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THE CHANGING FACE OF ABORIGINAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY: A 1990 UPDATE

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Bilingual education was introduced by a new Federal Labour Government in 1973 when the Northern Territory was still a Commonwealth Territory governed from Canberra.

Many observers feared that this controversial program would not survive² self-government in the Territory in 1979. However, it did, partly because of the passionate commitment to the program by a sufficient number of staff in schools, a genuine appreciation of the aims of the program on the part of one or two very senior Departmental officials, and the hesitance on the part of policy makers to stop a program which had widespread support in the "grassroots" and in academic circles. Ironically the program has expanded, with ten additional bilingual programs commencing since 1979³, and it has become much more accepted by policymakers even though its academic results in the 3R, while a demonstrable improvement⁴ on previous approaches, have not been as notable as were predicted early in the program. The program probably has the same number of supporters and detractors as it ever did, but the heat seems to have gone out of the debate among non-Aboriginal people, possibly because those involved in the program now realise that it is evolving slowly to suit local *Aboriginal* priorities and that the debate should be left more to them. While there are financial stresses, there is no longer the pervasive concern that the program is about to be closed down. (See Note 5 for background reading about the program.)

THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE PROGRAM

Before discussing some of the changes which are taking place in the program perhaps some of its main features should be summarised:

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- The bilingual program began in four schools in four languages in 1973 and now operates in 17 Aboriginal languages in 21 schools (see Appendix 1 and 2). These are in more remote, traditionally oriented Aboriginal communities.
- About 3,400 Aboriginal students attend bilingual schools - which is about half the number of enrolled Aboriginal children in remote Aboriginal settlements in the NT, i.e., 7,600 in 1989.
- The bilingual program was introduced from the top down. Aboriginal people were consulted, but the program was the result of a political decision and it was, until the recent emphasis on Aboriginalisation of schools, and regionalisation by the Department of Education, centrally instigated and managed.
- When Aboriginal people were originally consulted and responded enthusiastically to the option of a bilingual program in their communities, in hindsight it appears possible that they were positive because at last their languages were being treated seriously: i.e., they were not concerned at that stage with the distinction between using their language for academic purposes or culture maintenance purposes. From the Aboriginal perspective concerns for culture and language maintenance were probably the overriding issues from the beginning, but have only been more recently asserted.
- It has been basically a bi-literacy model of bilingual education, and during the 1970's was criticised by some as a transfer-to-English program. As discussed below this was probably not a fair criticism.
- It has been primarily an academic model of bilingual education. By that we mean that while Aboriginal language maintenance has always been an important aim of the program, its major aim involved the improvement of Aboriginal academic performance by approaching schooling through the vernacular. Aboriginal languages were therefore used in schools for instructional purposes which were sometimes different from their typical uses in Aboriginal homes. This pattern is changing, as discussed further below.

- Team teaching is a major feature of the program, with, in most cases, a non-Aboriginal teacher being responsible for instruction through English, and the Aboriginal Assistant teacher (who was often also undertaking formal teacher education studies) being responsible for the Aboriginal language curriculum. This pattern will change as more Aboriginal staff complete their formal teacher education qualifications. In 1989, there were 28 formally qualified Aboriginal teachers, 18 of them in bilingual schools and ten in non-bilingual Aboriginal schools. By comparison there were in 1990, 312 Northern Territory Teaching Service positions and 75 positions in Catholic Aboriginal Schools, making 387 altogether in all Aboriginal schools, including all levels from classroom to principal positions.
- The bilingual program has tried to have 50% of all primary school time in the Aboriginal language and 50% in English in a model which moves from having the bulk of teaching time in the Aboriginal language at the beginning grades of school, to 80% teaching time in English at the end of primary school. (See Appendix 3). While there has been in practice varied shapes of models in different schools, and even within the same schools under different staffs, in accepted policy until recently there have been two models: one which included vernacular literacy (Model 1) and one which allowed for an oral vernacular program only (Model 2). In fact no Model 2 programs were ever formally established.
- It has been an expensive program, in 1990 involving 53 specialist, extra staff, spread over 21 schools. These positions were made up by four Linguists, 17 Teacher-linguists (curriculum developers), 9 Literature Production Supervisors (printers), and 21 Aboriginal Literacy Workers (writers and artists). The other major expense has been printing equipment in most large bilingual schools, and consumables costs. In 1990 the total cost of the program was over \$1.8 million. In summary there are now more bilingual schools, more Teacher-linguists and Aboriginal Literacy Workers than there used to be, and fewer Linguists, Literature Production Supervisors, office based advisers

and dollars for the production of teaching materials than there used to be. For example the annual allocation for materials production in larger schools has fallen from about \$7-10,000 in the early 1980's to about \$4,500 per year in 1990.

- The program in different times and at different schools has suffered from, and been vulnerable to, high turnover of key specialists and classroom teachers, and to disagreements among staff about the value of bilingual education. Bilingual education did not seem to stimulate casual discussion, but drew on passionately held commitments and beliefs of people from both ends of the ideological spectrum.

- For staff committed to the program it has always been, at least ideologically, a maintenance model of bilingual education. But in practice this has not always been possible to maintain. This is discussed further below.

- The program has produced on the whole statistically significant academic growth in English and Maths (See Note 4), but this growth has not been as great as predicted from the theoretical advantages of the bilingual approach. The academic performance of children in the program is still way below national norms but is at least on a par and in some cases better than children schooled through non-bilingual Aboriginal schooling programs. That these results in English were achieved with about half the time of exposure to English during primary school as experienced by students in non-bilingual schools is a strong statement in favour of bilingual education.

- A very positive feature of the program which is not so often talked about is that bilingual education creates jobs for Aboriginal people in their communities.

- A major positive result of bilingual schooling has been the professional growth and status of Aboriginal staff. One of the strengths of the program is that non-Aboriginals can't do it by themselves, and therefore school-based Aboriginal teacher development has always been a high priority. It is probably not a coincidence that during the late 1970's and early 1980's that the

majority of students undertaking study through Batchelor College tended to be from bilingual schools.

- School attendance rates in bilingual schools are also still way below national averages, but in some cases considerably better than in non-bilingual schools, for example at Nguiu and Lajamanu.
- A very positive feature of the program which is not so often talked about is that bilingual education creates jobs for Aboriginal people in their communities.
- A major positive result of bilingual schooling has been the professional growth and status of Aboriginal staff. One of the strengths of the program is that non-Aboriginals can't do it by themselves, and therefore school-based Aboriginal teacher development has always been a high priority. It is probably not a coincidence that during the late 1970's and early 1980's that the majority of students undertaking study through Batchelor College tended to be from bilingual schools.
- Bilingual education has had a very positive effect on curriculum development and attitudes of teachers in Aboriginal education in general. In the core curriculum development push in the NT Department of Education in the first half of the 1980s much of the innovative work was done by staff from bilingual schools.
- Perhaps a fair criticism of the bilingual program is that it has made primary schooling more accessible to a wider number of Aboriginal students living in remote settlements, but that it has not met the needs of the academically stronger students or more academically ambitious Aboriginal families. But failure to 'push' the better students is probably a fair criticism for all current forms of Aboriginal schooling. The absence of high schools even from Aboriginal townships of 1000 - 1500 people is one example of this. In this context it is interesting to note that 270 Aboriginal students from remote NT communities went to interstate boarding high schools in 1989. These came from relatively few communities, and were not evenly distributed across the Territory.

Recent changes in emphasis in the program

Bilingual education is slowly evolving, mainly shaped by Aboriginal teachers who have returned to their home communities after obtaining formal teaching qualifications from Batchelor College.

Following are some of the specific changes:

1. Wider acceptance of bilingual education

Acceptance of bilingual education as a support for Aboriginal language and cultural maintenance is now widespread among both Aboriginal parents and non-Aboriginal educators in the Territory. (For many Aboriginal people the terms 'bilingual' and 'Aboriginal language program' are synonymous). However, that acceptance is not universal. An exception to the general Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal trend of support for bilingual education comes from some Aboriginal parents in several NT communities which have well established bilingual programs - e.g., Milingimbi and Yuendumu (See Poulson, 1988). These people have reservations, mainly along the lines that the home community can take care of Aboriginal language and culture, and that school is for learning English and Western culture, But these people seem to be a small minority.

The number of Aboriginal staff employed in the program has changed, with the number of Aboriginal Assistant Teachers (NT Public Service employees) declining from 111 in 1978, to 91 in 1982 (excluding those in Catholic schools and part-time Aboriginal staff in outstation schools) but rising to 112 in 1990. In 1980 there was one Aboriginal teacher (NT Teaching Service employee) employed in the program and in 1990 there were 18.⁶ (It is worth noting that while the number of graduates from Batchelor College increased in 1989, the number of qualified Aboriginal staff in schools didn't. This is accounted for mainly by the attrition of trained Aboriginal teachers to other employment. As a point of comparison with this figure of 18, there are approximately 387 teaching positions in Aboriginal schools in the NT, about half of these being bilingual schools).

The actual and projected graduation figures for Batchelor College provide another picture of the professional development of Aboriginal staff (from both bilingual and non-bilingual schools):

	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
Assoc Dip T Year 3	5	5	6	8	2	6	12	40*	28*	28*	22*
Dip T Year 4	Not offered until 1987				3	9	11	13*	20*	22*	22*

These (*) figures are projections. The bulge in Year 3 in 1990 and expected increase in 1991-1992 is caused by Year 3 being offered in communities through RATE (Remote Area Teacher Education). This positive trend reflects the impact of the formally accredited teacher education program at Batchelor College and illustrates that a career path for Aboriginal teachers is now well established.

It is worth noting that in 1990 for the first time Aboriginal literacy Workers were placed on a formal career path in the Northern Territory Public Service. This brings with it such conditions as increased job security and accumulated superannuation and long service benefits.

2. Aboriginal control and Aboriginal language maintenance

As Aboriginal people increase in confidence to put their views more strongly about their own priorities (and Batchelor College has an important role in that increased confidence) they are saying, though such as the 1987 Batchelor College conference (See Walton & Eggington, 1990) that they are concerned about two things:

- (a) Aboriginal control of Aboriginal schools, and
- (b) the use of Aboriginal languages in schools for language maintenance purposes.

Perhaps a third concern should be added:

- (c) increased access to Western culture curriculum, particularly English literacy and Western maths.

At a large curriculum planning meeting which included about 25 Aboriginal people, held in Darwin in November, 1990, to provide direction to new Aboriginal Education Policy curriculum initiatives, priorities (a) and (b) were reaffirmed, but (c) was also emphasised.

Possibly Aboriginal parents are over optimistic about how far schools can help in language maintenance. But schools can help, and many parents seem to expect that of them. These changes are coming slowly, but they are occurring. It is because of these Aboriginal wishes that the models of bilingual education are likely to change a great deal in the next few years. This change has begun, as demonstrated from the Bilingual Schools Appraisal Process. It has not, however, been uniform across all Aboriginal communities.

Most non-Aboriginal educators are slowly recognising that there is no substitute for local initiative and the following of local aspirations in any educational program. Even the best organised, staffed and funded programs implemented by outsiders or introduced from the top down or from a centralised government can ever only achieve partial success. While Aboriginal people are interested in a range of educational issues, the matter of *Aboriginal control* overshadows all others. It is our view that even in those NT Aboriginal communities - the majority - where there is not a strongly articulated push for local control over schools, that as soon as there are sufficient Aboriginal staff trained to allow a 'critical mass' - a critical mass of Aboriginal staff numbers, staff confidence and school-culture expertise - that they will then work for increased local control, or 'Aboriginalisation'.

While Aboriginalisation is a concept much talked about it has not yet been well defined. It can refer to one or more of the following: a) replacing non-Aboriginal staff with Aboriginal, b) an Aboriginal administrative style and school organisation; c) Aboriginal curriculum development, or d) Aboriginal control over what happens in school, whether the teaching be by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people.

The NT Department of Education's Mentor Scheme enables Aboriginal staff to be Principal 'understudies' for approximately two years, with a view to assuming the full role of school Principal. There were eight Aboriginal mentors in senior positions in the NT in 1990, five of them in bilingual schools. The Mentor Scheme has also been extended to provide training opportunities for Aboriginal Teacher-linguists. The first of these is at Milingimbi.

It follows, then, that *Aboriginal teacher training* and training of Aboriginal people in educational linguistics is far and away the highest priority for a healthy future for any bilingual education program. Aboriginal teacher training is the most crucial part of any program which promotes local leadership, local initiative and local control of schools. At Batchelor College enrolments in courses (including teacher training and several other fields) increased from 120 in 1985 (or 100 equivalent full-time students) to approximately 300 in 1988 (or 260 equivalent full-time students) to about 600 in 1990. Confidence is one of the major ingredients of control, and this will probably come to most teachers through more advanced training of the type available at Batchelor College.

New models of team-teaching are likely to emerge as a result of these changes. One possible change from the 'classical' non-Aboriginal teacher paired with an Aboriginal Assistant Teacher in each bilingual class, might be three trained teachers - two Aboriginal and one non-Aboriginal - linked together over three classes.

3. Models of bilingual education One aspect of this matter is the issue of transfer versus maintenance models of bilingual education. The terms 'transfer' and 'maintenance' models of bilingual education are frequently mentioned in relation to the NT program - usually in a critical sense by a few writers who have visited bilingual programs but never experienced over time and from the inside the actual challenges of daily organising a program and stimulating sustained curriculum development in Aboriginal languages beyond the early childhood area (e.g., Shopen et al 1987, p.150, and Kemmis, 1988, pp.112-115). 'Maintenance' is defined in the current *Handbook for Bilingual Education* 1986, as

an approach which promotes the chances of a home language being maintained throughout the school. It implies that students have opportunity to learn in their first language in a well organised learning situation for an educationally useful time each day or week at all levels of the school. (p 16)

The changes made by policy makers in the Aims of Bilingual Education in 1983 (See Appendix 4) illustrate efforts by some people to make the program a transfer one, although Aboriginal language maintenance is still specifically referred to in Aim 4. While the reordering of priorities in bilingual education probably implied a transfer purpose, this was certainly never the aim of the vast majority of staff directly involved in the program either in schools or in head office. NT bilingual education policy has always stated that during primary years overall 50% of school time was to be devoted to each language and beyond Grade 4 and into post primary years 20% of school time was devoted (or available) for work in the Aboriginal language.

Was the NT bilingual program in fact and in practice a maintenance model? Many senior policy makers were not interested in the distinction between transfer and maintenance, but for some their bias would have been strongly towards transfer: hence the reorganised Aims of Bilingual Education in the early 1980's. During the life of the bilingual program the personal ideological/educational agenda of those Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff in schools who supported bilingual education committed them strongly in favour of maintenance. Language and culture maintenance was a major purpose behind the work of these people if they were 'for' bilingual education at all. And without people with this ideology the program would not have survived.

But perhaps the simple juxtaposition of 'transfer' versus 'maintenance' is on the ground an oversimplification constructed by those supportive of bilingual education but who never had become intimately involved with the day to day running of a program. In practice how maintenance-oriented a school is depends on the gifts, abilities and commitments of the particular Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff present at the time. In other words commitment often fluctuated from year to year. In practice there are three main obstacles to sustaining a full maintenance model: (a) funds would need to be sufficient to allow Aboriginal staffing at higher year levels of the school; (b) Aboriginal staff would need to be academically stronger than the older Aboriginal students, which is not always the case; and (c) Aboriginal staff would need to have a 'flair' for curriculum development in a broad sense and at higher year levels.

But the issue needs to be seen at a deeper level. Maintenance may be linked in the future with a fundamentally different model of schooling which promotes Aboriginal control and leadership, and which uses Aboriginal languages for purposes *other than* typical Western school-type academic purposes. This Aboriginal shaping of what is meant by 'maintenance' will evolve as increasing numbers of Aboriginal teachers gain formal qualifications and take up curriculum responsibilities in their schools.

Partly because of Aboriginal emphasis on language maintenance, the model of bilingual education currently being used in formal bilingual programs is undergoing change. While the Model 1 (See Appendix 3) in the *Bilingual Education Handbook* is still the 'basic' model, schools are rightly implementing variations of the model in response to different community needs.

In comparison to the Model 1, many bilingual schools have increased the amount of Aboriginal language instruction used in Preschool and Transition class programs to nearly 100%. This change has occurred because parents have requested that 'little kids' should be taught in a language they can understand, while the children learn schooling behaviour.

In Year One and Year Two classes, two developments have occurred, namely that these classes are increasingly being taught by Aboriginal teachers, and that formal English literacy - rather than informal oral English activities, is occurring.

For classes in the upper primary sections, most schools are now spending more than the 20% time allocation, as indicated by Model 1, on instruction in Aboriginal languages. This relates to the clearly expressed wish by Aboriginal community members that the school has a role to assist the community with language and cultural maintenance.

These developments also reflect the beginnings of the implementation of two-ways or both-ways schooling approaches, rather than a transitional model of bilingual education (See Harris, 1990a).

None of these changes are uniform across all bilingual schools. This was reflected through the 1988 Bilingual Schools Appraisal exercise. For example, at that point in the develop-

ment of their school program, some schools wanted a greater emphasis on English literacy and numeracy (e.g. Areyonga) and some wanted a greater emphasis on culture and language maintenance (e.g. Walungurru). These latter schools are often aiming at what is sometimes called a Model B bilingual program where the Aboriginal language and English share a 50-50 split, not in relation to the primary school overall, but in relation to *each year level* of the school (See Appendix 3). At the request of its school council, one school, Milingimbi, has actually begun to implement a Model B program.

4. A Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Model

Recently a number of non-bilingual Aboriginal schools have asked for information and assistance in establishing Aboriginal language programs which are not formal bilingual education programs. These requests relate to the increasing concerns of Aboriginal community members that schools do have a role to play in assisting Aboriginal parents with the maintenance of Aboriginal language and culture. Model 2 of bilingual education will in the future be viewed as falling with the LOTE approach. Schools which become committed to a LOTE approach to teaching Aboriginal languages can, once strong community support for the use of Aboriginal languages in the school has been demonstrated, approach the Department of Education to be reclassified as a bilingual school.

The main advantage of thinking in terms of LOTE rather than Model 2 is that LOTE has accepted status Australia-wide as a program for respecting and teaching minority languages, whereas Model 2 never has achieved any acceptable status.

The major curriculum assistance which has been provided for schools interested in the LOTE approach has been the production of a book called *Pinarri* (1989) from the Kimberley Language Resource Centre. *Pinarri* outlines several different models through which schools can organise language and culture programs. While it will not solve all language maintenance problems, this teaching booklet is a useful starting point for those non-bilingual schools which want to discuss and begin to implement the organised use of Aboriginal languages and culture as a part of their school program.

5. Second Language Learning

Nowadays more educators in bilingual schools are slowly recognising that in terms of learning a national language - in this case English - language learning and culture learning cannot be separated. If the national language is taught without a strong *contextual* emphasis (by context we mean such as situational cues, understanding of cultural roles, cultural general knowledge and cultural appropriateness), then that language is unlikely to be used very effectively, and it will be unlikely that an increased number of Aboriginal students will succeed in high school.

6. Indigenisation of Aboriginal print literature

Minority language *written* styles and functions need to complement, and not compete with, the styles and functions of the written national language. This means that written Aboriginal languages should be used for language and culture expression/culture maintenance purposes, and for Aboriginal functions initiated by Aboriginal people rather than for 'orthodox' schooling and academic purposes. We don't think written Aboriginal language literacy has been going long enough - 15 years - for these unique Aboriginal functions to have been clarified and developed yet. But we do know from those few overseas examples of small language groups which maintain two or more literacies at once, e.g. Vai and Tuareg in Africa, Kutchin in Canada, Sioux in Oregon, Cherokee in Oklahoma, that the jobs done by each language need to be very different so they are not in competition. Some Muslim societies demonstrate this well with Arabic for one task, English for another and the home language for another job. In other words - the styles and functions of written indigenous languages needs to be indigenised. (See Harris, 1990b, for a more detailed analysis of these ideas. See also Goddard, 1989; Christie, 1989, for an argument along similar lines).

In this context the paper by Goddard, until recently Linguist with the South Australian bilingual program at Ernabella, is particularly valuable. Goddard makes the point that in SA Pitjantjatjara communities Pitjantjatjara people have shown that they are interested in two written Pitjantjatjara genres which complement the still primarily

oral culture. These are reportage and advocacy genres. Goddard's insights came from observing the nature of a very popular community newspaper, *Amataku Tjukurpa* (*Amata Times*). *Reportage* items in the local newspaper included the functions of: stressing the emotional impact of an event; reporting facts and events; focussing on 'human involvement' - remaining personal with no attempt at 'objectivity'; providing information already known to most readers; taking 'social action'; validating or celebrating opinions, and making acts of proclamation. *Advocacy* items had the functions of persuading, condemning, praising and complaining. These are interpersonal and social communication functions: they are not 'literature' oriented. He says further:

I argue that the potential of vernacular writing has been largely stifled by the priorities of outside decision-makers, who focus on children, schooling, and religion, rather than on adults, community development and politics. (p.1)

The import of Goddard's observations can be summarised by suggesting that if educators wish to promote the indigenisation of written Aboriginal literature we need to shift the emphasis in terms of funding and supportive expertise away from children and school-type children's stories, and away from an attempt to produce a large body of written literature, to adult writing, mainly for, at this stage, community newspapers and the recording of cultural knowledge as is taking place at the Yirrkala community curriculum development workshops and at Lajamanu. This change, while an urgent matter of emphasis, does not mean abandoning children.

At Lajamanu the Warlpiri people are indicating that written Warlpiri for them has the job of *recording* and *preserving* Warlpiri culture. Local people are beginning to say "You can get that in a book". (Personal communication Lee Cataldi, 1989).

Finally, those working in bilingual programs should perhaps also be more open to the possibility of the development of Aboriginal ways of using video recorders as an aspect of an indigenous form of literacy. Yuendumu and

and Bathurst Island have seen some development here.

7. Sociopolitical prerequisites of academic success

Perhaps teachers in bilingual schools are gradually learning that what happens *outside* classrooms (for example, in terms of how much parents feel they are in control of their children's training, or in terms of relationships between parents and the school principal or the Department of Education) are as important as what methods, skills or models teachers use *inside* classrooms. To foster parent control or community control of schooling might therefore be the surest way of fostering *academic* improvement among minority group children (See Ogbu, 1982; Cummins, 1986, for the genesis of this argument).

Another way of talking about this issue is to say that Aboriginal people living in remote communities seem at the present time to be more interested in the social/political nature of schooling than the academic side of it. By social and political factors we mean how the school relates to Aboriginal priorities, what the school is in terms of power relationships, how the school fosters relationships between children and adults and maintains the value system, and so on. In this sense the notion of the 'medium being the message' is very real to Aboriginal people.

8. Training opportunities in bilingual education

From the beginning of 1990, SAL, or the School of Australian Linguistics, was amalgamated with Batchelor College and renamed CALL or the Centre for Aboriginal Languages and Linguistics. This should ensure a continued interest in and training for bilingual education at that College. The other source of formal training for those who wish to work in bilingual schools has been available since the beginning of 1987 within the bilingual education strand of the Northern Territory University's Graduate Diploma of Applied Linguistics. (The other strand is ESL). This course has been operating for three years and is proving supportive to teachers working in remote schools.

CONCLUSION

The foundational conviction of the value of teaching Aboriginal children both in their Aboriginal language and in English has not changed, but ideas about how this should be done have. The models used, the roles and status of the staff, and the control of the program has changed over the last decade. It is becoming clear that many Aboriginal teachers and community members want to have increased if not total control over their children's schooling, and they are growing in the administrative 'capital' required to bring that about.

If those non-Aboriginal people who work in bilingual programs want to provide more long term support for Aboriginal people they must try harder to see and hear more clearly what Aboriginal people want a school to achieve. One of the best ways of supporting this process is the further promotion of informal and formal Aboriginal teacher training to enable more Aboriginal staff to gain full recognition and access to administrative structures and the influence those structures embody. Another important way is for non-Aboriginal educators to increase their efforts to understand what Aborigines say and write - resisting the temptation to tidy it up into their own (Western) image. There is likely to be continued change in the nature of bilingual schooling, and that should be expected. Although bilingual education is 15 years old in Northern Territory Aboriginal schools, in several senses it is still very young and still at its beginning.

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² The Federal Minister for Education moved quickly after coming to power in December, 1972, and commissioned the Watts, McGrath, Tandy *Report* which was produced by March 1973. In historical context this was a remarkably practical

and sound blueprint on which the early program could be built. As well, funding was generous. However, this did not alter the fact that the program was forced on NT education authorities by idealists in a reforming government 3000 kilometres away, whose knowledge about bilingual education was probably limited to the possibilities expressed in Kinslow-Harris' influential article of 1969. Senior NT authorities had already considered bilingual education and rejected it as impractical. (*Watts-Gallacher Report*) And in a way it was: there was no-one working in the NT at the time with any experience in bilingual education and Aboriginal teacher training was still at its beginnings. (See Morgan, 1988).

³ While the NT achieved self government in 1978, the Department of Education was not controlled by the NT Government until 1979.

⁴ Before the current system of school based appraisal was introduced in 1986 as a means of monitoring progress in bilingual schools, the NT Department of Education operated a quite sophisticated program of bilingual school assessment. This was based on both interviews of all interested parties in communities and on a range of assessment measures of academic performance in English and Maths. This program was conducted (by a section in the Curriculum and Assessment Branch other than the Bilingual Section) at Yirrkala in 1984, Bathurst Island in 1984, at Milingimbi in 1984, at Galiwin'ku in 1985, Barunga in 1985 and Oenpelli in 1985. A statement true of all schools except Oenpelli would be that, in general, significant gains in academic terms had been demonstrated in comparison to the pooled results of a group of non-bilingual control schools. The independent measures of results recorded by Murtagh (1979) and Gale, Christie, McClay and Harris (1981) corroborate this statement in relation to Barunga (Bamyili) and Milingimbi.

⁵ Useful sources of background information about the program in the NT would include Harris (1982), Harris, Graham and Buschenhofen (1984), Jones (1988), Russo (1988), Graham & Harris (forthcoming), Shopen, Reid, Shopen & Wilkins (1987), N T Department of Education (1989), Baldauf & Luke (1990) and Gale (1991).

⁶ It is difficult to obtain these numbers because statistics are not separated by race in the NT Department of Education. Also, not all Batchelor College graduates in teacher education seek employment in schools.

Incidentally there are now fewer teaching positions in Aboriginal schools than there used to be, for two reasons. First, the staffing formula used to be calculated on ration of teachers to enrolment numbers, whereas now it is calculated on attendance numbers plus 15%. Second, while the Aboriginal population is increasing, school attendance is generally decreasing although it is high in some schools.

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APPENDIX 1

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

SCHOOLS AND ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES IN THE LITERACY PROGRAM

REGION	SCHOOL	SYSTEM	LANGUAGES	COMMENCED
Darwin	1. Maningrida C.E.C.	Government	1. Burarra	1986
			2. Ndjebbana	1981
	2. St. Therese's Ngulu	Catholic	3. Tiwi	1974
	3. O.L.S.H. Wadeye	Catholic	4. Murrinh-Patha	1976
	4. Warruwi	Government	5. Maung	1973
East Arnhem	5. Galiwinku C.E.C.	Government	6. Djambarrpuyngu	1974
	6. Millingimbi C.E.C.	Government	7. Gupapuyngu	1973
	7. Yirrkala C.E.C.	Government	8. Dhuwaya and dialects	1974
Katherine	8. Barunga C.E.C.	Government	9. Kriol	1976
	9. Lajamanu C.E.C.	Government	10. Warlpiri	1982
Alice Springs	10. Yuendumu C.E.C.	Government	Warlpiri	1974
	11. Nyirpi	Government	Warlpiri	1986
	12. Willowra	Government	Warlpiri	1977
	13. Areyonga	Government	11. Pitjantjatjara	1973
	14. Docker River	Government	Pitjantjatjara	1979
	15. Yipirinya	Independent	Pitjantjatjara	1983
			12. Western Arrernte	
			13. Central Arrernte	
			14. Luritja	
	16. Ltyentye Purte	Catholic	15. Eastern Arrernte	1989
17. Papunya	Government	16. Papunya Luritja	1984	
18. Watiyawanu	Government	Papunya Luritja	1981	
19. M'Bunghara Homeland Centre	Government	Papunya Luritja	1981	
20. Haasts Bluff	Government	Papunya Luritja	1974	
21. Walungurru	Government	17. Pintupi/Luritja	1983	

CEC = Community Education Centre

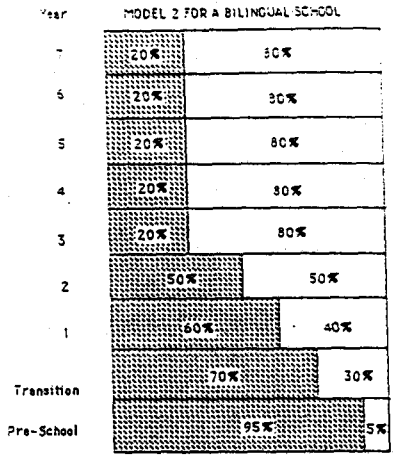
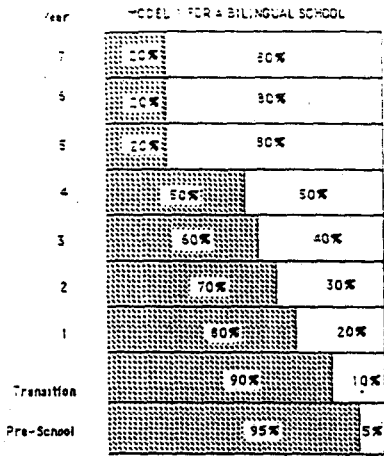
APPENDIX 2

A map of the Northern Territory of Australia showing Bilingual Schools



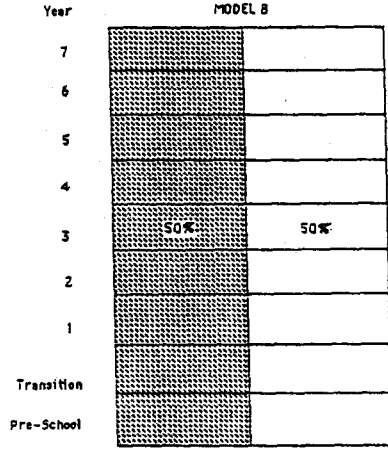
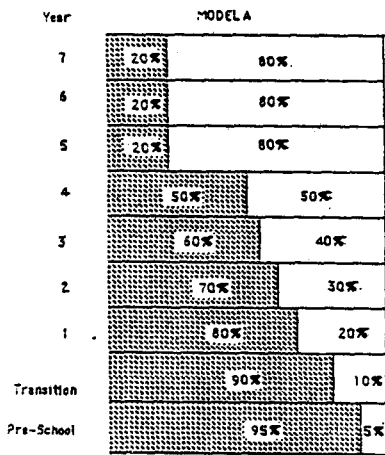
APPENDIX 3

MODELS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION
IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



INSTRUCTION THROUGH MOTHER TONGUE

INSTRUCTION THROUGH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE



INSTRUCTION THROUGH MOTHER TONGUE

INSTRUCTION THROUGH ESL

NOTE 1: Model 1 and Model A are the same.

NOTE 2: Time Allocation for languages of instruction may be extended from Year 7 up through post-primary years.

APPENDIX 4

CHANGING AIMS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The position in 1975 in relation to Aims of Bilingual Education in the NT was:

- * To foster greater proficiency in school work by the use of the Aboriginal language where appropriate.
- * To develop a more healthy self concept in each child through the systematic use of the Aboriginal language as a medium of instruction, and the incorporation of studies of other aspects of Aboriginal culture.
- * To develop competency in reading and writing in the Aboriginal language.
- * To develop sufficient skills in oral English before attempting to teach specific matter in that language.
- * To present subject matter in the language most appropriate for the instructional purpose.
- * To develop closer communication, involvement and mutual understanding between school and community.
- * To develop a better understanding of both cultures - that of the Aboriginal people themselves (and not only of a particular community) and of the dominant non-Aboriginal society.

From *Education News*, 1975, Vo. 15, Nos. 2 & 3, and
*Handbook for Teachers in Bilingual Schools
in the Northern Territory, Australia,*
NT Department of Education, 1980.

AND THE CURRENT POSITION:

The Government has adopted the following revised aims and criteria for evaluation of bilingual education.

- Aim 1 - To develop competency in English (reading and writing) and in mathematics to the level required on leaving school to function without disadvantage in the wider Australian community.

- Aim 2 - To foster greater proficiency in school work through the use of the Aboriginal language where appropriate.
- Aim 3 - To develop a more positive self concept in each child through systematic use of the Aboriginal language as well as English as a medium of instruction, and the incorporation of studies of other aspects of traditional Aboriginal knowledge.
- Aim 4 - To develop such skills in oral English that by Year 5 English becomes the major language of instruction and of literacy, with the vernacular maintained for continued literacy development and for the teaching of both traditional and modern knowledge where appropriate.
- Aim 5 - To promote the development of teaching skills, teaching responsibility and formal educational leadership in Aboriginal staff.
- Aim 6 - To develop competency in reading and writing in the Aboriginal language.
- Aim 7 - To develop closer communication, involvement and mutual understanding between school and community.
- Aim 8 - To develop a better understanding of both cultures - that of the Aboriginal people themselves (and not only a particular community) and of the non-Aboriginal society.

From *Information Statement No. 6*
Education for Aborigines,
NT Department of Education, 1983
and the current *Bilingual Education*
Handbook, 1986