carried by English but in the disruption of local cultural and ideological possibilities.

5. Linguistic imperialism

A term that Skutnabb-Kangas (1988, 1998) makes central to her view of the inequitable allocation of language rights is ‘linguicism’. Linguicism, she argues — akin to racism and ethnicism — is a sort of “linguistically argued racism” (1988: 13; 1998: 16), a process by which an unequal division of power is produced and maintained according to a division between groups on the basis of

the language they speak. Phillipson (1992) has taken up this term and looked specifically at one form of such linguistic imperialism, namely what he calls “linguistic imperialism”, and particularly English linguistic imperialism. It is important to view Phillipson’s arguments on linguistic imperialism in this light, for although his concerns about the global spread of English can be taken on their own, they are also deeply connected with this threat to linguistic human rights.

Phillipson’s attempt to theorize what he calls “English linguistic imperialism” is doubtless the best known attempt to map out such relations. What Phillipson tries to do is to show that there are significant relationships between frameworks of global imperialism — that is to say continuing relationships of global inequality — in terms, following Galtung (1980), of economic, political, military, communicative (communication and transport), cultural and social imperialism — and the global spread of English. English linguistic imperialism Phillipson defines in the following way: “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (1992: 47). That is to say, the dominant role of English in the world today is maintained and promoted through a system both of material or institutional structures (for example through English maintaining its current position as the dominant language of the Internet) and of ideological positions (arguments that promote English as a superior language).

Phillipson is generally very convincing in his demonstration of how English has been promoted and supported by a range of institutions, particularly the British Council. He also makes convincing arguments about the ideological underpinnings that support English, the arguments that construct English as a superior and beneficial language to all. Here, then, we have another crucial argument: English has been continually spread and supported for very particular political and economic goals, and, through its constant promotion threatens the linguistic human rights of speakers of other languages. Phillipson’s position has received a lot of criticism from many different directions. I think the important point with Phillipson’s view is to understand what it can and cannot do. As he suggests, the issue for him is “structural power” (1992: 72), not intentions, and not local effects. He is interested in “English linguistic hegemony” which can be understood as “the explicit and implicit beliefs, purposes, and activities which characterize the ELT profession and which contribute to the maintenance of English as a dominant language” (73). Thus, it is the ways that English is promoted through multiple agencies and to the exclusion of other languages that is the issue.

In terms of the two senses of ideology, this view clearly presents us with a political and critical account of the global spread of English. It also has things to

say about discursive effects, but in a particular way that I think is often misunderstood. To the extent that he is interested in discursive effects, this is in terms of people accepting the ideological positions in support of English. Thus Phillipson does have things to say about discursive effects but they are not so much about the effects of the spread of English as about the effects of the ideological support for the spread of English. The spread of English is more a result of the discursive effects, rather than the discursive effects being a result of the spread of English. Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, (1996: 441) point out that “As English is the dominant language of the U.S., the UN, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, many other world policy organizations, and most of the world’s big businesses and elites in many countries worldwide, it is the language in which the fate of most of the world’s citizens is decided, directly or indirectly.” This is an important observation about structural power, but not necessarily about what the effects of such decisions being made in English might be.

This point is frequently misunderstood (perhaps at times by Phillipson himself?). The problem is, in part, that the notion of linguistic imperialism is in many ways too powerful. If it is only used to map out ways in which English has been deliberately spread, and to show how such policies and practices are connected to larger global forces, it works. But the moment it slips into apparently implying ideological effects of such promotion, it runs into dangers. Thus it is not a position that can tell us about the discursive effects of the spread of English but rather a position that can tell us about the continuing possibilities for such effects to happen. But here, by quite rightly problematising the notion of choice, Phillipson runs the danger of implying that choices to use English are nothing but an ideological reflex of linguistic imperialism. Such a position, it might be said, lacks a sense of agency, resistance, or appropriation.

6. Language rights

Rather than an argument only for the maintenance of language ecologies, we now have an argument that languages are threatened by linguistic imperialism, and particularly English imperialism. What we might suggest, then, is a language ecology model needs the addition of a political or moral view that goes beyond the argument that the altering of an ecology or the reduction of diversity are in themselves unacceptable. Indeed, Tsuda (1994) and Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996) insist that a linguistic human rights perspective should form the cornerstone of an ecology of language paradigm. (And Mühlhäusler 1996, it

should be noted, adds the notion of linguistic imperialism to his view of language ecology.) Reviewing various documents on human rights, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996) show that there is little provision for the positive right to education in a mother tongue. Thus, Skutnabb-Kangas (1998: 12) argues, “we are still living with linguistic wrongs” which are a product of the belief (“monolingual reductionism”) in the normality of monolingualism and the dangers of multilingualism to the security of the nation state. Both, she suggests, are dangerous myths. “Unless we work fast”, she argues, “excising the cancer of monolingual reductionism may come too late, when the patient, the linguistic (and cultural) diversity in the world, is already beyond saving”. What is proposed, then, is that the “right to identify with, to maintain and to fully develop one’s mother tongue(s)” should be acknowledged as “a self-evident, fundamental *individual* linguistic human right” (22). These “universal linguistic human rights should be guaranteed for an *individual* in relation to the *mother tongue(s)*, in relation to an *official language* (and thus in relation to bilingualism), in relation to a possible *language shift*, and in relation to *drawing profit from education* as far as the medium of education is concerned” (1998: 22; emphasis in original).

This, then, is a powerful argument in favour of the support for diversity in terms of fundamental human rights. What it adds crucially to the discussion so far is a *moral* standpoint from which diversity can be supported. Powerful though such an argument is, there are also a number of problems. It often assumes too simple a dichotomy between those who have language rights and those who do not: “Linguistic majorities, speakers of a dominant language, usually enjoy all those linguistic human rights which can be seen as fundamental, regardless of how they are defined. Most linguistic minorities do not enjoy these rights. It is only a few hundred of the world’s 6–7,000 languages that have any kind of official status, and it is only speakers of official languages who enjoy *all* linguistic human rights” (Phillipson, Rannut, Skutnabb-Kangas 1994: 1–2; emphasis in original). It also relies on problematic assumptions about the necessary effects of English, and the possibility of working with a notion of universal rights (Pennycook 1998a). Thus, it is perhaps worth considering Coulmas’ (1998: 71) claim that the notion that language shift is necessarily a catastrophe, based as it is on a “nineteenth-century romantic idea that pegs human dignity as well as individual and collective identity to individual languages”, may be a passing ideological fashion. Furthermore, as Rassool (1998: 98) argues, the complex, interconnected nature of the modern world suggests that continued appeal to the moral basis of universal rights may no longer have adequate credibility: “in the light of these dynamic changes taking place globally and nationally can the argument for a universalizing discourse on cultural and

linguistic pluralism be sustained?" Thus, like Phillipson's notion of linguistic imperialism, the notion of universal linguistic rights may be too much a dream of modernist universalism to continue to have currency and legitimacy in the current global context.

In terms of the two ideological questions, it clearly takes a strong stand on the politics of the global spread of English to the extent that it can be shown that English poses a threat to linguistic diversity and rights. Thus, a language rights perspective, like a language ecology perspective, is concerned primarily with the support of diversity. If the global spread of English can be shown to be a threat to such diversity, language rights provide a powerful moral argument against support for English. In terms of the second understanding of ideology, again like the language ecology framework, it has less to say about the actual ideological effects of English than about the destruction of other cultural and ideological possibilities if language rights are not upheld. But when linked to an analysis of the incursions into local languages and cultures caused by English, it again can provide a moral argument against the threats to diversity.

7. Postcolonial performativity

One further way of thinking about these questions is in terms of what I call postcolonial performativity. This view acknowledges the significance of all these last three perspectives — linguistic ecology, linguistic human rights, and linguistic imperialism — but in trying to explore further what I earlier (1994) termed the 'worldliness of English', it works with concepts of appropriation and performance. The notions of appropriation and hybridity have been crucial to postcolonial studies, which as Loomba (1998: 173) suggests, "have been preoccupied with issues of hybridity, creolisation, *mestizaje*, in-betweenness, diasporas and liminality, with the mobility and cross-overs of ideas and identities generated by colonialism." Attempts to understand postcolonialism, then, have been concerned not only with a critique of the 'metropolitan' categories of knowledge and culture, but also with an attempt to understand how languages, cultures, knowledge and identities have been taken over, appropriated, adapted, adopted and reused. Postcolonialism also demands that we work contextually. What role English plays in particular contexts needs to be understood in terms of specific sociologies of those contexts. If we start to pursue such questions in terms of local contexts of language, it becomes possible to consider using English not so much in terms of some inevitable, essential commonality, but rather — as with

Judith Butler's (1990) understanding of gender as something performed rather than pregiven — as another form of 'performativity'.

Thus we need both a more complex understanding of globalization and a more complex understanding of language than those offered by the frameworks above. Appadurai (1990: 296) suggests that the "new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models". This position moves towards the "conceptualization of global culture less in terms of alleged homogenizing processes (e.g., theories which present cultural imperialism, Americanization and mass consumer culture as a proto-universal culture riding on the back of Western economic and political domination) and more in terms of the diversity, variety and richness of popular and local discourses, codes and practices which resist and play-back systematicity and order" (Featherstone 1990: 2). From this point of view, both the liberal approach of Crystal with its global and local languages in mutual relationship, or the more critical view of Phillipson and others, with its local diversity threatened by global homogeneity, may be inadequate. Thus, while never losing sight of the very real forces of global capital and media, we need, at the very least, to understand the response to cultural spread and not assume its instant effects.

This means, first, viewing the global dominance of English not ultimately as an *a priori* imperialism but rather as a product of the local hegemonies of English. As Foucault (1980: 94) puts it in the context of arguing for a notion of power not as something owned by some and not by others but as something that operates on and through all points of society, "Major dominations are the hegemonic effects that are sustained by all these confrontations". Any concept of the global hegemony of English must therefore be understood in terms of the complex sum of contextualised understandings of local hegemonies. Thus, for example, Dua's (1994) analysis of the 'hegemony of English' in India points to all the complex ways in which English operates in relation to indigenous languages, in education, language policy, mass media, and so on. And such local hegemonies contribute towards a larger position of hegemony. But such hegemonies are also filled with complex local contradictions, with the resistances and appropriations that are a crucial part of the postcolonial context (and see also Canagarajah, this volume).

Second, therefore, this position suggests we need to understand how postcolonial subjects are not mere reflexes of colonialism and neocolonialism but rather are resistant, hybrid beings using aspects of indigenous languages and cultures as well as colonial languages such as English for multiple purposes. Butler (1997: 158) asks "What is the performative power of appropriating the

very terms by which one has been abused in order to deplete the term of its degradation or to derive an affirmation from the degradation, rallying under the sign of 'queer' or revaluing affirmatively the category of 'black' or of 'women'?" The same questions need to be asked of English in the global context, so that, for example, the "Africanization of the English language" is not merely a question of identifying a local variant of English, but rather "must definitely include the deracialization of English. Black aesthetics has to rescue blackness from the stifling weight of negative metaphor" (Mazrui and Mazrui 1998: 29).

In terms of the two ideological frameworks, this perspective has something to say about both. It suggests that the global spread of English has political implications and these need to be addressed. But it also insists that such effects need to be understood through contextual sociologies rather than a priori assumptions about imperialistic effects. Thus it offers a political standpoint both on the structure of linguistic imperialism and on the agency of resistance. In terms of the second understanding of ideology — the discursive effects of English — it also acknowledges that English may have effects in terms of the cultural baggage that comes with English, but it suggests that this can have no absolute or necessary effects, that it will always be changed, resisted, twisted into other possibilities. And it asks not merely whether ideology is imposed or resisted, but what is produced in such relationships. And thus, as Claire Kramsch (1993) suggests, we need to start thinking here of what is produced in cultural encounters, not just homogeneity or heterogeneity, imperialism or resistance, but rather what 'third cultures' or 'third spaces' are constantly being created.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, then, I would like to suggest that we cannot escape viewing the global spread of English in political (or ideological terms). In this sense it has clear ideological implications, and these can be addressed by looking through a variety of political lenses. The *laissez-faire* liberal perspective, which attempts to deny a political or ideological dimension to such questions, needs to be strongly resisted. So too, of course, does the colonial-celebratory framework, with its vehement support for English. The powerful perspectives on these questions brought by language ecology, linguistic imperialism, and language rights frameworks point to the significance of understanding the ideological context of the spread of English. But, in terms of adducing ideological implications as possible discursive effects of English, we need, I believe, to move towards a framework of postcolonial performativity. While global theories may frame our

problematic, the issue has to be one of local contexts and particular configurations of language, culture, knowledge and power.

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CHAPTER 8

Negotiating Ideologies through English

Strategies from the Periphery

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1. Prologue

Consider a story that has been passed down orally through many generations in my community — a story etched in our collective memory. It is the story of a young man — Thiru — who was to be baptized as a Christian during the early days of British rule in my native town of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Thiru had gone through years of careful preparation to facilitate his entry into the saved flock (which was also treated as the civilized and privileged group). The instrument for this transformation was English education. He was educated in a special boarding school, separated from his family and friends, because it was assumed that he would come under the corrupting influence of the vernacular which could hamper his motivation and proficiency. In the boarding school, the English language was taught through sermons, Biblical parables, and the didactic poetry of Milton and Pope, as Thiru was inducted into a Christian world view. Hinduism being a polytheistic religion, the British considered it not quite conducive to making the natives faithful to a single authority. The monotheistic Christianity was expected to develop the necessary respect for the near-universal power of the British.

But just when Thiru was to be baptized as an example to his Hindu relatives, the local Christian flock, and his proud British teachers, something went wrong. As he was about to be dipped into the water by the priest, Thiru slipped. He felt he was drowning. He cried out “Lord Muruga, save me!” This he uttered in Tamil — a language he had pretended to have forgotten long back in the boarding school. As the priest brought him out of the water and named

him John, Thiru realized his blunder. He was not being drowned, but baptized. He had to do something now to explain the invocation of the Hindu God's name in his spontaneous cry for help. So as he came out of the water, he said loud and clear in English, "Oh, Muruga! If not for Lord Jesus, I would have perished today! Praise Jesus!" Imagining that Thiru was simply chiding the Hindu Gods and asserting the superiority of Jesus, the missionaries and administrators went home happily. The temporary disturbance in the colonial world was now repaired. Thiru, alias John, went home with his relatives for evening prayers to his personal Hindu deities. He had to specially thank them today for providing him a new (and respectable) name, a baptismal certificate, and an English education which would help him greatly as he applied for a job in the colonial bureaucratic establishment the next morning.

What some of us might consider to be a shamefaced opportunism here — i.e., pretending to go along with the values and expectations of the authorities in order to gain personal advantages — has been treated by ethnographer James Scott (1985) as constituting the weapons of the weak, which peasant communities in South Asia have been using for generations. These simple acts of false compliance, parody, pretense, and mimicking are the strategies by which the marginalized detach themselves from the ideologies of the powerful, retain a measure of critical thinking, and gain some sense of control over their life in an oppressive situation.¹ Perhaps these ambivalent and half-hearted acts were not strong enough to bring down the military might of the colonial powers. But they were sufficient to nurture oppositional discourses and ideologies among the natives.

It is important for my discussion to show how Thiru negotiates some of the tensions in language, discourse, and ideology in his intriguing baptismal drama. Note first the code switch. He deploys some English lexemes strategically to convey messages desirable to the British, while his earlier accidental use of Tamil would have indicated his resilient Hindu faith to his in-group members in the audience. He is also able to hold the Hindu and Christian discourses in tension and live a compartmentalized life quite comfortably. Consciously deploying suitable symbols to indicate his belief in the Christian discourse, he is a Christian for the British and Hindu for his family. This doesn't pose a psychological or spiritual problem for Thiru. His pluralistic religion of Hinduism permits him to absorb one more God — Christ — into the pantheon. This act will be interpreted as hypocritical and insincere only by the missionaries who demand absolute faith in a single God. If through all this Thiru gives the impression of conforming to the colonialist ideology, it is only an impression. He does this only to suit his interests. Note, furthermore, the complex way in which Thiru uses English: he is able to signal his detachment from colonialist expectations not by refusing to use English, but by using it. It is the symbolic association of the language with Christian and colonial discourses that enables him to use it effec-

tively to outwit the authorities. The strategic ways in which he marshalls the resources of language and discourse to serve his interests should prove that the marginalized are by no means under the total control of ideologies. They can discern tensions between these constructs to negotiate them creatively for their purposes.

2. The argument

Thiru's act helps me articulate a relationship between language, discourse, and ideology to explore the subtle ways in which periphery communities have negotiated the ideological potential of English. The sign system of language gains meaning only in the context of *discourses* — which I understand as genres of thinking, communicating, and behaving.² Through the respective discourse genres, language represents related ideologies. Ideologies are, for me, ways of representing and interpreting reality, and there is no life outside of them. Ideologies are always partial and partisan to one's community. They are more or less liberatory or oppressive, depending on the social practice and historical background of the community. It is important to note, however, that each of these constructs — language, discourse, and ideology — are at tension with each other even as they are interdependent. There is tension not only between them, but within each construct. The signs in a linguistic system clash to create a proliferation of meanings. There are competing strands within a specific discourse waiting to be reinterpreted in surprising new ways. Ideologies can be critiqued from within, even without the availability of clearly formulated alternate ideologies. The relative autonomy of each construct from the other explains the way in which the language/ideology connection has been variously negotiated in the periphery by folks like Thiru.

I wish to narrate in the rest of this essay some significant moments in the colonial and postcolonial history of my native community in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, to illustrate the strategies adopted by local people to negotiate ideologies through English. This is a simplified narrative purely for the purpose of highlighting some of the ironies and paradoxes in the ideological status of English in periphery communities in recent times. English has represented different ideologies in terms of the specific historical conditions and social practices of the community. My task is to identify the more critical strategies adopted by the local communities to construct/express liberatory ideologies leading to their empowerment. I offer this story of English in my community as an example of the micro-social analysis that has to be carried out in different periphery communities to redress a historiography in English studies (undertaken mainly by center-based scholars) that has not been adequately sensitive to the everyday strategies of linguistic negotiation of the local people.³

3. Colonization: Discursive appropriation

Let's begin with the colonial period. Many critical applied linguists have elaborated on the ideological functions envisioned for English language teaching during this period.⁴ But a closer look shows the doubts colonizers had on the capacity of language to develop a subservient mentality. As they formed one of the first schools for higher education in South Asia — the Batticotta seminary in my hometown — there was constant bickering between the missionaries and administrators on the type of curriculum and texts that should go with the language.⁵ While the Christian discourse was preferred by some, others thought that English literature represented the humanist/Enlightenment discourse that had a civilizing influence. Their restless experimentation with the curriculum suggests at least two things: some doubted the ability of the English language to inculcate pro-colonial ideologies by itself; it had to be clothed in the appropriate discourses and texts to achieve this effect. Secondly, even if they managed to find the discourse best suited for their purpose, nothing could guarantee that English would achieve the intended results. In fact English education could turn counter-productive, providing the natives aspirations and ideals that could be used against alien domination.

With hindsight we can say that the suspicions of the colonists were indeed confirmed. While some natives passively adopted these pro-colonial discourses and ideologies for their material advancement, others like Thiru resisted this influence in creative ways. A popular approach was what I call an *avoidance strategy* that we also find in Thiru. Natives adopted a product-oriented, philological approach to English, simply to claim a knowledge of the language (or grammar) in order to qualify for bureaucratic jobs, while distancing themselves from the texts and values that came with the language. They separated the abstract sign system from the ideological constructs that came with it. There is ample precedent in the indigenous culture for orientating to learning in a formalistic manner.⁶ There are also cases of parents who claimed that they would let their children attend missionary schools only up to the point they acquired a smattering of English, and removed them from English education before they were inducted more deeply into the western/Christian discourses at advanced levels of schooling. Similar strategies have been reported from many contemporary periphery classrooms.⁷ Melvin Resnick (1993) reports that Puerto Rican students adopt a product-oriented learning strategy to avoid the ideological influences from North American discourses, though they like to claim the economic and professional advantages that come with the acquisition of the language. They selectively learn English grammar, while resisting a communicative competence in its discourses and ideologies.

But some others in my home town adopted a different strategy to negotiate

the ideological impositions of English. These Hindu revivalists started Saivite schools — not to suppress the teaching of English, but to teach it in terms of their own Hindu discourses. An example of such institutions is the Jaffna Hindu College, run by the Hindu Educational Board that rivaled the local Christian Missionary Society.⁸ The school was run by local intellectuals who had tasted the best of English education, reaching the highest levels of accomplishment. But they decided to marshal their knowledge and linguistic expertise for developing the indigenous educational traditions. Here they taught the English language through translated texts from Hinduism. They also popularized Hindu philosophy through parables and tracts, borrowing strategies used by the missionaries to evangelize the natives to Christianity.⁹ It is fascinating to read some of these hybrid texts which are in English syntax but contain Hindu terms in Sanskrit and Tamil. This is a creative process of transforming the sign system of English to represent a discourse alien to it. I call this the *strategy of discursive appropriation*. This is a precursor to the nativized variants of English and postcolonial discourses that have reached a highly visible level now, as championed by those like Braj Kachru (1986). This is a more creative and constructive strategy compared to Thiru's avoidance strategy as these educationists were taking the bull by the horns (as it were) and bending the sign system to take on a brand new ideological and discursive shape.

4. Decolonization: Reinterpretation strategies

As we move to the Decolonization period, the English-educated bilinguals play a unique role in the struggle for independence. They used the English language to appropriate the discourses of modernism/Enlightenment, Christian liberalism, and European nationalism taught by the British in their schools. These discourses were used to make an argument against colonial interests. Their argument ran something like this: "You teach us to be proud of the Glorious revolution of Cromwell, the opposition of Henry the 8th against the Pope, and the struggle for autonomy by the small communities in Europe against the Holy Roman empire. Don't you recognize that you are denying us similar aspirations we have as a nation as we struggle against your Queen?" Or they could take another tack at the argument like this: "You teach us that our Hindu caste system is despicable and inhuman and that Christianity treats all human beings alike. But how does this teaching relate to your treatment of us as ignorant savages who are not fit or mature enough to rule ourselves?" This is a *strategy of reinterpretation* — i.e., providing new meaning for dominant discourses to suit one's own interests and ideologies. It was hard for the colonizers to resist this argument as the natives were repeating the discourses they themselves cherished. It was hard to resist,

furthermore, because they were not saying all this in Tamil among themselves, but saying it loud and clear in English to the whole world. The natives were using the language of the master only to curse him more effectively.

The paradoxes in the ideological functions of English don't stop there. Movements such as the Jaffna Youth Congress which spearheaded the nationalist struggle in my town found that English made accessible the anti-colonial thinking of leaders from many other language groups in the periphery — like Nyerere, Gandhi, Nehru, and Banda.¹⁰ The anti-colonial ideologies of this periphery-wide leadership became available in my home town only because of English. Imagine what would have happened if these periphery thinkers had chosen to develop their anti-colonial thinking solely in their vernaculars! The decolonization movement that had such mass appeal all over the periphery after the Second World War would have been greatly impoverished. English thus became at this time a repository of the periphery-wide anti-colonial thinking.

In fact, it was difficult for the owners of the language not to be infected by the dangerous ideologies English was picking up like viruses all over the third world. Edward Said (1993) argues that the counter-discourses of periphery intellectuals of this time generated an ideological critique among center intellectuals themselves, leading to the construction of anti-modernist and anti-establishment thinking in the West. English thus became a liability for the owners of the language.

5. Post-independence: Accommodation strategies

As we move to the newly independent nations in the periphery, we see yet another ironic twist in the ideological functions of English. The bilingual professionals of the formerly radical Jaffna Youth Congress are the new elite, using English language for the conservative purpose of consolidating power. The ideology of “English as a neutral code” is developed to say that anyone with education and competence will achieve social mobility irrespective of one's caste/regional/religious identity. We know that English was not an *unmarked code* (to use the formulation of Kachru 1986); English was transforming my community from a feudal one with a caste-based hierarchy to a market- and capital-oriented one with a class-based stratification. Furthermore, the scientific and technocratic discourses represented by English also enable the new elite to assert leadership. They claim to lead the community towards modernization and progress in concert with the elite in the center communities. English thus undergoes an interesting ideological shift in the hands of periphery elite. The very same liberal discourses which represented progressive ideologies earlier now acquire conservative interests to prop up the power of the periphery bilinguals.

I call these uses of English by local elite a *strategy of accommodation* — i.e., invoking English and its discourses to accommodate their vested interests.

The opposition to this source of power, by whipping up the monolingual masses, springs from another alien/western ideology — Marxism. But ironically, even this ideology wouldn't have arrived in my home town if not for English. Marxism was imported by those who were proficient in English to read the canonical writings of Marx and Engels during their education in Oxford and Cambridge, or at least in the urban bilingual schools within the country. Needless to say, the new oppositional leadership also belonged to the bilingual educated groups. Here again English serves the vested interests of the educated bilinguals and represents conservative interests. It is ironic that English should have been the vehicle for radical ideologies like Marxism. For many periphery communities, it is English that represents Marxist texts and discourses to this day. Marxist discourse holds a foreign and anglicized ethos for people in my community. The only versions of Marxism that have resonance for locals are those that are mixed with discourses of linguistic nationalism and ethnic separatism that many western Marxists may refuse to recognize as belonging to their canon.

6. Postcolonial realities: Linguistic appropriation

We move finally to the present day status of English in my community. The non-English speaking groups are disgruntled that for almost five hundred years since the first European ships arrived in our island they haven't seen any dramatic changes in their social status. The strategy of opposition they have now adopted is to reject English lock-stock-and-barrel. They consider the best policy as not to have any truck with that cursed language. The militant regime that is waging an armed struggle to form a separate Tamil state (in the multi-ethnic island of Sri Lanka) has officially declared a policy of Tamil only and "pure Tamil." Their ideal is a return to the precolonial Tamil kingdoms. Combined with the popularization of classical discourses (in the form of ancient Tamil literature and cultural practices) this movement represents ultra nationalistic ideologies.¹¹ At the point of the submachine gun, people are asked to adopt new lexical items for formerly borrowed words, to give up studying or using English, to adopt a curriculum in schools that is influenced by classical Tamil and militant Tamil history, and to follow ideologically driven pedagogies. The mistake the new regime is making here is one that radical scholars have also often made — to assume that there is a homologous connection between language and ideology, that English equals repressive colonial ideologies.

The military regime seems to have over-reached itself in its enthusiasm. There is widespread disappointment in my community with this extremist turn

of events. Many in my home town consider the dominant ideology as not nationalistic, but simply chauvinistic. This includes not only those who are English educated, but the average citizens. There are already signs of opposition to the separatist militant regime. In fact, there are signs that English is playing a part in this resistance against ultra nationalism. Among the subtle ways in which English is still used, code switching (with English items used mostly in a Tamil syntactic frame) assumes tremendous ideological significance.¹² Under the guise of using Tamil, the locals are using some extent of English for symbolic purposes. This is a surreptitious form of usage — reminiscent of the earlier avoidance strategies. Without clashing head long with the militant regime, they are adopting discourse strategies that have it both ways (i.e., seeming to conform to the dominant linguistic policy, they also use some tokens of English). What is ideologically significant is that through code switching they evoke a discourse of cultural pluralism and internationalism that assumes anti-totalitarian and anti-chauvinistic ideological interests against the dominant separatism. English thus helps keep alive multicultural discourses in the periphery and helps resist the monocultural/monolingualist tendencies of the local regimes.

The persistence of English in the periphery is due in part to the ways in which it has become vernacularized. English is able to resist the nationalist tendencies of the periphery regimes because it has influenced the vernaculars in a deep rooted and pervasive fashion. A local professor of Tamil, Sivatomby (1990), acknowledges that there are dual linguistic/cultural traditions that characterize the cultural life of my community — one strand goes back to the Saivite revivalism of the Jaffna Hindu College, grounded in Hinduism and Tamil language; the other strand derives from the liberal discourses of the Jaffna Youth Congress, associated with English education and secular/internationalist thinking. Thus Sivatomby recognizes the integral place of English language and western discourses in our cultural formation. For better or worse, English is part of the indigenous discourse tradition. The mistake of the ultra-nationalists is to underestimate the complexity of our cultural formation — or perhaps they are involved in a vain struggle to reinterpret our cultural tradition to suit a pre-colonial purism when the majority of the people desire a postcolonial pluralism.

In linguistic terms, what we see is that through certain creative processes the competing languages have mingled to constitute a system of hybrid codes.¹³ This I call a *strategy of linguistic appropriation* (analogous to the strategy of *discursive appropriation* practiced by the Hindu scholars during the colonial period). Now, not only discourses, but the sign system of English has been appropriated, destabilizing the integrity of the language we call English.

7. Some caveats

It is ironic, however, that my characterization of English as representing multi-cultural discourses in the ultra-nationalistic communities contrasts with the ideologies of English in center communities. English represents monoculturalist tendencies as reflected in the English Only bills being considered in the United States. Note that when the U.S. Congress permitted Puerto Rico to hold a referendum to decide its political autonomy recently, the one condition they tried hard to impose on that community was to keep English as their official language. Or listen to speaker Gingrich arguing in support of the English Only law passed by the Congress in 1996: referring to bilingual educational programs he says, “This isn’t bilingualism. This is a level of confusion, which if it was allowed to develop for another 20 or 30 years would literally lead, I think, to the decay of the core parts of our civilization. ... Is there a thing we call American? Is it unique? It is vital historically to assert and establish that English is the common language at the heart of our civilization” (see Schmitt 1996: A10). These examples should serve to warn us that English can represent conflicting ideologies at the same time in different communities — i.e., militant forms of cultural homogeneity in the center and pluralism in the periphery.

It is important, however, that the ideological life of English in the local scene be seen in relation to the global situation. The democratizing/pluralizing ideologies that English channels into the chauvinistic periphery regimes come partly through the global reach of mass media, pop culture, entertainment, and technology. Despite the ban imposed by the militant regime on non-Tamil films, music, and literature in Jaffna, Mickey Mouse and Michael Jackson still find their way into my village! The 60’s pop culture (featuring Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Paul Simon) is still alive among our youth. Even the military regime permits its cadres to watch old westerns and combat films (of the second world war) under the naive belief that this will build the fighting spirit of its cadres (oblivious to the other ideological influences Hollywood can carry out). Though these discourses may have democratizing possibilities in the local context, these are products of the market forces and cultural institutions of the hegemonic center. Perhaps the periphery people should be alert to the possibility that the positive ideologies represented by English in the local context will be appropriated by the international agencies of English to bring them under the ideological sway of center communities. The subtle modes of resistance in the local context could be exploited by the global hegemony of English. Therefore periphery communities have to use English critically, negotiating its use amidst the conflicting ideologies it represents in diverse historical and geographical contexts.

8. Conclusion

This is an admittedly simplified narrative of a long and controversial historical experience. But I hope I have illustrated some of the ironies in the divergent ideologies English has represented in the periphery. From a wider lens we can see that English has represented multiple discourses and ideologies for different communities at different times. Through this narrative I hope to have characterized English language as a site of competing (and contradictory) ideologies. The ironies and paradoxes in the ideological status of English in the periphery are traced above not to imply that English is a neutral language that can mean different things to different people at different times. (The term *negotiation* implies that the opposing party comes with an ideological position of its own which has to be dealt with in terms of one's own ideology. If English is not bound to any ideological position whatsoever, then there is no need for a two-sided negotiation. One can simply take over the language and use it at will. The term *negotiation* would have no meaning in this context.) English therefore embodies certain domineering ideological and discursive tendencies which periphery speakers have to always negotiate judiciously. But we must acknowledge that the ideologies of English are never stable — they change in relation to the historical conditions and social practices of the respective communities. Though I argue that it is possible to negotiate ideologies through English, the task is not easy: one does have to contend with the power English enjoys from its historical associations, the dominant groups who claim ownership over the language, and the material advantages the language holds. But the moral of my tale is that it is not impossible to negotiate the terms in which one will learn and use the English language.

This perspective on the hybridity of language and discourses raises a methodological question in linguistic scholarship. In cases of linguistic and cultural contact that is so characteristic of the postcolonial world, the sign systems have themselves become mixed and hybrid. English is now a heteroglossic language that has become pluralized. It has become mixed with other languages, while itself accommodating various codes. Should we still hold on to the assumption of languages as discrete/autonomous entities and speak of a separate ideology for each language?¹⁴ What about the ideological implications of these diverse hybrid codes — of which English is a part? Would the different systems of English (i.e., standard English in the center and vernacularized English in the periphery) represent different ideologies? And how do the diverse ideologies English represents in its contemporary status as a heteroglossic language relate to each other?

The pedagogical application of all this is to make our students alert to the need for negotiating the terms and contexts in which they will use English, aware

of the conflicting values it represents. We can point to the creative communicative strategies adopted by people from their own communities from way back in history to acquire and use English in their own terms, and to resist the hegemonic ideologies of English or represent liberatory possibilities, despite the power represented by the language. They might have been poor, uneducated, and disempowered, but my fellow villagers like Thiru knew the secret of language learning and usage — one doesn't reject a language outright, or absorb a language uncritically; one has to negotiate the discourses and ideologies one desires through any given sign system.

Notes

1. There are other ethnographers who have noted such coping strategies in Asian societies from precolonial times — see Adas (1992). Kochman (1981) observes such strategies in the contemporary African-American communities, which he terms “fronting”. He claims that this strategy may have been developed during slavery in the South.
2. For a more extensive treatment of this orientation to language, discourse, and ideology see the definitions of Kress (1985).
3. Much of the information relating to the local response to colonialism is available only in oral history. It is for this reason that I begin this paper with an anecdote that has been passed down from generations in my community. There are many such “jokes” and “anecdotes” that need to be unpacked for their ideological implications. In some of my publications, center reviewers have criticized the use of such anecdotes as unreliable “data”. But to expect published/ documented evidence is unrealistic as periphery communities are largely oral in their construction of knowledge and, additionally, have not enjoyed the resources to print/publish their views and experiences. Center scholars are often denied such sources of data as they don't enjoy in-group status with periphery communities to gain access to such intimate knowledge. They are also not proficient in the native languages to tap the information encoded in oral history.
4. Phillipson (1992) and Pennycook (1994) have traced the interests of the center in spreading English in the periphery. They have also shown how the discourses of ELT were formed on the basis of the colonial experience.
5. I base my reading of the colonial educational enterprise in Jaffna on the writings of Chelliah (1922). He was a teacher of English during the British rule in my community, and provides insights into the policy and practice of English education at Batticotta seminary from the days of its inception. See also Viswanathan (1989) for a balanced account of similar debates and vacillations of the British on English education in India.
6. Well known Dravidian scholar Emeneau (1955: 145–146) notes: “Intellectual thoroughness and an urge toward ratiocination, intellection, and learned classification for their own sakes should surely be recognized as characteristic of the Hindu higher culture. ... They become grammarians, it would seem, for grammar's sake.” As late as the colonial period, the teaching of local languages to European administrators was primarily based on studying and memorizing learned grammatical treatises (see Wickramasuriya 1981).

7. There are other studies that report that a product-oriented learning strategy may have oppositional potential. See Delpit (1995) for African-American students; Pennycook (1996b) for Chinese students; and Canagarajah (1993a, 1993b) for studies in Sri Lankan classrooms.
8. For more on the activity of the Saiva educational enterprise, see Sivatambi (1990).
9. For an example of a Hindu scholar who appropriates Christian discursive strategies for “evangelizing” local people back to Hinduism, see Arumuga Navalar (1872).
10. See Kadirgamar (1980) for more on the politics of the Jaffna Youth Congress which appropriated western discourses for its struggle. See also Anderson (1983: Ch. 7) for the part played by colonial languages in creating an imagined pan-periphery community of anti-colonial resistance.
11. For a discussion of the discourses and ideologies adopted by the Tamil regime of the LTTE (i.e., Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), see Schalk (1990).
12. For empirical data and sociolinguistic description of code switching activity in everyday life in the Tamil community, see Canagarajah (1995a, 1995b). For code switching in local classrooms, see Canagarajah (1995c).
13. Code switching (between English and a vernacular) is increasingly functioning as a means of reconciling the tensions many postcolonial communities face between the pulls of global Anglicization and local nationalistic tendencies. It has also been observed that in such communities hybrid codes are evolving to become a significant means of intra-community communication. For studies on this subject see Heller (1992) (in French Canada), Blanc and Hamers (1982) (for New Brunswick), Blommaert (1992) (for Tanzania), Pandit (1991) (for Englishized Hindi), and Swigart (1992) (for bilingualism in Dakar).
14. Swigart (1992) criticizes the tendency in mainstream linguistics to look at hybrid codes (as in code switching) as a mongrel or freak form, and to treat languages as autonomous.

CHAPTER 9

Ideology and Policy in the Politics of the English Language in North India

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1. Introduction

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, rural, left-leaning, lower-caste politicians came to power in the north Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (U.P.). Their main political rivals have been upper-caste Hindu nationalist politicians. Both groups have for the most part displaced the centrist Congress party politicians who had dominated Indian politics since independence. In this triangulation of politics in north India, the language policy positions on English do not cleave with political party lines. Elected officials on both the left and the right have implemented policies prohibiting the use of English in state and local governments in north India. Other left-leaning politicians have advocated mandatory English in the school curriculum, finding support from political rivals further to the right.

At the same time that one finds politicians of all political hues on both sides of the policy debate on the English language, the ideological gap between the left and right on issues of cultural politics has been increasing. The right's ideology is *Hindutva*, a Hindu-based cultural nationalism. The left advocates secularism, affirmative action (preferential treatment through reservations policy) for lower castes, and protection of Muslim minority rights. At the center of the political spectrum, the Congress party vacillates, most recently asserting its secular credentials in general election campaigns, trying to cleanse itself of the stigma of having failed to prevent the destruction of the Babri Masjid, a sixteenth-century mosque in northern India, by *Hindutva* fanatics in 1992 when Congress was in power at the national level under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.

Rao's prime-ministership is also well remembered for its instigation of

economic liberalization. While neither the left nor the right has reversed this liberalizing trend when in power, both have publicly advocated economic nationalism, resulting in, as in the English language policy debate, strange political bedfellows in periodic alliance. The situation reminds one of recent election campaigns in the United States, when Pat Buchanan's defense of the working class against job exportation to low-wage countries sounds remarkably similar to rhetoric of leftist Democrats. Yet no one would suggest that Pat Buchanan and the left-wing of the Democratic party are ideological soul mates. I will argue in this paper that the ideologies of the left and right in India are fundamentally different despite ephemeral alliances on particular policies. Because of this inherent difference, the ideology of the lower-caste, rural, left-leaning politicians may not be "legitimizing the power of a dominant social group or class", but rather challenging that power; indeed "not every body of belief which people commonly term ideological is associated with a dominant political power" (Eagleton 1991: 5–6). To make my case, I will focus on policies regarding the English language in north India, arguing that both pro-English and anti-English advocates on the left are attempting, albeit through divergent policies, to re-appropriate vernaculars as part of an anti-elite project. In doing so, they are offering an alternative, perhaps even a subordinate or subaltern, discourse on the politics of language. In contrast, the right's agenda of propagating a Hindu imagining of the nation contains an elitist (upper caste) component; hence the right sometimes finds itself defending the elite language of English, sometimes promoting a chaste Hindi over English.

In making the particular argument in the north Indian case, I am suggesting that while ideology informs policy, it does not determine it. Nor can one derive ideology from policy. Policies are practical applications of substantially amorphous ideologies. Policies are contingent, adapted to changing material conditions. Ideologies, although not necessarily consistent, are more persistent. In this paper, I will allude to this more general argument about policy and ideology by tracing the politics of language in north India over time, from the anti-colonial moment forward. I will demonstrate that today's ideological differences between left and right are deep-rooted despite the superficial and occasional convergence between left and right on policy matters.

2. The anti-colonial moment

The English language provided access to the discourse on liberalism and political democracy for the Western-educated urban professionals who dominated the

nationalist movement. Through the (Indian National) Congress, these nationalists initiated a dialogue, in English, with the British imperial rulers on the illegitimacy of colonial rule. As was the case throughout the colonial world, Western education provided the ideological tools to challenge colonialism within its own paradigm: “the main lines of an urban middle and professional class critique of colonialism was to grow out of English education itself” (Raina 1991: 286).

But Indians were perhaps unique in that they never let English get “under their skin” (P. Dasgupta 1993: 99). According to Partha Chatterjee (1993), Indians maintained an “inner domain” that was impenetrable by British cultural imperialism. This inner domain was the fountainhead for the cultural renaissance that provided the spiritual endurance for anti-colonial resistance. The language(s) of this inner domain was indigenous common speech. In making this case for Bengal, Chatterjee (1993: 55) notes “[w]here written prose marked a domain already surrendered to the colonizer, common speech thrived within its zealously guarded zone of autonomy and freedom.” Chatterjee describes the attraction of this common-speech discourse to the middle-class, urban, English-speaking professionals. Despite the gap between the poverty-stricken masses and themselves, their desire for affinity, their search for that affinity, through the “discovery of India”, was as important as the anti-colonial agenda to them. It was Mohandas K. Gandhi who turned that desire into practice. Indeed, Gandhi blamed the gap on English language education: “by reason of English being the medium of instruction ... we have been isolated from the masses” (quoted in Raina 1991: 284). Furthermore, Gandhi questioned the role of English in challenging British political power: “Of all the superstitions that affect India, none is so great as that a knowledge of the English language is necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty ...” (quoted in Raina 1991: 279). In the 1920s Gandhi convinced Congress to organize along regional language lines (Austin 1966: 270–77).

Gandhi was privileging an alternative discourse. But there was more than one alternative. While the text of spiritual leaders such as Ramakrishna contained a “rustic colloquial idiom” (Chatterjee 1993: 51), the Brahma and Arya Samajists advocated Sanskritized Hindi as the alternative to English (J. Das Gupta 1970). Revivalist spiritual organizations in the Hindi heartland (such as the Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, or RSS) provided the increasingly Westernized middle class with a theology that was Hindu yet reformist, furnishing them with their sense of self-hood and nationhood. The language policy of these organizations, the promotion of Hindi, was “perceived as the symbolic instrument for fighting colonialism and English” (Kumar 1990: 1247). But it was not Gandhi’s Hindi. It was a Sanskritized Hindi that was theologically validated by its association with the language (Sanskrit) of Hindu

texts. It was class-laden as well with the Hindi literati arguing that the commonly spoken Hindi, advocated by Gandhi, was not appropriate for “serious discourse, as in education and parliament” (Kumar 1990: 1253). It also had a strongly communal element as it sought to distance itself from the Persianized, Urdu-ized vocabulary of common speech. According to Krishna Kumar (1990: 1254), “[t]he struggle for Hindi ... became a means for upper caste groups, some of whom had substantial landed interest, to establish political identity.” Many joined the Congress party, committed to protecting their caste-privileged traditional elite status. They perceived themselves as a counterweight to the English-speaking Nehruvian wing of Congress (McLane 1988: 54, 56; J. Das Gupta 1970: 118).

3. The moment of independence

On the eve of independence then there were at least three positions on the English language: the Nehruvian, the Gandhian, and the Hindu revivalist/traditionalist. All three positions were represented in the Congress party, which assumed power upon independence. There was overlap between the positions. Both the Gandhian and the revivalist positions perceived English as an impediment to Indian cultural identity and as a tool of British hegemony; indigenous language was a symbol of anti-colonialism. The two positions differed however on the nature of the indigenous language(s). This difference implied a difference in perception of the symbolism of language for class and communalism. For Gandhi, English was a barrier to equality and the mass mobilization necessary for the anti-colonial struggle; it reinforced class privilege and status hierarchy. Gandhi’s position was “essentially a revolt against the practices of the [communally] partisan literary elite and the political revivalists” (J. Das Gupta 1970: 111). In this he made common cause with Nehru, with both Gandhi and Nehru advocating spoken Hindi (Hindustani) over Sanskritized Hindi. For the traditional elite, Sanskritized Hindi was a bulwark against English, and would also reinforce the Hindu status hierarchy, to be upheld through conservative politics.

With the anti-colonial struggle over, the debate on Hindustani versus Sanskritized Hindi, with its symbolism for class and communal issues, intensified at the political center, leading to a close vote in the constituent assembly adopting Hindi over Hindustani (Austin 1966). In the end, “Gandhi’s pleas for Hindustani proved a straw in the wind” (Kumar 1990: 1253). Not only was Gandhi’s discourse on language marginalized at the moment of independence, but his politico-economic discourse was also rejected by Nehru himself. Nehru’s advocacy of a modern, industrial society pitted him against Gandhi and the

traditional elites. And it had linguistic overtones: “the ideological tie-up between a secularizing modernity and the use of English came to be established during the Nehruvian phase” (Raina 1991: 288). For Nehru, Hindustani was a tool for combating the backward, communally-inspired traditional elite on their own terms (and Nehru had lost that battle), but the larger issue was the future of India as a modern, secular polity, and English was the tool to accomplish this. Indeed, he did not seriously join in the Hindi versus Hindustani debate until the battle lines were sharply drawn, and then only to have his irrelevance pointed out by the traditional elites when they mocked his dependence on English (J. Das Gupta 1970: 163; Austin 1966: 271–74; see also King 1998). Nehru and other “secular-minded political leaders had rather little genuine interest in” Hindi and the *Hindutva* revivalist symbolism it implied (Kumar 1991: 44). Indeed Kumar (1991) suggests a “foul contract” was implicitly agreed upon by the Nehruvian and revivalist/traditional elites, marginalizing the Gandhian discourse in the process.

This “contract” resulted in what Austin (1966) has called “the half-hearted compromise”: although Hindi (and not Hindustani) would become the official language it would not become the “national” language, and English would continue to have “associate” official language status for at least fifteen years. Nehru in essence won the battle on English: English was deemed necessary for modernity, for science and technology in the promotion of industrialization. While indigenous languages were necessary in the mass mobilization phase of anti-colonialism, the assumption of power meant prioritizing English as the language in which to construct a modern state, according to the Nehruvian vision (Kaviraj 1990: 68; P. Dasgupta 1993: 142; Annamalai 1991: 37).

For Nehru, English was increasingly needed for national unity as well (King 1998). English was necessary for co-opting the South to participate in the new national project, as was clear from the south Indians’ animosity to proposals to adopt Hindi as the national language in the constituent assembly (Austin 1966). Nehru reassured the south Indians in the early 1960s that English would retain its status as associate official language as long as the South desired. The South’s anxiety over the sincerity of this promise after Nehru’s death led to language riots in Tamil Nadu as the 15-year transition period for retaining English as associate official language drew near (Brass 1990: 143–44). For the youth in Tamil Nadu who led the riots, English was a ticket for coveted central government jobs, jobs geared toward building Nehru’s modern, secular, industrialized, and English-speaking, polity. Their apprehensions were finally laid to rest by a parliamentary act in 1967 definitively legislating Nehru’s promise.

Nehru’s perception of English as “national cement” provided his fall-back position as he grew increasingly worried about the fissiparous tendencies that

would be unleashed by a linguistic re-organization of the states, a re-organization that had been promised by Congress since the 1920s (Geertz 1973: 255–56; Raina 1991: 287; King 1998). Nehru “suspect[ed] the Indian languages of harbouring populism and sentiment as their natural element” (P. Dasgupta 1993: 168); “[a]nybody who show[ed] greater familiarity or attraction to the vernacular [was] immediately suspected of things that would ultimately slide into secessionist tendencies of various types” (Kaviraj 1990: 69). Although the States Reorganization Act of 1956 began the process of redrawing state boundaries along language lines despite Nehru’s reservations, these suspicions signaled the rejection of an alternative discourse on language among the Nehruvian elite.

4. The language politics of Rammanohar Lohia

There was one politician who voiced an alternative discourse on language repeatedly in the late 1950s through the mid-60s. This was Rammanohar Lohia, leader of the socialist party in its various avatars during this period. Lohia wrote extensively on the language issue, calling for the banning of English. He viewed English as a barrier to class equality, to democratization, to economic development for the poor. He called on socialists to organize committees and conferences on the *angrezi hatao* (Remove/Banish English) issue and to deface English signs in north India. But he was clear that “the chief aim of our movement should be removal of English and not the establishment of Hindi” (Lohia 1966: 6–7). He complained that “[o]rthodox pundits with their high-flown Sanskritised Hindi and Bengali are doing a great harm to the cause of their languages. The Hindi of our newspapers is becoming more and more unintelligible” (Lohia 1966: 16). He himself “had his own style of writing and speaking Hindi, which was very simple and direct” (Mishra and Pandey 1992: 53).

Although Lohia was clearly for the use of the spoken variety of Hindi, i.e., Hindustani, in government and schools in north India and opposed to the communal tendency of those advocating Sanskritized Hindi, he was obsessed with opposing Congress and Nehru in particular and hence prioritized banishing English over elevation of the language(s) of the have-nots. Lohia “had dedicated himself, with an amazing singleness of purpose, to the task of destroying Congress rule” (Limaye 1988: 169, 139). This led him in the 1960s to seek electoral alliances and coalition partners with other non-Congress parties, including the Jana Sangh, a Hindu nationalist party with strong communalist overtones that had formed in the early 1950s as the traditionalists lost out to the Nehruvians within Congress (Graham 1993). The Jana Sangh espoused Sanskritized Hindi as

the national language. Just as the traditionalists and the Nehruvians had a “foul contract” that marginalized an alternative discourse on language, Lohia contracted with the Jana Sanghis against the Nehruvian Congress, muting his own discourse on language. The Lohia-Jana Sangh contract was temporary and for purely electoral purposes, compared to the deeper cultural implications of the Nehruvian-revivalist “foul contract” that, according to Krishna Kumar, remain today. Nevertheless, I would argue, even an ephemeral electoral alliance between Lohia-ites and Jana Sanghis aided in the marginalization of Lohia’s subaltern discourse on language. Exemplary of this were the language policies of the state government of Bihar in the late 1960s. This government, resulting from the 1967 election which was the first to chip away at the dominance of Congress, was a broad-based coalition, with socialists predominating but including Jana Sanghis. The education minister and deputy chief minister of the government, Karpoori Thakur, a disciple of Lohia, banished compulsory English from the school curriculum. But when the government moved to recognize Urdu as a second official language in the state, second to (Sanskritized) Hindi, and thus implicitly to re-appropriate Hindi by legitimizing Hindustani, communal riots, allegedly fomented by the Jana Sangh, erupted, resulting in the death of close to 200 people (Brass 1974: 26–72). The policy regarding Urdu was abandoned. By the end of the decade, Lohia had died, the non-Congress governments in the north Indian states had fallen, and Indira Gandhi was beginning to consolidate her power in the Congress party and the country.

5. The Indira-Rajiv dynasty

By the early 1970s, Indira Gandhi had adopted populist rhetoric and a centralizing, authoritarian style of rule, pointedly different from that of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru. The epitome of her ruling style was the Emergency she declared in June 1975, lasting until 1977. Her return to power in 1980 and the prime ministership of her son, Rajiv, from 1984–89, continued the pattern of strong central control, with chief ministers (i.e., the elected chief executives in states of the Union) having no independent base for power or policy-making (including language policy) (Sonntag 1996: 4–5). Rajiv didn’t quite have the touch of his mother and his attempt to copycat her strong centralization resulted in floundering on policy initiatives. To compensate, he increasingly invoked the “foul contract” of his grandfather and played the communal card, hoping to shore up *Hindutva* support (Jaffrelot 1996). In urban areas, his communal rhetoric struck a chord with aspiring entrants into the burgeoning middle class. He

changed his mother's populist rhetoric to yuppie rhetoric, appealing to young technocrats (as he was himself). And of course English was and is the symbol and language of this class (Sheth 1990). It was also the language of the Center and centralization; Rajiv "condemned linguistic states [set up by the 1956 States Reorganization Act] as the greatest blunder of free India" (Puri 1990: 705).

Despite Indira Gandhi's authoritarian policies, alternative discourses didn't disappear, but indeed flourished in a blooming of new social movements in the early 1970s (Omvedt 1993). With experimentation and alternatives cut off in the political sphere, civil society picked up the slack. The epitome of this efflorescence was the JP (Jayaprakash) movement against Indira Gandhi's increasingly amoral and corrupt politics. The movement started in Gujerat and then was transported to Bihar by Jayaprakash Narayan himself, an old socialist and former colleague of Lohia. However, the movement gained its organizational strength from the involvement of the RSS, the right-wing *Hindutva* para-military organization. The RSS agonized over whether this anti-Indira alliance with the left would dilute its rightist ideology (Jaffrelot 1996).

This left-right alliance carried over into the formation of the Janata party which came to power at the Center upon the defeat of Congress (Indira) in the elections at the end of the Emergency. The Janata party was made up of virtually the same coalition that Lohia had helped forge in the north Indian states in the late 1960s — i.e., socialists, Jana Sanghis, dissident Congress and representatives of the backward-caste middle peasantry of north India. The prime minister was Morarji Desai, a former Congressman in the mold of the traditionalists. Largely because of its Jana Sangh component (the Jana Sangh being the political wing of the RSS), the Janata government advocated Sanskritized Hindi (Hardgrave and Kochanek 1986: 132). However it had to contend with a powerful reaction from the South, something the coalition governments of the northern states in the late 1960s didn't have to confront. Because of this and the intense in-fighting within the coalition, the Janata government's rhetoric on language was never implemented (Sonntag 1995: 103–104). Indeed, once in power, the Janata ministers slipped into using the language of power, English (Limaye 1988: 184), although Atal Behari Vajpayee, who was foreign minister in the Janata government, is remembered for addressing the U.N. General Assembly in Hindi. (Vajpayee is currently the Prime Minister of India).

6. The Yadav moment in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

By the end of the 1980s and Rajiv Gandhi's tenure as prime minister, the political dominance of Congress had deeply eroded, particularly in north India. In late 1989, Rajiv's Congress party lost in the general elections. His former finance and defense minister, V.P. Singh, as leader of a new party, the Janata Dal, became the new prime minister. Although V.P. Singh himself was an upper-caste Hindu royal scion and had been politically dependent on Indira Gandhi in the early 1980s (Sonntag 1996: 4–5), he now appealed to the lower-caste, middle peasantry who had benefited from land reform and Green Revolution technology in 1950s and 60s. These were the same constituents to whom Lohia had appealed, but by the 1980s their economic gains had translated into increasing political sophistication and a desire for political power. The largest among these "backward castes" in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) is the Yadav caste. In 1989, Mulayam Singh Yadav became chief minister of Uttar Pradesh; in the spring of 1990 Laloo Prasad Yadav became chief minister of Bihar. Upon becoming chief minister in 1989, Mulayam Singh Yadav launched an effort to implement a "banish English" (*angrezi hatao*) policy in the state administration. Next door, in Bihar, in the summer of 1993, Laloo Prasad Yadav suggested introducing the mandatory study of English in the school curriculum. Both chief ministers were allied with the V.P. Singh government in New Delhi.

The V.P. Singh government lasted less than a year. There were two primary causes for the fall of his minority government, both of which clearly illustrate the nature of the changing politics in north India, indicating a maturing of the constituency that Lohia had nurtured in the 1960s. The first was V.P. Singh's attempt in the summer of 1990 to dust off the Mandal Commission report. This report, written a decade earlier and then shelved, recommended extending the central government's reservations policy beyond Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to include OBCs (Other Backward Classes), e.g., Yadavs and other rural "bullock capitalists" (as Rudolph and Rudolph (1987) call them). Upper-caste youths reacted violently and tragically to what they perceived as a policy allocating fewer university seats and government jobs for open competition in which they were advantaged. Several dozen of them engaged in self-immolation in protest. V.P. Singh backed off of implementing the Mandal Commission report.

The final straw that led to the fall of the V.P. Singh government was the withdrawal of support by the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party, the successor to the Jana Sangh), support that was necessary for Singh's minority government. The BJP withdrew its support because V.P. Singh, through Laloo Prasad Yadav, had the leader of the BJP arrested. At the time of his arrest, the BJP leader, L. K.

Advani, was in Bihar in his motorized van decorated to look like Lord Ram's mythical chariot, on his way to the Babri Masjid (a 16th century mosque) in Ayodhya, U.P., the alleged birthplace of Lord Ram. This *rath yatra* or chariot ride was infamously successful at rousing up anti-Muslim fanaticism. V. P. Singh and Laloo Prasad Yadav decided to put a stop to it (although they only succeeded in doing so temporarily).

Although the V.P. Singh government at the Center was short-lived, the Yadav chief ministers continued, uninterruptedly in Bihar and intermittently in U.P. Like his counterpart in Bihar, the chief minister in U.P., Mulayam Singh Yadav, enacted policies and conducted politics strongly indicating his anti-BJP, pro-backward caste sympathies. The "Yadav moment" is as anti-communal as it is anti-upper caste. It also has a linguistic component:

Social groups and formations that began to register a political and economic presence in the sixties (and emerged into leaderships — with the franchise of 1989) seem to retain in potent measure critical and conceptual links with [M. K.] Gandhi and Lohia. Such leaderships which speak for a new resurgent rural elite are beginning to critique, from all accounts along a secular politics, the linkages between a dominant English-knowing urban middle class and developmental hypotheses which have, over the last four decades, fattened the metropolitan sectors at the expense of the vast countryside. In that critique, once again, the English language and English education are perceived to be key determinants of a comprehensive historical oppression. Thus, in the strategic states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Hindi protagonism seems to re-emerge not as a communal or entirely provincial phenomenon, but essentially as a second anti-colonial movement. (Raina 1991: 293)

Although I agree with Raina that politics in the early 1990s in north India suggest a "second anti-colonial movement", his analysis cannot explain why in U.P. Lohia's banish English was turned into policy by Mulayam Singh Yadav (and supported by the BJP state government in between Mulayam Singh Yadav's two stints as chief minister), while Laloo Prasad Yadav pushed for the re-introduction of compulsory English in the school curriculum in Bihar (albeit unsuccessfully so far). Elsewhere (Sonntag 1996), I have tried to explain this difference in political terms: while both Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Prasad Yadav appealed to the same constituencies, i.e., backward castes, particularly Yadavs, along with Muslims and Dalits (untouchables), Laloo Prasad Yadav's consolidation of this support base and hence of political power was much further along than Mulayam Singh Yadav's. In other words, political competition in Uttar Pradesh had been much fiercer in the early 1990s than it had been in Bihar. Laloo Prasad Yadav could relax more and suggest non-populist policies, such as

the re-introduction of English for school matriculation. However, this political explanation does not refute those who would argue that the Yadavs don't represent a subaltern politics but are rather one more component of the dominant elite — their discourse, although sounding different, is ideological in that it also legitimates the power of the dominant group/class (Vanaik 1990; Larrain 1994: 17).

How, then, can we agree with Raina in the quote above, i.e., that the Yadav moment is not only an anti-colonial movement, but a subaltern resistance-from-below (Srinivasulu 1994)? At the same time, we need to resolve the problem of explaining the apparently divergent policies of the two Yadav chief ministers. I would argue that there is an underlying ideological commonality in the language politics agenda of Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Prasad Yadav, a commonality that must exist if both are a part of a “second anti-colonial movement.” This commonality is easy to miss if one defines the battle as pro-English versus anti-English. There are more than two sides, a point on which Lohia failed to follow through: the anti-Sanskritized Hindi (writ large, the anti-communal) agenda is just as important to the politics of subalternity as the anti-English agenda. The language policies of Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Prasad Yadav must be policies validating common speech, rather than being just anti-English, to be part of an anti-elite project. The elite is not monolithic linguistically; there is an English-speaking elite and a (Sanskritized) Hindi-speaking elite. As Orsini (1995: 58) has stated, “post-1947 Hindi cannot be considered a ‘popular national language’ versus the ‘elite national language’ English. Rather they represent two different elites.”

In making this case, we first need to note that Mulayam Singh Yadav, in pushing for *angrezi hatao* (banishing English) also established a vernacular language center where both Dravidian and other Indo-Aryan languages of India are taught (personal observation, Lucknow, November 1993). His rhetoric regarding Urdu once he returned to the chief ministership in late 1993 suggested, at least to some, a re-appropriation of Hindi as the language of the masses and of the state; that is, away from the Sanskritized Hindi appropriated by the right (Kumar 1994). Laloo Prasad Yadav's policy on English in Bihar, i.e., promoting English in the school curriculum, may seem less likely to be ideologically anti-elite than Mulayam Singh Yadav's *angrezi hatao*, but nevertheless is consistent with an anti-elite ideology, I would argue. Laloo's image is one of a common man, a rustic buffoon to some, who shows up at IMF headquarters in Washington, D.C. in a country garb looking for a spittoon for his mouthful of betel nut juice — exemplary perhaps of his personal “resistance” to global elitism. He speaks colloquially, lacing his Hindustani with Bhojpuri (his mother tongue, officially designated as a dialect of Hindi). This makes him popular, and

demonstrates his political astuteness: Verma (1993) claims Laloo Prasad Yadav “gave impetus to the backward class movement by his perfect use of the language of the poor, dalits [untouchables] and slum-dwellers in his speeches.”

Why, then, would Laloo Prasad Yadav embrace English, the symbol of the upper class elite? He’s not embracing English, he’s hijacking it, suggests a young Indian sociolinguist:

Like gunboat diplomacy, in the hands of a few English helps maintain a kind of balance that will be destroyed if the instrument passes over to those who have been kept beyond its reach so far. By wanting to hand over the instrument to the backward castes or the local people, Laloo Prasad Yadav has in fact attempted piracy. (Agarwal 1993)

As Pennycook (1995: 55) puts it in more general terms: “counter-discourses can be formed in English.”

Laloo Prasad Yadav has shifted the parameters of the discourse on language in north India. For Laloo Prasad Yadav and his supporters on his English language policy, the debate on language needs to be indigenized, just as the English language itself has been indigenized in India according to Kachru (1983) and others. It also is being de-colonized: by claiming to appropriate English for the masses, the “Other” for Laloo Prasad Yadav is not the British colonialists but rather his political opponents, the right-wing Hindu nationalists. Indeed, the Bihar chapter of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party, successor to the Jana Sangh) opposed Laloo Prasad Yadav’s proposal, although the Bihar Congress party supported it. In Laloo’s discourse, those who oppose English for the masses are the elites, who are wary of any policy that might encourage the emergence of lower castes as a political force. As one of Laloo’s supporters noted, “those who are opposed to English would naturally be treated as persons opposed to the very concept of reservation [i.e., quota affirmative action]” (Yadav 1993). According to this statement, it is the same forces that oppose the mass appropriation of English which fight against reservations policy for the lower castes. Just as the BJP opposes Laloo’s English language policy, its predecessor, the Jana Sangh, vehemently opposed the reservations policy of Laloo’s mentor, Karpoori Thakur, when he was Chief Minister of Bihar in the late 1970s, causing his government to fall (and just as a decade earlier, the Jana Sangh had opposed the recognition of Urdu proposed by Karpoori Thakur who was then education minister, leading to riots; see Section 4 above).

In the end, Laloo Prasad Yadav was forced to back down from his proposal by members of his own administration and party. Opponents to his proposal within his own party invoked past imaginings equating English with the colonizer

in proclaiming that “Hindi is our mother while English is a beautiful prostitute” (Lal 1993). Even more illustrative of invoking past discourses was when Laloo Prasad Yadav’s party colleagues, in opposing his compulsory English proposal, reminded him of his indebtedness not only to Mohandas K. Gandhi, Rammanohar Lohia, Jayaprakash Narayan and Karpoori Thakur, but also to Purushottam Das Tandon and Madan Mohan Malviya, the latter two being the epitome of the revivalist/traditionalist elites in favor of Sanskritized Hindi (Verma 1993). Other of Laloo’s party colleagues steered clear of invoking revivalist discourse in opposing his proposal, implicating instead Rajiv Gandhi’s renewal of the “foul contract” in claiming that it was the elites’ adoption of “English culture” that “was responsible for the demolition of the Babri Masjid as well as continuation of casteism in society” (Verma 1993).

There have been times, however, when Laloo Prasad Yadav appears to “speak from within the dominant discourse”, although this doesn’t necessarily in and of itself invalidate his claim to subaltern resistance (Raheja and Gold 1994: 15). As his political career has become increasingly threatened because of incompetence and scandal, Laloo himself has occasionally reverted to revivalist/traditionalist imagery, for example when he suggested replacing “Bihar” and “Patna” (the capital of Bihar) with their Mauryan empire names, invoking a re-imagining of the state’s (and by implication, his) glory (Ahmed 1997).

The above suggests that the left ideology entails more than an anti-English, pro-Hindi language policy. It does not suggest, however, that politics inspired by this ideology is moral or ideal. For example, while illiteracy and infant mortality decreased under Laloo Prasad Yadav’s administration (Prasad 1995), corruption and sycophancy were widespread. Hauser (1996) has suggested that the Bihar Chief Minister lacked the ability to even conceive of structural change, let alone implement it. In Uttar Pradesh, the second Mulayam Singh Yadav government, elected in 1993, was a coalition between Yadav’s Samajwadi party and the Dalit [untouchable castes] BSP. Despite the initial euphoria over the empowerment of lower castes and Dalits, the coalition fell apart after internal bickering. The BSP then formed a short-lived minority government on its own — with support from the BJP! This Dalit-upper caste ruling combination has since been repeated. In north India, politics, including language politics, isn’t moral, it’s democratic: “the language debate is an outgrowth of the democratic process of politics” (Sheth 1990: 35). Rural-based backward castes, frequently in alliance with Muslims and Dalits, are challenging the English-speaking Nehruvian urban-based elite and attempting to side-line the communally inspired upper-caste *Hindutva* elite in the process. It is a competitive — and opportunistic — struggle, between what Sheth (1990) calls the “vernacular elite”, the English-speaking elite, and the Sanskritized

Hindi elite. As Srinivasulu (1994: 159) has argued, we should realize that in the early 1990s in north India, a “new subaltern subjectivity” emerged “which has the potential to break through the confines of ... [the] two dominant discourses of nationalism: one, the “secular” nationalism claim[ing] to be a continuation of the legacy of anti-colonial struggle [represented by Congress]; and, the other, the Hindutva cultural nationalism ...”

This potential was on the verge of being realized when this newly emerging vernacular elite came to power at the national (center) level in 1996. In the 1996 elections, the Congress party, widely regarded, at least in the past, as the bastion of the English-speaking urban professional elites, lost significantly. The BJP, representing the upper-caste *Hindutva* elite, emerged as the largest party and attempted to form a government. Vajpayee, the BJP Prime Minister, took his oath in Hindi rather than English as had been the tradition among the Nehruvian elite, while other BJP MPs took the oath in Sanskrit. But the BJP could find few coalition partners and lasted less than two weeks in office, with Vajpayee resigning rather than facing a vote of confidence he was sure to lose. The government that followed was a leftist coalition, the United Front, ranging from Laloo Prasad Yadav’s Janata Dal to Mulayam Singh Yadav’s Samajwadi Party to small, regional parties to (some) Communists. Supported from the outside by the defeated Congress party, it was, in essence, an anti-BJP alliance. The first prime minister of this coalition government, Deve Gowda, from Karnataka in southern India, came from backward caste peasant background, and spoke very little Hindi. The defense minister was Mulayam Singh Yadav, the Banish English warrior from U.P., whose English is limited. Apparently cabinet meetings were difficult linguistically, with Mulayam Singh Yadav not able to communicate with Gowda in English and Gowda unable to communicate in Hindi (although Gowda worked on improving his Hindi).

Even the seamier side of politics in north India ran into linguistic difficulties. One of the coalition supporters of the government was the JMM, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, a party based in the Jharkhand tribal area of southern Bihar. The JMM and other Jharkhandi parties have been fighting for social justice for the tribals. But they play politics as well. One JMM MP, not long before the 1996 election, went public with the accusation that the Congress prime minister in the early 1990s, Narasimha Rao, had, through an intermediary, bribed him to vote against a no confidence vote that the opposition had organized. His public statement regarding this bribe was released by the BJP to whom he had defected. He subsequently rescinded his defection, claiming that the BJP had bribed him to make this false accusation against the Prime Minister. As the plot thickened and this JMM MP looked increasingly sleazy, he mounted his defense: “I didn’t sign

it [the BJP-released statement alleging the bribe]. It was in English. I do not know what it said" (*India Today* 1996). One can bemoan a political system that not only condones, but seems to encourage, such corruption. Or one can celebrate the fact that it's credible that a non-English-speaking tribal would be bribed — that is, he is part of the political process, however seamy, and not excluded from it.

These changes at the national level, i.e., at the Center, were possible because of changes at the state levels in north India in the past decade, represented by the chief ministerships of Laloo Prasad Yadav in Bihar and Mulayam Singh Yadav in U.P. Although their overt language policy preferences regarding English differed, they shared a similar ideology, one that is in stark contrast to that of the BJP or Congress parties. Yet governance based on this ideology has proved unsustainable. By late 1997, the United Front government was fragmenting into its component parts, setting the stage for new general elections in 1998 and again in 1999.

7. The new *Hindutva* ideology

With no party winning a clear majority in the 1998 elections, the BJP formed a weak coalition government, only to be brought down a year later by a seemingly revitalized Congress party — revitalized under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of Rajiv. However, Sonia's charisma failed to deliver in the ensuing elections in the fall of 1999 and the BJP returned to power as head of a more solidified coalition.

Ideology has been the "BJP's Achilles' heel" in forming alliances and coalitions (Sharma 1998). The BJP has had to dilute "its *Hindutva* agenda which is euphemistically called cultural nationalism" (Sharma 1998). It has found it difficult despite the political compulsions to do so, because this ideology is determined not just by the party but by the RSS: "the fact remains that it is the RSS which sets the BJP agenda and so the BJP finds that it cannot on its own even think of diluting the *Hindutva* agenda set for it by the RSS" (Sharma 1998). The RSS, as mentioned earlier, is an allegedly non-political Hindu revivalist organization, established in 1925, that adopted modern organizational structures and tactics in emulation of what was perceived to be successful Western proselytizing religious and cultural movements (Jaffrelot 1996). It is this highly structured, committed nature of the RSS that immunizes it from shifting political winds. Its purpose early on was to "construc[t] an ideology of Hindu nationalism" (Jaffrelot 1996: 76). The linking of ideology and Hindu cultural nationalism with modernity is clear in the 1993 statement by Advani, one of the most

prominent leaders of the BJP with career roots in the RSS: “cultural nationalism [is] not only the substratum of India’s unity but also a dynamo for the country’s progress and transformation into a modern progressive and prosperous nation” (quoted in Jaffrelot 1996: 483).

While focusing on cultural nationalism in recent years, the RSS and the BJP have also espoused economic nationalism (Jaffrelot 1996: 533ff.), linking the latter with an anti-English stand. In one fell swoop, the RSS in 1997 “attack[ed] foreign multinational firms and demand[ed] curbs on the widespread use of English” (Madhavan 1997). The anti-foreign investment tone facilitates alliances with components of the left. One of the BJP’s staunchest coalition partners in recent years has been George Fernandes’ Samata party. Fernandes, currently Defense Minister, was responsible for kicking Coca-Cola out of India in the mid-1970s under Indira Gandhi’s populist regime. The anti-English tone, in contrast, has won few friends for the BJP. Mulayam Singh Yadav, the politician with the best anti-English credentials, remains the fiercest of the BJP’s opponents. And the BJP equivocates on the language issue — while the local BJP government in Delhi, for example, has attempted to push through an anti-English (*angrezi hatao*) policy, the BJP leader L. K. Advani, recognizing the BJP’s appeal to the urban upper-caste middle class, has admonished the “Banish English” advocates within his party (Sonntag 1996: 18).

The BJP also equivocated on economic nationalism during recent election campaigns, at least in the English language press (see, e.g., Bhaumik 1997: 16). Vajpayee, now Prime Minister, argued for “[l]iberalisation with a human face” (Miglani 1997). However in the Hindi language press, there was no equivocation (Gupta and Sharma 1996). While the BJP focused on campaigning on moderate economic policies and disregarded ideological issues in the English language press, L. K. Advani of BJP delivered speeches on “the party’s distinct ideology and cultural nationalism” to the illiterate (*India Today* 1997). The BJP may well split its audience through linguistic differentiation, a successful electoral strategy that masks its new *Hindutva* ideology (Pool 1992).

8. Conclusion

English remains a potent and ideologically laden issue in India. Indeed, one of the few stories in the *New York Times* on Indian elections in recent years was on the English language controversy (Kinzer 1998). While the *Times* correspondent portrayed the issue as essentially one of thank-god-the-Indians-are-finally-throwing-off-the-colonial-yoke, what I would regard as an essentially Orientalist

analysis, I have tried to argue that the politics of the English language in (north) India is much more complex and nuanced. I conclude that perhaps the best guide to deciphering these politics is one that distinguishes between the ideologies of the left and the right. Although the left-right ideological distinction may help us understand English language politics, it is not necessarily a predictor of specific language policies regarding English.

CHAPTER 10

Mixed Motives

Ideological Elements in the Support for English in South Africa

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The English tongue is of no account, stretching no further than this island of ours, nay not there over all. (Richard Mulcaster, 1582)

At the end of the twentieth century the relationship between English and social empowerment is still complex and fraught with the implications of colonial history ... (Leon de Kock, 1993)¹

1. Dominant language or dominating language?

English is the *dominant* language of South Africa. Assimilation to certain discourses about colonial power relations has tended to obscure the useful meaning of that term and fudge some necessary distinctions, so it is necessary to be quite clear: the word *dominant* is used here to describe prime status as a language of choice for sociolinguistically High functions.² A dominant language is not necessarily *dominating*, in the sense of forcing other languages out or providing an ideological filter through which their (lesser) worth is determined. And it is certainly not necessarily *predominant*: English is the first language of only 9% of the South African population. Afrikaans and Zulu both claim more second language speakers than English.³ Yet it is still, indisputably, the dominant language. Politicians use it most frequently by strategic preference. It is dominant on television, partly for economic reasons, and also on radio to a lesser extent. The demand for English is so high that established African language newspapers

are feeling the pinch, and only in the Western Cape province is the demand for Afrikaans demonstrably increasing. Many previously Afrikaans schools are having to accommodate classes through the medium of English as their ethnic population changes. And Afrikaans medium universities, technikons and colleges are increasingly offering English options, to cope with the needs of a new ethnic diversity in their enrolment, to attract enough local students, and to prepare for the international market. Despite the power of Afrikaner capital, commerce and industry function and network largely in English. The National Defence Force has opted for English as the “thread language” with other national languages used to support it. And the civil service is tending to use English as the base language in practice, employing other languages only as there is a demand for them. Not all of these situations are stable. The use of what we could call “English mainly” in many of these areas is being challenged in terms of the national constitution which names eleven languages the official languages of the Republic of South Africa. There are functional problems with the overwhelming use of English in education and in some other areas, particularly through lack of personnel with adequate competence in the language. And there are some vigorous efforts to promote other languages. Nevertheless, English is the *dominant* language of South Africa, a status supported, but not created, by international media like CNN, by the cinema industry, and by tourism.⁴ To have *dominant* status English must enjoy very substantial affirmation from the African majority in the country.

It is not the purpose of this essay either to applaud or deplore that fact. Rather it sets out to examine the ideological underpinnings of the *dominant* status of English in South Africa, and explore some of the ideological crosscurrents which would qualify that position. This involves running the emotional gauntlet of a number of language struggles. In the circumstances, reading a situation in one country through the refractive lens of another may provide useful distance, particularly when it comes to understanding the ideological construction of identity. In the next section of this paper, the questions of language and identity in a post-colonial South Africa are briefly set in their politico-historical context, the issues explored by comparison and contrast with the Irish situation.⁵ In the third section, the ideologically fraught subject of literacy, and particularly literacy in English for colonial peoples, is explored as part of a larger social history of enfranchisement involving both metropolitan developments and African responses. The final section examines some of the ideological cross-currents in the development of South African language policy and practice today, and points to research which suggests the sociolinguistic complexity of the actual status of English in South Africa at the end of the twentieth century.

2. Ireland and South Africa: Two colonial language histories

“Who invented Ireland?” asks Declan Kiberd (1996: 1) in the first sentence of his history of modern Irish literature. Given Ireland’s troubled colonial past, and the status of English in Ireland, the three answers he suggests are of some relevance in post-colonial South Africa after a long history of conflict.

The Irish, of course, invented Ireland. That is the common sense answer, just as it seems obvious that Africans invented Africa. The twentieth century Irish movement for national independence “imagined the Irish people as an historic community, whose self-image was constructed long before the era of modern nationalism and the nation state”. However, the very texts in the Irish language which support this view also “seem to take pleasure in the fact that identity is seldom straightforward and given, more often a matter of negotiation and exchange” (Kiberd 1995: 1). The Africanist view of a humane historic community transcending the limitations of nationalism and the nation state emerged also in the independence struggle. It was and is an assertion of value in the face of colonialist erasure, and it has some demonstrable support in the historical record. However, it also simplifies, tending to reify identity rather than understand it as dynamic. In both Africa and Ireland, pre-colonial languages are involved. In both cases, an understanding of historical process is required if the languages are to flourish. It is not enough to obtain legal status for the languages or even to require them to be taught. Mere assertion does not work. “After seventy years of official support and daily classes [in Irish] for every school child in the land, only five per cent could claim ‘frequent user’ ability, and only two per cent ‘native speaker’ fluency” (Kiberd 1995: 649). English is not only the dominant language of Ireland, it is the predominant language. English is the dominant language in South Africa as well, but it is certainly not the predominant one. Modern Irish people construct their identity largely in English, but the same could be said of a relatively small proportion of South Africans.

The English also helped to invent Ireland. “Through many centuries, Ireland was pressed into service as a foil to set off English virtues, as a laboratory in which to conduct experiments, and as a fantasy-land in which to meet fairies and monsters” (Kiberd 1995: 1). There are powerful incentives *not* to know the other on its own terms. *Terra incognita* has always given licence to the imagination to appropriate what it will and to assign value to the other. In *Mapping wild gardens*, the Polish scholar, Zbigniew Bialas (1997: 29), has provided a sophisticated account of European “symbolic conquest” of South Africa: “dominance and surveillance *over* nature and society.” This inscription has had the effect of immeasurably heightening the importance of English and (more equivocally)

Afrikaans in public discourse, and of denigrating the African languages as primitive, or at least as offering little purchase on modern realities. It has also led, as in Ireland, to complex equivocalities about identity. South African Africans have both developed strong (and at times aggressive) ethnic identities and accepted themselves to an astonishing degree at the coloniser's valuation. Leon de Kock (1993) offers an important analysis of this trend.

The third answer Kiberd (1995: 2) entertains is that "exile is the nursery of nationality". Massive emigration from Ireland in the nineteenth century saw to the growth of large Irish communities in the major cities of Britain, North America and Australia. They were dependent on a sense of Irishness for their identity. And yet they depended on being able to be Irish through the medium of English as a matter of survival: they "were keenly aware of the hybrid sources of their own nationalism." This impetus did little for the Irish language, but a great deal for the Irish literary achievement in English. A second kind of exile was the product of urbanisation. The children of rural people, brought up in cities, faced extended periods of schooling in English, and "a life conducted through the medium of English became itself a sort of exile" (Kiberd 1995: 2). This led to the formation of the Irish language movement, the Gaelic League. With some adjustments, the South African experience is interestingly analogous. For political rather than economic reasons, large numbers of South African political leaders went into exile as the apartheid stranglehold tightened. They fought the national battle from abroad, and found themselves working almost exclusively through the medium of a language other than their own, usually English, which had generally been the language of their formal education. Their return from exile brought back into South Africa a group of highly competent leaders, most with a high level of proficiency in English and a tendency to use it to avoid any ethnic taint in their political engagement with a multi-ethnic reality. Internally, too, political leadership of the resistance movements tended to use English in public life. This was for three reasons. The preferred language of the oppressor was Afrikaans, so using English was an oppositional gesture. English bypassed ethnic markers in ways which were useful in forging a national movement, so that, despite its colonial history, it became the common language of liberation. Further, the internal leadership had to be readily intelligible to the media, which was geared for English and was able to reach the world in English. As a result, for better for worse, the heroic figures of the struggle had (and have) a largely English public presence. The second kind of exile through urbanisation is perhaps more complex in South Africa than in Ireland, due to the multi-ethnic character of the country. The move to the cities has been dramatic, accelerated by drought and crop failure in areas practising a subsistence economy. The

demand of the commercial and industrial sector for English, the pattern of schooling through the medium of English, a predominantly English media sector, and the complexities of multilingual communities needing a *lingua franca* have all combined to strengthen the position of English. On the other hand, it is precisely in the social turbulence of urban life that linguistic and cultural loss is registered, and conservative (or conservation) movements arise. The pressure for promotion and development of Tshivenda, for example, does not come from the rural communities, but from the educated elite. It is also the English educated elite which is likely to appeal to the language rights enshrined in the constitution.

Ireland and South Africa have many analogous experiences, yet they are also significantly different in their history and circumstances. Ireland had an identity predating the modern state. Its current identity is informed by that ancient one, however mythologised, and its current citizens largely share a deep historical affinity with it. South Africa is a fiction of much more recent date. Unlike Ireland, it has no “natural” constituency. It is the product, partly, of a series of territorial claims in the name of an empire, supposed, as Rhodes claimed, “to establish justice, to promote liberty, and to ensure peace over the widest possible area of the planet” (quoted Judd 1997: 121). That was a vision widely shared, but not given any consistent support by the British government. Judd (1997: 129) notes that “Partly as a result of the frenzied empire-building of Cecil Rhodes and many others, the late Victorians had acquired a colonial empire of vast proportions that their descendants were to neglect for half a century and then abandon within a few years.” It is true that British thinking tended to the idea of a united South Africa from the 1870s, bringing together the white groups to form one nation as in 1910.⁶ In the half century and more after Union, English speaking South Africans established an identity at some remove from the metropolis, Afrikaner nationalism made a strong, quasi-totalitarian bid for authorship in a different language than English, and African nationalism was stirred into asserting other claims again. Initially, African nationalism accepted the flattening European way of lumping all black people together, even elevating this undifferentiated identity to a new self-definition of supposedly ancient origin in the pan-Africanist rhetoric of the 1950s. Gradually, the imperatives of ethnicity and the claims of nine South African “indigenous” languages began to be felt, and a fairly consistent pattern of South Africanism emerged in response. “South Africa”, as conceived today, is a product of the interaction of these elements, all such interactions having implications for language.

3. Literacy and social change

In the forging of the modern unitary state of South Africa, substantial changes in the way of life of the majority of its citizens were inevitable. Most of the changes are still taking place. A largely subsistence economy continues to yield to the attractions of paid work or enterprise in urban mining and industrial contexts. A traditional pattern of clan government has been unequally yoked with modern democratic systems which portend its demise. And a culture which relies on traditional wisdom and works exclusively in the oral mode has had to yield or adapt to the imperatives of an empirical and literate order. It is in exploring the development of literacy that the ideological pressures supporting English are most strongly felt, but they are augmented by both economic and political considerations.

Literacy, as Paulo Freire and others have reminded us, necessarily involves reading both the word and the world if it is to have the progressive consequences often claimed for it.⁷ In the technical sense of being able to decode the printed word, literacy can be profoundly destructive. If it involves a radical break with the understood traditional order the learner can lose a whole world for the sake of a mere technical competence. Literacy supposedly affords access to more generalised kinds of knowledge, more advanced kinds of work, and different patterns of association. Yet these are idle gains if the learner is not able to connect the old ways of seeing and the new, finding a place as a full human being in this world of opportunity. Real literacy includes an ability to read the actual worlds in which the literate person has to function as a full human being, and to respond creatively within them. If this expanded sense of literacy seems more orthodox now than it was in 1987, it is because the “developed” world has faced a quiet cognitive revolution in the intervening time, and has used the term “literacy” in precisely this way in connection with computers. Computer literacy also involves a paradigm shift, and must also not involve a break with a whole world if it is to be of value. It refers not primarily to technical knowledge of how to use specific programmes, but to an ability to find one’s way around the world of computers: to meet new situations quickly and well, invent applications, learn new programmes, develop new strategies, and reinterpret tried and tested procedures so that the computer can be used to improve or simplify performance. However, such a concept of literacy as an end to be aimed at in educational programmes is a late 20th century development.

Leon de Kock (1993: 102), in his study of missionary narrative in 19th century South Africa, observes that:

Literacy was the basis of what became an informing, knowledge-creating representational order. The larger object of literacy was a linguistic colonialism which placed 'English' and the values embedded in it at the apex of 'civilization'. The linguistic/semantic/semiotic transformation implicated in literacy teaching was therefore at the centre of the broader colonisation of South Africa, and the great contribution of the missionaries to the re-invention of South Africa and her peoples.

This requires qualification, largely because the concept of linguistic colonialism, like its Phillipsonian prototype, is deceptive.⁸ It suggests an imposition of English in the interests of the metropolis. The actual process seems to have been driven by other considerations which closely parallel those in social and political change and educational development in the metropolis.⁹ And it is my contention that these other considerations made of the literacy drive an oppositional process, earning credibility for English. Adverse implications of missionary practice and their contribution to the unhappy invention of South Africa can be seen with the wisdom of hindsight. In some cases, there was overt complicity with the imperial order, especially in the schools. Yet these same schools were perceived by the apartheid government at mid-century as the major threat to an order based on race and were summarily closed. In examining the historical record, we need to remind ourselves that real decisions are made in determinate contexts, subject to current practical and ideological constraints. Reputations of the kind that support English are gained in working under those constraints with perceived integrity over long periods of time.

4. Common attitudes to literacy: Dr Johnson on Earse

A mere fifty years before the English speaking missionaries¹⁰ began their work in South Africa, that normative figure of 18th century English letters, Dr Samuel Johnson, undertook "A journey to the western islands of Scotland." There, with the earnest Boswell for company, he encountered a largely pre-literate society speaking Earse, the Highland Gaelic. Admitting that he understands not a word of the language, he repeats what he has been told about Earse:

It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood.
(Johnson 1958: 207)

What literacy there is relates to the church. The synod of Argyle has translated "some little books of piety" and produced "a metrical version of the Psalms" in Earse.

In other words, literacy has been introduced as instrumental in spreading and securing the Gospel, a rationale evident among others in the South African mission field fifty years on.

Although Dr Johnson is notorious for his xenophobia, he is not anti-Celtic here. He is concerned quite explicitly with literacy. In the same paragraph, he says:

The *Welsh* and the *Irish* are cultivated tongues. The Welsh, two hundred years ago, insulted their English neighbours for the instability of their orthography; while the *Earse* merely floated in the breath of the people, and could therefore receive little improvement.

Furthermore, Johnson (1958: 208) believes that literacy in Earse is an unlikely achievement: “no man that has learned only *Earse* is, at this time, able to read.” It is understood that those who have learned to read have learned English. Theoretically, Johnson (1958: 207) understands the process of improvement as applicable to Earse. Where there are books,

By degrees one age improves upon another. Exactness is first obtained, and afterwards elegance. But diction, merely vocal, is always in its childhood.

However, it is clear that the pace of the modern world and the condition of a unitary state (the United Kingdom) in that world are unlikely to afford opportunity for that progressive development. English must supply the need.

The discourses and assumptions in Dr Johnson’s account, then, are part of a common heritage for the missionaries encountering pre-literate black South Africans in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is worth spelling them out. Illiteracy is seen as a constituent condition of barbarism, even if the illiterates are white and Christian. Literacy brings refinement, improvement, cultivation, growth. Without it people are condemned to grossness of thinking and action, or to perpetual intellectual childhood. Literacy in the native language is introduced for narrow instrumental purposes, and is not sustainable without literacy in English, which provides access to a wider shared life and a superior civilisation. Finally, there is not time for the slow processes of indigenous development, and all should go on the English fast track. By the time the missionaries reach South Africa in any numbers, the utilitarian progress ideology of the nineteenth century has given its own cast to such ideas, and it in turn is shaped in part by a concern with democracy.

5. Literacy and democratisation in Britain and South Africa

A relatively small proportion of the British were literate in the first half of the nineteenth century. Through intensive efforts, often in Sunday schools, the proportion had arisen sufficiently by 1832 to see the launch of two regular periodicals of wide circulation with the literate working class as a large part of their intended readership: *Chambers's Journal* in Edinburgh, and the *Penny Magazine* in London, though both circulated throughout the United Kingdom and the *Penny Magazine* had distributors in Dublin and New York as well.¹¹ Chambers (1882: 31) records as his guiding principle:

to take advantage of the universal appetite for instruction which at present exists; to supply to that appetite food of the best kind, in such forms and at such price as will suit the convenience of every man in the British dominions.

The impetus is on the one hand profoundly democratic; on the other, aimed at providing an approved diet of reading (“the best kind”). The same applies to the *Penny Magazine*. Volume 1, number 1, page 1 (March 31, 1832) opens with an article on “Reading for All”. The magazine aims:

to fix the mind upon calmer, and, it may be, purer subjects of thought than the violence of party discussion, or the stimulating details of crime and suffering.

The desire is explicitly not to supplant an interest in current events and public life, but rather to offer “a universal convenience and enjoyment” “to *all* classes.” The material offered was bland enough, but offering it was to enter contested territory. The *Penny Magazine* sets out explicitly to counter opposition to “General Education”: to undermine the efforts of people who “may desire to retain a monopoly of literature for those who can buy expensive books”.¹² *Chambers's Journal* and the *Penny Magazine* — and literacy work in general — represented a deliberate and highly successful political act to empower the lower classes for wider participation in the society. Their champions saw literacy as a precondition for social mobility, democratisation, and the harnessing of the national energies in the march of progress. The Reform Bill of 1832 extended the franchise to the affluent middle classes, and redistributed parliamentary representation to take proper account of the growing urban-industrial complexes. The next reform came in 1867 when the electorate was doubled by including many male members of the industrial working class. A further reform in 1884 extended the vote to all males over 21. These few dates suggest how contested the notion of democracy was through the greater part of the Victorian era. However, it had strong and benign supporters, and was increasingly enfolded in a notion of

national dignity. The Preface to the bound first volume of the *Penny Magazine*, dated December 18th, 1832, considers the success of the journal as a mark of Britain's being a country "where civilization is carried forward to very high degrees of perfection." Not only is there a "vast number" of people able to read, but the technical and managerial ability to meet their needs is available, and has in some cases been developed in the course of the first year. The same Preface makes a bold declaration, evincing a faith in the potential of the common people:

The people will not abuse the power they have acquired to read, and therefore to think. Let them be addressed in the spirit of sincerity and respect, and they will prove that they are fully entitled to the praise which Milton bestowed upon their forefathers, as "a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious and piercing spirit, — acute to invent, subtile and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to."

Leon de Kock's comment that "Literacy was the basis of what became an informing, knowledge-creating representational order" in South Africa is undoubtedly true. But this reports an interpretation after the event, not a driving concern at the time. The motives for the emphasis on literacy need to be plain if we are to understand the ideological support for English in modern South Africa. In pursuing literacy programmes, the early missionaries were in the company of many progressive thinkers of their day, concerned to empower and to nurture a growing body politic and to realise the full potential of the people they were serving. To some extent, this openness to the potential in the indigenous people of the colonies was more widely shared. By the 1870s, it was no longer evident. Ridge (1987) gives an account of how the Romantic myth of paradise shaped possible responses to indigenous people, and how these responses changed with the colonial-imperial consolidation in the 1870s. The same divide is illustrated in the history of Lovedale College, examined very closely by de Kock (1993: 109–111). The first Principal, William Govan, saw Africans as equals, and wanted a full European curriculum for them, including the classical languages, so that they could compete on equal terms with Europeans.¹³ This led to a dispute between him and James Stewart, who eventually succeeded him in 1870. Stewart wanted African schooling to be based on different principles to those applying to people of European origin. He favoured abandoning the classical languages, treating English as the classical language in the curriculum, and emphasising industrial education. His approach was probably affected by the changing political climate and the move in empire towards a notion of racial superiority based on social Darwinism. However, it was not solely or perhaps even primarily affected by those discourses. It is interesting to note the move for

English to replace the classics in England in the earlier nineteenth century even in tertiary curricula as new universities were founded to cater for the needs of the middle and working classes (Palmer 1965). It is also interesting to note H. G. Wells's caustic comments on the British Education Act of 1870. He saw it as designed "to educate the lower classes for employment on lower class lines, and with specially trained, inferior teachers who had no university quality" (quoted Argles 1964: 28). Yet the Education Act passed as progressive, and indeed extended compulsory primary education to the children of the working class. Stewart's thinking in 1870, then, bears a strong resemblance to the received wisdom of the British parliament in the same year. In sum, the missionary response to race, and so to education, in South Africa in the 19th century was closely related to the responses to class and the demands of development and democratisation in Britain in a turbulently transformative period of metropolitan evolution. Literacy in English went along with a concern for fuller participation in national life (there was a qualified franchise in the Cape), access to a wider shared culture (predicated on non-racialism, because race was not a decisive issue in the metropolis), and opportunity for social and economic mobility (particularly with the urban-industrial challenges to the traditional society and economy). That none of these things was unproblematic does not alter the broad, progressive aspirations which they represent: aspirations which resound in later attempts to come to terms with the issues.

6. Ideological continuities in times of rapid change

In July 1934, the New Education Fellowship, then "the one existing permanent educational organisation of world-wide scope" (Malherbe 1937: i), organised a conference in South Africa on "Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society." The thirties were a time of political ferment in many parts of the world. In South Africa they saw the enfranchisement of white women (1930) and the removal of property or financial qualifications for the franchise for white men. 1931 saw the passing of the Statute of Westminster by the British parliament, granting autonomy to the dominions, which would nevertheless be "united by a common allegiance to the Crown". The economic upheavals and social challenges of the Great Depression led to the main political parties forming a coalition in 1933 and uniting in 1934 (Thompson 1990: 160f). The main political currents in parliamentary politics had always been what is now identified as racist. However, there had been three main streams: one which emphasised a common destiny for the races, one which saw a long process of adaptation ahead before there could be

a common society, and another which aimed at increasing separation. Segregationism was in the ascendent. The union of the parties saw the beginnings of an intensification of structured racist thinking in white politics: thinking which would lead to the victory of Afrikaner nationalists in 1948 on an apartheid ticket. In an attempt to appease the Afrikaner nationalists, “qualified” Africans were removed from the common voters’ roll in 1936. In 1938, there were nation-wide celebrations marking the centenary of the Great Trek of the Boers away from British rule and towards an exclusivist Afrikaner independence. In 1939, the social Darwinism which had led to the realignment of politics in the 1870s forced its way onto the world stage in bizarre but terrifying form as Hitler invaded Poland. At the time of the conference in 1934, then, the informing ideals of fuller participation in the national life, access to a wider shared culture, and social and economic mobility were precariously in the balance.

The conference proceedings afford us a privileged look at the complexity of debates about language in the larger context of education and society in the 30s. We can only glance at it in this essay. What is immediately striking is the extent to which the debates could have been taking place 60 and more years later. Little has changed in the substantial issues raised. The war and the apartheid era seem to have silenced the debate for a period, and fixed the ideological positions within which the participants were moving. At the end of the century, the participants have changed, but the issues stand, little better understood than they were in the 30s. Sixty five years on we hear the consensual voices of three African educational and political leaders from different ethnic backgrounds, Xhosa, Zulu and Tswana. The consensus about the role of African and European languages runs deep, and so can be presented in distinctively different styles. The new Africanist voice in this debate in the 1990s, with its insistence on priority to be given to African languages, finds its surprising analogue in three white voices at the conference, two of them English-speaking professors of Bantu Studies at liberal universities, the third a Dutch Reformed missionary in the then Southern Rhodesia.

D.D.T. Jabavu (1934:434), then Lecturer in Bantu Studies at the South African Native College, Fort Hare, presents a full picture of the prior learning the African child brings to school, and argues the child’s “clear advantage over the European in his initial capacity for learning languages”, pointing to many urban children being “often at home in six languages” before they go to school. It seems to Jabavu “unreasonable” to confine the African child, “as many of our White rulers insist on doing, to the medium of his mother tongue for more than a year after starting school.” Jabavu was far from undervaluing the African languages. He taught them with conviction, and his father, John Tengo Jabavu,

was one of the pioneering black journalists in South Africa, sub-editor of the Lovedale mission-linked *Isigidimi sama Xhosa* in 1881 and founder-editor of the independent and oppositional *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Opinions of the People) from 1884. André Odendaal (1984) has shown how the educated elite, specifically including the Jabavus, were able to meet across ethnic boundaries through their education (in English), and were committed to democratic non-racialism. Their hopes were bitterly disappointed and are only now being rearticulated in the invention of a new South Africa. From its foundation in 1912 and through much of its existence, the oldest of the black political movements in South Africa, the African National Congress, has depended on a common language, not only to cross ethnic boundaries, but to participate and stake a claim to participation in a wider, inclusive, national life.¹⁴ The choice for Africans in the 1930s did not present itself as between the riches of traditional life and the aridity of being deracinated “black white men”. Africans could choose to work for an attenuating version of traditional life in what G. H. Welsh (1934: 437), another speaker at the conference, called “some dreamland of adequate reserves”, or to work for full citizenship in the larger, modern society, with some command over their destiny — an aim understandably, but perhaps not inevitably, associated with a command of English. Staggeringly expensive efforts were made to force the first option under apartheid. The second option is being fleshed out in the 1990s.

D. G. S. Mtinkulu (1934: 471f), a Zulu scholar lecturing at Healdtown, presents the ideal of mother tongue education in the most favourable light, but shows the main opposition to it to be from Africans themselves. The reasons are economic and social.

The worker must know his employer's language, and the vast majority of the Bantu to-day do work for the White man. They believe, too, that the White man earns big money because he is educated. [Further,] ... the Bantu fear that the continuance of so many Bantu languages will keep the tribes apart and restrict friendly intercourse. ... A common knowledge of English or Afrikaans immediately puts one at ease when amongst people of a different tribe. There is a sense of oneness and of friendliness, This is one of the reasons why the Bantu prefer to conduct their meetings in English. They don't do this merely to ape the White man as some people think.

Mtinkulu favours what is nowadays called “additive bilingualism”. He considers that whether the other language should be English or Afrikaans will depend on the language dominant in the part of the country concerned. And he notes, in words which have a very modern ring: “for more advanced education, English would give the pupils access to the wider world.”

The Reverend K. T. Motsete (1934: 479) of the Bechuanaland Protectorate (modern Botswana) makes similar points in ways which are differently digested.

The political supremacy of the White man makes it desirable that the African should know the "official languages" of his rulers. Their commercial value, too, is important, for trade is carried on in them. They, too, serve as a medium through which Natives of different tribes and languages may have inter-communication and thereby learn to know each other and to cooperate with each other. The African National Congress, the African Eisteddfod and the Bantu Trade Exhibition are made possible by the use of English as a *lingua franca*. // On the cultural side, European languages provide the "open sesame" to all higher education and professional callings ... // [And, finally,] An African's ability to speak a European language humanises him in the eyes of Europeans [i.e. whites], who, when they hear an African speak in their language, find him to be a human being with feelings and aspirations not unlike their own.

The last point is a reaction against the painful heightening of racist, segregationist thought at the time: the use of English or Afrikaans makes a black person who would otherwise be considered less than human seem a full person to the white person, and so, as it were, to have "benefit of clergy". In an article published the year after the conference, one of the speakers, G.P. Lestrade (1935: 128), distinguishes between three schools of thought on the future of the African people: segregationist, assimilationist, and adaptationist. Against the prevailing trend, none of the white voices we shall glance at is segregationist or significantly racist. However, the cooption of the adaptationist concern with identity to legitimate segregationist "separate development" at a later date, and the use of the assimilationist position to justify the effective exclusion of the majority from public life on linguistic grounds are useful reminders of the insidiousness of racism. Both an emphasis on English and an emphasis on African languages can be racist and dehumanising. By the same token, both can be liberatory and affirmative.

It is probably fair to describe the three white voices selected from those at the conference as adaptationist. Professor G.P. Lestrade (1934: 477) argues that "Africans, in fact, have no reason whatever to be, as many of them unfortunately are, ashamed of their linguistic heritage: they should rather be very proud of it, love it and cherish it." The Rev. A. A. Louw (1934: 479) urges "an attitude of sympathy and reverence" towards a child's African mother tongue, "exalting it to the position to which it is entitled, and instilling in the African child a sense of pride in it." And Professor C. M. Doke (1934: 482) calls for Africans to "have pride and faith in their own language." All three have a justifiable concern at the

undervaluing of a rich heritage, and the self-loathing which is one possible response of the colonial subject to institutional pressures. Louw (1934: 478) also makes the practical point that, “although opportunities for the African to master a European language and in that way enter freely into a wealth of knowledge must not be restricted, yet for many years, perhaps for all time, the masses of Africa will have to receive whatever intellectual and spiritual treasures the older countries can give them through the vernacular only.” The concern that the group which succeeds in the European languages is so small is a feature of much discussion in the 1990s. Finally all three, Lestrade in his article of 1935, and Louw and Doke at the conference, propose a form of linguistic consolidation or harmonisation, by which cognate African languages would have a shared standard written form. Doke had had experience of this in “creating” Shona from four related languages or dialects in what was then Rhodesia. This idea was raised again ten years later by Jacob Nhlapo (1944, 1945), and has been aired more recently with reference to past proposals by Neville Alexander (1989: 74f). These were moderate, enlightened and pretty well-informed white views in the 1930s. They embody an ideological set which was alternative to both the rising tide of segregationist racism among whites and the dominant position among the black intelligentsia at the time. In this regard things have changed. Respect for and pride in the African languages, concern for those Africans with no access to English, and standardisation or harmonisation as a means of securing a future for the languages — these are the distinguishing features of the most strongly expressed black progressive thought on language at the end of the century.¹⁵ It has not overcome support for English. But that is to conceive of the issues in terms of troubling binarities.

Clearly the processes of ideological formation we have been describing are complex and cannot be engaged through easy rhetorical (and ultimately melodramatic) binarities. The colonisers and the missionaries are not best *understood* as villains, and the Africans colonised are not *seen to best advantage* as victims. If there is a pressing need for English, it does not help to see it as a threat. And if there is a deep desire to use Zulu in public life, seeing the language as a weak victim of colonial oppression can only be inhibiting and debilitating. The real choices are much more complex, and the decisions made have immediate implications for the happiness and success of the people making them. English is sometimes chosen as if the choice were inevitable and natural. It is also sometimes chosen in a tightly constraining situation as the only route to true modernity and progress. Neither choice is satisfactory. However, from the evidence before us it is clear that the decision for English is more often functional than out of a sense of its infinite superiority. It is thus consistent with pride in

an African heritage and a desire to affirm an African language. Just as a mother tongue speaker of an African language needs that language in order to read certain aspects of the world, he or she may need another language, perhaps English, to read other aspects of it.

To sum up, the ideological formation which we have been tracing through this discussion of literacy is fed by three main streams: a long-prevalent British set of attitudes as expressed by Dr Johnson; key notions evolved in the gradual extension of education and of the franchise in 19th century Britain; and views articulated by mission educated black people as they faced the implications of the modern condition: living in a unitary state and reading (in a Freirean sense) the unfamiliar world in which they now found themselves. These latter views did not, in theory or in fact, involve dropping the African languages. They involved reserving them for those domains to which they provided an access impossible or unlikely in English. The African languages were thus used for functions usually reserved for Low varieties of a language on the metropolitan model. Here there is a triple terminological problem. First, there are High and Low varieties of all the languages used in South Africa, so one may have a High variety being used for what one might call Low functions. Secondly, for linguistic egalitarians the term Low has strong pejorative connotations, issuing in a sense that the persistent strategic choice described here is pathological. The implication is that citizens must then be persuaded or forced to use all the official languages for High functions. This is sociologically naive and, as such, inimical to language promotion. However, it is too prominent a usage to be ignored. Thirdly, use of the languages for what are understood as Low functions may in fact be instrumental in effecting High functions. For example, use of the African languages in the domains referred to forms a strong, if sometimes chthonic, element in constituting or signalling political identity — a decidedly High function.

It may help those charged with policy development in modern South Africa to understand the complex dynamics outlined above, and to use them as a starting point in the development of the African languages. The dominant position of English in South Africa is not, in fact, decreed from on high or the product of an international EFL conspiracy, but is rather the choice of a non-English majority, who have real needs which they see as met through the language. However, they clearly do not wish the dominant to become the dominating. They deserve to be taken seriously. Failure to accord them this respect is evidence of neocolonial attitudes. Crowley (1996: 52) reminds us of the need “to resist images of those who have been colonised, or subjugated in other ways, as passive recipients of the dictates of their masters”. “Surely,” he remarks, “*that* is the colonial fantasy.”

7. Language policy and language practice in a democratic South Africa

Language policies in South Africa must take the judicable national Constitution as their first point of departure. The Constitution names eleven languages as the official languages of South Africa. Provinces and municipalities may decide which of the eleven they wish to use, provided that the decision takes account of the wishes and needs of the people of those areas. Any citizen has the right to communicate with a government department and to be responded to in the official language of his or her choice. The Bill of Rights, which the Constitution embodies, protects the right of individuals “to use the language ... of their choice” (Constitution 1996: §30 and §31), “to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable” (Constitution 1996: §29(2)), and “to be tried in a language that the accused person understands or, if that is not practicable, to have the proceedings interpreted in that language” (Constitution 1996: §35(3)(k)). The clauses also make provision for a Pan South African Language Board, providing for the promotion and development of the official languages and a number of others with certain functions in South Africa.

On the surface this would seem to prefigure a South Africa with a radically adjusted sociolinguistic status profile. It is at least conducive to an improved status for the African languages. The Constitution does provide for protection of languages against being dominated, and may be very useful as a legal framework for language planning. However, it could no more *determine* sociolinguistic status than King Alfred could command the tide. Whatever the causes, it is a hard fact that English was the language used almost exclusively in negotiating the constitution itself. And English has continued to be the main and almost exclusive language of the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures. This has not been without some controversy. The balance may change in some ways, driven by the understandable demands of ethnicity, but the role of English as the language of common resort in a country with an apartheid-induced horror of ethnic fragmentation is likely to remain strong. The long-standing ideological association of English with the aspiration to a common society, and the ideologically entrenched notion of English as a language of liberation inform the status of English in politics.

There is one very powerful ideological cross-current. Resistance to the primary (or dominant) use of English comes largely from activists for Afrikaans, the *dominating* language of the apartheid era, and the language of communities which experienced English as a *dominating* language in two periods of aggressive anglicisation in the 1820s and early this century, immediately after the

Anglo-Boer war. Afrikaans mother tongue speakers (the majority not white) are understandably alarmed at the diluted legal status and diminished sociological status of their language in the new order, and the ways in which this is registered in dramatically reduced use in the public media and in public life. Their appeal is to the Constitution. And it is backed by white Afrikaner capital. Even the right wing of Afrikaner nationalism supports the multilingual policy of the government and enthusiastically espouses the language clauses in the Constitution. A recurrent misconception in this debate is a posited 1 : 1 relationship of legal and sociological status as mandatory.

The ideological factors come all the more strongly into play when there are financial stringencies. Parliament and the legislatures cannot afford a European Union-style interpretation and translation service. The first reaction to this was a move to exclusive use of English. A second phase, with strong input from activists for Afrikaans and the African languages has seen some planning within tight financial constraints for use of the applicable range of languages, with English still as the common (and so dominant) factor. The public service is under a constitutional obligation to give equitable status to all languages, and is currently examining ways of using the linguistic resources which its members bring with them, as well as developing an improved state language service. In practice, financial and logistical constraints have favoured English as the common language of communication, with other languages used in cases of demonstrated need or where it is important to signal an adherence in principle to the constitutional ideals. The National Defence Force proposes to use English as the "thread language" for logistical and financial reasons, resorting to the other languages as "link languages" of complementary value in specific situations. The Pan South African Language Board, in its response to this policy proposal, seeks to guard against unreflective imposition of English by asking whether it is indeed the language best understood by the majority of members of the force. However, given the schooling system and the requirements for enlistment, it would seem likely to be so. In the justice system, policy mooted for discussion includes English as language of record with ways being sought of giving substance to the language clauses of the constitution in courtroom practice. But all these moves call for "creative thinking" within a very tight budget. The high-profile trial of ex-State President, P. W. Botha, for contempt of court after he failed to respond to a summons from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, was conducted in English, though it was not the language of the defendant or the presiding senior magistrate. There was adequate provision for evidence presented in Afrikaans to be translated into English. Major efforts are currently being made to develop low budget training programmes for court interpreters to give a professional edge to interpretation.

In national broadcasting, cost factors have markedly favoured the use of English on television, overruling more principled arguments. Imported programmes in English cost a fraction of what imported dubbed programmes cost, and they in turn cost as little as 20% of the cost of locally produced programmes (McNeill 1994). It goes without saying that programmes in any South African official language other than English would have to be made locally. The independent television broadcaster, M-Net, owned by Afrikaans business interests, offers only English in its programming. TABEMA (an acronym for Afrikaans words which could be translated: Task Group for Empowerment of Users of Afrikaans on Television) has repeatedly presented the South African Broadcasting Corporation with valuable critiques of current policy and practice, at times revealing simplistic elements in SABC policy thinking about the role of English, and putting another cast on arguments about viewer preference and cost.¹⁶ Radio is another matter. Lower costs, and the tendency for radio stations to serve particular niche groups, have made for greater linguistic diversity on the airwaves, with English still dominant, however.

South Africa now has a compulsory education policy up to grade 9. As the numbers involved are so great and the funding available is so inadequate, there has been little attempt to enforce the policy. Instead, following IMF neo-liberal guidelines, there has been a major assault on the education system. There has been large-scale reduction in staff complements, with the best teachers having the greatest incentive to leave. Teacher training institutions have also been under threat and many have closed. With leadership diminished and very few posts available to prospective teachers, there is much reduced opportunity to bring about change by in-service training or by introducing fresh blood. Further, with class sizes growing steadily beyond the numbers which classrooms were designed to hold, and beyond numbers which might make less authoritarian methods of teaching readily possible, survival comes before enlightenment. Institutional inertia in teaching and learning is reinforced by structural constraints. However, the multilingual, multicultural classroom has come upon many schools regardless. The challenge will not go away. Language in education policies are being developed nationally and provincially. They have to take account both of practical (physical and professional) circumstances in the schools and of the demands which parent and employer communities are making on education. An informing notion in the policies is “additive multilingualism” — new languages added to the mother tongue without diminishing its significance. English is the dominant language in education through demand and a range of practical considerations. Unless the issues are clarified, and significant work is possible in teacher in-service education, the production of suitable materials and

engaging the support of the community, additive multilingualism will not be achieved. Instead, there is a real danger that English will not only be *dominant* but *dominating* in its effects, and that the dominating English will be an attenuated *lingua franca* version.

Work done in the province of KwaZulu-Natal by Keith Chick and Rodrik Wade (1997) provides an interesting final qualification on the arguments in this section. Taking a large sample of school-leavers and first year university students, all of them Zulu mother tongue speakers, they sought indices of the sociolinguistic status of English among them and evidence of their linguistic behaviour. Their findings (like those of Rima Vesely (1998) in her smaller Cape Town project) reveal the persistence of the ideological formation teased out above in the discussion of literacy. English was valued above all other languages, even more among rural than among urban students. In a ranking exercise, 57.9% valued it first as a language of international contact; 29.78% first as the language of national unity: adverse valuations were minimal. 81% saw themselves as using English as the primary language of their professional lives. 68% saw it as the primary language used in interaction with public servants. These are perhaps less surprising than that 46.9% saw it as the primary language of the areas where they were going to live, and 19.7% as the first language of their home lives in future (Chick and Wade 1997: 274). This represents a huge swing towards English, apparently at the expense of Zulu. However, two interesting observations qualify this conclusion. First, Zulu pupils observed in a formerly white school use code switching “to index an English identity while still retaining a Zulu identity” (Chick and Wade 1997: 276). Secondly, “the linguistic vitality of Black South African English continues to improve relative to that of Standard South African English” (Chick and Wade 1997: 281). Clearly, what has recurrently been conceived as a relatively simple, unidirectional process of assimilation to or domination by English has to be examined qualitatively. It is tending more and more to a dynamic hybridity.

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Notes

1. Mulcaster is quoted in Bryson (1991: 59). Leon de Kock (1993: 56) makes the comment in his doctoral thesis.
2. In the multilingual situation in South Africa, English is the main language of choice for purposes generally reserved to a High variety of a language in a more linguistically homogeneous society. In this it is dominant. Alan Davies (1999: 535) has problematised the term “dominant language” along with the often emotional terms “mother tongue”, “home language” and “first language.” He describes a common situation in many countries of the world where a language of wider communication is dominant outside the home, and the mother tongue (or home language or first language) is dominant in the home: a person may have “more than one dominant language, each language being dominant in certain areas of life.” Davies’s discussion also highlights the interrelatedness of individual and social choice: the individual’s choice is strategic in relation to the social group, but, once made, is also a constitutive element of the social choice. Herriman and Burnaby (1996: 9) point to the situation in the United States where English is the dominant language by choice or tacit consent, and “declaring it official can only serve to repress minorities rights.”
3. This may be deceptive. In a country where many urban people speak four or more languages, a language which has the most strictly *second* language speakers may not have the most speakers overall.
4. Most of this information is documented in Ridge (1996, in press), and Peirce and Ridge (1997). The information on newspapers in the Western Cape was provided on 1 October 1998 by Eben Louw of *Die Burger*. The South African National Defence Force presented the fourth draft of its “Language Policy” to the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) early in 1998 for comment.
5. Ambassador Eamon O. Tuathail of Ireland drew my attention to the similarities in the Irish and South African experience of colonisation and its aftermath, and fed my interest in the comparison. I am grateful to him. Comparisons with other African states are made in Ridge (1999).
6. See Leonard Thompson (1990: 133–34) for a discussion of Carnarvon’s attempts from 1875 to effect a Canadian solution in Southern Africa, uniting the two British colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal with the Orange Free State Republic and the South African Republic (the Transvaal), both of them Boer countries. His efforts came precisely at the time when Afrikaner nationalists began the first movement for the acceptance of Afrikaans as a language in its own right and not as an inferior dialect of Dutch. Carnarvon’s actions led to the first war with the Transvaal (1880–81), confirming the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, and setting the course for the Anglo-Boer War. They also led to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, crushing Zulu military power but launching Zulu politics.
7. See Freire and Macedo (1987) for the most focused discussion of this issue in the late 20th century. I allude to the title, *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*.
8. See Phillipson (1992) for a study of language as a means of political control: “linguistic imperialism.”
9. In their magisterial study of missions and the dialectics of modernity among the Tswana, John L. and Jean Comaroff (1997: 316f) comment on the generic interdependence of accounts of African missions and inner city poverty in the UK. They also state

that colonisation was never a monolithic movement through which an expansive Europe imposed itself, systematically and inexorably, on peripheral populations. It

may have been a world-historical process. But it played itself out in multiple registers and in disconcertingly ambiguous ways. (403)

Their work of most significance to the topic of this paper will appear in the third and final volume of their study.

10. In 1737, the Moravian, Georg Schmidt had established one of the early protestant missions in the world at Genadendal in the Western Cape. Others were active in the Dutch period at the Cape. The English ousted the Dutch in 1806, and a new period began, with the main thrust of British-based missions to Africans commencing in the late 1820s.
11. An excellent account of the rise of a new working class literate culture in the towns of Britain is given in James (1974). A great variety of educational initiatives was involved. It is perhaps also worth bearing in mind that similar initiatives were expanding on the European continent and elsewhere. James (1974: 18) records republication of the *Penny Magazine*, often in translated form, in France, Germany, Holland, Lithuania, Bohemia, Italy, the Ionian Islands, Sweden, Norway, Spanish America, the Brazils and the United States.
12. Chambers (1882: 33) notes that the *Journal* cost three-halfpence while newspapers were so heavily taxed that they cost sevenpence, more than four times as much. The *Penny Magazine* cost only two thirds as much as *Chambers's Journal*. Cost was a major factor in reading. As the *Penny Magazine* (1832: 1) pointed out, a quarto cost five guineas or 105 times as much as the heatedly opposed shilling duodecimo volumes for a popular readership.
13. The Reverend K. T. Motsete (1934: 480) told the conference on Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society, that the demand for the classics among Africans was an index of need. Among other things, the classics afford a perspective on the imperial European races at an earlier phase in their development. Cicero describes the inhabitants of Britain "as being so ugly and unintelligent as not to be fit to be servants in the house of a gentleman of Rome"!
14. Pixley Seme's speech opening the conference at which the South African Natives' Congress (later the African National Congress) was founded, announced that in the face of white exclusionary intransigence in the establishment of the Union of South Africa, they were assembled "so that we can together devise ways and means of forming our national union for the purpose of creating national unity and defending our rights and privileges" (Rive and Couzens 1991: 89). The speech was, necessarily, in English.
15. See especially the work of Neville Alexander (1989 and later) and the work of the National Language Project in Cape Town, as well as the thinking of Kwesi Kwaa Prah (1995), a South African-based Ghanaian professor of Anthropology with a pan-African vision. Prah (1995) contends in rather extreme terms that if the majority of the African people are going to be reached by education and are to develop:

this can best be done in their own idioms. But far and beyond this, one would want to add that, indeed, the whole range of African education from the beginning and the end should be in African languages. This is the only way of giving people confidence in themselves and their culture and providing a viable route to social and economic development.

16. For example, the "Language policy proposal for SABC's TV services", compiled by J. B. du Toit and H. C. Viljoen on behalf of TABEMA, and submitted to the SABC in September 1999.

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