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BEYOND COMMON SENSE IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION *

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It is assumed that by now the widely known UNESCO statement** about the value of vernacular literacy has achieved the status of "common sense" knowledge among those interested in the schooling of minority language groups. The term "common sense" here implies that although there is much that is sound in a common sense view, there is also the danger of oversimplification. Although strongly in favour of bilingual education, both educationally and in terms of the ethics of racial contact, I see a number of areas where an oversimplified approach to it can bring either some harm with the good or at least lessen the effectiveness of the use of the vernacular language in education. The "initial literacy in the vernacular" approach is not a panacea for all minority group educational problems. The article by Joy Kinslow-Harris (1968), probably the best single statement made on the value of vernacular education for Australian Aborigines, was a profound call for a basic change in attitude towards the education of Aborigines, and outlined sound starting procedures. While this paper strongly supports Kinslow-Harris's statement, it wishes also to extend understanding of some important theoretical issues.

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** "It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium." (*The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*, UNESCO 1953, p.11).

1. TRANSFER AND MAINTENANCE MODELS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Most people who support the idea of bilingual education probably also support the principle of self-determination of ethnic minorities rather than their complete absorption or assimilation into the mainstream culture. It follows that those who are sympathetic to such ethnic minorities would not welcome any form of bilingual education that in fact became a powerful tool of assimilation. Two major models of bilingual education need to be defined in broad terms. A *transfer* bilingual education model is one that utilizes the home culture and first language of the child merely as an affective emotional and linguistic *bridge* to the school culture and language of the dominant society. Here the specific aim is to transfer to education in the national language during the first two or three years of primary school. A *maintenance* model of bilingual education is one that seeks to maintain the use of both languages and cultures in some important ways (rather than as a public relations gesture) throughout the school life of the student. If it is true that the choice of what lifestyle a minority student will live should ultimately be left to him and his community and family, rather than to external political or educational forces beyond local control, then one of the major purposes of a maintenance bilingual program is to leave the choice open until a more real and free one can be made. To transfer to English by age seven or eight almost forces a choice at that young age (conscious or subconscious) because such an action by school authorities says to the child, "your language is kid's stuff -- when the big people get into real school it is all in English" (along the lines of the proverb "what you do speaks so loudly that I can't hear what you're saying"). Any efficient transfer to an English-only curriculum is geared for life in a Western technological economy and the economic opportunities opened by this new education can, in some social contexts, effectively eradicate the original culture within a single generation. The following is an example of the fears of a scholar from an ethnic minority about the effects of transfer bilingual schooling programs on the children of his people, the Chicanos (Spanish Americans) of the United States:

"Thus, in direct contradiction to the usual program's statement of goals, the structure of 'typical' [transfer] programs can be expected to foster not the maintenance but rather the accelerated demise of the ethnic mother tongue.

This is to say that in most cases the ethnic language is being exploited rather than cultivated -- weaning the

"pupil away from his mother tongue in what amounts to a kind of cultural and linguistic 'counter-insurgency' policy on the part of the schools. A variety of the ethnic language is being used as a new means to an old end. The traditional policy of '*Speak only English*' is amended to '*we will speak only English* - just as soon as possible and even sooner and more completely, if we begin with a variety of the ethnic language rather than only English!'

In light of this, the benefits to the ethnic language and culture optimistically supposed by many to be somehow inherent in any bilingual education program, become suspect as one realizes that some (and today most) types of bilingual programs may achieve much more effectively what the earlier monolingual policy could not do. ... " and

"... The school has always been an institution representative of the powerful community interest groups and their mainstream beliefs. The majority of Chicanos simply do not at present have either the socio-political power or the detailed and clear policy on language and culture necessary for their indigenous varieties of language and culture to be recognized in an institution for social *control* such as the school, which in all societies is one of the traditional sites where the results of overt and covert socio-political and cultural conflicts are operationalized in what, in English, we somewhat euphemistically call 'school policies', rather than 'cultural politics'." (Kjolseth, 1972, pp. 109 and 111)

In a sense Kjolseth places too much responsibility on the school for language change. "School" is rarely so powerful a factor in language change apart from other social contexts (e.g. language use in the home, community, church, or for desired social mobility, etc.) and economic factors (e.g. job opportunities which require the national language and literacy). The social, economic and geographical realities for the Australian Aboriginals are in many ways very different from those of American Chicanos. For example :

- a. Aboriginals are dark in pigmentation, a fact that limits social mobility in terms of inter-marriage, etc.;

- b. they are geographically isolated for the most part away from the mainstream of life in the country in which they live;
- c. by cultural inclination, or opportunity in terms of local resources, their economic opportunities are limited.

In other words, the threat of vernacular language loss is not so acute for Aborigines in isolated Northern Territory areas as it is for Chicanos in urban America. However, the issue of whether a transfer bilingual program might "win the battle but lose the war" is sufficiently crucial to warrant the use of an example of the possible lethal nature of a simple transfer curriculum model of bilingual education among a culture closer to Australian Aborigines in terms of their contact situation than are the Chicanos - the Aleutian Indians.

In 1917, Lenin well knew the importance of language to people, so in the socialist revolution in the U.S.S.R. he could not afford to ignore the vernacular languages of the more than sixty powerful minorities in the Republics. So the drive for universal education included initial literacy in the vernacular for those minorities. The policy also aimed at national unity among the Republics, so the Russian language was promoted as a national language and the vernacular programs were designed for transfer to Russian. Many of these vernacular languages were, however, so large and powerful that they survived both the effects of the transfer-to-Russian bilingual curriculum model and the other aids to Russianization such as large scale forced migrations and constant rotation of large numbers of soldiers. As an example of the strength of some of these minority languages, the Georgian language group (which has a long literate history) still provides today for education from primary through university levels in Georgian. However, some of the smaller groups with no strong literate heritage suffered a different experience. The Siberian Yupik - the Aleutian Indian group mentioned above - (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication) under the impetus of Lenin's bilingual education policy had their first published book in Eskimo in 1932 (including, of course, photos of Lenin and Stalin). Because of their relatively small numbers and lack of political power, their transfer to Russian during the 1930's and 40's was rapid. (This was further aided by a change of script from Eskimo to Cyrillic, i.e. to modern Russian script). The last Eskimo publication, written in Cyrillic script, was published in the early 1950's, thus

marking the "success" of the Russian transfer bilingual education program. Today most Siberian Yupik within the U.S.S.R. speak Russian and their Eskimo dialect is virtually extinct. However, members of virtually the same Siberian Yupik group on the American side of the Bering Straits today speak the Yupik Eskimo dialect as their first and major language. It will be interesting to observe what happens to this group as the effects of bilingual education programs, which have begun among some of the various Eskimo groups since 1965, become clear.

The above does not imply a prediction as to what will result from Australian Aboriginal bilingual programs. It is offered, however, to show that bilingual education is more than a matter of "education". It involves issues of political ethics and long term cultural identity. Curriculum planners need to be aware of the important differences between transfer and maintenance bilingual program models.

2. A MAINTENANCE MODEL INVOLVES LANGUAGE DOMAINS

One of the idealistic but naive hopes of those interested in the success of bilingual education is that *somehow* bilingual education helps a person become and remain "fully bilingual". Up to a point this contains some truth, but there are many degrees and patterns of being "bilingual". For example, although bilingualism or even multilingualism is extremely common in the world, it is relatively rare that the one person will have equal range and facility in different languages. In most cases two languages simply do not perform exactly the same functions in that person's life. What is more common is that a bilingual will vary in fluency in each language according to different social speech domains or functions. Fishman (1968, 1971) has developed this useful descriptive tool of "Language domains", which is a speaker's device to achieve language economy in a bilingual setting. (Although Fishman is responsible for developing domain theory, others before him, for example, Barker (1948) and Ferguson (1959) had discussed the subject - the latter under the term "diglossia".) Basically the idea in domain theory* is that language use varies along three criteria: person,

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* While language *domains* is one pattern of bilingualism, *code switching* (Gumperz, 1970) is another possible pattern. Domains normally involve changing to a different language at the paragraph, or more often, at a discourse level; whereas code switching involves changing languages within a sentence. Code switching is an in-group style, and is used by the in-group as a test of whether the person being

topic and place. For example, imagine a young bilingual person meeting with a priest who is also bilingual in the same two languages. If the meeting is in church, one language might be spoken (topic and place); whereas if both were playing a game, they might speak a different language (topic and place varies). Or if they are at an employment office seeking employment for the young man, they will choose the language carefully on the basis of one or more of those three criteria. However, all of the three criteria are not always pertinent. For example, in a study by Greenfield (1972) among Puerto Rican bilingual children in New York City, it was found that language use varied according to domain of interaction. Use of Spanish was primarily in the domain of "family", secondarily in the domains of "friendship" and "religion" and least of all in the domains of "education" and "employment" -- while the reverse was true for their use of English. However, it was also learned that among these particular Puerto Ricans the domains were not decided from an interaction between the criteria of *person*, *topic* and *place*, but almost entirely according to the *person* being spoken to. This is probably the case also for those Australian Aboriginals who still speak their vernacular as their first language.

In any case, the use of language domains remains a powerful tool in a maintenance bilingual schooling curriculum model (see John and Horner, 1971, p. 161). It is worth noting that domain usage as discussed here is in disagreement with part of *Recommendation 10* of Hale and O'Grady's (1974, p.14) statement -

"Education has the goal of enabling an Aboriginal scholar to write or talk about literally anything under the sun, either in English or in his native tongue."

However, because domain usage is a naturally occurring linguistic

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spoken to holds the same values and identity. Code switching usually involves highly educated bilinguals (it is only possible when the phrase structure rules of both languages have been mastered); it is used *within* a group (where domains operate *between* different groups as a device of separating the functions of two languages between those groups); it is used for metaphoric, semantic or stylistic purposes; and finally, involves languages (for example Spanish and English) that represent two cultures that have undergone much contact. Between two cultural systems that are still very different (for example traditional Aboriginal and white Australian cultures) the use of domains rather than code switching is more likely to be found.

economy, "the two languages [should not be] placed in competition in the same contexts, which is contrary to normal diglossia". (Oller, 1974, p. 9-10) Furthermore, there seem to be psychological and language learning advantages to using the two languages in two different domains, especially in the early years:

"The psychological effects of compound bilingualism may be particularly critical during the age period between five to seven years when the role of language in cognition is just being established." (Cazden and John, 1971, p. 261)

Co-ordinate bilingualism, that is, usage of the two languages in separate domains, is the model used by Wayne Holm and staff at the Rock Point Navajo bilingual school. (Here the two criteria of "topic" and "person" mutually support domain usage; that is, Navajo teachers teach some subjects in Navajo and English teachers teach other subjects in English.) This policy does not mean that Navajo children are not exposed to successful bilingual models in the Navajo teachers; however, it does mean that these bilingual models have their effect in informal rather than formal classroom contexts. (There is also no overriding reason why the same teacher cannot teach two subjects in two different languages. However, in that case, "topic" would be the only criterion separating domains, which is a "weaker" situation.)

The use of different languages in different speech domains is probably a reality already in most Australian Aboriginal communities, for example, English for school (person, topic and place, but mostly person), and for white people (person and topic, but mostly person), versus the vernacular for home, most social interaction and ceremonies (person, topic and place, but again mostly person). Because of this current and functional reality, and because the school day in a bilingual school has no more hours than the school day in a monolingual school, the idea of language domains seems both practical and essential to a maintenance curriculum model of bilingual education. For those interested in seeing the maintenance model instituted for Australian Aboriginals and who are discouraged about the practicality of the maintenance model because of the multiplicity of Aboriginal languages, the small numbers of speakers of each and the difficulties involved in producing materials for such small groups, they should remember that in spite of these facts, there are other facts mentioned under 1. a, b and c above, namely, their dark pigmentation lessening their social mobility, their geographical isolation and limited economic opportunities: all of which militate against the possibility of imminent assimilation.

In other words, there is still good reason to accept this culturally pluralistic situation as it is and work towards the best bilingual/bicultural curriculum model available: the maintenance model.

Some comments are probably necessary about the materials needed to support a maintenance model. Because of our "Western" preoccupation with written material in schools, and because of concern about the difficulty and questionable function of writing a great deal of material in an Aboriginal language, we have perhaps been blinded to the fact that much learning can be done orally. Although a strong literature production department is essential in a bilingual school, much good teaching can be done by both direct oral communication and the use of tape recordings rather than by dependence on book libraries; and can be done visually by means of film and video tapes made in each school and preserved for new on-coming classes. Oral and visual technology (as well as printing technology) can enable the development of other than token subjects in the vernaculars in a maintenance program (for example, "the history of the Northern Territory" rather than "How the Crow Became Black"-- "token" here meaning token in terms of school priorities). Media other than the printed word may also tap different learning modality potentials, for example, visual versus verbal, which may vary culturally (John, 1972) as well as from individual to individual in any one culture. The trend today in education generally (both in elementary schools and high schools) is away from an almost sole emphasis on the printed word (and any spoken word related only to printed material) to more use of oral language and manipulatable materials. Some of these methods are the presentation of projects using constructed materials rather than written reports, and the use of small group discussions rather than teacher lectures and student note taking. None of this lessens the teacher's need for written texts, notes or plans. Both the English and Aboriginal teachers in all domains will need to use writing in varying amounts, but the fact that we are now seeing that students can learn through many other means as well as through written texts, leaves room for the use of the vernacular in appropriate subject areas at higher levels in a maintenance bilingual program.

It will be noted that all the above discussion implies a preference for a policy of "cultural pluralism" over against vague (and assimilationist) notions of "social change" for Aboriginals.

"Our own belief is that educational research reflects underlying assumptions about the objectives of education. We join those who seek a kind of education that will provide

a dual preparation for every Indian [in the above case, Aborigina] child in what we hope will be an increasingly pluralistic society. His education should equip the young Indian with the minimum skills necessary for urban society, if he chooses to participate in it. And it must do this without neglecting his growth within his traditional society, thus freeing him for the other choice of developing Indian life among Indians." (Cazden and John, 1971, p.269)

3. BILINGUAL EDUCATION INVOLVES MUCH MORE THAN LANGUAGE AS SUCH

It is becoming more and more apparent that one of the oversimplifications of bilingual education is the belief that if you can only change the language of initial instruction the total purpose is largely achieved. It is true that initial instruction in the vernacular is probably the most basic and powerful tool of any bilingual education program, but the language switch is only one of several desirable aspects of such a program. The "education" part of "bilingual education" is as important as the "bilingual" part.

a) Type of Curriculum Design

There are a large number of analyses of different ways to place different emphases in school curricula for early childhood education. The various program designs may vary on a continuum between those on the one hand that emphasize specific prescribed learning objectives, limited pupil choice and initiative, and extensive teacher direction; and on the other end of the continuum are broadly expressed learning objectives, with much pupil choice and initiative, with the teacher's role becoming one of a facilitator of learning (which, incidentally, requires high teacher skill and much teacher initiative, but of a different kind). Another way of describing the continuum would be to call it one between intellectual skills versus an emphasis on the emotional and mental growth of the whole child; or content versus process. (There are, of course, many programs that span a large area across the middle of the continuum, for example, those designed by Weikart, Kamii, Nimnicht, Hughes, Montessori and many of the British infant schools). The point here is that in a bilingual program it is reasonable to expect that, in spite of the presence of two languages, the program will remain "Western" in orientation to the degree that its teachers are Western oriented and to the degree that the curriculum model is designed for Western teacher direction. In view of the current degree of "Western" teacher ignorance of natural Aboriginal learning

contexts, the Aboriginal child will have scope to learn within the cognitive and social learning styles of his culture, and later his two cultures, if his learning is in a freer context than that allowed by direct instruction by a teacher. In other words, there is much that can be said in favour of an "open classroom" curriculum design to complement a bilingual education curriculum design. Both have a basic "child centred" philosophy, (which, of course, should not be confused with poor materials or sloppy teaching). The structure and purposes of the pre-school might be the most sensitive indicator of whether the curriculum designers seriously want the child to be free to be bicultural, or whether pre-school is primarily a social and educational preparation towards the major culture's educational goals.

b) Culturally Different Learning Contexts or Styles

During the growing concern for the education of ethnic and linguistic minorities in English speaking countries there have been several historical developments. Prior to the late 1950's the policy generally was to treat minority children as if they were the same as the Western monolingual English child. Then in the early 1960's came an emphasis on teaching English as a Second Language, thus recognizing differences. Then in the mid 60's, bilingual education commenced, followed by interest in bilingual/bicultural education in the early 70's, recognizing that neither language nor education can be separated from culture (I use the word "interest" here because most of us won't really grapple with what bicultural education might entail). Perhaps the next educational innovation for cross-cultural education will be the recognition, both theoretically and in educational practice, of the deep influence on the minority child of culturally different learning contexts. Although in its infancy, this subject is far too extensive to deal with here, but its main areas might be specified as:

- i) The major *modalities* through which important amounts of learning are done may vary from culture to culture. For example, Vera John (1972) describes how the Navajo Indians use the visual modality as a very basic mode of getting important life information from the environment. This is in comparison to monolingual English speakers who use verbalization (either spoken or written) as the major mode of learning. It isn't that either group does not have facility in verbal forms of communication or in visual forms respectively, but that there is a kind of dominance resulting from different socialization practices within the two cultures.

(Judith Kearin's work (1974) on visual memory is relevant here). Further research is necessary to discover what the dominant modalities might be for Australian Aboriginals and how to apply these findings in the classroom.

- ii) In terms of the *social contexts governing the use of language*, Susan Philips (1972) has shown among the Warm Springs Indians of North Dakota (most of whom, in the younger generation, speak a dialect of English as their first language) the importance of culturally defined sociolinguistic rules for language use. She shows that although the verbal content of a language (i.e. syntax and vocabulary) might be well known, in different cultural contexts (for example, schoolroom versus playground or home) different rules will apply as to how, when, where, why and to whom language can be used. These usage rules are triggered by interpersonal communication expectations carried over from the child's home culture. This fact says two things to the teachers of English in a bilingual program: firstly, that an ethnically different child may be reticent to use English for reasons other than that of not knowing sufficient content of English; and secondly, that oral English should be taught in socially meaningful contexts so that the sociolinguistic rules governing its usage may be learned, rather than merely its content. Obviously, this is one reason why it is necessary for children to be bicultural as well as bilingual, because it is in effective communication that language and culture are so mutually dependent. A third implication of Philip's work for Australian bilingual programs is that basic sociolinguistic research is needed to discover rules of interpersonal communication used by speakers of the Aboriginal languages, so that culture clash and misunderstandings originating in cultural differences in language usage rules, might be avoided.
- iii) In terms of the *ethnology of learning* there is a good deal of research to be done. There are three broad types of learning contexts; *traditional informal education* (for example, learning subsistence skills); *non-institutional formal education* (for example, initiation) and *school learning*. (Scribner and Cole, 1973). In spite of all the anthropological research that has been conducted among Australian Aboriginals, very little focus has been exclusively devoted to the dynamics and contexts of transmission of knowledge and skills among Aboriginals traditionally, or to Aboriginal values and child rearing practices that affect learning.

(Annette Hamilton's work (1970) is an exception in the latter area). These need to be systematically observed and then utilized in schools so that the transition from the purely Aboriginal home learning contexts to the bicultural school environment might be as smooth and productive as possible. (See Gay and Cole, 1967; Zintz, 1969). The third type of learning context, school learning, should also be examined in Aboriginal schools. Recently there has been a good deal of interest in "ethnologies of the classroom" (Dumont, 1972; Smith, 1972; Leacock, 1969; Flanders, 1967; Collier, 1973). There are now many research techniques available (perhaps the most graphic being the videotape and various behaviour coding strategies) that provide teachers with accurate objective feedback about how their behaviour is affecting the pupils in the classroom. Bilingual education should by its very nature be child centred, and for this to be so in practice, more awareness about present Aboriginal realities in these three types of learning is required.

- iv) In terms of *environmental or spatial arrangement* of the learning context, Kritchevsky et al. (1969, p.33-36) have hypothesized that classroom arrangements should vary according to the use and nature of space in the child's traditional culture. What kinds of buildings are most suitable for Aboriginal schooling, or must it all be inside buildings? One of the most important environmental features that could affect an Aboriginal person's preparedness for learning might be the composition and positioning of the group of Aboriginals with whom he is at the time.
- v) In terms of a person's *internal psychological structures* as this affects learning, Bruner, Olver, Greenfield et al. (1966), Luria (1971), Cole and Bruner (1972), Scribner and Cole (1973) and Cole and Scribner (1974) discuss "functional learning systems" and intellectual "orientations", and different experiences as these affect one's capacity for learning. The basic idea here is that traditional cultures deal only with subject matter that is actually present or at least familiar to all those present. In contrast the function of a Western school system is largely to teach children about either non-present or non-familiar concepts. When a child from a traditional culture goes to school he has to learn how to transfer concepts and generalize principles to novel situations. The majority of cross-cultural psychologists

now seem to agree that people of all cultures have the basic component cognitive processes such as abstraction or inferential reasoning or categorization (Cole and Scribner, 1974, p.193) but that these basic cognitive processes function in different ways in culturally different thinking systems. In other words it is not that the particular mental capacities are absent in different cultures, but that the functional systems (or how these capacities are combined and applied to problem solving) vary in important ways between traditional and technologically advanced cultures. Leaving the cultural mindset or the cognitive "crutches" of a homogeneous "tribal" culture, and moving into a second more complex, less predictable culture, and one less governed by tradition, may stimulate the generalizing of concepts. In other words, diversification of experience may force one to generalize to new contexts and new problems those concepts learned in traditional contexts. For example, it is well known from studies such as Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp (1971) that tribal African children, after some formal schooling, quickly generalize cognitive capacities to new areas of experience, and develop the capacity to generalize underlying principles to non-context-specific tasks on various tests. All this says that a child needs to have Western type schooling experiences at least in some subjects (or domains) in order for Western type functional learning systems to develop.

In the light of the above, moves by some Aboriginal groups "back to the bush" to outstations to have extremely informal schooling with local teachers in charge, with perhaps some visits by white teachers (although within the rights of the Aboriginals concerned, and desirable for other reasons) is not the best kind of bilingual education for them if, in fact, they want their children to develop mental functional systems that will allow them to compete later in Western school systems at higher levels.

4. THE PLACE OF SECOND LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAMS

There is available today apparently contradictory evidence of the results of "bilingual education", or at least schooling involving a second language. Some educators think that the success of such projects as the St. Lambert in Montreal, Canada (Lambert and Tucker, 1972) "proves" that children can do very well in school while doing all their subjects in a second and previously unknown language. This

is an issue that cannot be solved on purely "linguistic" grounds. The question is: if the originally monolingual English speaking St. Lambert children were highly successful in schooling in a French immersion program (i.e. all school subjects taught in French) why is it that thousands of American Indians and Australian Aborigines who experienced primary schooling in second language immersion programs largely failed dismally? We know that innate mental ability does not account for the differences. Perhaps what the St. Lambert experiment suggests to many people is that, all other things being equal, schooling in a second language does not provide insurmountable problems to a student. But all other things are not equal! The St. Lambert children came from upper middle-class homes; their parents actively took the initiative in asking McGill University to begin the experiment with their children, and the children came from homes where there was a well established tradition of schooling and literacy etc. It seems therefore, that where children come from homes of low socio-economic status with no tradition of formal schooling and literacy, that the vernacular language, *for strictly speaking non-linguistic reasons*, is the most effective social and psychological substitute for the absence of these dimensions in the child's background. In this context, social and emotional factors are more important than purely linguistic ones. This is perhaps the major purely utilitarian reason why use of the vernacular language in bilingual education is so important for most ethnic minorities. In discussing the St. Lambert experiment in Montreal, Bowen (1974, p.14) says that :

"...this illustrates what I believe is the major point: that the choice of language as the medium...for educational purposes should be determined by social conditions...."

In places such as Montreal and Culver City in California, to use just two examples in French and Spanish, the most appropriate language of instruction is the pupil's second language, where the prevailing social conditions are suitable. However, in the case of American Indians and Australian Aborigines, where many years of education through immersion in the second language has failed, the most appropriate language of instruction would be the pupils' first language (their vernacular) because, again, that is what is most suitable in terms of the social or psychological conditions that prevail.

Later in his paper, however, Bowen says:

"...the most promising way to develop bilingual competence,

to make a person proficient in another language, is to use that language in a significant function. The most successful attempt to provide an adequate opportunity for bilingual skills that I am aware of, is an immersion program where early education is given fully or substantially in a second language." (p.21)

Experience has shown that where the students are socially and psychologically prepared for it, more of a second language is learned when children learn the content of significant subjects in that language rather than when they take the second language as a subject itself.

In the light of the social and psychological realities prevailing among traditional Australian Aboriginals today (and most American Indians) and in the light of what Bowen and others have noticed in favour of second language immersion programs, how can these apparently conflicting principles be reconciled? The reconciliation can probably be achieved by following a maintenance bilingual education program until the child is emotionally and scholastically well established in school, and then changing at, say, the 6th grade, to teaching English by immersion. After competence in English has been achieved, the students should then complete their high school education in a bilingual structure if possible, immersion in the second language having achieved its goal. (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication). So that the student will not be pressured out of his ethnic identity, or become a social misfit in his home culture, the goal is competence in the second language, not complete long term transfer to using the second language for all functions.

5. TEACHERS' ROLES AND INFLUENCE

One of the repeated observations from talking to teachers and looking at research studies is that the role of the teacher is really more powerful in the classroom than is the program design itself. In Smith's (1972) study, she examined eleven different schools that had different Head Start program designs. The purpose of the study was to see how quite widely varying curriculum designs influenced the children's social-personal behaviours. One would have expected that Smith would have found marked differences in those programs' influence on the children's personal and social behaviour. However, she found no significant differences, and this seemed attributable mainly to teacher influence, both from

the fact that most teachers incorporate their own curriculum variations into any program design and, secondly, by means of sheer influence of their personality, values and attitudes:

"... some observers feel that teacher behaviour varies more widely *within* different "models" or programmatic approaches than it does *between* different approaches." (Smith, 1972, p.39) [emphases mine]

This influence of teachers has been emphasized elsewhere; for example, in the well known book *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, which describes the self-fulfilling prophecy, that is, children's performance will be greatly influenced according to the teacher's expectation and in response to teacher attitudes; and Kleinfeld (1972, 1973) who stresses how important the personal relationship between student and teacher is in Eskimo education.

It is probably appropriate here to raise the question of how effective a curriculum change will be without change in or of teachers. In other words, will the teacher's influence be so strong that a "new" bilingual program may be reduced to something very similar, from the student's point of view, to the old monolingual one? But what is the solution? One can't train a lot of new bilingual teachers overnight. One answer is to have more paid local teaching aides in the classroom with official recognition, and give them in-service training. (This practice began in the Northern Territory about ten years before "bilingual education" was introduced, but could be further extended.)

"A next-to-worst local bilingual teacher or aide (poorly trained in terms of Western teacher training) is better in a bilingual program than the next-to-best white monolingual teacher." (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication)

In other words, an exceptionally poor local teacher would be of little use, and an exceptionally good monolingual English teacher is still a very valuable asset, but neither case denies the general principle. Another answer is to decide how a monolingual Western teacher's training can be furthered towards more of an understanding of bilingualism while he/she is serving as a teacher. Basically, a bilingual education program requires teachers who are to some degree bilingual/bicultural. Granted, some formally qualified English speaking teachers are very useful assets in such a school, but if they make no effort to learn some of the Aboriginal language (even if only greetings and praise terms) or if they don't spend any time

informally in out-of-work hours with Aboriginal people, then their attitudes are probably such that in at least some ways they are negative influences on Aboriginal children, and unknowingly show disrespect for the Aboriginal language. One of the basic attitudes that would qualify a European teacher to be a part of a bilingual program would be, "I know these people have something valuable to teach me". The logical extension of this philosophy is that the sooner qualified Aboriginal teachers (possibly "qualified" in some compromise sense) become the headmasters of Aboriginal schools the better;* for the sake of the government's good faith in proving genuine commitment to self-determination, and for the sake of the children who need models of the rewards of the new system:

"In New Mexico, to take a case in point, the fact that the administrators of the school, the owners of businesses and the people of high socio-economic status in general tend to be majority culture types while the people of lower socio-economic status like custodians and laborers are predominantly ethnic minority types, is a very loud fact that commands a lot of attention from the child and everyone else. The effort to change attitudes based on response to these sorts of realities is almost like trying to get people to stop believing in traffic accidents." (Oller, 1974, p. 15-16)

Finally, teacher attitudes are important to the success of any domain/maintenance bilingual curriculum model. Eduardo Hernandez-Chavez, a sociolinguist and educator of long experience in the Southwest of the U.S.A. said recently (1974) :

"The use of language domains in bilingual schooling is the most powerful curriculum design towards maintenance of the minority language. However, if the teachers in the school do not show appropriate respect for the minority language both in word and deed, then

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*Western teachers would continue to be needed to handle the "System" for such schools (for example, people such as ex-headmasters or other experienced teachers who had achieved some degree of biculturalism and who were sufficiently humble), perhaps in the role of deputy headmasters - with no reduction in salary, etc.

the minority children will follow their lead attitudinally and a domain structure will be rendered powerless in the face of teacher (and hence student) attitudes that reveal a desire not to use the minority language for significant functions in the school."

Admittedly, the curriculum models and teacher behaviours are probably not as powerful a factor ultimately in minority language maintenance as other social, economic and political factors operating outside the schools. However, teachers and the schools are probably easier to change than these other factors; that is why it is important to understand what changes within teachers and schools are most important in this context.

6. EVALUATION

a) Achievement, or Skills Tests

"Evaluation" and "planning" are two sides of the same coin. Any evaluation that does not cover all the areas outlined under "The aims of bilingual education" is too narrow. "Evaluation" is often used synonymously with "achievement tests". Achievement tests are manifestations of our Western technological society's preoccupation in schools with the child's repertoire of skills, rather than an interest in the whole child in terms of mental ability, social development, emotional maturity and so on. Teachers and administrators often give merely lip service to the needs of the "whole man", while priority emphasis is given to teaching cognitive skills. This is not to say that achievement tests have no useful function. They can be helpful if the tester is aware that achievement tests need to be testing *competence* not merely *performance*. (See Cole and Scribner, 1974, Chapter 8.) Competence is that broad base of relevant knowledge and the capacity to apply understanding in novel situations. It is not merely rote memory. For example, the Bereiter-Engleman inspired Distar program teaches basic arithmetic, English language and reading skills to "disadvantaged" children. The test results often gratify the source of the program's funds and often the teacher, but on closer examination it appears that the tests are largely circular, i.e. they test what has been taught - which can be more rote memory than growth in competence. The child's own productions or evidences of creativity reveal more of the child's competence than standardized tests do. For example, a story retelling task (John and Berney, 1970) (where the child is read a story accompanied by

pictures, and is asked to retell the story in his/her own words, accompanied by the same pictures) reveals more of the child's language ability than, say, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (though admittedly the former is more difficult to score). Or in the area of second language testing, linguists have recently been turning away from discrete point tests (e.g. tests of grammatical items and vocabulary) to tests of integrative skills (e.g. cloze tests) because an understanding of the nature of language shows that words are not primarily processed as discrete units but are processed accumulatively (see both Oller, pp. 184-199; and Spolsky, pp. 164-176, in Oller and Richards, 1973). Another problem is that standardized test results are largely unintelligible. Macnamara (1974) suggests some more alternatives:

"In my own evaluation of a bilingual project I attempted to make myself intelligible by reporting samples of what children were able to do and estimates of how many could perform at that level or better. So I included samples of the stories children told in French and of the passages they were able to read. This I did for the beginning and end of the year so that everyone could see what progress the children had made. I should have extended this to arithmetic and other subjects." (p.51)

b) Tests of Non-Cognitive Qualities

In spite of the emphasis on achievement tests there is some research on social-personal behaviours of young children. Withal (1960) and Smith (1972) have reviewed a number of studies that have tested such variables as self-concept and self-esteem, interpersonal adjustment, (that is, how well the child adjusts to the school setting, and to teachers and peers) and studies relating to autonomy and independence. Flanders' (1967) interactional analysis technique, which records interaction between teacher and students, measuring non-cognitive dimensions in the classroom, is one of the best known such tests. This area of testing falls within the "ethnography of the classroom" which is quite a new field of classroom evaluation where techniques for quantifying personal behaviours are being developed. This dimension deserves the effort necessary to streamline it into an efficient tool in the evaluation of Aboriginal classrooms.

c) The School in the Community

There are also implications of bilingual education that extend

outside the classroom which no thorough evaluation can ignore if "school" is recognized as other than an end in itself. Bilingual education can affect, and be affected by, factors that extend far outside the school. Spolsky, Green and Read (1974) outline some of the other considerations which influence, or are influenced by, bilingual education, and suggest the breadth of context in which evaluation needs to be conceived:

- i) Linguistic considerations - what are the local language varieties and their roles in, and reactions to, bilingual education? What is the influence of public media such as radio, etc.? How are the major and minor languages tested? What is the nature and extent of language maintenance and shift, or development of language domains, and how are these facts reflected in school language use?
- ii) Psychological considerations - what has been learned about traditional cognitive styles? How are student attitudes and relationships being influenced, or pride in cultural heritage being affected by the bilingual school?
- iii) Sociological considerations - is anyone's socio-economic status changed because of the introduction of bilingual education? Is the community structure influenced and what is the changing role of the school as a community factor? How is social mobility or access to the mainstream national culture influenced by the bilingual school?
- iv) Economic considerations - how stable and generous is the source of funding? Has the government said with its right hand, as it were, that bilingual education is to be implemented, but with its left hand withheld the extra funds necessary to employ such specialized staff as linguists and literature producers, for example, artist/printers etc.? How does the school influence employment opportunities in the local community for program graduates and other older people? How does the school itself change as an employer after the introduction of bilingual education?
- v) Political considerations - does the school have any connection with, or role in, various pressure groups? How does government policy and national ideology affect the school? Who controls the school? Is the school a local political symbol? What political content is there in the curriculum? Is the school a local political power base, and what is its role in political awareness?

- vi) Religio/cultural considerations - how is the strength of local religion and culture influenced by the school or influencing the school? What is the cultural-religious content of the curriculum, and how are students and parents affected by this?
- vii) Educational considerations - what is the availability of primary resources -- Aboriginal and Western teachers; linguists, printers, adult education personnel; materials, equipment, etc.? What is the quality of scholastic achievement? What is the quality and relevance of education? What is the quality of teaching in both languages? How does the curriculum influence students and staff?

In summary, Spolsky et al. make the important statement:

"...our main purpose is to show how relatively insignificant educational considerations may be, both in the decision whether or not to establish a bilingual program and in the evaluation of a program's 'success' in reaching its goals." (p.3)

Definition of goals is obviously necessary prior to evaluation of any bilingual program, and the five goals for bilingual education in the Northern Territory outlined by Watts, McGrath and Tandy (1973, Chapter 1 and especially paragraph 1.2, p. 7-8) are not inconsistent with a broad context of evaluation as suggested by Spolsky et al. It will be interesting to see if future evaluations in the Northern Territory cover all five goals with equal thoroughness.

Finally, part of this broad context in which Spolsky et al. are suggesting bilingual education be evaluated, should be a commitment to the position : "*education for what?*" Our assumption in the Western world is that "school" is a necessary and good thing, and even if the seven broader considerations of Spolsky et al. mentioned above are kept in mind, focus is likely to be merely towards improving the quality of schooling as such. Because "*education for what?*" asks a question of the future, we tend to put it off, which we really can't afford to do. It is perhaps at this point that we should recognize the importance of the maintenance model of bilingual education; of the value of cultural and language domains and of the future security that might be contained for the Aboriginal in being a bilingual/bicultural person.

CONCLUSION

The vernacular language as used in the educational setting is necessary for communication (and communication is necessary to learning). It also carries enormously important messages in terms of inter-cultural respect, self respect, and as a statement that the minority vernacular is as "real" and as valuable in its own right as the dominant language. For these reasons the use of the vernacular in bilingual education is probably the single most important and powerful part of it. The purpose of this paper has been, however, to document two warnings. Firstly, that the use of the vernacular in school, although powerful and effective, is not a simple or common sense matter; and that its use carries consequences that those interested in the field are only just beginning to express. And, secondly, that the vernacular on its own cannot overcome inadequacies in curriculum design and teacher attitudes and administrative ways of doing things that are still basically oriented to monocultural English, Western and technological priorities. In the final analysis, if the control over the planning of the school life (in terms of what language is used, what the curriculum plan is, and who does the teaching) is in the hands of monolingual and monocultural representatives of the dominant society, the use of the vernacular language in primary school education will never amount to more than a powerful veneer. In most cases there is a large cultural gap to be jumped: from the monocultural Aboriginal to the bicultural/bilingual Aboriginal. To speak metaphorically, the way to help a minority child to jump this gap is not to build bigger and better landing facilities, but to strengthen the jumper and release him from obstacles of communication and insecurities of identity.

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