

1987

Multicultural education : A book of readings

Gary Partington (Ed.)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuworks>



Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#)

Partington, G. (Ed.) (1987). Multicultural education : a book of readings. Doubleview, Australia : Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

This Book is posted at Research Online.
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuworks/6837>

Edith Cowan University

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study.

The University does not authorize you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following:

- Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.
- A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. Where the reproduction of such material is done without attribution of authorship, with false attribution of authorship or the authorship is treated in a derogatory manner, this may be a breach of the author's moral rights contained in Part IX of the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).
- Courts have the power to impose a wide range of civil and criminal sanctions for infringement of copyright, infringement of moral rights and other offences under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.



Western Australian College of Advanced Education

Multicultural Education

A Book of Readings

Edited by
Gary Partington

Q
370
193420
994
AUL

Western Australian College of Advanced Education
PO Box 217, Doubleview 6018

ISBN 0-7298-0042-3
P-625-6-87







MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS



First Printed June 1986
Revised June 1987

Published by
Western Australian College of Advanced Education
P.O. Box 217, DOUBLEVIEW, 6018

Copyright c The Western Australian College of Advanced
Education, 1986, 1987.

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
<u>OVERVIEW</u>	4
 The Origins of Multiculturalism M. Liffman	4
The Facts, Policies and Rhetoric of Multiculturalism Laksiri Jayasuriya	25
 The Separatism of Assimilation G. Smolicz	34
Aborigines in Multilingual Australia J Budby	40
<u>LANGUAGE</u>	48
The Tongue and Mind Twisting of a Migrant Dewi Anggraeni Fraser	48
But What Do You Mean by Bilingual? Bilingualism and Community Language Teaching Howard Nicholas	51
Why Teach Ethnic Languages in High Schools Peter L. McGuire	65
<u>SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTITY</u>	69
 Self-Concept and Identity in Multicultural Education Gary Partington	69
 Do Aboriginal Pupils Have Negative Self-Concepts? R. Chadbourne	79
<u>ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS</u>	83
 Traditional Aboriginal Education Strategies and their Possible Place in a Modern Bicultural School Stephen Harris	83
Indo-Asian Refugees in Victorian Schools Elaine Jones	97
 The Question of Culture P Kelly and R Bennoun	107

	Page
<u>INTERGROUP UNDERSTANDING</u>	120
Keeping the Teacher Happy M. Christie	120
If Australians Can't Say My Name It's Not My Fault Ratko Capkunski	124
Sabina: The Story of a Migrant Child Arriving in Australia Bernadette Gigliotti	131
Australian Attitudes to Immigrants R. Taft	139
<u>COGNITION AND TESTING</u>	151
A Quotient of Awareness J. Kearins	151
School, Cognition and the Aboriginal Child Pam Knapp	161
Issues and Problems Related to Testing Language Skills in a Cross-Cultural Setting C. Walton	168
<u>CURRICULUM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS</u>	175
The Classroom Teacher's Influence on the Academic Performance of Aboriginal Children Neville Green	175
Teaching Reading and Writing to Older Aboriginal Children R. Lipscombe	197
Problems and Issues for Teachers Making Decisions on Curriculum L. Hannan	211
Strategies for the Development of a Multicultural Curriculum Lorna Hannan	224
My Experiences at Brunswick East High School Patricia Clark	233
St. John's Greek Orthodox College, Melbourne Alex McKnight	238

POLICY

Multicultural Education in Schools N.S.W. Department of Education	241
Multicultural Perspectives to Curriculum N.S.W. Department of Education	245
Intercultural Education N.S.W. Department of Education	251
Multiculturalism in Education. A Policy Document WA Multicultural Education Advisory Committee	256

PREFACE

The problem of obtaining texts with material relevant to the core course in Aboriginal and Multicultural Education in the W.A. College led me to suggest a book of readings selected by those teaching the course. Obviously this was a trap for the unwary, for the diversity of recommendations that I received meant that unless the book was to be of mammoth proportions, some lecturers were bound to be disappointed. This was compounded by difficulties in tracking down authors to obtain their permission in time to publish.

Even so, it is anticipated that the collection of readings finally assembled will contribute to teaching the course. It is, as the introduction suggests should be the case, an eclectic collection of articles with no one guiding philosophy. Aboriginal and Multicultural Education is such a diverse field, the adoptions of a single viewpoint when preparing teachers would be unrealistic.

My thanks go to all those who assisted in preparing this volume, particularly to the very understanding editors and authors who gave their ready consent to reproducing the articles. Also I must thank Lyn Black for typing the readings, Jan Adams for her assistance in proofreading, and my fellow lecturers for their recommendations.

Gary Partington
Churchlands Campus

INTRODUCTION

Gary Partington

The multicultural nature of our society has been accommodated as a matter of fact by most Australians in recent years, but its implications have not yet been fully accepted. These implications are particularly relevant to schools, which are a major influence on pathways to success in adulthood for children of minority backgrounds. An eclectic programme is required for teachers to meet the needs of all children in a multicultural society. It must provide for ethnic studies, languages, self-esteem and identity development, promotion of intergroup understanding (and accompanying elimination of prejudice and discrimination) and access to skills for mainstream participation.

Few classrooms in Australia today are homogeneously Anglo-Celtic Australian in ethnicity but despite this, teachers often tend to overlook cultural background and related factors as influences on children's success and adjustment at school. Even for those children who display a strong measure of difference which is obvious to teachers, the influence of this is ignored except in seeking a solution for language problems. It is important that the ethnic backgrounds of the children are understood and accepted by teachers. In any society the range of possible variations in culture is great, and in order to tap the cultural reality of children in the classroom the teacher must draw on the cultural knowledge of those children and their families.

Schools have a responsibility to educate children whatever their background. While the existence of a particular home background may appear to be a sound explanation for a child's poor performance at school, it does not justify the continuation of that performance. It is the school's duty to seek alternative avenues to success for children whose upbringing differs from the mainstream.

Children's success at school is influenced by the school's acceptance of them. For adults in society, the effect of rejection by others can be reduced by withdrawing from the rejection situation. For children who are required by law to attend school, there is usually no way of physically avoiding the continual rejection of their personal values, language and behaviours. Success is more difficult to achieve in this situation, and children often withdraw from effective interaction in the classroom by daydreaming, inattention and disruptiveness.

Teachers may be unaware of the cultural gulf between home and school, but children are often painfully aware that the assumptions made about them are inaccurate, and imply rejection of their reality.

The statement that many children 'live in two worlds' is somewhat clichéd, but still very true, and because of this they are open to more experiences which can be damaging to self-esteem than is the case for mainstream children. For much of their school lives children of ethnically different backgrounds are able to keep their two lives separate, but they experience particular pain when these two worlds confront each other. A visit to school by parents, for example, may embarrass children, while discussion of their home lives in an atmosphere devoid of care or understanding can be devastating to children. The school should not seek to avoid situations where the two worlds come in contact, but it must ensure that such contact is a positive experience for children.

Anglo-Australian children experience a sense of continuity between school and home which is often absent for children of ethnically different backgrounds. This leads to a sense of not belonging in one of the two social environments, which may cause the rejection of one or the other. A child's inability to develop a sound identity may result in misbehaviour at school, absenteeism and early school leaving. Although such alienation is rare in childhood, it is more marked in adolescence. This does not mean that attention should be focussed only on the development of a sound sense of identity in both the home and school contexts at high school. The foundations for sound identity are laid in early childhood education, and consolidation during primary school years is important. The school should seek to ensure that all children feel a sense of belonging in both mainstream social situations and the ethnic group of their parents.

Acceptance is particularly necessary with regard to language. For many children the language of the school is not their home language. There is a need to acknowledge and cater for the special needs of children from non-English speaking backgrounds. By ignoring the language of the home the school indicates the low value it places on the child's individuality. It also reflects disregard for the contribution parents can make to the educative process. The child is forced to learn the subject matter of the curriculum in an unfamiliar language, and in isolation from the potential support of parents. This places the child from a different language background at a great disadvantage compared with the child brought up in an English-speaking household. To suggest that parents should learn to speak English is a simplistic response which ignores the reality of ethnic identity, the centrality of language to the maintenance of that identity, and the difficulty for adults to learn English quickly and fluently enough to be a significant support for their children. It also ignores the benefits of bilingualism to the child's cognitive and social development.

Members of ethnic minorities need the skills to function effectively in mainstream society. The control of economic, legal and political institutions in society is largely determined by members of the mainstream Anglo-Australian group. To function effectively in this milieu people of all ethnic backgrounds require the qualifications

which provide admission to these institutions on the most favourable terms. In the long term, such admission provides opportunities to modify the institutions in order to make greater allowances for minority groups in Australia. Successful schooling is the key to admission. People of ethnically different backgrounds must not continue to be excluded in large numbers from the principal institutions of society because of failure to succeed at school. The manifesto for schools is quite clear. They have to ensure the success of a greater number of children from all ethnic backgrounds.

The school's responsibility extends to all children growing up in a multicultural society. They must be sensitized to this social situation because intercultural communication requires an understanding of each of the cultures involved in the interchange, as well as an acceptance that ethnic differences are acceptable and are of equivalent value. This represents a great challenge for the school because it is an agent of secondary socialization whereas the family is the agent of primary socialization. The attitudes and values acquired in the family tend to be more permanent and enduring than those acquired at school. The infant child has no control over early socialization, but the schoolchild is able to reject possibly contradictory socialization presented by the school. Prejudices which are transmitted to children by their parents are usually difficult to change, but it is of vital importance to the continued existence of a multicultural society that cultural and physical differences come to be an acceptable part of social life. Equality of life chances for all members of Australian society depends upon the development of intergroup understanding and the elimination of prejudice and discrimination.

The school curriculum should be based on these five elements of multiculturalism: ethnic studies, languages, self-esteem and identity, intergroup understanding and skill development. Because of differing school contexts, overt teaching of the five elements may not always occur in the classroom, but the teacher should take all five into consideration in planning and teaching the curriculum.

To classify the readings in this collection according to these elements in multicultural education is difficult because so many have relevance to more than one element, while a study of all the readings contribute to an appreciation of desirable approaches to skill development as well as to intergroup understanding on the part of the teacher. Other readings lie outside this framework in that they provide a background to multicultural education in Australia, such as Liffman's article "The Origins of Multiculturalism in Australia". Furthermore, categories are needed for those articles which contribute to several of the elements listed above: Kearin's article "A Quotient of Awareness" is a case in point.

Consequently the reader should not consider that the classification of an article to a category limits its relevance to that category: as wide a reading as possible should be made to encompass material to specific topics.

OVERVIEW

In this first article Michael Liffman explains the origins of the multiculturalism and goes on to examine the state of multiculturalism in Australia in 1983. Following an examination of the causes of the swing away from assimilationist views, Liffman explains why multiculturalism developed as an alternative basis for policy.

Since the article was published there have been two significant changes. First, a swing away from 'soft options', especially in education, with their emphasis on principally aesthetic elements of culture, towards those options which ensure that minority group members will be treated fairly in Australia and have the same life changes as mainstream Australians. Second, the federal government has withdrawn its financial support for multicultural education.

With these developments in mind, the content of the remainder of Liffman's paper can be seen in hindsight as an examination of factors which have contributed to the federal governments reduced commitment to multiculturalism. He identifies the issues being debated in multiculturalism, and indicates how a lack of cohesion exists on what multiculturalism means in practice and for policy development. Interrelated components of multiculturalism are also examined, including immigration, identity and equality. The central difficulty facing multiculturalism is seen to be the diversity of issues encompassed under its umbrella.

THE ORIGINS OF MULTICULTURALISM

M Liffman

While the climate in which AIMA was established may owe its origins to social and historical seeds sown in Australia and overseas in the post-war years, the idea of multiculturalism assumed a concrete form rather suddenly and distinctly. It was Gough Whitlam's new Labor Government which in 1972 very clearly created and gave political form to the idea of multiculturalism.

In its early days, multiculturalism was a bright new slogan - uplifting, evocative, refreshingly uncomplicated and an easy way of sorting out the liberals from the conservatives. Entrusted to the care of possibly the most exuberant and original politician in recent public life, Al Grassby, it offered, especially to the eager young professionals who so readily embraced it, a cosmopolitan identity far more exciting than the somewhat masochistic 'cultural cringe' which for so long had hung over the nation. Multiculturalism also reflected and encouraged the genuine interest in origins and roots which, true to demographic and sociological form, the coming to maturity to Australia's first generation of post-war immigrant children was bringing to the surface. And the price of this package was unusually low: all one had to do was enjoy immigrants - especially those who provided Melbourne and Sydney with their lively coffee shops, exotic restaurants and new forms of music, theatre and art.

The main meaning of multiculturalism was commonly explained in terms of a recognition that the idea of assimilation was sociologically unrealistic

Reproduced with permission from Committee of Review of the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (1983) Report to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Volume II.

and undesirable, and that pluralism - the preservation of identity in an open and tolerant society was a more appropriate approach to the ordering of communal life in post-war Australia.

Amongst the more tangible factors effecting this changed view were the following:

- (i) The undeniable reality that in fact Australia was already a multicultural society. Further, with the second and third generations ethnic identity, again as a matter of fact, simply had not disappeared.
- (ii) The phobia of many Australians was also waning. Perhaps because of the increasing enjoyment of their food and festivals, Australians began to see the new ethnic diversity not as a destructive, dividing force but as something with the potential to enrich the whole society. There was developing a growing, albeit superficial, sense of acceptance of other cultures.
- (iii) More significantly, particularly with the second and third generations, migrant communities were becoming more articulate and confident. Their views, ideas and grievances were given voice, often by successful young professionals concerned to express their identity, and skilled at utilising accepted political and activist strategies.
- (iv) The increase in confidence expressed itself in the growth of migrant and ethnic community groups, with some moving from purely recreational and cultural interests to welfare and a concern for rights and representation.
- (v) The appointment of Mr Al Grassby as Minister for Immigration in 1972 provided one of the catalysts in this area. Mr Grassby positively asserted the virtue of a multicultural society choosing to describe it by means of the metaphor of a mosaic of cultures all making up a single rich picture.
- (vi) Most importantly, Australia had experienced a generally prosperous two decades. Migrants were not needed as a scapegoat and indeed it was recognised that the development of manufacturing industry would be impossible without the migrant intake. Everyone appeared to benefit from migration. Moreover, reform was on the agenda and social change and innovation appeared - perhaps uncharacteristically for Australia - to offer excitement rather than threat.

The multicultural idea therefore tapped and in turn helped mobilise a very tangible mood and awareness amongst sections of the community. The early years of official multiculturalism under the Labor Government, saw, for instance.

- dramatic changes, to immigration policy, ending the 'White Australia Policy and asserting the importance of family reunion;
- the Australian Citizenship Act of 1973;
- the major survey, a Decade of Migrant Settlement, conducted in 1973 by the Australian Population and Immigration Council. This concluded:

In the past it has been assumed that '(Migrants) initial disadvantages, which are considerable and could be reduced by government action, usually fade away after several years of hard work.' (James Jupp, Arrivals and Departures, pp 158-9). The results of the Immigration Survey emphasise that migrants' disadvantages often persist well past the initial settlement period. Especially in Melbourne and Sydney, there are many migrants resident in the country whose welfare is cause for community concern and action (Australia Population and Immigration Council 1976).

The Henderson Poverty Inquiry (1975) identifying the realities of life in Australia for many immigrants.

Of the 106,000 adult migrant units with no other disability, only 2,800 (or 2.6 per cent) were very poor before housing. Of the 40,000 recent migrants with other disabilities, 11,500 (or 28.8 per cent) were very poor before housing. Thus of all the 146,000 adult income units who were recent migrants, 14,300 (or 9.8 per cent) were very poor before housing. This compared with the figure of 10.2 per cent for all adult income units.

The position is quite different after housing. Of the 106,000 migrant units with no other disability, 5,000 (or 5.2 per cent) were very poor after housing. Of the 40,000 with other disabilities, 12,500 (or 31.3 per cent) were very poor after housing. Thus of all the 146,000 recent migrants, 18,000 (or 12.3 per cent) were very poor after housing. This compares with the figure of 6.7 per cent for all adult income units.

Who were these 40,000 recent migrants with other disabilities? No less than 11,900 (or 29.8 per cent) were single females with no children and no other disability. The other substantial group were 7,000 unemployed, 8,000 large families and 5,500 aged (Australia. Commission of Inquiry into Poverty 1975:20).

investigations and consultations by government into migrant needs and the state of community relations in Australia, through the formation of Migrant Task Forces and an interim Committee on Community Relations.

the passing of legislation banning racial discrimination, and the appointment of the Commissioner for Community Relations.

Although the multicultural idea had only three years under the patronage of a Labor Government, the Liberal Government returned at the end of 1975 indicated an acceptance of multiculturalism as unequivocal as that of the Whitlam Government. The Galbally report on Post-Arrival Services and Programs (Australia, Review of Post-Arrival Services and Programs for Migrants 1978) represented a strong - and on the part of Prime Minister Fraser seemingly personal - commitment to the spirit of multiculturalism, and its translation into government policy.

Much community debate has occurred since that time as to the depth, sincerity, motivation and understanding of multiculturalism contained within the Galbally approach. Defenders claim it to be a remarkable

advance, affirming a radical new view of the place of immigrants in Australian society, and offering many substantive changes in government provision to immigrants and ethnic minorities. Critics have dismissed the Galbally approach as tokenistic, poorly conceived and deliberately unwilling to address the fundamental issues of access and equality in Australian society.

Inevitably much scepticism arose from the fact that an issue which had originated with a reformist government was adopted - in the view of many, co-opted - by a conservative government; this scepticism was severely compounded by the misgivings people had as to the selection of Frank Galbally to head the review.

To the sceptics, the establishment of AIMA confirmed these doubts. Its far-reaching role, the choice of Frank Galbally as Chairman and Petro Georgiou as Director, its closeness to the Prime Minister and his department, and its concern with the specifics of government policy development, disturbed those who saw multiculturalism as embodying wider debates and more radical approaches to social change.

Nevertheless given the reality that policy in any sphere of government activity is likely to be more constrained and controlled under a conservative government than a reformist one, there could be no doubt that throughout the life of the Fraser Governments, multiculturalism continued to be affirmed as government rhetoric, and expressed in government policy. The contrast between the post 1975 government and the pre-1972 government in this regard was dramatic.

1. THE PRESENT

Multiculturalism in Australian public life is almost exactly ten years old and, as is the way with most ideas, now faces a far more complicated world. Over the last decade, the multicultural idea won many new friends from various, and even unlikely, quarters; but more recently its friends - both old and new - are being shed at a disturbing rate. Indeed, to trace the career of multiculturalism in Australia and to analyse its present state is to follow a very revealing seam in Australia's political, social and intellectual life, which not only reveals much about the reality of multiculturalism, but also suggests considerably larger observations about the state of the nation.

The career of multiculturalism to date has several notable features. Firstly, in one sense multiculturalism has had significant success. Although a totally new addition to the agenda of government action and although closely associated with a Labor Government, multiculturalism has been explicitly endorsed and incorporated into the rhetoric and programs of the conservative governments which came after 1975. As a result Australia has ethnic radio, multicultural TV, Migrant Resource Centres, a Telephone Interpreter Service, and the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.

Secondly, multiculturalism is barely closer today than it was ten years ago to having a coherent theoretical and practical content, or a meaning which is genuinely understood and agreed upon by either its advocates or its opponents, let alone the community at large.

Thirdly, and partially as a result of the above, whereas in its early days the sources of support for and opposition to multiculturalism were fairly clear and predictable - the progressives for, the conservatives against - now the field is very confused. In fact it is often said that

multiculturalism is at a crossroad, and certainly an examination of the present debate unearths many of the political alignments, communal anxieties and ideological underpinnings currently affecting national directions. It may also be that the current debate really does represent a crisis point in the history of the idea of multiculturalism, in the face of which multiculturalism will either entirely dissolve or will emerge as a sustained analysis rather than a simple slogan, and with a numerically diminished but intellectually and politically strengthened constituency.

1.1 The Structural Context

Several major factors are shaping this realignment of the state of multiculturalism; the most obvious is the profound economic and structural change presently overtaking Australian society. (This material draws on the introductory chapter of a report of a review group to the Victorian Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs 'Access and Equity: The Development of Victorian Ethnic Affairs Policies' produced by the Victorian Government Printer, 1983).

The vast bulk of migrants since the Second World War came to Australia in times of economic development and prosperity. Because of this growth it was believed that any settlement problems migrants might have would merely be temporary ones. That optimism has now vanished in both the short and longer terms. Australian industry is facing fundamental problems of restructuring, a process which will have the greatest impact on migrant workers, while the immediate economic prospects are universally accepted as gloomy.

The official approach to the restructuring of industry is perhaps no closer to finality now than it was in 1975 with the publication of the Jackson Report. (Australia. Committee to advise on policies for Manufacturing Industries 1975) Central to the problem is the question of the reduction of existing levels of protection. The White Paper on Manufacturing Industry signalled this when it pointed out that 'as a long-term objective the community will be best served by a manufacturing industry with a structure which requires minimum levels of government support'. (White Paper on Manufacturing Industry 1977)

The Crawford Report (Study Group on Structural Adjustment) discussed a wide range of issues related to adjustment, and reaffirmed the need for structural adjustment. Its warning could be summed up in the following statement:

The Australian economy approaches the 1980s in poor shape. Inflation, although declining, and unemployment are at unacceptably high levels. The structure of the manufacturing sector is not well suited to Australian conditions. Adjustment pressures on the economy and on manufacturing in particular continue to increase. At the same time, manufacturing is ill-equipped to adjust. The outlook for the economy in the medium term is not good. A major policy challenge exists (Australia. Study on Structural Adjustment 1979).

It further warned that if the economy does not adjust, it may well emerge from the recession with an industrial structure which is unable to exploit its potential for growth. This may mean an economy which cannot sustain unemployment rates as low as they would otherwise be (1979).

The Report inevitably pointed to labour-intensive manufacturing industries as areas which were under the greatest pressure to adjust and accept a similar workforce. The implications clearly were important for migrant workers although the Report did not discuss their prospects as a separate issue.

Another indication of the effects of structural adjustment on migrants was given by the Myer Report (Technological Change in Australia, 1980). This Report recognised that technology would affect adversely various groups in differing ways and it documented some of these. In regard to migrants, it had this to say:

As a group, migrants generally, and especially female migrants, are more than proportionally employed in less skilled occupations. As new immigrants they tend to be employed initially in occupations that Australian workers see as less attractive; in general they seek to move out of these positions as soon as practicable. Because some jobs are unattractive, employers have an incentive to apply technological innovation to eliminate them and by so doing they reduce labour turnover costs. This can have the unfortunate consequence, for those located in these positions, that they no longer have what to others was an undesirable job, but to them is preferable to no job.

Within the broad migrant category there are differences in the extent to which migrants of different origins are disadvantaged. For example, men from some European countries are generally more unskilled and more concentrated in the manufacturing and construction industries than English-speaking male migrants. The latter obtain occupations more nearly resembling the norm for Australian workers, or in some cases (New Zealand, United States and South African immigrants) obtain relatively higher-status employment. Non-English-speaking women are much more concentrated into production process-worker and labourer positions than Australian and English-speaking immigrant female workers. The proportions of female workers in these occupations are Yugoslavs 54%, Greek 51%, Italian 38%, Maltese 35%, United Kingdom and Eire 11% and Australian 7% (Australia. Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia 1980: 106-7)

It seems clear from all these reports that just as migrants bore more than their share of the burden of post-war economic development, so they appear to be destined to bear a similar disproportionate share of the costs of adjustment.

Intertwined with the emerging effects of long-term, structural change are the impacts of the present economic recession. Unemployment and the effects of the reductions in public expenditure of both the previous and, to a lesser extent, the present government are particularly felt by immigrants. As well as being especially prone to unemployment - on a 'last on, first off' basis newcomers have had less chance to establish savings and to have other support networks to draw on.

In real, economic terms, these factors cast a heavy shadow over the achievements of multiculturalism. A diminishing social wage, in terms of health care, income security and interest rates, may totally offset some of the special benefits provided to ethnic communities by the Galbally Report. (Even within the package of benefits offered by the Galbally version of multiculturalism, there lurked some major offsetting factors. The suggestion in the Report, promptly acted upon by the government in 1978, that tax rebates for Australian residents sending money to dependants overseas be abolished, saved Treasury more than the extra expenditure required by the Galbally Report, and imposed a direct cost on many immigrants.) The net benefits of multiculturalism, especially in a time of economic stringency, require detailed and comprehensive calculation; they are not measured simply by totalling the provisions made under the multicultural rubric.

1.2 The State of the Debate on Multiculturalism

The state of the debate on multiculturalism is perhaps best seen by going back to the conventional right versus left dichotomy, not because that division in fact represents the actual division within the debate, but because, on the contrary, it shows the more complex views, interests, and undercurrents which the multicultural idea overlays on our political system. In that picture are to be gleaned some clues as to where ten years of multiculturalism have taken us and what the future may bring.

Although the conservative position entailed an initial discomfort with the multicultural idea, one strand of its thought now champions its own versions of that idea. The value of personal identity (the enrichment made possible by communal diversity) and, maybe with less conviction, the right to equal opportunity were the basic themes used by the Liberal/National Party to justify its support for ethnic media and specific migrant settlement, educational, and cultural programs. The extent to which the Fraser Government publicly affirmed, both in language and legislation, this version of multiculturalism surprised many, and led even some seasoned opponents of conservatism to the reluctant view that Prime Minister Fraser himself had some sort of idiosyncratic but genuine personal commitment to multiculturalism.

Among these strands in the conservative position co-exist others which are less sympathetic to the multicultural idea. One is the 'born to rule' mentality and its parallel implication of Anglo-Celtic domination of elite levels of power. Another is the basic conservative assumption that, where possible, preservation of existing arrangements is to be preferred to social change, especially at structural and institutional levels. This coupled with the growing tendency of conservative thought to respond to the present economic crisis with a monetarist approach to economic management and government spending, and traditionalist beliefs about the role of individualism and initiative, suggests that a conservative position will find difficulty in accomodating any but the most mild demands which arise from the multicultural idea.

Under the former government, this tension between a commitment to aspects of the multicultural idea and a fundamental political position somewhat inimical to its translation into practice, was not given much public airing; rather, the two strands sat uneasily with each other, with the latter quietly unsettling and undermining the conviction and effectiveness of the official endorsement of multiculturalism.

Recently, however, the elements in the conservative position which challenge multiculturalism have been brought together in what is coming to be a specific critique of the idea. They are expressed partly, and in a populist rather than scholarly way, by some politicians - including the former Liberal Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Mr Hodges - and, more intellectually, by a few academics, notably Lauchlan Chipman, Frank Knopfelmacher and Raymond Sesisto, and the occasional journalist such as Michael Barnard. This critique, it appears, is based on the conservative assumptions mentioned above, plus two other themes, neither of which are necessarily or exclusively associated with conservatism, but both of which seem to find comfortable homes there.

One is the fear that the diversity of multiculturalism risks societal division and conflict. Religious or ethnic conflict, as in Northern Ireland, Lebanon or Yugoslavia, may be cited or the urban ghettos of the USA or the tribalism of some African nations, as indicating that multiculturalism can lead to fearful outcomes, and that an emphasis on national unity is far wiser. This is a powerful addition to the conservative critique as it is non-partisan, is not altogether without sociological or historical evidence, and reflects the deep-seated and intuitive anxieties of many people.

The other theme is that of political or cultural superiority, xenophobia or, at its crudest, racism. In its unashamed racist form - 'we are better than wogs' - the theme is an unworthy element in the conservative position but nevertheless a potent one, given the obvious extent of

racism in the community. The belief in the superiority of Anglo-Celtic, Christian systems is only slightly more sophisticated than crude racism, but appears to be more respectable and less rabid – especially at a time when the world-wide spread of fundamentalism is giving Islam a bad press while creating a new, self-righteous brand of Christianity. Frank Knopfelmacher has given the argument another turn by arguing for the superiority of British, Westminster-based political systems and, by extension, suggesting that multiculturalism is a threat to political freedom and stability.

With the growth of neo-conservatism it is likely that the conservative critique of multiculturalism will make great gains; what form it will take, which elements within it will become strongest and what, if anything, will remain of multiculturalism in the conservative position will be seen over the next few years.

Competing strains of thought and therefore ambivalence about the place of multiculturalism are not confined to conservative thought; the reformist position also embodies some unresolved questions.

In its early days the multicultural idea was strongly associated with radical or progressive politics. Its romantic and expressive aspects, its concern for rights, its cosmopolitanism, and its focus on change, all made the idea of multiculturalism seem far more at home in a radical than in a conservative system. A strong element too in the multicultural idea is its protest against the anonymity and powerlessness of people, and the breakdown of community in emerging post-industrial society; in its assertion of the value of community and tradition, multiculturalism found a receptive hearing amongst the radical camp (although it is not difficult to imagine the same theme, packaged only slightly differently, being taken up within a conservative or even fascist ideology!) Multiculturalism is also favoured as representing a call to solidarity and community action, whereby diversity can be harnessed and strength forged.

But nevertheless, within the radical position, the argument for multiculturalism touches off at least two somewhat critical positions. Both reflect the unending debate within the left between the reform and radical points on the continuum of change.

To many, the multicultural idea feeds too easily into moderate, superficial reforms rather than creating pressure for more fundamental change. Thus demands for the teaching of community languages overlook the more basic questions of access by migrants to equal educational and employment opportunities. The placing of interpreters in hospitals does nothing to address the high incidence of injuries to migrant workers in factories. Because the multicultural idea has immediate demands which can be met and is not part

of a rigorous social analysis, and because the very term emphasises cultural difference rather than socio-economic status and access to power, it too readily (according to this critique) feeds into moderate reformism rather than structural change.

The other stronger critique of the multicultural idea from within the left, comes from those more single-minded theoretical analyses which look elsewhere than at the migrant experience, cultural difference or ethnic factors for the source of patterns of societal functioning. In a thorough-going class or gender-based analysis of society, attention to multiculturalism can be a wasteful distraction - possibly deliberately manipulated by ruling interests to divert and weaken class action.

Within the Labor Party, all these positions on multiculturalism can be found, as well as the occasional expressions of crude racism or hostility to non-Anglo-Saxon minorities, which are not confined to conservative parties. It is too early to see how a Labor Government will act on these ambivalences. Clearly, the commitment to multiculturalism will remain, but its form and degree will be subject to the resolution of these various pressures.

The idea of multiculturalism, however, is not, unlike some more esoteric notions, one which stays safely in the hands of theorists and political activists. The issues embodied in multiculturalism touch very deep levels of the daily lives and concerns of many ordinary people, so that, in somewhat different language, multiculturalism is a topic of opinion and dispute beyond the arguments of the professional practitioners of political debate. Multiculturalism carries with it themes relating to 'them and us', Australians and outsiders, rights and responsibilities which - especially in the difficult economic times Australia now faces - draw new participants and issues into the forces shaping the multicultural idea, and make the debate around it even more complex.

Not surprisingly, concern about unemployment and poverty, and the resulting competition for jobs and income, is a fuse which will rapidly ignite a sometimes explosive debate about multiculturalism. Workers and unionists, who might otherwise be expected to line up on the liberal or progressive position of support for multiculturalism, now increasingly find themselves urging reduction of immigration levels and complaining that newcomers draw opportunities and government favours away from more deserving native Australians. These positions, which if not inherently contrary to the multicultural idea easily spark off and give legitimacy to the anti-multicultural argument, are amongst the more serious policy dilemmas facing the Labor Party and the union movement.

In addition to the direct policy implications of this sort which people draw from the current economic crisis, the

pressures and anxieties currently experienced by many people, and consequent mood of social tension, is fuelling an upsurge of scapegoating, competitiveness, xenophobia and racism. Much has been said about the relationship between unemployment and racism; and the current situation clearly portends a deterioration in community relations which poses a threat to multiculturalism. Somewhat disturbingly the arguments of those theorists and politicians who express some doubts about multiculturalism appear to have a populist appeal which the arguments of the advocates of multiculturalism lack.

Whether this deterioration in attitudes to minorities, and the large reservoir of hostility to immigrants which persisted even during the last ten years, will combine to offset the positive results of the various efforts made by government to promote the multicultural idea amongst the community over the last decade cannot be known: what is clear, however, is that at the community level, the debate about multiculturalism is far from over. Indeed, the debate is likely to become more, rather than less inflamed, with 'cosmopolitans' - the committed advocates of multiculturalism - required to do battle with a 'popular front' combining outright bigots and racists, with people confused by the pace of social change, or protecting their place in the status stakes.

(It would be a mistake - although a common one - to ascribe all the community opposition to multiculturalism to racism and bigotry. It is arguably both more accurate and more fruitful to ascribe much of this negativism to lack of imagination, or ability to comprehend why migrants don't readily learn English, why they 'stick together', etc. In a country as sheltered from the forces of history, and from obvious regional, linguistic and ethnic diversity as Australia has until recently been, many people simply fail to understand the needs of those whose experiences are so outside their own.)

The other major participant in debates about multiculturalism are Australia's immigrant and ethnic communities. With many exceptions - one of multiculturalism's worst enemies being the migrant who denies his immigrant origin or claims that he succeeded in his new life without any of the initiative-sapping support now being offered to newcomers - immigrants clearly wish to be able to speak and teach their children their own languages, to worship in their own way, to have adequate interpreters in hospitals and government departments, to pursue their own cultural interests, and to have effective union representation. On these issues, and particularly on the key one of the scope for continued immigration and especially family reunion allowed by Australia's immigration policy, the immigrant communities share an interest in multiculturalism which, even if not couched in the same language, transcends the political, economic and social diversity of those communities. (The virtual adoration still demonstrated by so many immigrants for Al Grasby is perhaps one of the most heartfelt expressions of community feeling to be seen in Australia).

It is clear that the multicultural idea now faces some threat. Within conservative thinking, growing limits are being placed on notions of group rights, and in any event, restrictions on government spending and economic problems allow little opportunity for any programme of social reform or change. In Labor circles, those strands of thought unsympathetic to the multicultural idea appear to be gathering strength as the failure of multiculturalism to make real inroads on social disadvantage become more apparent. Through the wider community, economic pressures bring to the surface anxieties which place self-interest and survival ahead of the more distant appeals of multiculturalism, and encourage the growth of xenophobia and scapegoating.

This decline in the vigour of the multicultural idea was highlighted by the low-key position occupied by multiculturalism on the agenda of both political parties during the recent Federal election campaign. Both parties relegated the issue to low visibility policy areas, the Liberal Party, in contrast to previous elections, making no new promises, and Labor putting together a somewhat fragmented package directed more to relieving legislative anomalies than developing any sort of real program.

1.3 The Realities

The above pages have sought to identify the various attitudes about multiculturalism which form part of the overall climate. Attitudes do not compete for influence simply on their merit however; rather they become part of a more complex political process within which some realities persist:

- Within political parties, the commitment to multiculturalism, in some form, cannot be retreated from. Even if the overall 'ethnic vote' evades pollsters and party strategists, within party branches ethnic candidates and blocs are now established elements of the process, while in the larger society, ethnic communities see themselves, and are seen as, a specific target of politics.
- Many key opinion leaders - clergy, academics, literary figures, judges, etc. - are 'cosmopolitan', and would brand as racist any party which sought to repudiate multiculturalism.
- Multiculturalism has been institutionalised in significant ways. Ethnic TV and radio are structures whose own vested interests, as well as supporters, would not allow their dismantling. Racial Discrimination, Equal Opportunity, Human Rights, and Citizenship legislation all affirm aspects of multiculturalism.
- Most State governments now have Ethnic Affairs Commissions, and most States have Ethnic Communities Councils. Many tertiary institutions and secondary schools teach multiculturalism.

- No matter what debate occurs about the desirable shape of Australia's immigration policy, that policy will in fact continue to make Australia a country of ethnic diversity and high intake levels. Australia's place in the world will make it impossible to reduce immigration and refugee entry to negligible levels.
- The real meaning, in terms of outcomes rather than rhetoric, of any government's commitment to multiculturalism will be shaped by that government's overall philosophy and operation. Multiculturalism has little concrete, absolute meaning, nor is it sufficiently central to the concerns of any government (nor its voters), to give rise to programs inconsistent with that government's larger approach. In other words, under a conservative government, multiculturalism will not address fundamental issues of distribution of wealth and power; under a Labor Government, the extent to which those issues are addressed will be a matter of constant contention.

2. ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

It is in this rather confused climate of debate and reality that multiculturalism will be tested and interpreted in years to come. Over the last 10 years the content of multiculturalism has been very varied, ranging from orientation programs for newly-arriving refugees, to support for ethnic festivals, the creation of Channel 0/28, and the funding of ethnic aides in aged, health and child care services.

For most of the post-war period, it was the immigration issue, rather than its consequence, ethnic diversity, that was of interest to the community. Indeed one of the factors to have given rise to the idea of multiculturalism is the coming-of-age of a generation of people, born in Australia, but of immigrant origin - and it is, increasingly, the concerns of this generation that are reflected in the debate about multiculturalism. Nevertheless the two issues, immigration - the process of resettlement in a new country, and ethnicity - the place and meaning of descent, are both enmeshed in the multiculturalism idea, although their social dynamics, and their implications for government policy may well differ.

Matters of current contention, such as access to opportunities and services, patterns of equality and mobility, the scope for cultural diversity and expression and others, may require different consideration between immigrants - new arrivals - and ethnics - people born in Australia of non-Anglo descent. Much of the labour market disadvantages experienced by, for instance, the Lebanese and Turkish communities may be due to the immigrant, rather than the ethnic, factor: while it is imperative to ensure that this disadvantage is not passed on to the succeeding generations, it is equally vital that a self-fulfilling expectation not be created, and that policies be addressed to the precise causes of disadvantage, that is immigrant status, rather

Multi-Cultural background. Australia has not had the length of exposure to the immigration experience that America has had; and it cannot yet be assumed that the ethnic factor will take on the same lasting quality in Australia as has occurred in the USA. One of the challenges, in the development of Australian multiculturalism, is to come to an independent, indigenous understanding of what the long-term outcomes of immigration will be, and neither to romanticise, nor be alarmist about, the ethnic factor. Australia is at an early stage of its multiculturalism, and yet to discover what is real, and what is ephemeral, in that experience.

From the rather mixed bag of issues which, to date, have confused Australian multiculturalism, three persistent themes with implications for the future can be identified.

2.1 Immigration Policy

Irrespective of the way multiculturalism is viewed, the shape of Australia's immigration policy will be a dominant policy question for the Australian Government and nation into the foreseeable future. Australia's situation as a huge empty continent, without foreign borders, resource-rich, free from racial schisms, almost untouched by terrorism, close to South-East Asia and far from potential nuclear battlegrounds - and seen (rightly or wrongly) as environmentally unpolluted and capable of sustaining a much-increased population - will make it impossible for Australia not to respond to international population pressures and refugee movements.

Although the pressures on Australia's immigration policy do not depend on Australia's approach to multiculturalism, the way in which this policy is debated and formulated, and its specific outcomes, will both reflect and influence the status of multiculturalism in the Australian community.

The nexus between immigration policy and multiculturalism takes several, closely connected forms:

- The continuation of medium to high immigration entry levels, on a non-discriminatory basis, with high priority attached to family union, is likely to provide the demographic basis for a cosmopolitan community, and to meet the needs of immigrant groups already in Australia. Such a policy will be more supportive of the intent, and social needs, of a multicultural community than a more restrictive policy.
- However, it is not only the outcome of immigration policy but the way that policy is debated, which will affect the climate of multiculturalism in the future. Opposition to immigration based on racism, or even concern on economic, labour-market or environmental grounds which gives respectability to the fascist arguments of others, risks creating

communal tension - as will excessive or narrow claims from immigrants or cosmopolitans for a very generous immigration policy.

- Settlement policies (which need to be seen as an integral part of immigration policy) are vital determinants of the settlement experiences of newly-arrived immigrants, and of the reaction to them of the host community; and therefore of the quality of the society's multicultural experience.
- The special powers which government has over immigrants (in relation to entry decisions and appeals, deportations and citizenship) deeply affect their civil rights and liberties. One of the marks of a multicultural society must be that citizens by grant have, as nearly as possible, the same status as citizens by birth.

The development of appropriate policies in this area involves a sensitive balance of broad-ranging study of immigration and settlement processes, clarification of objectives, outcomes and competing costs, detailed and longitudinal monitoring and research, and meaningful community consultation and education.

2.2 Ethnicity and Identity

One of the over-arching meanings given to ethnicity is identity: the origin, value-set, culture, religion, language, race, nationality, region, or historic experience which an individual or community chooses to associate with and affirm. It is ethnicity as identity which has been the most romanticised and highlighted of the manifestations of multiculturalism in the last decade (as exemplified by Al Grassby), and which also has given rise to much critical, populist reaction.

Multiculturalism, in this sense refers to - and supports - the value of diversity in society. Its expressions are ethnic festivals and arts, ethnic radio and TV, and the proliferation of ethnic organisations through the community.

This strand of multiculturalism has, over the last decade, been a very vigorous and positive one. It has been this meaning of multiculturalism which has found the most ready, bi-partisan support from government. It is also, however, this aspect of multiculturalism which sits on the most shifting ground in terms of social process, community attitudes and policy implications:

- Not yet known is the breadth, depth and persistence of the ethnic communities' attachment to their own identities. The present interest is clearly deeply felt and real, but is not shared by all 'ethnics', certainly not in the pure form claimed by the

activists. The form in which ethnic identity will be expressed, and in which it merges or conflicts with other identities, over the coming years is unknown: certainly it will vary from group to group, over time, over life cycles, and across class. The nature of future need of the Australian community for multiculturalism in this form is one of the great underlying issues now facing Australian society.

- Also unknown is the capacity of the Australian community to tolerate the claims made for cultural diversity in the name of ethnic identity. There is a constant and visible tension between those urging diversity, and those calling for adherence to a dominant, Anglo-Saxon value system; and the point where the limits are drawn is not clear or constant over time. As suggested earlier, there is now some pressure for the limits of this tolerance to become somewhat tighter.
- The romance with cultural diversity over recent years has obscured the conflict between the value of cultural diversity per se, and other values. Feminists, for instance, find much to object to in some cultures; multiculturalism has yet to address this issue. Certainly, the cultural relativism required by multiculturalism is unlikely to have an untroubled run in Australian society for much longer.
- Similarly, the question of whether cultural diversity can in fact threaten social cohesion and core values has not been seriously considered. Sadly, the concern is usually invoked by racists, seeking to conceal their real motivation, and deservedly, is dismissed accordingly. Nevertheless, there is a real issue to be addressed - as overseas experience shows - and policies to be developed.

Significantly, this meaning of multiculturalism does not confine itself to the ethnic factor. There are many sources of multiculturalism in the community, of which immigration-related ethnicity is only one. Others include 'alternate' lifestyles, differing recreational groups, religions, class and education, sex-related identity (e.g. feminists, homosexuals), and very importantly, in this context, Aboriginal communities. Whether these sources of cultural difference are to be addressed by multiculturalism is an open question.

Some of these questions as to the nature and future of multiculturalism can be tackled with detailed survey research. Long-term research and monitoring, and ethnographic work will also be important. However, so global and sensitive are some of these issues that they will never be totally resolved by research means. Rather these questions will provide the continuing background in which government policies and community attitudes will operate.

The promotion of an attitude, in the community and among policy-makers, in which these factors are sensitively and intelligently understood and worked with, may be more important than pure research.

2.3 Ethnicity and Equality

The other key strand of multiculturalism, sometimes related to the interest in identity, sometimes deliberately distanced from it, is concerned with ethnicity as a factor affecting equality in society. The basis for this concern is clear: ethnic origin should not be allowed to disadvantage people in terms of their access to their rights, opportunities, and rewards in society. The evidence that it does often do so is abundant - in unemployment and income statistics, patterns of representation in circles of power, access to health and welfare services, educational achievement. Similarly, the range of causes of such disadvantage are readily observable: language barriers, cultural difference, Anglo-Celtic dominance of power centres and institutional processes, the vulnerability to exploitation of newcomers to Australia.

The ethnic factor, in this view, is not a personal or subjective issue of personal choice, so much as an objective condition acted upon by the community. To a degree, this aspect of multiculturalism is recognised by all the players in the multicultural arena, and both political parties have directed some of their policies at remedying some of the specific socio-economic disadvantage experienced by immigrants and ethnics.

Within this general concern, however, many debates remain unresolved and wide divergences of approach exist:

- The precise elements in the ethnic factor which cause the disadvantage are subject to different interpretation. Is the cause simply language disadvantage, or more deep-seated cultural difference? Is it the failure of ethnic groups to disperse and assimilate or should they seek greater ethnic cohesion?

The immigrant/ethnic issue is pertinent here. How much disadvantage is due to the newcomer status of the immigrant, and how much will be sustained by future 'ethnic' generations/ To what extent is it possible to generalise - or can meaningful observations only be made by looking at specific ethnic groups and immigration waves and cohorts?

In understanding these fundamental questions, Australia is hampered by the shortness, in historical terms, of Australia's mass immigration experience. The playing out of these factors has only begun, and much research and observation, and less speculation, will be needed over the years to come.

Even where the main factors are identified (or thought to be identified) there is a disagreement about where the change should occur. In one view, immigrants, having come to Australia should change - and in the meantime, accept some disadvantage. If they learn English, work hard, and send their children to school, they will find their place in the sun. Others argue that Australia, having sought its immigrants, has an obligation to them - and should ensure that services are available in languages other than English, that social arrangements are not culturally-biased, etc.

Although it seems that the latter view is more in the spirit of multiculturalism, in fact many who claim to support the multicultural idea take the first view, and the debate has quite immediate policy implications. This issue is not one to be resolved by research so much as by community debate and understanding.

Partly related to the above, among planners, policy-makers and service-deliverers, there exist various concepts about the appropriate arrangements to be made. The basic choice is between universal 'mainstream' services (delivered to all people, regardless of their background, and accessible to all), and ethnic-specific services (specially tailored to meet the language, cultural, etc. needs of immigrant and ethnic groups). Many variants of these approaches are possible, with further questions as to the appropriate auspice and structure for service delivery, the role of ethnic representatives and personnel, interpreters and bilingual aides, ethnic community organizations, etc. Another version of the same theme is the notion of positive discrimination - still a very controversial and emotive proposal. The issue is also sometimes talked of as equality of opportunity versus equality of outcome.

An even more fundamental debate underlies the whole issue of the link between ethnicity and equality, but only sometimes surfaces. Ultimately, the choice of approach to tackling ethnic disadvantage rests on a belief about the source of societal inequality and strategies for social change.

An incrementalist approach is one which identifies specific sources of ethnic disadvantage, for example, language difficulties at school, and seeks to remedy them by appropriate adjustments, such as ethnic aides or ESL programs. A more radical view perceives underlying issues of the distribution of wealth and power, that is, a class and gender analysis, and seeks more fundamental structural change. (In this view it is the fact that immigrants are workers, rather than immigrants, which causes their real disadvantage, and requires challenge.)

The ethnic factor poses some problems for a class-based view. Much of the logic of the class view leads to a perception of the ethnic factor as a diversion, obscuring the real issues of inequality and fragmenting the class solidarity which is needed for effective change. An alternate logic, more accepted in the USA than in Australia, sees ethnic consciousness as providing a base for the sort of group confidence and solidarity which can become a spring-board for a larger mobilisation.

So fundamental can be the rift between the incrementalist, and the class view of ethnicity, equality, and social change that debate and action in this area becomes highly polarised. Proponents of the Galbally approach to multiculturalism, for instance, differ so totally from the analyses developed by the Centre of Multicultural Studies at Wollongong that no development of ideas and action can occur. Although it is unlikely that a consensus can be found, or even sought, between these views, there is little value in the debate being polarised more than necessary.

Again, research has a contribution to make in understanding, and developing policies to address, the link between ethnicity and equality. But this issue is only partly a technical one. The clarification of underlying values and assumptions, and of policy priorities is the necessary context for progress to occur.

3. CONCLUSION

Clearly the meaning and place of multiculturalism in Australian society will remain an urgent question in coming years, and one which governments and the community will continue to address.

It is therefore imperative that the overall nature of the multicultural issue be understood, so that the means by which it is addressed be appropriate.

Multiculturalism is only partially a technical issue, to be left in the hands of the bureaucrats and researchers. It is also, fundamentally, an emotional issue, capable of giving rise to strong feelings and of immediate interest to large numbers of people, at all levels of society. It is a loose, partially symbolic concept drawing on a range of matters and beliefs. For multiculturalism to be meaningfully and humanely translated into government activity, more than research data is needed - although that will be vital. Without community involvement, understanding and acceptance, multiculturalism will fail - or worse.

Underlying value bases and assumptions need to be identified and policy options made explicit. Strong emotional attachments, ambivalences and anxieties require acknowledgement. Political motivations need recognition. Changes in issues and attitudes over time, and in the prevailing climate will confuse expectations and plans.

In short, and to reiterate, constant and meaningful community involvement in the evolution of multiculturalism is fundamental to its success and is the context in which technical and research inquiry can be conducted. In this sense, multiculturalism is qualitatively different from many other major issues of concern to government, where community attitudes are not so strongly held and shared, or are less relevant, and technical criteria can be given a more confident place.

REFERENCES

- Australia. Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, (1975), Poverty in Australia: First Main Report, AGPS, Canberra, 2 vols (Professor Ronald F Henderson, Chairman).
- Australia. Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia: (1980), Technological Change and its Consequences, Vol 1, AGPS, Canberra, (Sir Rupert Myer, Chairman).
- Australia. Committee to Advise on Policies for Manufacturing Industries: (1975), Policy for Development of Manufacturing Industries: a Green Paper, AGPS, Canberra, 4 vols (R G Jackson, Chairman).
- Australia. Population and Immigration Council, (1976), A Decade of Migrant Settlement: Report on the 1973 Immigration Survey, AGPS, Canberra.
- Australia. Review of Post-Arrival Services and Programs for Migrants: (1978), Migrant Services and Programs: Report, AGPS, Canberra, 3 vols (Frank E Galbally CBE, Chairman).
- Australia. Study on Structural Adjustment: (1979), Report, AGPS, Canberra, (J G Crawford, Chairman).
- White Paper on Manufacturing Industry, (1977), AGPS, Canberra.

Laksiri Jayasuriya's article is a blend of astute observations and an account of the main threads of the history of multiculturalism in Australia. Like Liffman, he identifies issues which must be understood and resolved before multiculturalism can be fully relevant to the needs of Australian society. In particular, he points to the importance of equality, justice and fairness, rather than merely tolerance and understanding, as the lynchpins of multiculturalism. This represents a shift from the romantic, 'soft' form of multiculturalism to a stand which may be less acceptable to members of the mainstream.

THE FACTS, POLICIES AND RHETORIC OF MULTICULTURALISM

Australia, said the newspaper columnist Buzz Kennedy recently, has in not much more than thirty years ". . . changed the very structure of the community with an immigration program bolder and more racially diverse than any country has attempted before". He added that we had "made the transition to a multiracial society with a minimum of friction".

There is no doubt that Australia's ambitious postwar immigration program was a remarkable social experiment; it has radically altered the social landscape with a mosaic of diverse people drawn from more than 100 countries and speaking some fifty languages. Equally, migration has been a key factor in the economic development of post-war society. In short, the effects of migration over the past three decades have far exceeded the expectations of its originators in both social and economic costs and benefits. It is worth looking at how we have tried to cope with an influx of nearly three million newcomers in a little over thirty years.

The most obvious fact about postwar migration is that it has dramatically transformed the demographic structure of the country. Immigrants and their offspring have been the main contributors to the growth of the Australian population since 1947, accounting for just over 50 per cent of its growth and approximately 70 per cent of the growth of the workforce. While in 1947 only a tenth of the population was born overseas and less than 3 per cent were of non-Anglo-Saxon origin, by the 1981 census some 27 per cent was born overseas and more than half of these were from non-Anglo-Saxon countries. What is more, nearly another 20 per cent had at least one parent born overseas. These are the second generation migrants whose response to multiculturalism in the 1980s will be crucial. Taking both first and second generation migrants, we see that about 40 per cent or two in five Australians are either migrants or children of migrants. This proportion of migrants in the total Australian population is higher than that in America during the peak of its migrant intake in the decade ending in 1910.

Reproduced with permission of the author and editor from Polycom, No 37, June 1984.

It is important to note that of the overseas-born component, nearly two-fifths came from non-English-speaking countries of northern, southern and eastern Europe; more recently there has been a small but growing number of settlers from the Middle East and Asia, especially Lebanon, Turkey and Southeast Asia, but not enough to generate the exaggerated xenophobia expressed by some racist groups that tarnishes the social scene despite all the euphoria about multiculturalism.

Apart from introducing social and cultural diversity, the most significant aspects of immigration are economic: after all, the impetus for the policy was overwhelmingly economic - the need for labor, both skilled and unskilled, to develop the nascent manufacturing industries of the 1950s. Migrant workers, female and male, make up a significant proportion of the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled work force. The Borrie Report, among others, has pointed to the over-representation of migrants in menial, routine, low-paid jobs - the jobs shunned by Australian indigenous workers. This phenomenon is described by economists as segmentation of the labor market and highlights the fact that the labor market is fragmented between migrant and non-migrant workers. In the United States this is known as the "dual labor market" hypothesis, since the allocation of job opportunities is between the high wage, strongly unionised primary sector and a secondary sector characterised by low wages and poor working conditions, dominated by black workers. The Australian version of this hypothesis suggests that the primary sector is dominated by Australian-and-British-born workers along with a fair proportion of northern European workers. Migrants from Asia and the Middle East are at the bottom of the occupational scale. They are also disproportionately represented among the poor, as shown by Professor Henderson in the Poverty Report of 1978. The situation is now even bleaker, with the unemployment rates for non-English-speaking migrants, and for female workers generally, decidedly higher than comparable rates for Australian-born workers. Clearly one cannot understand immigration policies - intake as well as settlement - without acknowledging that the basic source of inequality affecting migrants lies in the segmentation of the labor market. And, contrary to the rhetoric of multiculturalism and the naive assumption of many of its social policies, it needs to be stressed that migrants are not a homogenous group. They are differentiated not just in terms of national and ethnic origin but, probably more significantly, in terms of their occupational status. This is of considerable importance when one begins to wonder who are the beneficiaries among the migrants of multicultural policies. There is not only a strong ethnic middle class allied with an ethnic labor aristocracy - a sort of ethnic petite bourgeoisie - but a fairly large number of migrant unskilled workers whose interests may not coincide with those of other migrants. As Robert Birrell has put it, the segmentation of the labor market is "the fundamental basis of the social, political, and economic divisions between the non-English-speaking-origin and Anglo-Saxon communities". Put differently, the inequalities and deprivations suffered by many migrants are a direct function of their socioeconomic position, and any migrant settlement policies that fail to address this fundamental issue are divorced from reality.

How did mainstream Australians - the dinkum Aussies, themselves the migrants of yesteryear but now the hosts to newcomers - react to these massive changes in the social and economic system?

From the days of Arthur Calwell, the first Minister of Immigration, until the end of the 1960s official policy was rigidly paternalistic and strictly assimilationist. It was based on the principle that newcomers, considered lucky to be here, should become incorporated into the Australian way of life without much difficulty and that they should do so quickly.

The long-term objective of this was to have immigrants shed their original cultural identity and become indistinguishable in speech, manner, appearance, taste, and thinking from the Anglo-Saxon Australians. Behind this was (and still is) the aim of a stable, cohesive, and a healthy society. Assimilationism assumed that this was not possible without a uniform set of values, attitudes and institutions to which all members subscribed. Today we think otherwise.

While officialdom continued during this early period to resist recognising the rigidities and dysfunctional aspects of a hard-line assimilationist policy, the heterogeneity and diversity of Australian society was becoming markedly visible both in public and private life. The unfairness, impracticability, the general failure and unrealistic nature of such an extreme policy stance was evident in such facts as a high return rate of migrants, a high incidence of psychiatric disorders, growing residential concentration, and general apathy and widespread unhappiness of large sections of the migrant populace.

And so we began to see in the mid-1960s the emergence of a milder form of assimilationism, now called integration. This less rigid attitude towards migrant settlement signalled greater tolerance of cultural difference and a diversity of ways of living. As in the melting-pot ideology of the United States, here the expectation was of an eventual blending of cultures (and one suspects there are some versions of today's multiculturalism that still harbor such a view).

Yet this dilution of assimilationism was more apparent than real, and not even the first break in the White Australia policy in 1966 heralded the disappearance of the ideal of total conformity and a homogenous society. The pervasive ideal and dominant ideology, as Minister Snedden put it as late as 1969, was that "we should have a monoculture, with everyone living in the same way, understanding each other and sharing the same aspirations". He went on to say: "We do not want social pluralism".

It is hard to believe that, within three years of Snedden's reaffirmation of the orthodoxy of migrant policy, the advent of the Labor Government in 1972 brought a totally new philosophy, one enshrined in the language of multiculturalism and receiving bipartisan endorsement.

Al Grassby, as Minister of Immigration in the Whitlam government, wrote an important chapter of Australian history by expunging the White Australia policy from the statute book. He then proceeded to radically restructure policies of migrant settlement inscribed in the Anglo-Saxon language and philosophy of assimilationism. It is still too early to appreciate the full significance of these changes and Al Grassby's role. However, in the enthusiasm and zeal for multiculturalism in the late 1970s and 1980s, the nature and dimensions of the changes in thinking and values have been prone to be exaggerated and have been fraught with polemical and utopian overstatement.

The abandonment of hard-line assimilationism first became evident with Al Grassby's concept of a multicultural society - the "family of nations" that permitted migrant groups to cultivate differences in ways of thinking, acting and feeling. Grassby, though espousing a consensus view, was primarily concerned with challenging the cultural dominance of the Anglo-Saxon and thereby liberating the migrants from one source of oppression.

Ethnicity denoting a "sense of peoplehood", a feeling of closeness, symbolised by sharing in common culture, language, way of life, racial origin, or religion, became an important element of newly proclaimed multicultural society. Either through self-identity or ascribed identity by the dominant groups the emergence of ethnicity was deemed important in restoring the migrants' sense of personal worth. However, as the late Dr Jean Martin noted, the concept of ethnicity should, for analytical and practical purposes, be associated with "minority status" - that is, groups singled out for differential and pejorative treatment because they possess some socially distinctive characteristic. In other words, ethnic groups should be regarded as status-devalued minority groups, particularly in assessing the life chances of their members in a new society.

The reasons for the abandonment of assimilationism are still being argued about. Some on the right argue that the change was political: it was the lure of ethnic votes that led politicians to co-opt ethnic leaders to serve as political brokers for the ethnic vote. While this viewpoint may not be a complete explanation, there is substance to the view that those who today stand to gain most from multiculturalism are the ethnic leaders drawn from the ethnic middle class and petite bourgeoisie. It is they who manipulate the ethnic vote for the party they support, vigorously canvassing for those multicultural policies that enable them to buy votes.

Against this, left-wing critics see the abandonment of assimilationism as a response to changes in the structure of the Australian working class. The argument is that, as a result of the fragmentation of the labor market, there have been changes in the social structure affecting all classes. A key element of this view is that the newly upwardly mobile migrant workers - the ethnic petite bourgeoisie and middle class - have embraced ethnicity as a means of mediating class relations, a position not dissimilar to that of the right-wing thinkers. According to the left, the State, by catering to the cultural concerns of ethnicity, has been able to grant status and recognition via ethnicity, overcoming the status loss associated with the earlier pattern of cultural devaluation. Ethnicity becomes an escape for the migrants' lack of status in society. But whatever the reasons for the shift in policy, by the end of the 1970s assimilationism had almost disappeared from the political and social vocabulary.

Since the mid-1970s, this apparent willingness of the dominant groups in Australian society to encourage a degree of cultural and social variation by recognising ethnicity and ethnic identity has implied the adoption of a pluralistic model for migrant - host-society relations. Multiculturalism has come to be a shorthand term for a form of cultural pluralism. Both terms are vague in meaning and implicitly subscribe to a consensus view of society - a reconciliation of competing interests.

On the one hand, the terms are used descriptively to characterise the social and cultural diversity in Australian society (and there is little to complain about here except that "polyethnic" might be a better descriptive term). However, it should be noted that even at a descriptive level, according to Dr Charles Price, Australia will be less of a multicultural society than a mixed cultural society, that is, one in which people inherit in themselves many different cultures and mix the cultural elements in their own way. This, he says, is because of a rapid break-up of ethnic communities as a result of second-generation migrants marrying outside their own communities.

However, it is the normative-prescriptive usage of the term that has wider currency and warrants scrutiny. This usage is predicated on the existence, or desired existence, of mutual tolerance and respect for cultural differences by all members and institutions of Australian society. It postulates an ideal state of affairs in majority-minority ethnic group relations. This is the consensus view, the expectation that groups will live side by side with mutual respect and tolerance and be able to achieve common ends within the same political unit.

Importantly, what this model of cultural pluralism prescribes as the new ideology of migrant settlement is implicit in the slogan of multiculturalism - "unity in diversity". Thus it is in terms of the pursuit of diversity that we have fostered a greater sense of ethnicity, a tolerance of cultural difference expressed in the periodic "celebrations of ethnicity" applauded and patronised by political and community leaders.

Of course, it is still unclear whether this greater willingness to accept cultural difference does signify a genuine respect for the understanding of the culturally different. A recent Victorian survey found that nearly 50 per cent of Victorians sampled saw immigrants "essentially as 'no hopers' who have come to a land of opportunity to make good".

Impressionistically one suspects that there has been some change but that it is only superficial.

The tolerance afforded to the culturally different is a different matter. This depends upon the strength of social supports and sanctions for and against prejudiced or intolerant behaviour. And there are today many more institutional barriers to expressions of blatant discrimination, cultural antagonism, and ethnic or racial intolerance, at least in public life. We can only continue to build up social deterrents to such behaviour.

My view is that the greater accommodation afforded different cultural values and ethnic lifestyles characteristic of post-war society reflects the greater community acceptance of permissive cultural ethos. Ethnicity and its manifestations have become incorporated in the lowered threshold of tolerance of acceptable behaviour and may have nothing to do with the propagation of multiculturalism.

The crucial element in all versions of cultural pluralism is the insistence on unity while allowing for diversity. This unity, it is argued, has to be safeguarded by the universal acceptance of the common aspects of the political system, and political structures. It is for this reason that cultural pluralism always contains a token reference to "the common realm of political rights and social valuations" as an

essential part of pluralism. Cultural pluralism and multiculturalism thus have an element of assimilationism because all migrants are expected to learn to function in the common aspects of society that enshrine some core social and political values.

The real issue here is the need to distinguish cultural from structural pluralism. In its extreme form, structural pluralism entails an apartheid-like separatism and carries the potential for dividing rather than unifying society. It was for this reason that the 1975 report of the Lippman Committee in advocating cultural pluralism was anxious to point out that "a fine line divides cultural pluralism from structural pluralism" and to warn against the dangers of slipping into the latter.

Considering the haphazard and confused way multiculturalism has evolved in Australia since the mid 1970s, many primary ethnic structure have developed. These are evident mostly in the efforts of ethnic groups to maintain separate customs, languages, religions, and diets. Extensive lobbies exist today to campaign for ethnic media, ethnic schools, and ethnically based welfare structures. Indeed, as the social geographer Ian Burnley rightly asks: "The question now is whether the urban society of Sydney and Melbourne is structurally or culturally plural, has elements of both, or is neither". What is more significant is his next question: whether it is possible to maintain separate customs, languages, and media and not develop a kind of structural pluralism.

One of the urgent issues that multiculturalism of the 1980s must face is how much structural pluralism Australian society is willing to maintain and legitimise in its pursuit of cultural pluralism. It is disquieting that the 1982 Zubrzycki Report, *Multiculturalism for All Australians*, is not only ambiguous but confused on this issue. While it emphatically rejects "separate development" and assert that social cohesion is a major goal of multicultural Australia, it goes on:

[The Committee] is conscious of the difficulty of drawing a distinction between group specific structures that are undesirably separatist and others that play a legitimate part in the maintenance and dissemination of particular cultures or in the support of minority groups (p. 30).

We are entitled to know precisely to what extent the report is prepared to espouse the claims of structural as against cultural pluralism. For example, do we accept ethnic educational or media structures at public cost? And if so, how is this to be justified, not just from the point of view of mainstream society but from the perspective of the needs of the migrants themselves? We need to move away from the rhetoric of multiculturalism and spell out realistically the costs and benefits of such a policy.

It is clear that there is a need to distinguish between the private and public domains of life, particularly when multiculturalism is translated into social policy. The simple and compelling point is that while an emphasis on the private domain (typified by aspects of cultural life such as food, language, religious observances, family life, and recreational pastimes) may help to preserve ethnic identity, give emotional security and enhance the self-esteem of individual ethnic group members, it does not necessarily assist in helping migrant or ethnic minorities to cope with "the political realities of the nation state". In other words, the

legitimate aspirations of migrants as members of minority groups for a fair share of the resources and social rewards of society at large - the public domain of life - may be impeded by an excessive and exclusive concern with the "privatised" aspects of social and cultural life.

Another way of expressing this difference is to demonstrate that prescriptive multiculturalism confuses two related but distinct aspects of social functioning and social relations. To retreat via multiculturalism and ethnicity into private domain is to expound the right to choose a style of life rather than to struggle with issues of life chances. I believe Bullivant's distinction between life styles and life chances is central to an understanding of the meaning and significance of multiculturalism as a philosophy of migrant settlement.

Multicultural policies and programs that stress the freedom to choose life styles - typical of the "romantic pluralism" epitomised by what one Canadian observer described as "a spaghetti-eating and basket weaving" (and I would add, a rice noodle-eating) approach to multiculturalism - fail to address the critical issues of migrants' life chances. These revolve around overcoming structural inequalities and have to do with competition, power and conflict rather than consensus and the "niceness" of the happy family. While an approach highlighting life styles may promote ethnic self-identity and enhance self-esteem by ignoring the issues of migrant social and economic inequalities, it fails to deal with the struggle for equality, fairness and justice.

Pluralism has to be viewed as an agent leading us to larger goals in society, in particular the ideals of social justice and equality. As Schermerhorn eloquently argues: "If pluralism does not go beyond itself, if it is exhausted in self-congratulation and bemused nostalgia it will become like a stagnant pool whose lack of outlet condemns it to final pollution."

Official versions of multiculturalism espoused by political parties and the powerful ethnic lobby all fail to show how multicultural policies (for example, ethnic television and the pursuit of community languages) can remove the glaring deprivations and inequalities migrants are exposed to and ensure not only a measure of equality of opportunity but what the Karmel Report on Education called an "equality of outcomes."

A romantic and exotic version of multiculturalism tends not only to confuse private cultural concerns with political reality, but also to locate migrant problems - the disadvantages and discrimination suffered by migrants - within "the realm of communication and cultural dissonance". The causes of the inequality, deprivation and disadvantage afflicting migrants, especially the working class, cannot be identified in terms of cultural dissonance or cultural exploitation. No amount of cultural enhancement will alleviate structural inequalities.

What is missing in this account of multiculturalism is the importance of class and the correlated concept of power as a determinant of social relations. Certainly, it is neither class nor ethnicity alone that is critical for such an analysis. We need to recognise the importance of both factors in portraying the minority status of migrant groups and understanding the structural position of migrants. Stratification theories that relegate racial, ethnic, or cultural differences to residual categories such as color or ethnicity are at best partial

theories incapable of explaining the institutionalised practices of which we are a part. Society is divided vertically by class and each division horizontally by race and/or ethnicity as implied by the notion of "ethclass" that has gained currency among stratification theorists who wish to portray the interaction of class and ethnicity as a determinant of behaviour.

I would argue that at all levels members of ethnic minorities suffer the double disadvantages of ethnicity and class deprivation, but that this is particularly manifest in the case of lower class migrant workers whose inferior social position is aggravated by the compounding effects of ethnicity and class. It is perhaps for this reason that on measures of social mobility in Australia (of which there is little tangible evidence) ethnic minorities are likely to experience more horizontal than vertical mobility.

A cultural pluralism that recognises equality of opportunity as a key issue or principle in society must make provision for harnessing the skills, talents and resources necessary for making a living and for what has been called "securing a place on the ladders of property, prestige and power" that characterise a given society. I believe that assimilation into the political reality of one's society is an essential precondition for enhancing one's life chances.

In this resides the inescapable dilemma for any theory of cultural pluralism. It has to resolve the tension that lies concealed in the issue of diversity and equality, so much so that one theorist has claimed that "the problem of diversity and equality is not remediable, at least in the short term". It is no easy task to accommodate ethnic diversity at the primary group level and yet enable migrants to overcome dominance and oppression by the dominant group in society at the institutional level. Even the leading theoretician of multiculturalism, Professor Zubrzycki, concedes that "cultural differentiation in the long run may be incompatible with the doctrine of equality" and admits that ethnic stratification via ethnic-specific occupational structures could stultify the strivings of migrants for upward social mobility.

I dread to think that the glorification of ethnicity we have been indulging in, supposedly in the best interests of migrants, may actually be counter-productive and leave them trapped and encapsulated in the very social structures that oppress them.

I have tried to suggest that the change from assimilationism to multiculturalism may not have been as beneficial to the migrants and as significant for society as has been claimed. While in some ways multiculturalism has given us a richer and more varied society, one a little more trusting and tolerant of cultural differences, intolerance and discrimination still prevail covertly. The exotic versions of multiculturalism may have been more rhetorical than real, and perhaps because of the political expediency that underlies these shifts in policy. Clearly, the politics of ethnicity - not ethnic politics - loom large on the horizon.

The confusion between the private-public dimensions of multiculturalist policies leaves the vast majority of migrants no better off than before. There is not doubt, as the left and right would agree, that some migrants, especially the ethnic middle class and petite bourgeoisie, have

been the main beneficiaries of these policies. It is also clear that, wittingly or unwittingly, cultural pluralism appears to be giving way to a form of social or structural pluralism that the wider society is unprepared for and is reluctant to accept.

The rights of migrants and so called ethnics may be better safeguarded and guaranteed from within mainstream institutions suitably equipped to serve the special needs of migrants, rather than outside them in ethnic structures. It is easier and preferable to adapt and restructure mainstream institutions (as for example, when the Department of Social Security took over migrant settlement services in the Whitlam era) than to develop and proliferate special services or services via ethnic structures. Because of the absence of enforceable norms of performance, from the point of view of ordinary migrants an ethnic bureaucratic elite might be far more oppressive than anything they have encountered through Anglo-Saxon dominance.

My argument is that it is not life styles, the privatised version of multiculturalism, that matter but life chances. In the popular philosophy of multiculturalism, from Grassby to Galbally through to Zubrzycki, we have tried to play down the nastiness of the real world, its competition and conflict of interests and have glorified the "niceness" of the happy family living amicably and in harmony.

If multiculturalism is to be relevant to the needs of Australian society, including its migrant component, first and second generation, then it must be urgently concerned with equality, justice and fairness and not just with tolerance and understanding. The latter without the former has a hollow ring to its laudable objectives of "unity in diversity" and in the long run will breed anger and resentment that may well threaten the moral basis of society itself. It is through justice and equality for migrants that we can sustain "a richly diverse, tolerant and vibrant society".

The agenda for a truly multicultural society where there is tolerance and understanding with social justice has still to be written. I believe that such an agenda has to be framed in terms of life chances and not life styles. The debate, the political debate, has only just begun and perhaps by 2001 we will be able to enshrine a more enlightened vision of a multicultural Australia.

It is time to take stock and re-examine with candor and vision, the rhetoric of multiculturalism.

Cultural separatism is a threat to the unity of Australian society. While there are many forces already at work which contribute to social disunity, the addition of another element is undesirable. In the next article, George Smolicz points out how the failure of mainstream schools to offer a range of community languages, coupled with government support for separate ethnic community schools, potentially contributes to separatism. He argues the "The most feasible alternative is to provide multicultural education within the existing school".

THE SEPARATISM OF ASSIMILATION

G Smolicz

The phase of assimilation of the 1950s and 1960s gave way in the 1970s to a variety of interpretations of multiculturalism.

Now, in the mid-1980s, there are signs of an incipient separatism.

Migrant children brought up in the 1950s and 1960s had virtually no chance of acquiring literacy in their mother tongue in any 'mainstream' Australian school.

At present it is possible, for some minority children at least, to maintain and develop their home cultures through the official school system rather than through the Saturday school ventures which were all that were available to them in previous decades.

Despite such changes, it is still possible for children (and parents) from the minority background to opt for the assimilationist course and reject all educational efforts at culture maintenance.

Even in the very few schools which make a language other than English compulsory for all students during a certain number of years, it is possible for a Dutch-Australian child to choose German, or for a Greek-Australian child to opt for French, thus giving him or her the opportunity not to pursue literacy in the language of the group or groups from which he or she originates.

Multiculturalism in education has therefore increasingly meant creating opportunities for choice, and translating the concepts of cultural democracy into school practice.

Underlying this choice has been the changing idea of what constitutes an Australian.

Underlying this choice has been the changing idea of what constitutes an Australian.

During the early post-war years and for some time afterwards, an Australian was assumed to be a native speaker of English and almost invariably a monolingual, with the exception of a very few of the academic and social elite who were taught 'ancient' or 'foreign' languages.

Neighbours

The realisation, dating from the 1960s, that France and Germany were England's rather than Australia's neighbours and that for geopolitical reasons one should introduce into education the languages of our geographic neighbours as well as of world's great powers, did not basically alter this Australian-English nexus.

Spanish, Russian, Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese were introduced as 'foreign' tongues. Even Italian was more often thought of as an important language for the understanding of Western civilisation (which undoubtedly it is), than as a language spoken at home and in Saturday schools by an increasing number of Australians.

The crucial question that one must address is the extent to which Australian-born individuals can be accepted as Australians while they continue to make use of languages other than English in their daily life.

In this regard language stands out as a particularly striking, not to say glaring, demonstration of cultural difference; but what is being said about language could also in some ways be applied to other aspects of culture, such as religion, family structure, personal habits, food and dress and names.

The liberalisation of public opinion in relation to language seemed to show itself first at the family level. People could talk Greek or Italian in their homes, providing it was in private and immediately dropped whenever an 'original' or 'real' Australian (who could be a descendant of the pioneer settlers or a recent immigrant from England) made his or her appearance among the ethnics.

Another mild trend in the direction of cultural democracy for Australians of all backgrounds is based upon strictly 'transitional' criteria.

This refers to the toleration for the first generation of immigrants speaking their own tongues, with special permission for their children to indulge in such un-Australian activities until they had mastered English, when 'migrant' tongues could be safely phased out from use.

This transitional assumption has been the mainspring of some of the more extensive bilingual education programs in the US, and it continued to underlie some official Australian attitudes, as shown for example in the questions that were asked, or not asked, in recent censuses.

Regularly

Before 1976, no language question appeared in any census, while in that year a question was included which referred to languages other than English spoken regularly. It elicited positive responses from large numbers of school children learning French.

That census was also plagued by omissions and inadequacies of analysis based, for example, upon confusion on the part of statisticians and programmers between Slovenian and Yugoslav groups, as well as upon parsimony - born possibly of tacit hostility or indifference to languages - which caused only 50 per cent of the data to be analysed.

Hence, for several groups we were back to defining language on the basis of birthplace, once again equating Australian birth with the use of English as the mother tongue or sole language.

This traditional view of a monolingual Australian was reinforced by the 1981 census, which provided almost a parody of any concept of multiculturalism that did not rest upon strictly transitional assumptions.

People were asked to respond with a 'yes' or 'no' to the question on their ability to speak a language other than English; if they answered in the affirmative, they were required to indicate whether they could speak English very well, well, poorly, or not at all.

This type of questions reveals three assumptions:

- That if language competence is to be determined it can be inferred from birthplace data, since all children born to 'migrants' in Australia will have shifted to English only;

- The false idea that people able to speak a language other than English will, almost by definition, be deficient in their command of English - or at least that their competence had to be carefully scrutinised; and

- The devaluation of all languages other than English, since the census taker shows not the slightest interest in what other languages the respondents speak, the sole concern being their ability in English.

Education systems in this country are, however, increasingly ahead of census makers and there is a growing realisation of the need to adjust to the needs of young Australians, some of whom may enter the school without an adequate command of English. NESB

This adjustment not only involves the learning of English as a second ~~ESL~~ language, but also the provision of facilities for children from non-English speaking backgrounds to learn to read and write in their home language, as well as opportunities for children of all backgrounds to acquire the knowledge of another tongue.

These provisions are still, however, inadequate; a survey by the Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee of South Australia found last year that of the 80 per cent of schools which responded to the questionnaire, only about a third taught a language other than English.

Alternatives

The alternatives facing the Australian education system are gradually becoming clearer.

One possibility is for languages of major groups to be offered as options in 'mainstream' schools, with the risk that since only Greek-Australians learn Greek, for instance, such studies fragment the school and society.

A second alternative is to offer two or more languages in schools as options, with the proviso that at least one of these languages is made compulsory for three or more years. This is the situation, for instance, at one State high school in South Australia, which currently offers seven language options.

This means that language study is part of the core curriculum and that a language other than English is treated in the same way as, say, Mathematics, and may be dropped only after a student has had a reasonable exposure to it.

A third alternative is to refrain from teaching any language other than English, although such a possibility is increasingly untenable, not only because of the multicultural educational policies of Australian governments but also because of the attitudes of parents.

Such parents are likely, as voters and citizens, to insist on the adoption of the principle of cultural democracy in school practice. Should the school authorities continue to deny such rights, the parents, through their religious and linguistic communities, are free to organise their own independent primary and secondary schools. Moreover, such schools, be they Greek Orthodox, Lebanese Maronite, Latvian Lutheran, Armenian Christian, Arabic Muslim, Ukrainian Catholic, or ethnic non-denominational, may be in a position to claim the same kind of State Aid presently allocated to non-government schools, be they Catholic (Irish derived), Church of England, Presbyterian (Scottish origin), or the several Jewish day schools now operating in Melbourne.

So far only the Jewish community, especially in Victoria, has made extensive use of an independent school alternative, while other groups, such as the Greek and Islamic, have just begun to experiment with such a possibility. In England, however, we are already witnessing a much more pronounced press for Islamic, State-aided independent schools.

It is difficult to generalise which outcome is most appropriate for each community. A large degree of educational pluralism already exists in Australia, both along religious and social class lines. From 1917, when German Lutheran schools were outlawed, there has, however, been no extensive pluralism by language, while religious variations have been very largely within the Christian group.

Implications

The desire of ethnic groups to establish their own school system has implications not just for the inculcation of a particular religion, language and culture, but also for the way in which students are prepared for public examinations, university entry and for the society's occupational structure.

To be successful, ethnic day schools would have to show their academic efficiency, as well as create a reputation which would not be a handicap to their pupil's future social standing and career chances.

In this connection it should be noted, however, that some groups may be so devoted to their culture as to tolerate some status disadvantage in exchange for an assurance of cultural continuity.

So far, at least a few Jewish schools appear to have managed to achieved such a good reputation, but it should be noted that the most prominent

among them rely upon English as the principal language of instruction, although Hebrew and/or Yiddish may form an important part of the curriculum.

Such schools have been seen by some researchers as having a dual role of cultivating a scholarly and spiritual Jewish tradition, while preparing their students for a socio-economic survival in our competitive and largely materialistic society.

The socio-economic position of the Jewish group, its moderately large size in Melbourne and the ability of its members to enter the mainstream intellectual, academic, economic and occupational structures of society has ensured a stable basis for at least some of such schools.

The extent to which other groups might care to emulate the Jewish group has yet to be seen. The improving socio-economic positions of some groups, the greater assurance of their members following economic hardships of early settlement and the desire to preserve their culture in the face of the indifference, devaluation, or even tacit hostility of the majority, could mean that there are others which are likely to establish their own day schools for at least some of their members.

Such possibilities would be very much increased if the groups concerned became aware of the facile and deceptive aspects of much 'official' or 'rhetorical' multiculturalism, and the unwillingness of most schools to transmit the core values of minority cultures, especially languages.

Attitude

The dominant group in this country has grown accustomed to tolerating a very extensive pluralism in education within its own English-speaking ranks; it has accepted (perhaps without even being fully aware of it) the growth of Jewish schools.

But would it be happy at the thought of the sprouting of a whole series of ethnic day schools, some Islamic, some Orthodox, using a bilingual structure in which a language other than English played an important part, and which remained outside its control?

So far, the choice between the majority group adopting multiculturalism in 'mainstream' schools, and severely limiting such development so as to encourage ethnic school separatism, has not been resolved.

An increasing number of institutions are attempting to implement multi-cultural education, including the teaching of community languages, but there are still only a few schools which have taken serious steps to expand the range of languages taught, or to include materials from non-British sources in History, Geography and Social studies courses.

Other schools have toyed with 'residual'-type multicultural approaches such as international days, some artistic endeavours and folklore.

Schools which teach languages often give them low time-table priority, which may prevent a student from doing more than one language in addition to English; they also find it difficult to accept the fact that a community language requires a different pedagogic approach from the teaching of a geopolitical foreign language such as Japanese, Indonesian,

French or German, with the latter often still taught as if no one in the class could possibly use it as his or her home language.

On the other hand, governments have increased grants to part-time ethnic day schools and appear to be giving them some encouragement, possibly because they are cheaper and less provocative to the sensitivities of the majority than the introduction of a fully fledged multicultural curriculum to mainstream schools.

Such half-measures cannot, however, continue indefinitely. A serious attempt will have to be made to expand multicultural approaches in the state, Catholic and independent sectors, or there will have to be acceptance of a growing number of State aided independent ethnic schools.

In England, voices of alarm have already been raised at the prospect of an increasing number of Islamic schools in the various parts of the country, a situation which could not be legitimately averted because of a concurrent strong drive for additional schools by the Church of England.

The most feasible alternative is to provide multicultural education within the existing school and thus make it unattractive for minorities to splinter off.

Can Australia follow this approach? The dangers caused by school separatism are not perhaps always clearly understood.

Small and apparently insignificant ethnic schools have been tolerated because they have not affected the balance of economic, social and cultural resources in the community. When larger groups start establishing such schools, there is the danger of a head-on ethnic clash over allocation of funds, employment, status and job opportunities in a climate of economic stagnation.

It is important to avert such prospects of inter-ethnic strife by developing multiculturalism in schools as the best way of cultivating and expanding frameworks of values for the whole community. This system of values must be seen as flexible and open to the values of minorities.

The ideal of a multicultural society in which a variety of cultures live in harmony has been a cornerstone of multicultural ideology. John Budby argues that this is an impossible dream, as is the development of Australia as a multilingual nation, but he does identify several necessary conditions for the development of multilingualism in the nation. Throughout the paper he focusses on the importance of Aboriginal participation in the promotion of multiculturalism and multilingualism.

ABORIGINES IN MULTILINGUAL AUSTRALIA

J Budby

Address given to the World Education Fellowship - Queensland Section, 28 July, 1983).

The topic chosen for discussion at this gathering is entitled, 'Towards a Multilingual Australia'. Because of my particular upbringing, experience and knowledge, my presentation will specifically focus on the place of Aborigines within such a society. My fellow speaker will broaden the issue by outlining aspects of the wider Australian society and their relationship to the new ideal. Since we constitute between one and two per cent of the Australian population, perhaps I should limit myself to this proportion of time in presenting my paper. However, I shall adopt an important principle of multilingualism, namely, that of equal recognition, and spend considerably more time in presenting an Aboriginal viewpoint on the contribution my peoples can make to a multilingual Australia. I hope that my fellow speaker does not permit me to 'hog the microphone' for too long as I am sure that he will have some important perspectives to add to tonight's discussion.

To present my people's place within a multilingual Australia I believe it is necessary to present the current attitudes. The current attitudes can be attributed largely to what has occurred in the past. The settlement of Australia has significance. Therefore I will begin my presentation by outlining the structure of the Australian population and how it came to be. Then to present the Aboriginal view of this and the attitude to the suggested new Australia. To do this I will diverge from the major topic initially to express a view of multiculturalism. Language is an important component of culture and therefore one cannot easily divorce one from the other. A multilingual Australia must also be multicultural, in my opinion. Most Aborigines have a particular attitude to this new Government policy. My people's attitude will be defined and made explicit through the historical perspective and through a critical analysis of statements made by three groups on multiculturalism. The three groups who have made a statement include, the Working Party on Multiculturalism, established by the Queensland Department of Education, the Commonwealth Education Portfolio, and the Committee on Multicultural Education who reported to the Commonwealth Schools Commission. Having established the current Aboriginal attitude, I will provide some strategic ideas to how I consider the ideal of multilingual Australia can be achieved. In providing strategies I hope to leave food for thought for later discussion and review.

1. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Archaeologists have found evidence that supports the fact that the ancestors of the current Aboriginal population roamed this country some 40,000 years ago. These Aboriginal tribes each had their own distinct and definite languages and cultures.

Even today some 200 different languages, 400 to 600 dialects and some creoles are spoken. These tribes adopted parts of each other's cultures over a period of time through contact and interaction. This situation as it existed, and to some extent still does, constituted a multicultural Australia. These people lived in harmony with the land: and each other. Their affiliation to the land is reflected in their cultural and social organisation, their religion, their customs, their law and their language. This harmonious life-style was to change. So, too, did the population, simultaneously.

The change was brought about by at least two significant waves of settlement - one of invasion and one of immigration.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century came the invasion by the Anglo-Saxons and the Celts. They brought with them their superior weapons, a more advanced technology, an urgency and expectancy, their law, customs and language. They soon became the oppressor of the indigenous inhabitants. The indigenous population were dispossessed of their land and in the process dehumanised.

During the early part of the twentieth century came the immigrants, especially, from Europe, with their way of life which was not too dissimilar to that of the invaders. Many of the immigrants were, however, either bilingual (English and mother tongue) multi-lingual, or non-English speakers. In this respect, at least, they differed from the Anglo-Saxons and Celts. The economic and political powers of the elite/dominant society - the Anglo-Saxons/Celts - soon attempted to mould the immigrants. The Immigrants were encouraged to assimilate, although less pressure was placed on them than on Aborigines. Perhaps their unitedness and force of numbers permitted them to reject attempts towards total assimilation, although they blended into Australian society with ease. More recent immigration from Asia has created greater issues than the European immigration because of the pronounced cultural difference from that of the mainstream society.

Today, then, the population of Australia can be categorised as consisting of indigenous peoples, invaders and immigrants, and descendants of any combination of these. Therefore one can conclude that the population of Australia contains people from a variety of different cultures possessing different languages. Furthermore, it could be said that Australia is a multilingual and multicultural nation. But is it? I believe, as many of my brothers and sisters do, that this is not so, especially when one considers current definitions on the subject.

To clarify this statement allow me to critically analyse the statements on multiculturalism as presented in three reports.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MULTICULTURAL STATEMENTS

The three statements to which I refer include:-

Education for a Multicultural Society. A discussion paper based on a Report to the Council of Directors of the Queensland Department of Education, prepared by the Working Party on Multicultural Education (June 1979).

Education in a Multicultural Australia. A discussion paper prepared by the Commonwealth Education Portfolio, 1979.

Education for a Multicultural Society. A report to the Commonwealth Schools Commission by a Committee on Multicultural Education, 1979.

While all of these statements were presented as a discussion paper, they are significant statements and serve a purpose. I am unaware as to whether they have been adopted as policy but I am sure they have been used as a guideline for educational planners for the formulation of policy. From these statements there can be identified a commonality of principles in relation to the defining of Multiculturalism. The definition as provided by the Commonwealth Education Portfolio seems to cover all the principles most succinctly. On page 18 of their report they say:

The group uses the term multiculturalism to describe an ideal society where groups would co-exist harmoniously, free to maintain many of their distinctive religious, linguistic or social customs, equal in their access to resources and services, civil rights and political powers and sharing with the rest of society concerns and values, which have national significance.

From an Aboriginal viewpoint, the attainment of such principles seems too idealistic to be achieved.

The ability to co-exist harmoniously depends to a large extent upon a mutual understanding and appreciation of each other. Aborigines who have high unemployment rates, poor health and high infant mortality, inadequate housing, and are in conflict with the mainstream society's law and customs, are unable to live harmoniously in a society that oppresses. Furthermore, many non-Aboriginal Australians have developed negative stereotypes of Aborigines and refuse to accept their worth as fellow Australians. This conflict can probably be attributed to the fact that people confined to a single culture often have difficulty in conceptualising other cultures except in terms of deviations from their own. This seems particularly relevant of English speaking peoples who, through their belief that English is the master language, have difficulty in accepting the importance of any other language and hence, culture.

Christianity has destroyed Aboriginal religious beliefs. Little attempt is being made to record Aboriginal languages - many are being lost forever. Bilingual programs tend to be geared towards competence: in English rather than retention of Aboriginal languages. Many social customs of my peoples are frowned upon by others. Aboriginal dance, and to a lesser extent art, is not a sellable commodity in the eyes of non-Aborigines and is therefore not considered as having much to contribute to Australia. The imposition of non-Aboriginal values and norms on Aborigines has meant a loss of their own.

While it can be argued that some Commonwealth policies through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs provide special services and resources to Aborigines, at the expense of other Australians, essentially the expenditure of funds is largely used for employing non-Aboriginal administrators. A tremendous amount of funds is ill-directed and little filters through to the people in real need. The Aboriginal Development Commission does not receive sufficient funds to be able to satisfy the critical need for housing. Aborigines lack any real political and economic power. Established advisory committees such as the National Aboriginal Conference, the National Aboriginal Education Committee and the State Aboriginal Education Committees are 'powerless and used only as advisors or 'scape goats'.

It has been only in recent times that Aborigines have been able to effectively participate or been requested to participate in the decision-making processes about their own welfare.

The Aboriginal frustration is further enhanced by their omission as part of multiculturalism. In the past, multiculturalism has tended to refer to migrant families. Definitions have even omitted the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic peoples. An example of this fact is that no Aborigines were members of the Working Parties which framed the above-mentioned statements. Aborigines were excluded from the Galbally Report, while the Commonwealth Schools Commission have programs specifically for migrants and nothing specifically for Aborigines. Perhaps the reluctance to involve Aborigines can be attributed to the fact that there exists a Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs and in Queensland a Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement, and that Aborigines have not shown much enthusiasm for multiculturalism, but to omit them from discussing multiculturalism and establishing their position, in my opinion, demonstrates that we do not live in a truly multicultural/multi-lingual nation.

Peoples not members of the mainstream society are denied their own identity as a culturally different group but are expected to contribute to a national identity which has not been clearly defined.

The conclusion decided upon by a national workshop of members of the National Aboriginal Education Committee - (advisor to the Federal Minister of Education and Youth and Affairs) and State Aboriginal Education Consultative Committees - (advisor to their respective State Education Departments) illustrates Aboriginal attitude towards a multicultural Australia. They concluded:-

Most participants at this workshop considered a multi-cultural society to be one in which there was a variety of cultures living in harmony. This seemed however the impossible dream. The reality of the current situation where there is not sufficient recognition of cultures apart from the mainstream means that the ideal dream is rendered impossible. It was further pointed out that whilst Aborigines remain the most depressed individual group in Australia and until there is recognition that Aborigines have a living and working culture, there can never be a satisfactory multicultural society.

The participants considered the ideal multicultural society to be one in which there was equality, and a sharing between cultures, yet each culture being able to retain its own identity by regulating the amount of interaction it had with other cultures.

While this attitude of my people may seem gloomy, it is in effect a change of attitude towards accepting multiculturalism from what was prevalent in the 1970s when the concept was first espoused in Australia. During the 1970s my people regarded the new concept of and Government policy of multiculturalism as a means of further oppressing ourselves and was unanimously rejected. I believe too that some positive advancements have been made to date but I consider more needs to be done. We should not rest on our laurels.

3. MULTICULTURAL AND/OR MULTILINGUAL AUSTRALIA

Thus so far my presentation has tended to highlight the negative aspects of an ideal Australia - a multicultural/multilingual nation. I have also concentrated on multiculturalism. I wish finally to comment on Aborigines in a multilingual Australia. We would all accept, I presume, that the population of Australia is multilingual. We may tend to differ as to whether this constitutes Australia as being a multilingual nation. However, this is the issue which must be addressed.

The recognition of one's culture must accompany the appreciation of one's language. I am of the opinion that an understanding and knowledge of language may lead to cultural acceptance.

The recognition and acceptance of European and Asian languages as school subjects demonstrates to some extent that there exists in Australia a belief in multilingualism. However, many teachers of a language are not mother language speakers. Because of this I believe that important cultural aspects are not portrayed. From an Aboriginal viewpoint there is a distinct paucity of Aboriginal languages being taught with the aim of retention in mind. As previously mentioned, the bilingual programs seem to be aimed at improving literacy in English rather than in any other language. While some Aboriginal languages have been adequately recorded to be able to be taught in schools and the wider community, traditionally Aboriginal communication was through oral language or non-verbal actions. In other words, Aboriginal languages need to be taught orally and not through writing.

There are other issues associated with the introduction of Aboriginal languages teaching in schools and the wider community.

These include:-

- a) the non-acceptance of the importance of learning an Aboriginal language by the mainstream society and their lack of exposure to it;
- b) the diverse nature of Aboriginal society which ranges from those that largely abide by tribal rules and obligations to those partly assimilated into mainstream society and who have lost or prefer not to consider their Aboriginal identity, and those at various points within these limits;
- c) the number and diversity of Aboriginal languages which includes Aboriginal languages, Aboriginal dialects, Creoles - including forms which are much anglicised, along a continuum, and English - including some dialects with emergent Creole and/or Aboriginalisation forms;

- d) the protection local communities give to their language, meaning that it cannot be taught outside of the local community unless there is close consultation;
- e) the fact that there is no common language which can be used to transmit all of Aboriginal culture; and finally,
- f) the lack of interest in, and the paucity of written resources for the teaching of Aboriginal studies.

The complexity of these issues encourages me to conclude that Australia as a multilingual nation is an impossible dream. Aborigines can only be forced into contributing to the ideal unless some changes are implemented.

4. STRATEGIES REQUIRED FOR ABORIGINES TO BE A PART OF A MULTILINGUAL AUSTRALIA

It is generally accepted by anthropologists that societies and their culture differ considerably, not only in their technology but also in their beliefs, attitudes and values. While it is rarely possible to identify just one all-pervading culture, since cultures are in constant change being influenced by and dependent upon the interaction and impact one culture has on another, in all societies there are behavioural traits which can be used to identify one group of people from the rest of the community. Languages are also adapted through the introduction of new vocabulary and phrases to explain concepts that are a result of the new contact.

Aborigines have attempted to retain aspects of their own way of life while conforming and adapting to the cultural practices of the mainstream society. In this process the total destruction of Aboriginal culture has not occurred, nor is it likely to in the future. Aboriginal peoples throughout Australia have varying, but not too dissimilar, behavioural patterns different from that of other Australians. Such behaviour is still deeply rooted in the tribal beliefs and customs of the past. Sharing, extensive use of the extended family, and welcoming of others into their social structures are all important features of contemporary Aboriginal life. Almost all behavioural patterns are influenced by the environment.

Perhaps, then, strategies required to move towards a multi-lingual Australia should be directed at convincing the wider Australian society of the existence of a live and working Aboriginal culture, and of the existence of Aboriginal languages. In my conclusion I will briefly outline some of the strategies which are necessary to achieve the ideal.

- 1) An initial process of unlearning, to reduce the stereotypic images and opinions that non-Aborigines have developed about ourselves, followed by a re-education through a comprehensive community education program aimed at increasing community awareness. Positive exposure through the media is deemed an important feature of this comprehensive community education program. This can be done through having more Aboriginal people appearing on television as news readers, current affairs commentators, special features depicting Aboriginal life both contemporary and traditional and through having programs for and about Aborigines.

- 2) A similar process is needed for Aborigines. Some need to have their cultural heritage and identity as Aborigines reinstated. Many Aboriginal people have lost pride in their own cultural heritage, their own identity. Through the schooling indoctrination process they have come to believe that "being white is right", rather than the "black is beautiful" motto. This attitude needs to be reversed.
- 3) The introduction of Aboriginal Studies into schools and tertiary institutions is necessary and would serve at least three purposes, namely:
 - a) give the Aboriginal children opportunity to enrich their own identity and pride in their cultural heritage;
 - b) provide avenues whereby non-Aborigines can accept Aborigines as fellow Australians;
 - c) assist in giving all Australians a realisation of the significant contribution that Aborigines can make to the development of this nation.
- 4) The teaching of Aboriginal language is an important component of any Aboriginal Studies program. Above I have outlined some of the difficulties that this entails, but I believe these difficulties are surmountable. Exposure to the spoken word can be done through records and tapes. The introduction of a language into schools should be done at the discretion of the local community. Aboriginal people need to decide upon a language which can be used universally. This may require the creation of a lingua franca. Perhaps, also, rather than concentrate on the learning of any one language a course of study could be devised that provides a general understanding of the structure and usage of Aboriginal languages. This type of approach would be acceptable in urban areas where there is a paucity of mother tongue speakers. Aboriginal people should have the sole responsibility for the formulation, administration and teaching of such a program, or any other Aboriginal language program for that matter.
- 5) There needs to be recognition that Australian history is the history of the Aboriginal peoples and that colonisation is but one aspect of that history. A re-writing of Australian history from an Aboriginal viewpoint is necessary. Currently many Aborigines are compiling oral histories, through recording details of activities and events as seen by Aboriginal elders. An analysis of Aboriginal stories, myth and legends may lead to a greater understanding of Aboriginal history and add new perspectives.
- 6) The adoption of a National Language Policy may be the initial strategy required to enhance a multilingual Australia. I am, however, inclined to think that Australia's multiculturalism needs to be recognised before the language will be. A National Language Policy, if adopted, should aim to have funds directed towards research into and the recording of Aboriginal languages. This may need to be done orally because I believe that linguists tend to vary pronunciation of sound if such sound is not part of their own repertoire or unable to be recorded by present phonetic symbols. The training and employment of Aboriginal people as linguists and researchers for this purpose is deemed essential.

- 7) Over the last forty years, the scale and diversity of immigration has seen official promotion of multiculturalism, multicultural education and multilingualism. This promotion has coincided with developments in the Aboriginal movements. Within the Aboriginal movement, advances have been made in relation to cultural difference. Special programs have been mounted to correct the imbalance and injustice experienced by my peoples. It is no wonder then, that although Aborigines accept they are part of the multicultural/multilingual Australian population, they wish to be considered as a significant part because they are the indigenous peoples of this nation.

Perhaps the reason for this stand is that, generally, Aborigines consider that existing services, programs and provisions should be maintained. Funding for Aborigines should not suffer through expenditure on multilingual/multicultural programs. The low socio-economic position of my people needs to improve before Aborigines can effectively participate in Australian society.

5. CONCLUSION

Positive initiatives have been implemented by Aborigines to ensure the continuity of their beliefs. Aboriginal schools are being established and thrusts to encourage the revival and continuation of Aboriginal languages are being made. Aborigines are becoming more and more united as a people through their common concerns and understanding of each other. A pan-Aboriginality seems to be emerging. But, we are powerless while we are forced to remain in the low socio-economic strata of Australian society. We are unable to make a contribution to this country's development as a multi-lingual nation.

While I personally believe in the value of a multilingual Australia, I fear that it is an unattainable ideal. If an equal recognition of the different languages and cultures within the Australian population is to occur, then a concerted effort by all Australians is required. This concerted effort needs to be directed towards attitudinal changes, which is a long-term operation. A mutual nationality for all Australians must be developed. An aspect of this nationality would be a recognition of its population's multilingualism.

While most ideals are never met, we mere humans require goals for which we can aim. Maybe, however, through persistence we can improve the current situation in preparation for the future.

LANGUAGE

This lighthearted look at some of the confusions that occur for newcomers to the English language as it is spoken in Australia contains a serious message for classroom teachers. Care in communication is essential and teachers should be wary of assuming that all children in class will understand them, particularly when they use colloquialisms.

THE TONGUE AND MIND TWISTING OF A MIGRANT

Dewi Anggraeni Fraser

I used to feel proud when someone said to me: "You speak very good English!", as I childishly thought it was a compliment. I was taught that when you went to a shop, the conversation would probably go on like this:

"Good day, Madam, can I help you?"

"Yes, please. May I have a pound of sugar and a jar of coffee, please."

"Certainly. Here you are. Would you like anything else?"

"No thank you. How much do I owe you?"

"A dollar eighty-five, thank you." Etc.

Well, unless the shopkeeper is a devoted listener to "English Language for You from Radio Australia", this is usually what goes on; well, this was what happened to me:

"You right, luv?"

"Right or wrong about what?" thought I, as I hadn't even opened my mouth yet. Seeing my bewildered face, the shopkeeper, who was a nice little lady (oh, how paternalistic of me, or should I say, maternalistic?), kindly articulated every syllable of the following sentence:

"Do you want something?"

"Yes please," said I, after regaining part of my composure. "May I have a packet of raisins, please."

She gave me a tiny packet of raisins, told me the price; I paid her, and off I went, still a little confused about why she gave me such a small packet. But since questioning about the size of a packet had never been in the social-formula conversations I was taught, I kept quiet. After that strange opening phrase from the lady, who knew what could come next?

Now, my landlady at that time was making a cake. When she found out that she had run out of raisins, she asked me whether I would mind going to the local milk-bar to buy a packet. Understandably, she burst out laughing when she saw the size of the packet.

"She probably thought you only wanted a packet of raisins to nibble," she explained to me later.

Reproduced with permission of the Editor from Polycom, No 23, November 1979.

Years later, I drove my car to a service station. The following conversation went on (a far cry from what I was taught in the first place):

"How much?"

"Fill'er up."

"What?"

"Super."

"Everything okay under the bonnet?"

"She's right."

Where are the madams and the sirs and can-I-help-yous? Mind you, I remember hearing that kind of language when I went to a poorly-lit restaurant where the customers were not poorly-charged. Then, and there, I heard "please", "madam" abundantly used in sentences addressed to me by the staff of the restaurant. But then, when you are throwing away money like tipping out used tea-leaves from the teapot, you feel fit to be addressed as "Sir" or "Madam".

I also had to learn the Anglo-Saxon inhibitions about anything that has to do with sex or other biological functions. My poor husband has become so basic since he married an Indonesian that he occasionally shocks his family and relatives. Luckily he only sees them occasionally!

A container made from china, plastic, or painted aluminium, which you or some of you keep in the bedroom (under the bed?) for emergency biological purposes, in the country where I come from, is called a "pispot" (note there is only one "s"). I caused such a muted embarrassment amongst my students when one day (years ago, I have learned my lesson now) I mentioned that thing by its proper name. Later on I learned that you had to observe from the context what the speaker meant by a pot. It can mean the pot you keep under the bed; the container of a plant; the container of tea; a cooking utensil; and lately it can also mean marijuana. Some people are prudish or just have a passion for ambiguity.

When I was learning English, I was taught that "accident" meant a car crash, falling from a tree, an argument with a hungry lion, or other mishappenings of the kind. Yet I learned another kind of "accident" when I sent my little son to a kindergarten-creche. One afternoon when I came to pick him up, the supervisor said apologetically to me: "Eric had an accident in his pants." With the understanding of "accident" that I had, would you blame me if I was shocked, thinking that it was a mutilation. When I turned pale, the supervisor thought I was over-particular about Eric's cleanliness, and she hastened to explain to me that she had washed and put clean pants on him. I nearly had hysterics from relief when I found out that Eric had merely failed to reach the toilet in time.

Almost any sentence at all in English, with a little imagination, can be taken for a sexual proposition. Could this be because people are inhibited yet enjoy thinking about sex (aha, speak for yourself!)? A friend of mine was once held up in Sydney, because of some sort of a strike. He was on his way to a conference overseas, therefore did not expect this stopover at all. The young lady who had been sitting next to him on the plane and with whom he had had a rather pleasant conversation, asked him:

"What are you going to do? Where are you going to sleep? Can I come too?"

Most of you might agree with him, that the lady was propositioning him. But I swear I would just as likely have said the same thing without any intention of having any physical contact with him. Am I too naive or has he too much imagination?

Last month, two minister friends of ours were going back home after a year's post-graduate study at Geelong. They tried to visit as many friends as possible before they left. Since most of the friends live in Melbourne, it was necessary to spend a night or two with them to make it worth coming.

At a party, I saw one of them talking to a mutual friend while checking his diary. I came to join the conversation. When he saw me, Wijoyo, this minister friend, said: "Dewi, I am glad to see you here. Now, when can I come and sleep at your place?"

I just could not let this opportunity pass. I turned around and told everyone (close friends and husband) triumphantly:

"Wow! Listen! I have been propositioned by the Reverend Wijoyo!".

Everyone looked surprised, most of all Wijoyo. I asked him to repeat his question. Our Australian friends agreed that it did sound a little daring. We spent the next half hour discussing how to describe Wijoyo's innocent "sleeping around" without ruining his reputation but did not come to any favorable conclusion since, however we tried to describe it, anyone with an imagination like my earlier friend's could easily interpret it differently.

I came to Australia with a good knowledge of formal English, (which I learned at school with difficulties!) and discovered that I still had to learn how to communicate properly. I sympathise with people who come here with no knowledge of English at all, and yet are expected to be able to communicate in this society.

In this article, Howard Nicholas sets out to clarify the terminological chaos that so often complicates discussion of multicultural and bilingual education. In the process, he offers definitions of some of the underlying concepts, examines the relationship between community language and bilingual education programs and points to some of the factors which need to be considered when we attempt to maintain minority languages.

BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY BILINGUAL?

BILINGUALISM AND COMMUNITY LANGUAGE TEACHING

Howard Nicholas

Australia is often called a multicultural nation and described as having a multicultural society. This is certainly true of the present situation in the sense that many cultural groups exist here side by side. Educators have, however, an additional concern - the situation in the future. Educators are therefore required to consider not only strategies for coming to terms with existing multiculturalism and multilingualism, but also effective means of ensuring that the existing linguistic and cultural pluralism is maintained.¹

As far as bilingual education and other types of community language programs are concerned, we have to seek educational models which are compatible with both the present and the future needs of the society as a whole and also with the needs of the individual members of that society. Programs which contribute to only one of these objectives may have insufficient relevance for a continuing multicultural/multilingual society.

For some time now, the discussion about when, where and to whom we should be teaching community languages has been confused because of ambiguous use of a variety of terms and the consequent confusion in the identification of appropriate aims for various types of language program. It is the intention of this article to present a framework for the description of programs in the area of community language education, which will hopefully lead to a clarification of the discussion and to a consequent clarification of appropriate objectives so that we can develop realistic expectations for the programs in our schools.

Reproduced with permission of the editor from Polycom, No 34, June 1983.

-
1. This second claim rests on the acceptance of a multicultural society as a desirable form of social structure. Should our recognition of a multicultural society entail only the perspective of the problems caused by such a state, our programs would be aimed at eradicating the existing situation. However, this latter perspective is emphatically not that propounded by educational and social theorists in this country.
-

Preliminaries: bilingualism for the individual and for society.

The definition of bilingualism itself has progressed from earlier prescriptive definitions (Bloomfield 1933), which stipulated that only a person who had "native-like control of two languages" could be classified as a bilingual, to functional definitions such as those advanced by Mackey (1962), which merely require of a speaker that he make use of two or more languages in order to be regarded as bilingual. As Mackey pointed out, "the point at which a second language speaker becomes a bilingual is either arbitrary or impossible to determine". The earlier definitions effectively required that a bilingual be the linguistic equivalent of two normal speakers. Later, it was recognised that this state of affairs could seldom be attained. The state of "native-like control of two languages" came to be known as "equilingualism" (Raffler-Engel 1961) in the search for a definition that would enable researchers to describe the more general condition and its inherent variation. It was recognised that bilinguals are quite simply people who use two languages and, thus, that an adequate definition of bilingualism would have to come to grips with language choice and usage patterns.

It was shown that we could not hope to adequately differentiate between a monolingual and a user of more than one language on the basis of their relative control of the grammar of their respective languages. This insight resulted from the recognition that language has at least two dimensions—that of form and that of function. It is possible to have accurate control of a restricted range of functions of another language, without having native-like control of all aspects of the grammar. Since we also know that there is variation in the nature of the monolingual's grammatical control of his only language, such a measure cannot be used to distinguish monolinguals from multilinguals. Such a purely grammatical approach would involve the designation of arbitrary standards of usage, with the obvious corollary that a person would have to attain a certain level of grammatical performance² in his or her first language before that person could be classified as monolingual!

In the search for a minimal definition, Haugen (1953) and Weinreich (1953) respectively defined the general condition of bilingualism as beginning when "a speaker is able to produce complete meaningful utterances in another language" or consisting of "the alternate use of two languages". These approaches provide us with a minimal definition of the baseline state, but still do not enable us to differentiate between various types of bilingual language usage or between the patterns of a bilingual's and a monolingual's usage. All that such definitions enable us to say is that a bilingual can use more languages than a monolingual to achieve more of the same types of ends. The peculiar characteristic of bilingualism is captured in this minimal definition, but we still need a more precise description of the variations in the usage patterns of those who speak two languages.

2. The point being that the speakers' competence would presumably have to be judged on their performance, unless we want to set up a massive testing program for all members of the speech community.

Bilingualism is the condition of using two languages. However, as Mackey (1962) points out, a bilingual community is a "collection of individuals who have a reason for being bilingual" (my emphasis). Thus, we must distinguish between a bilingual community and a bilingual individual. As Mackey (1962) also points out, a bilingual community in which every speaker is equally capable of using both languages is a community which has no reason for being bilingual since one language simply duplicates the other in all its functions, so that we end up with a situation in which one of the languages will be regarded as superfluous. This need not be the same language for all speakers, but an approach which aims at general equilingualism will necessarily result in a situation in which speakers choose between languages rather than attempt to make complementary use of both.

So it is, in fact, counterproductive to attempt to preserve a community's bilingual character by developing a model of equilingualism for all its members. Aiming at community level equilingualism would probably create a situation in which one section of the community adopted one language as its means of communication and another section of the community adopted another. We would, thus, do nothing to raise the general level of multiple language usage. To be sure, certain speakers would probably benefit from the program by becoming close to equilingual, but for the majority the reason for maintaining the second language would have disappeared and we would be left with (at least) two largely monolingual communities.

It would seem more efficient and more desirable to aim at a solution which will encourage a lasting bilingualism at both the community and the individual level. Given the tremendous variety of languages and cultures in Australia, and assuming the above warning is heeded, the most appropriate way to develop the desired state of social multilingualism is by educational concentration on the needs of the individual members of that society.

I use the word "multilingualism" deliberately, since it would be wrong to select one community language and call it the second national language. Maintaining a number of community languages side by side with English as the national language means that individuals may benefit from the language skills that they have acquired in the home and may also acquire a language for general communication. A range of community languages also allows native speakers of English to choose which second language they would like to speak.

We are thus searching for a model which will enable those individuals who wish to obtain such a level of competence to become equilinguals, but which will at the same time enable the general community to develop a level of functional bilingualism. To define this model, we are forced to examine the level of language switching in existing multicultural societies, and to discuss the determinants of such language choice. We must, however, recognise that we are aiming, not at the kind of mixing which results from simple language contact (see Clyne 1967, Hasselmo 1970, Haugen 1953, Poplack 1979 and Weinreich 1953). Instead, we are aiming at a level of conscious bilingualism where the speakers are able to distinguish between their languages and to control their language use.

External influences

Since publication of the classic article by Fishman (1965), it has been recognised that the factors that control language choice (not language mixing) arise from a particular situation, as do the factors that control the choice of speech style in monolingual usage. A particular language is generally assigned to a particular domain or setting defined by one (or more) of a number of factors such as:

- . the person to whom one is speaking.
- . the place where the conversation is taking place,
- . the topic that is being discussed,
and
- . the people who are present.

Similarly, it has been noted that children who grow up in a situation in which two or more languages are regularly used appear to have most success in developing a functional level of bilingualism when they are able to assign the use of one of the languages to one conversation partner on a regular basis, and to assign the other language to another person on a similarly regular basis. This principle was captured by Ronjat in 1913 in the formula "one person one language". Remaining at this broad level, the implications are that not only child but also adult users of two or more languages are most successful in maintaining their multiple language usage patterns when they know that there exists at least one situation exclusively reserved for each language. This one situation provides the bilingual speaker with sufficient reason to maintain his or her bilingualism.

So long as that situation does not change in any way, the bilingual speaker feels justified in maintaining both languages.

The situation can, however, be threatened by factors outside the control of the individual or the individual community. We have a particular example of this in Australia in the context of World War 1. Until this time, settlements in western Victoria, metropolitan Melbourne and certain areas of both South Australia and Queensland had maintained a functional bilingualism with much of the communication within the settlements being carried on in German, while transactions outside the settlements were carried on in English (see Clyne 1967, Kipp 1981 and Wilson 1966).

As a result of World War 1, repressive attitudes on the part of the Anglo sections of the community and various State governments caused the use of German to be regarded as suspect and, as a result of legislation (still in force in Victoria), the schools which were teaching bilingually were closed or forced to stop using languages other than English as a means of instruction in subjects other than languages. After this external intrusion into the school domain, the rate at which the community switched from functional bilingualism to English monolingualism rapidly increased (see Kipp 1981).

Similar external influences have been reported from other countries. In Canada, because of the lack of positive contact between the French- and English-speaking communities, and the resultant suspicions, children in programs that were designed to develop functional bilingualism have developed a noticeably different variety of Canadian French. These

(usually) Anglo children are not exposed to French, to any significant extent, outside the classroom. They have almost no contact with members of the Canadian French-speaking community and so they see their second language largely as a means of achieving success in the educational system. Thus, although the children manage to acquire significant amounts of the French language, in a variety that serves their purposes at school, their lack of usage opportunities with their peers prevents the development of a variety which would be acceptable to the Canadian French community. Thus, they fail to become functionally bilingual.

The point here is that the mere knowledge of more than one language does not classify a person as bilingual unless that person can actually make use of his or her knowledge in an appropriate speech community. If a speaker does not have sufficient cultural knowledge or cannot gain acceptance to the degree that will permit him to put his second language to use, then he cannot be regarded as a functioning bilingual in the sense of the definitions discussed earlier.

Similar arguments have been advanced by Brent-Palmer (1979) in her analysis of why Finnish-speaking migrants in Sweden are not succeeding in Swedish-or-Finnish-medium schools. She argues that the conflict between the two groups concerned and the consequent marginalisation of Finnish speakers has negative consequences for their linguistic and academic achievement. If a society wishes to preserve and develop its multilingual resources, it must ensure that the situations which are identified with each language are permitted to retain that linguistic identity.

The question of what to do in order to maintain bilingualism thus becomes one of how one maintains or develops a variety of language-marked situations.³ Bilingual education is certainly one way of achieving such an aim, if it is appropriately structured.

Bilingual and other community language programs.

As we outlined earlier, the majority society's acceptance of the use of minority languages is vital for the maintenance of community languages since it gives those languages the "social status" which they require in order to be maintained parallel to the national language.

The education system is the one single structure in our society which reaches all members of the community between the ages of five and fifteen. As such, the attitudes which this system (or the various smaller systems which make up the whole) generate(s) are the only ones more-or-less guaranteed to reach the whole society. The education system is also the first major social institution with which all children make contact. For many children, school is their first opportunity of discovering whether their language and culture are (in some sense) socially "adequate".

3. By "language-marked" situations I mean situations in which a given language is identified as the chosen means of communication.

What is bilingual education? There are a number of conflicting beliefs currently circulating. One problem is the conflict between the notions of transitional and continuing programs, both carried out under the name of "multicultural education". Transitional programs are designed to assist children from non-English-speaking backgrounds to cope with the Australian educational system and to acquire English in the least painful way (implicitly at the expense of their particular community language). These programs are based on research findings that certain educational programs achieve better results in terms of general achievement and the acquisition of reading skills in the majority language if the education process is begun in a minority language (see Engle 1975, Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa 1977 and Cummins 1978). The objective of much such research was to determine the best way of learning the national language. Often, no further consideration was given to the maintenance of the community language. Such programs cannot claim to be multicultural in more than a temporary sense. A program which fails to provide for the continuing presence of the community languages side by side with the national language fails to comply with some of the more significant objectives of bilingual education (see below). Only those programs which, by the use of both the national language and a community language, aim to support societal multilingualism on a continuing basis should be regarded as bilingual education programs.

There is further confusion at the level of distinguishing between "community language programs" and "bilingual education programs" and "foreign language programs", I will offer a definition of such programs appropriate to the Australian setting.

One step towards the clarification of the situation was taken in 1979 when the "Working Conference on Language in Education" at the University of Sydney defined a community language as "any language spoken by residents of Australia".⁴ This definition obviously included English, and thus the term "CLOTE" (Community Language Other Than English) was coined to indicate the differing functions of English and other community languages (for example, only English is the language of the parliament, legislation and the judiciary). In this article I will refer to community languages other than English as "community languages" and if I wish to include English I will make explicit reference to it. Maintaining this distinction has at least one advantage: it enables us to maintain the distinction between "foreign" and "second" language teaching, enabling us, in turn, to distinguish between the teaching of English in countries where it is not a community language (for example, China) and in those where it is a community language (for example, Australia).

In Australia today we see a multiplication of programs designed to teach community languages in our schools and also a multiplication of the ways in which such programs are introduced. Conflict arises when the term "community language program" is reserved for programs which only teach community languages as second languages. I suggest that this use is in fact a misuse which leads to confusion and false distinctions.

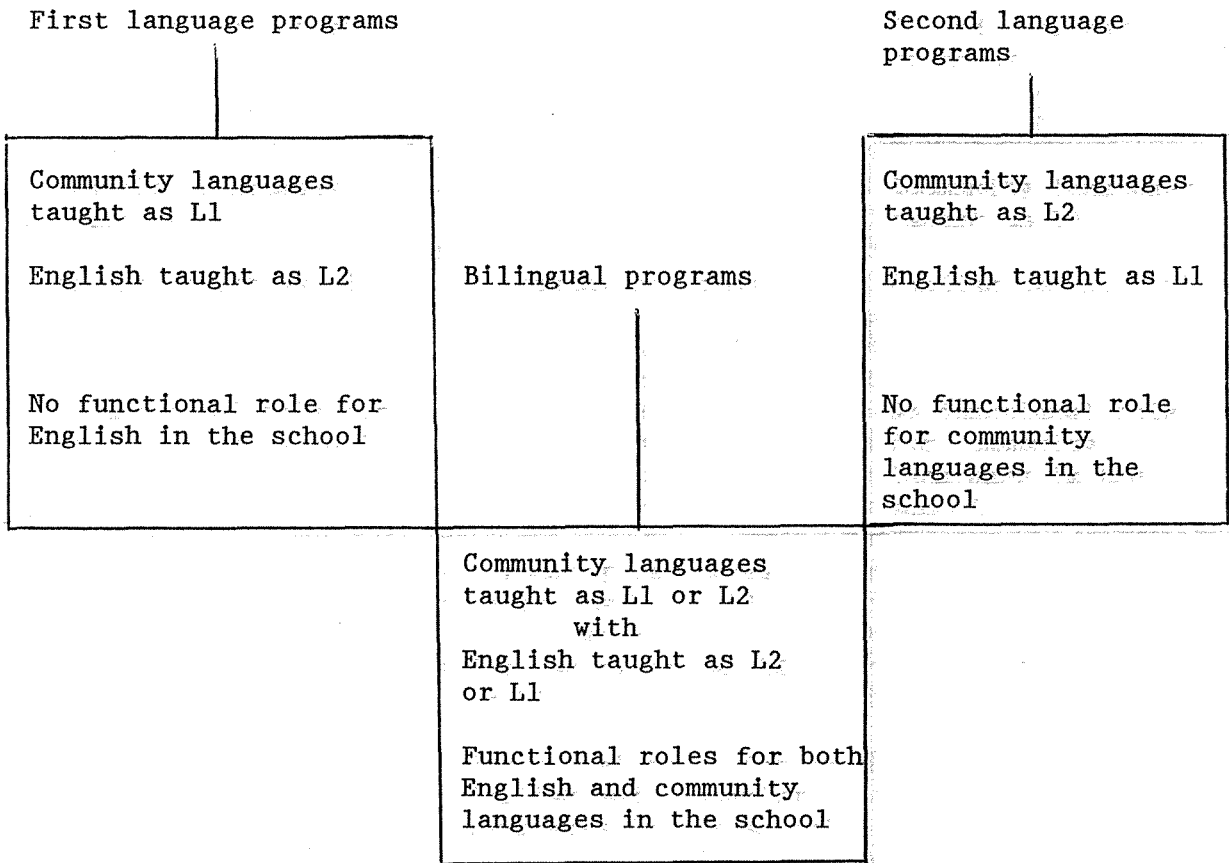
4 A similar definition had been circulated in Victoria in 1976 in a discussion paper signed by representatives of various groups interested in multicultural education.

As indicated earlier, community languages are quite simply languages spoken by residents of Australia. A community language program is, thus, any program which attempts to teach a language already spoken by some residents of Australia or to teach in one of those languages. This is a minimal definition which will enable us to examine the common characteristics of a variety of language programs.

Community language programs may introduce or maintain a community language. They are to be differentiated from foreign language programs by the fact that they teach a language which is spoken in the community to which the school and the children have to access, enabling them to make meaningful use of that language.⁵ There will, of course, be variety in the extent to which the various community languages are, in fact, used by their own communities and in the various parts of Australia, but this does not detract from the central identifying characteristic of such programs. We still need, however, a means of distinguishing the various types of programs which make use of community languages. I would suggest that bilingual programs, in this context, are a subset of community language programs, differentiated by the particular use to which they put those languages. Some community language programs teach a community language while the other subject areas are taught in English. Some community language programs teach subject content in a community language while English is taught as a second language. Bilingual community language programs teach in both the community and the national language.

5. For a discussion of which community language(s) is (are) the appropriate one(s) for inclusion in a particular school's program, see Nicholas 1980.

FIGURE ONE

COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

In Figure One I have distinguished three abstract types of community language programs. In reality, programs will seldom conform exclusively to a particular idealised type, but will be located somewhere between two of the varieties. On the left we have "first language programs". These are programs whose distinguishing feature is that they attempt to teach exclusively in the community language. Complementing this, the schools concerned have standard TESL programs teaching English in a purely "language teaching" setting. On the right we have "second language programs". Their distinguishing feature is the attempt to teach a community language as an abstract second language without a function in the school context. The language of instruction for other subjects in such programs is English. In the middle we have "bilingual teaching programs" which combine both first and second language teaching methodologies to teach subjects other than languages in both English and the community language chosen for the class.

Just as the minimal definition of community language programs applies to all programs which teach, or teach through the medium of, a community language, so the minimal requirement for classification as a bilingual program (as we understand it in this country) is that both languages have a role in the transmission of general curriculum content.⁶

6. The point is that a school can potentially offer a variety of programs to accommodate the needs of a limited range of pupils, but it is probably only feasible to program for any two languages for any one pupil simply for economic and administrative reasons.

Since we cannot have a two-language program where both languages are taught only as abstract language-learning exercises (without any language of instruction) bilingual programs must involve two languages in complementary use. The children will thus be learning through both their first and second languages. Some pupils will be learning a community language as their first language and the national language as their second language, while others will be doing the reverse.

Many programs which teach community languages at the primary school level are actually of the "second language" type. There are some which conform more closely to the definition of a "first language" or "bilingual language" program, but this is less often the case. Nevertheless, all such programs are community language programs, and at this level are called CLIPS (Community Languages in Primary Schools) programs. The distinctions drawn between the different types of teaching methodologies (based on the use made of the particular community language) distinguish between first, second, and bilingual language programs; not, in this case, between bilingual and community language programs. The distinction between a community language program and a bilingual language program can only be made at the methodological level when the bilingual program does not use a community language; for example, a program which teaches in Russian and English in China.

Changes over time

There is one further factor not incorporated in these idealisations as they stand - the time factor. It is possible for a school program to vary over time in the degree to which it conforms to the idealised types. A school might begin its program in a manner similar to my characterisation of a first language program and then change its usage of the community language so that it becomes an abstract subject (such as is frequently taught in our secondary schools at the moment). This change can either be a direct transition from the first language program type to the second language program type (a transitional program), or the change might be from the dominant usage of the community language to equal distribution of the two languages across the curriculum (thus ending up close to the idealised bilingual program). On the other hand it is theoretically possible for a second-language-type program to develop into a bilingual-type program, or even - despite being almost inconceivable - for a second-language-type program to so change its methodology as to become a first-language-type program.

Those changes which are not of practical relevance will be ignored in the following discussion. Figure Two contains the three program types in a configuration which enables development over time to be incorporated. Change can take place in the direction of the arrows. A shift from the extreme second-language-type program to a bilingual program is unlikely, but it has been mapped in since it is possible for changes to take place whereby a program begins somewhere between a second-language and a bilingual-type program and becomes more bilingual in character as the teaching load becomes more evenly distributed between the two languages over time.

Our definition of bilingual language programs should therefore be expanded to include those programs which end up having bilingual character even where they do not begin in that manner. It is thus recognised that the initial stages of bilingual programs will have to be adjusted to meet the requirements of particular language communities.

The essential feature is the distribution of the teaching load between the two languages, enabling a particular program to comply with the stated objectives of bilingual education in the maintenance of a multicultural society.

As can be seen from Figure Two, transitional programs cannot be regarded as bilingual programs since bilingual distribution is never identified as an end-state in the development of such programs.

Similarly, a program which begins with bilingual characteristics, but develops in such a way that it acquires second language program features (a modified transitional program) is not to be characterised as a bilingual program since the characteristics of such a program are not identified as a desired end-state.

Models for the various changes can be found overseas. There are Canadian and American immersion programs which change in the course of the pupils' school career from having first-language character to having bilingual character. Some of the programs in Sweden changed from first-language-type to second-language-type, and this kind of program has been proposed for Australian schools.

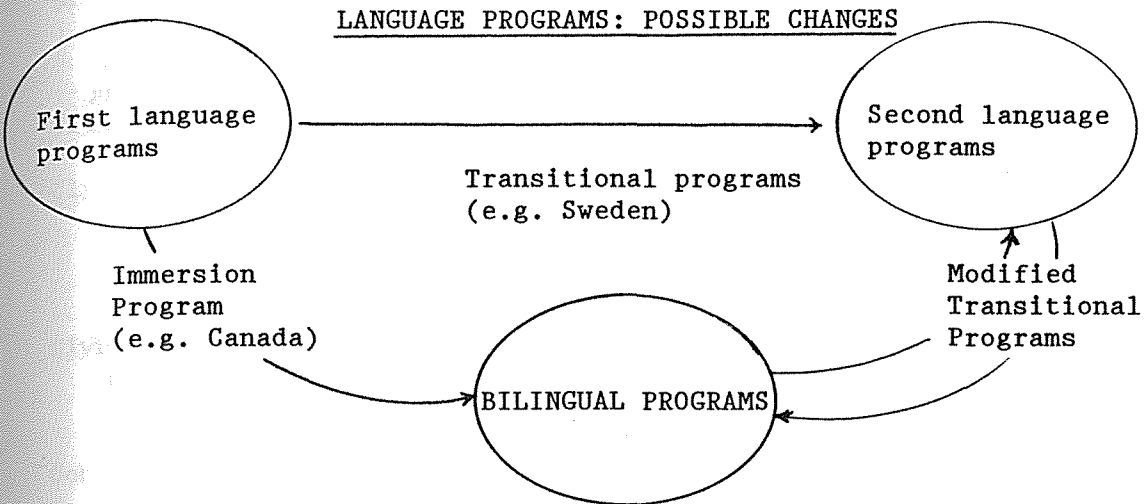
To repeat then, a program is ultimately defined by its desired goals in combination with the methodology which it uses to achieve these goals. Thus in viewing a total school program, the term "bilingual program" will be reserved for those programs which end up with functional "load-sharing" between the community language and the national language across the curriculum. The "ideal" bilingual program will have an even distribution, but programs which have minor weightings in favor of either of the languages involved may well be considered as bilingual programs.

In addition to the structure of different community language programs, there is the question of appropriate objectives for such programs in this country. Within the context of multicultural education, the following four objectives have been suggested for bilingual education. Clyne (1980) analysed educational arguments, suggesting three objectives for the Australian context, and I have added the fourth:

1. Educational. The teaching of basic literacy skills in L1; continuity of education without interruption at the later primary or secondary level; an entire educational program in two languages.
2. Language maintenance. The maintenance of the child's L1.
3. Ethnic identification. The teaching of certain cultural areas such as religious instruction in L1.
4. Language introduction. The teaching of the given language as a second language to speakers of other L1s.

The first language programs fulfil the first three objectives to various extents; the second language programs fulfil the fourth objective and perhaps some of the second and third objectives if a native speaker happens to be in the class. The bilingual program with instruction through the medium of both languages should be able to fulfil all four objectives.

FIGURE TWO



Maintaining a multilingual community

The question still remains of how community languages can be given a function in the school context so that they can fulfil the objectives mentioned and enable the community to maintain its multilingual and multicultural nature.

The logical "reason" (in the sense used by Mackey) for structural bilingualism within the school is provided by having different "uses" for the different languages. In order to provide this sort of in-school rationale, schools would have to establish an area (or areas) of the curriculum which is (are) devoted to the community languages on a continuing basis. These areas do not have to be the same in all years. In fact, owing to current functional language teaching transferability of language skills from one situation to another, it might even be beneficial for the pupils if at various year levels different curriculum areas were designated as exclusive community language situations, and certain teachers were designated as exclusive users of community languages. However, merely allotting a certain number of hours per week to the learning of a language will not constitute a sufficient reason for children to continue the development of that language beyond the initial phase (see Nicholas 1980). The school must provide that reason by ensuring that the children can only achieve in certain curriculum areas by using certain designated languages. As can be seen (Kipp 1981), once the language learning is given a purpose in this manner, so that it complements the language maintenance efforts of the home, bilingualism can be maintained over decades if so desired.

The point is that an important responsibility now lies with the schools. Language choice, and thus the extent to which bilingualism is maintained, reflects considerations of prestige and status. Whether we like it or not, the school, as an institution of entrenched social norms, performs an active gatekeeping function by defining "acceptability" for many members of our society.

It is thus the responsibility of the schools, and those who exercise this "acceptability-defining" function (the teachers) to actively demonstrate that use of a community language is an acceptable form of social behaviour, by giving these languages, and thus their speakers, a real role in our education system. This can only be done by using them as a means of instruction.

As was discussed above, one of the considerations involved in maintaining and developing bilingualism is the question of status associated with the use of a particular language. As has been shown in Sweden, a language other than the national language has a poor chance of being maintained if, despite the existence of a situation in which it can be used, it is not regarded as socially desirable to use that language in the given situation. This is where the acceptance of "community languages" as having a recognised status and continuing function in Australian society becomes vitally important in the attempts to maintain the bilingualism of the individuals who make up the various speech communities. It has been demonstrated (see Clyne 1979) that some languages are better maintained over generations than are others, and it can be shown that this is related to the status which these communities attribute to the various languages as transmitters of cultural values (see Smolicz 1979). These values are not only determined by speech-community internal values; they result from a combination of internal values and responses to external pressures.

Action to reduce external pressures and to ensure that all language groups are respected equally will be of great importance in easing the work of teachers involved in language programs. This job cannot be carried out by the school alone since the pressures originate at a much broader level. Two examples of such external pressure, publicised in the media, are: the suggestion from Professor Leonie Kramer that money spent on multiculturalism would be better spent on teaching English (The Age 10.11.1982) and the suggestion from Professor Lauchlan Chipman that teaching community languages is almost entirely worthless (The Age 2.10.1981). Comments of this sort require community, political or academic responses, since they are intended to influence the general climate of adult opinion. The school, however, has a vital function to fulfil at the local level by ensuring that non-Anglo communities are involved in the school policy-and decision-making process. Schools must thus develop a way of using community languages which gives pupils a "reason" for using a language other than English. Ultimately this depends on a value judgement that such languages are desirable for any of a number of reasons. If we decide that languages are valuable, then we have to follow through with a decision to alter the monolingual nature of our schools. Studies from other countries such as the United States and Canada (Cohen 1975, Cummins 1978 and Lambert and Tucker 1972) show that this can be done without affecting the educational chances of speakers of English as a first language and with the likelihood of improving the educational achievement of both these and L1 speakers of community languages.

REFERENCES

- Bloomfield, L. (1933), Language, Holt, New York.
- Brent-Palmer, C.A. (1979) "Sociolinguistic Assessment of the Notion 'Immigrant Semilingualism' from a Social Conflict Perspective", Working Papers on Bilingualism, 7, pp. 135-80.
- Clyne, M.G. (1967), Transference and Triggering, Nijhoff, The Hague.
- Clyne, M.G. (1979), Community Languages in Australia: What the 1976 Census Will (and Will Not) Tell Us. Paper delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the Society for Linguistics and Education, Melbourne, November 1979.
- Clyne, M.G. (1980), "Primary School Languages and Bilingual Education: Some Overseas Research and Legend", Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, vol. 3, no. 1 pp 29-38.
- Cohen, A.D. (1975), "Successful Immersion Education in North America", Working Papers on Bilingualism, 5, pp. 40-5.
- Cummins, J. (1978) " Educational Implications of Mother Tongue Maintenance in Minority-language Groups", Canadian Modern Language Review, vol. 34, no. 3 pp. 395-416.
- Engle, P.L. (1975), "Language Medium in Early School Years for Minority Language. "Groups", Review of Educational Research, vol. 45, no. 2 pp. 283-325.
- Fishman, I.A. (1965), "Who Speaks What Language to Whom and When? An Analysis of Multilingual Settings", Linguistique 2, pp 67.88.
- Hesselmo, N. (1970), "Code Switching and Modes of Speaking" in Gilbert, G (ed.) Texas Studies in Bilingualism, Berlin, pp 179-210.
- Haugen, E. (1953), The Norwegian Language in America, University of Philadelphia Press, Philadelphia.
- Kipp S.J. (1981) "Reconstructing a Pattern of Language Use and Language Shift: Three Rural German Settlements in Victoria", MA thesis, Monash University, Melbourne.
- Lambert, W.E. and Tucker, G.R. (1972), Bilingual Education of Children: The St Lambert Experiment, Newbury House Publishers, Rowley, Mass.
- Mackey, W.F. (1962), "The Description of Bilingualism", Canadian Journal of Linguistics, vol. 7 no. 2, pp. 51-85.
- Nicholas, H.R. (1980), "A Model for the Teaching of German as a Community Language in the Primary School: A Preliminary Study", MA thesis, Monash University Melbourne.
- Poplack, S. (1978), "Syntactic Structure and Social Function of Code-switching", CENTRO Working Papers 4, Centro de Estudios Puertorriquenos, New York.

- Raffler-Engel, W. von (1961), "Investigation of Italo-American Bilinguals", Zeitschrift für Phonetik Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung, 14 pp 127-30.
- Ronjat, J (1913), Le d'evloppement du langage observe'chez un enfant bilingue, Champion Paris.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. and Toukomaa, P. (1977), Teaching Migrant Children's Mother Tongue and Learning the Language of the Host Country in the Host Country in the Context of the Socio-Cultural Situation of the Migrant Family, Tampere.
- Smolicz, J.J. (1979), Culture and Education in a Plural Society, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra.
- Weinreich, U. (1953), Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems, Mouton, The Hague, 1974. Originally published as Number 1 in the series "Publications of the Linguistic Circle of New York", 1953.
- Wilson, F.R. (1966), "Some Aspects of Lockyer Valley German", BA(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland.

This paper is based on two earlier papers, one delivered at a CMES Materials Development Workshop in May 1982, and one at the Victorian Ethnic Communities Council's State Language Policy Conference at Prahran CAE in the same month.

Howard Nicholas is a postgraduate in the Department of German at Monash University.

Rather than learn a foreign language which has little relevance to Australia, Australians (school students and others) should learn languages which are used in the community. Peter McGuire points out the advantages of learning such languages, and these range from simply being able to better understand ones own language to communication with other speakers of the language.

WHY TEACH ETHNIC LANGUAGES IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Peter L. McGuire

Peter McGuire is a Victorian teacher who has spent the past few years teaching English abroad. - At present he lives in Poland where he teaches at the Technical University in Wroclaw.

Why teach ethnic languages in high schools? Why not? is the obvious question. Why shouldn't minority ethnic languages, such as modern Greek, Italian, Spanish, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian be taught when so many Australians now come from these countries? These are the languages which are spoken in many Australian homes - why not teach them? The time is ripe for ethnic languages to be taught in high schools, and even to be studied by high school teachers too.

It's a practical lesson, after all. There is plenty of opportunity to practise these languages in our own communities. The old excuse that Europe is so far away hardly holds water when one looks at the ethnic composition of our cities. Familial ties with the countries concerned are very strong; many ethnic Australians return to visit their families in the old country. Why not try out your Greek or Italian when you go shopping? You don't need to be a camera-toting tourist with a phrase-book to speak a foreign language.

But the objection "What is the point of learning Greek or Polish?" is soon heard. "These are not important languages - the languages of the great literary classics or of international communication." This is partly true. But learning a language in order to read the classics is obviously beyond the scope and interest of most students. The answer lies simply in this - that there are people speaking those languages who live just around the corner.

Though French and (to a lesser extent) German have been taught in our schools for several decades, for most second-and third-generation Australians the idea of actually speaking a foreign language out of school is strange. The assumption has always been, quite rightly, that the new arrival must learn to speak English. But, for the good of community relations, a reciprocal obligation exists of getting to know the various cultures of our ethnic communities and that means learning their languages.

Reproduced with permission of the Editor from Polycom, No 23, November 1978.

Looking at the matter more academically, in the case of modern Greek and Italian, many of the arguments formerly advanced for classical languages apply. The vocabulary of these languages is, to a large extent, based on their ancient forms and reflective of an ancient culture. Yet if the student doesn't understand a particular point, he can consult his neighbor rather than a dusty academic tome. It is always interesting to recognise familiar words in the strange setting of an unknown language. In the first few lessons of modern Greek one meets "anthropos" as an "anthropology", "gynaika" as in "gynaecology", and "xenos" as in "xenophobia". (In explaining the meaning of English words to my Greek students I was continually told: "We know! It's a Greek word!")

In learning about the culture associated with a language, we discover that it is, in fact, a small world. Our histories are inter-linked. Though I am now living in far-away Wroclaw in south-west Poland, one of the main squares in the town bears the same name as Australia's highest mountain Kosciuszko. (The mountain was named by the Polish explorer, Strzelecki, after Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who led an insurrection against Czarist Russia in 1794.) My students here are very amused to hear the Australian pronunciation of such words, though I have since learnt how to pronounce them correctly.

So learning community languages is not simply an academic exercise. The class may also look at the culture and lifestyle of the people. What sort of houses do southern Europeans live in? What is a northern winter like? Students can try Greek food, watch Italian films, or listen to Turkish music. For the non-linguistic student, these are lessons worth learning.

The more linguistically inclined students must come to grips with a different grammatical structure; must come to an understanding of how it all fits together. Good teachers will let the students feel the language before they bombard them with conjugations and declensions. For ambitious students complete mastery will take many years. The vocabulary alone of any language is oceanic in scale. But though there may be sweat and tears in the task, there is also the opportunity to have a lot of fun. One discovers hidden corners of one's own personality that can only be expressed in a particular language, and probably only with native speakers of that language. Modern Greek is very melodic, and is still the language of the classical humanist who loves life and things of this world. In contrast, Polish, with its innumerable diminutives, is warm and sentimental - the language of close family life. Of course you have to find the language which suits you - that language and ethnic character which you find personally attractive.

In a foreign language, there are always nuances that cannot be rendered exactly in English, or that simply do not exist in English. These often convey the special character of the people, or the peculiar conditions under which they live. Greeks speak about "kefi", roughly translated as "good spirits", but only actually experienced if one goes out to eat and dance in Greek company. Greek words are often more expressive than English ones: the simple "block of flats" is more vividly described in Greek as "polykatoikia" - literally, "many inhabitants". In Polish, diminutives of first names have a more personal warmth - something absent in English. My daughter's name, Magdalena, has at least five diminutives - Magdalenka, Magda, Magduszia, Madzia, and Magdunia. Even the names of the most common household items, from apples to zips, have their own

diminutives. And as an illustration of how words reflect living conditions, there is a verb "doroboc sie", which means to acquire over a long time all the necessary household furniture and accessories - a much more difficult process in Poland than in Australia.

For students who are just beginning the language, a lot depends on their teacher, who must be able to convey the flavour of the language and create an atmosphere in which students are not afraid to try their hand at actually using the language. The best way to learn a language is with a native speaker of that language, and there are, of course, plenty of suitable people available in Australia for that job. Students may hear the real thing rather than simply the product of a university language course.

Australian students of ethnic parentage can derive great benefit from sharing in the study of their mother tongue. Their esteem for their own language and culture is fostered (especially when the prevalent attitude is so often that it's all better forgotten). Such traditional cultures and languages must not be lost in the modern Australian society. In addition, the psychological handicaps of living and being educated in an alien culture are broken down. Such a student can contribute actively to the lesson, and, when explanations are given in English can improve his own English too. This is at least one lesson in which the child is not hindered linguistically. It is often the case that the parents (if they left their homeland many years ago) are speaking a mixture of English and their own language when they converse at home. Also we must acknowledge the elementary truth that there are certain things which one simply cannot express in an acquired tongue.

Communication is the pre-eminent adolescent preoccupation. Speaking a foreign language is one of the best lessons in communication, since it requires the ability to be patient with others, to listen, and to learn. Teachers and students have to deal with the basics of communication: the discipline of forming questions and statements which are understandable to all participating parties. It is difficult to be cynical or sarcastic in a foreign tongue, until you have acquired some sophisticated idioms, and, in any case, your native-speaking listener has the upper hand. Learning a community language can also be a lesson in manners. If you learn Italian, for example, you must learn the Italian way of being polite, both word and manner of expression. Starting the conversation off in the right way sets the right tone for any relationship.

On a more general level, the attitude of educators (and students) to language and languages is important at this time when Australian literacy levels are so often under fire. It has been said that before being competent in a foreign language one must be competent in one's own. The complaint is frequently heard - not only of migrants but also of native Australians - that they leave school without being able to speak or write English properly. What might be lacking is a "linguistic awareness", that sense of how one writes and speaks which is stimulated by contact with other languages. This linguistic awareness seems to be shared by more "oral" cultures, such as those of Greek and Arabic countries. Perhaps we Australians are inarticulate as a result of our isolation, both suburban and rural. Whatever the case, a remedy might be an increased emphasis on languages in school - both English and ethnic.

It is true that in learning a second language one begins to understand one's native tongue. One reason why we can neglect to teach the grammatical structure of our own language is that we don't have to study or teach foreign languages which require at least a basic understanding of the structure of one's own. (I must confess that my Greek students sometimes knew a lot more about English grammar than I did).

Let me illustrate this by reference to my own experience in teaching English in Poland. Polish has only three verb tenses, while English is reputed to have sixteen. So I have had to explain the subtle implications of these varied tenses to the students - but not before working out their shades of meaning for myself. In doing so I have learnt a little more about the dynamics of my own language.

Above all, as our Australian students become accustomed to speaking foreign languages, some of the fear of alien cultures will disappear.

The old prejudice that English and the Anglo-Saxon culture are indisputably superior has to go. We can learn a lot from traditional European societies where family and community relationships are closer than ours. It is time that these ethnic languages were brought into the open, into our schools, and into a better integrated community.

SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTITY

In this article the author examines the relevance of self-concept and identity to multicultural education. The complex nature of the concepts is analysed and suggestions are made for promoting self-concept in the classroom.

SELF-CONCEPT AND IDENTITY IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Gary Partington

Self-Concept

Self-concept refers to the beliefs that the individual has about his or her self. Many definitions of self-concept exist, but the one which is most appropriate for our purposes is that used by La Benne and Greene (1969), who were concerned with the influence of self-concept on classroom behaviour, and the possibility of modifying educational practices to enhance self-concept and so result in changed behaviour. A modified form of the definition they used is:

Self-concept refers to a person's total appraisal of his or her appearance, background and origins, abilities and resources, attitudes and feelings which culminate as a directing force in behaviour.

Self-concept itself is not observable, for it is a psychological construct which can only be inferred from behaviour. It is a multi-faceted construct, with many different aspects to it. Also, it varies depending upon the activity and situation to which the individual is related at any given time. For example, a particular student may have a positive concept of herself as a footballer, but the same student in the maths class may see herself as a poor scholar. Some self-conceptions will be more central to the life of the individual than others. A student who is a poor actor may have a weak self-concept of himself as an actor, but because he rarely or never acts, this particular conception is of marginal importance. Brookover and Erickson state that "From the sociological perspective, the self-conceptions which are most relevant are those by which we define our role in the situations which we wish to account for". (1969:101)

In any social situation a variety of roles is possible, and it is not always an easy matter to specify particular roles as essential to a particular situation. In the classroom context self-concept of academic achievement would seem to be central, but the individual student may adopt strategies which play down the centrality of academic achievement and emphasise other aspects of the role, such as classroom clown, helper or athlete. By careful selection of reference groups and attention to particular reinforcements, the individual can maintain a strong general self-concept in spite of the apparent centrality of academic achievement to the role of student. Conversely, a student who is well above average in intelligence and achievement may hold a low self-concept of ability if he or she mixes only with other high achievers who are performing at a higher standard.

The clue to the relationship between self-concept and achievement lies in the formation of evaluations regarding the self. The evaluative component of the self - the value placed on the various abstractions which make up the self-concept - is known as the self-esteem of the individual.

DEFINITION: Self-esteem consists of the evaluations placed on the various abstractions which make up the self-concept. In other words, it is the value placed by the individual on his or her own self-attributes.

The significance of self-esteem lies in its potential as a guide to behaviour. An individual who places a high valuation on his or her self is likely to take part in a performance requiring utilisation of the capacities, attitudes, or skills which are valued. An individual who places a low value on these qualities is less likely to show willingness to participate. It is not necessary for the evaluations to reflect accurately the relative levels of ability or a factual difference in the qualities possessed for it is considered that the individual's belief in himself or herself is sufficient to determine behaviour. This is noted by La Benne and Green (1969) who explain the impact of positive self-evaluation in terms of self-fulfilling prophecy. "The dynamics of a positive expectation tend to produce the appropriate behaviour to bring about the expectation" (1969: 20).

Burns (1979) outlined three reference points against which the individual can judge his or her self-esteem. The first is the comparison of self-image (picture of the self) as known, with ideal self-image (picture of the self as the kind of person one would wish to be). Those who measure up to their ideals are likely to be high in self-esteem, while low self-esteem is more likely for those who don't.

The second reference point is the internalisation by the individual of society's judgements of his or her performance, expressed attitudes, and capacities. Significant others are considered central to the development of self-concept because of their evaluations. This reference point is of particular significance in education because of the potential influence of teachers as significant others in affecting the child's self-esteem. A child who regards the teacher as a significant other in his or her life, and receives positive evaluations from the teacher, may internalise the evaluations and so come to expect positive evaluations in the future. For the child who receives negative evaluations from the teacher, however, future actions may be guided by the expectation of failure. The child may come to consider his or her views as of little value, for example, and decline to participate in classroom activities. Brookover and Erickson suggest that we place a value on any new role we acquire. This value is "a function of the extent to which we perceive that others will allow us to achieve or maintain desired social relationships or personal satisfactions". (1969: 103)

The third reference point outlined by Burns is "the individual evaluating himself as a relative success or failure in doing what his identity entails" (1979: 56). If people consider themselves good at something then their self-esteem is maintained. If they do not fulfill their roles adequately, self-esteem suffers.

These three reference points have added significance for the ethnic minority child because there are two worlds from which to draw comparisons. The range of ideal self-images is expanded, but the child's opportunities to achieve the ideal may be reduced because of differential socialisation in the minority group. The child who seeks to attain an ideal which is rooted in mainstream culture is at a marked disadvantage compared with the mainstream child seeking to achieve the same ideal.

At first it appears that the self-esteem of minority children would suffer because self-esteem based upon society's judgments is much at the mercy of mainstream attitudes towards members of the minority group. To build positive self-esteem under circumstances of negative evaluations means that the child must overcome these negative attitudes and also provide his or her worth in realms which may be culturally alien to his or her upbringing. It is important to note, however, that this applies only if these attitudes are held by significant others - who may be the teacher and members of the peer group. The child who was aware of the existence of negative attitudes, but never came directly in contact with them, most probably would not suffer in self-esteem.

As self-concept is a multifaceted construct, it is possible for the minority individual to have positive self-esteem with regard to home social environment but negative self-esteem with regard to school. The degree to which the individual is influenced by each of the available reference points will vary according to earlier experiences and to perceptions of the significance of the reference points.

Chadbourne (1984) adopts an interactionist view of the relationship between the individual and society. That is, reference group theory assumes that the individual modifies his attitudes according to significant others. Chadbourne argues that the individual modifies his or her perceptions of the attitudes of significant others according to the view of the world he or she possesses. Thus, it is possible that individuals will heed the feedback of supportive people and ignore that of people who are rejecting.

Self-esteem and Achievement: The view that there is a relationship between level of self-esteem and behaviour is borne out by research in the area of academic achievement. Generally, studies show that high self-esteem is associated with academic success but low self-esteem accompanies failure. In a review of literature concerned with the relationship between academic achievement and self-esteem, Purkey noted a "persistent and significant relationship between the self-concept and academic achievement" (1970: 15).

Wylie (1979) noted that the relationship between achievement and self-concept is more complex, both theoretically and methodically, than is typically assumed. She pointed out that the individual's achievement evaluations may be influenced by the limited reference group mentioned above. It is not inevitable that awareness of the achievement levels existing in the heterogeneous group will result in low self-esteem because, as Wylie pointed out,

Persons work hard to preserve and enhance overall self regard and ... they will emphasise or minimise the salience of various aspects of self-concept as needed to accomplish this. Thus, to the person who is able and achieving and so conceives of himself, these

factors may be salient to over-all self-regard, especially if significant others indicate their importance. But the person whose achievements and abilities are manifestly limited may minimise the importance of 'grades and brains', especially if these factors are not particularly salient to significant others. (Wylie, 1979: 358)

This relative emphasis is often observable in the greater attention given to achievement in sport, entertainment and other avenues rather than to academic achievement among many children.

Self-esteem among immigrant groups also has been found to differ, for Connell (1975) has found that Italian adolescents had the lowest self-esteem of several ethnic groups measured. There is some doubt, however, whether it is possible to argue that one ethnic group will experience lower self-esteem generally than any other ethnic group.

Implications for Teachers

Because of the significant relationship considered to exist between self-esteem and achievement it is widely accepted that enhancement of self-esteem will lead to improved school performance. While there appears to be no definite link between membership of minority ethnic groups and level of self-esteem, there are occasions in the educational experience of all children when the use of methods to enhance self-esteem is desirable. The first days at school or kindergarten are such an occasion. As Borba and Borba say:

The first day of kindergarten is a milestone in the lives of children - a day when they begin to forge ahead toward independence in a new environment. Parents and family will no longer be the only primary persons in the child's life. Others - those teachers, friends, and peers whom a child considers significant - begin to influence and affect development of the child's self-concept. If these new significant others consider and treat the child as a worthwhile and important human being, they will help the child develop a positive self-image. (1978:3).

The teacher can use methods in the classroom to raise the self-esteem of the children. There are several rules which should be followed to do this.

1. Always be positive - don't punish the children.
2. Ignore negative behaviour and poor performance.
3. Emphasize all positive performance.
4. Avoid negative comparisons with others.
5. When comparing with others, use positive terms: For example, "You're as good as...".
6. Compare the individual favourably with him or herself at an earlier stage: "See, you can do it", "Now you can do it, and last week you couldn't".
7. Reward positive statements about the self.

8. Externalize cause for failure, or attribute them to factors the child has control over: "You're not ready yet", "With a bit more practice, you'll be able to do it".
9. Avoid attributing failure to the child's ability - don't make statements such as "You've got no brains at all", "That was a stupid thing to do".
10. Be consistent.
11. Ensure other teachers are supportive.
12. Make sure non-verbal communication matches what you are saying.
13. Be friendly with the children. Chat to them in a pleasant manner about their interests and yours.
14. Provide options for children, and let them make decisions. Don't dictate all their moves for them. Give them responsibility.

Borba and Borba (1978) list 101 ways to enhance self-esteem in their text, appropriately titled Self-Esteem: A Classroom Affair. 101 Ways to Help Children Like Themselves.

IDENTITY

A person raised in a stable homogeneous society has no reason to be troubled by issues of ethnic identity. It is only in societies where different ethnic groups have come together that the individual will be subjected to conflicting perceptions of self-image. Such is the case in Australia. For members of the dominant group, ethnic identity is stable, but for the minority ethnic groups, because choice of ethnic identity is possible, conflict of identity may occur.

Ethnic identity is one component of individual identity which in turn is a part of the individual's self concept. In a review of the literature concerning personal identity, Harris (1980) noted that self-concept consists of identity (sense of location), self-image (picture of the self), and self-esteem, or the evaluation of the individual's perception of self. Identity is concerned with sense of place in social situations that is formed through self perceptions and the subjective interpretation of perceptions held by others. The possession of an identity implies both continuity over time and interaction with others. Erikson (1968) stated that the conscious feeling of having a personal identity

... is based on two simultaneous observations, the perception of the selfsameness and continuity of existence in time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognise one's sameness and continuity. (Erikson, 1978: 50).

These processes are largely unconscious to the individual and to others, and continue throughout life (Erikson, 1968). Fitzgerald (1977) considered that a significant function of identity is that it provides a sense of belonging to a subcultural group and offers "psychological satisfactions that are not attainable in the larger society" (1977: 17).

Group membership is an important part of the process of identity development. The sense of belonging to the group is an essential component of a mature identity, which Erikson (1960) explained in terms of learning the roles appropriate to membership of the group. The development of identity can be regarded as an adjunct of socialization, particularly primary socialization. The strong emotional identification of the individual with significant others during primary socialization, and the absence of alternative perceptions of reality leads the individual to accept the social world that is constructed as the only reality (Berger and Luckman: 1967).

Through interaction with these significant others the child establishes his location in the social world. In Berger and Luckman's terms, "By identifying with significant others the child becomes capable of identifying himself, of acquiring a subjectively coherent and plausible identity". (Berger and Luckman, 1967: 151).

When a person holds multiple group membership, confusion may occur regarding perceptions of identity, for memberships may overlap. Behaviours appropriate to one membership group may be inappropriate to the other, and measures of competence may differ from group to group. If, however, the individual is able to relate his apparently inconsistent behaviour to the framework which he has created, a sense of continuity can be maintained.

DEFINITION: Identity refers to the individual's location in his social world. It is a subjective sense of belonging in one or more consecutive or concurrent social situations and is formed through self perceptions and interpretation of perceptions of others.

Ethnic Identity: An understanding of the concept of ethnic identity requires an analysis of the concept of ethnicity. The defining characteristic of an ethnic group is, of course, its ethnicity, a term which has been defined by Isajiw as follows:

ethnicity refers to an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group. (Isajiw, 1974: 122).

Ethnic identity develops with other components of identity during primary socialization. Erikson (1968) considered that such identity formation is not completed before the adolescent years, although research has shown that children, by the age of five years, hold conscious feelings of ethnic identity. (Rohrer, 1977; Brand, Ruiz and Padilla, 1974).

From a review of the literature on identity, Harris considered that "a firm relationship between past, present and future is the essence of identity strength" (1980, 14). This consistency can best be maintained if secondary socializations build upon primary socialization. Although Berger and Luckman state that the less emotionally charged nature of secondary socialization makes it possible to function in a detached way within another social milieu, severe crises may still occur with "the recognition that the world of one's parents is not the only world there is, but has a very specific social location, perhaps even one with a pejorative connotation" (Berger and Luckman, 1967: 141). Migration to another culture places the individual in a reality which differs from the

social world of his primary socialization. In the case of Aboriginal people and immigrants to Australia, their ethnicity is frequently denigrated, thus making for a potential identity crisis. Even if this was not the case, the different social reality creates a situation ripe for identity conflict for the individual who endeavours to belong to both worlds.

Many people experience identity conflicts during adolescence, when they are trying to resolve the conflict of becoming an adult yet retaining the security of childhood. Some cultures avoid this conflict by having definite rites of passage which mark such boundaries clearly, and apply the new status of adulthood unequivocally. Reflect on possible identity crises in your own life; marriage, parenthood, middle age, retirement and unemployment are some key points at which crises may occur.

On the basis of Berger and Luckman's (1967) view of identity formation, identity conflict is not inevitable for children of immigrants, because ethnic identity is a product of primary socialization while learning the social reality of the host group is a process of secondary socialization. Commitment to social realities acquired in secondary socialization is usually less than in primary socialization. The individual may function within that reality adequately without forming a commitment to it, so that subjectively he identifies as a member of the ethnic group while going through the appropriate motions to signify acceptance, at an objective level, of the host group's culture. Cronin describes this characteristic of the adjustment of some immigrants to their new society.

Twenty nine Butterworth Street is a little piece of Italy, when you step in you land in Sicily, that's for sure, you are in Catania. Outside, it's Australian, the democratic way of life socially. I play their Australian game, I smile and when I am corrected I stand thus but inside I know how superior I am to them and how I could put them to flight with a few words if I chose to. But they never know. I play the fool with a mask and so they are happy. (Cronin, 1970: 166).

Diverse views exist on the significance of identity, conflict among immigrant children, and children of immigrants, in Australia. In a review of the literature on identity, Young (1979) concluded that it cannot be assumed that ethnic minority students will experience culture conflict or marginality, regardless of whether they have single or dual ethnic identification. Young suggested, however, that the presence of considerable prejudice in Australia may result in immigrants being unable to identify with Australia, and so the ethnic groups will remain a principal agency for identity formation. Taft (1977) argued that the identity conflict which immigrant children are believed to suffer cannot be supported by facts, and that it was simply a variation of the intergenerational conflict which all adolescents undergo. Goding (1978), however, believed that the child's inability to integrate the two cultures resulted in the undermining of confidence and subsequent deterioration of school performance.

During adolescence, many youths experience some form of identity crisis as they develop a personal identity. Children of immigrants, and

Aboriginal children, also undergo this transitional stage if their families have adopted Australian child-rearing practices. Their search for identity is compounded by the issue of choice of ethnic group, which is a choice the mainstream child does not have to make.

It is possible that a small minority of children suffer identity crises related to ethnicity; they don't know where they belong, and in effect are marginal, belonging neither to their parent's ethnic group nor to the mainstream.

The school has a special part to play in the identity socialisation of children of ethnic minority groups. It presents as a matter of course the culture of the mainstream: after all, its chief function is to induct the young into the culture of the society. For the mainstream child, the school continues where the family leaves off. That is, schooling is based on assumptions made about the primary socialisation of the child. Because the primary socialisation of the culturally different child does not conform to these assumptions, crises of identity may occur, adversely affecting either the child's identification with the family or his or her adjustment to school. The more the methods employed in education support continuity between original and new elements of culture, the more readily they maintain an "accent of reality" (Berger and Luckman, 1971:163) for the culturally different child. The immediate problem for this child is the alienness of much that goes on at school. "The cultural base that previously provided the personality with its identity and all the necessary assurances of its validity, is, inexplicably, no longer valid" (Toronto Board of Education 1975:2).

If the school chooses to give equal value to the culture of the minority group child, it will be able to avoid this alienation and possibly lead to the development of a bicultural individual who is able to function comfortably in both social worlds. Such an approach is desirable for teachers of ethnic minority children.

Aboriginal identity has been the focus of considerable comment in recent years, due to the resurgence of interest among Aboriginal people in retaining their culture, and to the continued rejection of Aborigines by Whites.

It is perceived as a positive attribute to be fostered among Aborigines, in the same way as immigrant ethnic groups support the retention of their own ethnic identity. Teachers in schools must respect the right of children and their parents to make their own decisions regarding their identity, while at the same time providing the skills for effective participation in mainstream society. Such an approach requires a delicate balance of tact in teaching - not to reject the child's culture overtly or implicitly by promoting the mainstream culture as superior.

For teachers to be effective at this they need a sound knowledge of the children and their backgrounds, as well as empathy, genuineness and the ability to accept alternative lifestyles with equanimity. It is important that teachers of children who identify with different groups should not interact with their pupils on the basis of stereotyped views. The following requirements are desirable to minimize strategies of interaction which lead to identity confusion for pupils:

- Prior study of the sociocultural background of ethnic minority group pupils, including child rearing practices, values, relationships, language and skills.

Intercultural experiences, both real and simulated, in order to prepare the teacher for the teaching situation, and to overcome the initial fears that beset teachers when they first come in contact with ethnic minority group members.

Awareness of the expectations of the community for the teacher, so that he/she can retain their respect as a competent professional. This may include mundane matters such as setting homework regularly and dressing neatly, or more complex skills such as displaying appropriate verbal or non-verbal behaviours in diverse social contexts.

Adapting the curriculum to the culture of the group. At the workplace this may be at the basic level of utilizing local, relevant examples to illustrate teaching points; selecting literature with appropriate contents, or drawing on the cultural knowledge of the students to embellish a lesson. More fortunate teachers will have the support of specific learning resources which are integrated into the culture, such as culturally relevant mathematics materials.

Use of the child's home language in the classroom or school. Although not always a possibility, this alternative strategy is highly desirable and provides immediate integration of the child's two worlds in the classroom. At the least, the child should be encouraged to use his/her own language at school, and it should be offered as a subject of study. Also, interpreters should be used for communication with parents rather than relying on the child. This show of respect for the parent reaps the benefits of greater faith in, and reciprocal respect for, the school.

Informal social contact between teachers and parents, preferably in the social world of the parent. While this may be embarrassing at first to both parties, if it is assumed that the teacher's knowledge is such that he/she avoids offence and is willing to accept culturally different behaviour, in the long run it can lead to greater acceptance by both parties of their respective roles.

Avoidance of assessment methods which disadvantage the culturally different child. Continued denigration of the child's knowledge, skills and abilities derived from his/her own culture, and promotion of those based on mainstream culture, can lead to rejection of one or the other. An amalgam of both is desirable.

Participation of community member on the school council. Control of the council in areas where the community is the dominant group is a logical extension of this.

Human relations activities which develop in all children an acceptance of others and an understanding of intercultural contact.

The ideal of a bicultural individual capable of functioning in both cultures is achievable, and the classroom teacher, usually the principal mediator of the second culture, has a primary role to play. While most minority group children grow up to be reasonably balanced individuals in this respect, it is usually achieved with much heartache. The teacher should make it a key priority to ensure satisfying cultural experiences in school and so contribute to the development of individuals who are secure in their identity.

REFERENCES

- Berger, Peter L., and Luckman, Thomas (1967), The Social Construction of Reality, Anchor Books, New York.
- Brand, Elaine S., Ruiz, R.A. and Padilla, .A.M. (1974), "Ethnic identification and preference", Psychological Bulletin, 81, 11, 860-890.
- Brookover, Wilbur B., and Erikson, Edsel, (1969), Society, Schools and Learning, Michigan State University Press, East Lansing.
- Burns, R.B. (1979), The Self-Concept, Longman, London.
- Connell, W.F., Stroobant, R.E., Sinclair, R.E., Connell, R.W. and Rogers, K.W. (1975), 12 to 20 Studies of City Youth, Hicks Smith, Sydney.
- Gronin, Constance (1970), The Sting of Change. Sicilians in Sicily and Australia, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Erikson, Erik H. (1968), Identity: Youth and Crisis, Faber and Faber, London.
- Fitzgerald, Thomas K. (1972), "Education and identity: A reconsideration of some models of acculturation and identity", New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 7, 1, 45-58.
- Goding, Alison (1978), "Immigration and its educational implications", in Cox, D. (ed.), An Uneasy Transition: Migrant Children in Australia, Melbourne: Congress Organizing Committee, 9th International Conference of the International Association of Child Psychiatry and Allied Professions, Melbourne.
- Harris, J. (1980), Identity: A Study of the Concept in Education for a Multicultural Australia, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Isajiw, Wsevolod W. (1974), "Definitions of Ethnicity", Ethnicity, 1 111-124.
- La Benne, Wallace D. and Green, Bert I. (1969), Educational Implications of Self-Concept Theory, Goodyear, Pacific Palisades.
- Rohrer, Georgia K. (1977), "Racial and ethnic identification and preference in young children", Young Children, 32, 25-33
- Taft, Ronald (1977), "The study of immigrant adjustment. Science or just common sense?" Ethnic Studies, 1, 2, 14-19.
- Toronto Board of Education (1975) "The bias of culture: an issue paper on biculturalism:", Revised, Eric, ED 123 747 April.
- Young, Rosita M. Holenbergh (1979), "Ethnic identify and education", in de Lacey, P.R. and Poole, M.E. (eds), Mosaic or Melting Pot: Cultural Evolution in Australia, Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, Sydney.
- Wylie, Ruth (1979), The Self Concept, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

This article continues the examination of self-concept, and shows how a simple interpretation of the concept is now wise in classroom settings. Rod Chadbourne identifies four grounds on which an attribution of low self-concept to Aboriginal children may be misleading. The author's questioning of the validity of self-concept as a factor in school achievement for Aboriginal children leads him to suggest, like Budby, that the structural changes are necessary to "inspire the children's confidence in their teachers, school and society".

DO ABORIGINAL PUPILS HAVE NEGATIVE SELF-CONCEPTS?

R Chadbourne

In this article I would like to question one of the explanations offered to help account for the relatively low academic achievement of Aboriginal pupils, namely that they are handicapped by negative self-concepts. The connection between self-concept and school success itself seems plausible enough. For instance, students with negative self-concepts may tend to adopt low occupational horizons which, in turn, can undermine one type of motivation for academic achievement. Similarly, if pupils perceive schooling as a race then lack of self-confidence could lead them to take the attitude, "Why bother, I'm not good enough to win a place to university anyway." Moreover, as Jackson (1960) points out, classrooms are very judgmental places where the behaviour and work of children is constantly evaluated by teachers and peers. As a result in many learning situations the student "is risking error, judgment, disapproval, censure, rejection and, in extreme cases, even punishment" (Canfield and Wells, 1976:7). If insecure and defensive, pupils may find such an atmosphere very threatening and consequently be inhibited by a fear of failure. Also, it may be suggested, unless children are self-sufficient they may experience difficulty coping with cold, distant, formal teacher-pupil relationships.

What is more open to dispute, however, is whether or not Aboriginal children have negative self-concepts. Fanshawe (1976) observes that there is insufficient experimental data to enable this issue to be resolved conclusively on empirical grounds. And within the literature on the education of socially disadvantaged children there are opposing views that can be related to differences in ideology. For example, on the one hand, writers such as Johnson state quite clearly that:

Growing up in a family that has inherited poverty, living in an environment that induces failure, being rejected by society, and being confronted with his own inadequacies in the school, the disadvantaged child learns to look upon himself with contempt. Furthermore, his negative attitude towards himself is continually reinforced. When he fails to change his negative self-concept to a positive one, he in turn produces children who develop a poor self-concept. Poor self-concept is still another cycle of poverty for the disadvantaged.

(Johnson, 1970:26)

According to this school of thought, the alleged negative self-concept of the Aboriginal child should be regarded as learned, culturally determined, a personality deficiency, and part of the culture of poverty.

On the other hand, there are writers who regard the negative self-concept thesis as yet another way of blaming educational disadvantage on the 'victim' rather than on the 'system'. An example of this is provided by Arnez, who says:

Now that black people have rejected the theories of cultural deprivation and cultural disadvantage, white-oriented social scientists are endeavouring to provide that black people's lack of success ... is due to their negative self-concept rather than to the racist nature of society.

(Arnez, 1972:104-5)

By engaging in 'person blame' suggests Arnez, 'deficit theorists' are able to distract attention away from the real cause of educational disadvantage, namely prejudice and discrimination generated by structured inequality and institutionalised racism.

Briefly, the case for Aboriginal children having negative self-concepts can be argued as follows. The self is a social product, formed from our perceptions of what others think of us; that is, from the image we see when we look into the mirror of us that others hold up (the 'looking glass self'). Compared with their white counterparts, Aboriginal pupils are confronted with a more negative mirror image because they get more negative feedback from 'significant' and 'generalised others' (as a result of low achievement at school and damaging ethnic stereotypes in our society). Therefore logically, other things being equal, they must develop lower self-esteem than do white students. Furthermore, it can be argued, anyone doubting the validity of this reasoning need only look at the negative self-reports made by Aboriginal children and the self-denigrating nature of much of their personal demeanour.

However, whilst these arguments may appear to be logical, they do not take into account the possibility of the following distinctions being made by or about Aboriginal children.

The first distinction involves the difference between being aware of negative evaluation by others and accepting that evaluation. Aboriginal children may be aware that members of their race are regarded, by 'society', as 'failures in life', as having not 'got on' and as having not 'made a go of things'. They may be aware that they are regarded, by 'society', as being not only different from white people, but also as being inferior to them. They may be aware that they are sometimes treated in a patronising and condescending way by members of other ethnic groups. But, even though they may be constantly presented with this negative evaluation, Aboriginal children may not accept it as valid judgment of their true social and individual worth. Instead, they may

react along the lines of: "We are just as good as other people"; "Who do white people think they are?"; "It's not our fault that we're poor." Furthermore, whilst Aboriginal children may be aware, in effect, that 'society' blames poverty and education failure on the 'victim', they themselves may hold the 'system' to be responsible.

Secondly, there is the possibility that Aboriginal pupils' perceptions of their actual performance at school may differ from their perceptions of their potential level of competence. It may be difficult for them to deny that their developed academic ability is lower than that of most white children' but they can always take the view that, "If I had the same opportunities as white kids then I'd perform just as well as they do"; or, "Whilst at the moment the majority of white kids are more successful at school than me, if given half a chance I'd soon catch them up". In short, Aboriginal children can have negative views of their present ability, but positive views of their potential ability.

But even if an Aboriginal child accepts that he does not have the same potential ability as white children, even if he accepts that with all the opportunities in the world he would still perform badly at school, he may nevertheless not accept that this constitutes grounds for regarding himself negatively or for "looking upon himself with contempt." That is, a child can have a negative view of himself as a pupil but a positive concept of himself as a person. Teachers, on the other hand, may not make this distinction; instead they may add a moral dimension to their 'objective' assessment of students' work. For example, if a pupil's academic performance is poor, then teachers may make and transmit the judgment that the pupil is not only bad scholastically but also is necessarily lazy, stupid, unimportant, not worthy of respect, and deplorably lacking in the Puritan virtues of enterprise, drive and the will to succeed. However, although some teachers may not distinguish academic competence from moral and social worth, the Aboriginal child has a vested interest in doing so and in rejecting the value-judgement component of the teachers' assessment.

A fourth distinction is that between lack of self-confidence and lack of confidence in others and the system. In mixed social company, an Aboriginal child may be placed in a threateningly evaluative relationship with white people. In such a situation, the Aboriginal child might show signs of shyness, embarrassment and self-consciousness. One interpretation of this behaviour is that the Aboriginal child lacks self-confidence. Another interpretation, however, is that the Aboriginal child lacks confidence in the white people to take him seriously, treat him as a social equal and generally give him a 'fair go'. For example, in a job interview, an Aboriginal person may give the impression that he has no faith in himself. The truth of the matter might be that he considers himself far more capable of doing the job than all of the other applicants but that he has no confidence in the selection panel to give him an honest hearing; and it is his uncertainty about the panel members, and not any uncertainty about himself, that makes him appear tentative. To take another example, the reluctance of an Aboriginal child to stay on at school and undergo a matriculation course might be taken to mean (by outside observers) that he lacks confidence in himself. However, this particular pupil's perception might be, "I'm confident that I would be able to improve and get to University if only my parents could help me with my homework, my friends would not reject me if I became serious about academic achievement, and if my teachers would be more patient and not give up on me."

It could be the case then that many Aboriginal children, in effect, say to themselves: "The only difference between me and white kids is that they get the breaks and the sponsorship whereas my opportunities are blocked by obstacles beyond my control. But I can't say this publicly because people would think I'm conceited or that I'm just making excuses or that I've got a chip on my shoulder. So to prevent people thinking this way, the easiest thing to do is to make out that I blame myself." It is important then to distinguish between the impression that the behaviour of Aboriginal children seems to give about their self-concepts and what in fact their words and personal demeanour really mean.

Insofar as these four distinctions are valid, they suggest that the results of research, purporting to demonstrate that Aboriginal children have negative self-concepts, should be approached with caution. They also suggest that the negative self-concept thesis may be based on an 'over-socialised conception of the nature of man'. When it comes to attitudes about one's self, perhaps too much stress is placed upon the influence of social learning and not enough upon the possibility of man having a natural disposition to develop high self-esteem and protect it against persistent attack. Finally, these distinctions suggest that, instead of focusing only on the 'victim' and devising ways to build up the self-esteem of Aboriginal children, the spotlight should be turned also on the 'system' to see that changes can be made to inspire the children's confidence in their teachers, school and society.

References

- Arnez, N L (1972), Enhancing the Black self-concept through literature. In J A Banks and J D Grambs (eds): Black Self Concept. New York. McGraw-Hill.
- Canfield, J and Wells, H C (1976), 100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers and Parents. Englewood Cliffs. Prentice Hall.
- Fanshawe, J P (1976), Possible characteristics of an effective teacher of adolescent Aboriginals? The Aboriginal Child at School, 4, 2, 3-23.
- Jackson, P W (1960), Life in Classrooms. New York. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Johnson, K R (1970), Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged: A Rational Approach. Palo Alto. Science Research Associates.

This article reprinted from The Aboriginal Child at School, February, 1983.

ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS

6



Bicultural schooling for Aboriginals is promoted in this article. Stephen Harris presents several reasons for bicultural schooling, and then proceeds to show how it can be applied in the 'modern' Aboriginal school. The comparison of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learning styles alerts the reader to the need for a sensitive approach to teaching Aboriginal children, while the detailed exposition of Aboriginal learning styles provides a lead to implementing relevant approaches in the classroom. While the author draws on his knowledge of the Mililingimbi Aboriginal culture, parallels can be drawn for teaching other Aboriginal children.

TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES AND THEIR POSSIBLE PLACE IN A MODERN BICULTURAL SCHOOL*

Stephen Harris

Introduction

This paper has two main purposes: first, to heighten the awareness of teachers of Aboriginal children that there are some fundamental differences between ways in which most education in white society is conducted and the ways in which most education is managed within Aboriginal society; and secondly, to suggest some applications of these Aboriginal education strategies that should be effective in school subject areas.

As this paper is really about the development of bicultural schooling, I will first lay some ground work by defining what I believe a bicultural person is, and what a bicultural school is:

- . A bicultural person has the ability to shift into and operate in two cultures with relative ease and comfort. Such a person has access to, and is able to empathise with, the points of view of both cultures, without losing identity with the primary reference group.

- Bicultural education in its broadest sense is the teaching of two ways of life. A bicultural Aboriginal School is one where at all levels the Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal staff ratios, classroom subject content, languages of instruction, teaching styles and sources of decision-making, significantly represent both cultures. A bicultural school is one where the non-Aboriginal staff thinks of itself primarily as a servant of the local community rather than as one of the direct sources of leadership in the process of social change. The staff in a bicultural school seeks to develop racial harmony and functional academic skills in the local community. Bicultural schooling involved the community, therefore, in such matters as the definition of the aims and objectives of the school, the design and siting of school buildings, the employment of school staff and the use of the school's financial resources. Such a school must develop out of consistent and lengthy consultation between appropriate representatives of both cultures.

What official acceptance has bicultural schooling? If we accept some precedents from overseas, Article 26 of the United Nations Charter

Reproduced with permission from Sherwood, J. (Ed.) (1982), Aboriginal Education : Issues and Innovation. Creative Research, Perth.

*Plenary address, National Aboriginal Education Conference, Darwin, 1978

Parents have a prior right to choose the type of education that shall be given to their children." The government of Canada, for example, seeks to put this parental right into practice with Indians of the North West Territories (which is that part of Canada probably most similar to Northern Australia in terms of educational challenge) through what amounts to a bilingual/bicultural education policy (see McPherson 1973). To move closer to home, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in several recent speeches (for example, 'Aboriginals in Multi-Cultural Australia', March 1977) endorses the principle of bilingual schooling for Aboriginal (and hopefully non-Aboriginal) children.

Why is bicultural schooling a sound approach theoretically, and why is bicultural education for Aboriginal children a significant advance¹ on bi-lingual education?

- (a) Ethical Reasons: If the vernacular is used only in the early levels of the school we can be justly accused of supporting transfer bilingual programmes where the Aboriginal language is merely used as a more efficient way of making students literate in English. Transfer programmes have been accused elsewhere (Kjolseth, 1972) of deceiving the vernacular speakers as to the purpose of using their language, and of being assimilationist. In the U.S.A. transfer bilingual programmes are now branded as "compensatory" and "deficit" models of education. (Of course standards in English and Maths must also be maintained through all levels of the school or another kind of deception will be being practised). If one believes that a maintenance model of bilingual education (see Harris, 1975) is much more sound than a transfer-to-English model in terms of the ethics of multiculturalism, bicultural education can provide the content which will enable bilingual education to be functionally extended through all levels of a school. If subjects such as Aboriginal History, Cross-cultural Studies and Natural Science are seriously developed in Aboriginal languages and in English, then every level of the School programme can be bilingual/bicultural.
- (b) Educational Reasons: There are important educational reasons why bicultural education is sound theoretically. Only two of these will be mentioned: (i) One of the most basic principles of education theory is that a learner must move from the known to the unknown. One of Rousseau's greatest sayings was that people can learn only what they already largely know. To explain what I mean by 'know' I will borrow from linguistics the helpful distinction made between 'competence' and 'performance'. Language performance is merely a speaker's production of the words, sounds, phrases, etc. of a language; but language competence is that control and that capacity to generate words into such an arrangement that the language communicates. Language competence is that capacity which enables a limitless number of messages to be produced from a limited stock of words. When would-be learners are said to be 'parroting', what is probably happening is that they have learned to 'perform' without their items of knowledge being incorporated into or generated from a genuine 'competence'. My belief is that without properly utilising bilingual and bicultural education, we will teach the majority of Aboriginal children only to 'perform' in

Western knowledge. Lack of competence in learning (or an overload of rote learning) in the school experience of many Aboriginal children may partially account for why so many of them do not progress far beyond mid-primary school grades. (ii) Working with material with which children feel at home, and with which they feel more in control, aids in their 'learning how to learn' - which is a different thing altogether from learning information. 'Learning how to learn' makes the whole schooling process more meaningful: it involves grasping the purpose of school learning and some feeling of success at it. I asked a teacher who had worked with upper primary classes both before and after the introduction of bilingual education, in the same Aboriginal school, what was the main difference, if any, in behaviour of the bilingual students, and she said:

I am still baffled by the slow progress of the poorer students, but a significant group of better students in this bilingual class really surprise me because it seems to have dawned on them what school learning is all about and what the process really is. For example, they really like reading - in both languages. I think what this means is that they have 'learned how to learn'.

I believe appropriate bicultural curriculum development will extend this kind of result to more of the average students.

(c) Sociological Reasons: There are good sociological reasons for developing bicultural schooling. There is today among Aborigines a desire to learn the 3R's, but this desire has not by itself narrowed the gulf between schools and communities. Aboriginal adults still seem generally to feel (in spite of the presence of Aboriginal teachers - though that helps) that schools are really white man's domain, and until this gap breaks down, the commitment of communities to schools will be half-hearted. Allowing non-Aboriginal teaching process and non-Aboriginal content to predominate so strongly in schools, speaks a loud silent message to Aborigines: "You don't have much that schools can use", which in emotional terms can easily be shortened to: "You don't have much". When the visiting Canadian education consultant Andre Renaud was recently asked, "How did you in Canada reach a take-off point where Indian initiatives for their own education were harnessed?", he said among other things:

We consulted them - we asked them what they wanted. We realised that the strength of a tree is at the bottom - the sap goes up, it doesn't go down.

Julius Nyere (1974) said something very similar in relation to the efforts of non-Africans to help Tanzanians:

Development brings freedom provided it is development of people. But people cannot be developed: they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a man's house, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self confidence in himself as a human being. (p. 27).

Schools must take serious notice of what Aborigines want, and must start in school with what they have, in terms of both processes and content, if their pride and initiative is to be more loosed into action within the school.

The Main Features of Aboriginal Learning Processes

Although various degrees of social change have taken place in all Aboriginal communities in the N.T., most of them are still very much 'more Aboriginal' than they are 'Western' (Harris 1977, pp 30-50). A discussion of traditional Aboriginal learning contexts is therefore highly relevant. The following chart summarises the major broad contrasts between Aboriginal and Western education systems;

Most non-Aboriginal learning in Australia is FORMAL, i.e. conducted as follows:

- in specifically educational institutions and buildings.
- by trained teachers who have a specific office of teacher
- with the content having little immediate application to everyday life and survival.
- largely through verbal instruction. (While there is much informal learning in Western Society, such as in the home, this is still accompanied by much more verbal teaching than is the case in Aboriginal society.)
- is often imparted in compact highly organised 'courses' which take comparatively little time.
- learning is often a highly conscious process.

Most Aboriginal learning is INFORMAL, i.e. conducted as follows:

- without specifically arranged educational institutions or buildings.
- by various relatives
- with the content having immediate relevance to, and arising out of, everyday life and survival.
- largely through non-verbal means.
- in most cases is time consuming with most skills being learned over many years.
- learning is often not a highly conscious process

Below I will list the major informal learning processes observed at Milingimbi. These findings are most probably generalisable to all fairly traditionally oriented Aboriginal groups in Australia. Most learning at Milingimbi that takes place in the Aboriginal environment is through the following processes: (the term yolngu in the examples below refers to Aboriginal people, and balanda to white people).

- (a) Observation and imitation, rather than through verbal instruction - either oral or written. For example:

M____ (aged forty-five) and his three sons, aged eleven, nine and six years, were cutting stringy-bark trees, four to five inches in diameter, for didgeridoos which M____ wanted to make to sell in the craft shop. M____ went up to each potential tree and gazed carefully up its length, looking for any dead branches or holes that might indicate a hollow tree. Each of the sons followed his gaze, especially the two older boys, often going to the same side of the tree at which M____ was standing so that they could have the same viewing position. When M____ moved round the tree, still looking up at the trunk, the boys sometimes moved with him. M____ muttered to himself from time to time, but did not say anything to the boys. Every time a tree fell, the boys went over eagerly to see if it was hollow. Once when M____ was sitting having a rest, each of the two elder boys tried to cut a tree down but the axe was too heavy for them and they soon gave up.

Virtually all survival skills, social skills and much learning of artistic skills such as painting and dancing are learned through observation and imitation. Aboriginal people learn by looking, not through talk. (Aboriginal people are highly verbal but talk has more of a social than a teaching function.)

- (b) Personal trial-and-error, rather than verbal instruction. For example:

L____, a yolngu man of about twenty-one had a reputation for recognising the footprints of many Milingimbi people. He claimed that he learned to be such a good tracker and to recognise the footprints of other yolngu during training received under the Boy Scouts. The Boy Scout movement at Milingimbi has lasted for only one or two sessions. Games of tracking had been played, and L____ had done very well at those games. Actually, it appears that L____ had learned his tracking skill by personal observation and trial-and-error over many years, and through spending a lot of time in the bush with his father. When I asked L____, who is one of the better yolngu speakers of English, to teach me how to track or explain to me how to track, he could not even begin. "I just do it", was as close as he could get, yet there is no question about his knowledge.

Other examples are again plentiful: a boy learns to spear a fish, not only through observation of older men doing it, but by throwing spears great many times at a great number of fish. Aboriginal people learn by doing, not through talk.

- (c) Real-life performance rather than through practice in contrived settings. For example:

During the daytime some of the rock-and-roll band members, who were living in Bush Camp, in ones and twos would put a cassette of a relatively new song on a cassette player and

set it in front of the band microphone, playing their own instruments along with the production from the cassette player. There was little chance of failure and the monotony of "practice" as balanda think of it, was gone because the taped music carried the tune along enjoyably. Thus a new musical item was added to the repertoire very gradually - again in the contexts of a "real thing", or a miniature "jam session".

There are many other examples, such as "football practice". Football practice is obviously a game-of-football practice more than it is practice for games of football to be played later. (This feature of Aboriginal learning is related to the present time orientation.) This may explain why Aboriginal children hate to be stopped halfway through singing a song in school. To them it is an end in itself, not a means to a later end.

(d) Mastery of context - specific skills, rather than abstract, context - free principles. For example:

The balanda fishing supervisor, himself a keen sailor, considered B___ an expert sailor, judging from the skill and knowledge B___ demonstrated in the Milingimbi area. This balanda went with B___ to Darwin by plane, to sail B___'s new boat the 400 miles back to Milingimbi. To the surprise of the supervisor, B___ tried to sail right in close to the shore along the coast east of Darwin, which was an area that B___ had never been along before. This of course was quite dangerous and the supervisor had to take the boat out away from the shore.

On a smaller scale, an example of a context specific skill is when an Aboriginal person learns to spear fish or wallabies; there will be no lessons given on the principles of physics involved in spearing fish, such as the cause of parallax error, or the need to use a steeper trajectory in order to propel a missile a longer distance, etc. Fishing will be learned in the context of others and himself fishing. An example of the contrasting white system would be that a boy at school would learn about the principles of magnetism and positive and negative charges in electricity, so that he can use these principles later in one of many possible careers involving electricity. For example, becoming an auto-electrician does involve some context-specific skills, but these will have been preceded by learning the principles of electricity years before.

(e) Aboriginal learning involves orientation to persons (most often close relatives) rather than to information. For example: Soon after I had moved to Milingimbi I became involved with an Aboriginal Writers' Workshop which was being conducted by the adult-education teacher for a group of yolngu women keen to write stories in yolngu matha (yolngu language). The adult education teacher had been at Milingimbi for four years, had worked hard and successfully at learning yolngu matha, and was an expert on local genealogies, as well as knowing all the individual women in the workshop personally. After my wife and I had been involved in this project for two months, the main teacher went away for a week's holiday and we newcomers attempted to keep the workshop going.

The women attended class but did very little. Thinking the language barrier was the problem (even though most of the women spoke reasonable English) we arranged for another balanda teacher who was fluent in yolngu matha to come and help so that women could have immediate editorial feedback in yolngu matha. It made very little difference to the writing programme, although some happy hours of yolngu matha followed between the Aboriginal women and the "new" teacher. When the original adult-education teacher returned, the programme immediately picked up pace again and carried on as usual.

There are other contexts where this person-orientation applies; for example, a Milingimbi boy who is really quite keen to catch turtles is not allowed to actually catch his first turtle under the instruction of anyone except his father or uncles.

These above are perhaps the major informal Aboriginal learning processes but there are other Aboriginal behaviours relevant to learning, some of which I will mention here: Aborigines are more oriented to the present time (and past-continuous) than the future, which means learning experiences need to have some immediate satisfaction in order to be maintained. Aborigines do not respond to the pressure "You'll need this skill when you grow up", nearly as well as do Western children. There is another way in which time orientation affects Aboriginal attitudes to learning. Because most Aboriginal learning is informal, Aborigines are generally not conscious of how long it took them to learn skills. (The tracking example above is appropriate here.) Thus, when adults attend a reading class they might easily expect to learn to read in a couple of days, and when they don't they become disillusioned and stop attending. This means that each class has to be a satisfying experience in the present, if future attendance is to be maintained. Also, Aborigines tend to learn through wholes, rather than parts or through successive approximations to efficient end products - rather than through sequencing of skills. Also, a high degree of cultural conservatism and acceptance of traditional authority exists. Aborigines tend to accept the universe as "a given" of life, and not something that is open to man's manipulation and change. In short, this means that "discovery methods" of learning may not be as effective with Aboriginal children as they are with non-Aborigines, because the success of the "discovery method" depends on an underlying cultural expectation that desirable changes can be wrought through manipulating the environment, and on a cultural value that there are a variety of ways of solving problems through inventiveness and innovation. Also, there are other Aboriginal behaviours that affect learning, such as the training they receive for personal independence. (That is why Aboriginal children often don't do what teachers ask them the first time they're asked, and partly why they resist answering too many questions.) Also, "to know" means as much the right to know as actually knowing information. Also, persistence and repetition are used as an efficient problem solving approach in a simple technology rather than much analysis - before - action, and so on. Space does not allow further discussion here (see Harris 1977 : 130-313; and Davidson 1977).

While the above anthropological observation of Aboriginal behaviours that affect learning are important, there are a number of sociolinguistic behaviours that affect learning almost as much. Again space does not allow a detailed discussion, but a few relevant sociolinguistic

behaviours will be mentioned: perhaps the most important of these has to do with Aboriginal answers to questions. Aboriginal languages have "why" words for questions that are asking "for what purpose?", but not for questions that are asking "for what reason?". Aborigines also often resist answering questions that require, "If ... then" analysis, or hypothesising about other people's motives for doing things, although straight information questions are usually acceptable. A major methodology in verbal teaching in Western Schools is the question-and-answer technique. This technique is not only used to clarify what is being taught, but is used by teachers to find out if children have "mastered"⁵ the material. When they have mastered particular bits of information they can go on to new material. White teachers often fail to recognise that this classroom question-and-answer technique is a Western classroom ritual. Aboriginal people are extremely pragmatic and see no sense in teachers asking questions when it is obvious that they already know the answers. Examples of other sociolinguistic behaviours important to learning include the right to speak and the right not to listen; the fact that audience "restlessness" and movement must not be equated with rudeness; and the absence of an impersonal debate form. (This is why a strong impersonal debate between white people is sometimes misconstrued by observing Aborigines as a personal verbal brawl.) Also Aborigines try to practise the avoidance of "strong talk" (This is why if a teacher speaks harshly to a child for some misdemeanour that the child has committed, the child is quite likely to feel absolved from the crime because the teacher has just committed a more serious crime by speaking roughly.) Aborigines also seek to avoid direct verbal confrontation. (This is why an Aboriginal person may agree to do something later, without any intention of doing it, rather than to have to say a direct "No".) All these factors are important in teacher/student relationships and teachers of Aborigines need to be aware of their importance. (See Harris 1977: 333-446).

Application of Aboriginal Learning Methods in a Modern School Setting

Having defined some of the major Aboriginal learning processes, the next step, assuming bicultural curriculum development is to be supported in practice, would be to establish which subjects are to be taught in the school. The two sources of authority who should have "say" over which subjects are taught would be the Department of Education and the Aboriginal community (or parents or local school board). In regard to the "core subjects", this new balance of authority should not cause sudden or radical changes but would establish the principle of two sources of authority in this responsibility. If there were to be a difference of opinion between these two authorities I would say that if the school really intends to serve the community, the community's wishes would have to take precedence. With proper consultation however, a confrontation would be highly unlikely. In fact, from the information available it seems that the Department of Education and most Aboriginal parents place equal emphasis (but with unequal understanding of ramifications) on the importance of the 3R's (or more specifically, Reading, Oral English and Arithmetic). These subjects are of universal use and are not "threatened" by biculturalism. Examples of other important subject areas in which bicultural curriculum development could take place would be Natural Science, white society's Social Skills and world views, Local History, and the History of the Northern Territory from an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal viewpoint, and so on. Also, it

might well be decided by Aboriginal parents that for some skills which they wanted their children to learn, the school was not an appropriate setting, for example, possibly Aboriginal Dance.

The next step would be to establish what processes and what content would be appropriate for the different subjects. "Verbal explanation" and "observation" and "imitation" are learning processes or strategies: they are the "How" of classroom practice. The materials, objects or topics used are the content: these make up the "What" of classroom practice. Traditional Aboriginal learning processes (learning by observation, by imitation, by personal trial-and-error rather than through talking, and so on) are highly efficient for the content that had to be learned traditionally. For example, given the amount of time available for learning traditional skills such as the recognition of water-bearing trees, etc., the methods of observation and personal trial-and-error are highly efficient. In that case content and process are well matched. However, it may not be efficient to teach, say, arithmetic, through traditional Aboriginal processes. Furthermore it may not be efficient to teach tracking skills today through traditional Aboriginal methods, because there is not the time available with other competing priorities and not the survival motivation. For example, at a settlement in Arnhem Land a sympathetic school principal went to the local senior Aboriginal men and said to them, "Do you want your teenage boys to be expert hunters and trackers?" and they said, "Yes". Then the school principal said, "Well, I'll arrange for you to have them every Wednesday afternoon and you can teach them hunting skills." Some of the senior men took the teenagers for a couple of Wednesday afternoons and then stopped. The Principal thought the Aboriginal men were uninterested in the teenage boys.

I want to use this story to make two points: (i) The school principal and the old Aboriginal men had the same content in mind but neither had much idea of the processes that the other party assumed would be used. From the point of view of the Aboriginal men (and I'm not suggesting that they consciously analysed the situation in the same way that I am) the task as handed to them by the school principal was very un-Aboriginal. For example, the amount of time was nowhere near enough. The way Europeans cope with pressures of limited time in teaching situations is to speed up understanding through the means of detailed verbal explanation along with demonstration and testing where practicable to give accurate monitoring of progress. These older Aboriginal men were not able to adapt their teaching methodology (i.e. observation and trial-and-error over long periods of time) to verbal instruction and testing to meet the time constraints. Furthermore, the task the Aboriginal men were handed was virtually a practice situation in a contrived setting because the Aboriginal men were not involved in hunting skills to stop their hunger but for teaching purposes; and it required of them future orientation in a context in which Aborigines are not future oriented, i.e. the relationship of skills and food supply. This case illustrates that at present there is little real understanding between our two cultures about the processes of learning in the other culture.

(ii) Some curriculum writers argue that there is an ideal mode or process for every content that needs to be learned. But when we look at a subject such as T.E.S.L. or Reading, either this is untrue (i.e. there is more than one efficient way to teach them), or we haven't yet found the ideal way. Referring back again to the school principal and the Aboriginal leaders above, I believe tracking skills could be taught

efficiently by either Aboriginal or Western means - the deciding factors to be taken into account, however, would be the time available and the motivation. In this paper I adopt the position that there is more than one efficient way or process to teach such school subjects as Reading and T.E.S.L. to European children and probably to Aboriginal children, but that in view of the fact that much of a learner's capacity to learn is actually emotional (or affective or motivational), and in view of the limited response of average Aboriginal students to Western processes to date, and in view of ethical and sociological considerations, the processes or methods that I would tend to adopt for Aboriginal students would be Aboriginal learning processes wherever practicable (say in terms of time available), and which at the same time are theoretically sound. (See Huttar 1977).

I would like now to illustrate from one of the core subjects, T.E.S.L., how one modern methodology has (quite by accident because it was developed in France for international businessmen) many Aboriginal learning processes in it and has been highly successful with at least one group of Aboriginal adults. In 1977, a demonstrator of the Structuro Global Audio Visual method of teaching oral English (better known as All's Well) worked at Milingimbi for 6 weeks. This programme placed Aborigines in simulated settings where they could learn the types of dialogues necessary to get by in white society. Through the repeated use of films of dialogues, a tape recorder and an intonation machine, students were able to observe real verbal interactions many times over and were able by means of successive approximations to the efficient end products (through mime and continuous attempts at role playing the dialogues) to gain confidence in speaking some practical English. The learning circumstances were highly social. Students spent most of their time trying to talk to other students (using phrases and sentences from the film they had just seen), learning by experience, and by constantly trying in a non-testing, non-embarrassing context. Failure was not possible because a student was able to mime out the dialogue when the words wouldn't come. Students also had some choice of exactly when and how they responded, although the individual was actually carried along in a group surge of activity.

I have worked with and seen Aboriginal adult education classes where after two or three sessions, attendance dwindled away to nothing. After six weeks at three hours per day most of the men and women involved in this All's Well course were still keen.⁶ I ascribe the response of the Aboriginal adults in this programme to high initial motivation, very skilled teaching, and to the many Aboriginal features and learning processes in this learning activity: there was a group and clan loyalty, i.e. person orientation; the sessions were enjoyable, i.e. ends in themselves and not perceived merely as dull practice sessions for later ends; there was no clear spectator-actor distinction (which parallels Aboriginal dance situations); and there was much observation, repetition, imitation, learning-by-doing, personal trial-and-error, all in a non-threatening context. There was no formal testing in the body of the programme, and Aboriginal facility for the love of drama was used to the full. There was no direct questioning, no threat to Aboriginal felt rights to independent action, no embarrassment of individuals in front of groups and no lengthy verbal instruction.

Reading is another of the 3R's which I believe can be taught effectively in a way that is both theoretically sound from a Western viewpoint, and suitable to Aboriginal expectations about learning. From the point of

view of Western theory there has been a shifting of emphasis during the last 15 years away from the idea that reading is best taught as a decoding skill, to teaching it more in terms of a much broader communication skill. Previously, one of the most popular ways to approach the teaching of reading was to emphasise the learning of letters first, then words, then comprehension skills, then later to expose the learner to lots of easy reading practice. More recently, the tendency is to reverse this emphasis: to expose the child to lots of reading practice first and foremost (which is done by reading a great deal to and with children, and through such means as the Language Experience approach), and only then to teach letters in a formal way. The theory is that although children do need to be taught word-attack skills, it is more important to realise that children learn to read by reading. Several methodologies such as the "Lap Method" (teaching reading basically as parents in "reading homes" teach their children), Language Experience, Caption Books and Instant Readers (a series of pictures with sentences underneath, which progress with minimal changes) are approaches which involve the major aspects of Aboriginal learning strategies: learning by observation, by doing, by imitation, by personal trial-and-error, by real-life performance, by persistence and repetition, as well as utilising person orientation and the principle of learning through successive approximations to the efficient end product (which is a different approach from certain kinds of sequencing of skills, i.e., where some skills are taught in such a way that their ultimate usefulness is not obvious).

Comments about making Maths programmes, Science (or Natural Science) programmes, the study of History and Social Studies more bicultural, will not be attempted here. Rather, readers are urged to take the observations outlined above and seek ways of teaching these subjects through more appropriate content and/or processes. A learning experience is not totally "Aboriginal" unless both content and process are Aboriginal. In the above discussion an approach to teaching is classified as "Bicultural" if either the process or content is Aboriginal. In subjects like Natural Science and Local History it may, however, be possible to use quite strong aspects of Aboriginal content and processes in schools. In any case there is no way in which any kind of schooling could be classified as "traditional Aboriginal". A bicultural school, however, might be classified as "modern Aboriginal". If that idea concerns us, think of the alternatives.

The Difference Between Adaptation and Direct Change

Those who are sympathetic to Aboriginal people must not be against all social change just because the assimilation policy may have espoused a certain approach to social change. What we all must recognise is that ~ social change by Aborigines is inevitable. Our responsibility is to see ~ that where education is a source of change, it builds on Aboriginal ~ strengths rather than emphasising all that is different. The development of Aboriginal art is a good example of a positive kind of social change. Modern Aboriginal bark painting is very different from what it was 30 years ago; for example, cross-hatching features much less and figures such as animals feature much more, in response to market demands. The contexts in which the paintings are done are very different; modern glues are used as fixatives rather than orchid juice, and the artists cope with a cash economy. However, the art is still uniquely Aboriginal; it still uses much Aboriginal content, and many traditional processes; it fits with traditional authority patterns and perpetuates

traditional skills in a modern context; and is a facet of settlement life over which Aborigines have considerable control and pride. I believe bicultural curriculum development can involve the same kind of adaptation. Friere talks about positive change having to build from what is within people, where their level of consciousness is raised in the course of active participation in an activity. The same kind of a parallel can be drawn from different building programmes on settlements. At Port Keats I saw two kinds of building projects, one of houses of completely local construction⁷ - of welded frames and round-log walls, built by teams of Aborigines with one white workman; and extremely expensive imported houses built entirely by European labour. About which house do we imagine local Aborigines are most proud? The log houses are not traditional Aboriginal houses, and were not built entirely by Aboriginal people, but the building of them probably "changed" the thinking patterns of the local Aborigines in a much more constructive way than did the glossy imports. We cannot continue to hand Aborigines skills or the 3R's in a pre-packaged, ready-made, foreign form. If we do, their involvement will then be on a superficial level and the social change, when it becomes more apparent, will be more destructive and confusing. A school must not be allowed to carry the unspoken message from non-Aboriginal society, "Nothing you have is really very usable in these days, so do everything our way." Father Leary from Daly River made a statement that impressed me recently:

The degree of successful living by Aborigines in the future will depend on the nature of the compromises they make.

A bilingual/bicultural school programme would not, then, be a programme that sought to resist all change, but one that sought as far as possible to promote necessary learning of new skills but with Aboriginal control and participation. Nor should a bicultural education programme be one that excluded the participation of suitably qualified non-Aboriginal people, because (at least at the present time) Aboriginal people do not have all the skills necessary for its success. In the sense that bicultural education will be efficient, there will always be a danger of a "transfer", because it should help Aborigines to better handle themselves in non-Aboriginal society. But to the extent that bicultural education seeks to be a source of cultural continuity and cultural adaptation, it is a "maintenance model".

Conclusion

While we cannot hope to develop "traditional Aboriginal" schools because schools are not traditional Aboriginal institutions, we can develop "modern Aboriginal" schools, where the current expressions of Aboriginality (whether they be the use of Aboriginal languages, kinship requirements or avoidance rules, learning processes and so on) are respected and assumed normal; where a continuity between the home and school and old and young is fostered; and where the school is seen as a servant and not a leader; and where an Aboriginal student can learn modern academic and survival skills without rejecting his heritage. In a society where social change is inevitable, the bicultural school is one context where modern Aboriginal society can evolve and adapt with continuity. The only other alternative, as I see it, is a school where cultural continuity is not enabled and where only the few brightest and strongest graduates become Westernised Aborigines, but where the majority ultimately become members of the Culture of Poverty, and not members of a modern Aboriginal society in multicultural Australia.

Notes:

1. Bicultural education could be an advance in a sense other than its being an advance on bilingual education. Once we learn enough about bicultural education from bilingual/bicultural schools we should be able to extend some aspects of bicultural education to those Aboriginal schools where, for various reasons, it is not possible to introduce bilingual education.
2. Other educational reasons for the desirability of bicultural education came to mind but space does not allow their elaboration here: for example the interrelatedness of language and culture and the fact that emotional factors (the affective domain) affect what, and how well, children learn, just as much as mental factors do (or the cognitive domain).
3. This probably accounts for why I was unable to gather my information at Milingimbi through interviews. Although the Milingimbi people obviously have a highly developed education system, it is not something they can readily define or explain or discuss.
4. While there is some variation between Aboriginal groups in terms of the content of culture (such as whether or not circumcision is practiced, or boomerangs are used) there is probably little variation in terms of processes present in various Aboriginal societies (such as a common hunting and gathering economy, common world view, similar type of religion and classification kinship structure, and so on).
5. Not only is this "mastery approach" (i.e., teach-and-test, teach-and-test) foreign to Aborigines, but parents don't 'test' their children in the sense of allowing them some "profitable struggle" in many learning situations. If an Aboriginal adult is present he or she will just tend to do the activity for the child. This is why, for example, in a reading lesson an Aboriginal teacher will tend to tell children words rather than let them struggle to decode them.
6. It is worth noting that none of the women dropped out: they represented a cross-section of the local clans and families and most had a long-standing personal relationship with the female non-Aboriginal adult education teacher. In the case of the men, one clan dominated the early attendance and the survivors (12 out of 22) were mostly connected to that clan, and the relationship with the adult education teacher was less of a stabilising factor.
7. Dr Shimpō (1978) in his extensive travels in the Territory, noticed that buildings in which Aborigines had been closely involved during construction were not vandalised; yet sophisticated imported buildings, constructed largely by outsiders, were often vandalised.

REFERENCES

- Davidson, G. (1977), "Teaching and learning in an Aboriginal Community" Developing Education, 4, No. 4, February.
- Harris, S.G. (1975), "Beyond Common Sense in Bilingual Education", The Aboriginal Child at School, 3, No. 4, August.
- Harris, S.G. (1977), Milingimbi Aboriginal Learning Contexts, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, U.S.A.
- Huttar, G. (1977), "World Views, Intelligence, and Cross-Cultural Communication", Ethnic Studies, 1, No. 3
(Paper given at the ANZAS Conference, August 1977).
- Kjolseth, R. (1972), "Bilingual Education Programs in the United States: For Assimilation or Pluralism", The Language Education of Minority Children, Random House, Massachusetts, ed. by Bernard Spolsky.
- McPherson, N. (1973), "Towards a Cross-Cultural Programme in the North West Territories", Readings in Bilingual Education, No. 46, N.T. Department of Education, Darwin, N.T.
- Nyerere, J. (1973), Freedom and Development, Oxford University Press, East Africa.
- Shimpo, M. (1978), The Social Process of Aboriginal Education in the Northern Territory, N.T. Department of Education, Darwin, N.T.

The effectiveness of a teachers efforts to instruct children depends to a large extent upon the teachers knowledge of the children's background: their motivations, abilities, skills and interest. All too often it is assumed that there are no differences, or that the differences are irrelevant to classroom instruction. In this article by Elaine Jones, the background characteristics of Indo-Chinese refugees is examined and implications are drawn for the teacher. It can be seen that background characteristics - language, religion, experiences and expectations - play an important role in educating the child.

INDO-ASIAN REFUGEES IN VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

Elaine Jones

Every Indo-Asian student who enters an Australian school brings a parcel of poignant experience, cultural values and accepted learning styles. The author of this article aims to uncover some of the implications for the teacher.

Asian immigration is not new to this country. Chinese settlers in the last century made a significant contribution to our Australian heritage and this has been followed by a trickling of ethnic Chinese of British citizenship (mainly from Hong Kong) ever since. Australia's experience with refugees goes back to the immediate pre- and post-war years and the 1950s when many displaced persons from Europe joined the large British intake in swelling the numbers of new arrivals to the country.

South-east Asian refugee immigration and settlement is a new phenomenon, and we cannot draw on our previous experience when dealing with the settlement of these groups.

The revised 1951 United Nations Convention defined "refugee" as follows:

an individual who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

It is important to recognise that the label "Indo-Asian refugee" does not refer to a homogenous group despite some cultural similarities. In fact the people so described represent diverse cultures and ethnic groups and speak a number of different languages.

Though not strictly refugees in terms of the above definition, the Timorese will be included here. The Timorese were evacuees who arrived in September 1975 and were finally given resident status in June 1976. Present intakes of Timorese are on a family reunion basis - many coming from Taiwan or from refugee camps in Portugal.

Indo-Asian refugees have been arriving in Australia since early 1970. The approximate numerical breakdown of these groups, in June 1982, was as follows:

Reproduced with permission of the editor from Polycom No. 33, March 1983, 18-23.

Timorese	6 000
Vietnamese	62 850
Lao	5 017
Kampuchean	7 282

Contrary to media suggestions, the proportion of people arriving by boats has amounted to approximately five per cent of the total refugee arrivals. The remainder have come from refugee camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Those coming from Thailand may have been in camp for up to three years. They are predominantly Lao and Kampuchean.

Many of those arriving by boat are single youths, and children without parents. At times the whole clan comes together. Family groups are selected from the camps according to criteria which favor those with relatives already in Australia or those equipped with special skills, the majority being drawn from the upper and middle classes. A proportion are intellectuals, professionals and businessmen who have been used to a comfortable life style and are highly motivated to regain status for themselves and their children. However, some are fishermen and farmers from coastal areas. Ethnic Chinese represent over half the Indo-Asian refugee population in Australia. As a group the Indo-Asians are beginning to articulate their needs but, since there are differences in ideology and cultural background within and between groups, minor conflicts are probably inevitable from time to time.

It is necessary, when thinking about educational management, to make a distinction between migrant and refugee groups.

Refugees are more vulnerable to stress and psychological breakdown than immigrants who have chosen to leave their country and who may return at will. Refugees' recent experiences and memories are associated with war trauma, the risks of escaping, whether on foot or in boats, confrontation with pirates or pursuit by enemies. Starvation, illness and the death of loved ones may have been the penalties paid for the escape. Loss of identity and personal possessions, with total dependence on the host community for the basic necessities of food and shelter and for help in their orientation in a new homeland - these demand major psychological adjustments.

Refugees have to accept that they may never return home again and, even after they feel safe and secure, they have to cope with intense homesickness and constant anxiety concerning parents and relatives at home or in camps. Loss of loved ones and family support for people with a sense of communal identity means they may for the first time have to make decisions by themselves for themselves. The necessity of adjusting to an alien culture and learning a new language is common to all immigrant groups, but for Asians the cultural distance is a wide gap to bridge. However, the qualities of flexibility and acceptance flowing from their Buddhist philosophy enable many of them to adjust to the Australian way of life more satisfactorily than one might expect.

It is helpful to examine the diversity of the Indo-Asian refugee groups in terms of ethnic background and language which may be graphically presented as follows:

ETHNIC ORIGINS AND LANGUAGES OF INDO-ASIAN REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA

	ETHNIC ORIGINS	LANGUAGES SPOKEN
Timorese		Indigenous
	Timorese	- Tetum (22 dialects)
	Portuguese	- Portuguese
	Chinese	- Hakka/Mandarin
Vietnamese	Vietnamese	- Vietnamese/French
	Chinese	- Mandarin/Vietnamese/Cantonese
		- Hokkien
		- Hakka
		- Chiao Chou or T'iao Chou (pronounced "Tee-Chew")
Kampuchean	Khmer	- Khmer/French
	Chinese	- Mandarin/Khmer and/or a number of dialects of Chinese, T'iao Chou being the most common
Lao	Lao	- Lao/French
	Chinese	- Mandarin/Lao
	Hmoong (Meo)	- Hmoong (Chinese-based Romanised script)

(Thai may be spoken by people from the border areas or former camp residents.)

Implications for the learning of English

It is generally recognised that by the time of puberty the patterns and structures of one's own language have been thoroughly learned and that therefore language interference from the first language may be stronger when a second language is tackled. The older the student the greater the inhibitions may be in adapting to new language behaviours.

The bilingualism of many Indo-Asian students (Vietnamese/Chinese, French/Khmer) is a distinct advantage in learning a third language, since they have a wider linguistic repertoire on which to draw and may have less difficulty learning English sounds which will be unfamiliar to those, for example, who speak only Chinese or only Vietnamese.

Each of the languages of Indo-Asian groups, when compared with English, has differences in intonation, sound patterns, structure and orthography. Vietnamese, for example, is a tonal language (ranging from six tones in the north to five tones in the south). It is strongly influenced by a Sino-Viet vocabulary but has a romanised script in which diacritical marking indicates tone. Lao is also a tonal language with an alphabet resembling Sanskrit. Khmer is a mono-tonal language with a script resembling, but distinct from Lao.

One of the main distinctions between Vietnamese and Khmer or Lao is that the latter two are based on Sanskrit and reflect Indian influences rather than Chinese. Hmoong is the language of the Lao hill people. It has a Chinese-based romanised script.

Many of the ethnic Chinese students may have been to Chinese schools in Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos or Timor and despite dialect differences many share Mandarin as a common language. Hakka is one of the most common dialects and the first language of these groups. Hokkien and T'iao Chou are also common dialects of the Vietnamese-Chinese. They may also be literate in their second language. In other words, the Vietnamese-Chinese may be literate in both Mandarin and Vietnamese since Vietnamese was the language of instruction in the schools. Timorese-Chinese may be literate in both Chinese and Portuguese. However, it must be remembered that after the fall of Saigon in April 1975 and the Indonesian invasion of Timor in October of that year Chinese schools were closed down and many of the newly arrived children may not have attended school since.

For the Vietnamese, French is the best known second language though during the war English gained importance in Saigon and is the second language in secondary schools. Many of the upper class Kampuchean and Laos are literate in French. However, very few of the younger adolescents will have had experience with French since education systems were "Laoised" or "Kampucheanised" in the late 1960s, and foreign languages were taught as a subject, rather than used as the language of instruction.

For the indigenous Timorese, Tetum is the native language. There are twenty-two dialects, but standard Dili Tetum is the most common first language of the indigenous Timorese in Australia. There is no written form. Hakka is the first language of the Chinese, and Portuguese for the Portuguese.

Cultural and religious factors

For the Indo-Asian groups, cultural and religious factors significantly influence attitudes to learning. The importance given to honor and self-esteem by the Vietnamese is related to the significance of the individual within the family. The gravity of dishonoring one's kin leads the Vietnamese to avoid any possibility of losing face. The Vietnamese concern for harmony is exhibited in a desire to please or satisfy the other person, so that he or she will reply in the affirmative, saying "yes" when meaning "no" - a common cause of misunderstanding. What the speaker may be communicating is "yes, I'm listening". Cultivated Vietnamese strive to handle all situations with a delicacy born of restraint and self-discipline. They conduct conversations quietly, gently, and without haste to give the assurance that the situation is under control.

The Vietnamese are usually more interested in the emotions and how human beings feel, react and interact in nature and the physical environment. For example, greetings are related to health rather than the Australian concern with weather. Because of their person-orientation, Vietnamese people may be more inclined to accept authority from and give allegiance to people rather than institutions or abstractions. Their interpersonal relationships are intense and their friendships deep, consistent with the powerful bond between members of the Vietnamese extended family.

For all Indo-Asian groups the concept of authority is a complicated area. It is related to one's position in any group and a code of conduct governs such matters as who is in control, who should speak first and what is appropriate for discussion. These societies are highly structured, and this makes acceptance of authority a natural thing, both inside and outside the family. In the experience of these people, the family is the only institution that has been found reliable.

In learning the English language, there may be a degree of cultural shock. For example, children of Chinese background may perceive too many or exaggerated facial expressions as improper. As the learning of "outlandish" sounds often involves eccentric facile contortions, the student may be embarrassed in front of the class, and this will inhibit learning. It is also important to remember that in many Asian societies the sexes are segregated, so that students in Australian classes may be upset if placed in close physical proximity to the opposite sex.

Attitudes to learning

Many Asian cultures place a very high value on good behaviour in school and foster this by incentives such as a reward at the end of the year's study. Education is esteemed, the teacher having status only slightly below one's parents.

Therefore the teacher's attitude to the student is very important. The best teacher is considered to be one who is warm and kind but firm. In the classroom it is important to recognise the Asian child's respect and reverence for authority. Children may respond with what they think is expected of them, seldom volunteering information, because in their own country initiative is not expected. They may be reluctant to ask questions and participate in discussion. As an experienced teacher has observed, the teacher is perceived as a boat which takes the student from

the darkness on the evil side of the river to the light and knowledge on the other. It is better not to upset the boat, right or wrong. They may also fear that if they admit ignorance they will lose face in front of the peer group, and bring disgrace on the family.

In Asian societies an authoritarian approach to learning has been the norm, with rote learning playing a significant part. Self-direction and the acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning are concepts which are quite foreign. Because the scholar is a revered member of society there is a very high motivation towards education. Furthermore, Asian students are often under great parental pressure to do well academically. This is an obligation expressive of filial piety. Respect for the dictum "Don't leave until tomorrow what you can do today" explains the student's reluctance to leave a task unfinished and his occasional insistence on remaining in class at recess or lunch time.

Where there are large groups of Indo-Asian children, peer group pressure on the recalcitrant learner or non-conformist may be great. (This pressure to conform may help explain the absence of overt signs of emotional disturbance in the language centre setting.) The Indo-Asian child will be reluctant to attend classes perceived as remedial, out of shame, or fear of being labelled or of being a disgrace to parents.

Teachers report no discipline problems with these children, claiming that in general the students are extremely conscientious and polite. Some schools have seen these students as a stabilising influence on Australian children, though not always to the advantage of the Asian students concerned. I once observed a situation in a school where senior Asians were placed in a remedial Year 10 Australian class. The school was reluctant to divide the group, despite different language needs, because of the good influence of the Asians on the Australian members.

The Indo-Asian child in the classroom

It is important to recognise that many Indo-Asian students may have missed out on a number of years' schooling. Refugees from Cambodia and Laos have often spent two to three years in refugee camps. The Vietnamese feel that they too have lost some years of schooling because of the highly politicised nature of post-war studies. As already mentioned, many of the ethnic Chinese children may have had no schooling since the new regimes took over.

Sometimes it is obvious to the teacher that the ages stated by students are incorrect. Ages may have been put back for two reasons: firstly, in the event of having to do war service training in their countries they would be bigger and stronger by the time they reached the "age" of conscription; secondly, so that they may attend and stay longer at school. If it is necessary to place children in a lower grade than they were in at home, both parents and children should be told the reason.

Some of the refugee students may exhibit dismay and feel alienated in the Australian classroom. To be placed in a classroom with children with poor attitudes and low incentives to learning can be shattering and frustrating. Many children complain that the teacher's efforts are negated by students who have little desire to learn and that time is wasted in maintaining discipline.

Because the teacher is revered, the children when they go home tend to act out for their parents activities which they've learnt in class. The indifferent or impersonal teacher constitutes a barrier to communication. The children respond best to a teacher who shows that he cares for them like a parent, and the importance of home visits should be recognised here. From the ages of five to twenty-one Indo-Asian students are taught to be dependent on their parents. As a large number of these children are here on their own, their dependence needs may have to be met at school.

As mentioned earlier, it is important to be familiar with the educational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the Indo-Asian students and to recognise that the older the student, the greater the difficulty in adapting to a new language and culture. The strong motivation of these students to adapt to their new environment and to learn English as quickly as possible makes them, in many teachers' eyes, the "ideal" students. However, cultural factors may have significantly hampered the learning process, and the disparity between English and languages such as Chinese and Vietnamese can make the task of learning English a very difficult and frustrating one. The success of Indo-Asians in adjusting to school will depend on the effort the school expends in providing for their language and social needs and in keeping the channels of communication open.

A very important point to remember in dealing with Vietnamese people is that it would be unwise to assume that all "Vietnamese" people speak and understand the Vietnamese language. They don't. Many speak and are literate in a form of Chinese only and are embarrassed and hurt when teachers assume that they can be helped over a problem by another student translating or interpreting in Vietnamese. If teachers try to find out which are Chinese speakers and which are speakers of Vietnamese, this may avert an awkward situation.

It is the teacher's professional responsibility to use the correct form of a child's name and to learn to pronounce it. Incorrect pronunciation, as well as contributing to identification problems, can be humiliating for the child in front of his peer group. Vietnamese usually have three names; for example "Nguyen Van Duc". The family name is always given first. "Nguyen". "Van" indicates that the child is male; "Thi" that the child is female. For adult males it would be "Mr Duc". The female adult on marriage would retain and be addressed by her given name while working and for listing purposes, but for a woman not working the maiden name is not used and she would be called by the given name of her husband and addressed as "Mrs Duc". Kampuchian names do not normally indicate the person's sex. The female adult on marriage usually retains her full name, though, while working, she may use her husband's name. Laotians have only two names - the given and family names - as do Australians.

It is important that English be learned as intensively and efficiently as possible. Pronunciation is one of the biggest difficulties; a non-standard accent can hamper communication. Pronunciation difficulties may be correlated with differences in phonology. By comparing the student's language with English the teacher can predict the sounds that the student may find difficult.

The teaching of a romanised script will be a high priority for the Lao, Kampuchean and Chinese if there is no knowledge of English, French or Vietnamese.

In order to develop confidence, overcome initial shyness and begin to participate in classroom activities, the student should be encouraged to articulate as soon as possible. For the adolescent students who can usually already write in their own language, some writing should be introduced early. Activities such as singing rhymes and reading simple poetry are popular because of the rhythmic nature of the task. Chorus drilling is popular in the students' countries of origin and should not be abandoned altogether since this does assist in the transition from one learning style to another.

Because it is not the established custom to question the teacher and actively participate as an individual, the Indo-Asian child may fall into the pattern of being the passive, non-understanding student who is afraid to articulate. The teaching of question articulation should therefore be an early priority.

The primary-age student may lack tactile and manipulative experience, such as playing with sand and using scissors. Art work may be meticulous but unimaginative. There may be large gaps in cognitive development because of restricted environmental experiences, particularly for those who have been in refugee camps. A transition stage between teacher-directed learning and self-directed learning must be allowed for.

For the senior student rote learning has been the norm. Their school systems have emphasised the lecture method, memorisation of facts and learning by observation. A paucity of teaching materials in their countries of origin has meant that the children have had limited access to maps, charts and books. Teachers have reported a lack of background in geographical and scientific concepts, hardly surprising in non-technological societies. (Large maps of Australia and Asia could be hung in the classroom to show the geographical proximity of South-east Asia and to underline the fact that it is a key factor in Australia's destiny.)

Because of the lack of books in the home countries of the children, they need to be encouraged to read and borrow books from the library and to be taught reading skills and how to use reference books. Readability levels of books and assignments should be checked and texts with strong visual reinforcement selected for the earlier stages of learning the English language. In addition, students will need to be taught summarising and discovery learning techniques. It is worth noting that these children will expect and request homework.

When talking to the child the teacher should use simple, basic language, consistent with what the child has mastered. The use of diagrams, labels and the blackboard to clarify teaching points is necessary.

Many children claim they can understand the content of assignments but not the teacher's instructions. These should be as clear and direct as possible.

To facilitate the learning of English, access to a bilingual teacher, particularly in the first few lessons, can be an advantage. Bilingual aides can ease the transition into the education system both by providing interpretation and by assisting with language acquisition.

Discontinuity of educational experiences, the studying of subjects never studied before, the focus on individual rather than group identity, personal traumas and anxieties and the concept of self-directed learning all put tremendous strains on Indo-Asian adolescents. Added to this is the burden of learning English to a standard at which they can compete with their peers and the constant fear of failure or of losing face. Mastery of the following survival skills, taken for granted by the English speaker, should be given top priority for the newly arrived non-English-speaker:

- . Interpretation of written signs and directions.
- . Understanding everyday social customs.
- . Basic vocabulary for living in Australian society.
- . Mastery of Australian colloquialisms and idioms.
- . The use of money and public services.
- . Knowledge of the legal system and the individual's rights.

I hope that this paper may be of some assistance to teachers dealing with the education of Indo-Asian children even if it succeeds only in drawing attention to some of the complexities involved. There are many gaps in our knowledge. Cross-cultural studies in learning styles, religious influences on Asian cultures, coping with stress, and Asian child-rearing patterns as compared with Anglo-Australian patterns could be rewarding and useful areas for research.

REFERENCES

The Asian Newspaper, Tattersalls Lane, Melbourne 3000.

Asian Language Notes: (1976), No. 1, Burmese, Chinese, Khmer, Vietnamese, Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Asian Language Notes: (1977), No. 2, Languages of Timor, Tetum, Portuguese, Japanese. Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Asian Language Notes: (1978), No. 3, Indonesian/Malay, Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Asian Language Notes: (1974), No. 4, Thai/Lao, Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Further Guidelines for Teachers of Asian Refugees, (1979), Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Guidelines for Teachers of Asian Refugees. (1978), Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra.

Handbook for Teachers of Vietnamese Students. Centre for Applied Linguistics, Arlington, Virginia, USA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to the following for their help in the preparation of this article: teachers and students in the Language Centres; John Le of Mitcham High School; Nguyen Van Nha, Ethnic Consultant, Child Migrant Education Services; Lach Hasvong of the Australian-Cambodian Society; and Geoff Burke, Acting Supervisor of Adult Migrant Education Services.

1097X



The next article continues the examination of Indo-Chinese refugees in Australia, but it is more cautious, offering advice not only on the cultures, but on the potential for misinterpretation of behaviours as a result of relocation. The problem in applying general descriptions of cultural characteristics to individual cases is given considerable attention by Kelly and Bennoun. Although the extract parallels the previous article, the developing influence of Australian culture on refugees is included in the descriptions of cultures and so presents a dynamic view of Indo-chinese refugees in Australia.

THE QUESTION OF CULTURE

P Kelly and R Bennoun

Introduction

When discussing the students from Indochina, it is essential that we understand that they constitute five distinctly different cultural groups - Vietnamese, Khmer, Lao, Mhong and Chinese.

Within each of these cultural groups there is a wide range of socio-economic, religious and political groups. It is totally incorrect to assume that a student from Indochina will behave in a predictable manner based on any study of the cultures of Indochina.

Ethnic Terminology

1. VIET: The ethnic group which is eighty percent of the population of Viet-Nam.
2. KHMER: Ethnic race populating Kampuchea, believed to originate from Indo-Malay settlers.
3. LAO: The majority ethnic group of Laos. There are many common characteristics between the Thai people and the Lao.
4. MHONG: The ethnic minority of Laos originally from Southern China, the Mhong traditionally lived on the mountain slopes of northern Laos. The spelling used here is that recently decided by Mhong in western countries and differs from the previous spelling of Hmong.
5. CHINESE
- (1) HOKKIEN: Chinese iminority group in Kampuchea and Southern Viet-Nam. The linguistic and regional group came originally from Fukien province in China.
- (2) TEOCHIU: The largest Chinese minority in Kampuchea and second largest in Southern Viet-Nam. The Teochiu originate near Swatow in Kwangtung province of China.
- (3) HAKKA: Smaller Chinese minority in Southern Viet-Nam, the Hakka originate in Kwangtung and Fukien provinces of China.

Reproduced with permission from Kelly, P. and Bennoun, R. (1984) Students from Indo-China: Educational Issues - A Resource Book, Australian Centre for Indo-Chinese Research, Surrey Hills, Vic.

- (4) CANTONESE: The largest Chinese minority in Southern Viet-Nam, and second largest in Kampuchea, the Cantonese originate from the province of Kwangtung, near the provincial city of Kwangtung.
- (5) HAINANESE: Smaller Chinese minority in Southern Vietnam. The Hainanese originate from Hainan Island.
- 6. KAMPUCHEA: Present name of the country previously called Cambodia.
- 7. KHMER ROUGE: Khmer communists, literally Red Khmer, who ruled Kampuchea from 1975 until the Vietnamese invasion in 1978.
- 8. PATHET LAO: Lao Communists.
- 9. CAMBODIA: Name frequently used to refer to the Khmer people and country now called Kampuchea.
- 10. KHMER KRON: Khmer from South Viet-Nam.
- 11. VIET-CONG: Viet-Nam Cong San - the Vietnamese communists.

WHAT "IS", "WAS", "SHOULD BE"

Unfortunately articles written on the topic of the culture of Indochina have covered only traditional modes of behaviour and beliefs. The writings tend to underplay the importance of the years of war, the post-war turmoil, the refugee experience and its resultant etching into the traditional cultures.

Everyone from Indochina has been affected. The younger the person of Indochinese origin in Australia, the greater the gap between traditional culture and the real attitudes he or she presents in Australia.

A teacher of an aggressive Vietnamese youth could wonder at such a statement as the following:

"High Vietnamese value on harmony in interpersonal relations is expressed in everyday situations through the use of delicacy, tact, politeness and gentleness in dealing with others ... It can be said the Vietnamese youth's behaviour patterns are governed by certain rules of propriety. The main rule being that it is a break of propriety to cause disappointment or discomfort to adults in general." Boland 1979)

At the time of its writing, it was a statement of what "ought to be" rather than what "was" and "what will be" in the years ahead.

The problem is that, whilst there is ample information on how the cultures should be perceived by their members, there is little information on how the cultures have been required to change and adapt as the process of third country resettlement continues.

Often, papers blur "unattached youth", "youth in general", "fostering and intercountry adoption" into one problematic area with no boundaries. It must be stated here that inter-country adoptions, i.e. the adoption by Australian families of children from Viet-Nam, Kampuchea and Laos are never considered by these researchers to have any similarities with the other Indochinese youth in schools. This is because of their young age on arrival, the emotional commitment in the longer term of the adoptive family. Their arrival ceased in 1975, whereas the refugee children arrived from 1975.

To attempt to clarify this blurred concept these researchers wrote a paper for VICRA entitled "Indochinese Youth - a New Perspective", 1981. The section entitled "Misplaced Sympathy:" discusses adoption and fostering concepts.

"The whole problem of the minors from Indochina has been seen unfortunately as an extension of the "save the babies of Viet-Nam" spirit which was kindled in the early 70's when adoption by Australian families of Vietnamese orphans hit the media. The plight of these genuine orphans living and dying in sub-human conditions still lingers in the minds of concerned people. However, their concern is transferred to the displaced children of Indochina now and they feel that their plight is the same. Many even think that the "children" are "babies" and orphaned, starving and available for adoption. This is not a true picture but the "pitiful waif" sells papers, mobilizes public opinion in such a way that governments are forced into taking precipitous decisions based on incorrect information causing false emotions.

The unaccompanied minors who do come here to settle have to cope often with this misplaced sympathy. They are not pitiful genuine orphaned babies who have been saved from death, but instead are refugees with families with whom they still communicate or families missing now but hopefully to be found in the future.

The family is the most important unit throughout the world but these children do not yearn nor do they need a second family whilst living in exile. Australians, with the best of intentions, often feel that "love conquers all", love being parental love as we know it here. The love they have is for their families and their country, it is still there, deep inside them and the heartbreak of losing these is not made less by the introduction of a mother and father figure. In fact, it has often been told to us that the young person feels guilt when they "accept a new family" and would prefer to live through their sorrow without the additional emotional ties of a new family. These people do not need sympathy but support and encouragement to live their own lives in their own way in whichever placement situation is most comfortable for them."

In all countries of resettlement, each of the cultures of Indochina has its own team of cultural "gatekeepers". These people are usually well educated, and very proud of their cultural heritage which can be traced back thousands of years. It is natural to want to present one's culture in what one perceives as the "best" possible light and, as a result, when invited to write about their culture the result can be what the academic perceives it "should be" rather than how it "is" in the country of resettlement. Such articles (see bibliography) have much to offer as a background information, historical interest but not much to offer the teacher in the classroom faced with a real desire to compensate as quickly as possible for the previous disrupted schooling of members of his or her class.

"Most societies gradually change over the years, under the influence of local and overseas situations. The Vietnamese (or other Indochinese) society is not an exception." (Fryer and Kelly 1980)

Cultures cannot be transplanted in total. Compromises have to be made to accommodate new laws, climate, family structure in the new country, change of employment, status and attitudes of the host/dominant culture(s). Culture is not a "stagnant" phenomenon regardless of whether or not it is relocated or remains in its own confines for many years. Each culture of Indochina has been influenced by each other and by the French, Indian and Chinese cultures to varying degrees. Each will continue to develop and adapt to the world of the 1980's.

TRADITIONAL VALUES AND NORMS

This section will outline the cultural norms of the societies of Viet-Nam, Kampuchea and Laos as they were until the end of the 1970's and attempt to describe the empirical situation in Australia. It must be understood that these practices and attitudes vary depending on the strength of the bonds of kin, the rural/urban origins and social position of the family, educational standards and class within the society, ethnic roots and previous experiences with other cultures.

The Family and the Roles within the Family

Throughout Indochina the family is the most important unit of society. Family honour is a paramount concern. A by-product is that adults are always to be respected by children and youth and this respect intensifies with the age of the adult. Each of these cultures treat age as an honour and worthy of respect.

Roles are mapped at birth and are dependent on class, birth order and sex. Measures of wealth can be the number of children, especially boys, that the marital union produces and also the educational standard the children achieve.

Each society of Indochina has a tight class structure and social mobility is rare. The father, who becomes an adult at marriage, is the true head of the family and he should have complete control over the major decisions for his family just as his father had within his generation. The women are in control of the day-to-day activities of the household and the caretaking duties of the young children. The feminine and moral development of her daughters is her domain.

The most important child in the family is the first son. It will be his responsibility always to ensure a suitable standard of living for his parents as they age and his wife, on marriage, will move into the family home and share the responsibility of the husband's parents for better or worse. This role in Khmer society could also be for the daughter.

This extended family situation is often viewed as "ideal" and almost "romantic" by many Westerners. However, it is not without some tensions. Quite often the mother views (as does the older sister) the daughter-in-law as being unworthy of her son, accusing her of slothfulness and even, in an extreme case, of infidelity. The old western "mother-in-law" jokes have their counterparts in the cultures of Indochina but respect for the mother from her son sees the situation resolved by the submission to the will of her mother-in-law.

Of these cultures, it is the Khmer whose family is more likely to have been a nuclear one with very strong extended family ties, than an extended family living arrangement. In times of marital trauma, the mother-in-law is important. The wife can complain about her husband to his mother, and it is the mother who will "pull him into line". The wife can also complain about her husband and in-laws to her mother, as the mother remains her teacher and confidante throughout her life.

Children are not considered in other than those terms until they marry. There is no identity crisis because roles are prescribed for them and they are secure within the family structure. Any child who is a "problem", who falls foul of the law or obtains low grades is a disgrace to the family and in extreme cases is disowned by the family. Whilst the mother tends to the young child's day-to-day needs, the grandmother is often allocated the task of baby sitting, and the older children, especially the girls, are expected to mind the young siblings. They have to feed, entertain and generally replace the other, for period of time depending on what the mother deems as appropriate time spans. Some youth have complete care of the child, others for periods after school or holidays.

The following case study highlights the changes which took place in a Vietnamese family 1977-1983 from life in Viet-Nam through family reunion in Australia and resettlement. It is not unique.

Joan Knowles, Department of Anthropology, University of Western Australia, presented this case study at A.N.U. of a Vietnamese extended family in Perth entitled "Continuity and Change in Vietnamese Families in Perth, W.A." at the Australian Family Research Conference (Nov. 23rd-25th 1983). Her paper discussed "the manner in which one family coped with the new environment". The first arrival of this family at 20 years of age felt the "need to create a substitute family network. It was both emotionally, practicably unthinkable for him to live alone". He moved into different living situations each a little closer to his original "Vietnamese" family situation. When his family and extended family arrived he and his family moved through two entirely different stages.

The study highlights the changing roles within the family over the resettlement period. "The issue of traditional Vietnamese attitudes of thought and behaviour has caused the most change and created the most conflict within the family, fragmenting the overall structure of the family. While the six older members continue to keep the old conventions and customs, they become increasingly disturbed and disappointed by the younger people's rejection of traditional values such as: respect and obedience towards one's elders, subservience to one's husband, one's duty to one's family, modesty in dress and behaviour." (Knowles 1983)

These changes include the demise of the father as head of the family, the decrease in reliance on the family for emotional support, guidance and practical assistance, the diminishing importance as a source of information to the young women of the mother and the independent thinking of the youngest adult women of the family.

Boy-Girl Relationships

Generally in the countries of origin there is little mixing of the sexes at adolescence. It was, however, more acceptable in the capital and large provincial cities, but not so in the rural areas. Sex instruction

was never taught in school and in many families, sex was never mentioned at all. It was felt that such things would be learnt at the appropriate time at marriage. Boys and girls gathered information informally from their older brothers and sisters and their peers. Often, this information was not correct. Sexual experimentation occurred, but for girls it was considered wrong by both the family and the society as a whole.

There was a double standard, however, where girls should be virgins on marriage and boys can play the field, but are expected to settle down and marry a virgin, not unlike the West of yore. Some village areas continue with early arranged betrothal of the girls but this rarely happens in the cities.

Many family boys and girls view with absolute horror the sexual mixing in the Australian schools. The sexual freedom allowed some cultural groups in Australian is quite well accepted by the men and women in their early twenties and eventually by the majority of youth. But this causes conflict within the family and widens both the generation gap and the cultural gap.

Joan Knowles (1983) cites the following examples:

"The three youngest adult women in the family began to adopt some western ideas in both dress and behaviour. This created problems between these women and the rest of the adults. The most significant issue at the time was the relationship which developed between the single daughter and her boyfriend. He had been visiting the household for several months, meeting the young woman only in the company of members of her family. However, at this time the relationship intensified and although the young woman's parents clearly expressed their disapproval, the couple began courting like a western couple. When the situation between the daughter and her family deteriorated the couple eloped to the eastern states."

Many parents fear what could happen to their girls with their exposure to the opposite sex as well as to the behaviour of other girls of different ethnic origins. This fear is the reason why sometimes they do not agree with permitting girls to attend school camps, etc.

RELIGION AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY

The three countries of Indochina have a variety of religions and philosophies within their borders. These teachings have influenced every aspect of traditional life of the people. The religious codes of the countries are interwoven and it is not unusual to find individuals who practice more than one religious ritual – such is the blending of the religions and philosophies – the harmony of the nations.

It can be said that no matter which belief the peoples of Indochina hold as "truth" their lifestyle takes all beliefs into account. This is less like the western Christian belief of one "true" church, and those who are not of the faith being eternally outcasts. There is a little black and white in their religions and philosophies, more a kaleidoscope of worthy ideals interwoven in all aspects of life.

Animism

The belief in the world of the spirits and worship of these is held by a large percentage of the people in all three countries and it was the basis on which many religions were built.

Ancestral Worship

This is a belief in the necessity of showing one's respect for one's ancestors (in life and in death). It is linked with the spiritual continuum on which all people in life and death must travel. What you are is very much dependent on what your ancestors were and what they did in their lives for you. It is not uncommon to find an ancestral altar in the home of the Christian Vietnamese. Ancestor worship, as with animism, has been blended with other religions and philosophies.

Buddhism

This is perhaps the religion which westerners see as the most influential one in South East Asia and, to a large extent, they are correct. But it must not be viewed in isolation. The majority of people of Indochina follow the four truths of Buddhism.

1. The world has suffering everywhere
2. Suffering is the result of desire
3. Life's task is to overcome desire
4. A pure life will overcome desire which leads to suffering

There are two Buddhist schools - Theravada (Laos, Kampuchea and Southern Viet-Nam) and Mahayana (North and Central Viet-Nam). Both schools of thought are based on the concept of a continuous life, death and re-birth cycle, which will only be broken when one's spirit reaches the state of enlightenment, terms "Nirvana". Some people who have reached this state continue on in the cycle as spiritual leaders for others.

Christianity

Under French rule Christianity was revitalised especially in Viet-Nam. Missionaries, who were less successful in Theravada areas, converted people to Christianity. However, today it is not unusual for a Vietnamese family to pray at the ancestral altar before going to Mass, or to attend an audience with an astrologer prior to making a major decision. Viet-Nam had the largest Catholic following in the area prior to 1975.

Taoism

This philosophy has environmental overtones. It deals with the order of nature and the need for harmony achieved by the maintenance of positive and negative elements in the universe. It has had a strong influence in the daily life of the peoples of Indochina.

Confucianism

This philosophy is a combination of Taoism, ancestral worship and Buddhism entailing filial loyalty, piety and obedience. "Influenced by Confucianism, the Vietnamese people are expected to act in certain ways. the Vietnamese man must follow three fundamental lords, king and his subjects, father and son, husband and wife. Likewise he must possess the

five cardinal virtues: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge and sincerity. Similarly, Vietnamese women must practise the three degrees of dependence: dependence upon her father first, then her husband, later on upon her son; and four virtues: proper employment, proper demeanour, proper speech and proper behaviour." (Chi n.d.)

Hoa Hao

This is also a combination religion of Viet-Nam with strong Buddhist roots. It rejects notions of material religious needs and expensive ceremonies. Instead, the religion is one of spiritual contemplation.

"It is better to pray with a pure heart before family altar than to perform a lot of gaudy ceremonies in a pagoda with an evil heart." (Crawford, N.D.).

Every aspect of the life in Indochina has been influenced by these philosophies and religions. They are not aggressive but more a flowing with the natural tide, fitting into the order of the universe, adaption and the striving for inner peace.

The strength of the influence of these attitudes on the youth from Indochina will depend on how young he/she was when he/she left the country of origin, how long he/she was in the refugee situation, how strongly the western component in the camp promoted new ideas about religion and whether or not he/she has the guiding influence of the family here in Australia.

It is wrong to believe that if a Khmer youth says he is a "Baptist" that automatically it can be assumed that he holds certain ideals taught by that strain of Christianity. He may have found it easier to join them whilst in the camp because of his pliable philosophical approach to life. He may hold inside strong beliefs in Buddhism which he feels are not "suitable" in Australia because of his camp experience, and the interest shown in him by Christians here. The very philosophy of life which had given him the strength to survive the war and refugee trauma is presented to him as a "lesser" philosophy. This lowers his self-esteem and his pride in being Khmer. This is part of the refugee tragedy.

Many western cultures view life as having a beginning and an end. The cultures of Indochina, in contrast, see life as part of an eternal continuum which runs in cycles or spirals but with no real end. The finite aspects of western philosophies are difficult to grasp and uncomfortable to live with, if one has lived in the world of life phases and re-birth where one is important to the flow of the universe.

RACIAL ATTITUDES

Historical reasons underlie the deep mistrust each ethnic group has for each other. The Khmer and the Vietnamese have had a long history of wars with each other. The Chinese, who dominated Viet-Nam for one thousand years, and have been in control of the economies of the three countries for decades, are viewed with suspicion by the Khmer, Lao and Vietnamese and, in some cases, with hatred. The Lao, who have more in common with the Khmer, have for centuries felt that their culture was superior to the Khmer who they viewed as a backward race. The Khmer, on the other hand, feel the same about the Lao culture. Some Lao feel superior to Mhong and vice versa. Suffice to state that each race tends to have ethnocentric

attitudes. A recent visit to Indochina by the writers showed that the arch rivalry still existed and ethnocentric sentiments were openly stated throughout the countries and in the refugee camps.

Of course, not all students of Indochina have strong racist attitudes, but what must be understood is that they do not view themselves as a homogeneous group and the cultures do not necessarily have empathy with each other. Some youth have been taught racist attitudes as children by parents and propaganda in the newspapers, the parallel education systems and from the history books. This has been fuelled by the wars in each country.

An example of attitudes, although anecdotal, can be seen in the early problem of children from Viet-Nam in some schools of one state not having literature in their mother tongue. They were the first children from Viet-Nam and the teachers sought the advice of an ex-student from Viet-Nam who had lived in Australia for a number of years. He was asked to advise the authorities on what books were appropriate. He obliged and Vietnamese language books were made available. However, the problem was not solved. The children did not wish to take the books home and seemed reluctant to read them. A Chinese speaking Australian teacher solved the problem. She noted that the children were mainly of ethnic Chinese origin and could not read Vietnamese. The Vietnamese ex-student would not concede to this fact.

At first (1975) some Chinese from Viet-Nam who arrived in Australia as refugees, felt obliged to say they were Vietnamese but as time went on and more and more Chinese arrived, pride in their ethnicity grew in Australia. It has been said on many occasions that Australians are "used" to Chinese and are more accepting of them; one is "luckier to be a Chinese refugee and not a Vietnamese refugee".

"The Vietnamese think that they are best, but we Chinese know we are".
(19 year old Chinese from Viet-Nam).

Relationships in the schools are not helped when school teachers call over the microphone "would the Indochinese students please ..." or a teacher tells a group that "they all look the same anyway" or "Asians are all the same". (Quote from interview).

In the Thai refugee camps, ethnic groups are treated differently for political reasons. This can fuel anger leading to stronger ethnocentric attitudes amongst refugees which can result in overt racism in the camps in Thailand. This will take time and care, combined with understanding, to break down in Australia.

It must also be remembered that some individuals have assimilated into the mainstream culture of their country of origin even though they are of a different ethnic origin to the mainstream culture. Vietnamese from Laos or Kampuchea, Chinese from each of the countries, especially if they have lived in the country areas rather than the main cities and attended local rather than Chinese schools, Khmer from Viet-Nam, all fall into the category of being accepted as part of the mainstream culture. Some have dual culture, but others have suffered cultural attrition which has been their ticket into the realms of the accepted people in their country of origin.

Teachers of, and workers with, Indochinese youth must not, however, make assumptions about long standing attitudes permanently affecting relationships forever in Australia.

VICRA, since 1976, has enjoyed a history of ethnic group liaison and working together of the five ethnic groups in all projects in the areas of education, research, welfare, recreation, cultural promotion and information dissemination. Being aware of possible conflict and placing all experiences into the multicultural context, has resulted in the promotion of working relationships between all the ethnic groups from Indochina.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION

Education is viewed as the means by which the family assures itself of social status and a comfortable life. Women who become part time street hawkers often do so to enable at least one child (usually the eldest son) to reach the highest educational standard possible. The Indochinese recognise that education means information and this equals power - power over others or simply over one's life. Families are willing to go through enormous sacrifices to give this gift to their children. Some unaccompanied youth were put on boats by their parents to go to another country specifically to "further their education". For those who had to pay for a place on a boat, a son could have been sent alone because, with insufficient money for the whole family, the son is the best possible choice, as he would send money back to keep his family on his graduation.

This is a mammoth task to give a youth. The future comfort of his respected family is at stake. This is the burden carried by many of the single youth or sibling groups who arrive here and enrol in the Australian educational institutions. Often remaining at school (even without a living allowance) is the parents' wish.

For the Indochinese, school traditionally teaches values accepted by the parents. The Khmer schools taught the girls moral living code and the boys male living code off by heart so that a youth, under pressure, could quote the appropriate piece to give him or her direction and confidence in his or her chosen path. Discipline at school reflected that of home and there was no conflict in either the measures taken or the attitudes taught. Parents had confidence in the education systems available to their children prior to 1975.

The teacher is the person given the task of continuing the work of the parents in the moral development of the child, was held in high esteem and he was feared and respected by the students. Creativity and individuality in the western sense were not deemed worth preserving or encouraging in the education of students because they were not of great value in the world of work, or the world of family life. The western concept of "the individual" or "creativity" is not well respected in these countries and, within their cultures, are not pre-requisites of any form of public life in isolation.

After the changes of government in the three countries of Indochina, parental attitudes towards the education systems changed, especially amongst those who eventually left their country. Many felt angry and fearful of the new curriculum and have often cited examples of indoctrination. Some parents chose to keep children away from school.

Others who were serving under the old regimes, found their children deprived of schooling. Kampuchean parents saw the closing down of all schools and the destruction of any person or group who attempted to continue educating in any way.

The older children, now the youth in our schools, remember the respect they had for teachers prior to 1975 and their parents undermining of the teachers' authority after 1975, as this was first experience with a home/school conflict of values. A number of Vietnamese adults add to this, the idea that the youth themselves refused to attend school because of their own ideology.

"... because of their unwillingness to participate in the education system that the communist regime established. These young people saw it as indoctrination." (Nguyen 1984).

Whilst we have no evidence of this amongst current school students we know that this attitude was strongly supported by most of the parents who became refugees, and this supports the fact that some students could have problems translating old values into our classroom situation without upsetting traditional values held by the parents.

CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes with an extract from "Culture and all That" a paper written for VICRA in 1982 in an attempt to encourage those working with cultural groups to re-think the jargon used and to treat clients as individuals rather than members of groups. It points out that often customs, traditions and habits are taken out of context and branded the "culture" of a minority group without any knowledge of the historical development of the whole culture, in the time sense, to the detriment of true understanding of the individual.

"Culture and all that" (Kelly 1982)

"I have had many discussions with the Indochinese about what they mean by "culture". They have individual ideas, but all Vietnamese seem to agree that speaking their own language, having their own traditional festivities and eating their own food is keeping their own culture.

Cambodians, now referred to as Khmer, agree with this, but include song and dance. A multicultural society is, surely, one which accepts traditions and customs from all ethnic groups as "normal". To pretend that it means that whole societies can be successfully transplanted is ludicrous. The spirit of multiculturalism does not entertain a totally separationist attitude nor a melting pot one. But we must accept (as do the Indochinese) that customs, habits and traditions must in time be watered down to suit the environment of the new country. An example of this is the custom of visiting friend on weekends, held very dear by the Vietnamese. They are now compelled by sheer distance, inclement weather, shift work and lack of transport to abandon this custom or to limit it. Climate also limits the custom of the evening promenade and the legal requirements of licensing prohibits street trading. Have they lost their culture? No, they have lost some favourite customs but they are still able to speak Vietnamese and eat Vietnamese food, attend Tet celebrations and gather together on occasions in the same way as they did in Viet-Nam.

A published article about cultural differences stated that it was usual for a youth of that culture to sit in his room quietly "meditating" or "reflecting" and not speaking to others. Is it not true that youths of all ethnic groups tend to sulk and be moody? Another article blandly states "In Asian culture ..." This shows little understanding of "difference" and has a ring of "ethnocentricity". The Thai society is as different from the Vietnamese as the Greek society is from the English. No Australian would accept the statement "in Western culture ..." We agree that we are all different.

Each ethnic group must be divided into place of origin. The Chinese from Viet-Nam have very little in common with the Chinese from Taiwan because their learned culture, i.e. habits, traditions and customs are different because of environmental factors. They have ethnic origin in common but that may be all. I furnish the following as an example:

A Chinese from Viet-Nam who recently visited Taiwan felt isolated and said he had nothing in common with the Chinese (not even language) and very little in common with his fellow Chinese/Vietnamese living in Taiwan. He stated that the "culture of the Taiwan people makes me feel uncomfortable".

It seems that with the acceptance of multiculturalism as a concept worth pursuing, many workers have developed the habit of branding as "culture" every different opinion a migrant has. It is convenient, but it is of little help, when that which is accepted as "cultural" is perhaps a symptom of a deep problem which is individual or personal and nothing to do with culture. Perhaps the impact will be lessened if each person was viewed as an individual first and an "ethnic" second! In sociology, in referring to local cultures, much is made of "class". We accept that modes of behaviour will differ within a country because of class differences. Why then do we hear people say "in Vietnamese culture ..." when they mean "a Vietnamese mode of behaviour ..." Behaviour is dependent on personality, class, etc. I could make a lengthy list.

Some behaviour of Indochinese refugees is not "culturally inspired" rather "refugee inspired".

REFERENCES

- (1) Boland, K. (1979), Information Booklet Department of Community Welfare Services.
- (2) Fryer S. Kelly P. (1980), "The Vietnamese Woman" VICRA paper 1.
- (3) Knowles J. (1983), "Continuity and Change in Vietnamese families in Perth, W.A." Australian Family Research Conferences A.N.U.
- (4) Chi D.V, Joseph - Pamphlet entitled "The Vietnamese Woman" Pastoral Centre, Richmond, Victoria
- (5) Crawford J. "Culture of Viet-Nam"
- (6) Nguyen T. (1984), "The Adjustment Problems of Viet-Nam, Young People and the Understanding of their Needs" Youth Affairs Journal, March.
- (7) Kelly P. (1982), "Culture and all that" VICRA.

In the concluding paragraph of this article the author, Michael Christie, states, "We don't know enough about what is relevant or possible for Aboriginal children". From the other perspective, Aboriginal children often don't understand the meaning or relevance of much of what goes on at school. As a result their responses to teacher's questions are sometimes haphazard. Christie categorizes possible responses and suggests some of the causes of the problems.

KEEPING THE TEACHER HAPPY

M Christie

In his book How Children Fail, John Holt talks about the strategies children have for coping with school. The strategies of most children, says Holt,

Have been consistently self-centred, protective and aimed above all else at avoiding trouble, embarrassment, punishment, disapproval or loss of status. This is particularly true of the ones who have had a tough time in school. When they get a problem, I can read the thoughts on their faces. I can almost hear them, 'Am I going to get this right? Probably not. What'll happen to me when I get it wrong? Will the teacher get mad? Will the other kids laugh at me?'

I didn't really get to thinking much about children's strategies until I had stopped teaching and gone into a few classes to observe as a fly on the wall. Most of what went on in the classroom went completely unnoticed by the teacher. And what the teacher did notice, she seemed often to misunderstand. The children had an amazing variety of strategies which really had the teacher fooled. Some of them had fooled me too, for the years I had been teaching. I thought that if I were to point out some of the strategies which I saw, teachers may begin to look more carefully at their own and their children's behaviour.

Keep Guessing: If you don't know the answer, it's better to keep guessing than to stop and think. The teacher wants the lesson to keep moving. If you stop for a moment, he may think you're not concentrating. Anyway, teachers don't seem to mind you guessing - they think it means that you're active and interested - and when you come up with a right answer they're pleased because they can move on to the next part of the lesson.

Stay on a Winning Number: If you happen to give a right answer, stick with it. If it's been right before, it will be right again. This is a good strategy if you don't know what the teacher is talking about. Don't confess that you don't understand. This will make the teacher frustrated and draw out the lesson. It will make the whole thing unnecessarily complex and time-consuming, and you run the risk of making the teacher cross. If you've got a winner, stay with it. It'll win again sooner or later.

Mumble: If you think you know the answer, mumble it. When the teacher asks a question, his brain is tuned to receive the right answer, so by mumbling you're covering yourself quite well. If you're right, good. If you're wrong, the teacher might think that you're right. He really wants you to be right because it will mean that he's teaching well and he can move on.

Take a Stab: This is a good one, because if you're good at it, it will save you and the teacher a lot of trouble. If you're given a problem say the first answer that comes into your head. If it's a maths problem, try adding first. Add all the numbers together and the chances are you'll be right. If you're reading a difficult word, use the initial letter as a cue, take an educated guess and carry on. You will know that you're wrong if the teacher stops you. Don't stop to think about it or the teacher will get jumpy.

Split-second Timing: This is an easy one to master and very useful. If you are reading with a group, listen carefully to a good reader and echo what she is saying almost exactly as she says it. If you are good at this you'll be able to fool almost anyone and never have to read a word. If you don't know an answer, put your hand up a split second after the teacher has chosen someone.

Hedge Your Bets: Learn to cover yourself when called upon to answer a question. Say, "I think it might be 24 or maybe 30," or "I think it might be a triangle ... or maybe a square or oblong." If you're not quite sure, present your teacher with a small selection of possible answers. You'll be surprised how often he'll choose the correct one and then tell you you're right.

Look Interested: Remember to put your hand up often. The teacher likes it. There's no need to worry about being called upon. Usually she doesn't call on quiet children with their hands up. She calls on the noisy ones who are half out of their seats waving their arms, or she chooses those who are looking inside their desks or chatting and don't have their hands up at all. If you do get called upon, smile sweetly and say "I've forgotten." It won't matter.

Wait for an Easier Question: If the teacher asks you a difficult question, don't think about it too hard. She knows that if she wants to be a good teacher, she must break the problems up into small manageable pieces. So just sit quietly and wait until she feeds you something which is dead easy.

I suppose it's to be expected that children should develop strategies for dealing with teachers. Teachers have strategies for dealing with principals and I suppose principals have their strategies and so on. The worrying thing is that children resort to the use of their strategies so much, and that the teachers notice so little. And every time that happens, communication breaks down.

Holt suggests that children resort to strategies because they are afraid - afraid of trouble, embarrassment, punishment, disapproval or loss of status. He says:

A problem is a picture with a piece missing; the answer is the missing piece. The children who take time to see and feel and grip the problem soon find that the answer is there. The ones who get into trouble are the ones who see a problem as an order to start running at top speed from a given starting point, in an unknown direction, to an unknown destination. They dash after the answer before they have considered the problem.

It may be that many children use these strategies because they are frightened. I am happy to say that in my observations of classrooms I very seldom saw children who seemed frightened. But I suspect that many Aboriginal children were using these strategies because they really didn't know what else to do. Many of them honestly think that wild guessing is the name of the game. It is hard for us white teachers to understand this. Why do these children understand so much about the everyday world outside and then become hopelessly lost as soon as they walk into a classroom?

The answer is quite simple. As white teachers we fail to realise that the home and the school are two completely different worlds. Even if an Aboriginal child can cope with the social world of the school, he is mystified by the academic world. He sees a teacher. The teacher for some reason keeps asking questions, even though she already knows the answer. Adults at home don't do this unless they are telling jokes or trying to trick us. Is that what the teacher is doing? The questions she asks are not about the real world but about an imaginary world of numbers and writing not seen at home. "If seven boys have four oranges each, how many oranges are there altogether?" Which boys? Where are the oranges?

And as if that weren't bad enough, the teachers seem to be quite free to make up the problems, but they are not free to make up the answers. The business of getting answers is a whole different game from getting questions. The teacher's questions are imaginary, but imaginary answers are unacceptable.

With Aboriginal children the problem is made still worse because they are not used to so much language being bandied around. White people talk so much they can hardly think without talking. Aboriginal children have many different ways of thinking and finding out, but very often talking and answering questions is not one of them.

No wonder little children are driven to develop their own magical strategies for coming up with answers or for keeping the teacher happy. So far as the child is concerned his games are of the same nature as the teacher's. Every time the teacher asks one of her incomprehensible questions, the child is driven to pull one of his strategies out of the bag and try it. I could tell, while observing classes in action, that many children knew exactly what strategies they were employing and why. Some of them even looked a little guilty about it. The saddest thing was to see the children who started to work on a problem, thinking about it and working quietly, who then took a wild stab when the teacher called on them.

I said earlier that teachers didn't seem to notice what was going on. When I look back on my own teaching experience, I acknowledge with shame that I often did sense that the children were just guessing or playing games, but didn't do anything about it. Why not? Often I felt as though I had exhausted my repertoire of teaching strategies. I had tried everything to make the task meaningful and to encourage the children to think carefully about what they were doing. And still they stabbed, mumbled and hedged their bets. It was so much easier to wait for a right answer and move on when I got it. But of course this was really counterproductive. Whenever I did this the children were guaranteed not to learn. All they were learning was that school is mysterious and irrelevant. Holt says, rather strongly, that

we could well afford to throw out most of what we teach in school because the children throw it out anyway.

I suspected that if I discarded the things that the children didn't see the point of, or didn't understand, everything might well be thrown out, including myself.

So I am not advocating that we throw out everything and keep only that which the children find interesting, relevant and able to be understood. We can't do that, simply because we don't know enough about what is relevant and possible for Aboriginal children. That is, or at least should be, one of the major thrusts of research into Aboriginal education. And really, it's teachers in the classroom that are doing this research. Every so often you come across a teacher who is saying to himself, "Why am I doing this?" ... "Is this really what the children want or need?" ... "Do they really see the connection between this and what goes on at home?" These teachers are the first to admit that their problems of content and communication are enormous, but they know that they've got problems and they are working on them. Their classrooms are alive with interest and discussion. If more teachers could look critically at what they are doing and how the children are responding, they would be able to develop ways of bringing first themselves and then their children down to earth.

REFERENCE

Holt, J., (1969), How Children Fail. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth.

The presentation of attitude statistics, as in the previous article, gives the reader little idea of the actual feelings of the individuals who are surveyed. In the next article, the story of a young immigrant is presented, and this conveys the personal fears and disappointments, hopes and aspirations, of Ronni Capkunoski. This story conveys clearly the author's identification with his native village, and his difficulties in settling in Australia. It has a clear message for teachers.

IF AUSTRALIANS CAN'T SAY MY NAME IT'S NOT MY FAULT.

Ratko Capkunoski

This autobiography was written, as a humanities assignment, by Ratko (Ronni) Capkunoski, a Year 10 student in 1977 at Williamstown Technical School.

The story was first recorded by Ronni on tape; he then worked with migrant teacher, Paddy McCorry, to produce this written version.

Ms McCorry feels that language problems may often deny capable students any sense of achievement, and that if teachers can devise ways of working, other than total reliance on the written word, they may be able to give students the pleasure of achievement with the increased confidence that results from a "success" with English.

Ronni, went on to do an apprenticeship in fitting and turning; attending the technical school one day a week.

My name is Ronni Capkunoski. I was born in Yugoslavia, in Macedonia.

I was born in a village called Topolcani. It's near Prilep and Bitola. It's a good village, a mountain village. The village had about 250 houses. The houses weren't made out of wood like in Australia. They were all made out of stone or bricks but they had roofs sort of like Australian roofs, not of tin but of tiles. The people who lived there worked on farms, growing tobacco, rice, and apples.

My dad was a keeper of the fruit and sometimes he had to go around making rounds to make sure no one was stealing anything. My mum worked hard looking after us. My grandmother is still alive. She was very nice. She looked old - she had grey hair and wore a black dress - a black dress with black spots! I've got one sister, one year older than me. Her name is Sandra but her Macedonian name is Slobodanka.

In Yugoslavia we had a garden with chillies and tomatoes in it. And we were growing tobacco like all the other people, trying to make a living. We didn't have our own land, we borrowed it for a year. Then after we finished, we gave it back to the owner.

Reproduced with permission of the Editor, from Polycom, No 10, November 1978.

The first thing I can remember is carrying bricks to help build the house. I was about four or five years old. Before I started going to school I would help at home and play with the other kids, shooting sparrows with sling-shots and going up in the mountains.

My first day at school I didn't cry like my sister did. At one stage we were in the same grade at school but she was bigger than me and had more friends than me. The first day we went into the room and the teacher introduced herself, teaching us about how it was going to be in school. After the day was over we went home to do our usual things. At first I liked school. The first year I was best in the class, but then I went down; I don't know why. After a couple of years I didn't like school. I got bored with it and there was too much homework. I'd rather go hunting for rabbits, making traps and all that.

You could see the whole village from up on the mountain; it was a good view. It was really beautiful, all green trees. When it would snow it was really beautiful. White everywhere. There were creeks up on the mountains but no big rivers. My favourite place was the river near us, about a mile away. It was called Crna Reka. That means Black River. It was a fairly big river. We would go swimming when it was hot and we'd fish. I'd help my dad carry the fish when we caught a lot. There were carp and a lot of other kinds of fishes but I don't remember their names. Anyhow, we would eat them.

Sometimes my friends came fishing with us. At school we played a lot of soccer. We used to go around the village like kind of tough guys. We were the toughest guys in the village - me and my cousins, Branko and Kiro. And there were lots of other kids and friends too. There was a statue where we used to meet up. The statue wasn't of a man but at the bottom it had the names of the partisans who died during the war. We used to have meetings there, of what we'd do. We would go around and no one used to go near us, except the little kids of course. If they made any trouble, we'd punch them up.

We'd go into the forest where they grow apples and take the apples from there. We weren't allowed to, of course, but we'd still take them just for fun. We didn't get caught much - only a couple of times. There were watermelons and sunflower seeds and grapes too, and we'd take them too. A couple of times I went duck-shooting with my dad in the big swamps.

Sometimes we went to Prilep, Bitola, or Skopje. I don't remember much about it except seeing the tall buildings all around. I didn't like it; I'd rather be in my village. And we went to Beograd to get the passports and for vaccinations and all that, too. Sometimes my dad used to go to Prilep to do some shopping and he would get a bus. In the village most of the people were farmers but some of them had cars to show that they were richer people. Others had wooden wagons with bulls pulling them, not horses.

When someone got married in the village, all their friends would gather around, dancing and having fun from the morning until midnight and even four o'clock. Sometimes someone would fire a gun up in the air for kicks. There'd be a lot of drinking. Some people would get drunk on wine and whisky and there'd be a bit of beer too, but mostly it was wine and whisky. Macedonians make their own wine and whisky.

The music isn't rock'n'roll music like it is here in Australia; it's kind of folk music (narodni pesni). The people would dance all kinds of dances. They'd gather round in a circle and go round and round. The music is really good. Some comes from bagpipes made out of sheepskins. The bagpipes are called gajde. And there are accordions, Clarinets and drums too. The drums aren't like Australian drums - it's only one drum in Macedonia. You get two sticks and bang one on each side.

Gipsies used to come to our village. There was a big area in the middle of the village and the gypsies used to come around there and live for a few days and whenever the area got flooded they had to move to higher ground. They were nice people. They had wooden wagons called "tractor wagons" with rubber wheels like on a car, and a horse or bull to pull it. Some wagons were painted bright colors. The gipsies had dogs and chickens. They lived in tents and would go and get food from people, sort of begging but not really. Their clothes were different and they looked different from ordinary Macedonians - kind of dirtier. They had darker hair and skins.

Dad went to Wollongong

My dad went to Australia first - there wasn't enough money around even from all the hard working. So he went first to Sydney and then to Wollongong for eighteen months. After a year, we came here to Australia - in 1971 - and we lived for eight months in Wollongong. Then we came to Newport. We lived there for a year; then we bought our own house in Brooklyn.

I was happy of course to see my dad again when he came back to tell us we were going to Australia, but when we got on the bus to go to Beograd, I was kind of sad leaving all my friends behind. Everyone was crying. And then - Beograd, the city and the noise! And then there was a heavy rain that flooded the airport and we couldn't leave till it cleared. So we had to wait around. Then we got on the plane. It was the first time I'd been on a plane.

When it took off, my ears were all funny and there was too much noise because we were sitting by the wings where the engines were. But I wasn't scared - not really, because I was looking out the window all the time.

Out of the window, from above, it looked really nice. The people in the plane were all Yugoslavs and the hostesses were Serbian all the way. We landed in Singapore and, in a day or so, were in Australia.

At school in N.S.W. I met a Yugoslavian kid. The teachers gave me a book with small words and I had to learn them. I didn't know how to write this alphabet so the teachers wrote it down and we had to copy it. It was really hard, because I couldn't understand what the kids were talking about and even when I could understand a bit, I couldn't talk back. I didn't have a word to say. It was really hard till I got used to it and then, when I did get used to it a bit, we came to Melbourne and I had to start all over again.

I went to Newport West Primary School. On the first day, a lot of kids were teasing me. They called me a wog. They asked me "Do you speak English?" and I said "No." One other thing was, I was carrying a case

instead of a bag. In New South Wales the kids carry cases and so I was different again. There was one Serbian kid at the school but after a week he left - he shifted, and I didn't have anybody to talk to at all.

We were living at my aunty's place. We lived there a year. The first day there my father went to Smorgans, the meat works, then later went to Savage Fibreglass. My mother went to F & T Rubber where they make thongs. My sister went to Gellibrand High School but she didn't like it and left at fourteen to start work.

After primary school I came to this school and it was starting all over again - new school, new kids and more kids too, more kids than at primary school.

I was with my cousin, little George Grozdanoski. He knew more about the school than I did because he was in Form 2, so he introduced me to the teachers. He introduced me to Miss Piesse. There were other Macedonian boys too- It was better here because there were other kids I could talk to, Macedonian kids. I didn't know how to speak English very much. I didn't want to say something wrong till I got used to it, so I talked to Macedonians.

A wog is a gentleman

I had a fight in Form 1. A kid called me a wog or something so we had a fight and we got caught by the teacher. We had to write 300 times, "I must not fight in the schoolyard". I felt bad. When people called me a wog, I didn't feel very good. They are wogs themselves so why do they call me a wog? It's a nasty word, I didn't know what wog means. Miss Piesse said it means a gentleman but I don't know, the way they say "wog", it sounds really bad. It happens a lot but I've got used to it. Anyhow, I sort of won the fight but we didn't finish it, you know, because the teacher came along and broke it up.

The hardest thing I've ever had to do in my life was to speak English when I came to Australia first. You know, I wanted to go back to Yugoslavia the same day! I would have liked to have had a Macedonian teacher who could speak English so that she could explain it to me.

I want to be a motor mechanic but I'll try for a soccer player! At school I like graphics, F. and M., automotive, and all the trade shops. I'm not happy at school when we have maths and science but I like all the other ones. When I'm in the trade shops I'm happy. I felt bad when I had to stay in Form 4. I passed F. and M. but I flunked maths, humanities and graphics, probably because I didn't do enough work.

I get on with my parents and sister really well and I'm happy at home and at school, but I'd leave school if I could get a job as a motor mechanic. Most Australian kids, after they turn sixteen, they get their own flats, so I think they must have some sort of family trouble, but I like living with my family. My dad is boss in my family of course. He is the man. My dad is a friendly sort of person. He likes people, all kinds of people from other countries no matter what their nationality.

He is sometimes a bad-tempered man but only if you're doing something wrong. He's very fair as a father. He lets me go where I like.

My mum - she's a bit different from my dad. She's kind too but sometimes when my dad brings visitors home late at night, she doesn't like that because she has to get up and work in the morning. She doesn't like visitors that she doesn't know much.

My sister goes to work. She doesn't speak English as well as I do.

Myself - well sometimes I'm bad-tempered. Some kids annoy me calling me names I don't like, so who wouldn't get angry? I get nervous too, when I'm playing soccer or if I'm doing assignments at school and I haven't handed them in. I like to be the way I am but I do not like to be nervous a lot. The thing I like doing best is playing soccer, and mechanical things, machines, making things at school, and sometimes at home helping my dad.

I go out playing billiards at Newport. It's a lot of fun. I play with my cousin and a couple of friends. I go to the city and Footscray to buy things I need. I watch TV - everyone watches TV - and sometimes I listen to records and music - Macedonian music and English music - sometimes - and I listen to the radio when I've got time. I help in the garden and sometimes I help in the house.

My best memory? I've had a lot of exciting things in my life, in Yugoslavia going hunting, fishing, and swimming - ordinary things. The biggest thing that ever happened to me was coming to Australia. A really bad memory was the time when my grandfather and my grandmother died. That was last year. I felt pretty bad. My grandpa was in the war; he was a partisan. He was a good man but when he got drunk he was bad too. My grandpa died in a car accident and my grandmother died in hospital almost at the same time. They were my father's parents.

I've got a really close friend here in Australia. His name is Kiro and he lives in Seddon and takes us everywhere around. He's much older than me. He teaches me how to drive. He's a friend of my family - he's an older man with a job and he's married. He's kind but bad-tempered sometimes. Maybe I like him because he's from our country, from our village.

My own born country.

I'd rather be a Macedonian than an Australian. I want to go back to Yugoslavia and live in the same village again. The village is getting better to live in. It's not muddy as before because they're making the roads again. Macedonia is getting better, it's not as poor as it once was. Yugoslavia for me is better than Australia. It's my own born country. My dad wants to go back and I do too. My dad is out of a job now; in Macedonia that wouldn't have happened - there are no strikes there like here. Most of the time my dad was farming for the government so he'd have a job. My dad isn't happy here, he wants to go back, but my mum doesn't. She says we had to work so hard, planting tobacco. It's easier to earn money here than there - \$100 a week or more. Sometimes I get homesick for Macedonia when I think about it and my friends. Australia was so different-so noisy. You had to watch everywhere for traffic. When we first came, I was amazed - you know - big trains and all that. I didn't live in a big city but in a mountain village where there's fresh air and no factories around; no traffic noise and pollution, so it's better there in Yugoslavia than in Melbourne and the city.

I don't know much about the future. Things will change. Perhaps we won't have much of a future. In a few years time I think there will be a war.

Australia isn't a good place for migrants at the moment. Even though there are lots of migrants here, perhaps we'll start to go back - because of the government and the strikes and the unemployment, I'm not a politician, so I can't explain how all this has happened. We want raises for our jobs and the government won't give them to us so there are strikes. Then we're out of jobs.

Migrants do different jobs from Australians. We work in factories on machines. The government brought the migrants out so that Australia could have workers doing the jobs and the work that Australians don't like.

1147X

"The life of an immigrant is hard, but the pain can be eased by other migrants working with Australians in an effort to explain and aid migrants in adjusting to the new country, climate and language". With this conclusion, Sabina Rocco sums up her experiences as a young immigrant to Australia. As with Ratko Capkunski, adjustment to Australia was difficult, a difficulty which was largely unnoticed by those who should have been able to help.

SABINA: THE STORY OF A MIGRANT CHILD ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

Bernadette Gigliotti

Introduction

Sabina, Nina as her family calls her, is a twenty year old Italian migrant. She came to Australia five years ago. In that time she mastered the English language quite well, and after passing her Higher School Certificate she gained entry into Melbourne University where she is studying languages. Nina is the middle child of a family of five children. She has two elder brothers Tonino 20, Pasquale 18, and two younger brothers, Massismo 13 and Michele 11, all of whom were studying at various levels in their education. Nina herself was clever academically, and was fluent in both Italian and French. Nina's father Giuseppe Rocco, was an engineer in Italy, her mother Rosa was a housewife. The Rocco family lived in the southern port town of Salerno, owned their own apartment but because the firm where Mr Rocco was working closed down the family found themselves in economic hardship. Mr Rocco decided to migrate to Australia. He had been told by other members of his firm of the excellent conditions in Australia. Economic conditions in Italy were getting worse, and as he wanted his children to continue their studies he decided to start a new life in a country that seemed to hold nothing but hope for a successful future. Nina, a bright intelligent girl of fifteen, didn't want to migrate. Her life and loves were in Italy, but as all migrant children she was under the strict guidance of her parents and had to accept their decision. The letter that follows was written by Nina to her constant penfriend, Carla Puopola. In it we learn of the hardships and indeed the distress of a newly arrived migrant family through the eyes of an adolescent. It's truthful but at times her judgement of people and their attitudes to migrants seem a little harsh. Bearing in mind that this experience presents itself mainly as a hostile uprooting of an established, warm and secure lifestyle, one can recognise or at least sympathize with Sabina's point of view. With this account of Sabina's background in mind, and realising that this letter is translated from Italian to English I invite you to read on

Reproduced with permission from Burns, R (Ed) (1980) Teacher Education in and for a Multicultural Society: Young Teachers Reflect and Act. Centre for Comparative and International Studies in education, La Trobe University.

"The life of an immigrant is hard, but the pain can be eased by other migrants working with Australians in an effort to explain and aid migrants in adjusting to the new country, climate and language". With this conclusion, Sabina Rocco sums up her experiences as a young immigrant to Australia. As with Ratko Capkunski, adjustment to Australia was difficult, a difficulty which was largely unnoticed by those who should have been able to help.

SABINA: THE STORY OF A MIGRANT CHILD ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

Bernadette Gigliotti

Introduction

Sabina, Nina as her family calls her, is a twenty year old Italian migrant. She came to Australia five years ago. In that time she mastered the English language quite well, and after passing her Higher School Certificate she gained entry into Melbourne University where she is studying languages. Nina is the middle child of a family of five children. She has two elder brothers Tonino 20, Pasquale 18, and two younger brothers, Massismo 13 and Michele 11, all of whom were studying at various levels in their education. Nina herself was clever academically, and was fluent in both Italian and French. Nina's father Giuseppe Rocco, was an engineer in Italy, her mother Rosa was a housewife. The Rocco family lived in the southern port town of Salerno, owned their own apartment but because the firm where Mr Rocco was working closed down the family found themselves in economic hardship. Mr Rocco decided to migrate to Australia. He had been told by other members of his firm of the excellent conditions in Australia. Economic conditions in Italy were getting worse, and as he wanted his children to continue their studies he decided to start a new life in a country that seemed to hold nothing but hope for a successful future. Nina, a bright intelligent girl of fifteen, didn't want to migrate. Her life and loves were in Italy, but as all migrant children she was under the strict guidance of her parents and had to accept their decision. The letter that follows was written by Nina to her constant penfriend, Carla Puopola. In it we learn of the hardships and indeed the distress of a newly arrived migrant family through the eyes of an adolescent. It's truthful but at times her judgement of people and their attitudes to migrants seem a little harsh. Bearing in mind that this experience presents itself mainly as a hostile uprooting of an established, warm and secure lifestyle, one can recognise or at least sympathize with Sabina's point of view. With this account of Sabina's background in mind, and realising that this letter is translated from Italian to English I invite you to read on

Reproduced with permission from Burns, R (Ed) (1980) Teacher Education in and for a Multicultural Society: Young Teachers Reflect and Act. Centre for Comparative and International Studies in education, La Trobe University.

Dear Carla,

I have just received your letter that you sent last August. Need I say that I was very pleased to hear from a friendly voice. I was most surprised to hear you say that my letters were always filled with reminiscences of home and how I missed being there. Well, that's true and I'm sorry if I always speak of the same things, but that's how I feel every time I sit to write to you. Carla, you ask me to write of my life here in Australia. You ask how I feel, how I've "fitted in" after five years. You ask of my problems and my studies, of the boys here, what they are like, of my family, how mamma, papa and my brothers are adjusting? Well, such questions need to be answered separately, and for my part I hope I answer them as truthfully as I can. My answers may seem impossible or unbelievable but believe them for they are true! Let me go back to when we arrived in Australia for even though it was five years ago I can still remember everything that happened to us, each new experience is as vivid as the day we left Italia. It is like the beginning of a story I must have read somewhere - but we emigrated, we left home. Do you remember how I cried for hours that day? Papa saying - "Smile Nina, no more tears, we leave for the New America, everything will be bigger, better, new. You are young, look at your brothers, they are happy and can only think of the life ahead. Say ciao to Carla and dry your tears". He was trying to comfort me, but I could see, I could feel that his heart was breaking just as mine was. He was leaving his brothers and mamma too. What can I say, the plane took off, there I was wanting to scream, to run back, to stop everything. But I couldn't. We were coming to the New America, mamma said I had to learn, to accept, to believe that what was ahead was better than what was left behind. She was so sure, at least she seemed to be. I could see her praying to God in heaven with her rosary beads in one hand and Michele's small hand in the other. I tried to pray but I couldn't. Not even Don Battisto's years of dedicated religious catechism helped me. I just couldn't pray. Tonino sat next to me. "Think of Australia" he said, "think of the new country, how things will be different. You know, Nina, there's lots of wealth in Australia. Compari Andrew's brother came back from there to visit his mamma and the stories he told of how rich Australia was! There's hope for everyone. Imagine Nina, he talked of migrants owning their own homes, cars and studying if they wanted too. And land Nina, hundreds and millions of acres of land, with lots and lots of sheep and cows and so much wealth, Nina, imagine! Don't be sad, think of the new life and for Papa's sake smile." I turned my face towards Papa, he smiled at me, and I smiled back. But such a false and uncertain smile I have never smiled before, even now that smile of disbelief and confusion manages to find a place in my expressions. Papa knows it, I try to hide it but he always understood how I felt about us migrating. Carla, I was against it from the start, but to please Papa and the whole family I smiled. I even smiled when we landed in Australia, not because I was happy to be here, but more because I had been constantly sick on the plane. You asked, Carla, how I felt about Australia, well I arrived in Australia feeling only nauseous and that feeling stayed with me for many months afterwards!

"New Australians - New Australians - a whole plane load of New Australians". These words were the first English words I heard and not knowing at the time what they meant they have stuck in my memory like cement. "New Australians" is the term the Australians give to migrants in their country - it is a horrible term, I hated it then and I hate it now. We are not New Australians, we are Italians and I'm proud of it!

The interpreters at the airport tried to comfort us. There were about three hundred Italian immigrants on the plane that time, and they sat us down in their airport and tried to explain the procedures of the customs office to us. It was nice to hear a common language spoken to you. The airport, huge, white and filled with men and women dressed in blue uniforms, stern faces, people jabbering away in some other language - English - all I heard was "New Australian, New Australian". It seemed the formalities would never end. How can one explain confusion, chaos and embarrassment? Let me describe one incident that I will never forget. We were held up in customs; all the "New Australians" because one lady had brought with her a piece of cheese. Beautiful Italian formaggio! Even though it was a stupid thing to do I must admit - when the customs man found the cheese this poor woman tried to explain that she was bringing the cheese to her son, he had written a letter telling her how he missed Italian cheese, so she decided that 1/2 a kilo was not much to satisfy her son's longing. Thinking of her son she brought the cheese all the way from Calabria (if it had been me I would have brought two crates full, I miss it so much, che sapone!) You'll never imagine what happened for that 1/2 kilo of cheese, the customs man ruffled his feathers and started abusing her. It was only after I overheard my father speaking with an interpreter about what the customs man said that I found out what happened -

"Don't you know we have CHEESE in Australia, more cheese than you'll ever get in Italy - better too! Hasn't your BAMBINO told you that there's miles and miles of CHEESE here in Australia. Typical New Australians - no place is ever as good as home!"

To my disgust and to the poor signora's horror without explanation she was taken away by some women police I think, and made to undress, where did they think she was hiding more cheese, in her girdle! All her baggage was checked and she had to sign forms to be released. Mamma went with her, she was so distressed and crying she couldn't even unzip her dress. I felt so sorry for her but the sympathy soon went when I noticed the interpreter trying to explain to that beast of a man the reasons why she brought the cheese to Australia. How was she supposed to know they had miles and miles of cheese here! All we ever heard of Australia in Italy, was that it was dry and big and flat and had miles and miles of sheep! Someone should have told him they don't make cheese from sheep! But that interpreter instead of arguing with him was agreeing with him, was bowing and trying to appease him. I can remember being angry and upset at the way he treated the signora - I would have stuffed that role of cheese right in his mouth! - I'm sure papa would have too: "Don't you know how to treat women in this country" he kept saying, but the interpreter held him back. As for the cheese, well to tell you the truth, I think he took it home himself. With this introduction to the great "new America" and the Australian men, I found myself making a firm decision on how I hated this country and would do so forever. I clasped the hand of my father very tightly looking for protection, as we left the airport and drove to our new home in a most peculiar car - HOLDEN KINGSWOOD they call it, apart from anything it's very big! - Compare Gino and Communa Angela were so kind and warm and helpful when they saw us. It's good to have family here in a place where everything is different, confusing and hostile. The place we first lived in wasn't like anything we had ever seen in Italy. Salerno is so modern, the apartments, even the old ones, are so different. Compare Gino and Commara Angela live in a small, long concrete house in a place called Fitzroy. They still live there now. Carla, how can I explain, everything seemed so dark and closed in, Australia wasn't big, there

weren't any sheep only factories and Holden Kingswoods. Compare tried to explain the system here, where he worked, where they lived, what they did, what they lived like. So much to hear, so much to learn. A frightened child could only cling to her parents. But I wasn't a child, I was a young woman and my parents expected me to take a stand and listen, learn and act in the proper fashion befitting the children of Guiseppe Rocco. Like all Italians, my parents' honour and name was to be upheld whether here or in Italy. My crying and wingeing would not help. I had to be grateful for this opportunity to start anew and to show it. Even though this was the belief of my father I could see in the days to follow how he was lost, hurt and humiliated because he just couldn't understand the strange ideas and customs in this "New America". Carla, soon we settled in our new home. Settled is not the right word, "clustered" is better. There were eleven of us - seven in our family, compare, commara and their parents - in a house with only three bedrooms. I slept on a mattress on the floor in the lounge with my two younger brothers. What can I say, it was horrible! The house for all the warmth and friendship of compare and commara was alien to me. It didn't look like home, it didn't smell like home, it wasn't home, it was Australia. the first night in this country I went to sleep crying - I wanted to go home back to my family, my friends, my country, I was not a "New Australian", I was Italian and would always belong in Italy.

Time passed very slowly in this strange place. We became acquainted with the people of the neighbourhood. I expected everyone to be like us, Italians, to have the same customs, ideals, values, but they're not. Australians are different - they even look different. Fair-headed, pale complexions like the Northern Italians - yes - but different,, they're not Italian they're Australian. That's how I felt towards them - so different! I suppose I was influenced by the customs man at the airport (very funny names in Australia, they call their airport Tullamarine, I still can't pronounce it!) But not all Australians are like him, there are those that are kind and hospitable to migrants, trying to help understand you and what you want. Compare seemed to have no trouble with them. Introducing us very proudly to our next-door-neighbours, (that means the people in the house alongside you): "These are my relations from Italia" - he would say. They greeted us with smiles and nodding heads, a Mr and Mrs Booth, an old Australian couple, they were very nice, always spoke to me even though I never understood them. They made me feel more at ease with this new environment. They reminded me of nanna and nonno back home. After a week of introducing us to people and Fitzroy, Compare found work at his assembling factory for Tonino and Pasquale. Papa was too old, they wouldn't employ him. So with his references from his firm in Salerno papa went with the interpreter from the airport and tried to find work in the firms here. The result was always the same - firm after firm. "Can he speak English?" "No" would be the interpreter's answer. "Well, I'm sorry unless he speaks English we can't employ him!".

Papa tried many firms, but although these people were full of sympathy, they didn't want to know him. English was what they wanted, not my Papa's skills as an engineer. Every night for a month the answer was the same. I could see his face begin to mellow. This great new country full of opportunity had shut its doors to a migrant. The "New Australian" didn't know English - and frankly they hadn't the time to teach him! My temper rose and grew harder and firmer, the anger I felt was beginning to grow into hate. What these Australians were doing to my father wasn't fair - we had left Italy because we were promised opportunity but this wasn't opportunity to me, it was humiliation. You see Carla, we were

such a large family my brothers' wages were not enough to support us all. The money we had from Italy had all gone in air-fare and we could see that Compare and Commara were beginning to feel the burden of such a large family. Mamma found that she would be able to find work as a machinist at Commara's factory. At first papa did not want this but Mamma was firm, she was to help support her family as she had done in Italy - first as a house-wife. Now in Australia she would work as a machinist in a clothing factory. After a month in Australia she began work. She doesn't speak much of it now that she's finish, but I remember those times when she came home after working a ten hour shift, how she was even too tired to eat her dinner. Papa went each day to find work but for many weeks he came home with the same answer. His lack of English hindered him from finding work. Papa had resigned himself to factory work, but Tonino and Pasquale insisted that with his qualifications he should be able to find work that was of a higher standard. It broke his heart to see mamma work the way she did. We soon found that education was to be the main traumatic experience that we were to have in this "New America". Carla how I wished that things would be the same as in Italy, how I wished that I didn't have to face a whole new life as well as schooling. Massimo and Michele were thrilled at the idea of a new school. You ask how I coped with this new schooling. I didn't cope Carla, I managed to survive. I don't want to seem as if everyone was against me and nobody cared about the way I felt, or the way my family felt, but the fact is to me at the time I could only understand those things that seemed hostile to me and to my family. Anyway, I managed to drag myself to the new school, it was close to home, called Fitzroy High School. As I have explained to you in other letters the system, how we attended school from 9.00 in the morning to 3.30 in the afternoon, let me now describe to you what the first day at this school was like.

I remember it as clearly as if it were yesterday. Papa, Massimo, Michele and I were brought into the office of the principal just as school began. All the students were in one uniform like soldiers, running, yelling, laughing (it seemed at us), we were sitting there with our eyes popping out of our heads. My brothers were talking to themselves comforting each other and commenting on the uniforms. I shuddered at the thought of having to wear these horrible grey tunics and thought only of standing behind my father. We seemed to wait forever, soon the bell rang for what I thought was the start of school and the hall-way was emptied (I thought of home, of our school and of the happy times I spent there with you) - I could feel the tears begin to swell in my eyes and just as I was about to tell papa I wanted to go home, the principal came into the office. A lovely young lady was there and she introduced herself as Signorina Rigoni. She was the language teacher. Miss Rigoni was an Italian herself (she was born in Australia but her parents were migrants): as she spoke to the principal and my father she seemed quite relaxed and she understood and was more than just sympathetic, towards our situation. She promised to take personal care of my brothers and I, and also suggested that my father attend the English classes she ran at night, there at the school. She spoke to me in a gentle voice and understood the tensions I was feeling, the loneliness, the hurt and the fear that I had swelling up in my eyes. With a re-assuring touch of the hand she asked me what I had learnt at school in Italy, what I had seen in Australia, what I know of the life here. Oh Carla, I swear that if it hadn't been for this teacher, I would have run away on the first plane back to Italy. She spoke to my brothers each in turn, they felt more comfortable and after they had her confidence she was bombarded with their questions on the school and what they were going to learn. Massimo

was always friendly and easy going, he was very adult for his age (as you know most Italian boys are) and soon became acquainted and adjusted to the system. Michele was sent to the elementary school, for although he had finished this schooling in Italy they said he was too young for the High School. I can't help but think that separating him from Massimo caused a lot of emotional problems for him. He seemed to depend on Massimo for all his support, unfortunately at the new school he experienced too many fits of depression and fell behind in his studies badly. Papa caught onto this quickly but the teachers would not listen to him or maybe they thought he would soon be over them and refused to allow him to attend the same school as Massimo. That same day Miss Rigoni showed Massimo and I around the school. It was large like the one in Salerno, but the class-rooms were different, and the students were all different. Many Italians, Greeks and Lebanese children, even Asian students, but mostly Australians. Miss Rigoni brought us into the special English classroom and told us we were to have three months of intensive English with the special English teacher. I had thought she was to be our teacher, but she was only our interpreter and was the only teacher in the school that spoke Italian. I was dumb-founded to find out that my teacher couldn't speak a word of Italian. How were we to communicate! Well Carla if the purpose of this letter is to tell you how I felt, how I reacted and what I thought then I must say that what happened to me on that first day at that school has shaped my whole way of thinking about this country. Miss Rigoni left Massimo and I in this little room with small tables and a few chairs sitting waiting for the teacher. Massimo was speaking but I didn't hear him, I could only think of how was I to speak to this teacher. About ten minutes later in came a group of six students and a teacher. I say 'a' teacher because I couldn't make out whether it was male or female. I don't believe in what some people say that first impressions mean nothing. To me that day they meant everything, and to migrants, to "new Australians" they mean whether or not you are accepted in this new country and can find a place, a home here. Let me continue, the teacher came in speaking to the other students. They sat down at the table with us. I noticed that one or two were Europeans but the rest were Australian. I looked at the teacher, she was so different from what I was used to at home. She had short, short hair like a man, was about forty and was wearing men's clothes. Heavy boots, thick jeans, and I hate to say it but she didn't look like a teacher. I'm sure my father would have objected, he had very strict ideas and values about the way professional people should dress and act. I listened to every word she spoke trying to pick up words, sounds, gestures that were familiar to me, but the only thing I understood was Sabina Rocco, Massimo Rocco, and then I think she translated Massimo's name to the English, they call him "Max" now. Mrs Strappe was a bold, loud and very manly woman; even though she taught us English she didn't understand me or my brother. Max got on with her very well, she seemed to associate with the boys better. But she never understood me or my reasons for not speaking in classes. As I became familiar with the language I began to understand what she was saying to me. "Everybody", she would come in and say - "Sabina if you ever have any personal problems come to me and we can talk". How could I go to her, a woman I couldn't even associate with, how could I go to her and say I hate school, I hate English, I hate Australia - look at what this country has done to my family - how could she understand the problems of a migrant, she's an Australian. I cried for many weeks after beginning school. I had no other people to talk to except my brother and my progress was not improving. I think Mrs Strappe saw I wouldn't talk to her and she asked Miss Rigoni, the other teacher, to speak to me - I was so relieved, Carla, I poured everything out to her - how I didn't feel welcome in this

country, how my family was suffering, my father not working, my mother never home when I came home from school, my elder brothers having to work in factories to help the family when they could have been studying. And Michele grown into such an out-cast in such a short time. I cried and cried, she listened and understood. She spoke of the troubles of her family and how she too felt lost and rejected. She told me that this was the life of migrants, that her parents understood it, she understood it, that my parents understood it and that I too must understand it. Life in a foreign country without the knowledge of that foreign country's language is extremely difficult. It's as if you're walking from what you know as heaven into hell. She told me that my father was progressing very well in English and that soon he could apply for a job with confidence in English, and that I must do the same to help him and all my family: that I must also learn English and assist them in adjusting by showing them that I could. She understood my fears, my anxieties and my incredible sense of disbelonging and loneliness. She spoke with my English teacher and I think she told her how I resented being placed in with students younger than me and who were not migrants. I felt lost and to tell you the truth, I felt I was being treated as if I were dumb. Massimo confided in me one day and said he felt the same way. We were shifted after a month, separated and placed into groups with students of our own ages and backgrounds. Although now five years later - I can see the necessity for me to mix and understand the culture and ways of my Australian friends in my new home. At that time it was more important for me to be with students my own age - especially Italian girls. These girls I soon found out were not migrants but the children of migrants and some were from our part of Italy, near Salerno. They helped me tremendously in those first years, understanding customs, ideas and practices. Like sport, Carla, here they don't have soccer they have football, it's a very important sport and incredibly popular! The people each week during winter, rain, sun, snow go and watch this game. The whole language and culture just associated with this sport is a story in itself and I will write and explain it to you another time. I've been with two of my friends, Rita and Gina and their families, but I don't like this sport, it's hard to understand and the atmosphere is a little too rough for me. Massimo loves it and he Pasquale and Michele go each season. Papa soon mastered English, he always was very intelligent and found a well paid job with a firm in Brunswick after a year of searching.

I can't help but think he got the job because the manager of this particular firm was also a migrant - from Greece. He had been here many years and understood the hardships of a newly arrived family. Those first few years were hard Carla, a new country, home, people, language, but we learnt how to survive and slowly found that Australia was a land of promise, you just had to find the right people who know all the answers to make life a little easier, like Miss Rigoni. Even though we cling mainly to our Italian lifestyle, friends and customs, we have made a great number of Australian friends. We've moved from Fitzroy to a house in Brunswick. Again it is different, I'll send you a photo in my next letter. Here they call it a three - fronted brick-veneer, it's very nice, large and roomy and I now have my own room! It's quiet and nice here, much cleaner than Compara's house in Fitzroy. There are still a lot of migrants in this area of Melbourne and we find the life here more like home. I will not lie that I still miss home, papa wants us to become naturalized Australians so we will be "accepted" more as he says in the Australian community. Pasquale, Massimo, Michele and Mamma agree, but Tonino and I disagree strongly. We still feel very strong ties with Italy and want to wait a few more years to establish ourselves more in our new country.

I soon will be finished my second year at university: it was hard and tough but Papa insisted that I continue school and I did want to continue my studies in languages at tertiary level. Tonino and Pasquale haven't continued their schooling, but they also attended night school and have a good command of English. Thank heaven they left those horrible dirty factories and now work in banks as interpreters. Massimo and Michele are still at school, but I'm afraid are causing much worry for my parents. At school they are gaining a reputation - especially Massimo - as bad New Australian boys! The schools lack the discipline Papa shows at home and it's affecting both my brothers emotionally. They are striving to find an identity, Carla, to establish themselves as Australians. But they are sacrificing their Italian heritage. Unfortunately what has happened is that they belong to neither culture and although Massimo is coping with his loud and boisterous nature, Michele has suffered terribly in his brother's shadow. I try to tutor him myself as we did in Italy but I don't seem to be getting anywhere. He sees me as all that he understands the proper Italian migrant to be, still Italian but striving to understand the new world. Michele is falling into that fate of many migrant children, where to be accepted they must as the Australians say "assimilate", losing all their original culture for a bad substitution of a new culture. Even his Italian is suffering because of it. He knows neither English nor Italian very well. Carla, I plan to come home to Salerno after I graduate for a year. Papa promised me the trip as a present. I'm coming home only to strengthen my ideas on the problems that migrants face. I'll return to my new home, Carla, to Australia, with this aim to practically assist migrants in Australia when they come here. Not only Italian migrants but Greek, Lebanese, Spanish and many Asian migrants. What I've learnt here Carla is not only that communication is the basis of successful migration, but that attitudes must change. The attitudes of Australians to accept and help migrants not to "assimilate", but "appreciate" Australia and its cultures. And the attitude of migrants that Australia is not a heaven without work, but a place where each man's dignity can be upheld by helping him to understand the country he had chosen to migrate to. The life of an immigrant is hard, but the pain can be eased by other migrants working with Australians in an effort to explain and aid migrants in adjusting to the new country, climate and language. If nothing else Carla, I intend to stamp out that term "New Australian", I hate it and many migrants also hate the term and the meaning attached to it! I hope this letter has answered some of your questions, write and tell me of your impressions of Australia and anything else you want to know, I send my love to your family, I leave you for now, write soon,

Sabina Rocco.

1065X

The response of Australians to immigration is a very relevant component of multicultural education. Without the approval, or at least acceptance, by the Anglo-Australian majority and the earlier immigrant minority groups, it is unlikely that immigration could continue or multiculturalism could be supported. Taft outlines changes in attitudes over the centuries, and indicates how Australians are becoming more accepting of ethnic diversity. This trend will most likely be supported by the focus on multiculturalism over the past fifteen years.

AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRANTS

R Taft

In a paper delivered in 1974 (Wolfgang 1975) Jean Burnet, Chairman of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee on Multiculturalism, defined multiculturalism as voluntary marginal differentiation among people who are equal participants in the society - with accent on the voluntary and equal participants. (Page 212) Dr Burnet pointed out that a miscarriage of this policy can give rise to hostility on the one hand and extravagant hopes on the other.

It is the possible hostility that I wish to examine today. Most of the talk about multiculturalism concentrates on the immigrant part, but today I want to look at the other part - the Australian in a multicultural society.

For the present purpose, I shall use the term 'Australian' as a shorthand term for referring to the established, non-aboriginal residents of Australian communities, as opposed to 'immigrants'. This usage, like virtually all of the terminology in the field of immigrant-Australian relations, is open to ambiguous interpretation; it is not at all clear what the criteria are for deciding when an 'immigrant' becomes an 'Australian', let alone for deciding when an 'immigrant' becomes an 'ethnic' - if ever. Answers to these questions must be given before we can properly talk about a multicultural or polyethnic Australia, but for the purposes of my paper, it is sufficient to rely on commonsense distinctions between Australians and immigrants. Roughly speaking, immigrants are distinguished through their connection with some foreign country, usually the place of their birth, and Australians by being born in Australia or by having lived here during their childhood.

For most of its history, Australians have had close contact with the life of immigrants, either because they themselves were born elsewhere or because one of their parents had been. It was the 20-year period, 1927 to 1947, that was unique in Australian history for its relative lack of immigration, rather than the rest of the time between 1788 and the present day during which immigration has been high, apart from short gaps. Perhaps the hiatus between 1927 and 1947 was the cause of an exaggerated innocence in the present 40-60 age group, who grew up during that period. It is this generation that has forgotten that assisted immigration has been a common practice in the past whenever the development of the country required particular types of people who were not freely available.

Twenty years ago I was invited to contribute a chapter to a book in which my allotted task was to assess the impact that migrants had had on the Australian way of life. (Taft 1962) This was difficult, since a strict interpretation of the subject would have dealt mainly with the changes in the situation of the Aboriginal communities and their culture as a result of the arrival of the Europeans, but this is not what was intended by the editor. My general conclusion was that 'The influence of immigrants on the Australian way of life and national character is a comparatively slow and limited one, as organised societies can absorb large influxes of population without changing greatly' (in Coleman, page 206). The main effect on Australia of large scale immigration has been to make us more aware of the cultural diversity of the human family. Imagine the impact on the established residents in the middle of the 19th century of the arrival of types of people who were strange in their eyes: Irish peasants, Californian gold-diggers, Chinese coolies and 'Indian' camel drivers or of the arrival of orthodox Jews from Eastern Europe, Lebanese and Greek merchants or German farmers in the latter part of the 19th century and first part of the 20th, just to choose a few of the many possible examples.

It would probably be a surprise to most of us to learn that there was a not inconsiderable well of suspicion and even antagonism towards the substantial numbers of Americans who flocked to Australia in the 1850's. There was some basis for this resentment in that the Californians had previously objected to the behaviour of Australian gold-diggers in their country, and in 1850 postal workers in California had actually refused to handle mail destined for Sydney because of their antagonism to ruffians from Australia. The Americans in Australia were viewed, in reciprocation, as lynchers and 'gentlemen of the Bowie knife and the revolver' (Potts & Potts 1974). There were also 'cultural' objections to the Americans' habits of drinking cocktails and putting ice into their drinks. On the other hand, the same Americans were respected for the high level of technology that they brought to the primitive industry of the day.

Many of us can remember the mild shock effect on residents of Melbourne and Sydney of the arrival of substantial numbers of refugees from Germany and Australia in the late 30's. Their inevitable briefcases and their raincoats that were fully four inches longer than the customary Australian length were really quite a challenge to the comfortable, but very rigid conventions that prevailed at the time. There were also often hostile reactions if these new arrivals were overheard speaking a foreign language to each other in public places.

If we recall those attitudes of only 40 years ago, can we doubt that there has been a dramatic breakthrough in tolerance in Australia for which the continuing arrival of diverse types of immigrants can take much of the credit. As group after group of immigrants have arrived since World War II, the degree of deviance from expected styles of appearance and behaviour that could be tolerated has pushed out wider and wider. We would no longer look with surprise at a youngish woman dressed in dark clothes with her face half covered with a shawl, or at her male counterpart walking two paces in front of her and sporting a Turkish style mustache and jacket shape. (They are probably Australian students anyway!) We would no longer as a nation think it strange - or even rude - that people speak in a foreign tongue in public places, and the smell of garlic on a breath after lunch may arouse envy in some of us rather

than disapproval. Cultural styles that once hit Australian minds, even the most tolerant of them as alien now have become a familiar part of the Australian way of life, if not of our own personal one.

Threats to food, jobs, wives, land, gold, housing, markets and schooling have all played their part. On some occasions these resources were essential to life satisfaction and it is understandable that the residents were resentful of anyone who might threaten them. Restlessness regarding some of these issues, jobs in particular, is, of course, starting to stir in Australia now and must influence attitudes towards immigrants. It seems doubtful that increased contact with the newcomers would reduce this cause of resentment of immigrants as a class, although it might improve the acceptability of individual immigrants. Thus, many of the ethnic groups in Australia adopt a low profile to be on the safe side. These groups may be thought of as 'the silent majority' of the immigrants.

I would like now to look in more detail at the attitudes of Australians towards immigration and immigrants. In the last 35 years we have had survey data to help us assess this but we must rely on archival material, such as newspapers and public documents, to provide information on attitudes before that. Unfortunately, very little has been done by historians to collate such material, except as it applies to the striking case of the Chinese and other non-European immigrants of the 19th century. There still is an important work to be written on the history of Australian attitudes towards immigrants of various background and nationalities. We do not really know what the reactions were, for example, to the colonies of Italian Swiss in the Bendigo district of Victoria, Italians in Queensland and New South Wales and Germans in South Australia and Victoria in the 19th century. We do know that opposition became outspoken against the Germans in the years before and during World War I when they were accused of being an alien and traitorous element, and many of them were interned without clear justification. The antagonistic attitudes to the Chinese were more endemic and they were associated with hostile actions, discriminatory legislation and exclusion from the country. Quotations from the press range from 'hordes of idolatist barbarians, destitute of religion and morality' (The Empire, 1861) to 'filthy scouring of the putrid East' (The Bulletin, 1899). While the unbridled hostility of these remarks is perhaps too crude for today's media, one wonders whether circumstances could ever lead to a rise in such abuse against the substantial communities of orientals, many of them Chinese ethnics, that are arriving currently.

One clear-cut case of hostility to an immigrant group in the 19th century was the attitude of the established settlers to the Irish. What must surely rate as the first 'opinion poll' on attitudes to immigrants in Australia was conducted in 1842 by Mr John Patterson the 'Victorian' Immigration Agent, when he sent a questionnaire to prominent citizens asking them for their opinions about immigrants present and future. A typical reply came from Dr Alexander Thomason (Public Records Office of Victoria, series 19, 42/1956) 'Great numbers of immigrants of 1841 from the south of Ireland were of little value to the colony and scarcely worth their food and very many of them being far below our own Aborigines in intelligence and moral character.' There is still a story to be told about the Irish-British conflict that split Australian society for over 100 years and then miraculously subsided in the early 1960's.

The three-volume work on racism in Australia, edited by Stevens (1971), has much to say about prejudice against Orientals and Pacific islanders in Australia, a little about prejudice against Germans and Jews, but nothing about anti-Irish feeling. Obviously the picture that I have painted here is far too rosy, and the limits of cultural tolerance are still only too readily manifest, but I offer the striking nature of the changes in such a short period as an excuse for my hyperbole. At last this reminder of the intolerance of the 30's, when the dominant outlook concerning the integration of immigrants was unequivocally assimilationist, and impatient with deviation, may help to put the present attitudes into a more accurate perspective.

What has been the effect of extensive contact with immigrants? An initial contact with people who are different or who are perceived as dangerous can cause increased reserve and even hostility, e.g. straight xenophobia. But with increased contact, there may develop a mutual understanding, and adjustments of behaviour towards each other that tend to defuse somewhat the suspicion and resentment. The history of relations between the residents and the newcomers in Australia so far has been that, over time, the newcomers have become more like the majority of Australians in their ways, i.e. become partially acculturated, if not fully assimilated, and the established residents have gradually become more accustomed to and tolerant of foreign ways. As I have pointed out above, every experience of becoming familiar with and accepting a group who are culturally divergent from one's own culture helps to widen the range of tolerance for the next experience. The long period of relatively happy relations between a heterogeneous group of people in Australia over the past 30 years must have helped to increased general tolerance in Australia.

However, the need to come to terms with the unfamiliar is not the only factor by any means that mediates the effect of increased contact on attitudes. There is a substantial psychological literature on the effect on national and racial prejudice of contact between members of the groups (Amir 1969). Increased contact can improve or deteriorate the attitude depending on the circumstances. The effect is positive when the contact is non-threatening or even rewarding, or when it is supportive of the self-respect of the parties, or when it manifests a commonality of interest between them. It is negative when the increased contact reinforces negative images and when there is a threat of competition for resources. Amir's analysis quotes studies that make it clear that working together for common goals is the most constructive form of personal contact for improving mutual attitudes. But this would apply only if all parties have respect for the contribution that each can make, and if the manner in which the parties carry out their roles is mutually consonant. However, for increased contact to be constructive for attitudes, it is not necessary for all goals to be common, only that some of them are, especially if the goals are important ones for the people concerned.

The impact of various immigrant groups on the resident population of Australia over our history has illustrated some of the above factors in operation, especially the part played by mutuality of aims, and the negative influence of conflict in the achievement of those aims. When the immigrants have been wanted for the development of the country, they have usually been welcomed and praised for their fine characteristics.

The history of attitudes towards immigrants in Australia provides plenty of examples where increased contact has led to friction when there was competition for scarce resources between the established settlers and the newcomers.

The Irish community was probably the first separate ethnic group in a polyethnic Australia, unless it was the Scots. Both of these distinguishable groups predated the German, Chinese and Jewish communities, and set up a pattern of cultural and structural pluralism which applies today in one form or another to current groups. I refer to the preservation of national customs and celebration of national events, e.g. St Patrick's Day, the establishment of formal organisations, such as clubs, schools and religious institutions. Also, with the exception of the Scots, each of these groups has been subject to prejudice and discrimination at some time or other.

Let us now turn to some results of relevant opinion surveys, mainly those conducted by the Australian Public Opinion Polls (Roy Morgan) and Irving Saulwick & Associates. There are three dimensions functioning in the attitudes towards immigrants: one is the attitude towards immigration itself; another towards particular immigrant groups, either in terms of their nationality or their occupational category and the third, attitudes towards the integration into Australia. When the prevailing attitudes are favourable to immigration in general, the attitudes towards particular groups tend to improve also, and the opposite is the case when they are unfavourable.

In 1948 a survey using modern sampling and interviewing techniques was conducted on the adult population of Melbourne by the University of Melbourne Department of Psychology (Oeser & Hammond 1954) at a time when Australians were beginning to realise that they were under growing pressure from outside to populate the continent and to open the doors more widely to immigrant from Europe. These included refugees, mainly British and Dutch, whose roots had been unsettled by the psychosocial disruption of the War. Thus, a community of interest between the immigrant and the Australians was established with respect to their immigration; the immigrants wanted to come and the Australians needed their services. In the 1948 survey, 93 per cent of the Melbourne population agreed that Australia needed immigrants and, almost without exception, these favoured the free¹ immigration of Englishmen. Free immigration of Irish was favoured by 65 per cent, other groups were less popular: Italians 21 per cent; Chinese 32 per cent and American Negroes 10 per cent. (Table 1)

Since that time, opinions about Australia's need for immigrants waxed and waned according to the position of the economy and changed attitudes towards particular groups. During the 1960's the majority of Australians appeared to support an increase rather than a decrease in the number of immigrants (Gallup Polls, 1961, 1964, Perth Surveys 1960 and 1966, Richardson-Taft, 1968), but by 1971 the position had changed. In The Age poll of 12 July 1971 only 11 per cent favoured an increase in the number of immigrants and 53 per cent a decrease. The major reason given was lack of housing, and employment problems. Even a small majority of the non-British immigrants who were asked opposed rather than favoured an increase. A poll on the same subject held in June 1977 (Gallop Poll, The Herald, 19 June 1977) gave very similar results (6 per cent in favour 51

1 'Free' means endorsing either 'allow them to come' or 'pay to get them to come'.

per cent opposed), but this time the question referred specifically to 'non-British' migrants. In fact, the quota of immigrants has been fluctuating quite markedly from year to year since the big immigration began in 1947, but the actual figures have borne little relationship to the opinions of the public. They were probably far more determined by Government assessments of the needs of Australia and also on opportunities and pressures from outside of Australia, such as the needs of Lebanese refugees in 1977.

With the present rising rate of unemployment in Australia, we seem to be moving into another one of those anti-immigrant cycles. It is not difficult to understand the motives of Labor people who oppose the continued admission of immigrants on the grounds that the present depressed state of the employment market does not warrant it. There is plenty of precedent in Australia's history for that outlook. It is more difficult to applaud the wisdom of outspoken statements by immigrants themselves against further immigration. While their motives probably represent genuine concern for the welfare of the Australian working class and their fellow immigrants, their statements are supplying weapons to Australian bigots who regard the immigrants of the recent past as dangerous as any possible future immigrants. The immigrant spokesmen who wish to restrict immigration are not typical of immigrants as a whole who still strongly favour some immigration, especially of skilled workers, although at a reduced rate (The Age, 9 November 1977).

There has been a big change in Australian attitudes towards the immigration of people of particular nationalities. Even as late as 1947, there was still an assumption that our immigrants would be almost entirely British with few exceptions. At that time, only a few people (21 per cent) indicated that they favoured Australia allowing in even 12,000 displaced persons per year. In fact, 20,000 arrived in 1948-49.) For the next 30 years after that, we were in phase two in which the arbitrary figure of 50 per cent was taken as the minimum target for British immigrants, although it was seldom actually reached until the 1960's. Even a progressive thinker of Dr Evatt's standing was publicly advocating a target of 60 per cent in 1958 in order to preserve the British composition in the Australian population (Jupp 1966: 16-7).

Suddenly, without any proclamation, this policy seems largely to have disappeared, and we have entered phase three. In the past few years, new settlers from Great Britain have fallen to less than a third of the total, and few voices are heard any more on the subject. In the 9 November 1977 The Age poll, the preference for British over other northern Europeans had completely disappeared in the younger and better educated respondents.

The changed attitudes towards different nationalities can be easily illustrated by the views expressed in opinion polls: in 1948 there was 70 per cent difference in the numbers who supported the admission of English immigrants and those supporting Italian; in 1964 the difference was only 45 per cent and in 1971, 31 per cent. (Table 1.) The change in the relative attitude towards the admission of Negroes is even more noticeable. In 1948, 77 per cent would not allow any Negroes at all to immigrate, whereas in 1964 the figure was 47 per cent and in 1971, 34 per cent. This surely is a good indication that the most extreme form of the white Australian exclusiveness policy is over, though one could not, by any means, claim that prejudices play no part today on the issuing of

visas. In The Age Poll in Sydney and Melbourne in 1972 (The Age, 1 August 1972) 75 per cent of the respondents agreed, at least partly, that coloured migrants are as acceptable as any other migrants.

It is of interest to note the age differences in the attitudes towards the various national groups. The younger people are far more sympathetic to Negroes and other non-Europeans than are older people, but they are far less sympathetic to Italians and Greeks (The Age, 19 July 1971). In 1977 (The Age, 9 November) 11 per cent of the respondents under the age of 25 chose Asian immigrants as their first preference as immigrants compared with only five per cent for southern Europeans. The trends may point to an ultimate convergence of attitudes in Australia towards British, other Europeans and non-Europeans, to a point at which all are treated as equal, which would be a remarkable change from the past. An interesting question is what is causing the changes? Is it due to more contact with non-Europeans? Possibly. Is it due to the different images of non-Europeans, and especially of American Negroes, that is being purveyed by the media and largely emanating from overseas? Perhaps. Is it due to the gigantic increase in travel? Probably. Is it due to the Australian education system? I should like to think so.

This leads on to my concluding consideration. Given the history of attitudes in Australia to various immigrant groups, would a policy of cultural pluralism lead to more favourable attitudes by Australians towards other groups - or less? Judging by the results of opinion polls, I think less. It is clear that only a small minority of Australians favour increased segregation of immigrants in their own national groups. In the poll published in The Herald, 19 June 1977, only three per cent of the adults interviewed favoured segregation and 90 per cent of the respondents believed that the immigrants 'should be encouraged to mix more with English-speaking Australians'. Just what the Australian public means by this is not too clear. What sort of encouragement do they have in mind? Do they see themselves as having any obligation to do the encouraging; it is merely a pious platitude or is this opinion just an excuse for prejudice? I don't know. Many more questions, and actual tests of behaviour, would be needed to be able to determine just how receptive most Australians are to gestures of friendship from immigrants and how willing they are to extend their own hand. In general, the prevailing views on integration are pretty unrealistic but, nevertheless, these harsh views do prevail.

In 1972, residents of Melbourne and Sydney were asked straight out 'Do you agree that migrants should try to forget their old national customs as quickly as possible.' (The Age, 4 August 1972, Table 2). Thirty-six per cent of Australian-born respondents agreed strongly with this proposition, while only 21 per cent disagreed strongly. The corresponding figures for non-British immigrants were 33 per cent and 32 per cent respectively, i.e. even about a half of this group were less than enthusiastic about the maintenance of immigrant cultures, presumably with the exception of their own.

The most telling survey of all, that of Irving Saulwick & Associates, published in The Age on 9 November 1977, makes it clear that most Australians favour the proposition that migrants 'should be encouraged to fit into the community as soon as possible'. Fifty-four per cent of Australian-born people favoured this, compared with 46 per cent of all immigrants. (Table 2) One of the two alternative choices was 'migrants should be assisted by Government funds to maintain their own culture.'

This was chosen by 29 per cent of the Australian born and 37 per cent of the immigrants. (Breakdown by courtesy of Irving Saulwick.) The other choice was 'Migrants should be left to fit in at their own pace'.

Considering everything, there is a greater acceptance of government assistance for pluralism than there used to be, especially by young, well-educated Australians, but the assimilation model for the integration of immigrants is still a strong one, and is even favoured by many immigrants themselves. This does not necessarily mean that all aspects of multiculturalism are rejected by the public at large. Many of them are acceptable. There is definite support for parents teaching their children their own language (Buchanan's study of house-wives in Melbourne in 1971 (Buchanan 1976) but not for establishing special classes in government schools in order to do so (The Herald, 19 June 1977). Associations for the promotion of the literature and high culture of particular nations, such as the Dante Alighieri Society, would surely be widely approved by those who care about them. Almost certainly the holding of ethnic folk festivals is acceptable to Australians, and perhaps also the establishment of self-help welfare societies by ethnic communities. On the other hand, the evidence of public opinion suggests that it is only the apathy and passivity of the public that has left largely unchallenged such pluralistic structures as ethnic social and sporting clubs, ethnic schools, national patriotic organisations and ethnic radio. Fortunately, Australian leaders in the main support these, but the majority of the public are not really sympathetic. The leaders can help to broaden and even change public opinion, but they cannot completely ignore it in a democratic society.

To sum up, while there has developed in Australia a certain degree of acceptance of diversity and tolerance of unconventional styles, there are still distinct limitations to this, especially when it raises questions of separation. Clearly, the vast majority of the population would like to see more mixing. There is a belief, which as we have seen is fairly well founded, that mixing together promotes better relations, excepting where there is inferiority or rivalry or where there is inability to communicate. Participation by immigrants in general community voluntary organisations and social institutions will help those relations and both Australians and immigrants have an obligation to help this come about. I refer, for example, to such things as school committees, trade union meetings, religious and welfare organisations, political parties, sporting bodies etc. But there are three most important qualifications that I should like to make. Firstly, the demand for more participation must be matched by a positive attempt by the established leaders in these organisations to encourage and promote participation by immigrants, using all reasonable methods, including the use of relevant migrant languages.

Secondly, greater participation can come about only if the immigrants are respected for what they are and not treated as an inferior class of being. This requirement places a responsibility on the Australian opinion climate, in which the education system and the media play vital roles. The Community Relations Commission also has its part to play in this². It is still an open question, however, whether we are fully ready yet to exercise sufficient tolerance for this condition to be satisfied with respect to all types of immigrants.

The third qualification is that a drive for participation by immigrants should not occur at the expense of asking them to give up completely their ethnic identity or their own community structures and their cultural and personal support systems. These are needed by immigrants to help them maintain their social identity and self respect. A demand for premature integration is neither humane nor practical. The ethnic institutions should be accepted as part of the life of Australia - but, at the same time, the immigrants should try to spread themselves into activities that at least match the civic and community involvement of other Australians of the same occupational and educational levels.

- 2 Very pertinent comments and suggestions on the reduction of prejudice are contained in the final report of the Committee on Community Relations, September 1975, pp. 53-61.

I predict that in the long run, the integration of the present immigrant ethnic peoples in Australia will proceed in the same way as it has gone with the Irish and the Germans in the past, and perhaps it will happen at a faster pace. But it is a gradual process, and there can be tensions on the way unless we watch our step. It is within this context that community leaders must provide a visionary approach that takes into account the welfare of all of the citizens of our heterogeneous country; this approach will need to consider the needs of as many people as possible, whether they are ethnic or otherwise. It is my personal opinion that some degree of ethnic pluralism is good for Australia and should be encouraged, but I would not demand that immigrants and their children have a duty to sacrifice themselves by ringing the separatist bell excessively loudly. The question of how much and what type of pluralism is appropriate still needs to be spelt out in more concrete detail by its advocates, with consideration of the possible effects on the immigrants and on Australian society of the various alternatives.

In conclusion, I will quote from a statement by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the Hon. Michael Mackellar, on 19 May 1977: 'We have enjoyed in Australia and can continue to enjoy, the best of both worlds. It is, therefore, somewhat disturbing to see, from time to time, suggestions that the maintenance of the separate cultural identity of our various ethnic groups necessarily is dependent on the establishment of tight and exclusive ethnic institutions . . . There is a real danger that if Australian society is divided into small, tightly knit, exclusive units, resentment will arise from misunderstanding and indeed from real or perceived mutual discrimination. Such a development would deny the equality of opportunity that we believe to be a most precious part of our life today. It would lock particular ethnic groups which are comparatively disadvantaged into permanent deprivation'.

Like Mr Mackellar, I would like to see us continuing to enjoy the best of both worlds, a multicultural but an integrated society. I applaud heterogeneity, the many within the one, but, unlike some of the current spokesmen on Australian society, I cannot accept that conflict and possible confrontation between sections of the community is to the long-term benefit of anyone.

Table 1: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE IMMIGRATION OF SELECTED NATIONALITIES IN AUSTRALIAN SURVEYS

	Melbourne 1948 (Oeser-Hammond)		Australia 1964 ASRP-Huck		Melbourne/Sydney 1971 Saulwick - The Age	
	Free immigration (<i>'Allow them to come', 'Try to get them to come'</i>)	Exclude	Free immigration	Exclude	Free immigration	Exclude
English	91	2	91	3	79	3
Irish	65	16	83	4	-	-
Italian	21	46	46	23	48	11
Chinese	32	24	17	33	36	19
Negroes	10	77	17	47	32	34

All figures are percentages

Table 2: ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS

Saulwick - The Age (4 August 1972)

Do you agree that migrants should try to forget their old national customs as quickly as possible?

	Total per cent	Australian/New Zealand born	Non-British immigrants
Agree strongly	36	36	33
Agree	20	20	21
Disagree	22	23	14
Disagree strongly	23	21	32

Saulwick - The Age (9 November 1972)

'Migrants should be encouraged to fit into the community as soon as possible' 'Migrants should be assisted by govt. funds to maintain their own culture'

Total (per cent)	54	31
Australian/New Zealand born	56	29
United Kingdom	48	34
Southern European	39	45
All immigrants	46	37

Amir, R. (1969), 'Contact hypotheses in ethnic relations', Psychological Bulletin, 71, 319-342.

Buchanan, M.E. (1976), Attitudes Towards Immigrants in Australia, Research Report No. 3, AGPS, Canberra.

Jupp, J. (1966), Arrivals and Departures, Cheshire-Landsdowne, Melbourne, pp. 116-7.

Oeser O.A. & Hammond, S.B. (eds) (1954), Social Structure & Personality in a City. Routledge Kegan Paul, London.

Potts E.D. and Potts A. (1974), Young American and Australian Gold, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane.

Stevens, F.S. (ed.) (1971), Racism: The Australian Experience, vol. 1, 'Prejudice and Xenophobia', Australian & NZ Book Co., Artarmon.

Taft, R. (1962), 'The Myth and the Migrant' in P. Coleman (ed.), Australian Civilisation, Cheshire, Melbourne.

Wolfgang (ed.) (1975), Education of Immigrant Students: Issues and Answers. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto.

COGNITION AND TESTING

A common theme in intercultural contact has been the belief by the dominant group that they are intellectually superior to other groups. This has certainly been a widely held belief by Europeans in relation to hunter-gatherer communities throughout the world, and Australian Aborigines have been subjected to the same accusation. Initially, psychological research supported this, but more recent linguistic, anthropological and psychological studies have shown it to be a false view. The basis for the belief has been the use of tests which favour European culture. Judith Kearings has recently been engaged in tests which attempt to remove this cultural bias. The following article is a report of some of her search. Kearins considers that schools should cater more effectively for the different cognitive abilities of Aboriginal children.

A QUOTIENT OF AWARENESS

J Kearins

Since the development of psychological assessments of 'intelligence' at about the beginning of this century, many groups of people have been tested. By and large, most have performed at lower levels than people of north-western European origin or ancestry, who belong to the culture within which the tests were devised.

Among the poor performers, with average IQ's of 80 to 92, have been people from further east (Greeks, Yugoslavs, Iranians, Iraqis, Turks, Indians), tested in their homelands, mostly in large numbers and by compatriots, on 'standard' non-verbal or translated tests.

These relatively poor performances demonstrate the extent of cultural learning of a particular type involved in most cognitive tests. Presumably, north-western European cultural learning is required for good performances on tests coming from this cultural background, so that children from different backgrounds, even those from other areas of Europe, are likely to be disadvantaged.

Children from more widely different backgrounds, such as those from hunting and gathering groups, can be expected to be disadvantaged even further.

Nevertheless, hunting and gathering people have been tested on Western-type tests, and poor performances interpreted as indicating inferior ability. Kalahari 'bushmen' people in the 1930s were assigned a mean mental age of 7.5 by Porteus as a result of their performance on his Maze Test.

In the same period, Aboriginal people of north-west Australia performed poorly on this test, with ages ranging from 8.22 years to 12.17 years for adults. Aboriginal people have performed poorly, but not invariably so, on other tests.

Fowler, for instance, using non-verbal tests of British and American origin, found a wide range of scores in the Gascoyne area of Western Australia, some individuals scoring at or above average white

Australian levels. He considered the wide range important; it demonstrated that high Aboriginal scores were possible, even on alien material.

Kearney and McElwain, in extensive testing during the 1960s with the Queensland Test, modified from British and American tests, demonstrated clearly for the first time that Aboriginal test performance depended upon degree of European contact. Remote children performed very poorly, those with medium contact performed better, while urban children living in impoverished conditions performed almost as well as the low socio-economic white Australian children among whom they lived.

Similar effects of particular cultural experience are to be found in other test enterprises in Australia. Where language is required for responses (as in Piagetian testing), and English is the language used, these effects can be expected to be especially marked, with children from remote areas performing very poorly.

Yet, if information on how children perform within their own culture is required, then those from the most traditionally-oriented groups should be best able to provide it. For the effective testing of such children, however, more than culturally relevant test material is necessary; social approaches and behaviour familiar to the groups is also required.

Since the hunting and gathering tradition is far removed from a Western industrial culture, it is not at all likely that similar rules of courtesy should apply in both, or that children should behave the same way towards adults.

In psychological testing of all children, motivation and co-operation can be major problems. The tester asks children to produce on demand and for a stranger a very special sample of behaviour, often with time limits set for a response.

Ideally, maximum attention, high motivation, co-operation with the tester, and a degree of ease or relaxation most likely to permit effective problem-solving, are all required. These are mostly assumed to have been present, since results are treated as real indicators of level of ability, yet within Western culture inadequate attention has almost certainly been paid to these factors.

In the testing of children of another culture, the problem is of major significance although it is not often treated as important. Given the wide differences between cultures [it is clearly unrealistic to take Western testing assumptions virtually unchanged to another culture - for example, that children will accept any adult as an authority figure, that they will 'work for' adults, that question-and-answer conventions are as in Western culture, or that all children are accustomed to injunctions to 'hurry' or 'be as quick as you can'.]

For all children, it is essential that the tester's task be seen as eliciting information about abilities and the careful drawing out of children so that they reveal these abilities, rather than simply applying a test. For people from different cultures, this is very difficult. The tester who sets out to do it must be ready to accommodate every indication of wrong social moves on her part; of polite disinterest in materials, task or procedures; of lack of comprehension; or of mistrust,

dislike or amusement in relation to her. She must learn and practise the rules of courtesy used in the culture and how they apply between children and adults.

[In traditional Aboriginal groups, polite behaviour for an outsider consisted of waiting to be approached and providing all personal information demanded before assuming acceptance.] For all people, it required non-intrusiveness, quiet, self-contained and non-domineering behaviour and the recognition of each individual's right to make his own decisions. This applied to children, too, who were reared within a system allowing for their maximum freedom and independence. They were virtually free of the verbal constraints and requirements considered usual by white Australians, and were not expected to work for or with individual adults unless they chose to.

To gain children's confidence, motivation and relaxation attention, the psychological tester must become known to the group, be unhurried, non-mysterious and non-authoritarian, and must treat children as equals.

Children should be seriously invited to participate in tasks, which must be sufficiently interesting to them to gain their willing attention. They should be allowed to work with the tester in familiar ways and surroundings and at a comfortable pace -- out-of-doors, in public view, sitting side by side and working on material at sitting height.

If Aboriginal children decide to attempt a task, they usually show high interest, motivation and unusual persistence, but if expected rather than invited to participate, will mostly not refuse. Resultant performances are likely to be poorly motivated, however, and the task may be completed rapidly so that the child is free of the requirement.

Before any serious testing is done, the tester should try to discover whether children are willing to work with her by using a simple task of local interest; poor performances on this are likely to indicate lack of interest in any joint endeavour. If such an attempt to establish a tester's acceptability is not made, poor results may be unjustly attributed to lack of ability in the children.

The abilities of a different cultural group are most likely to be revealed by tasks calling on the cultural learning of that group. The hunting and gathering lifestyle traditionally followed in Australia required skills, abilities, and probably ways of thinking, which differed in some ways from those required in settled agricultural and later industrial lifestyles.

As is the case for Kalahari people, Australian Aboriginal people have been noted (by early settlers as well as later writers) for certain types of knowledge and expertise unequalled in the white community. These include special skill in route-finding, spatial location and tracking, and in survival in inhospitable country and harsh seasons. The latter required high ability in finding and capturing game, finding and identifying edible vegetable foods and locating water.

These skills are still generally used by remote Aboriginal groups and called upon by outback police and white settlers. To a largely unknown extent they appear, also, to characterise Aboriginal groups no longer living in remote regions.

Since the child-rearing practices of any group lead to the sort of adult the group requires and admires, Aboriginal children's experiences can be expected to differ markedly from those of many white Australian children, and their cultural learning to differ in content as well as in style.

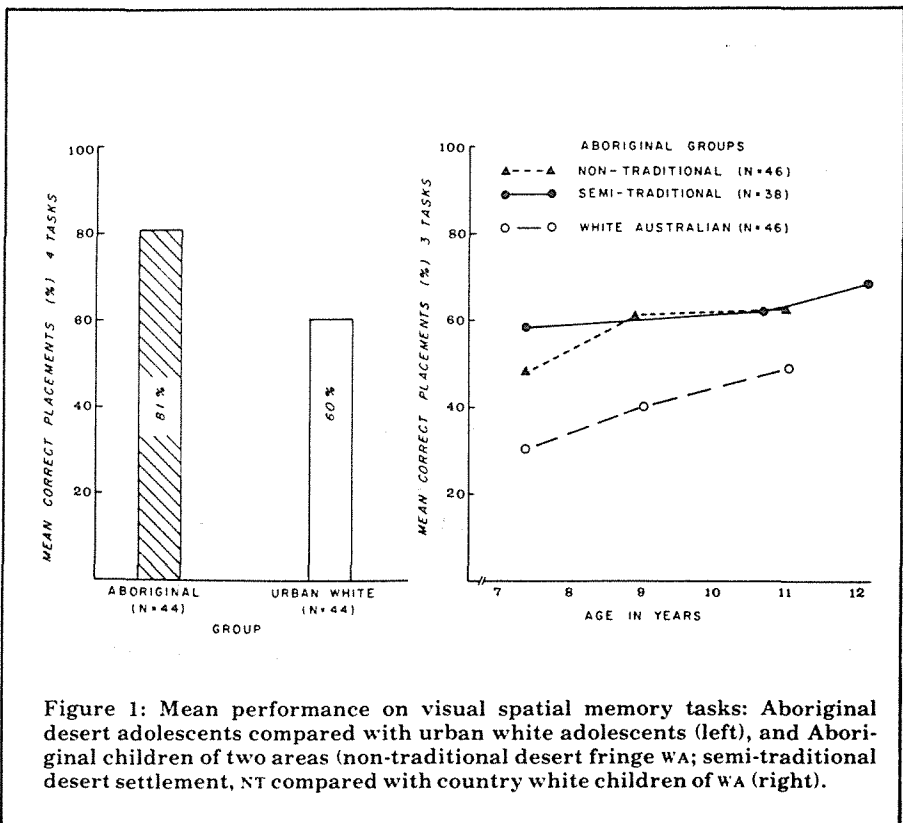
The tasks to be tested, or those likely to reveal strengths and thinking patterns of these children, need therefore to be based on known adult skills and the likely daily requirements of the hunting and gathering lifestyle - in the same way that intelligence tests long used in urban Western culture have been successful, in America, for example, because the items they contain are fairly representative of the intellectual tasks that American city dwellers are likely to be called upon to perform.

Many subtle features of abilities and thinking style are likely to escape an observer from another culture, but more obvious abilities can be investigated, and indication of style or skill incorporated in later tasks. Although the process is slow, it should lead to a clearer and more useful picture. The following tasks have been tried in Western Australia and to some extent in two other States. They have provided information on visual spatial memory, verbal and pictorial memory, and some wildlife knowledge.

VISUAL SPATIAL MEMORY

Studies during 1974 and 1975 showed Aboriginal children (from 6 to 16 years) to be superior in performance to white Australian children on tasks calling for memory of relationships between objects in spatial arrays - an ability hypothesised as useful to spatial location in relatively unmarked country; for instance, children were asked to inspect a rectangular array of twenty items for thirty seconds, then to replace the jumbled items in their original positions.

Figure 1 provides a summary of the data for desert children, non-traditional desert-fringe children and white Australian children.

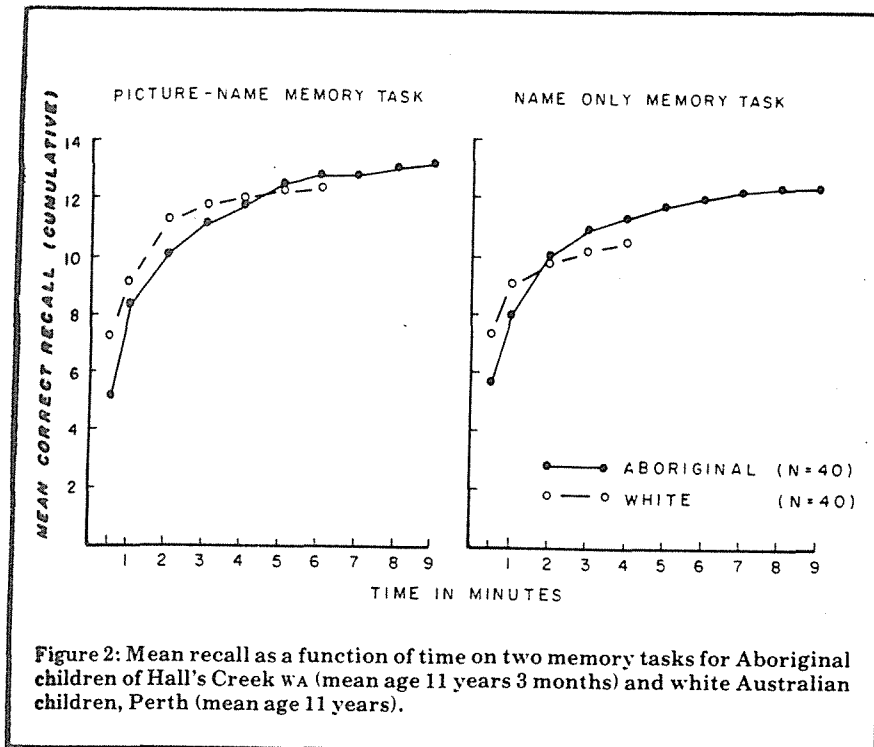


A notable feature of the performance of Aboriginal children was the use of apparently 'visual' strategies, since differences in content reflecting difficulty in naming did not affect their performances, whereas they did affect white Australian performances. The latter group found familiar and namable objects easier to replace than objects less able to be named.

MEMORY FOR NAMES AND FOR NAMES AND PICTURES

Aboriginal children from Hall's Creek and white Australian children from Perth attempted two non-spatial memory tasks, each of twenty items and involving verbal recall. In one task, children attempted to memorise the names of twenty familiar birds, mammals and reptiles read to them at the rate of one every three seconds and then reported the creatures they remembered by name in any order. In the other task, children saw small ink drawings of twenty different creatures, as well as hearing their names. The time course of children's responses was recorded, as well as items recalled.

On both tasks Aboriginal children responded significantly better than white Australian children; figure 2 provides a summary.



Both groups performed better on the picture-name task than on the name-only task, the improvement with pictures being greater in the case of the white Australian children.

Various features of performance and children's reports indicated that Aboriginal children were more likely to have used the same broad strategy on both tasks (probably involving imagery, self-induced on the name-only task), while many white Australian children seem to have attempted rote-learning on the name-only task, but to have been able to use imagery on the picture task.

Aboriginal children's responses were relatively unhurried, so they would have scored lower than the white children had standard time constraints of one or two minutes applied. They also continued to respond over relatively long periods of time and were loth to 'give up'.

Overall, Aboriginal children appeared to be using well-trained memories and strategies in which they had considerable confidence; this seemed not to be the case so often with the white children. Cultural factors, especially child-rearing procedures and other features of a hunting and gathering tradition seem very likely to be involved.

Similar influences may affect cognitive skills and information processing habits of 'urban' Aboriginal children, though it should be noted that children considered to be in this category in Perth were often born in the country, and visited and sometimes stayed for long periods in the country with or near relatives.

Sixteen such children attempted the two memory tasks. All were attending school in Perth, although at least half were born in country areas, mainly of the south-west. Almost all lived with their families in various Perth suburbs and all were familiar with the city environment and city life.

These children performed at approximately the same levels as Hall's Creek children (see Figure 3), and like them, recalled items over a long period of time and appeared to have unusual confidence in their ability to do so.

Both Aboriginal groups showed remarkable persistence, and children of both groups were equally reluctant to admit defeat (since twenty items had been presented, most children seemed to consider they should be able to recall this number).

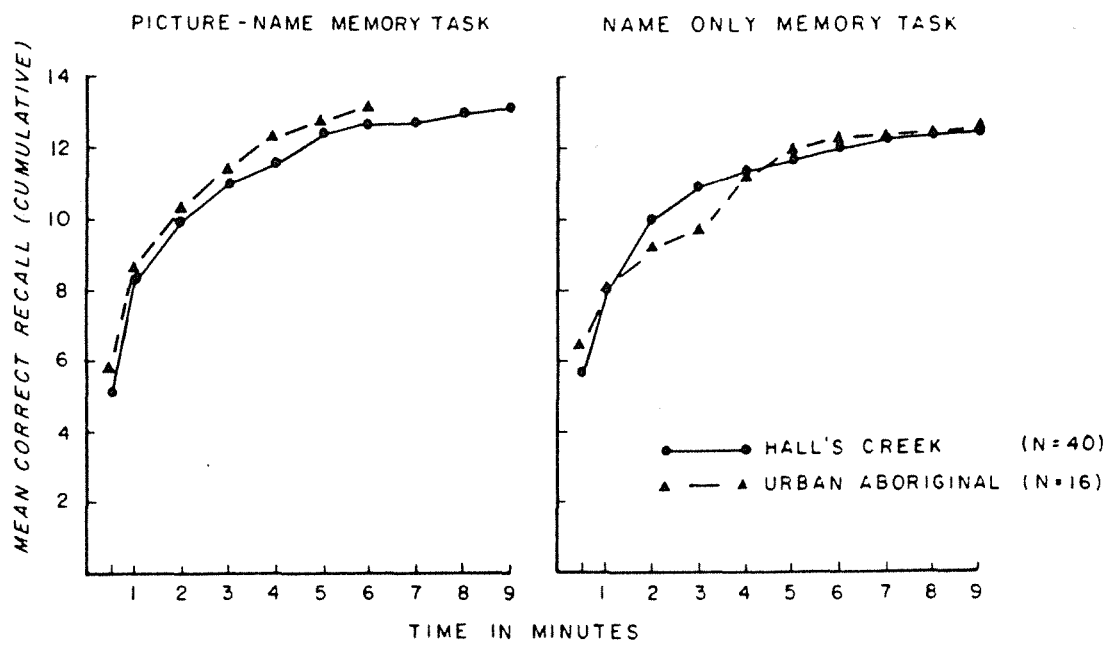


Figure 3: Mean recall as a function of time on two memory tasks for Aboriginal children of Hall's Creek wa (mean age 11 years 3 months) and urban Aboriginal children of Perth (mean age 11 years 5 months).

BIRD RECOGNITION

Relative to the Aboriginal wildlife knowledge, the bird recognition task must be considered insignificant. However, it provides some data on out-of-school learning where none have been available for Aboriginal children.

In this task, Aboriginal children from Hall's Creek (WA) and a NSW country town, and white Australian children from the same NSW town, sorted colour photographs of birds into two heaps of local and non-local birds, the score being based on correct discrimination.

Both the more traditionally oriented children of Hall's Creek and the non-traditional NSW Aboriginal children scored significantly better than the white Australian children, the NSW Aboriginal scores falling between those of the other two groups (see Figure 4). The Hall's Creek children provided a great deal of detailed information on bird life beyond that required by the task.

The remarkable knowledge demonstrated by these children indicated a continuing and strong interest in wildlife in the settled groups to which they belonged, and suggests (since both the information and children's possession of it were unknown to teachers) that much out-of-school learning by Aboriginal children concerns wildlife and the natural world.

The fact that the NSW Aboriginal children scored significantly better than white children of the area, even though the latter had greater access to the bush (in a farming community) suggests that these children also belonged to groups who maintained their earlier interest in the natural world, and who were thus likely to have retained other, and perhaps unexpected, elements from traditional times.

If some basic attitudes to children and to child rearing have been retained, for instance, children will be more likely to develop habits and skills for processing visual information, as suggested by the bird recognition data.

Knowledge by teachers of the likely differences in experiences and approaches of Aboriginal children can lead to useful modifications, sometimes minor, of teaching style, and to an appreciation of some of the out-of-school learning of these children, such as wild-life knowledge, which can then be introduced to the classroom to the benefit of all.

As a result, Aboriginal children might enjoy greater opportunity for school success, and consequent increased motivation for school work than is likely when the school system revolves exclusively around experiences and knowledge they do not fully share.

(This research was supported by the University of Western Australia and by grants from the Australian Research Grants Scheme. Part of the field work was done during sabbatical leave from the University of Western Australia. I wish to thank the children who took part, their teachers, and the Education Departments of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and New South Wales.

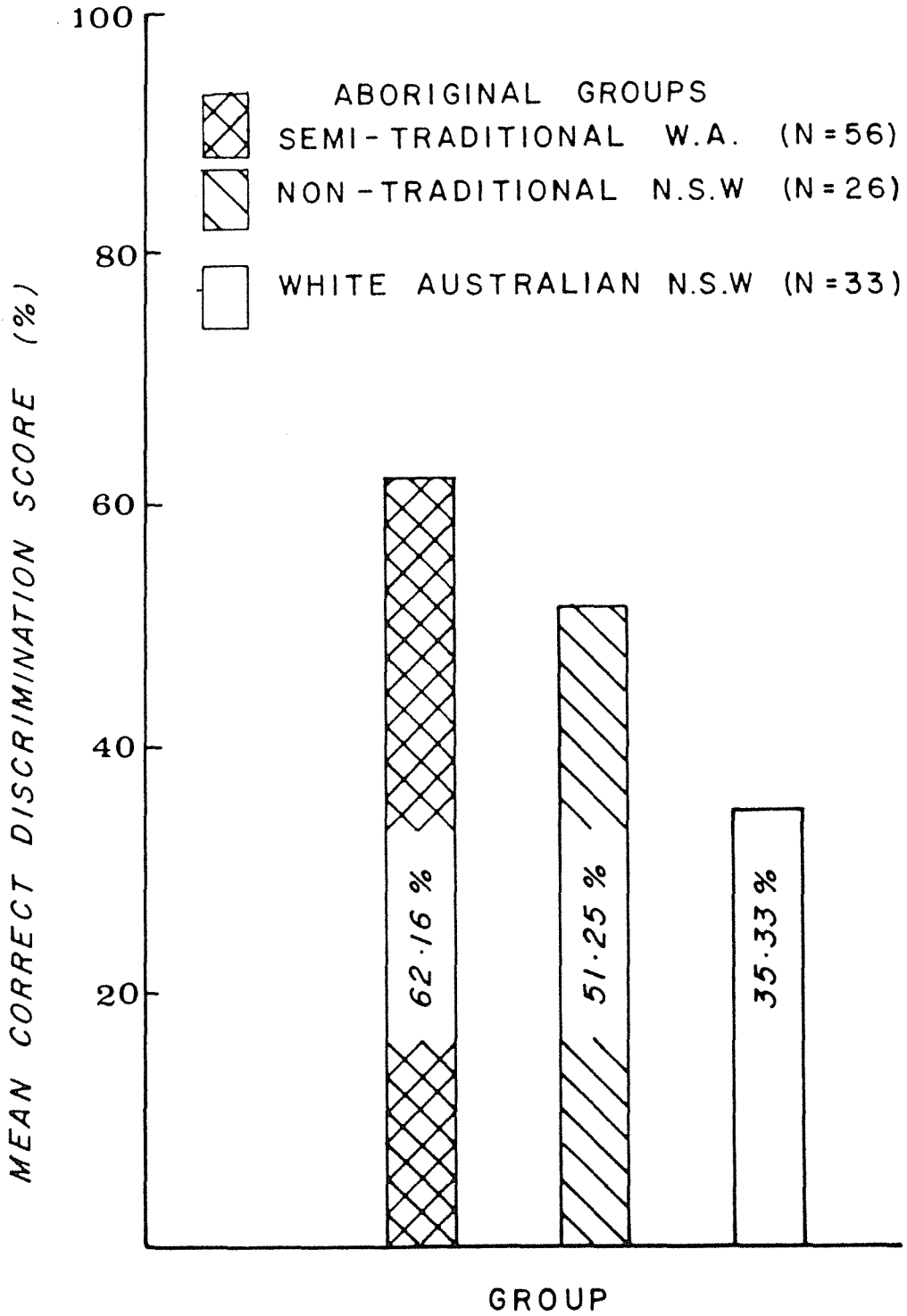


Figure 4: Correct discrimination scores on bird recognition task for three groups of children.

REFERENCES

- Fowler, H.L.: (1940), Psychological tests on natives in the north-west of Western Australia. Australian Journal of Science, 2, 124-7.
- Kearins, J. (1977), Visual spatial memory in Australian Aboriginal children of desert regions. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Western Australia.
- Kearins, J. (1981), Visual spatial memory in Australian Aboriginal children of desert regions. Cognitive Psychology, 13, 434-60.
- Lynn, R. (1978), Ethnic and racial differences in intelligence: international comparisons. In R.T. Osborne, C.E. Noble and N. Weyl (Eds): Human Variation. New York: Academic Press.
- McElwain D.W. and Kearney, G.E. (1973), Intellectual development. In G.E. Kearney, P.R. de Lacey and G.R. Davidson (Eds): The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians. Wiley, Sydney.
- Porteus, S.D. (1931), The Psychology of a Primitive People. London: Edward Arnold.
- Porteus, S.D. (1965), Porteus Maze Tests: Fifty Years Application. Pacific Books, Palo Alto.

In the preceding article, Kearins argued that differential test results reflect different thinking patterns. Knapp reports that a replication of some of Kearins work did not have the same outcomes, and argues instead that schooling should focus on promoting similar cognitive skills. This can be done by developing knowledge about non-Aboriginal cultural characteristics which are necessary in using equivalent skills in the classroom.

SCHOOL, COGNITION AND THE ABORIGINAL CHILD

Pam Knapp

It is an unfortunate fact that the Australian school system has found it extremely difficult to accommodate to the needs of Aboriginal children who, in most cases, leave school barely literate and numerate (e.g. Bourke and Parkin, 1977).

Many factors of a cultural and socio-economic nature may explain why Aboriginal children fail at school. Bourke (1980), for example, includes in his list - poverty; housing; opportunity for self-management; Aboriginal identity and self-esteem. However, recent cross-cultural research suggests that Aboriginal children are further disadvantaged because they 'think' differently to their European counterparts and respond to teaching strategies which are at variance with those used in schools.

It has been found that Aboriginal children adopted by European families 'think' like Europeans (Dasen, de Lacey and Seagrim, 1973.) In fact, length of European contact appears to be a reliable indicator of an Aboriginal child's ability to succeed at school. (Dasen, 1974). Thus, the racial differences in thinking and learning are generally attributed to different patterns of life and cultural demands experienced by traditional Aborigines and Europeans.

What are these cognitive differences?

In the literature, Aboriginal people are characterized as having superior visual memory (e.g. Kearins, 1976); preferring to process or 'see' information as a simultaneous whole, whereby all the relevant parts may be considered at the one time (Davidson, 1979); and most often employing a concrete, reality-based mode of reasoning (e.g. Dasen, 1974; Harris, 1978). In sharp contrast, the typical European style (which is expected by the school) emphasizes verbal memory; a predominantly sequential mode of processing whereby all the parts progressively build up to a whole understanding of solution (e.g. as in a logical argument, reading or solving mathematical problems); and rational, hypothetical reasoning.

Why do Aborigines and Europeans adopt different modes of thinking?

The Aboriginal cognitive style is thought to have developed out of the needs of the traditional Aborigine as a hunter-gatherer. It is argued that of necessity, the Aborigine has an intimate relationship with the natural environment and has to use his powers of reasoning on concrete

objects and actual events in real-life context. Acute visual perception and the capacity to remember the relationships of objects in space are well developed abilities because they have survival value, for example, in scanning the countryside for signs indicative of food or water.

The Aborigines were traditionally a non-literate, non-numerate people. On account of their nomadic life style, material possessions were few. There was no Western-style exchange economy to necessitate precise units of quantification and labour specialization was minimal (i.e. all adults were hunter-gatherers).

In European society, on the other hand, literacy and numeracy are highly valued and functional and, as such, constitute the basic skills which are taught in schools.

How do Aborigines and Europeans teach their Children?

Harris (1978) and Seagrim and Lendon (1980) further argue that, in accordance with their respective life-styles, Aborigines and Europeans educate their children using markedly different teaching methods.

Aboriginal culture demands a strict and conservative adherence to the rules. "Why" type questions are discouraged and casual explanations are most often given in terms of the magical exploits of Dreamtime ancestors. The myths, songs and ceremonies, which constitute Aboriginal heritage, are memorized by rote and initiated boys in particular are expected to remember these sequences in precise detail. Survival skills are learned in a real-life setting largely by means of observation, imitation and personal trial-and-error.

European educators, on the other hand, actively teach their children using a highly verbal content and adopting predominantly question-answer and self-discovery techniques.

How should we teach Aboriginal children in school?

The corollary to the 'cognitive differences' argument is that we should take advantage of Aboriginal abilities and teaching strategies in the school. Aboriginal children would learn more effectively if we used "less verbal and more visual content" and a "visual association" system to teach reading (Kearins, 1978). Similarly, Harris (1977) advocates a 'looking' and 'doing' rather than a verbal explanation method as the most suitable in teaching Aboriginal children.

But what about cognitive similarities?

A recent study I conducted in collaboration with Gavin Seagrim (Knapp and Seagrim, 1981) made me realize that while being attuned to the cognitive differences between Aborigines and Europeans, we should not overstress these and that we should also be equally aware of the cognitive similarities which exist.

Our Study

Previous research (Kearins, 1976) had suggested that Aboriginal children have superior visuo-spatial memory in comparison to European children of the same age. In our study, we were unable to confirm this hypothesis. We found that on tasks which required children to memorize an array of objects, there were either no differences between Aboriginal and European

children, or, in one instance, a significant difference which favoured the Europeans. The mnemonic coding strategies used by children from both racial groups were found to be surprisingly similar. Furthermore, within each racial group, there was a wide range of individual differences in performance. Some Aboriginal children were extremely successful on our visual memory tasks, as were some European children. However, there were also children from both racial groups who performed poorly.

We concluded that the evidence for strictly definable differences in cognitive style between Aborigines and Europeans is not as clear-cut as might have been expected. Contributory factors are likely to be complex and to involve considerable individual differences. Even if Aborigines are found to have certain distinguishable cognitive skills, these may be task - and culture - specific (e.g. to foraging and hunting in the bush) and therefore not necessarily transferable to the school situation.

Examples of cognitive similarities and implications for the school

With these sorts of doubts in mind, I went back to the literature and found that although there may be many instances of racial differences in cognitive style between Aborigines and Europeans, there are also similarities. In fact, within their culture, Aboriginal people are familiar with the style usually associated with European 'thinking' (namely, verbal memory; sequential processing of information; and abstract, hypothetical reasoning), the so-called cognitive precursors to literacy, numeracy and 'success' at school.

It follows that if both differences and similarities in cognitive style exist between Aborigines and Europeans, the problem for the school system in educating Aboriginal children becomes twofold:-

- (a) Not only do teachers need to accommodate to the 'differences' by taking advantage of Aboriginal content and Aboriginal styles of teaching and learning, as Harris (1978) has suggested; but
- (b) Teachers also need to facilitate the successful transfer of the 'similarities' or the appropriate skills to the classroom.

In both cases, this facilitating factor must be a meaningful learning context.

Cognitive similarities and problems of the transference of skills to the classroom

1. Memory:

Much has been made of the Aborigine's superior visual memory. Yet, Aboriginal culture makes demands on both visual and verbal memory, for example, children must learn in detail myths, songs, dances, kinship rules, the geography of the land, identities of plants and animal tracks etc. Such information is memorable because it is meaningful and has utility in everyday life.

However, will this memory faculty (whether we emphasize the visual or the verbal component) necessarily transfer effectively to the school situation, which for an Aboriginal child is not a system he readily understands and which is alien to his own values and view of the world?

In school, Aboriginal children do learn information such as sight words and tables by rote, often with remarkable success. But, if this information is not learned in conjunction with what the reading process is all about (i.e. to get meaning from a text - see Smith, 1978) or why we need a number system at all (a particularly difficult concept for Aborigines to appreciate - see Harris, 1980), there will be a limit to what the Aboriginal child can learn.

To illustrate this latter point, I know Aboriginal children who can read their basal reader beautifully simply because they have memorized a bank of useful sight words. Their comprehension of what they are reading however, is relatively poor. More advanced readers increasingly use prediction from language and contextual cues in their reading because the human brain, as a generalized system, cannot cope with the information load required to memorize all the individual sight words necessary to read more difficult texts.

Thus, unless Aboriginal children are skilled in reading for meaning and have the necessary oral and written language experiences, their progress will, at best, reach a plateau around the mid-primary school level. They are likely to fail despite the fact that we have utilized their so-called superior visual memory, because we have not really taught them how to read. Reading is an active process and not the passive absorption of a set vocabulary (Smith, 1978).

2. 'Reading' and sequential processing (i.e. meaning is developed in a progressive, cumulative manner).

There are several examples of sequential processing ability in Aboriginal culture, but tracking is a particularly useful one because reading the tracks of an animal in the bush is comparable to reading books (Wallace, 1968). Both tasks require a sequential analysis of signs-words and background experience and an understanding of the 'reading process' - to gain meaning (whether it is comprehension of a text or the whereabouts of a source of food). In the context of these tasks, Aborigines and Europeans adopt similar cognitive strategies. Why then don't these appropriate strategies transfer successfully to school for the Aboriginal child?

Tracking is a highly functional activity in the life of the traditional Aborigine and children learn to track by tracking. Aboriginal children accompany adults in the daily search for food and are encouraged by example to be 'good trackers'. They are regularly exposed to the process of tracking which includes - recognizing the tracks made by various animals; the patterns of behaviour which are to be expected from different types of animals; the restraints imposed on animals by the landscape etc. And most importantly, they can see the relevance of reading tracks in relation to unearthing prey.

For the Aboriginal child, tracking is a useful, rewarding and enjoyable activity and they often practise reproducing the tracks of animals in the sand back at camp (Seagrim and Lendon, 1980).

In a similar way, European children are exposed to reading and writing from an early age. For example, most European children regularly see their parents reading and writing; parents read stories to their children as a pleasurable activity, and books are usually available in the home.

What is crucial is that Aboriginal children can perform sequential processing tasks in one context and Europeans can perform them in another. However, an Aboriginal child will not effectively transfer his cognitive skills to reading texts unless he has the context understandings that are available to the European child (and vice versa for a European learning to track). It is up to the school to provide the necessary experiential background for the Aboriginal child if he is to make this necessary transfer.

Just as the Aboriginal child learns to track by tracking, so, in Smith's words, he or any other child will learn to read by reading.

Two literacy programs operating in the Territory have had considerable success in providing this important cultural link for Aboriginal children; the Traeger Park Program (Alice Springs) which caters for Aboriginal children in an urban context for whom school English is a second dialect; and the Bilingual Program (throughout the Territory) which is concerned with developing English as a second language.

A Language Experience approach to literacy has been adopted at Traeger Park where children learn reading, writing and spelling skills through functional experience with oral language and books of all kinds (Gray, 1980). A similar philosophy is behind the Bilingual Program where Aboriginal children are taught to read in their own language and thereby understand the process of reading texts before they transfer to books written in English.

3. Number and Hypothetical Thought

Number symbols and absolute measurement form the basis of what can become an abstract, hypothetical system. It is true that numeracy is not valued in Aboriginal society and that Aboriginal languages have few words for quantification.

However, although Aborigines do not traditionally make comparisons in absolute terms, that does not mean that number concepts are entirely missing. They are capable of making complex, relative comparisons. For example, Aboriginal maps and explanations about the geography of the land are given in terms of relative distances and locations and do not involve the European euclidean relationships. Yet, Aboriginal people can indicate direction with remarkable accuracy (Lewis, 1974).

Harris (1980) gives many examples of relative comparisons which do not involve such accuracy but which are cleverly suited to the Aborigine's dealings with Europeans.

Aboriginal people can also use 'higher mathematics' without a number system. Kinship relationships operate on permutations and combinations which even the most astute anthropologists have difficulty in fully

comprehending. Furthermore, adult members of the Aboriginal community often discuss hypothetical kinship combinations, which have no relationship to actual people, purely as an intellectual exercise. Thus, to assume that Aborigines are non-numerate, 'concrete' thinkers is at best an oversimplification.

When Aboriginal children come to school, we cannot expect them to be as well versed in the world of counting and the other pre-requisites of an absolute number system, but this should not be a tremendous disadvantage. Absolute number is a natural extension of relative number as it simply expresses differences using a system of standard units.

Once again, the overriding requirement is that teachers systematically expose Aboriginal children to an enrichment program of number and measurement experiences so that they can come to appreciate what numbers are about and why they are useful.

In Conclusion:

If Aboriginal children are to achieve in a European academic context, we need to recognize that merely imitating Aboriginal learning and teaching styles will have little purpose if the meaning context of the material to be learned has not been adequately developed. Furthermore, we should not focus on the Aboriginal child's cognitive capability or his lack of capability, but on our teaching strategies and how these may be adapted to help the Aboriginal child successfully make the step from one culture (his own) into another (the school).

REFERENCES

- Bourke, C. The Future of Aboriginal Education in South-Eastern Australia. The Education Magazine, 1980, 37 (1), 31-34.
- Bourke, S.F., & Parkin, B. The Performance of Aboriginal Students. In S.F. Bourke and J.P. Keeves (Eds.), The Mastery of Literacy and Numeracy, Melbourne: A.C.E.R., 1977
- Dasen, P.R. The Influence of Ecology, Culture and European Contact on Cognitive Development in Australian Aborigines. In G.E. Kearney, P.R. de Lacey and G.R. Davidson (Eds.), The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians, Sydney: Wiley Books, 1973.
- Davidson, G.R. An Ethnographic Psychology of Aboriginal Cognitive Ability, Oceania, 1979, 59, 270-294.
- Gray, B. Developing Language and Literacy with Urban Aboriginal Children, N.T. Department of Education and A.I.A.S., Canberra, 1980.
- Harris, P. Measurement in Tribal Aboriginal Communities. Developing Education, 1980, 7, 23-28.
- Harris, S. (1978), Traditional Aboriginal Education Strategies and their Possible Place in a Modern Bilingual School, Darwin : N.T. Department of Education.

- Kearins, J. (1976), Skills of Desert Aboriginal Children. In G.E. Kearney and D.W. McElwain (Eds.), Aboriginal Cognition : Retrospect and Prospect. Australian Institute Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.
- Kearins, J. (1978), The Visual Spatial Memory of Desert Aboriginal Children. University News, University of W.A.
- Knapp, P.A. & Seagram, G.N. (1981), Visual Memory in Australian Aboriginal Children and Children of European Descent. International Journal of Psychology, In press.
- Lewis, D. (1974), Report on Research Carried Out in the Simpson Desert. Canberra Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies.
- Seagram, G.N. and Lendon, R.J. (1980), Furnishing the Mind. Academic Press, Sydney.
- Smith, T. (1978), Reading. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Wallace, P. (1968), Tracking Ability - Aboriginal Women and Children. Report to A.I.A.S., Canberra.

Kearins & Knapp have pointed to the problems confronting researchers when they study in cross-cultural contexts. The same problems occur for classroom teachers when they attempt to measure skill development by children of different cultures. Chris Walton outlines clearly the dangers in using tests designed for Europeans with Aboriginal children.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS RELATED TO TESTING
LANGUAGE SKILLS IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING

C. Walton

In this paper I hope to explore some of the issues surrounding the use of tests of language skills in Aboriginal schools. In doing this I hope readers are given a few starting points from which to explore their own answers to the following questions:

1. What is reading?
What do we really believe about the reading process?
What theoretical assumptions underlie our practice?
2. What does our theory tell us about the reading process as experienced by culturally and linguistically different children?
3. What have we learnt so far about teaching reading to Aboriginal children?
4. How have we tried to evaluate Aboriginal children's language skills in the past?
What have we learnt from this?
5. What are the responsibilities of educators when assessing language skills in a cross-cultural setting?

The areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing are obviously interrelated. I want to look particularly at reading. In doing so the importance of the other areas is not being ignored, but what has been learnt about the reading process over the last ten years has implications for the other areas that are becoming more apparent. In terms of current theory and practice the impact of the psycho-linguists initially in the reading area is now being felt in the other areas of language. One of the leading psycho-linguists is Frank Smith. This is what he says about the reading process:

Reading involves information that the reader receives through his visual system (the marks on the page) and information that he already has available in his head, in cognitive structure ... knowledge of language is crucial non-visual information that the reader himself must supply. Similarly, very little reading will take place if the subject matter of the text is completely removed from the experience of the reader.

(Smith, 1975, p.50)

Ms Christine Walton, Dept of Education, N.T.
Reprinted from The Aboriginal Child at School (1983) Vol 11, 2, with permission of the editor and author.

The psychologists speak of the child's use of three cueing systems in his quest for meaning from print: graphophonic, syntactic, semantic.

When we evaluate reading our methodology should tap into the child's use of these three systems. It should enable us to gain information about the child's use of the cueing systems in such a way as to suggest clearly to teachers strategies they may need to develop in teaching that child to use these cueing systems effectively. To this end Miscue Analysis was developed as a diagnostic tool that tapped into the use made of these cueing systems by individual children.

The work of F. Smith, Ken & Yetta Goodman, C. Burke, Max Kemp and others has greatly enhanced our knowledge of the reading process. For children to get meaning from print they must bring to the task an understanding of not only the relationships between the marks on the page and sounds in language (grapho-phonics) but also their world knowledge as it relates to what is being read (semantics) and also knowledge of word order (syntax). These three systems enable the child to predict what the next word or group of words is likely to be and to comprehend the passage.

When children are reading a language that is not their mother-tongue they are at a disadvantage in each of these three areas, e.g., the different sound systems of English and Aboriginal languages, the possible difference between the world knowledge of the reader and the writer and the possible lack of familiarity with the structure of the English language.

Past approaches to the teaching of reading did not consider these barriers to learning; for example, a traditionally oriented Aboriginal child was expected to learn to read in English using materials designed for language learners, set in urban situations, using stilted, structured and often meaningless text. In the Northern Territory we have begun, in two significant ways, to break down these barriers to learning to read:

1. the bilingual program where a child learns to read in his mother tongue before learning to read in English, and
2. the Tracks Language Program that, in combination with a good oral language program, at least introduces children to reading in English by offering reading material that is familiar in content to the experiences of the child. Having become familiar with the structures of the English language, children read books that have some meaning and relate to their own experience of the world. It is an attempt to make initial English language learning meaningful.

I believe that these two innovations represent a vast improvement over previous methodologies. To evaluate the success or otherwise of our endeavours teachers need to be tuned into the reading process as experienced by their students. We may, at some time in the future, assist teachers in this by developing evaluation tools that tap into the reading process as experienced by the students. To date no such instruments exist other than individual diagnostic tools such as Miscue Analysis. If we are to attempt to design tests for our situation we need to clarify their purpose. What do we expect the test to do for us? If tests are to have a function they must be of real value to teachers when they are selecting their educational strategies and developing their programs in relation to individual children or groups of children. The trend in reading research in recent years has been towards individual

diagnostic type tests and away from standardised/normative type tests as they offer little help to the teacher. It is generally felt that the older tests, with their emphasis on quantification, do not tap the real skills of the children and do not provide any useful information for the teacher, which is the primary, legitimate function of a test.

As Keogh (1974) puts it when talking about the I.T.P.A. (Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities):

Such quantification may provide some comfort to the quantifier but does not provide direction in solving the problem. (p. 132)

Australian researchers tend to agree. Dwyer (Queensland Department of Education) was instrumental in spearheading the Queensland Van Leer Program. He states:

By now enough should have been said about language difference and the influence of teacher expectations on pupil performance to alert us to the need to use great care in our interpretation of language test results achieved by Aboriginal children. (Dwyer, 1976)

It has been the failing of many Australian education programs that test instruments designed for a limited purpose and normed usually on overseas American middle class white samples, have been used in Australia on Aboriginal children. The validity of this use of tests has been questioned repeatedly. If we are to test reading we have to be sure about the validity of the measuring device we choose to use. Tests normed on U.S. samples have been questioned for use even for first language white Australians. To be valid and reliable instruments, normative tests have to be researched extensively to ensure that the purpose of the test is in keeping with our use of it. In some reading I did in 1982 I was surprised to find that tests used in some Australian experimental programs had been normed in the U.S. in the 1950's and that tests normed and designed for children speaking English as a first language were being used with second language speakers even when the manuals for the tests state that this is inappropriate.

e.g., P.P.V.T. (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test). Dunn (1965) states in the manual -

The scale may be given to any English speaking resident of the U.S. (p.25)

The test itself was standardised in 1958 on a group of white children only (Dunn, 1965, p. 27).

With reference to using American tests in Australia, Teasdale and de Vries (1976) criticise the fact that -

Scaled scores based directly on the performance of the normative group in the U.S. have been widely used in the analysis of data, generally without any assessment or comment on their applicability to Australian conditions.

They cite a study in Australia that shows that the American norms are "misleading" and "inappropriate". They suggest, if using the test (I.T.P.A.) in Australia -

1. Use raw score data only.
2. Use it only with children whose mother tongue is English.
3. Do not use American norms.

(Teasdale & de Vries, 1976, pp. 261-2)

There is need to assess skills in the use of English in the Northern Territory but teachers would be better using their own judgement based on performance observed rather than relying on tests quite obviously designed for a different purpose and clientele.

Other factors that need to be considered when looking at tests include:

1. The language used in the test instructions. Severson and Gest (1970, p.323) cite studies -

that suggest the operation of another test-related factor...understanding of test instruction which may accrue to the detriment of persons whose language is characterised by different structural and dialectal features than that of the examiner.

2. Testing methodologies and situations. In his study, Labov (1973, p.52) shows the different linguistic responses that can be generated by particular testing methodologies and situations, i.e., a Negro boy in a formal setting of a New York school in interaction with a white interviewer, is compared with a boy in a casual, relaxed setting with a black interviewer. The differences in the linguistic behaviour elicited were substantial.

When we look at test results we are looking for insights into language competence. It is difficult to extrapolate from the results on tests if the tests are inappropriate or invalid. It is even harder if, using such tests, we are looking for the causes behind the apparent results. We can hypothesise about a myriad of factors that will range from biased conjecture to informed opinion and still be "off the mark". We can locate the problem as identified by the tests as within the child, the home, the teaching program, or a combination of all of these. But, if the 'problem' is even in part a product of the test construction, we may be chasing a paper tiger. We can, and often have ignored some obvious factors while searching for more elusive construction, e.g., we can use a test designed for first language learners on a population of second language learners and decide that they are all 'deprived', suffering 'cognitive deficits', and in need of 'remediation'. Similarly we can compare the students' results with a middle class white sample from America but do we stop to think about the state of health of the respective populations. We can ask - did the norming sample not only not include E.S.L. students and culturally different children, but were the students in the sample experiencing the level of health disorders that we know exists in our students? This may seem of little consequence, but the following figures should make my point:

Middleton and Francis (1976, p. 132) examined 73 children on an Aboriginal settlement. Of these 73 children 38.4% had infected and/or damaged ears. A mild hearing loss can mean that the teacher's normal voice is heard as a whisper. Given a lot of background noise (e.g. rattly air conditioners) the teacher would not be heard or understood at

all. If you combine this with a teacher speaking a different language or dialect, you get the idea that the children are doing remarkably well considering all the factors seemingly designed to make learning difficult for them. I don't believe we take the E.S.L. and health status of our students seriously enough either as teachers or as administrators and policy makers. In the United States this issue has been faced in the courts. Lopez (1978, p.4) states that:

In 1974 the movement for bilingual education produces a landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Lau v. Nichols* case. The court unanimously agreed that there was not equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum. For students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.

If we were really to face this issue it would be reflected in such things as staff training, teacher pupil ratios, dollars, etc. We tend to act administratively as if the students were English speaking. The above quote from Lopez can be extended to read that there is not equality of treatment merely by providing the same tests. If test results were to be interpreted as identifying problem areas within our supply of an educational service, and not within the child, it might be administratively justified to use them, given that we are very selective and that we are satisfied as to their validity. It is sadly possible, though, that we may be using quite unsophisticated techniques instead, such as testing children in a second language with out-of-date books, and then using the results to blame or explain away the failure of Aboriginal children in our schools rather than take some responsibility ourselves.

The problems in Aboriginal education are many faceted. Simple solutions are not to be found. Education, after all, is only one small piece of the overall picture. We have to consider what the problems really are. We cannot continue to blame the victims of our neglect. Jenks (1972, p.6) gives us this to think about:

If, for example, a nation refuses to send children with red hair to school, the genes that cause red hair can be said to lower reading scores. This does not tell us that children with red hair cannot learn to read. Attributing red heads' illiteracy to their genes would probably strike most teachers as absurd under these circumstances.

If we ignore things like the second language and the health status of our students can we then blame them for their poor performance on our tests even if we make sure the tests are o.k.? This is only part of the picture. If we are to evaluate children's progress in reading, for example, can we avoid ethnocentric bias?

Nurcombe (1976, p.185) puts it like this:

Thus blinded by our ethnic spectacles we see Aboriginals in terms of deficit. Only recently have we begun to inquire about the nature of their dialect, their aspirations and their self-image.

Given what we know about tests, the reading process, the cultural background of the students, their linguistic differences, and the warnings of researchers who have made these mistakes before us, and all the other factors that complete the picture, can we honestly and professionally blindly go ahead and administer an inappropriate test and

then take its results seriously. We need to find our own answers to the questions posed at the beginning and learn from the experience and mistakes of researchers, teachers, educationists generally who have trod that path before us. We can, given that information, develop our own answers. We need also to trust our own professional judgement.

Not test, however cleverly it is constructed, can substitute for the insights professional teachers get from working closely with children. (Goodman, p.33).

REFERENCES

- Dunn, L.M., (1965), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Manual. A.G.S. Inc., Minnesota, U.S.A.
- Dwyer, L.J., (1976), A language program for Aboriginal children. The Exceptional Child, 23, 1, March.
- Goodman, K.S., (n.d.), Testing in reading: a general critique. In R.R. Rudell, (Ed.), Accountability and Reading Instruction Critical Issues. National Council of Teachers of Education, Urbana, Illinois, pp. 21-33.
- Jenks, C., (1972), Inequality. Penguin Books, G.B.
- Keogh, B.K., (1974): Psychological evaluation of exceptional children: old hangups and new directions. In R.L. Jones and D.L. MacMillan (Eds): Special Education in Transition. Allyn and Bacon Inc., Boston, U.S.A. pp.131-16.
- Labov, W., (1973), The logic on non-standard English. In N. Keddie (Ed.): Tinker, Tailor...The Myth of Cultural Deprivation. Penguin Education, G.B.
- Lopez, M., (1978), Bilingual education and the Latino student. In L.A. Valverde (Ed.), Bilingual Education for Latinos. Assoc. for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington D.C.
- Middleton, M.R. and Francis, S.H., (1976), Yuendumu and Its Children: Life and Health on an Aboriginal Settlement. Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Nurcombe, B., (1976), Children of the Dispossessed. A consideration of the Nature of Intelligence, Cultural Disadvantage, Educational Programs for Culturally Different People, and the Development and Expression of Competencies. A Culture Learning Institute Monography, East-West Center, The University Press of Hawaii.
- Severson, R.A. and Gest, K.D., (1970), Towards standardised assessment of the language of disadvantaged children. In F. Williams (Ed.): Language and Poverty: Perspectives on a Theme. Markham Pub. Co., Chicago.
- Smith, F., (1975), Comprehension and Learning. A Conceptual Framework for Teachers. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, U.S.A.

Teasdale, G.R. and de Vries, T., (1976), The Use of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities with Aboriginal Australian children. In G.E., Kearney and D.W. McElwain (Eds): Aboriginal Cognition: Retrospect and Prospect. Psychology Series No. 1, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra. Humanities Press Inc., New Jersey. U.S.A.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Goodman, K.S., (n.d.), Testing in reading: a general critique. In R.R. Rudell, (Ed.), Accountability and Reading Instruction Critical Issues. National Council of Teachers of Education, Urbana, Illinois.

Smith, F., (1973), The politics of ignorance. From The Politics of Reading: Point-Counterpoint. I.R.A. Delaware.

McConnochie, K., (1981), White tests, black children: Aborigines, psychologists and education. In Bill Menary (Ed.), Aborigines and Schooling. Adelaide College of Arts and Education.

Position Papers from the Australian Reading Association.

CURRICULUM & THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

In the section on cognition and testing it became obvious that the different backgrounds of Aboriginal children can affect their performance at school related tasks. In the next article, Neville Green presents a comprehensive picture of the teacher's influence on Aboriginal children's learning. He notes how the under-achievement of Aboriginal children can be attributed to such factors as low teacher expectations and to an inability to cater for the differences which Aboriginal children bring to school. He points to necessary changes in teaching, but concludes that teachers may be unaware of their significant influence on children.

THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S INFLUENCE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

Neville Green

Introduction

The wastage rate of Aboriginal children being processed through the school system is a matter of concern to all Australians. Numerous factors contribute to the apparent low achievement of Aboriginal children. Poor health, inadequate accommodation, insufficient support by family and discrimination by non-Aborigines are a few of the many causes that have been fervently advanced by some and, with equal fervour, rejected by others. In this paper I suggest that the classroom teacher through conscious and unconscious indicators of attitude can weight the scales of the child's success for the better or for the worse.

The Wastage Rate

In 1979 there was a total of 1389 Aboriginal children enrolled in year 1 in Western Australian schools but only 33 in year 12, the final year of formal schooling (Table 1). Two significant inferences can be drawn from these figures. Firstly the wastage rate of Aboriginal children moving through the school system is appalling and follows the patterns of education of disadvantaged groups noted by the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty (1976: 17.) The Commission observed that ethnic factors and poverty strongly influenced the amount of schooling and made particular reference to Aborigines;

Special mention should be made here of Aborigines who constitute the minority within Australia which has benefited least from the schooling system. The 1971 census revealed that almost a quarter of all Aboriginals aged 15 years and over had never attended school and two fifths had only attended primary schools. Less than two out of every hundred Aboriginals had attended to year 10. (ibid:16)

The second point to consider is that the number of Aboriginal students who successfully complete year 12 is too small to meet the ever increasing demand for Aboriginal people with the educational qualifications to gain access to professional and executive positions in Australian society. Thus they continue to be the most under-represented ethnic group in the professions. In order to reduce this deficit more Aboriginal children must survive the system and their survival, to a great extent, will be influenced by the attitudes of teachers and the methods they use in the classroom.

Table 1

Aboriginal Children in Western Australian Schools 1979

Year	Government	Non-Government	Total
pre	1877	127	2004
1	1161	228	1389
2	859	173	1032
3	868	163	1031
4	883	150	1033
5	809	128	937
6	814	151	965
7	774	146	920
special classes*	203	44	247
8	880	132	1012
9	596	109	705
10	426	105	531
11	132	35	167
12	21	12	33
<u>special classes*</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>106</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>10405</u>	<u>1707</u>	<u>12112</u>

Ref: Western Australian Education Department Planning B. Statistics

*Special classes include children with physical, intellectual or sensory handicaps.

Table 2

The Ratio of Aboriginal to Non-Aboriginal Children
in Government Schools in Western Australia 1976-1979

Class Year	1976	1977	1978	1979	
				1:12	pre
			1:12	1:16	1
		1:32	1:17	1:11	2
pre	1:35	1:18	1:21	1:24	3
1	1:17	1:21	1:21	1:22	4
2	1:21	1:22	1:22	1:24	5
3	1:21	1:22	1:22	1:23	6
4	1:19	1:21	1:20	1:21	7
5	1:22	1:23	1:20	1:19	8
6	1:24	1:24	1:22	1:26	9
7	1:24	1:25	1:28	1:37	10
8	1:24	1:29	1:40	1:67	11
9	1:31	1:42	1:82	1:239	12
10	1:38	1:86	1:367		
11	1:106	1:271			
12	1:378				

Ref:: Western Australian Education Department. Planning 'B' stats.

Table 3

Percentage of Aboriginal Children in Western Australian Schools
August 1978 **

%	Government Schools*	Non-Government Schools
0-1	66	11
1-10	194	27
11-20	27	6
21-30	9	1
31-40	7	2
41-50	6	1
51-60	3	1
61-70	3	0
71-80	2	0
81-90	6	2
91-100	15	2
Total	338	53

*Junior Primary, primary and class 11 District High Schools only.

** schools without Aboriginal children are not included.

Ref: Western Australian Education Department. Planning 'B'
Statistics. August, 1978.

A study of the numbers of Aboriginal children in Western Australian Government schools (Table 2) shows a marked increase in the ratio of children attending school at pre and year 1 levels between the years 1976-79. It is also evident that there is a consistent ratio of Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal children throughout the primary and lower secondary classes. But from year 10 onwards it is a picture of disaster as the Aboriginal teenagers fall right out of the educational system. Too often teachers and the Australian society in general view such a result as the failure of Aborigines 'to make it' and attribute the 'failure' to conditions beyond the control of the school. Undoubtedly a significant percentage of the student loss at the year 10 level is attributable to children at traditionally oriented settlements quitting school and assuming new roles within the home community, but the majority of Aboriginal school children do not fit into this category and over fifty percent in Western Australian schools reside in the more densely populated south west corner of the state. Therefore the role of the school and its contribution to the wastage rate of Aboriginal children must be considered.

Teacher Perceptions of the Problem

Earlier this year, in preparation for a classroom oriented workshop, I asked a group of 15 rural teachers to list the major difficulties that they encountered when teaching Aboriginal children. The teachers came from classrooms with an Aboriginal component that varied between five and sixty percent. There were 80 responses and these were separated into five general categories. Understandably there was occasionally overlap between the responses.

1. Child Deficit

Forty eight of the responses identified the problem as a child deficit:

'lack of interest ... language problem ... short attention span ... disruptive in the classroom ... hearing loss ... poor attendance ... drops head when spoken to ... malnutrition ... inadequate clothing poor hygiene ...'

2. Family Deficit

Eleven responses identified the family as the source of the problem with ... 'low parental expectations ... transient lifestyle ... very little parent contact ... lack of parent support ... parents never answer notes'.

3. Environment Deficit

Six of the responses attributed the blame to the 'social conditions ... cultural gap ... home background influences ...'

4. Other Agencies

Four of the responses identified sources beyond the control of the school, the family or the child. These were of the following type: 'other agencies do not give the school proper support'.

5. School and Classroom Deficit

It is significant at this point to realise that only eleven of the responses attributed the child's learning problems to factors for which the school could be deemed responsible and six of those were written by one teacher. The most common responses were 'Aboriginal children are ignored ... reading materials are inappropriate ... prejudice by teachers and non-Aboriginal children ... teachers do not have special training to teach Aborigines ... a lack of Aboriginal support staff ... inadequate extra curricular activities.'

The survey indicates that teachers are able to identify a wide range of conditions that undoubtedly do contribute in varying degrees to the poor school achievement of Aboriginal children. However, most of the conditions or problems that were listed are those unlikely to be changed by the efforts of individual teachers. It is therefore desirable that teachers firstly identify the problems that can be positively influenced by the school and then direct their talents and energies towards achieving a satisfactory solution. Some Aboriginal schools, such as Wiluna, assume responsibility for showering the children daily, providing school clothing, laundering the home clothes and cooking lunches for every child in the school. These schools are exceptions and it is debatable whether (or not) the teachers should take over these responsibilities from parents.

The teachers' reactions to the presence of Aboriginal children in the classroom and the manner by which their learning problems are rationalised in terms of child deficit is not new. The 1973 survey of Western Australian Schools by Makin and Ibbotson found that there was a tendency for teachers to attribute disciplinary and behaviour problems to areas 'in which the school influence was minimal'. (1973:6) Teachers throughout the state identified the child's language and cultural background as the major impediments to academic achievement. (ibid:8)

This view even prevailed in regions where there has been a European influence for almost 150 years. Makin and Ibbotson reported that 'a fairly substantial number of teachers from the Great Southern agreed that Aboriginal children might just as well not be going to school at all.' (ibid:5). In a later survey of 257 principals and 1755 teachers in Western Australian schools, Tannock and Punch (1975) observed that the responses 'indicated that in large measure the educators place the blame for the students' poor achievements on factors for which the school cannot be held responsible' (1975:92) Many of the respondents blamed the child's family and home environment yet the survey revealed that 'the teachers know very little about their particular pupils' home situations nor do they have much significant contact with the parents.' (ibid:93) Tannock and Punch were drawn towards two disturbing conclusions.

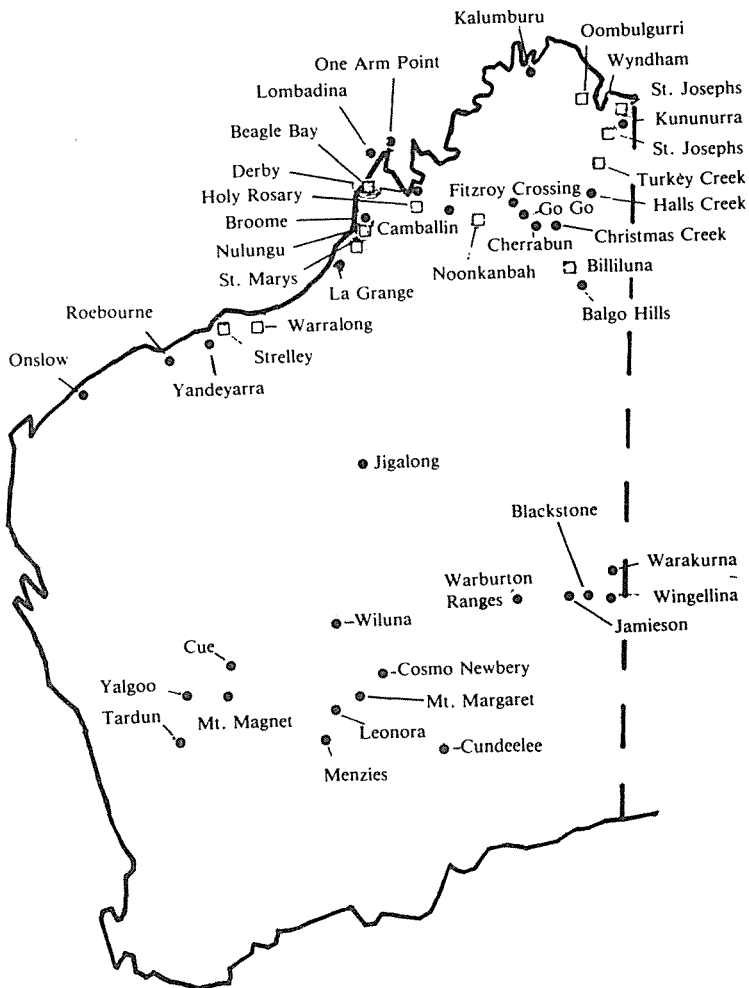
1. 'The fact of the matter, then, is that the teachers do not expect Aboriginal children to do well in school. While few are complacent about low achievement of this section of the school population, most teachers feel that the situation is well beyond their control. Aboriginal children, they have accepted, just cannot do well in school.' (ibid:93)
2. 'The picture is a grim one and obviously suggests dramatic change. It is clear that a continuation of the present situation will make it very unlikely that Aboriginal children will ever have much success at school.' (ibid:93)

It would be unfair to interpret these responses as simply anti-Aboriginal attitudes. Instead we should recognise that a great many teachers have difficulty reconciling the difference between their own ethnicity and culture and that of the children they teach. This is more likely to occur when the child's home environment is characterised by poverty. As Hickerson, writing on American education states;

The inability of affluent-oriented teachers in American society to understand or cope with the behaviour of children from economically deprived families is often of paramount importance in alienating these children from the public schools.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS WITH OVER
50% ABORIGINAL ENROLMENT, 1980

•Government □Non Government



It is this clash of value commitments that, more than any other factor, drives our Negro, Mexican, Puerto-Rican, Indian and economically deprived Caucasian children out of the school and into the street. Children abandon school in the second grade attitudinally, and in the tenth grade physically.' (1966:42)

More locally, McEvedy after researching the education of children of Italian descent in Western Australian schools commented;

'A total of 247 statements were made on pupil behaviour by the teachers. Three-quarters of these were negative ... It is obvious that teachers subscribed to the view that the child or his upbringing were in some way 'inadequate', or 'wrong' and, by implication, the school was forced to act as an agent of intervention between the child's home and the child so that the child could be educated.'...(1980:5)

The report of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty in Australia makes similar observations of teachers (1976:72-73) and elsewhere notes:

a) Teachers of Migrant Children

'Migrant children come to share the lower expectations held by teachers and so a situation of self-fulfilling prophecy is created.' (p.57)

b) Teachers of Economically Disadvantaged Children

'Those they (teachers) considered to be the most able were the students at the upper end of the social scale and those they saw as the least able were children from low status families. Yet the results of the objective tests administered in the course of the study indicated that social class background was not significantly linked with ability in the humanities, mathematics or science though it did affect knowledge and understanding in the social sciences.' (p.77, citing McGaw et al)

c) Teachers of Aboriginal Children

The Commission's findings on Aboriginal education were most depressing; 'When a teacher believes a child to be disadvantaged because of his deprived experiential background, he will have a low expectation of that child. The Commission found many Aboriginal children right round Australia subject to that teacher's estimation; that is, tolerated rather than respected or admired.' (p.197)

The Commission found that many of the teachers believed that; 'both child and parents were pitted against them in a seemingly hopeless struggle' (p.197) ... and 'in all areas we were assailed by the complaint "nothing in my training prepared me for a situation such as this.' (p.213)

The Self-fulfilling Prophecy

Rosenthal and Jacobsen's well known study Pygmalion in the Classroom popularised the belief that a teacher's positive expectations will result in improved child performance and that a teacher can convey her expectations in a variety of ways;

'To summarise our speculations, we may say that by what she said, by how and when she said it, by her facial expressions, postures, and perhaps by her touch, the teacher may have communicated to the children of the experimental group that she expected improved intellectual performance. Such communications together with possible changes in teaching techniques may have helped the child learn by changing his self concept, his expectations of his own behaviour, and his motivation, as well as his cognitive style and skills.' (1968:180)

Because of the ethical ramifications it is unlikely that a researcher will ever deliberately set out to prove an hypothesis that the self-fulfilling prophecy can also apply when a teacher conveys a negative expectation towards randomly selected children in the classroom. However, a number of observational studies have been made that add strength to the belief that the teacher's negative attitude towards the child can depress the child's enthusiasm and achievement. Rist (1970) in a study of ghetto children making their first contact with formal education, showed that the teacher's perception of the family's social status, derived from information on the admission cards influenced the teacher's expectations of the child's performance and by the end of the second week she had placed children in 'ability' groups which remained fixed for the rest of the year. Rist also noticed that the children placed in the lower groups had darker pigmentation and were more poorly dressed. Not only did the children perform to the teacher's expectations, but longitudinal studies by Rist showed that the children streamed into low ability groups in their first weeks of school remained trapped in such groups in their second, third and subsequent years at school.

Do Rist's observations have relevance for teachers of Aboriginal children? It is possible that a teacher's expectation of failure for the year one child is not only borne out by the child's 'failure' but dooms the child to a school-life of self-perpetuating failure and causes teachers to become convinced 'that Aboriginal children cannot do well at school because they do not do well at school'? (Tannock and Punch 1975,p.47).

As Rist's study showed, teachers may have a preconceived image of the potentially successful child and the Aboriginal child generally, does not fit this image. There are, of course, exceptions that apply in varying degrees. When the parents hold status positions as, for example, government employees, teacher aides and police aides, the teacher's attitude towards these children may convey an expectation of good performance. A similar expectation may also be apparent if the child is regularly well dressed or lives in a better class of home. In towns where the Aboriginal children have three distinct styles of accommodation, the reserve hut, state house and hostel or mission the

teachers have been observed to grade their expectations to match the child's accommodation. Hostel children are more often seen by teachers to have the 'best chance'. In one country town where the teacher expressed this opinion I noticed that the better dressed mission children adopted a superior attitude towards the reserve children. At a rural teacher inservice course in 1978 it was noted that in larger towns, 'a marked difference is obvious between children who come from town houses and those from camps. Children from established families in towns are performing well while those from camps are transient suffering language problems and lack the experiences school takes for granted when embarking on the formal program.' (Education Department of W.A. 1978)

The Effect of Attractiveness

Teachers have included poor health, inadequate hygiene, and unsatisfactory clothing as factors affecting the Aboriginal child's performance at school. A recent survey by a team from the Western Australian Public Health Department confirmed that the situation is serious and produced evidence to suggest that there was a strong link between poor social conditions and diseases of the ears and eyes. At Balgo Hills, a desert Mission with a government school, 140 of the 144 children examined had infection of the eyes and ear discharge. (Sixty percent of the teachers of such high incidence settlements also had symptoms of trachoma) (West Aust: 13 Sept, 1980).

There is little doubt that poverty and poor health do affect a child's performance at school but to what extent do they also affect the teacher's response to the child?

Clifford and Walster (1973) conducted an experiment to assess the effect of a child's physical attractiveness on a teacher's expectation of the child's success. They found that a child's attractiveness did influence teachers' perceptions and the more attractive the child, the more biased in its favour he was likely to be. Any attempt to extrapolate Clifford and Walster's findings to teacher perceptions of the Aboriginal child would provoke an array of pertinent questions such as; 'Would the clean, healthy and well dressed Aboriginal child be ranked as less attractive than a grubby, poorly dressed non-Aboriginal child.' Nevertheless on basic health grounds, some teachers do find it difficult to display sincere warmth towards, and encourage physical contact with a child who many have suppurating ears, unsightly nasal discharge, skin infections, dirty clothing or even all four conditions. And, unmentionable as these conditions are in today's society, this is the reality for hundreds of Aboriginal children and their teachers. Because one's perception of attractiveness is culturally biased, the application of Clifford and Walster's research findings to teachers of Aborigines occurs when they are appointed to a country school. Up to that time their concept of the Aboriginal child may range between the 'noble savage' to the worst of the stereotypes. The classroom reality is often an experience for which few are prepared. The State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia surveyed beginning teachers in 1979 and claimed that

Almost 50% of beginning teachers reported some degree of culture shock in finding differences between their own expectations and those of the students and the local community. This particularly applied to those sent to schools with a significant Aboriginal population.'

(State School Teachers' Union of W.A.: 1979)

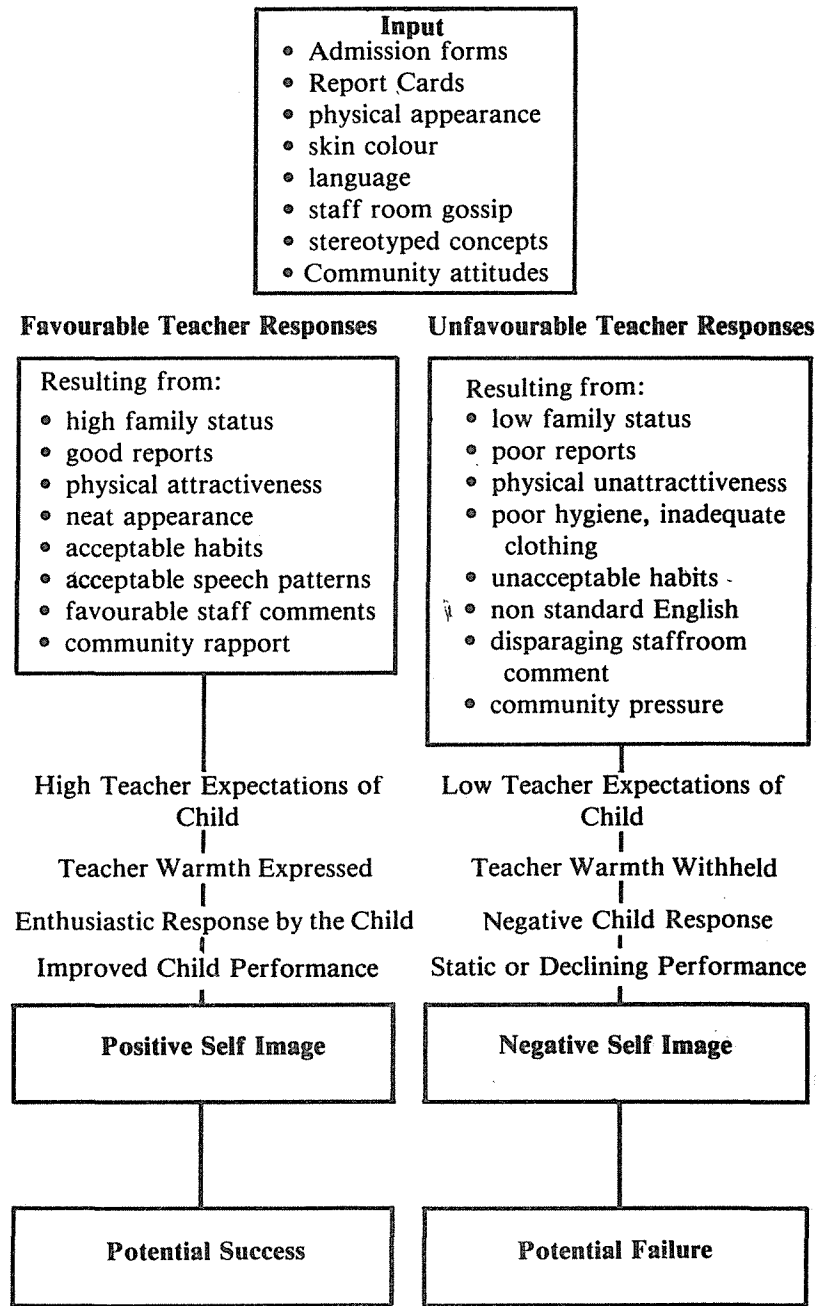
The Concept of Self and Teachers

In a school in the Great Southern region of Western Australia where the Nyungar Aboriginal children constituted 20% of the population, many of the younger Nyungars were withdrawn into special classes for skills subjects. The junior withdrawal class of 18 children was totally Aboriginal. Here the children vied with each other for the teacher's attention; their responses were eager and the whole group hummed with enthusiasm.

Later in the day, I saw five of these children in their regular classroom where they were segregated into a distinctive group placed at the rear of the room. They were passive in class activities, unco-operative in group work and generally unresponsive to the demands of the teacher who frankly admitted that she had very little success with Aboriginal children. Similar contrasting behaviour by Nyungar children was observed by Malcolm (1979) and Hill (1975:72).

Why was this happening? Was it as Hill suggests 'the dynamic function of the small group as a tool in the helping and educational process.'? (1975:72)

FIGURE 1: POSSIBLE TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE CHILD



Or as in the case that I observed a situation where the classroom teacher gave the Nyungar group little hope, expected little response and got little achievement in return as the small group passively fulfilled her prophecy of failure?

In recent years considerable attention has been focused on schools with a majority of Aboriginal pupils. However, the findings of Watts (1976:50) suggests that the children with the poorest concepts of self are in those schools where they constitute a 5 to 19 percent minority of the school population.

Table 3 shows that in Western Australia there are more schools in this category than all other schools with Aboriginal children attending. Watts states that;

There seems enough evidence to suggest, then, that these students need special help and that these schools need special help so that they can aid the students.'

Most of the research into the achievement of Aboriginal children has been directed at the school. Very few researchers have asked the parents of the children how they feel about education. One exception is Dr A.K. Eckermann (1977) who wrote;

... after prolonged discussions with Aboriginal children attending both primary and high schools in Rural Town, I have come to the conclusion that they do not enjoy the learning situation, see no real evidence that they may benefit from it in the future, and frequently do not learn even basic skills such as reading and writing while they attend.'

The parent and child responses quoted by Eckermann tend to blame teachers, principals and the school system for the child's poor academic achievement, with comments such as:

I don't like school 'cause the teachers don't like us dark kids, that might be only my idea, but I reckon that they pick on the dark ones and make them feel small ... '

And from a mother:

'But this headmaster, he doesn't like dark kids and when the white kids see the teachers picking on the dark one, they reckon they can try it on too.'

Is It Survival?

I cannot accept that teachers are deliberately racist in their attitudes towards Aboriginal children. What then is the reason for so many accusing fingers being pointed at the teachers? The fear of losing control of the children is a constant concern amongst teachers in general and young teachers in particular. A Queensland teacher of Aboriginal children commented;

'You really have to screw these kids into the floorboards to establish you're the boss.' (Eckermann, 1977:40)

And a New South Wales teacher said;

'Teaching is a matter of survival - I've got to make sure I survive out here first, then secondly I try and teach the kids.' (ibid:40)

For some, teaching Aboriginal children is a despairing experience. The following comments were made to me by teachers in remote area schools:

'It was three months before the kids really started to talk to me.'

'At the end of the first six months I couldn't see any progress and I really wasn't sure if I was actually teaching.'

There were times when I wanted to cut my wrists!'

It is possible that personal fears and uncertainty tends to make some teachers remain aloof from Aboriginal children and adults outside of school hours. Thus they are regarded as unfriendly by their pupils and teaching becomes more of a task and less of a joy each day.

As an annual visitor to a particular four teacher Aboriginal school, I witnessed the dramatic changes that can occur when survival replaces learning as the teacher's primary objective.

When I first visited the school it had a principal who generated tremendous enthusiasm amongst the staff and children. The junior grades were working in small groups on a thematic program on the topic of animals and the whole room vibrated with the childrens' oral and written output. Out in the playground an old gold prospector, surrounded by an attentive group of children, operated a dry blower and presented a thin tail of gold for the childrens' critical appraisal. The activity was part of the theme of mining that the senior grades were involved in.

The following year the enthusiasm had given way to boredom which contributed to an increased level of misbehaviour. The new principal, filling in a promotional year, liked neither the children nor the town. After one year he applied for a transfer and got it. His successor was a traditionalist and a disciplinarian. The children's desks throughout the school were set in rows; every child faced the front. The school rules were strict and punishment liberal.

What was happening in this school?

The first principal was a skilled professional with a love of teaching and children. The programs he inspired tapped the creativity of his staff and were enthusiastically received by the children who responded to the positive attitudes of the staff and to the relevance of the curriculum. By contrast, teacher negativism produced child disinterest and teacher imposed discipline provoked child aggression. The senior children who watched the dry blowing specked for gold in their spare time and several of their parents owned metal detectors. That curriculum had

relevance to those children in that school at that time. The teachers and pupils of each school must redefine relevance in terms of their own locality. The back to the wall strategies that typify the teacher struggling to survive in the classroom, are often indicative of a lack of relevance in the lessons.

This year, the school is back to the tone of five years before because the principal is again a dynamic and experienced teacher of Aboriginal children. When I think of this school, and many like it, I marvel at the resilience of children and their ability to adapt themselves to the radical changes in teacher personalities that confront them each year.

Parent/Teacher Contact

A number of studies (Tannock and Punch, 1975:93; Binnion, 1975:49) indicate that teachers have contact with a smaller proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal parents. Binnion notes;

'The only teachers who spoke to more Aboriginal than white parents were teachers in project schools. Fifty per cent of the teachers in non-project schools and 29% of teachers in project schools spoke to no Aboriginal parents.'
(Binnion, 1975:50)

But perhaps the most significant finding by Binnion was;

1. there was a significant difference between the responses of teachers who had indicated a high level of Aboriginal-parent contact to those who had little parent contact.
2. there was also a significant difference in response between those teachers who taught in the project classes with a high Aboriginal enrolment and the responses of subject teachers who taught fewer Aboriginal children and saw them in a less favourable light.
3. most of the teachers who participated in a communications conference, (the sample was small and consisted of two project and six non-project teachers) reported that their personal attitudes towards Aboriginal children had become more positive and that the children in turn had responded to them with greater enthusiasm and improved achievement.

It would seem likely that by improving teacher awareness of Aboriginal culture and values and increasing the rate of parent/teacher contact there may be measurable gains in the performance of Aboriginal children. But such ideas are easier to propose than to implement. Very few, if any, teacher pre-service programs have core units in Aboriginal studies. School based induction programs are not always adequate.

Binnion (1975:33) after concluding that the culture-value differences between parents and teachers cause a great discrepancy between the teachers' aims and their perception of the parents' aims, states:

'only effective communication between teachers and parents will eradicate the misconceptions that each have about the other because of culture-value differences.'

Teacher Awareness

There is undoubtedly an awareness amongst teachers of Aboriginal children that a classroom problem or series of problems exists. They can detect the symptoms through their failure to bring children to the anticipated classroom goals.

Some teachers can diagnose a range of possible causes for the failure of the child who is culturally different, but the majority of teachers experience great difficulty in prescribing an effective and lasting treatment. Tilbrook (1977:32) in her study of Aboriginal children in a Western Australian town noted;

'All of the schools make the distinction between Aboriginal children and others, and see the Aboriginal children as a group apart with special needs. Having defined them as 'problem' generally, the question of what to do with them is understandably found to be baffling.

A possible reason for the 'bafflement' of teachers may be the difficulty of successfully interacting between two cultural and/or social frameworks - theirs and the children's. Teachers who are confronted with children with physical, mental or sensory disabilities will endeavour to devise strategies to meet such challenges. This is not always the case where a 'cultural difference' is perceived to be the problem. Last year a teacher sought my advice about the only Aboriginal pupil in her year one class. The child refused to conform to the expected behaviour norms; she would not sit and listen to stories, her speech was poor, she was disinterested in participating and she just did not seem to listen to the teacher. I suggested the child's hearing be tested and a serious loss was revealed. What was happening here? My experience with deaf and Aboriginal children made me consider the possibility of a hearing impairment being the primary factor of concern. The young teacher direct from college without these experiences assumed that the child's behaviour was a consequence of being Aboriginal. A child does not have a failing record merely because he is Greek, Italian, Aboriginal or of any other ethnic group. Similarly, a child's Aboriginal English may be seen as a factor of poor academic achievement without the teacher being aware that his own diction or delivery may be contributing to or even causing the problem (Malcolm, 1980:40).

It must not be assumed that a model for teaching Aboriginal children can be learned and randomly applied in every classroom. This is an unrealistic expectation in education per se and even more so in Aboriginal education. Consider language as only one element of classroom interaction. A report on numeracy and literacy of Aborigines in the Kimberleys of Western Australia emphasised the diversity of the language encounters:

'In short each classroom poses a special set of facts about the kind of language spoken, and the kinds of understandings the teachers have about these languages, and the difficulties caused by cross cultural and multilingual settings. For each teacher then, the classroom is unique, and for each district, the population variables, in terms of language and community customs are unique.

In short, there can be no 'pure' regional language policy ... Australian Oral and Written English of a type spoken by most European teachers, and most children is the norm in Perth, and as such, teachers from that region tend to have expectations about childrens' reading and mathematics skills based upon a familiarity of students with Australian English. Such expectations are not appropriate for the Kimberley region.' (Tilghman, 1979:7)

Teachers do encounter difficulties in the classroom and despite the optimism of previous Directors of Primary Education who saw no need to give teachers special preparation for educating Aboriginal children, (Sherwood, 1979) the problem will not diminish until teachers are brought to an awareness of the difficulties Aboriginal children encounter at school and the types of teaching strategies that might prove effective in communicating, relating to and educating them.

Influence of Local Attitudes

The training of a primary school teacher is directed towards the development of positive attitudes towards all children in the classroom and a conviction that all children have the potential for some degree of success. Yet the research suggests that too many teachers express low expectations for Aboriginal children. Why is this so? Is it possible that teachers appointed to towns where prejudice is accepted and practised absorb the local attitudes towards ethnic minorities? Teachers have told me that they have to socialise in the towns and it is easier to keep their opinions in check than become embroiled in arguments. Crawford, an Aboriginal teaching assistant at Walgett High School in New South Wales writes;

'In many country towns teachers' expectations are a reflection of the community expectations and attitudes. Aboriginal children believe they will not perform well in class, and they realise that this belief is shared by their peer groups and their teachers..' (1977:39)

The teacher coming to a town is well placed to identify social injustice, in-equality, poverty, maladjustment, deviant behaviour, poor health and discrimination, for at the child level these ills lie close to the surface. The teacher in the role of class leader could foster tolerance and understanding. But unfortunately, this has not been the record of the past. Teachers represent the most conservative group of people within our society. As purveyors of culture and social attitudes, they tend to be influenced by societal pressures. Rather than attempting to initiate change they follow in its wake and few teachers will risk local sanctions by acting as crusaders in opposition to the prevailing attitudes. It may be unrealistic and perhaps unfair, to expect them to behave otherwise.

Defining the effective teacher of Aboriginal children

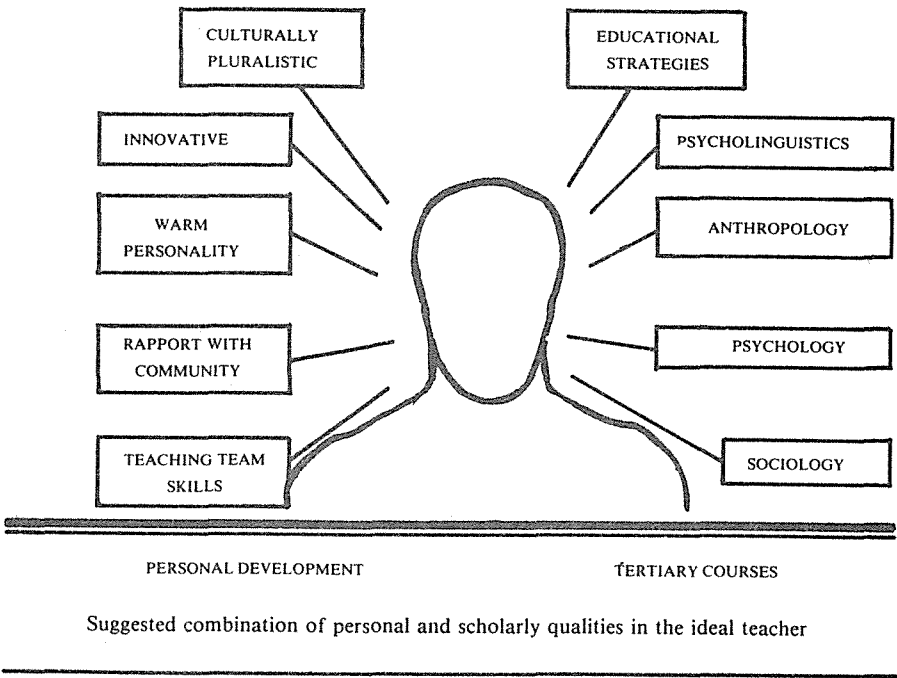
In view of Tilghman's previous statement on the diversity of the Aboriginal classroom, it is doubtful if it is possible or even desirable to project the model of the effective teacher of Aboriginal children. Not only must the classroom variables be taken into account when proposing the qualities for effectiveness, but equally important is the response of the teacher to the environmental and cultural differences that he encounters.

It is, however, possible to consider the qualities that appear to make a teacher more effective in a crosscultural classroom - ie. a classroom where the teacher's culture and socialization is significantly different to most of the children. Hart (1974,) defines the teacher of Aboriginal children by the many roles he must assume as part of his professional responsibilities. But Hart emphasises that the successful conduct of these roles depends upon a combination of scholarly and personality qualities (Fig.2).

Unfortunately it does not follow that a teacher with a sound background of Aboriginal studies will be an effective teacher or that the teacher who is capable of establishing a warm relationship with the community will be able to enthuse children in the classroom. There is more to success than a check list of qualities.

FIGURE 2. TEACHER QUALITIES

(Based on Hart, 1974)



Judith Kleinfeld (1972) sought to isolate the characteristics of the effective teacher of Alaskan Eskimo children and defined four major categories.

FIGURE 3 - TEACHER CATEGORIES

(based on Kleinfeld: 1972)

ACTIVE DEMANDINGNESS

PROFESSIONAL
DISTANCE

Type 1 Traditionalists	Type 4 Supportive gadflies
Type 2 Sophisticates	Type 3 Sentimentalists

PERSONAL
WARMTH

PASSIVE UNDERSTANDING

The Sentimentalist, according to Kleinfeld, tends to be too soft, too disorganised and his classes soon erupt into chaos. Very little effective teaching takes place and he is left with a sense of injustice and rejection. The rejection may cause him to exhibit defense mechanisms of criticism, sarcasm and hostility towards the children and even other more successful staff members.

The Sophisticate, with his detached reserve is often an excellent teacher with bright urban middle class children who respond to his wit and repartee. However, he finds it difficult to relate meaningfully to the ethnic minority, to the poor, or to the culturally different.

The Traditionalist places emphasis on performance. This is the teacher who demands results. He is regarded as an excellent teacher with urban children, but because he tends to be too formal and too aloof he can rarely empathize with children. They work for him not with him. He is often intolerant of those who do not or cannot maintain his levels of expectation.

The Supportive Gadfly was seen by Kleinfeld as possessing the qualities that makes him or her a positive, liked and successful teacher in a wide range of school environments. This type of teacher radiates a high level of warmth, not only emotional but by his verbal and physical contact. But personal warmth alone is not enough as we saw with the sentimentalist. The teacher must maintain a policy of 'Active Demandingness'. This the 'Gadfly' succeeds in doing.

Fanshawe (1976: 3) considered that Kleinfeld's model did have some relevance for the teacher of adolescent Aborigines but warned against the fallacy of regarding all ethnic minorities as similar. Fanshawe did, however, with some reservations, suggest that teachers of Aboriginal children should exhibit the following characteristics which expand upon the qualities of Kleinfeld's Gadfly'.

- they should be demanding, having faith in the academic ability of their Aboriginal students, avoiding the trap of expecting little from their students and getting little;
- they should be warm and supportive, giving guidance, help, understanding and encouragement; being sympathetic to the Aboriginal culture, whether it be the traditional culture or the culture of the fringe dweller;
- they should be stimulating, presenting material and organizing activities which are clearly demonstrated to be relevant to the needs of their students;
- they should be responsive and organized, eliciting from their students a trust in their professional competence.

CONCLUSION

There is indisputable evidence that Aboriginal children are under-achieving and that a mammoth reappraisal of teaching strategies, curriculum content and teacher attitudes is necessary before that trend will be arrested. In this paper I have concentrated on one aspect of education - the teacher, and have posed the questions:

Is the teacher contributing to Aboriginal under achievement?

If so, what are possible causes?

How can a teacher become more effective?

Teachers, who in the main take for granted their academic successes, their economic stability, their social status and their confident assessment of personal worth, tend to underestimate the importance of such values to children who are being denied access to these social markers. Furthermore, teachers may be oblivious of their catalytic role as they generate positive or negative forces within the classroom.

REFERENCES

- Binnion, Joan (1975) Secondary education for Aborigines. Education Department of South Australia.
- Clifford, M.M. and Walster, E. (1973) The effects of physical attractiveness on teacher expectations. Sociology of Education vol. 46
- Commission of Inquiry into Poverty. (1976) Poverty and education in Australia, Canberra.
- Crawford, L. (1977) Aboriginal children and the school. The Aboriginal Child at School, vol. 4. no. 3.
- Eckermann, A.K. (1977) The teacher won't teach me! The Aboriginal Child at School, Vol. 5, no. 5.
- Education Department of W.A. (1978) Inservice course summary. Kalgoorlie, April.
- Education Department of W.A. (1976-1979) Planning 'B' schools statistics.
- Fanshawe, J.P. (1976) Possible characteristics of an effective teacher of adolescent Aborigines. The Aboriginal Child at School, Vol. 4, No. 2
- Hart M. (1974) Kulila on Aboriginal Education. Sydney: Australian & New Zealand Bookshop.
- Hickerson N. (1966) Education for alienation. N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Hill, K.F. (1975) A study of Aboriginal poverty in two country towns. Canberra.
- Makin, C. and Ibbotson, D. (1973) A survey of Aboriginal education in selected Western Australian schools.
- Malcolm, I. (1980) Preparing teachers for interaction in Aboriginal classrooms Occasional Papers, Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, No. 4.
- Malcolm, Ian G. (1979) Classroom Communication and the Aboriginal child: a sociolinguistic investigation in Western Australian Primary Schools. Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis. U.W.A.
- McEvedy, M.R. (1980) Prejudiced teachers and their migrant pupils. S.P.A.T.E. Conference, Perth. Unpublished paper.
- Rist, R.C. (1970) Student social class and teacher expectations: the self fulfilling prophecy in Ghetto education Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 40, No. 3.
- Sherwood, J. (1979) Aboriginal studies in teacher education. In Berndt, R.M. and C.H. (Eds.) Aborigines of the West: Their Past and Their Present, U.W.A. Press, Perth.
- State School Teachers' Union of W.A. (1979) Education Committee - an induction evaluation. August.

Tannock, P. and Punch, K. (1975) A report on the education status of Aboriginal children in Western Australia. U.W.A.

Tilbrook, L. (1977) Moora, Aboriginal children in a wheatbelt town. Perth: Mount Lawley College.

Tilghman, P. (1979) A report on literacy and numeracy in the Kimberleys. Prepared for the Senate Inquiry - September, 1979. Unpublished.

Watts, B. (1976) Access to education: an evaluation of the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme. The Aboriginal Child at School. Vol. 4. No. 4.

Western Australian Newspaper, 13 September, 1980.

1162X

What can the teacher do to enhance Aboriginal childrens skills in the three R's? Lipscombe, in this next article, has approached the task of teaching reading from the perspective of a 'supportive gadfly', as outlined in Green's article. From a basic assumption that the teacher should start with the children's experiences and build on them, she gives a multitude of suggestions for content and method in reading and writing. Teachers who use the contents of this article, however, should keep in mind that it must be selectively adapted to the specific needs of the children in their class. There is no magic formula for all children.

TEACHING READING AND WRITING TO OLDER ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

R Lipscombe

Teaching reading and writing to older Aboriginal children can be one of the most satisfying teaching tasks in the Northern Territory. Most of these students have a culturally different background from the teacher's. Their perception of a topic therefore may be quite different from the teacher's. A good teacher will value this difference and use it:

as a starting point to teach the student about living in a bicultural world;

to broaden the teacher's own outlook of the world. These differences can add a new dimension to a good teacher's thinking.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

The language experience approach seems to be one of the most effective methods to use with students. This approach relies upon the use of language arising from personal experience. It involves a meaningful integration and development of thinking, talking, writing and reading.

Encourage the students to talk about their sport; they can report on games they have played or watched. Ask them to tell about/write about themselves to include in a sports book. Collect books from the weekend sporting fixtures and use them as reading material. Comprehension exercises, sequencing, language structure, grammar etc., are more meaningful if they are based on these articles.

One teacher had tremendous success with all students writing their own biographies. My own class wrote stories about their home communities; these were displayed at the local Tourist Bureau and attracted much interest. (Better Reading/Writing Now contains 100 ways to publish children's writing: available from P.E.T.A., C/- Business Manager, Epping Public School, Epping, 2121 (\$4-\$5)).

The rationale behind the success of the language experience approach is:

1. What a child thinks about he can talk about (or paint or draw).

2. What he can talk about he can write about (or someone else can write for him).
3. He can usually read anything he writes about; we have found also that our pupils enjoy trying to read what other students have written as well.
4. It is much easier to reinforce the skills of comprehension through personal writing.

One method of organising this approach is for the teacher to introduce the topic naturally during the morning talk. She may read an article about a football game, or relate an anecdote about a game she watched. Allow the students to draw a picture about the topic before they start writing (not all of them will want to - leave it up to them). The more capable group will probably draw a picture and then get on with their story. This group can have free reading/tutor systems when they finish. Try to get them to proof-read their own stories. With the majority of the class encourage them to talk about their picture and begin writing. With the really slow group get them to give you a sentence to write on their picture. They copy this once and then attempt to write a similar sentence substituting a noun, adjective, phrase etc.

All children have access to dictionaries. I recommend the following:

An Easy Dictionary, Schofield & Sims Ltd., plus one workbook for same;

Chambers Young Set Dictionaries, 1 2 3 4.

As well as dictionaries, each child has a 'spelling paper'. Encourage them to try to write the words needed on this paper. If time permits, tick each part they have written correctly and change the 'wrong' letters. It is necessary that they are shown that (usually) most of their words are correct. The more able groups write the words they needed help with in their dictionary note books. If the students are giving/asking for really interesting words I note them down and put them on display. Try to correct as much as possible of their written work with them.

Sometimes I ask them to rewrite their stories, especially if they are going on display. Children should have the opportunity to see their work in corrected form. Point out acceptable forms of spoken and written English. I do not believe in accepting wrong structures and I am sure the children do not want errors on display either.

With my below average (!!) group I found the following idea very valuable. After they had written (or I had written) their story they then wrote each word in their dictionary notebook. If they had already used the word in a previous story, they simply put a dot to show that they had used it again. Thus pages in their dictionary might appear like this:

aA	tT	sS
a.....	the	some
aeroplane..	Tom..	sand ..
are....	tomato.	Susie .
Australia	there	sat ...
at	time ...	silver.

In effect you are building up the 'sight word' list. You will find that they grow in confidence in their own ability to read and write when they realize that they have a stock of 'known' words.

Lots of teachers still rely heavily upon 'phonics' for the teaching of reading and spelling: if you are determined to place an emphasis on phonics could I suggest you adopt this suggestion - before you throw yourself into phonics make sure you have an adequate listening program in operation. Also make sure you understand thoroughly the significance of all types of hearing loss.

You can take all your 'phonic' words direct from their individual dictionaries: compound words and syllabification exercises are more meaningful if the words are known.

Learn all you can about the Language Experience, Breakthrough to Literacy, Organic approach. When you have time, I suggest you read:

Harris, S., Culture and Learning: Tradition and Education in N.E. Arnhem Land, N.T., Department of Education, 1981.

Fader, D., Hooked on Books, New York, Pergamon Press, 1969.

Kohl, H., Reading - How To, Penguin Education.

Christie, M., What to do until the reading specialist comes, The Aboriginal Child at School, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1978.

READING FOR A PURPOSE

We must give students a purpose (one which they can appreciate) for both reading and writing. The following lists, which have been compiled by Libby Pearce, show some of the purposes of reading and writing. (N.B. Reading and writing for leisure/pleasure should not be overlooked).

SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR READING

- . Reading labels - on foodstuffs, clothing etc. to ensure correct or appropriate article is purchased.
- . Reading instructions on labels, e.g., cake mixes, packet foods etc. Also washing or cleaning instructions on clothing.
- . Reading assembly instructions for do-it-yourself kits etc.
- . Reading instructions on paint cans, garden sprays etc. to be able to calculate amount required.
- . Map reading.
- . Reading manuals of instructions for the care and maintenance of appliances and motor vehicles.
- . Reading traffic signs and motoring regulations.

- . Reading hire purchase agreements and contracts.
 - . Reading minutes of a meeting.
 - . Reading insurance brochures etc.
 - . Reading advertisements and mail order catalogues.
 - . Reading sewing and knitting instructions and patterns.
 - . Reading recipes for cooking.
 - . Reading plans as a basis for construction.
 - . Reading and interpreting telegrams.
 - . Reading business letters, graphs, tables etc.
- Official forms, e.g., tax returns, census forms, applications for benefits and bank statements.

SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR WRITING

- . Filling in mail order catalogue forms.
- . Writing mail order letters.
- . Writing telegrams.
- . Filling in banking forms, e.g., deposits, withdrawal, application for cheque account.
- . Writing simple business letters.
- . Keeping a simple credit/debit ledger.
- . Filling in official forms e.g. tax returns, census forms, application for benefits etc.
- . Writing instructions for another person to follow, e.g. directions to find a place, job routines etc.
- . Writing duty statements.
- . Writing minutes of a meeting.
- . Writing accident reports, eye witness accounts etc.
- . Writing statutory declarations.

With a bit of thought these purposes can be made interesting for our students. A whole unit of work can be centred around an order from D.J.'s. Imagine the excitement of receiving a new blouse from D.J.'s in Sydney.

I can hear a few settlement dwellers saying, "Yes, and imagine the disappointment when you find it's the wrong colour or the wrong size."

SPELLING

I believe that the teaching of spelling should still have a place in the Language Arts. We should systematically teach the students to recognize and spell the Dolch words. Research has shown that these words make up 50-70% of all of the words our students have to read and consequently spell. The methods following are those used in most standard spelling schemes, e.g., EPIC.

Words taught in formal spelling lessons can be obtained from many sources, e.g.:

- . common errors in weekly/daily stories.
- . all subject areas of the curriculum.
- . topical words - I am doing student driver words and words connected with the 'office' because this is the unit we are studying.
- . all words connected with a sense, e.g. sound - pop, band, laugh, roar, whine etc.
- . a graded list.

METHODS OF TEACHING A WORD

- a) Pre-test all students.
- b) Write each word on the board, say it clearly and carefully, use it in a simple sentence. Point out any interesting feature, i.e. phonic features, shape features.
- c) Tell students to write the word, then they check it while you spell it to them.
- d) Rub out the word and tell them to write it down again and get their partner to check it.
- e) Write the word in a sentence to illustrate its meaning.
- f) Students make up their own sentence using the word.

WHAT THE STUDENT SHOULD DO

- a) Look at the word.
- b) Say it yourself.
- c) Write the word and check it.

- d) Underline any hard spots.
- e) Spell the word, letter by letter, to yourself.
- f) Picture the spelling of the word.
- g) Write the word in syllables (if possible).
- h) Write the word in a sentence.
- i) Build other words from it.

ACTIVITIES TO REINFORCE WORDS

1. Write down the big word in your list which has this small word in it, e.g.:

ear all each

2. Missing letter. Find these words in your list, e.g.

-- own -ske- c--led

3. Write all your list words in alphabetical order.
4. Find these things in your list and write them down, e.g.

3 colours
3 words that tell us about the weather.

5. Can you find these words in your list? e.g.:

1)
 0

1. Someone who looks after you.

6. Jumbled words. Find these words in your list, e.g.

nlogg sakem

7. How many new words can you make by joining the words on the left to the words on the right?

in	to
on	where
to	one
bed	thing
some	day
every	room

8. Secret Message. These words are all mixed up. Work out the secret message by putting them in the right order:

the are All Yirara going clever Drive the student to In.

9. Find opposites to these words in your list and write the pairs of words down, e.g.:

always n _____

black w _____

10. Write a short story using some of your list words.
11. How many new words can you make by adding these heads (write down several prefixes, e.g. un, re) or these tails (write down several suffixes e.g. ful, ment) to your spelling list.
12. Make two (or three or four) lists of words. Put the words with only one syllable in the first list and those with two syllables in the second list and so forth.
13. Check your dictionary and write two sentences for each word to show that the word can have two different meanings.
14. Make new words by filling in the empty squares:

_____	_____	_____
loud	louder	loudest
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
clear		
_____	_____	_____

15. Complete these sentences by using a list word:

The cattle () water to drink.

16. Say these words. Write two more words that rhyme:

sound ground

17. Change mea in measure to make new words commencing with

plea trea

18. Add er, ed, where possible to:

being travel

19. What list words can you make out of these letters?
You can use each letter several times:

r e m p a l

20. Yirara College - how many words can you make out of this?

N.B. Remember Aboriginal students usually have well developed visual skills and good visual memories. Use all sorts of visual presentations in preference to auditory stimuli in these lessons.

We should take account of the way the Aborigines have traditionally learnt their skills - this has an extremely important bearing on our future survival in Aboriginal schools. We can successfully follow their methods in many subjects, e.g. spelling, maths, visual perception and awareness. Stephen Harris has written a fascinating account of the Aboriginal learning context.¹ Try to get hold of a copy. It should be compulsory reading for all teachers of Aboriginal children.

READING/WRITTEN EXPRESSION IDEAS

Alphabet Ideas

Try to foster a 'love affair' with words. Try a group (class) story with words using each letter of the alphabet, e.g.

All big crocodiles dislike eating five girls hurriedly in June. etc.

Class ABC

Students use people, things, actions from their own classrooms (or school) to make up an ABC.

A is for acting	D is for David	G is for good
B is for bell	E is for everyone	H is for home time
C is for class	F is for Freddy	I is for itchy

Expression of a Thought or Feeling

Read a poem or a short story illustrating someone's thoughts or feelings. Ask students to think of a time when they were lonely, happy etc. and write about it.

Write down some things you'd like to know but are too frightened (ashamed) to ask.

Food

Plan a menu for a special event. Write out a menu for a cafe or restaurant. Draw the clothes you'd wear. Who would you take with you? Do a food alphabet.

Cartoons

Talking cartoons - students do a cartoon on the language master cards. They then record the dialogue on the language master.

Conversation bubbles to go with a set cartoon or draw a picture to go with a conversation bubble. Sequence cartoons.

Class News

Students help the teacher to compose a daily news item. When sufficient items have been collected the teacher has them typed and roneoed for each pupil.

1. See reference earlier in this article.

Weak class - write the news with several words omitted. A supplementary word list could be given to help the students choose (and spell) the missing words, e.g.

Today is It is We will have David saw five in the lagoon near the school.

Word bank: fish, sunny, raining, Friday, crocodiles, Reading, Art.

News Clippings

Clip suitable headings from newspapers, magazines, pamphlets etc. Students have to write a story to go with the heading for a newsheet. Have a suitable 'spread' of topics, i.e. sporting events, crime, women's news etc.

Life Story

Ask each student to think about his life story being made into a film. Ask the class to think about the important things which have happened in their life. You could give them 'leading' questions as a guide, e.g. Where were you born? Tell me about your family.

Staff book

Students arrange to interview each staff member. To help them initially you can give them a prepared set of questions to ask. These can be collated into a reading book. A Polaroid photograph would add interest.

Visitor's Book

Interview or summary of short speech on visitor's home, family, job etc.

Words

Talk to the students about all the things you need words for e.g. pop songs, picture shows, radio, television, school, sports rules, telephones, you sometimes have to talk at the store, or at the clinic if you are sick.

Tell your students to pretend they can't talk (or speak) English and ask them how could they show a European or someone from another tribe that:

- . they are hungry and need something to eat
- . they want to join in and play basketball or football
- . they are lost and can't find their own people
- . they want to buy a can of Fanta and a boiled egg

Try to find out which words the children feel are important for them to know - see how their list compares with your basic survival list.

Signs

Draw each sign the students might see in their communities. Ask the students what each sign means. See if they can design some 'fun' signs, e.g. "Goannas cross here", or "Danger - sharks swim here".

Ask your students to teach you some of their own sign language.

Pop Stars

This topic is almost unlimited in the variety of motivational lessons which it generates. Level of teacher expectation will need to be adjusted to individual abilities.

Who Am I

Write five clues about yourself:

1. I am _____
2. I have _____
3. I can _____
4. I live _____
5. I like _____

We must take note of their interests, e.g. sport, pop stars, local activities. Use the local environment to teach the skills needed. Take 'a reading walk' around your settlement. You will be surprised how much 'purposeful' reading you will find.

The activities already mentioned could all be expanded to make a unit of work similar to the Pop Star unit.

Activity 1

Collect stories and pictures from newspapers, weekly magazines, pop magazines etc. These could be pasted onto light card if you intend to use them for a variety of activities.

If you have an old alphabetical expanding file you could have the students file the stories in alphabetical order; or put them in alphabetical order and keep them in two-hole folders. Instead of filing them alphabetically the students could file them according to a time - line schedule, or a popularity rating (this leads to lots of 'animated' discussion - quite possibly the students could conduct a survey among class members to determine the popularity rating. Votes could be awarded to each pop group by the students and the rating worked out on a preferential voting system. Parallels could be drawn between this activity and the way elections are conducted).

Many comprehension exercises could be based on the information contained in these articles. Make sure that your comprehension exercises encompass the whole range of comprehension, i.e. -

- (a) Literal (most basic level where students only have to give you back the information contained in the article);
- (b) Interpretive level which is based upon -
 - 1. data provided by the author
 - 2. logic, and (in the case of divergent inferences)
 - 3. readers' imagination
- (c) Critical level of comprehension involves the student in evaluating and judging the material contained in the articles. As with all levels of comprehension this skill can and should be taught by the teacher. To help develop the skill of critical comprehension the following activities are useful, e.g. panel discussions, whole class or group discussions, evaluation of relevant reviews of the pop group, advertising blurbs related to their performances, editorials, letters to the editor etc., comparison of facts from different sources, e.g. information put out by pop group managers, recording companies, critics, fans, national magazines, etc.
- (d) Creative comprehension is normally quite a difficult level to teach. Nevertheless this particular topic seems to 'lend' itself very well to creative exercises e.g. What would you do if you belonged to the Bee Gees? How would you dress if you were a member of a Punk Rock group? etc.

I had 'less able' students copy out short articles about pop stars; they had substituted their own (or a friend's) name in place of the pop star's name. This exercise has helped train students in acceptable sentence structure as well as being a powerful motivation for them to read their own and their friends' work. These stories could be bound together as a 'Class Pop Star Magazine'.

Activity 2

Lots of spontaneous 'talk' was generated during a lesson in which we made up a pop star alphabet. This exercise helped many of the students to visually fix the position of letters in the alphabet, e.g.:

Abba
Bee Gees, Boney M, Boyfriends
C
David Bowie, Dragon
Elton John, Elvis Presley
Faces
etc.

An additional activity in this area is to take one letter, e.g. 'S' and arrange all the pop groups which start with that letter in alphabetical order, i.e.

Sex Pistols
Sherbet
Starjets
Stevie Wonder
Sweet
etc.

Following this exercise you could tell students to select a pop group, write this down and see how many groups they can incorporate in the following way:

Stevie Wonder
 O
 D
 S
 T
 E
 W
 A
 R
 The DartS
 w
 e
 e
 t

I have found that this exercise has led to a great awareness of sound/symbol relationship.

Students can even write 'off beat' poetry (!!) by working with a Pop Star's name, e.g.:

Sex Pistols	- Noun	Dragon
Sing	- Verb	Drones
Savagely	- Adverb	Drearily

or a Word Crocodile based on pop group names -

Monkees
 Kiss
 Sweet
 Elton John etc.

Activity 3

Select one of the current pop tunes and stencil enough copies for your class. I have used the words of pop songs to increase students' awareness of words with multiple meanings; we have studied the compound words, grammatical structures and word families contained in the song. Comprehension exercises based on the words of the song have 'uncovered' interesting attitudes to social issues. Some of the 'folk' songs can be used to develop 'caring' attitudes. Many students have never looked beneath the superficial 'surface' meanings of songs. By encouraging 'in-depth' analysis of their own 'pop-culture' we can hopefully inculcate an in-depth analysis of everything they read and experience.

One of my classes compiled a Dictionary of Slang from pop songs. Many lunch hours were spent debating (to put it politely) the meanings of particular words. These sessions led to an increasing awareness of the 'power' of language. The same group developed their own 'Class Slang List' and took great delight in 'not being understood' by their peers in other classes. Fortunately they did not use 'their' slang with other teachers on the staff. Believe it or not, a 'love of language' can be born by using this approach.

Activity 4

Writing letters to pop groups has always been a popular activity with my students. Several years ago we decided to make up some questionnaires to send to some pop groups. Initially we compiled a class one which we wrote on the board. In the next lesson students compiled their own list of questions to a group of their own choice (some judicious censoring might be needed with less inhibited students). We were fortunate to receive replies from a few groups (send a stamped addressed envelope and you may be lucky).

Another interesting lesson developed out of the above; small groups within the class were formed to research a group of their choice. They then filled in a duplicate questionnaire form as best they could. Several groups were able to compare their answers with questionnaires returned by the groups.

Each class group selected a spokesperson to be 'interviewed' by a student. The spokesperson pretended to be a pop star which his/her group had researched.

These interviews were taped. Students quickly became aware of their excessive use of the meaningless phrase 'you know'. These sessions led to a definite improvement in clarity of speech, organisation of answers and (thankfully) a marked decrease in the use of 'y' know'. Several weeks later I used these taped interviews to test students recall of facts. Students were surprised at the discrepancy between what they 'remembered' and the played-back interview. We then developed a series of ways in which we could select important visual and auditory information and methods by which we could 'learn' this information and recall it more easily. I was optimistic enough to hope that these methods would also be used by the students to help them in their 'more academic' lessons.

Activity 5

Each student selects a pseudonym and writes a 'Dorothy Dix' type letter to a pop group asking for advice about a real (or imagined) problem they are facing. Ask the class to appoint a small group to answer these letters. These can be displayed in the classroom. I have been amazed at some of the 'teenage insights' contained in some of the replies. Change the 'answering group' occasionally if your class want to continue this activity. This type of activity helps students to see that other students have to face similar problems. Disputes regarding advice have paved the way for many lessons (informal) on problems related to drugs, sex, food, health, appearance, romance etc. Worries about physical and mental differences, discrimination (age, sex, appearance, taste, socio-economic class, religion, political opinions, race, residential area etc.), relationships with parents, siblings, peers, opposite sex, other adults etc., have all been discussed at length. More mature attitudes regarding tolerance and prejudice have developed.

These spontaneous, informal discussions on the above issues have proved more worthwhile than the most assiduously planned lesson. (Warning - High School teachers will need to be prepared to defend this approach. Make sure you are aware of the actual 'learning' that is going on. Judicious questions can maximise the benefits of spontaneous communication).

Activity 6

Ask students to design an interesting record cover for a pop song. More able groups can often design a cover using words arranged in an interesting visual way, e.g. for the song "Money Money Money".

Activity 7

Musically inclined pupils might be interested in writing a report on the instruments used by a group. Research into ways in which certain instruments have changed over the years could be an interesting exercise. One of my classes became interested in the Melbourne based 'Bushwhackers' group. They studied their unusual instruments and made up their own set (with variations). Subsequently these were donated to a local primary school.

Activity 8

Dramatise/tape a "This is your life" program.

Activity 9

On many occasions we have used pop song lyrics as the basis for our study of 'poetry' (a painless way to encourage students to study poetical notions).

Activity 10

Collect several old accommodation books. Select a pop group and tell students to find them suitable accommodation. Selected accommodation must meet the following criteria, e.g. it must be within 12 kms of Adelaide, must have a spa pool, colour TV, 24 hour room service etc. Students then select about five motels/hotels which meet these requirements.

Use of pop songs, stars and groups is only limited by the teacher's ingenuity and imagination. If your group is more interested in sport, politics or business, you could substitute the topic and adapt your activities accordingly.

N.B. In learning to use and fully understand English your Aboriginal student may have to learn not only to speak in a different way, but also to think and act in ways which are different from those of his people (i.e his society - the ways he knows). Be very careful in the activities that you introduce that you are not unwittingly undermining your student's faith in his own way of living.

Lorna Hannans first article examines the range of meanings of the term "multicultural curriculum" and then goes on to consider some of the implications for multicultural education of various aspects of curriculum planning. The conclusion drawn suggest that schools have to start somewhere and while ideal models of multicultural curricula should be striven for, measures which fall short of these ideals are acceptable as a starter. Hannan concludes with some major questions which must be answered if multiculturalism is to be effectively implemented in schools.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES FOR TEACHERS MAKING DECISIONS ON CURRICULUM

L. Hannan

The following outline is not meant to be the basis of a theoretical paper. Its content and thrust will be drawn from a range of present school practices and points of discussion from examples are indicated.

1. What Multiculturalism Means for Teachers and Schools

1.1 Range of Meanings

Whatever meanings multiculturalism may have in the rest of the society, it currently has several distinct meanings in schools. The difficulties that come out of people mistakenly believing that they are using the same term to cover the same range of meanings become even more confusing when they are trying to negotiate school policy and curriculum planning. Therefore I intend to start by looking at a range of the meanings currently used among teachers talking about multicultural education.

1.2 School Based Meanings

What these meanings have in common is that they are based on particular school practices and policies. It is therefore not appropriate to talk about their being "correct" or "incorrect". It will gradually become obvious that none are completely misguided, but many are unsatisfactory; some are contradictory and all are incomplete. Nevertheless they are the basis from which we can start and they need to be understood.

1.3 Examples

1.3.1 Where a multicultural curriculum is seen to be one which helps migrant children and the children of migrant families to fit into the general society.

This view is characteristically held in schools whose population think of themselves as "Australian" rather than "migrant" and where the teaching staff agrees with their perception. The first reaction of those with a strong commitment to multiculturalism or with experience of a developed program is to be shocked at a view which exonerates that group from any other responsibilities to

act as part of the total society. However, hidden inside the rather limited meaning being given to the intentions of a multicultural curriculum is a rather hazy perception of the legitimate case for a school to respond in content and emphasis to its own population.

An example of this view is:

There are no migrants in our school so we do not need to introduce a multicultural program. What we want to do is take our students to Melbourne where they can see the problems first-hand.

- 1.3.2 Where a school program is thought to become multicultural by planning a number of discrete activities, some of which are outside the curriculum such as 'ethnic nights' or 'international day'.

These events are intended to give different groups a chance to display part of their culture and so to familiarise everyone with the diversity to be found among cultures. The problems with this approach are that it can remain superficial and need not influence the formal program even when it is relevant; and that it fails to show that similar or even identical human wishes can and are met in a great variety of ways.

The program examined contrasts the potential with present practice.

... Children will cook and eat spaghetti ...

COMPARED WITH

... bread.

After looking at different sorts of bread, we will tell the children how they are made. For example Middle Eastern bread used to be made at home. In Australia, it is made by the baker and people who are used to flat bread buy it while some others decide they will also buy it.

- 1.3.3 Where a multicultural curriculum is described as an overall attitude to the subject matter and organisation of the school.

This description is hardly debatable and only becomes interesting when it is clear what is to be done and why. An analogy can be made with another teaching idea called LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM. Both lead rather too quickly to the conclusions either that if you have the right attitude you will be doing the right thing; or that a range of disconnected and incoherent activities can be initiated and linked to the approved attitude, and will need no further justification.

As part of our multicultural program we have introduced:

- International Day
- Ethnic Nights (one each term)
- Folk dancing
- Parent newsletter

This year we want to start

- A Drop-in Centre for ethnic parents
- A multicultural library with books in Italian, Greek and Vietnamese
- Story telling

- 1.3.4 Where a multicultural curriculum is seen as a substitute for Community Language Programs, because it can reach everyone in English and provide them with an understanding of different cultures.

It is clear that because teachers are hard to find and Community Language Programs lack adequate classroom materials, they are hard to introduce and school administrators are quickly sympathetic to the idea that something else can be done instead and will serve the same purpose more effectively. Most such programs also remain safely under the control of the teachers, though whether this provides them with conscious or unconscious support, I could not say.

- 1.3.5 Where a multicultural program is seen as a necessary support and complement to a Community Language Program.

I take it that a Community Language Program, whether it is an introductory program for non-speakers or a maintenance program in the mother tongue for a section of the school population, cannot be divorced from the idea that students will be making contact with the culture with which that language has a symbiotic relationship. Hence the idea that related subject areas should support the language study is often advanced. However there can be no adequate multiculturalism if the developing culture of the Australian Community is not introduced and advanced as part of the program.

Example: the culture of "Australians" today and how it can be used in the curriculum.

THE CULTURE OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

Example

Responses of commentators, historians, writers, artists, film-makers

- The Australian landscape
- The Aboriginal peoples and cultures
- Migration
- Life in the outback
- Life in the cities
- Cultural diversity in Australian life
- The idea of egalitarianism

- 1.3.6 Where a multicultural program is seen as the introduction of a set of values to the conventional areas of the curriculum, thereby changing their content.

What is involved is the correction of prejudiced judgments and long established omissions, the development inside schools of coherent material which informs students about the nature of the society. What is still more difficult is for schools to uncover and work with the conflicts which underlie the content and also to find ways of involving parents. Their approving, informing or planning the curriculum to do justice to our need to have an informed population raises the idea of community involvement beyond tokenism.

An example of attempts to involve parents in this process.

WHAT PARENTS WANT

The Brunswick Secondary Education Council has set out ten main issues that come up in debate at parents' meetings

Ten Issues for Negotiation

1. Community languages
2. Assessment
3. Discipline
4. English
5. Core: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Community Languages compulsory to Year 10
6. Dress: An economical form of school dress with a school identification on it.
7. Maths
8. Homework
9. Grouping: In some schools students in year grades are promoted automatically each year. Parents are used to a system of promotion from grade as the result of tests
10. Participation: Parents want their ideas to be considered seriously by the teacher and either to see them put into practice or to hear why they cannot

2. Why Teachers and Schools are Interested in Multiculturalism

2.1 Response

Whatever criticisms can be levelled at schools and teachers about intransigence and lack of response to the needs of students and society, it is also the case that they have daily contact with groups of students whose needs cause them to re-examine what they are doing. Consequently the greatest level of awareness of multiculturalism is in schools with a varied ethnic student group.

2.1.1 Representative program in a school with a high migrant population.

SCHOOL WITH HIGH MIGRANT POPULATION							
<u>Language Programs</u>							
English	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
"Additional English"		As required					
Bilingual Italian group	P	1	-	-	-	-	-
Italian for speakers	-	-	2	3	4	5	6
Italian for non-speakers	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Greek for speakers	-	-	-	3	4	5	6
Greek for non-speakers	-	-	-	3	4	5	6
Arabic for speakers	-	-	-	3	4	5	6
<u>Multicultural Themes</u>							
The Family	P	1	2	3	-	-	-
Where we come from	-	-	-	-	4	5	6
Christmas	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Easter	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
and so on							

2.1.2 Contrasting program in a school with imperceptible migrant presence in its population.

SCHOOL WITH LOW MIGRANT PRESENCE							
<u>Language Programs</u>							
English	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
'Additional English'		Not Provided					
Italian	-	-	-	-	-	5	6
<u>Multicultural Themes</u>							
Migration	-	-	-	-	4	5	6

2.2 Social Justice

There are also teachers whose argument for and justification of multicultural activities and curriculum is based on first principles - on the view that everyone has the right to have their ethnic background accepted by and represented in the school. While the original argument is unarguable, it very often leads to a truncated approach at the level of action in the school.

2.2.1 Programs which show some evidence of tokenism.

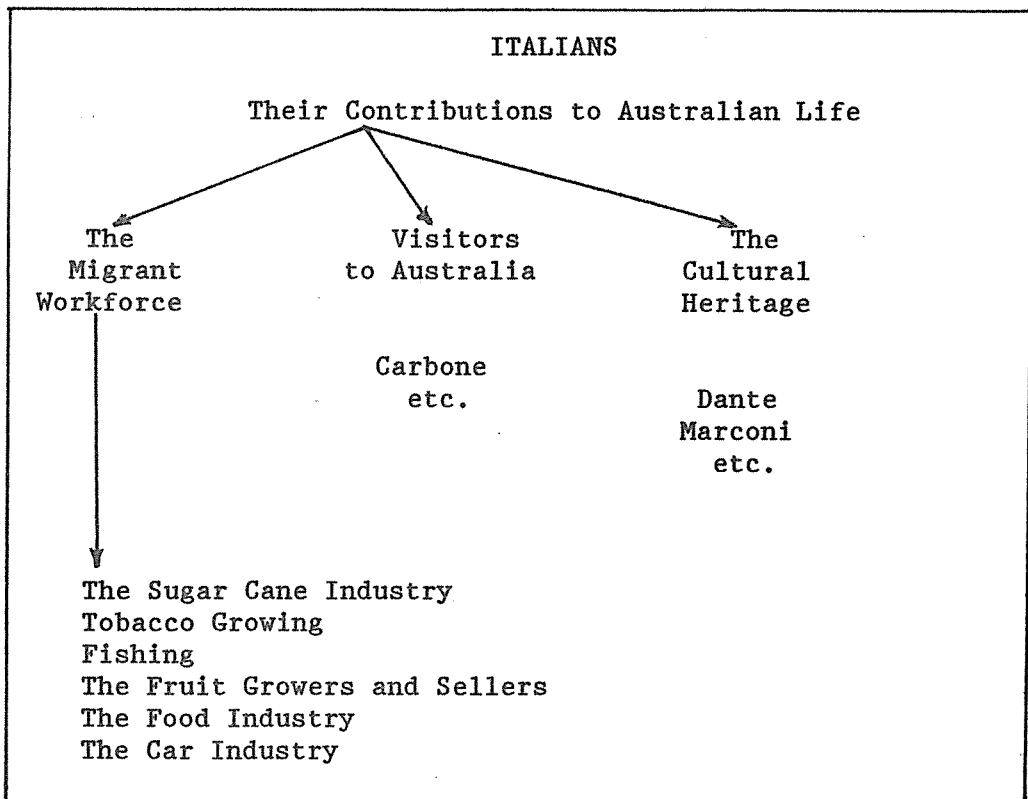
COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAM	
Time allotment 20 minutes per week	
QUERY: How much language learning could possibly be expected if class time is minimal?	

2.2.2 Evidence of opportunism in some areas of school planning.

Funds requested for a teacher for a language program when the school knows of no registerable applicant; for library holdings in languages not taught in the school; for titles of Social Science texts with no indication that anything new will be added or developed in the school.

2.3 Social Reality

Even a disinterested analysis of our present society will show it to contain a number of ethnic cultures, some of them repressed and struggling, and others having a stronger presence in our community. The history of our society is partly the history of a number of identifiable ethnic groups and their interplay, their influence on each other and on the destiny of the total society. The difficulty for teachers who see multiculturalism in this light is that not even the informational base on which their new courses could be developed is available to them.



2.4 Fashion

It is often said of teachers that they are jumping on this or that bandwagon. Multicultural education is said to be such a bandwagon by critics of the teachers who follow it, and by critics of the growing number of programs claiming to belong to it. The words used and the tone adopted denigrates both the teachers and the programs. It does seem likely to me that some teachers will follow a new movement fairly spontaneously, but I would counter any suggestion that they do in significant numbers on the grounds of fashion only by remembering that it involves a lot of extra, hidden work. Information seeking, planning the

sequence by which novel material will be taught and devising methods of teaching which try to come to terms with attitude change are tasks that lie quite close to the beginning of any multicultural program. The bandwagon criticism also rings rather close to YOU'RE WRONG IF YOU DO AND YOU'RE WRONG IF YOU DON'T which makes me wary of the reasons for which such a dismissive argument is advanced.

2.4.1 A market for multicultural materials does spawn some inadequate publications. (Teachers need to know how to evaluate text books and other materials intended for the classroom.)

2.4.2 Examples of materials developed responsibly and which focus on the Making of Australian Society are:

1. Seventeen Australian Families, produced in 1981 by Qantas and The Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra.
The seventeen case studies of Australians from a variety of ethnic backgrounds are presented in separate booklets. Each deals with family background, dwelling, eating, relaxing, worshipping, learning, communicating and working. One colour poster and two colour prints of each family; two cassettes; and a teachers' handbook are included in the package.
2. The Australians, produced in 1981 by Magic Mirror Productions, and distributed exclusively by L. & S. Educational Supply Corporation, is a multi-media kit consisting of six half-frame film strips; six audio cassettes; 50Hz automatic or manual film strip projectors, a teachers' guide and student work sheets.
The titles include:
 - Who are the Australians?
 - Origins: The Populating of Australia
 - Australian Lifestyles
 - Music in Australia
 - Food in Australia
 - Religion in Australia

3. Multiculturalism Seen as Part of the Process of Schooling

3.1 What Schools Are For

One of the strongest views of the purpose of schooling comes from Paolo Freire. Freire's thought is based on the idea of human vocation which is to act on life to change and improve it, and which is itself clearly a strong motivation in the minds of many teachers. Freire's case ranges beyond school and is based on a dichotomy ranging over all aspects of life and society between being able to act (which is human) and being acted on (which is to be treated inhumanly). He goes further and puts the responsibility for helping people to see how they are prevented from behaving humanly on schools, even though he does not think schools alone can change society. Ultimately he places teachers right in the centre of any effort to understand and plan to improve our life conditions. Teachers are therefore involved in the disciplined effort both to recognise diverse cultures in our society and to provide structures whereby they can contribute to its overall development (an aspect of the DOMINATION/OPPRESSION theme which Freire's thinking makes central to education in our time).

Nothing short of this view is sufficient to carry the open intentions of multicultural education forward, but of course it takes reflection and analysis to work out what actions it can lead to.

3.2 Schools and Knowledge

What schools are undoubtedly responsible for is learning, but the distinction between getting-to-know and the acquisition of knowledge is blurred. Learning is valued in people who have achieved it. The infamous example of the semi-literate doctor carving you up following a misguided idea of where the appendix ought to be is usually wheeled out in support of knowledge. Schooling is concerned with getting into the learning game - i.e., with the process of learning, and learning about society and its cultures. Step by step that process can be represented:

INFORMATION GATHERING - REFLECTION - DESCRIPTION
INTERPRETATION;

AND CAN CONTINUE

INTERPRETATION - ACTION - CHANGE

at which point the process enters its second cycle. Stated in the abstract, the description is totally unexceptional but what it suggests is that teachers need to deliberately examine processes rather than limiting themselves to what will be learned, and that approach may be most appropriate to the multicultural areas of the curriculum.

Example: A course of study whose content is established by describing the process.

SENIOR ENGLISH
A COURSE OF STUDY AS A GROUP 2 SUBJECT

- 6.0 ASSESSMENT
- 6.1 Principles
- 6.1.1 Assessment is to be continuous, diagnostic and participatory.
- 6.2 Process
- 6.2.1 At the mid-point of each unit, a reporting device, oral or written should be provided by
- (a) Students, directed to the teacher
 - (b) The teacher directed to the student focusing on matters such as
 - What has been learnt?
 - What skills have been developed?
 - How far does the student feel she or he has moved towards achievement of the goals?
 - What is the teacher's opinion on the same issue?
 - How does the student feel he or she has participated?
- 6.2.2 At the end point of each unit students should submit a report to the teacher similar to that described above.

3.3 Negotiation

Teachers and schools which have worked towards non-selective non-competitive schooling have gone a long way towards showing that learning can be organised in a program that relies on negotiating the curriculum and in dialogue which is not limited to the exchange of ideas but intends to put ideas together in a social context beyond individual concerns and individual effort.

Concern for critical thinking is neither foreign nor objectionable to most teachers but they are often lost about how to do it and feel in need of help to strengthen their analysis of the material to be examined and their confidence about how to organise that material in the classroom.

3.4 Starting Points: Organisation

A number of current school practices come under heavy attack, and teachers are often in search as we all are, of the 'right answer'. Here as elsewhere the right answer is not so simple.

3.4.1 The spaghetti and dance elements of the curriculum are criticised not because they are wrong but because they are not enough. The adage about teaching that you must start where the students are is true for the students and true for the teachers too. Where teachers have introduced short-term activity based elements into the school program, they have done something more than nothing. School based in-service where schools can look at the details of programs developed in other schools seem to provide the necessary impetus for many teachers to take the Second Step.

- 3.4.2 The introduction of a subject called 'Multicultural Studies' is often heavily criticised on the grounds that the whole school program should be informed by multiculturalism rather than being limited to one segregated study.

However there is no reason why a section of the school program should not concentrate on relevant questions; it need not be exclusive as the critics of this type of program presume and a start has to be made somewhere. One secondary school made 'Multicultural Studies' compulsory in the junior levels, an elective in the middle school and a pre-requisite for senior studies in politics and social studies, thereby legitimating the study within the framework of its academic curriculum and in no way incarcerating the relevant content inside one impoverished activity.

- 3.4.3 The introduction of thematic content into existing subject areas, whether by teaching thematically or co-ordinating content, is another way in which secondary schools have tried to develop their multicultural work. The problem is that teachers feel immobilised by their inability to involve all the subjects they want at the same time and so abandon the idea as impractical. The pragmatic answer of using the material you can get is not only reasonable but adequate, and school based work groups seem better adapted to meeting these needs than centralised services.

3.5 Starting Points: Content

- 3.5.1 The important characteristic of materials for multicultural programs is their authenticity and ability to bring real life rather than text-book issues into the classroom.
- 3.5.2 It is important for teachers to realise that a range of materials is important. Different 'documents' bring different content to the class, e.g., photographs, statistics, newscasts, oral history, current affairs programs, cartoons, etc.
- 3.5.3 Because migration and the cultural diversity in Australian life have become elements in our national literature and film, their regular selection for study can enhance understanding of multiculturalism without its being forced on the students, and without its being the only motive which ever brings these issues into the classroom.
- 3.5.4 the importance of local studies, examining the history and traditions of districts or regions as a starting point for a multicultural curriculum has to be placed in the context of national migration and cultural patterns, because without that focus, the development of an informed attitude to the total society is lost.

3.6 Unless multicultural education has the official approval and support of education systems and administrations, it cannot succeed. Working for official support must therefore be the aim of teachers or community workers trying to influence school programs.

3.6.1 The present status of Community Language teaching and the provision of Community Language teachers is ad hoc with the result that the programs themselves are insecure and do not take their place equally with more permanent parts of the program.

STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS
TEACHING GREEK LANGUAGE

	'74	'75	'76	'77	'78	'79	'80	'81	'82
Albert Park		.	.	.	.	.	.
Auburn				.	.	.	.	.	.
Brighton St., Richmond								.	.
Collingwood								.	.
Cremorne St., Richmond				.	.	.	.
Gold St., Clifton Hill				.	.	.	.	.	.
Lalor North					.	.	.	.	.
Malvern Central				.	.				
Richmond Central				.	.			.	.
Spensley St., Clifton Hill				.	.	.	.
Victoria Park	.	.	.	.	.	.
Westgarth		.	.	.	.
Ayr									.
Coburg									.
	1	3	3	9	10	7	6	6	8

Information collected and published by Dr. E. Afendras

- 3.6.2 Multicultural education policies are not supported with the full machinery for implementation. Such tokenistic attitude coming from the top encourages tokenist programs in the schools.

Community Support is Usually Cultural Whereas Many
Decisions in the School are Functional - Tension

COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Languages of migrant groups thought to be taught with emphasis on communication and therefore to use different teaching methods

'full' bilingual program
'limited' bilingual program
'transition' bilingual program
'maintenance' courses for speakers
'development' courses for speakers
'introductory' courses for non-speakers
'language awareness' program

- ethnic school work recognised by the school
- after-school program organised by the school
- 'insertion' class in school time
- employment of 'sessional' teacher
- use of aide or volunteer under supervision
- optional course with staff member
- compulsory or non-selective study

3.7 Schooling is at one of the major points of its development where research and developmental curriculum work is needed. The problem for many teachers at the moment is that they can see the need for new content, but cannot usefully undertake the task of researching that content individually. Support is needed in the forms of:

- 3.7.1 information gathering e.g., about the source countries of the present Australian population;
- 3.7.2 curriculum planning, where suggested sequences and resources are laid out and made accessible to teachers;
- 3.7.3 in-service courses at all levels of the teaching service to consider the developments needed in schools within the appropriate professional groupings;
- 3.7.4 pre-service courses available to a wider range of trainee teachers; study leave for practising teachers;
- 3.7.5 recognition of the rights and responsibilities of parents and community groups to be consulted in the developmental and implementational phases of the multicultural curriculum.

4. Some Major Questions

- 4.1 How can schools and classroom teachers confront the complex issues of attitudinal change, and the means by which cultural differences and tensions are resolved in the school community?
- 4.2 How can parents and ethnic communities be assured of having a significant and appropriate voice in the development of multicultural curriculum?
- 4.3 Can all schools be expected to adopt a multicultural curriculum or should there always be an element of choice.
- 4.4 (As partially indicated in the previous section 3.7) What official support is needed for teachers and schools developing a multicultural curriculum?

In this second article by Hannan, practical ideas are presented on ways to develop a curriculum which effectively reflects the principals of multiculturalism. This article is relevant to classroom teachers, school administrators and to curriculum planners. Adherence to the principles expounded in this article would ensure the development of a sound multicultural curriculum.

STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM

Lorna Hannan

1. Introduction
2. The Multicultural Nature of Australian Society
3. What is Needed to Develop and Change a Curriculum
4. Strategies

1. Introduction

While it is more generally acceptable now than it has been in the past to state that Australia is a multicultural society, it is not a simple matter to decide how that idea is to be translated into curriculum terms and brought into the classroom. Until that is achieved we do not have a multicultural curriculum and we do not even know how it can be arrived at.

The following is a summary of the workshop of several subgroups on some of the key issues which they defined. Their discussions were aimed at driving ideas and theory in the direction of practice, at the same time as measuring the intended practice against the very ideas it is meant to embody. Although it may sound like a truism, there is no escaping a truth just because it is obvious: teachers are constantly caught at the point where theory and practice meet. Without the twin elements of theory and practice to work with, we can get caught with either unreal and unhelpful aims or with trite and superficial answers. Therefore the group aimed for a rigorous working method which it hoped would have the potential for later development in real teaching situations and not just in theory.

The discussion looked firstly at the salient features of the society, then turned to a discussion of curriculum planning and finally attempted to establish some strategies for teachers, schools and systems.

2. The Multicultural Nature of Australian Society

If a school curriculum is to reflect and add to the multicultural nature of Australian society, then it is necessary to establish what are the salient features of the society from which a curriculum can be developed. Discussion suggested seven features, each of which is also tentatively related to the planning or practice of programs in schools.

- 2.1 Australian society has not been a collection of groups with equal or equivalent status, each of them able to continue and grow in their own culture as well as sharing a national

culture. That may be the sort of society we are aiming for but it is not the society we have had.

Curriculum planners need to be aware of the need for their work to be in part corrective, and to lead to an understanding of the concepts of dominance and oppression.

2.2

The indigenous culture of the Aboriginal peoples which came close to being destroyed as a result of white settlement has a continuing life in Australian society. Recent responsible historians and commentators now see that previous interpretations of the history of the Aboriginal peoples since 1789 have been distorted. For example, the Aborigines were not passive acceptors of their fate when new ways were brought to the country but continued active resistance with some limited success, and in more recent times have been quite assertive about their own rights. It is far too simple to regard their assertiveness as a recent development because to some extent it has always been present, and it is the dominant society which has a particular interest in interpreting their role as a passive one.

The curriculum needs to have built into it the right of Aboriginal peoples to speak for themselves and to make all sections of the society aware of their historical and present situation.

2.3

In the settler society of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there are stratifications which reflect cultural difference, because cultural difference is in truth related to economic security, social prestige and political power. We may now want to say, and many people in the past would have wanted also to state, that cultures are worthy of equal respect, but that view has not been held in Australia where the 'White Australia Policy' and sectarian issues have been strong strains at both official and informal levels in the life of the people.

The content and teaching methods of the curricula need to deal with the complications of the society as it is and not with idealised statements which neither encourage nor assist explanations of its real power structures.

2.4

Some of the cultural practices of minority groups are genuinely in need of reform. For example, there are forms of family organisation which disadvantage the women of particular ethnic groups; there are expressions of family authority which do not allow young people the freedom to develop adequate lives of their own; there are strongly ingrained expressions of racism against other groups built into unquestioned group traditions. Multiculturalism does not however involve accepting the injustices and faults of other cultures as inevitable or tolerable but will involve working to change them.

Teachers have to find ways of communicating the fact of unacceptable cultural practice at every level of schooling. Very young children are capable of absorbing complex social

ideas and should be neither confused nor sold short by the curriculum which is helping to shape their ideas about their own society.

- 2.5 Multiculturalism involves change and reassessment in all the groups which are part of the total society – a point which it may be difficult for the dominant group to be aware of. For members of the group which has been dominant, its own beliefs and practices seem to be the norm against which others are measured. It is possible to see the racism or sexism of another group and to be still unaware of these strains in the dominant group when the dominant group is the one to which you belong.

When examining the faults of the dominant groups in the society teachers need to be particularly skilful – especially in local communities which either are, or see themselves to be, culturally homogeneous and separated from the diversity which migrant minority groups bring. Lack of experience of diversity makes it difficult for young people to be objective about the only value system they know, but this is part of the lesson to be learnt.

- 2.6 Multiculturalism is sometimes interpreted as being the sum of the cultures of the minority groups. This view is an unhelpful distortion because it fails to place the national culture in context. If there is no central national culture, there is no useful sense in which individuals or minority groups can see themselves as bicultural and no constructive way in which the whole society can organise itself as a multicultural one. The dominant group is in danger of seeing itself to be either without a culture of its own, or as having a culture which other groups deliberately ignore or devalue.

On behalf of the society, teachers need a conscious awareness and evaluation of the Australian culture which has grown out of its history, its way of life and folk lore, as well as the literature, performing and visual arts which express it. This consideration decides in part what the content of the curriculum must be, and to be effective, must be put into effect at every level of schooling from Kindergarten to Year 12.

- 2.7 The cultures of Australian society have complicated symbiotic relationships with the community languages. If Australian society is going to value the cultures of its people, then it must also value their languages. Although the idea that community languages should be taught in schools is strongly advanced, it is also strongly resisted. It is resisted by some spokespeople who claim that English only should be taught in the schools of a country which accepts English as its national language, and it is resisted by others who argue that widespread teaching is not practicable. The debate is still going on but does not seem to be well founded. The right of peoples to their language should be beyond challenge.

Community languages have a right and proper place in the curriculum of schools and are the only foundation for a continued multicultural society. Once the language dies, the

culture which has been part of it can either be said to have died or to have undergone such a change that it is no longer recognisable as the same culture. Therefore community language teaching is the foundation of multiculturalism in the school setting.

This view may continue to be unwelcome to many Australians for a long time, but grows out of their resistance to a multicultural society and as such cannot be allowed to determine what is good for the whole of the society.

3. What is Needed to Develop and Change a Curriculum

The curriculum is a multi-dimensional feature of schooling which is influenced and changed in complicated ways. Various aspects are simultaneously important and their inter-action is part of curriculum strategy.

The following aspects were identified and examined:

- 3.1 Values which the curriculum intends to impart.
- 3.2 School courses which will be used to teach values.
- 3.3 Content of courses selected to impart values.
- 3.4 Development of appropriate teaching methods.
- 3.5 Development of appropriate means for taking curriculum decisions.

What are the

3.1 Values Which the Curriculum Intends to Impart

There was detailed discussion of the sorts of issues involved, examples only of which are described below.

- 3.1.1 The complex idea of Australia as a multicultural society means that the whole curriculum must respond to the need to build in corrective biases against racism. Therefore traditional interpretations of history will be called into question. 'Captain Cook discovered Australia' is a mistaken view of events which in turn grew out of a skewed view of who and what has been important. Coming to see why such a statement is unacceptable is a means by which multicultural values can be taught. The learning process is in itself potentially more important than the fact or series of facts to be learned.
- 3.1.2 Because languages are an integral part of cultures, the ways in which schools value community languages becomes a means by which values are taught. Thus a school where children are not allowed to speak their home language in the school yard opposes the use of the language; a school program which allows children to read for themselves in a language other than English - if they are able to do so - is showing tolerance for the language; and a school which has introduced a bilingual program where children study the content of their schooling in a language other than English is showing vastly more respect for the place of that language in the social, emotional and intellectual lives of its students.
- 3.1.3 All aspects of the curriculum need to be examined alongside the values which are meant to be taught, and strengthened or changed so that the proper ends are achieved.

3.2 School Courses Through Which Values Will be Taught

3.2.1 Some curriculum planners have argued prescriptively that multiculturalism should be a perspective to be taken into account in many parts of the school program and have ruled it is a distortion to introduce special subjects called 'Multicultural Studies'. The dichotomy is unimportant. Either means can be used to introduce new and important content. The name of a course is rarely informative about the values it will impart or about the content which will make it up, and can vary from school to school according to how the needs of the students are best met.

3.2.2 It is informative to see how existing school courses have been expanded by the introduction of multicultural values:

- The study of Greek, Italian and Turkish writers in translation in the literature segments of English courses.
- The re-evaluation of social studies which had treated only a limited range of family groupings to introduce other systems present, both within and beyond Australian society.
- The introduction of migration as a part of local studies thus recognising how a local community comes to either resemble or differ from the community at large.
- The provision of soccer and bowls as school sports.
- The deliberate placing of mathematical problems in a range of cultural settings and situations.

3.2.3 The introduction of school courses, particularly in community languages and bilingual schooling underlines an important shift of school values and in itself, teaches students that changed attitudes establish new priorities in school programs.

3.3 Content of Courses Selected to Impart Agreed Values

3.3.1 Since the basis of Australia's multiculturalism lies in the make-up of the society, it is important that all children at school should examine the nature of our present society. This can be done by taking such information as the birthplace of the present population and seeing what the countries of origin of the present population are. The process of selection of material to be used makes it clear that values matter. For example, information about the present population could be presented in such a way that the very diversity which is one of its most important features was presented as a fault. Teaching decisions must involve deciding that students need to know about diversity, not as an abstraction but as a real and quantifiable fact, and then having also examined the problems it brings, the teacher must next plan activities and means by which students will recognise that it is a valuable attribute of the society.

3.3.2 To secure the relevance of demographic information for pupils, a class may compare its own make-up with that of the school, the district, the state and the nation. The differences then become points of departure. Why is the class itself a typical of the

nation? What forces decided that the district would be either like or unlike the state? Has the district long had its present ethnic character? Part of the content consists in having students speculate for themselves about the nature of the groups they know and not in presenting them with established facts and interpretations.

- 3.3.3 There is great variation possible in the ways in which a content is established in curricula. Demographic information in a thematically developed curriculum becomes the starting point for pieces of related personal writing, drawings of exotic or atypical buildings, interviews with community celebrities and so on. In an experience based curriculum, the same content will suggest appropriate activities and excursions as well as reading to enrich the ideas which are within easy grasp. An integrated curriculum will organise similar information across subject boundaries. No one method of organisations seems necessarily to be better than another but rather to be a convenience suited to the school's organisation.
- 3.3.4 The selection of novel content is a great strain on the classroom teacher. It is appropriate that the needs of teachers be responded to quickly by administrators and central resource providing groups. Teachers who can see the need to expand the content of their present courses have a great deal of their planning time and energy taken up with evaluating means by which to explore new ideas in the classroom. They also have to spend time planning how to sequence new ideas, activities and discussions. It is such an overload on classroom teachers to expect them to research novel information that lack of support in this area can put them in a position where it is not possible to change the basis or content of their teaching.

Development of Appropriate Teaching Methods

- 3.4.1 A teaching method which is appropriate to a multicultural curriculum will usually be a teaching method which is appropriate to other areas of the curriculum, and not one which has special unique features.
- 3.4.2 However it is also clear that some teaching methods are particularly inappropriate to a multicultural curriculum. Students need to be able to work productively with ideas which represent re-assessment of attitudes they and the society have taken for granted in the past. Passive learning is quite inappropriate.
- 3.4.3 A great deal of the content of the study is concerned with conflicts which are not resolved in the society. Racial and sectarian conflict are particularly difficult to handle in the classroom. Teachers therefore need to develop means of dealing with conflict. Some of these are already tested, such as role reversal exercises which give people the opportunity to take both sides of a situation in turn and examine both rather than only one side of a contentious issue; plus due attention being given to not putting students who are already in conflict with each other into additional conflict situations in the classroom. However, more needs to be known by teachers about how to handle such difficulties.

- 3.4.4 Because the issues which are raised in the multicultural classroom affect the home, part of the development of an appropriate teaching method is to involve the parents and members of the wider community in planning the classroom study and organised experiences of the students.
- 3.4.5 Practising teachers need the support of in-service courses so that they have maximum opportunity to examine questions related to difficult teaching situations with the maximum of professional support. There should be top priority given to in-service courses for teachers using multicultural material.
- 3.4.6 Pre-service courses are quite inadequate in this area of the curriculum and fail to prepare young teachers for their work. Given the social importance of multicultural curriculum development, it would seem necessary to introduce compulsory segments into the training courses of all trainee teachers, irrespective of the level at which they intend to work or the discipline in which they have specialised.
- 3.4.7 The failure of senior administrators to support the work of teachers in this area is instructive. The principle source of innovation comes from classroom teachers whose daily experience of the cultural diversity of their students confirms their view that the content of their lessons and their teaching methods need to respond more sensitively to student needs. Administrators who have the power to direct resources towards solutions for classroom problems do not have direct experience of it themselves and are often indifferent or even hostile to the demands for greater support.
- 3.5 Development of Appropriate Means for Taking Curriculum Decisions
 - 3.5.1 To some extent a curriculum always seems to have been handed down, decided in some far off time which makes it difficult to change. However, massive re-organisations do take place and are usually backed by resources from government. Multicultural programs to date have depended on small special funding from the Federal Government and some re-allocation of existing resources from inside schools. The actions of individual schools are always important. However the effect of small scale funding of the sort that has come from the Federal government may have served to limit the number of curriculum changes rather than hasten them. Overall change should be accompanied by priority funding and the adoption of policies which are obligatory on all schools because this area of the curriculum is of national significance.
 - 3.5.2 Since all schools and school communities do not feel the impact of cultural diversity, it is probably necessary to oblige all schools to incorporate teaching about our society's diverse cultural identity. Otherwise all schools will not in fact have prepared their students to take their place in the nation as a whole but will have allowed them to remain in social and intellectual isolation. The preparation of curriculum guidelines and suggestions for all levels from Kindergarten to Year 12 should be treated as a matter of urgency by all systems.

- 3.5.3 Parents and the wider community need also to be drawn into active negotiation about issues which surround teaching about their own society. Through parent councils and parent teacher meetings, some parents can be drawn into discussion and debate but the forum is not adequate and new means are needed.
- 3.5.4 Teachers will often find that they want to negotiate the details of the curriculum with their students. Where schools are still given to testing and grading students, teachers are often bound to courses of fixed content. Such courses are inappropriate and in being unresponsive to the needs of local communities are harmful to the intentions of multicultural curriculum development.

4. Strategies

- 4.1 Multicultural education will develop slowly and erratically and strategies for change are therefore important. Adequate strategies need to rely on explanatory descriptions of the society itself (see points raised in Section 2 above) and a realistic analysis of the curriculum and its openness to change (see discussion in Section 3 above). Actions that look both ways at these two areas will have greater potential to achieve lasting change.
- 4.2 To the extent that curriculum change relies on teachers, it depends on their perception of its relevance to their own classroom situation and on their confidence that they have the knowledge, skills and resources to cope with innovation. Central authorities should therefore be persuaded to supply teachers with packages of information and materials which relate multicultural issues to existing curricula and give examples of classroom practice.
- 4.3 The possibilities for teachers to work together are valuable for curriculum development. In South Australia the Ten Schools Project has given a structure to curriculum development; in Victoria Child Migrant Education Services has organised annual workshops for Materials Development which bring interested teachers together to produce classroom materials. The stimulus which teachers can give each other in co-operative working situations is valuable to more than the working group and would lend itself to further development.
- 4.4 Multicultural education is often thought to be relevant only to schools which have a high proportion of children from migrant families in their population. As it was interpreted in our discussions, multicultural education is relevant and important to all Australian school children. It is therefore important to break the connection in people's minds with migrant education because as long as the connection is accepted it will inhibit the development of fuller programs.
- 4.5 Multicultural education is thought by some schools to be an adequate substitute for the introduction of Community Language teaching. It is important to make it clear that language study cannot be replaced by some study which is not of a language.

There are benefits to be had from studying a language which are not to be had from any other study. To take a child who has grown up bilingually in Australian society and to allow him/her to study the language of his/her home at school cannot be substituted by any study, no matter how valuable that other study might be. This issue also needs to be clarified in open debate.

- 4.6 Adequate support for teachers must be sought by them professionally (see discussion, 3.4.5 to 3.4.7 above).

In this account of an assignment set for a high school class of immigrant background student, Patricia Clark gives prominence to the wealth of experiences recounted by the students about their parents. From an educational point of view it is clear that the commitment of students to the task of writing the assignment was much greater than was usual, and it evoked much personal feeling. This article shows the importance of different cultural experiences to classroom learning, and the importance of utilising the knowledge and experiences of the students.

MY EXPERIENCES AT BRUNSWICK EAST HIGH SCHOOL

Patricia Clark

It is with pleasure that I relate my experiences at Brunswick East High School during my visits there as a student teacher this year. The particular event that crowned my experience was the result of an assignment given to form six, the idea for which came about quite by accident, and was given as a practice in free writing and expression to fit them for the "C" part of the H.S.C. examinations. As it happened, it gave a light-hearted finish to the year's work, and an optimistic note to my future prospects as a teacher. I am indebted to my supervising teacher for this experience.

First let me describe the set-up at Brunswick East High School. The school is divided into four parts. The main school is in Albert Street and provides classes up to fourth form levels. Another section is in Sydney Road and a third progressive wing, Lyonell Hall, is in Blythe Street. The fourth part of the school is situated in Victoria Street, in a block of flats, which accommodates fifth and sixth forms only. The separation of the higher forms from the main school is an experiment to see if students who are disadvantaged by a migrant background can be further assisted in their efforts to pass the H.S.C. examinations. Special emphasis is placed on reading and writing skills in all subjects and special elective English classes are available to them. They have their own common room where they may study or relax in their spare periods.

The sixth form English classes with which I was involved consisted mainly of students with migrant backgrounds. Approximately six students were from Greece, two from Turkey, one from Spain and one from Australia. The rest of the thirty-six students had an Italian background. My supervising teacher informed me that the students were accepted into sixth form on the condition that their parents agreed to more relaxed conditions at home, exemption from heavy family responsibilities, and to allow some social contact with other students of their own age, particularly at the same school, so that they can discuss their ideas and interests. I heard these conditions repeated at the parent-teacher night at the school, and it appears that most parents try to comply with the school's wishes.

My experience began on the last day of second term when my supervising teacher asked me to give a brief lesson (al improvisto) for the two sixth form classes. Because of the time limit and the pressures of my academic studies, I was at a loss what to do. Then, suddenly, I came across an article I had cut out of a newspaper concerning the "generation gap", and I decided to use it for this short lesson. Basically, it was a lesson on comprehension, but the article provided an opportunity to show the techniques of clear thinking and compare the differences in approach between the two methods. It also gave me an opportunity to try out an approach to something that is vitally important to all children, but particularly to migrant children - that of respect and understanding their parents, and their way of life. I tackled this by drawing attention to the particular elements that compound the problems of the "generation gap".

It is not necessary to elaborate further on the content of this lesson for it is the results that I am interested in relating here. After the lesson one of the students approached me with a most amusing and elated countenance and said, "Oh! Patricia! You've really hit the ball with that lesson. All the kids are up in the common room debating and arguing about it." My inane reply was, "Really? Well, I'm glad it made some impression on you all." "It sure did", she replied as she went on her way. Later, I related to my supervising teacher what the girl had said, and we had a brief discussion on some of the problems relating to the students' backgrounds. Many of the students, it seems, could not understand their fathers' continued loyalty to Mussolini and to fascism, or why it is that their parents' concern was limited to their material well-being rather than happiness and enjoyment in life, values which they, themselves, consider of paramount importance.

In the first week of third term my supervising teacher handed me a book called "Melbourne Studies in Education, 1977". "Take this home and read it, Patricia," she said, "I think you should read it to them on Friday for it answers some of the questions they've been asking." On Friday the sixth form classes were amalgamated and I read the story to them while the teacher interpolated relevant remarks at certain important places in the story. The class listened attentively and many made it clear that they could identify some of the characters and events in the story with those of their own families. Furthermore, some of the students knew the family concerned in the story since one of the sons was a well-known solicitor in Sydney Road and the family lived around the corner from the school.

The story is the biography of an Italian family which migrated to Australia several decades ago, written by the youngest son, Giuseppe Soccio. The interesting point in this story is the intelligent and objective psychological analysis of the father by his own son, who had obtained a degree at a university. He discusses the factors which caused the alienated personality of his father, the wars, the work ethic, immigration to Australia, the fight for survival and the eventual cultural division within the family due partly to the educational opportunities for members of the family. After the reading the students were given the assignment of writing their own stories of their families. No strict rules were laid down. They could choose whatever method they liked and if they wanted to include personal information they were at liberty to omit their names.

In fact, no one chose to omit their name, and the success of this assignment was evidenced by their enthusiastic response and, in most cases, by the lack of inhibition in writing their personal histories. This, I felt, showed unusual trust and confidence in their teacher and myself. They all knew that I spoke fluent Italian, that I lived nearby and knew many migrant families in the area. My only regret is that because I completed reading and marking the essays only last week I have not had sufficient time to assimilate or correlate the wealth of information contained in them. My essay, therefore, must necessarily be general, considerably raw and without much organisation.

Almost all of the essays described a typical southern European background. Most of the parents had come from large families in small, peasant villages where they farmed for their livelihood. Most of them had no idea what the world was like outside of their villages until they migrated to Australia. They had very little education since schooling rarely went beyond the third or fourth grades, so it is reasonable to expect that most of these parents have only a rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing in their own languages. This suggests that the provision of school information concerning the curricula translated into their native tongue is still an inadequate means of involving them in their children's education. It would be more rewarding, I think, to have teachers or interpreters explain it orally by making an appointment to visit the home and chatter over a cup of coffee. Most European mothers love to entertain, especially if their visitors are considered prestigious in some way. They would be more inclined to co-operate on a person to person basis than they would through a bit of paper.

Many students gave a good balanced picture of their parents' lives; the hardships, the toil, the lack of opportunities, as well as the pleasures such as the uninhibited freedom of their parents as children, the colourful festivals and the traditional games they used to play. This shows that the students feel a measure of respect, admiration and even nostalgia for certain aspects of the traditional lives of their parents. It is not all dreary and irksome, as some who reject their parents' ways would have us believe. A few took pleasure in recounting humorous little anecdotes concerning their parents' childhood pranks and the peculiar superstitions of mothers and grandmothers.

They related many light-hearted stories of their families' experiences, such as one student's mother who, as a young girl, was travelling to Canada, but found to her consternation that the boat was heading for Australia, where she eventually met and married the student's father. I was particularly impressed with a most romantic account by an Italian girl of her parents' meeting in Australia and their subsequent marriage. It was evident that her parents had taken great pleasure in relating their experiences to their daughter who, in turn, was obviously delighted.

However, not all the stories were happy ones. A contrast to those mentioned was the story written by a Turkish girl of her parents' unhappy marriage. It was obvious that most of the story is seen through the eyes of the mother, who married at fifteen, and periodically suffered jealous rages and beatings from her husband. The pressures were further increased by the sister marrying outside the accepted traditional pattern. The father's refusal to forgive has become a constant source of friction within the family. Though violence is present in many Australian homes, the migrant child often sees it in terms of their parent-culture and feels ashamed. Jealousy, however, is not a product of any one culture.

Many students emphasized the strong family unity in their homes. As one girl put it, "Australians are often left to fend for themselves, whereas in a time of stress, Italians will unite ..."

There was ample evidence that these students, for the most part, do not resent or condemn their parents' traditional ways to the extent that appears in many case-studies or articles on migrant children. Perhaps the reason for that is that nearly all of them have a common background. As a result they are not victims of extreme contrasts in life-styles, and do not suffer the decisions or rejection of their ways by Australian students and/or unsympathetic teachers. In case this seems an extreme statement to make I would like to point out that there are many ways in which a teacher, consciously or unconsciously, can show a biased attitude, such as mild disgust at parental attitudes concerning their children.

The writing of the essay necessarily entailed learning more about the parents. To do this the students had to converse with them and ask questions pertaining to their past; not only what they did but how they felt about things. This interest in the parents on the part of their offspring no doubt pleased them and the students profited by knowing much more about their background than they did previously. It also creates good feeling towards the school when parents realize that the school is promoting this interest, rather than denigrating their ways.

Several students took the opportunity to spill out their intimate thoughts and feelings concerning their family situation and their problems due to a cultural clash between them. As well as making the teacher aware, it is beneficial to the students to be able to give vent to their frustrations, cleansing themselves of much superfluous emotion and enabling them to progress in a lighter atmosphere.

Another important aspect concerning the assignment was that the students were able to see that their teachers are not only interested in them and their problems but also directed their interest and understanding towards their parents and their problems. It is most important for migrant children to realize that there are two sides to the coin and that it is undoubtedly more difficult for their parents to change, or even understand another culture, than it is for them. The cultivating of patience and understanding towards their situation is vital if they are not to become torn in two, or rebel against their parents. As well as developing the comparative freedom and individuality in the new culture there is a great need to promote respect for the old and consideration for the sacrifices many parents and older siblings have made so far in the students' lives.

A great deal more could be said on the basis of these essays, but I think the important nature of this assignment has been revealed. Students who previously did not write more than a half, or three-quarters, of a foolscap page produced four or five pages of intense and sometimes sensitive writing. Their writing appeared more fluent than usual and a great deal of thought and effort went into it.

My supervising teacher and I were deeply impressed by their sincerity and their trust in us. Their teacher is a most conscientious and genuine person sometimes inviting groups of students to her home for extra lessons on "clear thinking" and to promote good-will and friendship

between them. I was able to develop a good rapport with the students during my visits. There are possibly several reasons for this. One is that I speak the Italian language and have a sympathetic approach to the problems relating to the migrant child's situation. This is because I married an Italian in 1955, and for many years have observed the frustrations of our Italian friends and their children. I also had an extra week with these classes at the beginning of the year to conclude last year's teaching requirements. I have my supervising teacher to thank for such an unforgettable and gratifying experience as she allowed me a great deal of autonomy in planning my lessons. She involved me in the school's activities at every point. Particularly, I was grateful for the opportunity to assist on Parent-Teacher night in interpreting school reports to the Italian speaking parents.

There is one more thing I wish to add. My supervising teacher has obtained the permission of the students to have their papers typed and bound in book form for presentation to the university for the purpose of academic study and analysis. What began as an ordinary exercise in English expression has developed into an important collection of documents which may further the social and psychological understanding of migrant children by other teacher and student teachers in the Education Department.

Ethnic day schools are becoming more common in Australia and this brief description of St. John's Greek Orthodox College reveals the attraction such schools have for members of their ethnic communities. In this case the opportunities for the study of Greek language (including a bilingual programme in the early year), as well as a commitment to the Greek Orthodox religion, go far beyond what could be provided in the state schools. If the state school fail to provide for the educational needs of ethnic minorities, we can expect a flowering of such schools.

ST. JOHN'S GREEK ORTHODOX COLLEGE, MELBOURNE

Alex McKnight

Religion
Language

This school is claimed to be the first fully-registered Greek Orthodox day school in Australia, and opened in 1979 in North Carlton with sixty-nine students from Preparatory to Year 7. The opening of the College was the culmination of some years of pressure from members of the Greek Orthodox Community and the work of the priest of the North Carlton parish. Although parents were very keen for a Greek Orthodox College to be established it appears that there may have been some initial suspicion that the school would be a short lived experiment. In a sense therefore the school was on trial during the first year. However the College apparently proved itself to the Greek community and in 1980 the enrolment was over one hundred and eighty.

The increased enrolment in 1980 led to extreme pressure on accommodation and the College rented space from a Catholic school nearby.

In 1981 the enrolment increased again to over five hundred. Of this number, one hundred and eighty were primary and three hundred and fifty secondary. The school is currently divided between two campuses. The secondary section is located in the original buildings in North Carlton and the junior school is located in a collection of relocatable buildings on vacant land leased from the Education Department in North Fitzroy. At the time of writing, the relocatables have no power connected, there are no telephones, and the toilet block at present consists of a number of mobile 'supa loos'.

However, the school has purchased a large site in Preston and current plans are for the primary school to be completed as stage one of the new school by the middle of 1983. The new school is designed to make maximum use of the historic buildings on the site and to be built around the focal points of the chapel and agora.

The unsatisfactory accommodation of the primary school is seen as a result of the almost overwhelming demand for places. The difficulties the primary school is facing at present will be resolved when the new building is ready. Certainly the new building is awaited just as eagerly by parents as by staff.

Status: St John's is a registered school, and all members of staff are bilingual in Greek and English.

Funding: In addition to the normal recurrent grants, the College receives support from the Greek Orthodox Community. The Greek Education Department provides some funding for teachers' salaries and supplies text-books.

Fees: The fees are currently seven hundred dollars per year, and are kept as low as possible to ensure that the College is not seen as providing an education for the 'elite'.

Social Setting Students at the school come from a wide range of social backgrounds. Some parents are doctors, solicitors, teachers and successful business people. At the same time some parents are labourers, process workers and other unskilled workers.

The school is conscious of the sacrifices some parents have made to send their children to the College and decisions on fees and uniforms are carefully considered.

The students come from all over Melbourne, from traditionally high-migrant density inner suburbs as well as from the more established eastern suburbs. Three bus services operate to bring students to the school and one family drives students from Narre Warren each day.

Curriculum: The school offers a bilingual program in the junior primary section. For preparatory students the program in Term I is conducted totally in Greek to ease the transition to formal education and to teach basic concepts. From Term II English is gradually introduced in an informal manner. There is a transitional bilingual program in Grade 1 and the school plans to extend the program into Grade 2. Initially the staff planned a bilingual program throughout the primary school. However it now appears that the bilingual program will operate from preparatory to Grade II with a gradual increase in the exposure to English. From Grade 3 Greek will be offered as a second language.

The secondary section of the school operates a curriculum similar to other post-primary schools in the state. As the secondary section has expanded year by year the school has been subjected to annual inspection for registration purposes. 1982 is the first year that the school has offered Year 12, and students are prepared for the usual range of HSC examinations. The secondary section of the school differs from many systemic schools to the extent that Greek is offered at all levels.

A commitment to the Greek Orthodox religion is a crucial element of the school's philosophy. This goes hand-in-hand with what might be considered to be a 'traditional' curriculum. It appears that many of the parents have chosen to send their children to St. John's because of their dissatisfaction with systemic schools. Parents appreciate the opportunity for their children to learn Greek and to have regular homework within an educational context that is seen as being more 'traditional' and more 'strict' than that of systemic schools. A further advantage is that parents do not feel alienated from the staff and can freely discuss their children's progress in either Greek or English.

Before their children begin school parents are informed that they are expected to take responsibility for assisting the school (for instance in ensuring that homework is completed), and parents appear to understand what the school asks of the students and why.

Enrolment Policy: The school has been criticised in some quarters as being 'exclusive', in that it caters only to one group of students. However, the school would welcome the enrolment of non-Greek students at any stage, although it acknowledges the difficulties this might cause for the program. Although some critics might assume that all students have a good working knowledge of Greek this is not always so. Some children come from families where only one parent is Greek and they may therefore know very little Greek when they initially enrol. Other students have been born into families where the mass media have been more influential as language models than their parents. Such students have some Greek and some English but could not be said to have a secure knowledge of either. The school thus offers support to students which cannot be matched in most systemic schools.

Future Developments: This school is claimed to be the first of its kind in Australia, but others have since opened or are being planned. At the beginning of the 1982 school year a new school with a similar orientation opened in the inner northern suburb of Northcote. St. John's has been in contact with one interested group in Sydney and it is likely that a similar school will open in Sydney in 1983. This may become an established pattern in the next decade as ethnic groups become more established and financially more secure.

Issues Raised

Some of the issues raised by schools such as St. John's are as follows:

- Can the school be said to have a multicultural orientation, or is it ethnocentric and exclusive?
- To what extent have systemic schools failed in their responsibilities to parents and students of non-English speaking backgrounds?
- What provision is made for the training of teachers to work in schools such as St. John's?
- To what extent do systemic schools have a responsibility to provide transitional bilingual programs and language maintenance programs for students of non-English speaking backgrounds?

The next three articles have been produced by the New South Wales Education Department and provide a guide to schools seeking to do justice to all their students. Of crucial importance is the opportunity for members of ethnic minority groups to share equitably in Australia's resources and this is acknowledged in the first policy document. The accompanying documents spell out how teachers can effectively implement multiculturalism in curricula and promote intercultural understanding and interaction.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT 1983

NSW Department of Education

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

POLICY STATEMENT

Multiculturalism is a social value which focuses on national unity within which there is cultural diversity. The New South Wales Government is committed to fostering and promoting Multiculturalism in the context of a cohesive democratic society.

With regard to education in schools, the Government recognises that achievement of this objective requires:

- . review of policies, programs and practices in all schools, and
- . development of specific policies, programs and practices directed at particular groups of students.

MULTICULTURALISM

It is apparent that Australia is multicultural in the sense that it is "composed of many cultures". However, Multiculturalism requires more than a recognition of demographic facts.

The Government commitment is premised on the concept that the multicultural demographic reality is a positive feature of Australian society. Australia today is enriched by its cultural diversity and its future will be enhanced by fostering, rather than denying, cultural pluralism. The encouragement of interaction between all Australians, based on respect for difference, will work towards the development of national unity. Multiculturalism implies therefore, both a recognition of our cultural pluralism and our intent to foster such pluralism within the framework of a democratic society.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education is a combination of policies, programs and practices directed at ensuring that all schools recognise and accept the multicultural nature of Australian society and take positive steps to provide educational opportunities which will promote national unity through a deeper understanding of the cultural pluralism of our people.

It is essential that this statement be seen and interpreted in the context of other official statements and documents on education in the schools of this State. For example, the aims of multicultural education are inherent in the statements of aims of primary and secondary education in New South Wales, statements which emphasise that the development of the child's individuality is influenced by many factors among which are the home, the school, the community and the wider society.

It is recognised that the use of English is essential for full participation in the life of the nation. All children must therefore be assisted to become fluent in all aspects of English.

All Australians have an ethnic (cultural) identity, whether they be of Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal background, of English speaking or non-English speaking background. The identity is both a link with a cultural heritage and a focus for a present sense of belonging to a group. It is recognised that in an open society the degree of identification of an individual with a particular group is optional and may vary with time and social circumstance.

Nevertheless, for many people in Australia, the language and culture of their ethnic background play a significant role in their communal life. Facility in the use of a community language enhances communication across generations within the ethnic group and increases the potential for interaction between members of different groups. Therefore, the teaching of community languages and cultures both for native and non-native speakers will be supported and encouraged in our schools.

The study of many cultures as part of a student's exploration of the world is not a new phenomenon in New South Wales education. In fact, the multicultural nature of our world has been an important component of many curricula. This policy, however, seeks to focus more specifically on the Australian multicultural experience and to emphasise the incorporation of this experience into the curriculum.

While it is recognised that the causes of educational disadvantage are numerous, it is acknowledged that minority group status has been a significant factor contributing to the educational disadvantage of students from some linguistic and cultural minorities. Multicultural education, as one of a range of educational initiatives, can assist in preventing continuing disadvantage for such students.

Multicultural education is a significant vehicle for providing educational experiences designed to enhance the participation in society of all children in Australia. Multicultural education is thus an acknowledgement of the Government's commitment to assist children:

- (a) to gain access to society's resources through fluency in English, and
- (b) to understand, maintain and develop their language and/or culture through schooling.

As with all areas requiring government assistance, the extent of such assistance is dependent on available resources.

THE AIMS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The aims of multicultural education encompass the provision of educational experiences which will develop in all children:

- (a) an understanding and appreciation that Australia has been multicultural in nature throughout its history, both before and after European colonization,
- (b) an awareness of the contribution which people of many different cultural backgrounds have made and are making to Australia,
- (c) intercultural understanding through the consideration of attitudes, beliefs and values related to multiculturalism,
- (d) behaviour that fosters interethnic harmony, and
- (e) an enhanced sense of personal worth through an acceptance and appreciation not only in their Australian national identity but also of their specific Australian ethnic identity in the context of a multicultural society.

These aims of multicultural education are appropriate for all schools in the State. They are as relevant to schools with small numbers of children from linguistic and cultural minorities as they are for schools where such children predominate.

In meeting these aims it is essential that all schools and all school personnel facilitate intercultural understanding by ensuring that multiculturalism as a fundamental value permeates the total curriculum. All curriculum areas should reflect multicultural perspectives and all students should be exposed to these perspectives.

The aims of multicultural education will also be furthered through a range of programs and practices, subject to available resources, for specific groups of children according to interests and needs. Some of these are language based, while others have a sociocultural orientation.

In recent times a range of initiatives in multicultural education has been developing in schools. This policy statement will be accompanied by guideline statements and support documents which elaborate objectives and implementation strategies for these initiatives. Aspects of multicultural education presently in development include:

For all schools and all students

(a) Multicultural Perspectives to Curriculum

This process recognises the need for an analysis and review of present historical, social and cultural perspectives of curriculum with a view to incorporate perspectives which reflect the multicultural nature of Australian society.

(b) Intercultural Education

This process seeks, through an examination of attitudes, beliefs and values about one's own and other ethnic backgrounds to encourage positive interaction, successful communication and to enhance intercultural understanding.

For students according to interest and need

(a) English as a Second Language Education

This program is concerned with the acquisition and development of English for children of non-English speaking backgrounds.

(b) Transitional Bilingual Education

This program is directed at ensuring that, for children from non-English speaking backgrounds, conceptual development continues without interruption while English is being learnt.

(c) Community Language Education

This program seeks to provide opportunities for the study of languages other than English both for children for whom such languages are their first language and for children wishing to gain access to another language.

(d) Ethnic Studies

This program is concerned with the in-depth study of one or more Australian ethnic groups and is directed at raising the level of awareness of the multicultural nature of our society.

The success of specific programs in multicultural education will be significantly influenced by the degree to which the particular school community has been able to incorporate general multicultural perspectives into its policies and practices. School management and classroom practices should reflect the cultural pluralism of the school and the wider society. In all educational matters, including multicultural education, positive steps need to be taken in encouraging the participation of parents and community members in the development of policies and practices.

It is recognised that school communities will require assistance in implementing multicultural education. This assistance will be provided by support staff at central and regional levels and through inservice education.

This policy will be kept under continuing review by the Department of Education in consultation with the community. From time to time, resource materials will be made available to assist schools to implement specific programs.

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES TO CURRICULUM

A Support Document to the Multicultural Education Policy 1983

NSW Department of Education

The curriculum of any school is all of those planned and unplanned learning experiences which occur under the auspices of the school. It may therefore be viewed as a combination of policies, practices, classroom programs and the informal learning experiences in that school. The process of bringing MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES TO CURRICULUM is one of incorporating into these policies, practices, programs and experiences, knowledge and attitudes which reflect the multicultural nature of Australian society.

Incorporating multicultural perspectives to curriculum necessitates that schools analyse the existing cultural perspectives in their curriculum. This process of curriculum analysis and review can take place at a number of levels. It may, for example, involve central or regional curriculum committees. In a particular school, the process may involve:

- . the school community
- . the school executive
- . the entire staff
- . a faculty or grade
- . an individual teacher

For example:

- . the total school community participates in developing a school discipline policy which takes account of the cultural backgrounds of the students
- . a staff meeting is held to review the practices of school assemblies in order to determine their appropriateness for the ethnic composition of the school
- . a decision is taken at a school executive meeting to review home/school liaison with a view to increasing bilingual communication
- . a grade meeting is held to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing reading scheme and in particular its appropriateness for students of non-English speaking backgrounds
- . a teacher examines a local area of study to determine the extent to which the participation of people of various cultural backgrounds is acknowledged.

MUCH OF THIS PROCESS OF ANALYSIS AND REVIEW will be part of the school's normal curriculum development. Multicultural perspectives to curriculum provide a wider cultural base for the selection, organisation and implementation of curriculum options.

THE CURRICULUM that is not responsive to the ethnic diversity of Australian society misrepresents that society. A curriculum that reflects a single cultural perspective is a biased one.

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES TO CURRICULUM AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

These are the two processes of Multicultural Education identified in the Policy Statement as being "for all schools and all students". It is envisaged that these will provide the foundation upon which particular multicultural education programs will be built, "according to interest and need".

While the two processes are, of necessity, interrelated because all multicultural education processes are fundamentally attitudinal, a distinction can be made in terms of focus. Multicultural perspectives to curriculum concentrate on the cognitive domain while intercultural education, dealing primarily with beliefs, attitudes and values, concentrates on the affective domain.

The link between the two processes may be summarised in the observation that knowledge and understanding of Australia's ethnic diversity needs to be complemented by attitudes which perceive this diversity as a positive feature of society.

GENERAL AIM

Multicultural education seeks to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the multicultural nature of Australian society. This will be achieved, in part, through the process of incorporating multicultural perspectives to curriculum as well as through other processes and programs.

FORMULATION OF SPECIFIC AIMS

In formulating aims and objectives of multicultural perspectives to curriculum schools should consider:

- . identifying the cultural needs of students, the school, the community and the nation
- . incorporating a diversity of cultural perspectives existing within the school and its community
- . building on the knowledge, values, attitudes and practices of different ethnic groups within the school and the wider community
- . countering cultural bias in school practices and teaching/learning materials
- . taking into account the cultural role models of school and community personnel
- . involving various ethnic groups within the community in school-based activities.

It is envisaged that these considerations will provide the stimulus for initiatives which:

- develop an understanding and appreciation of the multicultural nature of Australian society, past and present
- assist students to function effectively in an ethnically diverse society
- foster a sense of personal worth in all students through an understanding and appreciation of their Australian national and ethnic identities
- foster school/community relations.

CURRICULUM ANALYSIS: A MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Curriculum aims and objectives, content and organisation, teaching and learning activities, resources, school management practices and community participation all have a cultural dimension. When applying multicultural perspectives, each needs to be clarified in terms of existing cultural dimensions and potential multicultural dimensions. Similarly, the values, beliefs and attitudes which constitute the informal ('hidden') curriculum need to be addressed. The assumptions of the 'hidden curriculum', if culturally biased, may contradict the formal curriculum.

It is the task of curriculum planners (whether they be members of a syllabus committee, or a school based committee, or teachers developing class programs) to ascertain existing cultural perspectives to curriculum and initiate multicultural perspectives which reflect the ethnic reality of Australian society. The following questions may assist in this task. The list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Further, not all questions may be appropriate to every situation.

DOES THE CURRICULUM ...

- provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective Australian citizenship?
- recognise the similarities and differences within and between Australian ethnic groups?
- assist students to develop an understanding of their ethnic heritage and Australian national heritage?
- distinguish between cultures from the place(s) of origin and the Australian context?
- assist students to recognise and understand the knowledge, values, beliefs and achievements of their own and other Australian ethnic groups?
- provide students with opportunities to identify with their own ethnic cultures?
- include opportunities for students to develop skills of intercultural interaction, communication and understanding?
- confront inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflict, realistically?
- build on the different cognitive and learning styles specific to various Australian ethnic groups?

- provide holistic views of culture rather than fragmented, partial views?
- incorporate resources which are multiethnic in knowledge and value?
- include ethnic-specific knowledge and understanding which is comprehensive and authentic?
- draw on the multicultural human and material resources of the school, community and nation?

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL

The incorporating of multicultural perspectives to specific curriculum content areas at the classroom level is premised on two general principles:

- all subject or content areas have a cultural dimension
- in a multicultural society the cultural dimensions of curriculum content areas should be diverse if they are to accurately reflect the society.

That all content areas have a cultural dimension is evidenced by:

- the cultural heritages which are drawn upon to provide the knowledge, skills and values base for particular subjects
- the sources of information which are perceived as "authentic" or "correct"
- the concepts in subject areas which are perceived to be "central" or "core concepts"
- the role of the teacher in legitimising and passing on cultural information

Bringing multicultural perspectives to a curriculum area does not necessarily involve changes to the content framework. Rather, it is a process of incorporation, so that aspects of the content area can be presented from a range of cultural perspectives. The process does not require that every aspect of curriculum be subjected to examination from the very large number of Australian ethnic perspectives. It does however, require that students are not continually presented with a monocultural perspective to important aspects of their schooling.

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AT THE WHOLE SCHOOL LEVEL

Multicultural perspectives may also be reflected in whole school policies and practices. Some examples, which are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, are listed below:

- encouraging staff development in multicultural education
- displaying multilingual education
- involving various ethnic groups within the school community in curriculum planning and school activities

- encouraging school participation in community activities
- involving bilingual/bicultural people in school activities
- recognising that the cultural expectations of various groups towards certain school activities, e.g. sport, excursions, may differ and hence will require explanation and negotiation of various options
- communicating between school and home in appropriate community languages
- considering differing educational expectations of various groups towards such matters as discipline, achievement and homework
- examining methods of student assessment including general ability testing in relation to language, cultural bias and relevance
- employing teachers' aides and other ancillary staff who are fluent in languages relevant to the school
- ensuring that school administrative practices are understood by the school community
- promoting the school as a focus of the community, e.g. for Adult Migrant Education Service classes and other community group activities.

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Much of the information, skills and attitudes required to successfully bring multicultural perspectives to curriculum may have to be drawn from sources other than those traditionally used by teachers and schools. If community members are to be used by schools as a source of information, expertise and opinion, they must perceive their interaction with schools as being mutually beneficial. Community members need to feel they have access to the planning and decision making process and that their views are given due weight.

Barriers to effective school/community involvement may include:

- lack of competence in English or appropriate community languages
- lack of understanding of school educational practices and processes
- preconceived expectations of the role and function of the school
- preconceived expectations of the role and function of community members
- lack of understanding of the values, beliefs and practices of the various ethnic groups in the school community.

EVALUATION

Evaluation will be primarily concerned with obtaining information to make judgements about the quality and effectiveness of the incorporation of multicultural perspectives into the curriculum. Quality and effectiveness should be examined in relation to both the curriculum development processes and the impact of curriculum change.

The curriculum development processes include planning, designing, implementation and evaluating. Information needed to make judgements about these processes may be acquired by analysing curriculum intentions and by monitoring the ways that these intentions are put into practice.

The impact of curriculum change may be judged by analysing information related to the achievement of the stated aims. This information can be obtained from various sources. These include student learning outcomes, changes in administrative practice and school organisation, the 'climate' of the school, personal relationships among school community members and community participation in the school.

Implementing multicultural perspectives to curriculum is possible within existing curriculum content areas and in this sense does not require any additional subjects or programs. However, the successful implementation of multicultural perspectives may lead to the development of other multicultural initiatives such as those outlined in other papers, e.g. English as a Second Language Education or Ethnic Studies.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

A Support Document to the Multicultural Education Policy 1983

NSW Department of Education

Schools are concerned with differences as part of the normal process of education. Differences based on physical characteristics, age, learning abilities, personality traits, gender and ethnicity are, among others, important aspects of school life. Ethnic differences are identifiable in observable behavior, and in the value and belief systems of staff, students and community.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION is a process concerned with identifying the ethnic dimension to school life and developing skills and attitudes necessary to interact effectively in a multicultural society.

This process of attitude and skill development has implications for education at a number of levels. Some issues will affect the entire school and will involve school management practices, e.g. cultural dimension to the school's discipline and pastoral care policy. Other issues will arise in individual classrooms, e.g. inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic peer group behaviour.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION: SOME KEY CONCEPTS

The intercultural education process involves three interrelated concepts:

- . Intercultural Interaction
- . Intercultural Communication
- . Intercultural Understanding

These concepts may be described as follows:

Intercultural Interaction

An encounter of different cultural systems at either the individual or group level with a view to sharing some cultural experience.

Intercultural Communication

A dynamic process whereby human behaviour, both verbal and non-verbal is received and responded to by individuals or groups from different ethnic cultures.

Intercultural Understanding

An ability to apply information and insights into specific cross-cultural situations in order to accurately interpret the message being communicated.

GENERAL AIM

To encourage positive interaction and successful communication between individuals and groups of different ethnic backgrounds, with a view to promoting mutual understanding.

SPECIFIC AIMS

- . To develop a school climate which promotes cohesion through the recognition and enhancement of the ethnic diversity of the school, community and nation.
- . To enhance self-esteem by recognising and promoting the ethnic identities of students, staff and community members.
- . To develop an awareness that individual, group and institutional practices reflect values, attitudes and beliefs.
- . To develop a belief in the equal worth of ethnic identities.
- . To develop skills of cultural interaction through an understanding of the significance of language and communication styles.
- . To develop intercultural skills through an examination of one's own attitudes, values and beliefs and the attitudes, values and beliefs of others.
- . To promote behaviour that fosters inter-ethnic harmony and counters discriminatory behaviour based on ethnic differences.

THE INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION PROCESS

The quality of this process will help determine the nature of the interaction, the effectiveness of the communication and the level of understanding within the Australian multicultural society.

INTERCULTURAL INTERACTION

To comprehend the nature of intercultural interaction it is necessary to analyse one's own culture, the cultures of others and the processes associated with the interaction of cultures.

The quality of intercultural interaction may be enhanced when individuals:

- . feel secure in their ethnic identities
- . have control over their ethnic identities.

The analysis of intercultural interaction should focus on:

- . the history of interaction of ethnic groups in Australia, e.g. White Australia Policy, Assimilation, Paternalism, Integration
- . diversity within ethnic groups, e.g. variation associated with place of residence, birthplace, economic status
- . traditions, values and beliefs which form the basis of many behaviours, e.g. religion, births, deaths, marriages
- . attitudes associated with an ethnic culture, e.g. aspirations, educational expectations.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The quality of intercultural interaction is invariably associated with language and communication style. The language of an ethnic group is both an aspect of its culture and a major means of communicating that culture. The language is also a significant means of access to the culture for those of other cultural groups.

When individuals and groups seek to interact but do not share a common language, confusion and misunderstanding may occur. However, confusion and misunderstanding may occur when the language is shared but the cultural background differs. Each culture has identifiable communication styles, e.g. tone and volume in speech, non-verbal cues and specific cultural perceptions which distinguish it from other cultures. Successful intercultural communication will occur when the participants are aware of the verbal and non-verbal constraints of the interaction. This involves taking positive steps to ensure that the message is appropriately transmitted and received.

INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

The encouragement of interaction and communication between all Australians based on respect for difference will assist in the development of national cohesion. Such cohesion requires a sense of common purpose and mutual understanding. Certain attitudes and actions which deny the legitimacy of cultural diversity inhibit cohesion. Therefore, the elimination of cultural prejudice, discrimination and bias at the interpersonal, inter-group and institutional levels is a prerequisite for intercultural understanding.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The intercultural education process is appropriate to whole school policies and procedures and classroom programs and practices. Some suggestions on implementing the process at both these levels are indicated below.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

A review of school management practices related to ethnic diversity should seek to develop consistent procedures which foster a cohesive school community.

Issues for consideration in such a review might include:

- . the values, attitudes and beliefs upon which present school practices are founded
- . the values, attitudes and beliefs evident in the school community
- . culturally prejudiced attitudes, values and beliefs which may be apparent in the school community
- . practices which are seen to discriminate on the basis of ethnic background
- . languages and communication styles of the school community
- . educational and social expectations in the school community.

A suggested framework for managing issues related to cultural diversity is outlined below.

Identification

The identification of specific cultural values, attitudes and beliefs is a skill essential to the management of cultural differences.

Identification may be facilitated by examining particular practices or behaviours which appear to be culturally determined. This process requires sensitivity and considerable skill. It is suggested that it be carried out by experienced teachers aware of the necessity for working closely with parents and community members.

For example, an investigation of student behaviour both within and outside the classroom in relation to teachers, other adults, class members of the same ethnic group, class members of other ethnic groups, and other students may assist in the identification of particular values, attitudes and beliefs. These may relate to such issues as the perceived value of education, teaching/learning styles, interpersonal relationships, inter-group relations, links between education and life chances, links between home and school, authority, modesty and discipline.

Clarification

It is not necessary in the clarification process to determine whether a behaviour or practice is right or wrong. The process seeks to ascertain the significance of the behaviour or practice in the context of the underlying values, beliefs, experiences, aspirations, etc. of those involved.

The participation of community personnel, parents, representatives of specific ethnic groups and interpreters may assist.

Negotiation

The negotiation process cannot dissolve cultural differences. It can however, assist in the resolution of issues which relate to cultural differences. This process should be based on an assumption that all parties share a concern for the welfare of students and are eager to resolve the issue. The negotiation process may generate a range of alternatives and seek to assess the possible consequences of each. The chances of successfully negotiating an issue will be enhanced if the issue has been identified and clarified.

CLASSROOM PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The application of intercultural education to classroom programs and practices may provide opportunities for students and teachers to:

- . understand that all Australian ethnic cultures have their own integrity, validity and coherence
- . appreciate the significance of ethnic identity to the development of self-esteem
- . develop competence in intercultural interaction and communication
- . identify and understand the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of their own and other Australian ethnic cultures

- appreciate ethnic diversity and social cohesion in the Australian multicultural society
- deal effectively with stereotyping, bias and discrimination.

Teaching/learning strategies directed at developing intercultural attitudes and skills might focus on:

- identifying and dealing effectively with ethnocentrism, racism, prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping
- dealing with personal and ethnic labels
- sharing tasks and working constructively with others
- coping with acceptance and rejection
- dealing with intercultural peer group pressure
- understanding and accepting individual and ethnic differences
- identifying possible consequences of one's words and actions on others
- initiating intercultural interaction
- experiencing aspects of cultures at first hand
- identifying barriers to intercultural interaction and communication
- effectively communicating one's culture to others.

A range of techniques is available to assist in the development of intercultural skills and attitudes. They include cultural immersion techniques such as socio-drama, role play and simulation games as well as the use of ethnographic surveys and persons with the capacity to interpret aspects of a particular culture.

EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the implementation of the intercultural education process will ultimately be reflected in the level of intercultural understanding (the degree of cohesion) evident in the school. The nature of interaction, the effectiveness of communication and the quality of understanding might be evidenced in the school climate.

Much attitude change is not quantifiable. Values, attitudes and beliefs are ultimately matters for private resolution by the individual. However, the incidence of observable acts of prejudice, cultural bias and discrimination is both quantifiable and a matter for school action at the executive and classroom level.

As its swansong at the end of 1986 the WA Multicultural Education Advisory Committee produced the following policy document, in the hope that it would be adopted by education systems in the state. Unfortunately, at the time of writing this has not occurred, and the Ministry of Education, in particular is relying on an outdated tokenistic policy. The future holds hope for significant change, however, for the Ministry is participating with the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission of WA to produce Multicultural Access Plans which should incorporate many of the perspectives contained in the following document.

MULTICULTURALISM IN EDUCATION
A POLICY DOCUMENT

Western Australian
Multicultural Education
Advisory Committee
December 1986 pp 10-15

POLICIES

ASSUMPTIONS

All educational systems, schools and teacher education institutions are urged to consider basing their policies and practices on the following assumptions:

- . multiculturalism remains the official public response to Australia's cultural diversity
- . all cultures are equally valued
- . all Australians have the right to maintain their languages and cultures
- . the sharing of cultures serves to enrich the lives of all Australians
- . the policies and practices of all schools should reflect an awareness and acceptance of multiculturalism
- . central to the rationale for Multicultural Education is the task of improving the participation of all students in formal educational activity and in society
- . the policies and practices of all schools should reflect an awareness and acceptance of multiculturalism
- . central to the rationale for Multicultural Education is the task of improving the participation of all students in formal educational activity and in society
- . Australian history has tended to ignore the contributions of all minorities

- . all schools require a social structure which will encourage acceptance of the ideas of democracy, freedom and equality
- . hostility and conflict among different groups in society can be minimized with a reduction in ethnocentric practices
- . the combating of prejudice and stereotyping requires essential skills which need to be continuously developed and reinforced.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The WAMEAC favours acceptance of the UNICEF Statement on the Rights of the Child:

- . a child has a right to have the family actively and knowingly involved in decisions about his/her medical care and educational placement
- . a child should have the right to a confirmation of his/her own culture, heritage and identity through the school curriculum and staffing
- . a child has a right to be protected from deliberate exposure to experiences and behaviours that are in opposition to the home culture and religious values
- . a child has a right to have teachers who are culturally sensitive and tolerant of differences.

AIMS

All educational systems and schools are urged to promote the following aims.

All students should be assisted in:

- . understanding and appreciating our society's common values
- . acquiring English literacy skills to assist proper communication
- . acquiring a respect for all cultures in Australia, including those of the Anglo-Celtic groups
- . becoming aware of the range of languages spoken in the Australian community
- . maintaining their own language and culture
- . acquiring competence in more than one language
- . gaining knowledge related to the sociology and politics of migration and settlement.

PRACTICES

The following strategies are recommended to fulfil these aims in a manner which has relevance for all students.

All educational systems, schools and teacher education institutions (where appropriate) should:

- . ensure that the curriculum includes a multicultural perspective in a wide range of subject areas
- . take action to avoid ethnic and racial stereotyping
- . consider measures which will help to break down ethnocentric attitudes, to depolarize interethnic hostility and conflict
- . adopt strategies and approaches which recognize that attitude change is a long term process
- . produce changes in teaching practices and the social structure of the classroom to encourage a respect for cultural diversity
- . provide for high quality English instruction and the remediation of English language difficulties
- . provide programmes in languages other than English which recognize the separate needs of mother tongue and second language learners
- . promote the use of teaching approaches and materials which are sensitive to the socio-cultural backgrounds and experiences of students in order to achieve academic excellence
- . utilize the resources of the local community to increase the participation of parents in the education of their children
- . deal with the social and historical realities of society to help students gain a better understanding of the inequalities which exist, and the ways these problems might be eliminated.
- . recognize that the care, understanding, concern and sensitivity shown towards students may be the most important influences on their performance
- . take measures to promote multiculturalism in professional development programmes
- . ensure that administrative policies and practices, staffing and resource distribution reflect the ideals of multiculturalism, and the educational needs of specific communities.

1791X

