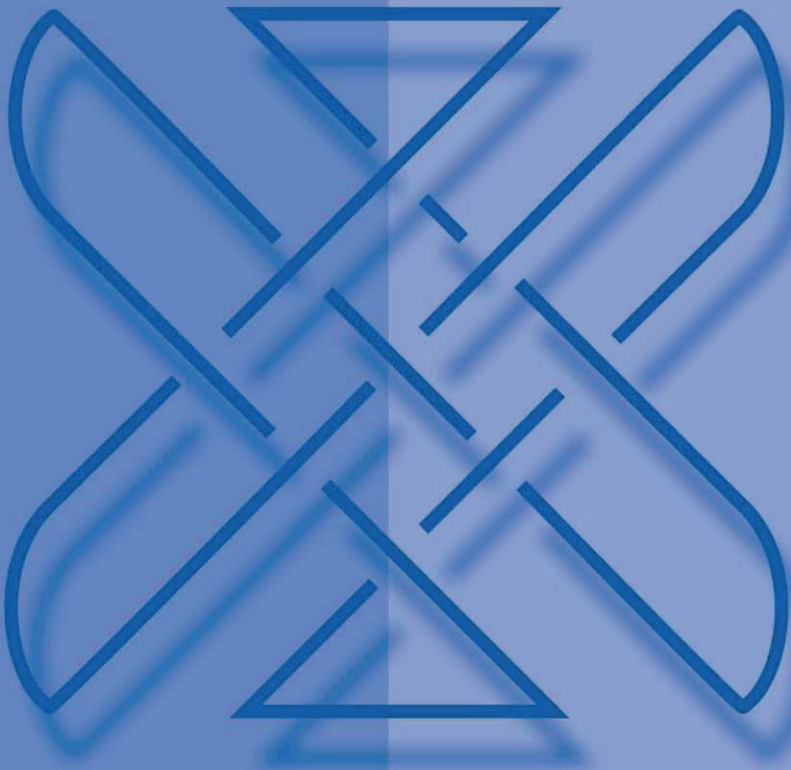# Language Policy and Modernity in Southeast Asia

Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand

Antonio L. Rappa

Lionel Wee

LANGUAGE POLICY AND MODERNITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand

Language Policy

VOLUME 6

The last half century has witnessed an explosive shift in language diversity not unlike the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel, but involving now a rapid spread of global languages and an associated threat to small languages. The diffusion of global languages, the stampede towards English, the counter-pressures in the form of ethnic efforts to reverse or slow the process, the continued determination of nation-states to assert national identity through language, and, in an opposite direction, the greater tolerance shown to multilingualism and the increasing concern for language rights, all these are working to make the study of the nature and possibilities of language policy and planning a field of swift growth.

The series will publish empirical studies of general language policy or of language education policy, or monographs dealing with the theory and general nature of the field. We welcome detailed accounts of language policy-making - who is involved, what is done, how it develops, why it is attempted. We will publish research dealing with the development of policy under different conditions and the effect of implementation. We will be interested in accounts of policy development by governments and governmental agencies, by large international companies, foundations, and organizations, as well as the efforts of groups attempting to resist or modify governmental policies. We will also consider empirical studies that are relevant to policy of a general nature, e.g. the local effects of the developing European policy of starting language teaching earlier, the numbers of hours of instruction needed to achieve competence, selection and training of language teachers, the language effects of the Internet. Other possible topics include the legal basis for language policy, the role of social identity in policy development, the influence of political ideology on language policy, the role of economic factors, policy as a reflection of social change.

The series is intended for scholars in the field of language policy and others interested in the topic, including sociolinguists, educational and applied linguists, language planners, language educators, sociologists, political scientists, and comparative educationalists.

LANGUAGE POLICY AND MODERNITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand

ANTONIO L RAPPA and LIONEL WEE

Springer

Antonio L. Rappa
Department of Political Science, NUS
10 Kent Ridge Crescent
Singapore 119260
SINGAPORE

Lionel Wee
Department of English Language and Literature
10 Kent Ridge Crescent
Singapore 119260
SINGAPORE

LANGUAGE POLICY AND MODERNITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Source: *CIA World Factbook*, 2005

In this book, our goal is to understand how the language policies of various nation-states in Southeast Asia grapple with the challenge of modernity. Our focus will therefore be on language policies as these are explicitly articulated either in the form of constitutions or public proclamations made by political leaders. We do not

deny that language policies can be implicit (Spolsky, 2004:8) since ideologies about language are prevalent regardless of whether these lead to overt policy formulations or not. However, our interest is in the attempts by Southeast-Asian nation-states to maintain/legitimize particular 'nationalist imaginations' (cf. Anderson, 1991), and such attempts are best seen in the kinds of explicit declarations made by agents of the state. It seems clear that our objective includes the question of how these nation-states manage the spread of the English language, since English is often seen as the language of modernity par excellence (May, 2001). But the spread of English into the nation-states of Southeast Asia also impacts on the status of the indigenous languages, and if English is the language of modernity, what kinds of roles are left open to the indigenous languages? We do not think that it is possible to completely avoid the spread of English (Phillipson, 1992; Crystal, 1997), and consequently, a major point of interest in our investigation is how nation-states attempt to manage the relationships between English and the local Asian languages. Different nation-states are constrained in different ways by their unique histories, and in subsequent chapters, we focus on case studies of four specific Southeast Asian nation states: Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.[1] But we are also interested in the similarities as well as the differences encountered by these nation states and in the concluding chapter, we will extract possible generalizations. In this introductory section, we explain how we intend to go about investigating the impact of modernity on the language policies of Southeast Asia.

1-1   INTRODUCTION

We review a number of key approaches to the study of modernity and language policy later on in this chapter. At this point, though, we want to simply state that we are treating modernity as the rise and spread of the products of rational activity performed by state as well as non-state actors. Examples of such products would include scientific and technological knowledge, political systems (constitutional government), legal institutions, educational structures, the standardization of languages, and patterns of mass consumption. These are products of rational activity because they are geared towards the achievement of specific goals (control of the environment in the case of technology, maximization of profits in the case of mass consumption, linguistic uniformity in the case of standardization), and though both the goals as well as the means for attaining them are constrained by past practices or 'tradition', the challenge for nation-states, where language policies are concerned, is to find a judicious balance between the desire to maintain a sense of tradition or authenticity, and the need to accommodate the products of rational activity. This point is also made by Fishman:

> Nationalist language planning must face two extreme positions in its attempts to reconcile modernization and authenticity. At one extreme is the view that such reconciliation is *impossible*; at the other, that it is *unnecessary*. One camp holds that the national language *cannot* (or should not) be employed for modern purposes.... The other camp holds that the delays and the trials of nationalist language planning (which optimally aims at expressing everything modern via indigenous roots) are simply so much *wasted time and effort*... But neither of the ... opposing views is nationalist in inspiration. The one is traditionalist; the other modernist. The nationalist *tour de force* is to combine authenticity *and* modernism; indeed, to find that there is no clash

between them at all. (Fishman, 1989:305, *italics* in original)

But it would be a mistake to assume that language policies directly confront the challenge of modernity. The relationship between language policy and modernity is mediated by a nationalist ideology since all nation-states have a sense, however fictional, of their histories and the kinds of people(s) who have participated in those histories. And because we want to take into account the influence of nationalist ideologies, our discussion of nationalism draws mainly on the work of Benedict Anderson. There are, to be sure, other theorists (Gellner, 1983, 1993; Hobsbawm, 1990) who along with Anderson, have argued for a modernist account of nationalism. That is, an account where nationalism is seen to arise from specific historical developments in nineteenth century Europe such as industrialization and print capitalism (see the following section). However, Anderson's theory is particularly attractive to us because he, more so than any other political scientist, has stressed the important role of nationalist 'imaginings.' Furthermore, perhaps because he recognizes their importance, Anderson does not adopt a judgmental stance on the truth/falsity of nationalist 'imaginings', unlike, say, Hobsbawm's 'inventionist' position (Hobsbawm, 1990; see May, 2001:68). For Anderson (1991), such imaginings are simply characteristic of all nations so that a nation is an 'imagined community', and it is the myths and stories constituting this nationalist imagination that both influence the formulation of particular language policies, and constrain how the products of rational activity can be accommodated. Again, we find Fishman's remarks highly relevant:

> All types of modernization planning involve a partial utilization of the past as well as a partial fabrication/creation of that past …. Planning repeatedly requires both the selective abandonment of the past as well as its selective ideologization and reconciliation with the new … More directly than in connection with many other aspects of planning, language planning depends on and interacts with decisions concerning the historical bonds that are presumed to unite hitherto disunited locals, the heroes they are to share, the classics they are to revere, the emotions they are to draw upon collectively … Language planning provides populations with a new name, with a new mission – and, as a result, with the drive and the dignity that makes new schools, new factories, new homes and new diets not only acceptable but also necessary goals to work for and fight for. It is not important that the variety being produced is increasingly unlike anyone's real mother tongue or grand-mother tongue. It is only important that it represents a legitimization of a new identity and a new power with which new authorities and new masses are consensually related to each other to the point of believing that they have always been so related. (Fishman, 1973:31-2)

Therefore, to understand how language policies deal with modernity, we need to take cognizance of the influence of nationalist ideologies (cf. Spolsky, 2004). In this book, we will treat such nationalist ideologies as 'institutional narratives' (Linde, 1993, 2001). As Johnstone points out:

> Narrative has been one of the major themes in humanistic and social scientific thought since the mid-twentieth century. The essence of humanness, long characterized as the tendency to make sense of the world through rationality, has come increasingly to be described as the tendency to tell stories, to make sense of the world through narrative. (Johnstone, 2001:635)

Moreover, there is increasing recognition of the importance of 'institutional narratives' in understanding policies (see Roe, 1994, for example). According to Linde, one important reason for seeing narratives in institutional contexts – including the narratives produced by nations – is that this helps us to appreciate:

> … the work that narrative performs in institutions to reproduce the institution, reproduce or challenge its power structures, induct new members, create the identity of the institution and its

members, adapt to change, and deal with contested or contradictory versions of the past. We may understand this as the way an institution uses narrative to create and reproduce its identity by the creation and maintenance of an institutional memory. (Linde, 2001:518-9)

For example, in Linde's own study of an American company, the institutional narrative includes the following points (Linde, 2001:522):

- a charismatic founder with a strong vision: the idea that farmers of good moral character should be charged lower rates for auto insurance, since they ran lower risks than city drivers, and an exclusive relation between the company and its sales agents;
- the American rural and small-town origins of the founder and of the company, which still shape its values;
- the development of the company from selling auto insurance to a full service company offering fire, life, and health insurance as well, presented as an ever-growing commercial and ethical success;
- the idea that the company is a family, and represents family values.

As Linde points out:

... this story of the institution's origin gives a coherent account of the company's identity and values. For a member to know this story means to know what the institution is, and what that member must do to be a part of it. (Linde, 2001:522)

Thus, in a similar manner, the institutional narratives produced by nation-states as they attempt to balance tradition with modernity serve the crucial purpose of legitimizing specific language policies. We briefly discuss two examples, which will be taken up in greater detail in chapters 2 and 4. The Singapore narrative (chapter 4) includes the following:

Singapore reluctantly came into being after its ejection from the Federation of Malaysia. It has no natural resources, and thus the continued success and development of the nation depends purely on the industry and intelligence of its people. But because the people of Singapore are of different ethnic backgrounds, racial sensitivities must be respected.

This brief narrative not only provides an account of Singapore's origins, and the values expected of its citizens, it also helps to rationalize Singapore's language policy. English is widely used as the medium of instruction in the education system because of its perceived importance in the global economy. And depending on their ethnic background, Singaporeans are expected to also be proficient in their ethnic mother tongues. This allows each ethnic group its own cultural space so that, hopefully, no single ethnic group can claim dominance over another. The Singapore language policy is thus oriented towards bilingual proficiency in English and the ethnic mother tongue. Knowledge of the former is justified on economic grounds while knowledge of the latter is seen as helping Singaporeans retain their different ethnic identities.

In contrast, the Malaysian narrative (chapter 2) emphasizes the following:

Even though Malaysia is ethnically heterogeneous, the ethnic Malays (who are the largest bumiputera or son-of-the-soil, i.e. indigenous community) are privileged as the original inhabitants of the land. Because the ethnic Chinese were often associated with having more economic power than the ethnic Malays, the policies of the nation state had to be redirected towards providing protection for the Malays (and minority bumiputera) under the auspices of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1970, resulting in a form of affirmative action that is sometimes referred to as the bumiputera policy. This policy ensures, among other things, that the Malay language and culture are given specific Constitutional safeguards regarding the rights of Malays

and other indigenous people of Malaysia, and that the education system, and the Malaysian Civil
Service (MCS) have to implement quotas to guarantee ethnic Malays and other bumiputera
access to the universities and employment in the MCS.

This Malaysian narrative, unlike the Singapore one, explicitly privileges the
ethnic Malays and pedestalizes the Malay language. Consequently, these different
narratives impose different constraints on the nation-states as they attempt to deal with
modernity. For example, in the case of Singapore, allowing the widespread use of the
English language is less problematic since in the Singapore narrative, no particular
Asian language is expected to be privileged. In fact, English, as we will see later, is
officially constructed as an ethnically 'neutral' language, and hence its widespread use
in Singapore is considered acceptable. In the case of Malaysia, however, the
privileging of the Malay language means that the widespread use of English for
official purposes is more problematic; it is seen as a threat to the Malay language and
thus to the bumiputera policy. The use of English in official domains in Malaysian
society, unlike that in Singapore, is therefore extremely sensitive and contested.
Perhaps there is no better illustration of the hotly contested status of English in
Malaysia than the angry responses evoked by a recent proposal, made by a Malaysian
senator, to allow the use of English in the Malaysian Parliament (*The Straits Times* 25
November 2002). Angry responses included editorials from a Malaysian newspaper,
Berita Minggu, which called such a proposal 'shameful', and a fellow senator who
was reported to have said:

> I do not agree, and in fact, oppose the proposal because in our excitement to improve our English
> language usage, let us not belittle our own national language. We fought hard to raise the Malay
> language as the official language and had won.

This brief discussion hopefully illustrates the mediating role that nationalist
ideologies play in legitimizing specific language policies, as well as in coping with
modernity. It also reminds us of the continuing influence of ethnicity in the formation
of such ideologies. This is a point made most forcefully in the writings of Anthony
Smith (1986, 1991, 1998), whose notion of *ethnie* or 'ethnic community' attempts to
go beyond both essentialist and situational conceptions of ethnicity, to highlight
instead the historical and symbolic nature of ethnic identities. Ethnic identities, for
Smith, involve shared memories, a sense of intergenerational continuity, and a belief
in a common destiny (Smith, 1991: 25). Ethnic identities, as we will see, feature
prominently in the language policies of Southeast Asia, and precisely because we
agree with Smith that such identities are not as open to change or self-fashioning as
other identities (e.g. status) may perhaps be, we refrain from adopting a postmodernist
stance on identity. A postmodernist stance would emphasize the fragmentary nature of
identity, and perhaps how a wide range of identities are available to the modern
individual, especially through acts of consumption, so that in deciding what
commodities to purchase, an individual enacts and validates for him/herself the kind(s)
of personae that he/she wishes to project (Bauman, 2005). However, it is clear that
one's ethnic identity is not as freely constructed as one's desire to be seen as, say,
'environment-friendly.' Elements of constructedness are undoubtedly present in all
kinds of identities, but the historical and collective nature of ethnic identities (May,
2001; Smith, 1986, 1991) gives them a resilience that poses significant challenges to
any language policy of any sort. Even the notion of 'new ethnicities' (Hall, 1997),
which emphasizes the emergent, hybrid and local nature of ethnicities, is not clearly a

distinctive phenomenon; it seems to be found in various societies regardless of their relationship to modernity (Bucholtz, 2002), and does not seem to pose any serious challenge, empirically or theoretically, to less transitory notions of ethnicity.

In the rest of this chapter, we provide a brief review of various studies of modernity and language planning. We then close the chapter by introducing three possible relations that can figure in any narrative of nationalist ideology: equivalence, displacement, and complementarity. We also discuss a phenomenon that we call 'linguistic instrumentalism', and raise the hypothesis that as indigenous Asian languages respond to the spread of English, they too will come to be viewed in instrumentalist terms. In other words, we think that a significant consequence of how four nation-states in Southeast Asia cope with modernity is to emphasize the instrumentalist values of the indigenous languages, thus contributing to a general rise in linguistic instrumentalism.

1-2   QUESTIONS OF MODERNITY

Modernity has been defined in a number of ways by different scholars, and its beginnings have also been traced back to various points in modern European history ranging from the sixteenth century right up to the twentieth century (Tomlinson, 1991:140; Sekiguchi, 1994:825-826). However, it is generally agreed that by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in European history, a new kind of society emerged that was fundamentally different from the kind of societies that had existed before although there are disagreements over the exact nature of this difference.

For example, William E. Connolly (1998:13-14) argues that modernity is about the drive to "force everyone and everything into slots provided by a highly ordered system and to pretend the result is self-realization, with achievement of reason, and attainment of common ground". And Gianni Vattimo claims in *The End of Modernity* that modernity exists as an era of history that is "opposed to the ancient way of thinking governed by a cyclical and naturalistic vision of the course of events in the world" (Vattimo, [1985] 1988:3-4). In the ancient way of thinking that Vattimo refers to, events such as earthquakes and tidal waves were attributed to the displeasure of the gods or some superior being rather than to what the moderns now know as the Forces of Nature. The way of thinking in modernity is differentiated from the ancient way because the modern way of thinking involves the use of scientific and technical vocabularies that signify greater human control over the environment than the ancients ever thought possible. Unlike the ancients, modern people *living in modernity*[2] are no longer fearful of the 'Forces of Nature', at least not in the way that the ancients were. As such, rather than aiming to appease the 'gods' through rituals and other constructed practices, the moderns now take logical steps toward avoiding the problem of the unpredictability of Nature. There is therefore a great divide between the ancient and modern ways of thinking and conceptualizing the world.

And while Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Weber generally agree that modernity is associated with the 'death' of god, and the rise of humanism, capitalism, mass culture, and industrialization, more recent scholars such as Stephen White, Zygmunt Bauman, and Theresa Brennan would be quick to add other equally important

dimensions to modernity such as globalization, communications technology, the commoditization of culture, advanced capitalism and the marketization of business, trade, and finance. Bauman also sees modernity as being 'liquid' and 'fluid'; by these metaphors he means that it destroys traditionally 'solid' loyalties and obligations at all levels of society from the macro to the micro. The result, according to Bauman, is "an individualized, privatized version of modernity, with the burden of pattern-weaving and the responsibility for failure falling primarily on the individual's shoulders" (Bauman, 2000:8). According to Bauman, under modern conditions, it is the individual who must make the primary effort to make sense of social life; larger institutional structures and traditions cannot be relied upon for this task. Bauman's optimistic view thus challenges the pessimism in Claus Offe's warning that modernity would be antithetical to self-reflection and self-critique (Bauman, 2000:4-5).

In a similar vein to Bauman, Connolly's analysis of modernity draws attention to what he sees as the breaking down of traditional identities. Connolly argues that the political culture of cosmopolitan cities, for example, is contingent on the extent to which (1) 'time is being sped up' – we do things much faster today than we ever did before (Connolly, 2000:597); and (2) "the [greater] speed at which we perform tasks today—through the agency of modern technology – tends towards softening up universal explanations of life" (Connolly, 2000:609). The 'speeding up of time', and the 'softening up of universal categories' makes it difficult, indeed, almost impossible to sustain the value and applicability of universal laws. However, Connolly is relatively optimistic that the result will be a cosmopolitan modernity where we live a life that is no longer tied to simplistic, traditional identities with expected or predictable behavior, nor will we discover much value or function in sticking to these simple categories. As such, he argues for a more complex view of social order, one which challenges "the closures of nationalism and civilizopolism with a more rhizomatic or network conception of political culture" (Connolly, 2000:603).

While Connolly is interested in how the speeding up of time causes a breaking down of traditional identities, Brennan argues on the other hand that the global economy has faster and more efficient means of extracting the surplus value of natural substances needed for capitalist production (Brennan, 2000:118). *Exhausting Modernity* builds on her early work on Lacan and history and has at its center, a Lacanian interpretation of the ego in modernity that is "built on the destructive objectification of the other, together with a destructive objectification of knowledge" (Brennan, 2000:34). For Brennan, the objectification of the other and of knowledge in the new political economy is extensively illustrated in environmental degradation and the depleted psychic lives of human beings (Brennan, 2000:34).

Moving on from Brennan's Lacanian perspective, Anthony Giddens discusses in his book on *Modernity and Self Identity* (1991) the manifold ways in which the self and society are dynamically different from preceding forms of historically-situated social organizations. Like Connolly, Brennan and other academics who have worked on modernity, Giddens' work seems equally concerned with the reorganization of time and space, seen in the globalizing influence of modernity's reflexivity. For Giddens, modernity's reflexivity refers to "the susceptibility of most aspects of social activity and material relations with nature to chronic revision in the light of new information or knowledge" (Giddens, 1991:20). It is this 'chronic revision' as new information becomes available that makes it difficult, if not impossible for traditions to be sustained.

From this brief survey, we see that while there is some controversy over exactly how 'modern' societies differs from 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' ones, these attempts to theorize modernity all clearly reflect a shared belief: that a fundamental change has taken place in the nature of social life. And despite the differences between these contemporary political and social theorists, it is also generally agreed that a key characteristic of modernity is the rise and spread of the products of rational activity. As Touraine points out (1995:9-10):

> It is impossible to describe as 'modern' a society which tries primarily to organize and to act in accordance with a divine revelation or a national essence. But nor is modernity pure change or a mere sequence of events; it means the diffusion of the products of *rational* activity: scientific, technological and administrative activity.... The distinctive feature of Western thought, at the point when it identified most strongly with modernity, was the attempt to move from a recognition of the essential role of rationalization to the broader idea of a *rational society* in which reason would take control of not only scientific and technical activity, but also of the government of human being as well as the government of things.

Thus, the spread of rationality was originally motivated by achievements in science and technology, which then led to a strong belief that rationality could and should also be extended to questions or problems in the social and political arenas. Modernity therefore marks the movement away from a god-centered universe to a man-centered one. It is characterized by an emphasis on logical and secular thought; it seeks exploration and discovery, and controlled attempts to improve, develop and build upon the past. With modernity, the future is not defined in terms of being tied to the past but by learning from and perhaps even breaking with aspects of the past. We will say more in the concluding chapter about the distinction between (simple) modernity and high modernity (Giddens, 1990, 1991; Lash and Urry, 1994), although this distinction will recur in the intervening chapters as well. For now, we simply note that the distinction is typically based on the idea that in late modernity, authoritative knowledge and institutional structures are considered to have a less foundational status, so that there is a greater opening up of the possibility of critical and reflexive monitoring, leading to the rise of various cultural industries (of dress, dance, music, etc) concerned mainly with the production and consumption of cultural objects (Lash and Urry, 1994). Such a conception of late modernity, we emphasize, is still consistent with the notion of modernity as the spread of the products of rational activity; the key difference is that in late modernity, strategies for coping are assumed to fall more directly onto particular individuals or ad hoc communities or cultural 'tribes', given the erosion of institutional authority. While cultural industries are highly developed in the West, they have a much more nascent form in Southeast Asia. In the concluding chapter, though, we briefly explore the possibility that such cultural industries can serve as a venue where indigenous languages can find some social and economic value that allows them to carve out a space in relation to English.

1-2-1   *Modernity & the Modern*

Why must there be a distinction between 'modernity' and 'modern'? To be modern is to be grounded in a perspective, an attitude that separates us from being ancient, from being traditional, from being old-fashioned (Berman, 1982). While modernity refers to a complex societal-level phenomenon, being modern refers to a mindset or perspective of individuals. So, of course, 'being modern' and 'modernity'

share much common ground since they are both built on reason and rationality. The term 'modernity', however, is often used to characterize a phenomenon that individuals and societies must willy-nilly grapple with (e.g. Tomlinson, 1991), that is, the spread of the products of rational activity. The term 'modern', on the other hand, refers to an outlook or attitude that increasingly embraces the secularization of life and its concomitant rationalization.

This spreading of this attitude of being modern was in no doubt propelled by attempts to extend rationality into social and political arenas. But this not only meant that an increasingly secular outlook was coming to predominate, it also meant a breaking down of feudal bonds, partly because rationality was understood to be a natural process that governs individual behavior. The celebration of rationality then required a greater respect for individual autonomy and also opened up a greater expectation of social mobility. This meant a weakening of social structures that immobilized people to permanently ascribed roles, as was the case with the feudal system. But the disappearance of the feudal system created a structural crisis in that different means had to be found to provide a relatively mobile and disparate group of individuals with the sense of belonging to a larger collectivity. While we should be careful not to appeal too easily to some form of Parsonian functionalism, where the rise of nationalism is 'explained' by both the breakdown of feudal ties and the need to maintain some form of social equilibrium, it does seem clear that the feudal system was gradually replaced with a greater emphasis on nationalism where the unity of an 'imaginary community' had to be constructed across class barriers, aided by the development of 'print-capitalism' (Anderson, 1991). The term 'print-capitalism' refers to the trade in books and other printed materials, which resulted in public forms of communication such as newspapers and novels becoming primary channels by which a shared culture and shared interests were being created. This was further aided by the fact that print-capitalism also contributed to the creation of 'mechanically reproduced print languages' so that certain vernaculars were eliminated or modified in favor of others, leading to the formation of standardized languages which were then able to reach ever more diverse groups of individuals. In Anderson's words (1991:46; see also Loomba, 1998:186), "the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation". As Anderson makes clear, language is an integral part of modernity. A major challenge thus posed by modernity is both the construction and maintenance of the nation-state, and any attempt to answer this challenge must come to terms with the role of language in the nationalist imagination, both as a medium or channel for the creation of the imagined community, as well as a representation of the community's sense of identity.

1-3   THE NATIONALIST IMAGINATION

Partha Chatterjee's (1993) work is a response, from a post-colonial perspective, to Anderson's (1991) argument that the nation is an imagined community. The motivation for Chatterjee's work stems from the question of whose imagination dominates in such nationalist imaginings. According to Chatterjee, Anderson's major contribution is to demonstrate that a nation is not predetermined by the kind of language spoken or by the race of the people. Rather, a nation is a product of the

imagination. But Chatterjee takes issue with Anderson's point that this process of imagining nations into existence, having taken place in Western Europe, the Americas, and the former Soviet empire "had supplied for all subsequent nationalisms a set of modular forms from which nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen the ones they liked" (Chatterjee, 1993:5). As Chatterjee points out, the implication of Anderson's argument is that the kinds of nationalisms imagined by the nations of Asia and Africa are secondary, in the sense of being derived from forms already created in the West. In specifying the nature of his objection to Anderson's argument, he says:

> If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain 'modular' forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized. (Chatterjee, 1993:5)

This response suggests that social institutions and practices may be divided into two domains: the material and the spiritual. Therefore:

> The material is the domain of the outside, of the economy and of statecraft, of science and technology, a domain where the West had proved its superiority and the East had succumbed. In this domain, then, Western superiority had to be acknowledged and its accomplishments carefully studied and replicated. The spiritual, on the other hand, is an 'inner' domain bearing the 'essential' marks of cultural identity. The greater one's success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture. This formula is, I think, a fundamental feature of anticolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa. (Chatterjee, 1993:6)

In the material domain, Chatterjee freely admits to the superiority of the West, and suggests that for Asian and African nations to achieve success in this domain, the only option is to imitate the relevant 'Western skills'. But it is in the spiritual domain where freedom and autonomy are still possible, where, according to him, the preservation of the distinctness of an Asian or African culture will allow these nations to claim an autonomous form of nationalism.

We think Chatterjee's position to be too rigid, and hence, problematic. The separation between the material and the spiritual domains cannot be easily sustained for two reasons. One, there are certain things such as language which may be said to occupy both the spiritual and material domains. For example, English is often seen as the language that provides access to economic development as well as scientific and technological knowledge. But as we will see in our discussion of Singapore, English is claimed by some to also be a mother tongue, a marker of identity. The converse is also attested, where there are attempts to present an Asian language (Mandarin in the case of Singapore and Malay in the case of Malaysia) as not merely being a cultural marker, but also a language of economic development and modernity. Languages in the narratives of Asian modernity may move from the material to the spiritual and vice versa. And on occasion, one and the same language may simultaneously be said to occupy both domains.

Secondly, by acknowledging Western superiority in the material while focusing on the spiritual as the bastion as cultural distinctness, Chatterjee is unable to accommodate narratives where links are made between the two domains so that even activities in the material domain are not merely attempts at imitating the West.

Narratives of modernity in Asia are 'moral-political' projects (Ong, 1999; see below also) where Asian values such as Confucianism do not merely exist in a separate domain from the material. Rather, a crucial ingredient in these narratives is the claim that Asian values actively contribute towards the achievement of economic success and political stability. For example, in a discussion of industrial development in East Asia, Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister of Singapore, suggests that "the more communitarian values and practices of the East Asians – the Japanese, Koreans, Taiwanese, Hong Kongers, and the Singaporeans – have proven to be clear assets in the catching-up process" (in Gardels, 1995:247). Furthermore, it is not just a matter of creating narrative links between the material and the spiritual. Often, the claim is made that Western 'notions' such as liberal democracy cannot be simply imported wholesale so that there is explicit rejection of any attempt to simply reproduce as faithfully as possible such political institutions. Rather, these institutions are claimed to necessarily take on an Asian inflection in the light of such Asian values. The result is that, contrary to Chatterjee, the material domain, too, and not only the spiritual, is often claimed to be distinct in narratives of Asian modernities.

Because we see the formulation of a language policy as part of a larger nationalist narrative, we are suspicious of any *a priori* binaries such as the one put forward by Chatterjee. To understand such narratives, we also do not believe that there are any grounds for predicting that certain factors (e.g. language, ethnicity, economy) will necessarily be more relevant than others in the construction of such a narrative; different narratives privilege different factors. We believe, however, that the structure of such narratives contain particular recurring relations that are of analytical value. These are the relations that we call 'equivalence', 'displacement' and 'complementarity'. We also believe that an interesting hypothesis can be made concerning the discourses surrounding particular languages. The hypothesis concerns a phenomenon we call 'linguistic instrumentalism'. In the later part of this introduction, we elaborate on these ideas.

1-4   MODERNITY AND MODERNIZATION

As mentioned, part of the inspiration for extending rationality to the social and political arenas was the optimism that its success (in the form of the 'scientific' method) in dealing with technological and scientific problems seemed to promise a way of delivering societies from an assortment of social and material ills. However, the failure of modernity to fulfill its promise resulted in attempts to explicitly theorize about the costs of modernity (Tomlinson, 1991:142-3). Again, not surprisingly, there are disagreements over the exact nature of these costs. According to Marx (1975), modernity engenders alienation, which, through the structures of capitalist domination, refers to the worker's psychological distancing from the product of his/her labor. For Durkheim (1984), the cost of modernity is anomie, where rapid social changes, particularly those brought about by the process of industrialization, lead to a sense of normlessness so that the power of tradition to provide normative guidance or to act as a cultural anchor is weakened. With Weber (1971), it is the 'iron cage' of instrumental reason, where the rationality of means is given priority over the rationality of ends, resulting in a divorce between moral values themselves and the technical means

available for accomplishing goals. All these make it clear that modernity is neither necessarily good nor necessarily bad. Rather, modernity is a confluence of factors (such as scientific and technological developments, the emphasis on rationality and individual autonomy, the rise of nationalism and the spread of capitalism) that societies need to deal with, and the question of modernity really amounts to the question of how these factors are managed.

One suggested form of management that was popular in the 1950s and 1960s was modernization theory as seen, for example, in the discussion in Roxborough (1979). In the wake of decolonization, modernization theory was presented as the solution to the economic, social and political problems faced by the former colonies in Asia and Africa. Propagated by the "mainstream intellectual apparatuses of the capitalist West" and in particular, by a self-satisfied and affluent America of the 1950s (Tomlinson, 1991:143,175), modernization theory attempted to explain the economic underdevelopment of the newly independent countries which had just emerged from colonialism, and to provide an intellectual justification for Western development policies that were supposed to aid these countries as they attempted to modernize. The explanation for economic underdevelopment focused primarily on the existence of traditional and indigenous cultural traits and values, whose presence was claimed to stand in the way of modernization. As a result, the proper solution, according to modernization theory, called for the elimination of these indigenous traits and the importation of Western programs that had little regard for the fit between such programs and the local cultural contexts of the countries that these programs were supposed to aid. In response, a number of criticisms were launched against modernization theory. One area of criticism was its assumption that societies can be placed or classified on points along a scale of linear progression from underdeveloped to developed status such that Western societies were presented as paradigm examples of the endpoint of such development. Such a system of classification tended to ignore the important cultural differences that existed between various countries, and it also subordinated cultural values to purely economic forces. Another related area of criticism was directed at the theory's assumption that the problems faced by Asian and African societies are due to the existence of a variety of indigenous traits. As mentioned, this implied that the only way in which these societies can become developed is to eliminate such traits, and to adopt as faithfully as possible Western institutions and social structures. The suggestion here is that Western modernity can act as the reference point for these former colonies, and that the way forward is via mimicry and faithful replication of the West. Also, by focusing solely on indigenous traits, the theory ignored the role played by external factors, particularly the historical relationship of exploitation between colonizer and colonized. The theory thus also failed to consider that current structures in the global capitalist market may play a role in sustaining relationships of dominance, exploitation, and dependency.

1-4-1   *Narratives of Modernity*

This failure of modernization theory coupled together with the recent successes of various Asian economies[3] (Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan) as well as the anticipated economic development of China has given rise to what Aihwa Ong more recently calls 'new narratives of Asian modernity'. These new narratives of Asian modernity are primarily characterized by a

rethinking of the place of indigenous cultural elements vis-à-vis Western modernity. In this rethinking, indigenous elements are no longer seen as being incompatible with Western modernity, rather the case is often made that it is precisely the presence of such indigenous traits that have contributed to the success of the Asian economies. These are contained in the stories of and about Asia, stories that aim to highlight the particularly Asian histories of the development of statehood, economy and society in contradistinction to theories of nationalism or modernity that were formulated in response to descriptions of Western societies. As Ong herself puts it:

> Thus, new narratives of Asian modernity, spun from the self-confidence of vibrant economies, cannot be reduced to a pale imitation of some Western standard (for instance, full-fledged democracy combined with modern capitalism). Ascendant regions of the world such as the Asia Pacific region are articulating their own modernities as distinctive formations. The historical facts of Western colonialism, ongoing geopolitical domination, and ideological and cultural influences are *never* discounted (only minimized) in these narratives, but they should nevertheless be considered alternative constructions of modernity in the sense of moral-political projects that seek to control their own present and future. Such self-theorization of contemporary non-Western nation-states, while always in dialogue and in tension with the West, are critical modes of ideological repositioning that have come about with shifting geostrategic alignments. (Ong, 1999:23)

That is, in 'articulating their own modernities', Asian countries are engaged in rethinking and representing both to themselves and to others the relationships amongst a variety of factors. These might include relationships amongst different ethnic groups, the role of Asian languages vis-à-vis the English language, and the maintenance of political and cultural independence with respect to neighboring as well as Western countries. Donald McCloud (1995) illustrates the uniqueness of (Southeast) Asian traditions in establishing independent paths to modernity. Thus, there is no monolithic Southeast Asian modernity, since each country has established its own separate spheres and strategies of development. Rather, modernity exerts a widespread and compelling global force that impacts differently across different states and regions. The characteristics of uneven, competing modernities between and among nation-states and across political, social, cultural and economic borders exist as tensions between modern forms and traditional structures of survival.

As we mentioned earlier, the challenge posed by modernity is primarily a discursive one. Where language policy is concerned, the goal is to construct, as far as possible, a narrative that incorporates the products of rational activity into the nationalist ideologies. And in the case of an Asian country, the institutional narrative would probably have to address relations between the Asian state, its population, its investments and capital as well as its relation to the West. In the case of language, as the Asian languages come into contact with the English language, the narratives must also address the possibility of exchange across cultural and ethnic domains. These Asian countries are therefore caught in a tension between a need to re-invent themselves in order to adapt to the forces of globalization without sacrificing what is perceived as defining the 'local' culture such as ethnic identity and the local languages. This is especially relevant, we think, to understanding the language policies of Southeast Asian nation-states since many of these states are attempting to modernize, but in ways that will allow them to retain a sense of tradition and authenticity. This suggests that in looking at language policies, it is useful to treat them as resulting from a 'balancing act', that is, as resulting from a need to take into consideration, however imperfectly, multiple factors and constraints. But before

saying more about what this actually means and in what way it differs from more established approaches to the study of language planning, we briefly review a number of earlier works.

1-5   LANGUAGE PLANNING AS PROBLEM SOLVING

Fishman (1973:24) defines language planning as "the organized pursuit of solutions to language problems, typically at the national level". Similarly, Blommaert, in a review of language planning studies, suggests that:

> The main focus of the theoretical elaboration was the correlation between types of languages (including language functions, linguistic needs and requirements) and types of communities (states, nations, polities, ethnic groups). The relations were specified as processes in which transformations in societies would be enhanced, sustained or shaped by transformations of the sociolinguistic profile of the society in question. (Blommaert, 1996:205)

Thus, approaches to language planning, particularly in the 1960s to the 1980s, can be described as oriented toward the identification of language problems and their possible solutions. Theories were mainly geared towards generalizing, as far as possible, over the types of problems that might be encountered by different community types, and correlating these with likely solutions. For example, consider Neustupny's (1970) breakdown of language planning into a sequentially organized series of problems and their corresponding solutions. Neustupny suggests that when the problem is one of code selection, language planning is mainly concerned with policy formulation; when the problem is one of code stabilization, then the goal is codification (in the form of dictionaries, grammars, etc); when the problem is expanding the use of the code, planning should deal with code elaboration (particularly via lexical innovation); and finally when the problem is differentiating one variety of the code from another, then planning must be concerned with code cultivation (via style manuals, for example, which would guide the use of the selected variety in various genres).

Neustupny's approach is strikingly similar to Haugen's (1966a, 1966b) four stage model which proposes that language planning should involve norm selection (deciding on which linguistic variety to focus on), codification (standardizing the selected variety), implementation (coordinating various activities to ensure that the selected variety is in fact used by the target population) and elaboration (widening the range of functions that the selected variety can be used for).[4] Thus, in his discussion of the theoretical framework for language planning, Cobarrubias (1983:3) refers primarily to Haugen's four stage model and Kloss' (1969) distinction between status and corpus planning. Both Haugen's and Kloss' theoretical innovations obviously fall well within the problem-solving orientation. For example, Kloss' distinction makes clear that resources can be channeled in different directions, either towards changing the status or the structure of a language. This has caused several authors to note that the focus on language planning has tended towards corpus rather than status planning (Cobarrubias, 1983:5). And Haugen's approach, like the distinction between status and corpus planning, allows language planners to decide what specific steps within the language planning process need to be given more attention.

In the 1990s, this emphasis on language planning as problem solving

continues in the form of a 'language management' perspective (Jernudd, 1993). The main difference between language management and the other approaches discussed so far is in how the language problems are identified. As Jernudd emphasizes:

> The difference is that the language-management model seeks to explain how language problems arise in the course of people's use of language, that is, in discourse, in contrast with approaches under Fishman's definition of language planning which takes decision-makers', for example governments', specification of language problems as their axiomatic point of departure. (Jernudd, 1993:133)

The language management model is, however, robustly still oriented toward problem solving as Jernudd immediately makes clear:

> Language planning can be accommodated as an aspect of language management, a process through which particular people are given the authority to find and suggest systematic and rigorous solutions to problems of language potentially or actually encountered by members of their community. Note that this formulation does not presuppose a democratic or any other particular political-institutional process of authorization; but it does require identification of the language problem in discourse. Such identification should be conscious and extensive, although in historical language planning it often remains underdeveloped. (Jernudd, 1933:134)

This emphasis on language planning as problem solving was to be critiqued by James Tollefson in his book, *Planning Language, Planning Inequality* (1991). Tollefson makes an important and useful distinction between two major approaches to language planning, which he refers to as the neoclassical and the historical-structural approaches, and it is to this distinction that we now turn.

1-6 NEOCLASSICAL AND HISTORICAL STRUCTURAL APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE PLANNING

The following is a summary of the four major differences between the neoclassical and the historical-structural approaches to language planning (from Wiley, 1996:115):

(1)   The unit of analysis employed: While the neoclassical approach focuses on individual choices, the historical-structural pays attention to relationships between groups.

(2)   The role of the historical perspective: The neoclassical is more interested in the current language situation; the historical-structural, in contrast, emphasizes the role of socio-historical factors.

(3)   Criteria for evaluating plans and policies: The neoclassical is primarily amoral in its outlook; policies are evaluated in terms of how efficiently they achieve their goals. The historical-structural is more sensitive to issue of domination, exploitation and oppression.

(4)   The role of the social scientist: Consistent with its amoral outlook, the neoclassical assumes that the social scientist must and can approach language problems in an apolitical manner. On the other hand, the historical-structural views political stances as inescapable so that "those who avoid political questions inadvertently support the status quo".

According to Tollefson, the neoclassical approach tends to emphasize the rational nature of individual choices. For example, an individual may choose to learn a new language because of certain perceived benefits such as access to better jobs. Or that same individual may decide that the time and money spent on learning a new language may not be worth the potential benefits, and hence make not make the effort

to expand his/her linguistic repertoire. Whatever the outcome, the neoclassical approach treats these as decisions which are freely and rationally made, and in a similar vein, language planning within the neoclassical approach, tends to adopt a problem-solution perspective, where language related issues are treated as problems which can be rationally and logically solved by adopting the appropriate language policy. Consequently, a major problem with the neoclassical approach is that it ignores the effects of socio-historical factors in constraining the nature of such choices. Individuals may make choices, but as Tollefson emphasizes, we need to also ask questions like "Why must that individual expend those particular costs? Why are those particular benefits rather than others available to that individual? What are the costs and benefits for other people in the community?" (Tollefson, 1991:32).

In contrast, the historical-structural approach pays careful attention to the kinds of interests that particular policies may serve. The aim is to "examine the historical basis of policies and to make explicit the mechanisms by which policy decisions serve or undermine particular political and economic interests" (Wiley, 1996:32). The historical-structural approach, then, assumes that planning bodies involved in policy-making reflect the interests of dominant political groups. Tollefson's own position is that the dominance of the neo-classical approach must be broken in favor of the historical-structural and he criticizes the former for attempting to be 'amoral' or 'apolitical' in dealing with issues of language planning (Wiley, 1996:32).

Most of the work discussed in the previous section on language planning as problem solving may thus be said to be neoclassical in nature. As a further example of the neoclassical approach at work, consider the papers in the collection edited by Rubin *et al.* (1977). In the introductory chapter to the collection, language planning is treated as:

> those planned activities which attend to the valuation of language resources, the assignment of preferences to one or more languages and their functional ordering, and developing the language resources and their use in a manner consistent with the declared objectives identified as planned targets. Just as economic planning is merely one among many measures by which an economy develops, language planning too does not exhaustively account for the developments recorded in the language situation. ... We also assumed that successful language planning, or degrees of it, can be understood in terms of the efficacy of planned policy measures as well as the target populations' propensity to comply with the public policies pertaining to language planning. (Das Gupta and Ferguson, 1977: 4-6)

By viewing language planning as an essentially technocratic process of efficiently administering resources so as to achieve specific goals, little consideration is given to questions of how such processes might lead to or help sustain dominance and dependency relations between groups, precisely the kinds of questions that Tollefson associates with the historical-structural approach. In contrast to the problem-solving neoclassical approach, some recent trends have tended to emphasize the inextricably social nature of language, and furthermore, to draw attention to the fact that language policies, rather than solving problems, may in fact create new problems or simply exacerbate old ones. In a number of important works, Leibowitz, for example, has focused on language policies where knowledge of English is required for access to a variety of economic, educational and political goods (Leibowitz, 1971, 1980; see also the discussion in Wiley, 1996). Leibowitz's analysis focuses on the

immigrant language policy of the United States and treats the policy as an attempt at imposing social control rather than problem-solving. For example, one of his analyses suggests that during the 1850s English literacy requirements were imposed by the Massachusetts and Connecticut legislatures in order to exclude English-speaking Irish Catholics from voting. And at the same time, such requirements were also being used to exclude African-Americans from participating in the electoral process. As Wiley (1996:121) points out, for Leibowitz, the "motivation to impose English language and literacy requirements has been based upon the 'degree of hostility' of the majority toward the language minority group 'usually because of race, color, or religion'" so that "language restriction is not something that has occurred in isolation from other forms of discrimination."

And Tollefson (1991) himself, in his book, presents a number of case studies of individuals facing important language choices, and attempts to highlight how larger social forces already constrain the kinds of choices available to these individuals. For example, in his case study of Harib Pal, a teenaged boy living in London whose parents came from Bangladesh (1991:44), Tollefson draws attention to the complex linguistic choices that Harib must make in course of his daily interactions. But Tollefson goes on to ask:

> But is it accurate to say that Harib has 'choices' about which language variety he uses? 'Choice' suggests freedom to select from alternatives without coercion. Is Harib 'free' to decide between alternative language varieties for use in the playground and in classes? Or do external forces determine which language variety he will use in any particular circumstance? These are important and complex questions that focus on the relative roles of individual choice and collective behaviour. (Tollefson, 1991:46)

A particularly influential attempt to address the larger social forces that affect individuals' language choices is in the form of linguistic human rights (Baugh, 2000; Hamel, 1997; Phillipson, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994; de Varennes, 1996). The goal of linguistic human rights is to ensure that minority groups and their associated mother tongues are accorded respect and acceptance, so that members of these groups can use their languages in domains (especially education) considered crucial for participation in society. Linguistic human rights advocates have tended to focus their attention on states, arguing that states are the appropriate addressees of rights, and are therefore obligated to ensure that no violations of linguistic human rights take place. The goals of linguistic human rights are laudable, and it seems fair to say that the primary articulators of the theoretical foundations of linguistic human rights are Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, and their associates. Pertinent works in this regard include Phillipson et al. (1994), Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1995), and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000). However, despite the good intentions of linguistic human rights advocates, there have been critiques (Blommaert, 2001a,b; May, 2001:8; Pennycook, 1998; Stroud, 2001; Wee, 2005), mostly aimed at clarifying a number of conceptual issues and problems that arise in concretizing the notion of linguistic human rights. One criticism is that the internal complexity and heterogeneity of minority groups is not fully appreciated. As May points out:

> The principal problem here is that advocates of linguistic human rights tend to assume the identity of linguistic minority groups as given, the collective aims of linguistic minority groups as uniform, and the notion of collective rights as unproblematic ... And yet this simply cannot be assumed, not least because of the processes of language shift and loss ... which may already have led many group members to abandon the minority language in question and /or any identification

> they may have had with it ... This common disjuncture between 'individual' and 'collective' aims immediately problematises the legitimacy of *any* claim to a group-based minority-language right, whatever its social and political merits. (May, 2001:8, *italics* in original)

Another problem with the linguistic human rights paradigm is that by treating languages as unambiguous markers of ethnic identities, instead of assuaging/eliminating ethnic conflict, this can actually polarize ethnolinguistic divisions as claims to limited resources are being argued for along ethnolinguistic lines (Stroud, 2001:347). Conversely, by drawing too much attention to the need to deal with ethnolinguistic conflicts, this view of linguistic human rights often neglects the issue of how languages also index social inequalities so that while ethnic differences are given greater emphasis, social inequalities are ignored (Blommaert, 2001a:137). Finally, a major conceptual problem for linguistic human rights advocates is the tendency to confuse 'language community' with 'speech community' (Silverstein, 1998; Wee, 2005). Silverstein points out that:

> Speech communities, even more than language communities, are highly variable in manner and degree of stability and extent over populations, times, institutional formations, places, and other determinants. (Silverstein, 1998:407)

The issue, then, is that linguistic human rights advocates need to be consistent as to whether their concern is with the language community or the speech community. As Mufwene observes:

> Language endangerment is a more wicked problem than has been acknowledged in the literature. It sometimes boils down to a choice between saving speakers from their economic predicament and saving a language. Seldom can both goals be congruent unless the ecologies are made more advantageous to the relevant populations. (Mufwene, 2002:376-7)

Unless the confusion between language and speech communities is clarified, it is not clear just how effective the notion of linguistic human rights will be in addressing the social problems faced by speakers of minority languages. Spolsky (2004:4-5) seems to make a similar point when he suggests that language policy studies need to pay attention to the speech community. It is to Spolsky's ideas about language policy that we next turn.

1-7   LANGUAGE POLICY AS A BALANCING ACT

In this book, we recognize with Spolsky (2004:39) that the study of language policy needs to distinguish between the language practices of a speech community, its prevailing ideologies, and the explicit policies or plans that both attempt to influence these practices and ideologies and are also in turn influenced by them. Spolsky himself offers a preliminary attempt at developing a theory of language policy, one that is of extremely wide scope. Thus, he suggests that in addition to the factors just mentioned (practices, ideologies, explicit policies/plans), such a theory needs to also bear in mind three other notions (2004:39-42). One, the focus of language policy can range from named varieties ('English', 'Malay', 'Mandarin') to individual elements that make up a language (pronunciation, lexical choice, spelling, among others). Two, all language

policies operate in relation to a speech community, of whatever size, with "good reason for the attention concentrated on political units" since nation-states are "an obvious locus of power, with a constitutionally established authority of government over their citizens" (2004:40). Three, language policies are always part of a complex web of "linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables and factors" (2004:41). It seems to us that our approach in this book is largely consonant with Spolsky's characterization of a theory of language policy. Of course, any specific study needs to delimit the scope of investigation, with ours being mainly on the policies of nation-states and 'named varieties'.

What we wish to point out, however, is that by recognizing that explicit policies need to be seen in relation to prevailing ideologies, we are able to occupy a middle ground between the neoclassical and historical-structural approaches for the following reasons. Since the challenge of modernity is to reconcile the products of rational activity with nationalist ideologies, this means that any resulting narrative must negotiate, as far as possible, relationships among a diversity of factors. Such factors, as we saw in our brief discussion of Malaysia and Singapore, will vary for each nation-state. But crucially, in so far as particular language policies are constrained by these multiple factors, we suggest that language policy is best understood as the result of a balancing act. It is an attempt on the part of the state to situate a language or in the case of a multilingual society, a number of languages, within a narrative of modernity. This point is anticipated in Fishman:

> Successful nationalisms finally create a sense of ethnic-cultural unity and of involvement or commitment within the geographic limits of their nations, but that takes time and, frequently, also force (as exemplified by the lack of full ethnic-cultural unity in such well-established polities as Great Britain, France, Spain, etc.). *Until* such unity is established (and certainly if such organic unity is not – or is no longer – sought, as in Belgium, Switzerland, India) the nation must continue to function, must continue to protect itself from external and internal opponents, and must continue to meet the needs of its citizenry with respect to the facilitation of communication and the conduct of commerce, industry, education, and all other organized societal pursuits. (Fishman, 1968a:7, *italics* in original)

All these different needs (protection from external and internal opponents, the facilitation of communication, commerce, education, etc.) are differently weighted for individual nation-states, and seen in this manner, language policies are thus never simply about language. They are also about politics, about cultural identities, and about access to social goods and capital.

While it is true that the idea of a balancing act is a metaphor, we would warn against concluding that it is 'just' or 'merely' a metaphor. As has been cogently argued by Schön (see also Lakoff and Johnson, 1980):

> When we examine the problem-setting stories told by the analysts and practitioners of social policy, it becomes apparent that the framing of problems often depends upon metaphors underlying the stories which generate problem setting and set the directions of problem solving. ... My point here is not that we *ought* to think metaphorically about social policy problems, but that we *do* already think about them in terms of certain pervasive, tacit generative metaphors. (Schön, 1993:138-9, *italics* in original)

Approaching language policy as the result of a metaphorical 'balancing act' is fruitful because this constantly reminds the analyst of the 'embeddedness' of language in things non-linguistic. By this we mean that in formulating a language policy, we assume that a number of different constraints must be taken into account.

Also, we are by no means assuming the policy outcome of any such balancing act is always an equitable one. There are often irreconcilable interests in any society that may therefore pose insuperable problems for the formulation of any language policy. These problems and constraints will, of course, vary from one society to the next. But some possibilities, in addition to those mentioned by Fishman, include the state of the economy and the prospects for future economic development, the degree of ethnic diversity and the potential for ethnic conflict.

There is, of course, no algorithm involved here, no mechanical formulae by which the optimal satisfaction of multiple constraints can be arrived at. Different societies must grapple with the problems in different ways, and indeed, there may be conflict internal to a society as sub-groups feel that they have either been mis-represented or under- represented. But we argue that treating language policy as a balancing act is not merely a convenient fiction. It is an important heuristic or in Schön's terms, a 'generative metaphor' that allows us to see more accurately and clearly the motivations for a given language policy. The simple reason for this is that the policy-makers themselves often engage in just such a process of dealing with multiple constraints.

We are aware that this may open us to the charge of being unnecessarily sympathetic to the establishment and thus we might be accused of merely acting as apologists for the status quo. In other words, by trying to understand the motivations behind a particular policy, we may be charged with being too charitable and not sufficiently critical of the policy. To this, we have two responses. First, we certainly acknowledge the importance of appreciating the kinds of socio-historical factors that may influence the construction of any language policy. As such, we think the emphasis on ideological considerations and how these may lead to sustained dominance relations between various groups is an important one, and we therefore consider the historical-structural approach an important corrective to the neoclassical tendency towards over-rationalization. But we submit that to see the language policy of a society as a balancing act does not mean treating that society as a homogenous unit. The approach allows for the possibility that different groups within a society may have different goals and priorities, thus recognizing that policies are attempts at resolving – with varying degrees of success – potentially conflicting elements within a society. Our approach therefore recognizes and indeed demands that the analysis pay attention to both sites of resistance, as well as the means by which such resistance is managed.

Second, the approach has the virtue of not assuming that the status quo is necessarily bad and must therefore be changed. We grant that language policy is often responsible for social inequality (Tollefson, 1991), and that linguistic imperialism exists (Phillipson, 1992). However, we do not wish to assume that a critical analysis of a current language policy must from the outset aim at overturning the status quo. It may be that given the highly difficult task of managing relations between language, state, population and capital, the policy as currently formulated is the least of possible evils. A constructive approach to policy analysis, the way forward, we believe, must first aim at understanding the constraints that current policies operate under (Hawkesworth, 1988). Suggestions for changes to the status quo, then, can lead to a more positive outcome if these are made with a clearer appreciation of the kinds of factors that have influenced the nature of the incumbent language policy. We are therefore not against change. But we believe that to see the possibilities for change (or

not), we must first have an impartial understanding of current language policies. Here, we merely wish to point out that the question of whether every act of analysis is already inherently politicized is a controversial one. However, even if it is only as an analytical heuristic, we believe in the importance of aiming for a neutral and apolitical stance rather than entering a field of investigation already charged with the goal of effecting political change. We also propose three possible relations that are important in analyzing different language policies: equivalence, displacement and complementarity, which we illustrate below.

1-7-1   *Equivalence, Displacement, Complementarity*

Equivalence refers to a situation where one element is seen to be on par with another. As one example of linguistic equivalence, we cite the policy of multiracialism in Singapore where, officially at least, the mother tongues of the three major ethnic communities (Mandarin for the Chinese community, Malay for the Malay community, and Tamil for the Indian community) are claimed to each be given equal support and emphasis from the government. And they are also claimed to perform similar functions within their respective communities, where each mother tongue is expected to provide its community members with a link to their cultural heritage. This, of course, is a case of equivalence between three indigenous languages. However, we must be aware that true equivalence will certainly be hard to find, and this is particularly so when one of the languages concerned is a Western language such as English. In such cases, because of English linguistic imperialism, where "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson, 1992:47), there tends to be a greater allocation of resources to English than to other languages. As a result, it is difficult, we suggest, finding cases of true equivalence involving English and some Asian language. We pursue this line of discussion further below when we elaborate on the notion of linguistic instrumentalism.

Displacement refers to a competitive situation where the co-presence of elements is felt to be unacceptable so that the presence of one element is seen to require the elimination of the other. In the case of Malaysia, for example, there has been an ongoing debate over which language – Malay or English – should be the medium of education, particularly in the tertiary institutions, and since 2002, increasingly in the secondary and primary schools as well. The choice is often presented in exclusive terms such that one must necessarily displace the other. This is because it is not merely the choice over a language but a choice over a language that also carries with it all the cultural and traditional values associated with an ethnic group.

The Singapore case is also interesting in this regard. In Singapore, there is a view that the development of proficiency in a standard variety of English is being jeopardized by the presence of a more colloquial variety, known as Singlish. In this case, Singlish and Standard English are constructed by the state to be in a relationship of displacement so that supporters of Singlish are often accused of tolerating or encouraging deterioration in Standard English. We discuss these cases in more detail in the chapters to come.

Finally, complementarity refers to a relatively more harmonious situation

where various elements are treated as occupying different facets of a larger whole so that a division of labor is achieved. In other words, the different elements are seen to reside in different domains so that there is no competition between them; they thus complement each other. In Singapore, the government's attempt to accommodate the presence of English alongside the mother tongues has led to a situation of complementarity where English is presented as the language of access to Western science and technology while the mother tongues are presented as providing links to ancient cultures and values. Thus, English and the mother tongues are assigned to separate functions in Singapore's language policy. Note, however, that complementarity is distinct from equivalence since there is no attempt to treat the provision of access to science and technology as being equivalent to the provision of a link to traditional values. In fact, complementarity is consistent with English linguistic imperialism since, if priority were assigned to scientific and technological knowledge, this could be (and it often is) used as a reason to justify the asymmetrical allocation of resources in favor of English.

While Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:271) acknowledge that any language planning activity will not only affect the language(s) ostensibly targeted, but also other languages in the environment, the theoretical notions they use in such discussions still seem to focus on the fate of individual languages. For example, they (1997:271) list the following as variables in language planning:

- language death
- language survival
- language change
- language revival
- language shift and language spread

We do not deny the importance of these variables, but we think it is important to also include concepts that are necessarily *relational*. And that is why in our work, we will use the notions of complementarity, displacement, and equivalence. As illustrated above, their intrinsically relational nature serves to remind us that the fate one particular language always has consequences for the fate of some other.

We are also aware of the dynamic nature of these relations of equivalence, displacement and complementarity. Two particular elements that are currently in a relation of equivalence, for example, may not be so in the future. As narratives get revised, so too, may particular language policies and the relations amongst elements affected by the policies. Our balancing act heuristic is, after all, an acknowledgement of the attempts to accommodate a multiplicity of forces, both internal and external to a society. And as these forces change, this will often lead to a renegotiation of the relations between them. One such force may be a change in the ethnic make-up of the society as migrants flow across a nation's boundaries so that yesterday's ethnic minority may become today's majority. Yet another could be an urgent need to attract foreign investment or the need to reassert/recover a national identity in the face of perceived Westernization. As these forces come into prominence or fade away, yesterday's relation of equivalence could well be today's relation of displacement, and vice versa.

In discussing these relations of complementarity, equivalence, and displacement, we should point out that the notion of what constitutes a 'language' is

itself highly ideologized. This means that such relations can, in principle, be seen as holding between varieties of what is considered a single language (so that the relation is intra-linguistic) or between what varieties belonging to separate languages (so that the relation is now inter-linguistic). Whether, in any given case, we are dealing with intra-linguistic or inter-linguistic relations, depends on the society in question. Our discussion of Thailand, for example, will draw attention to how certain varieties are constructed by the Thais themselves as being dialectal variants of the Thai language while yet other varieties are consistently regarded as separate languages, and consequently designated as 'foreign'. That such decisions about what constitutes the 'same' or 'different' language has little to do with 'objective' linguistic properties has been noted by Fishman, who goes on to point out that:

> *Not all language differences that exist are noted let along ideologized.* By this I mean that linguists recognize language differences (whether in phonology, morphology, or syntax) that millions of native speakers consciously or unconsciously ignore. ... The general point here is that differences do *not* need to be divisive. *Divisiveness is an ideologized position* and it can magnify minor differences; indeed, it can manufacture differences in languages as in other matters almost as easily as it can capitalize on more obvious differences. Similarly, *unification is also an ideologized position* and it can minimize seemingly major differences or ignore them entirely, whether these be in the realm of language, religion, culture, race, or any other basis of differentiation. (Fishman, 1968b:44-5, *italics* in original)

1-8   LINGUISTIC INSTRUMENTALISM

We mentioned at the very beginning of this chapter that a crucial aspect of narratives of Asian modernity, and specifically, of language policies in Southeast Asia is to manage the role of the English language. English is often described as a global or world language as seen for example in the arguments raised in Crystal (1997), and it is a gatekeeper in that proficiency in English is often seen as essential for socio-economic development. Grabe and Kaplan (1986, cited in Tollefson, 1991:82) point out that modern information systems require a single dominant language, and they give three reasons why that language is English. First, scientific information is cumulative, so that further progress often depends on having access to previously conducted research. Because of this, a common language for research is desirable, and increasingly, that language is English. Second, as the costs of research and development rise, there is both greater dependence on government support for technical innovation and application, as well as the vagaries of market-demand, to offset these costs. Here, it is not just access to previous information that becomes crucial; it is access to the latest information. And once again, English is seen as the most effective language for providing such access. Finally, approximately 85% of all information worldwide is stored or abstracted in English. This amount of information needs to be retrieved or accessed, and doing so requires a certain level of linguistic competence. And this means having a significant number of individuals who are fluent in English.

And of course, English is not officially considered the native language of the countries of Southeast Asia. It is the language of the outsiders, the Westerners, and very often, the former colonizers. This argument is, of course, complicated by the existence of many different nativized varieties of English. We will address the issues

posed by the presence of these nativized varieties in the chapters to come. For now, we simply note that it is not possible to completely ignore the language so that the management of English therefore already poses a delicate balancing act in itself. This need to establish a 'space' for the indigenous languages in relation to English is symptomatic of a more general problem regarding the hegemony of languages of wider communication (LWCs). According to Fishman:

> It is not only that English and French and Russian are already on the world scene that handicaps the Tamil or Persian language planner, but that these are all languages through which most future technical, political and social change will reach the indigenous language communities, and the most likely languages through which locals can leave the indigenous language community. All in all, therefore, the modeling process whereby the poor imitate the rich has its limits in language as well as elsewhere, but these limits lead to more dependency on planning rather than on less. (Fishman, 1973:28-9)

Regarding the spread of English in particular, though, Fishman suggests that:

> The spread of English is currently apparently accompanied by relatively little affect – whether negative or positive – and by correspondingly meager American and British ethnic or ideological connotations. The staying power of LWCs may derive from ethnic neutrality every bit as much as the staying power of minority languages may derive from ethnic relatedness. (Fishman, 1989:254)

On this matter, we cannot completely agree with Fishman. The Singapore situation does support his thesis that the 'staying power' of a LWC such as English depends on its 'ethnic neutrality', though we will see that such 'neutrality' is itself an ideological construct. However, we also saw the strong negative reactions that greeted a proposal to use English in Malaysian parliamentary proceedings, despite the apparent 'neutrality' of the language. A more detailed discussion of the specific relations between English and particular Asian languages will be pursued in the later chapters of this book, where we focus on four Southeast Asian countries: Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. But a common theme that runs throughout these four countries is the view of English just mentioned above, that is, where the language is seen as crucial for socio-economic development. To view English in this way is to see it as a 'tool', to see it as having an economic, instrumental value as opposed to a more symbolic, integrative value (Tollefson, 1991). This view of English is an instance of what we call 'linguistic instrumentalism', by which we mean a view of language that justifies its existence in a community in terms of its usefulness in achieving specific utilitarian goals such as economic development, access to social goods, or facilitating inter-ethnic communication. Thus, to see language as a gatekeeper or as a lingua franca is to see it in instrumentalist terms. In contrast, a language is viewed non-instrumentally to the extent that it is seen as forming an integral part of one's ethnic or cultural identity, and if its existence in a community is justified in terms of its symbolic value in allowing the community members to maintain a sense of identity. It is obviously possible for one and the same language to be seen as having both instrumentalist and non-instrumentalist functions. It is also important to acknowledge that linguistic instrumentalism is gradient rather than absolute. That is, a language may gradually acquire greater degrees of linguistic instrumentalism as over time, its value in performing various utilitarian functions may come to overshadow its role in sustaining cultural identities.

We now offer the following hypothesis, which will be tested in our case studies. We have already pointed out that English is seen in instrumentalist terms. We

suggest that linguistic instrumentalism will also come to influence the views of the indigenous Asian languages so that these languages, too, will come to be seen in instrumentalist terms. In other words, our hypothesis is that a significant consequence of the narrative of modernity in Asia is the instrumentalization of the indigenous languages, in addition to English.

Our reasoning is as follows. An important aspect of these narratives of Asian modernity is the positioning of English vis-à-vis the indigenous languages. In all these narratives, there is overt acknowledgement of the prominent instrumentalist role played by English in facilitating socio-economic development. This means that a significant amount of the state's resources, particularly in the field of education or manpower training, will be taken up by English. This may include the time set aside for language learning, decisions on what should be the primary language of instruction, teacher training courses, or materials development. This will lead to competition between English and the indigenous languages (or, more accurately, supporters of these various languages) for the limited resources. Such a situation is an example of what Phillipson (1992:47) calls 'linguicism', which he defines as "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language". We predict that in such a situation of linguicism, the most probable strategic response to be adopted by the supporters of the indigenous languages will be to emphasize or highlight the specific utilitarian values of such languages. These specific utilitarian values may or may not coincide with those attributed to English. In Thailand, for example, it may be difficult for the Thais to claim that the Thai language is useful in accessing scientific and technological knowledge. It is perhaps somewhat easier, however, in Malaysia, for the Malaysians to present Malay as a viable lingua franca uniting the different ethnic groups in Malaysia. But whatever the specific utilitarian values, the presence of English will force a re-examining of the place of the indigenous languages and a re-justification of the allocation of state resources, with the consequence that these languages will also come to be viewed in linguistic instrumentalist terms.

Interestingly, recent work by Monica Heller (1999a,b) on the politics of language and identity in a French-language minority school in Ontario, Canada, reveals a similar trend towards linguistic instrumentalism. Heller's work is a detailed ethnographic study of the language practices of the school, representing a minority community of francophone speakers in predominantly English-speaking Ontario, and her analysis shows how under the effects of capitalism, migration patterns, and the changing role of the state, the French language comes to be viewed more as a commodity (i.e. linguistic instrumentalism) rather than as a marker of identity. For example, for these minority French speakers, "their identity has been shaped by political subordination to the conquering English, and by economic marginalization and exploitation", and one response has been for them to "abandon the old politics of identity, and hence the problematics of authenticity, in favor of a new pragmatic position which allows them to take advantage of their access to multiple linguistic and cultural resources in order to participate in a globalized economy" (Heller, 1999b:4-5). The result of this shift is to move "the school away from its traditional arguments regarding its legitimacy, and towards a new vision of French, not as an inalienable dimension of individual identity, but as a valuable form of linguistic capital; not as an emblem of collective identity, but as the mark of an international, pluralist elite"

(Heller, 1999b:20). Heller's work raises an interesting question concerning the scope of linguistic instrumentalism, and the extent to which it is a phenomenon that can be found beyond Southeast Asia. Our work in this book, by investigating in detail the language policies of four Southeast Asian countries, makes a start towards a better understanding of how the spread of English may have impacted on the roles of indigenous languages, and how this may have contributed to the rise of linguistic instrumentalism. And in the concluding chapter, where we make a detailed comparison of all four countries, we will also be able to see emergent commonalities and differences between these countries, allowing us to better appreciate how and why each country may have managed their languages in the ways that they have.

1-9   ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The subsequent chapters examine the language policies of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand in terms of the framework outlined above. That is, we will treat each of these countries as engaged in the construction of a narrative of modernity. Such a narrative will have to accommodate a diversity of elements so that the language policy of each country is best seen as the result of a balancing act. And as we have mentioned, three possible relations are important in understanding these balancing acts: displacement, equivalence and complementarity. Also, throughout our examination, we will be testing our hypothesis concerning linguistic instrumentalism. We will therefore be asking to what extent an instrumentalist view of language, at first primarily associated with English, comes to also influence the ways in which the indigenous Asian languages are viewed.

The countries that we will examine are presented in alphabetical order. We will begin in Chapter 2 with our discussion of Malaysia, a predominantly Malay-Muslim controlled state with an economically powerful Chinese population. As mentioned, Malaysia has a commitment to a bumiputera policy, which is a form of affirmative action for ethnic Malays. This is a policy which has significant linguistic implications so that there is a continual tension in Malaysia resulting from a language policy that may be seen to unfairly advantage the ethnic Malays over the other ethnic groups, in particular the Chinese. Another tension results from different ways of interpreting a commitment to the bumiputera policy. A more fundamentalist interpretation argues for a greater role for the use of the Malay language in national life while a more moderate interpretation would desire balanced roles for Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English. One arena in which this conflict is played out is in the tertiary institutions where there have been attempts to have Malay, rather than English, instituted as the language of higher education. In the context of our hypothesis on linguistic instrumentalism, these and other tensions lead us to ask if the discourse surrounding the Malay language can be understood as being primarily instrumentalist in nature. Because of the large number of Malay words used here, this chapter includes a glossary of Malay-to-English words and phrases, in addition to a list of acronyms commonly found in the politics of Malaysian modernity.

Chapter 3 deals with the language policy of the Philippines. The language situation in the Philippines is highly dynamic and volatile, perhaps more so than in any of the other three countries examined here. Different groups with different

agendas are constantly jostling for their views on language policy to dominate. One group favors English as the language of government and education. A second group favors Tagalog while a third has been pushing for a Manila variety of Tagalog, which differs from the more standard Tagalog by having been influenced by a number of other indigenous languages. The debates among these groups is ongoing and the frequent fluctuations in political power as revolutions overturn incumbent presidents also mean that no particular language policy is ever 'balanced' in a sufficiently stable manner; moments of stability are all too brief, and are quickly replaced by the need to renegotiate and reconstruct the web that links different languages to the people, the state, capital and the West. An examination of the language debates over time will help us test our hypothesis by establishing if greater appeal is being made on instrumentalist grounds on behalf of either standard Tagalog or the Manila variety (Tollefson, 1991:141).

Chapter 4 focuses on Singapore, which has a fairly complex language policy involving a commitment to what may be described as 'multiracialism' and 'English-knowing bilingualism'. The former, motivated by the need to manage the country's ethnically diverse population, officially stresses the equality of the three major indigenous languages: Mandarin, Malay and Tamil. The latter requires that Singapore citizens learn both their mother tongue (which is usually one of the three indigenous languages) as well as English. This policy of English-knowing bilingualism stresses the value of English in accessing Western science and technology while claiming that the mother tongue is essential for one's cultural identity. This policy thus restricts linguistic instrumentalism to English, since the mother tongues are viewed in non-instrumentalist terms as being primarily markers of ethnic identity. However, in recent years, there have been attempts to highlight the instrumental value of one of the mother tongues, namely Mandarin, in the light of China's economic development. But the instrumentalist discourse is not just restricted to Mandarin. This is because the government's commitment to multiracialism means that the same functions must be attached to all the mother tongues, so that any instrumentalist view of Mandarin also raises questions about the instrumentalist viability of Malay and Tamil as well. Again, we predict that the attempts to treat the mother tongues in non-instrumentalist terms are doomed, and that these indigenous languages will also come to be seen through the lens of linguistic instrumentalism.

In Chapter 5, we turn our attention to Thailand, which has a policy of unilingualism[5] in that Standard Thai is both the official language of the country as well as the only medium of instruction in the educational institutions. English is therefore very much a foreign language among Thai students, though without doubt the most popular one (Wongsothorn, 2000:307). Because of the importance of the Thai language to the Thai identity, we certainly do not expect it to be displaced by English. However, the popularity of English, especially among the younger Thais, means that the relation of Thai to English will gradually change. Whether the nature of this change supports our hypothesis of linguistic instrumentalism will be pursued in this chapter.

Finally, we present our concluding chapter in Chapter 6. Here, we draw together the observations and analyses that have been made in the contexts of specific countries for a more comparative perspective. We note the similarities and differences across the four countries, and ask what this might mean for the understanding of the

relationship between language and modernity in Asia.

1-10   NOTES

[1] It would have been ideal to expand the analysis to include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam. However, given our interest in *both* language and modernity, we felt a focus on four nation-states would allow a balanced breadth of coverage, and more importantly, with depth. For a study of language policies in Southeast Asia with a much wider scope (but not a focus on modernity), we refer the reader to Brown and Ganguly (2003).

[2] While the phrase 'modern people living in modernity' may sound redundant, there is, as we discuss below, an important distinction to be made between 'being modern' and 'modernity'.

[3] One might ask how appropriate the 'Asian values economic argument' is in the light of subsequent economic crises such as the 1997 East Asian financial crises or Japan's ongoing recession since 1990. However, rather than undermining the relevance of 'Asian values', these economic crises are often seen as pointing instead to the need for international financial reforms so that states in general (and not just Asian states) are less vulnerable to speculative attacks and volatile capital flows (e.g. Gates, 1999).

[4] See Fishman (1973:25) for the suggestion that Haugen's and Neustupny's approaches can be reconciled, "since the type of planning each uniquely includes may be regarded as merely an iterative procedure from the point of view of the other."

[5] Smalley (1994) uses the term 'unilingualism' to indicate an emphasis on or an orientation towards a single language; whereas the term 'monolingualism' tends to imply that a single language already prevails.

CHAPTER 2

THE FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA

CIA World Factbook, 2005

This chapter concentrates on the tensions arising out of the policy differences between the Malay language and the English language in Malaysia. The Malay language is the official language of Malaysia and is enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution. Malay has been both the *de jure* and *de facto* language of choice among most Malaysians since independence in 1963. Malay is the language of nation building and represents the concept of *adat-istiadat* (traditional Malay cultural practices). It is deemed anti-constitutional for locals or foreigners to criticize or challenge the special position of the Malay language in any manner. The official and legal status of Malay has aided nation-building to a large extent but it has also made it a challenge for policymakers to implement other languages such as English, Chinese and Tamil in government policy. Too much emphasis on other languages such as English has often resulted in a political groundswell against the federal government and the state governments. This state of affairs has resulted in the sporadic and occasional implementation of English, for example, despite the importance of the role of English in technology and globalization. But as we show below, this does not mean that non-Malay languages are not used widely across the nation in business and social activities.

As we mentioned previously, our focus is on overt language policies. However, we also noted that overt policies are constrained by nationalistic narratives, and the concept of

adat-istiadat is a key element in the Malaysian nationalist narrative, emphasizing the important role played by the Malay language in constituting the Malaysian identity. The presence of *adat-istiadat*, as we demonstrate below, therefore makes it all the more difficult for Malaysia to reconcile elements of its traditional past with the challenges of modernity.[1] And in speaking of modernity, we come, of course, to the English language. For a long time, English represented the language of the ex-colonizer, and it is now is considered the language of Western capitalism. The widespread use English in Malaysian law, trade, commerce, and education is a result of an accident of historical fact. The 'use-value' of English is seen in its omnipresence as the language of technology and communication, making it a language that Malaysia cannot afford to simply ignore, nor for state policymakers to marginalize.

Before we proceed any further, we will examine the demography of Malaysia.[2] Refer to Figure 2-1. The demographic character of Malaysia helps provide a useful backdrop to the study of language policy. The country's GNP is about RM296 billion (S$148 billion or US$74 billion) with a population of `about 22.3 million living within its sovereign land mass of approximately 329,749 sq km including the states of Sabah and Sarawak, and the Federal Territory of Labuan in the North-Western coast. About a million foreign nationals live and work in Malaysia.

Figure 2-1   The Population of Malaysia
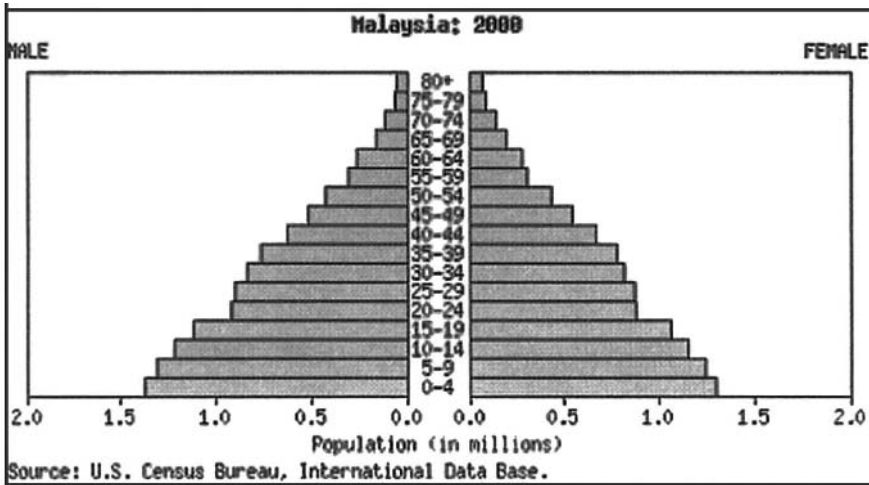
Note that ethnic Malays comprise almost 60% of the population, while Chinese make up a quarter of the population, and Eurasians and Indians make up the remaining 7.5%. Malaysia's population pyramid is illustrated in Figure 2-1. This chapter is therefore concerned primarily with the ways in which the positioning of the Malay and English languages within modern Malaysia will facilitate ethnic integration, ethnic-

tolerance, and multiethnic nation-building as the country attempts to negotiate the processes of modernity (often described together as globalization, democratization, capitalism, and a dependence on technological and scientific expertise). Our main argument is that the Malaysian state (i.e. the federal government) has to negotiate a careful balancing act between the competing tensions arising from the relationship between the Malay language (known variously as Bahasa Malaysia, the national language, or the national cultural language), and the use of English (usually and practically British and American English) as the international language of modernity. The problematic of language policy and modernity in Malaysia therefore provides an interesting and growing bank of data for conceptual analyses among decision-makers on one hand and the academic study of politics and policy on the other.

Milton J. Esman once wrote that the salience of the language choices made by decision-makers is itself an extension of the political community as a whole, "Language is a calculated policy issue in the hands of the political elites, with major impacts on society. A language regime can facilitate societal integration, exacerbate interethnic conflict, or foster pluralistic coexistence" (Esman, 1990:185). Indeed, such policy decisions do not merely facilitate or foster integration, conflict or coexistence on their own. Rather, as we shall see in this chapter, language policy decisions can produce integration of ethnic identity (for example at the level of national identity) while simultaneously suppressing ethnic conflict (as seen in ethnic claims over indigenous, spiritual and cultural spaces in the case of the bumiputera or son-of-the-soil policy), thus ensuring a seemingly peaceful quotidian co-existence during periods of interethnic contact (Case, 1993).

Esman's theoretical start-point was chosen because of his earlier work and familiarity with Malaysia seen in *Administration and Development in Malaysia* (1972). Note that 'administration' and 'development' symbolize two crucial facets of modernity, and remind us of the importance of language policy in supporting the progress of the nation-state in its search for an ideological equilibrium. Esman's views therefore provide a useful segue into the major theme of this chapter: the tensions and problems that arise in reconciling Malay and English both at the level of nationalist narrative and overt language policy.

In the next section, we provide a brief overview of the origins of modern Malaysia, leading up to the Malaysian nationalist narrative as it currently stands. We then deal with specific issues that arise from the intersection of this narrative with language policy. These include the bumiputera policy (a policy of affirmative action for ethnic Malays), the attempts to construct a relationship of equivalence between Malay and English, and the question of whether Malay is itself becoming seen in more instrumentalist terms.

2-1   THE ONSET OF MODERNITY IN MALAYSIA

Southeast Asian modernity began with the arrival of the Western colonizers and that 'first contact' for Malaya was in the 1511 invasion and conquest of Melaka by the Portuguese. This historical start-point eventually develops a Malaysian modernity

that is broken up into stridently different, competing colonial periods (Portuguese, Dutch, and British), each containing new and different emphases on warfare, military and civilian administration, legal infrastructure, and language policies.

While it was the Dutch period that enabled the rise of Malay as both an oral and written means of official and vernacular communications (Benjamin, 1988), it was the British period from 1874 to 1963 that generated the greatest impact on language policy in Malaysian modernity today, The British colonizers' legal *articles of arrangement*, called the Treaty of Pangkor, Clause VI (1874), ensured that British *residents* (a title accorded to Senior Colonial Officers of standing) would be the primary economic and administrative advisors of the Royal Malay Households (Gullick, 1969:53; Wilkinson, [1923] 1971:100-105; Rappa, 1997b:3). This was to be the first legal piece of legislature created to promote the Malay language. Such a legal device was an explicit recognition of the sovereign Malay status over non-Malays, and by the end of the British colonial period, became the political legitimation of Malay language and culture over the indigenous and other cultures of the peninsula. Therefore, without the advent of the British colonial period, Malay might not have ever attained its predominance in modernity. Additionally, the Treaty politically marginalized the *Orang Asli* who were the first people to settle in the archipelago and although the Merdeka Constitution of 1957 guarantees the rights of non-Malay bumiputera or 'indigenous people', the role of these marginalized bumiputera in politics and economics is limited. It is significant that "a primary motivation of the Treaty was to harmonize the large number of territorial wars and disputes among the various Malay kingdoms. The British needed to establish a favorable political climate for their mercantilist economics and subsequently devoted the entire ninety year period between 1824 and 1914 to the structuring of a comprehensive political economy for the benefit of the British Crown" (Rappa, 1997b:13).

The end of the Portuguese and Dutch colonial eras in Malaysia resulted in the entrenchment of the Malay, Chinese, and Tamil languages as the primary means of communications with the subsequent British-style of colonization making the most significant mark on these linguistic communities. This was because the British tactic of dividing their colonized towns and cities into the 'Chinese', 'Malay', 'Indian', 'Eurasian', and 'European' quarters became as much as a facet of British colonial life as it was part of the Malayan postcolonial experience. The effects of the British divide and rule policy explain much of the problems and issues present in Malaysian language and modernity today. After the end of the Pacific War, the peninsula was compartmentalized into roughly the same three political divisions of the pre-war years: the Federated Malay States, the Unfederated Malay States (UFMS), and the Straits Settlements of Penang, Melaka, and Singapore. However, the end of the Pacific War saw the ultimate demise of British and other colonial controls over their former colonies.

The rise of Malay nationalism that began in the first quarter of the 20th century came to fruition with the abortive Malayan Union proposal of 1946 – that sought to unify all three political regimes into a single unitary format – and signaled the formal rise of the indigenous political elite. Access to employment opportunities in the colonial administration depended heavily on one's skill in written or spoken English: the greater one's skill at the language, the higher the chances of enjoying greater occupational

mobility and social mobility. In this regard, English as always been viewed in linguistic instrumentalist terms in Malaysia. By the early 1950s however, British colonial policy towards education continued to play second fiddle to their primary objective of economic exploitation and political control over the archipelago.

The watershed federal election of 1955 legitimated the position of the incumbent umbrella political party, the Alliance, vis-à-vis the colonial administrators (Rappa, 1997). This was the umbrella political party that Mahathir Mohamad – the longest serving head of government in Southeast Asia till October 2003 – thought "continually favored Chinese over the Malays" (Mahathir, 1970:13). This narratival fragment from Mahathir, written over a decade before he came into power, revealed the reality of the ethnic tensions that were largely created by British colonial policies that entrenched the separate economic, social, and cultural development of the ethnic communities in Malaysia. This had a profound effect on the Malays who had traditionally perceived Malaya (before political independence in 1963) and Malaysia (as it was known after independence from the British colonialists) as being inherently their 'own' land.

The 1955 federal election also represented a political watershed for the Malay, Chinese, and Indian nationalists under the Alliance that was headed by the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), which won 51 out of the 52 seats contested. Subsequently, the 'political bargain' enshrined in the 1957 version of the Malaysian Constitution codified the importance of Malay indigenous/special rights (political rights) and predominance of Chinese-controlled businesses in the economy.

Six years after the formation of Malaysia, the cleavages between Malay political 'rights' and Chinese economic 'privileges' resulted in the May 13th 1969 riots. This led to the authoritarian implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1970-1971 when the democratically-elected parliament was suspended and dissolved and Malaysia was governed by an authoritarian, executive council in the name of communal unity and national peace (Hirschman, 1979; Hirschman, 1987; Jomo, 1990/1; Rappa, 1997). The move to marginalize the power of the centrist and moderate politician Tunku Abdul Rahman, by the right-wing, pro-Malay Tun Razak, would establish the supreme right of the Malays as enshrined in the Constitution for the first time in modern Malay history and provide political leverage for the Malay bumiputera claim over Malaya. Malays were not only given special rights in administration and education but also in terms of language and culture. The intention thereafter was to increase the Malay population from about half the citizenry to a sizeable majority in the 21st century.

Much of the motivation for the bumiputera policy came from the fact that Malay control over their homeland had been historically weakened by British colonial policy on migrant workers. For example, the policy on the local tin mines and other areas used Chinese migrant workers "until the Malays were excluded from these fields of employment" (Mahathir, 1970:27). This would eventually lead Mahathir to develop the argument that Malays would have to receive special protection and privileges in order to circumvent non-Malay intrusion into the spheres of Malay labor. The Malay dilemma for Mahathir was that unless they effectively engaged the challenges imposed by colonial rule, they would eventually lose control over their own tradition and culture. And if they did not face the fact of Malay backwardness, then they would only have

themselves to blame. This was because up till the late 1960s, there was a general reluctance among Malays to talk about the disparity between the Malays and the Chinese. Ignorance may be bliss (Mahathir, 1970:60) but for Mahathir (1970:103-114), the Malay dilemma was in effect a Malaysian dilemma.

The pressures involved in engaging Malaysian modernity was to an extent exemplified by Mahathir's surprise announcement at the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) general assembly on June 21, 2002, that he had resigned his party political presidency and all other party political posts in Barisan Nasional (BN) and UMNO. Mahathir's statement of resignation was eventually rescinded after a resolution to reject the resignation by his own deputy, the current prime minister of Malaysia, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Mahathir's outburst over national television caught his Cabinet colleagues by surprise. But it also reflected a series of 'political failures' that include his self-admitted inability to raise the general status and attitudes of Malay bumiputera, Malay culture, Malay language, and Malay educational performance since he became prime minister in 1981.

2-2   A NARRATIVE OF MODERN MALAYSIA

While Malaysia is a modern nation-state, it is also clear that it is a place of great social and cultural contrasts and political paradoxes. One such paradox is seen in its official multiethnic showcase of tranquility and peacefulness (*kesentosaan*) and harmony (*keharmonian*) between the bumiputera (the indigenous son-of-the-soil who enjoy Constitutionally-guarded special rights) and non-bumiputera, between the Chinese and the Malays, between the ultra orthodox Muslims, moderate Muslim majority, fundamentalist Islamic supporters who are propagating a Malaysian Islamic state, and the Islamic terrorist organizations with international connections to Al-Qaeda and other globally-located terrorist organizations.

How does the state act to reduce the level of ethnic tensions within modern Malaysia despite its multiethnic showcase that claims to represent all the major bumiputera and non-bumiputera people? One way in which this is done can be seen in the state's representation of *pondok* schools. The Malay word *pondok* means 'a small village hut'; and a *pondok* school is a village religious school. These are often found in the countryside and along the coasts of peninsula Malaysia.

In early 2002, the then prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, announced that the *pondok* schools were being used as a front by people who were involved in training cadres for violent activities under the guise of Islamic theology and who were not interested in imparting true religious language and religious knowledge. When Mahathir referred to these village schools, he was emphasizing their simplistic, fundamentalist, and backward nature. The *pondok* school is an anti-modernist metaphor that involves simplicity, stasis, and an adherence to basic beliefs over the complexity, development and progress of modernity. Mahathir's comments came in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the twin towers of World Trade Center in New York. As a result, the Malaysian government had introduced a standard religious curriculum for all religious schools so that the teachers would not deviate from these standards (*The Star*, February

2, 2002). The *pondok* school therefore represents, within the Malaysian narrative, a kind of political sleeper, dormant and working quietly in the rubber plantations and rural areas and undermining the moderate Islamic practices of the central government. The *pondok* school epitomizes one set of challenges to Malaysia's desire to achieve the status of a developed nation by the year 2020.

The prime minister Abdullah Badawi is pursuing a different brand of Islam from that of his predecessor, Mahathir Mohammad. The new prime minister's thinking is reflected in *Islam Hadhari* or moderate Islam. The middle-path strategy that Badawi advocates in *Islam Hadhari* is a particularly intelligent political strategy for three reasons: (1) it is a substantial continuation of Mahathir's moderate mixture of Islamic tolerance, which allows for political continuity and policy coherence at the highest levels of Malaysian politics; (2) the strategy emphasizes the peaceful and tolerant aspects of Islam, which puts the non-Muslim Malaysians at ease within the polity; and (3) *Islam Hadhari* announces to the neoliberal world that it can work within the capitalist structures by reconciling with the pressures from the US and its major Allies to fight terrorism associated with the right-wing fundamentalist Islam that the international media has portrayed in the West for the past four decades, ostensibly since the beginning of the Cold War in 1955. *Islam Hadhari* is in part based on the combination of the thoughts of Malaysian based Islamic scholars, Arab consultants, and the research output of the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, the federal capital of Malaysia. Yet there are some troubling aspects within Malaysian modernity that resist Badawi's new strategy such as the *pondok* schools of Islam.

While Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's prime ministership is still too new to make a comprehensive analysis of its performance, it seems likely that he will continue to adopt a moderate path for Islam and place emphasis on the implementation of such moderation in the rural areas of Malaysia. The strategy of *Islam Hadhari* will be supplemented by Badawi's emphasis on the agricultural sector and the importance of hard work and self-reliance at the grassroots levels. This contrasts with Mahathir's push towards global economic development across all sectors. Under Mahathir, the government's developmental drive had been based on a relentless economic rationality that tended to marginalize the Malay and non-Malay poor and had resulted in the loss of two states to the political opposition. It is therefore politically telling that the retirement of Mahathir has since resulted in the regaining of the state of Trengganu to the Barisan Nasional.

What this discussion shows, then, is that the Malaysian narrative is primarily characterized by the desire to privilege a specific, ethnically-inflected sense of identity, that of the Malay bumiputera. Because of this, the Malay language and the various religious and cultural values it is felt to embody (*adat-istiadat*) must always be given special prominence in the narrative. The problem here is that English, as the lingua franca of global communication and technological access, cannot be easily accommodated within this narrative without at the same time threatening to undermine the prestige of the Malay language.

Abdullah Badawi's *Islam Hadhari* is one attempt to address the intersection of tradition and modernity. By claiming that it is possible to strive for a more moderate version of Islam – one that is compatible with the demands of modernity while not compromising on traditional Islamic values – Badawi hopes to pre-empt accusations

from the more fundamentalist sectors of Malaysian society that he is disrespectful of the religion or undermining the central position that Malays ought to occupy in Malaysian society. It is obviously too early to judge the success of *Islam Hadhari*, but a crucial factor in Badawi's favor is the general consensus in Malaysian society that his credentials as an scholar of Islam are impeccable, thus lending essential weight to his pronouncements concerning the relationship between Islam and modernity.

2-3 THE NEOCOLONIAL MALAY STATE

The neocolonial Malay state itself continues to enshrine and protect Malay language interests in terms that have been widened into civil society structures such as *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (the Malay language academy) and the media companies owned by political parties.

The *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* gained autonomy for its special role in developing programs and expanding the language and literature through various professional activities in its corporate functions under Ordinance 1959 (also known as the *Acta* DBP, 1959). The Act granted the DBP the legal autonomy to develop and expand Bahasa Melayu, the language of the Malays, into Bahasa Malaysia the language of Malaysia. The intention is, in due course, to develop Malay into a world language by the year 2020 with the motto, "*Bahasa Jiwa Bangsa*" (Language, Life, Culture). The year 1959 was important because it was the year that Malaya (rather than Malaysia which only came into being in 1963) received permission for internal self-government from the British masters. The DBP Act was amended in 1978 and expanded in 1995 to include:

(1) implementing the national language in all fields including science and technology;
(2) expanding Bahasa Malaysia's special and official place as the national language with respect to its literary basis and content;
(3) to encourage the correct use of the national language; and technical development of the language in terms of *istilah* (grammar) and other areas that require specialist attention. The DBP is therefore empowered by the state to use state money to prevent the linguistic displacement of the Malay language to avoid language stasis, and language death as seen in the case of Latin.

Note that attempting to implement Malay in science and technology (1) represents a direct attempt to assert that Malay, too, is capable of functioning in domains that English normally would occupy. This is a sign that rather than being content with consigning Malay to the 'traditional' domain of cultural practices, Malaysian language policy is hoping to position Malay in instrumentalist terms. That is, it is being positioned as a language that allows its speakers access to greater socio-economic mobility, and not just traditional Malay culture.

This instrumentalist positioning of Malay vis-à-vis English demonstrates that awareness of and attention to English is never far away. Thus, the *New Straits Times*-in-Education program (NIE) is an example of a media-sponsored English program where the media is seen to be an instrument of modernity (*New Straits Times*, March 13, 2002). More importantly, the state announced on June 7, 2002 through the new

education minister Shamsudin Aziz that the study of English would be made compulsory for all Malaysian students. This recognizes the continuing importance of English as the instrument of the state in Malaysian modernity. In fact, Malaysian ministers themselves often give speeches and interviews that are interspersed with English and Malay. Phrases in both languages are used as points of (political) emphasis in these speeches and interviews. On formal occasions such as speeches made in Parliament and other legislative chambers, it is not uncommon for the political representative to also make use of Koranic verses and phrases at the beginning and at the end of these speeches. When he opens parliament, the paramount ruler or King of Malaysia, the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, also makes use of Koranic phrases in his public and private speeches since he carries with him the sacred responsibility of safeguarding the Muslim religion. This is a tradition that was institutionalized after first contact with the British colonizers by the British themselves. The British wanted the Malay rulers to make use of their own religion (Islam) to gain the trust and confidence of the people, rather than imposing the Christian religion on the Malays.

The English language is therefore often used in policy directives about national interest objectives in terms of acquisition of knowledge in science, technology, industry, business, banking, finance, and commerce. The Malay language on the other hand is used as a vehicle for bonding citizens within the multiethnic, multilinguistic, and multiethnic nation-state across ethnic, religious, and class lines. As the official national language, Malay is supposed to serving the following two main policy functions which were to act as:

(1)   an emblem of the Malay people who are considered
        constitutionally as the indigenous people of Malaysia; and,
(2)   a bearer of traditional values, thus securing the survival of
        Malay primordialism.

The importance of Malay in Malaysian modernity cannot be discounted not just because it continues to be the official national language; it is also the working language of many Malays and non-Malays alike within Malaysia and outside its borders. Also, there are linguistically different Malay languages and dialects in the Southeast Asian region that are habitually spoken by about 200 million people in Southeast Asia and parts of the Middle-East and Africa. This makes the Malay language the fifth largest of all language communities worldwide. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines the Malay language as:

a member of the Western, or Indonesian, branch of the Malayo-Polynesian language family, spoken as a native language by more than 33,000,000 persons distributed over the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo, and the numerous smaller islands of the area, and widely used in Malaysia and Indonesia as a second language. Malay shows the closest relationship to most of the other languages of Sumatra (Minangkabau, Kerintji, Rejang) and is clearly, but not so closely, related to the other Austronesian languages of Sumatra, Borneo, Java, and to the Cham languages of Vietnam. Of the various dialects of Malay, the most important is that of the southern Malay Peninsula, the basis of standard Malay and of the official language of the Republic of Indonesia, Bahasa Indonesia, or Indonesian. A Malay pidgin called Bazaar Malay ... was widely used as a lingua franca in the East Indian archipelago and was the basis of the colonial language used in Indonesia by the Dutch. The version of Bazaar Malay used in Chinese merchant communities in Malaysia is called Baba Malay. Languages or dialects closely related to Malay that are spoken on Borneo include Iban (Sea Dayak), Brunei Malay, Sambas Malay, Kutai Malay, and Banjarese.

Given such a definition, it becomes clear why the Malay language has been used to 'ground' the indigenous claim of the Malays. The special rights of the bumiputera are enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution whereby all bumiputera are accorded special rights in terms of education, housing, land acquisition, bank loans, trust funds and privileged positions in the Malaysian Civil Service (MSC) and in the private sector. Over the years, this has created a two-class system of citizenship in Malaysian politics. Therefore in constitutional terms, it would appear that bumiputera Malaysians constitute 'first class citizens' while the non-bumiputera Malaysians such as the Chinese and Indians, constitute 'second class citizens.'

2-4   EDUCATION AND MALAYSIAN MODERNITY

The Abdul Razak Committee on Education was formed in 1955 in the same year that Malaysia 'received' or acquired internal self-government from its British colonial masters. Razak would eventually become the first Minister of Education and succeed Tunku Abdul Razak as the second Malaysian prime minister. The 1956 Razak Education Report as it came to be known recommended that a national education system be created for the newly independent country with Malay as the national language. The Razak report became the keystone of Malaysia's education system gazetted in the Education Ordinance of 1957. It would also become the source of future problems for the system of education in Malaysia. However, it was not till the Rahman Talib Review (1960) that a clearer legal basis for education was established in the Education Act (1961). A clause within the Act empowered the state to make Malay – as the national language – compulsory in Malaysian primary and secondary schools as well as institutions for government and government related training such as the police force and the military. This keystone language clause has neither been revised nor challenged for over 4 decades and appears to have served the Malay community very well.

There is another reason why there have been no apparent challenges to the Education Act, and this is found in another law, the Sedition Act (1948) that was introduced during the Emergency period (1946-1960) by the British to control and contain the communist movement under the banner of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1971, which enshrined Malay as official and other languages as being tolerated, clearly states that Malay, "may no longer be questioned, it being considered that such a sensitive issue should for ever be removed from the arena of public discussion". The law provided for all English-medium schools to incrementally adopt Malay language as a subject of compulsory study. Singapore separated from Malaysia in 1965 after barely two years in the federation and their language policies now took on a radical divergence, with Singapore's policy focusing on English (the native dialect and mother-tongue of the Eurasians) and three other official languages of 'Mandarin/Chinese', 'Malay' and 'Tamil'; and Malaysia's policy developing into the study of Malay as the national language with the vernacular languages and English receiving lower emphasis. This means that the Malaysian

Constitution has been the primary legal-rational tool for raising the status of Malay vis-à-vis English, Chinese and Tamil.

In fact, there were early attempts to displace English, and replace it with Malay. For example, English-medium schools were abolished in this period amidst resistance from the English-speaking population. The political intention was two-fold, and meant to:

(1)   rid Malaysia of the colonial language;
(2)   weaken the Chinese-grasp of the English language. But to the chagrin of the Malay ethnocrats (Rappa, 1999c:90-120), many of the best Chinese students were eventually out performing the Malay bumiputera in the study of Malay language itself.

Another benchmark report was the 1979 Mahathir Report on Education reflecting over seven years of study in development administration. The report widened the scope of education to include the nationalistic goals of patriotism as well as functionalist ones such as the production of skilled manpower for the economy. However it was not until the mid-1990s that the Education Act (1961) was amended to meet or to face the challenges of 21st century Malaysian modernity that formed part of Mahathir's Wawasan 2020 (Vision in the Year 2020) which intended for Malaysia to achieve developed nation status by that year as well as creating a nation of excellence within an education system that developed individuals who were not only capable of the highest possible level of personal achievement but also the best possible contribution to the family, the society, and the nation as a whole.

A third benchmark is the New Education Act (1995) that provides free education from ages 6-18 with the last two as options depending on academic and other performance criteria. The system of 'free' education has been implemented across a nation-wide system of 5244 national Malay schools; 1282 Chinese language schools with Chinese as the medium of instruction; 530 Tamil language schools with Tamil as the medium of instruction, and 28 special schools for the physically challenged. Malaysia continues to practice a system of automatic promotion to secondary schools regardless of whether students have passed the primary school examinations (PSAT). Students who attend the non-Malay national schools have to read an additional year before entering Form One to bring them up to speed in the national language. Since the beginning of the NEP (1970), considerable resources have been devoted towards Malay bumiputera education in order for these indigenous citizens to acquire a greater stake in the historically Chinese-dominated economy. While some critics have claimed that the intended 30% stake by Malay bumiputera was indeed achieved well before the target year of 1990, successive UMNO-led governments have resisted such criticisms and implemented what is now known as the National Development Policy (NDP) that is a continuation of the affirmative action strategy (Pong, 1993) despite the speeches by Mahathir on the need to wean (Malay) bumiputera away from a dependence on quotas and other forms of non-merit based selection systems (Pong, 1993). Pong's article examines the results of the affirmative action policy of Malaysia in terms of gender and socioeconomic difference with data that was based on the 2nd Malaysian Family Life Survey (MFLS2) for birth cohorts born between 1940 and 1969. Pong concludes that over time, Malays were increasingly more likely to attain secondary school than were non-Malays because of the policy. However, this quantitative assessment negates

several qualitative factors such as (1) the quality of high school graduates; (2) their ability in English language as the language of modernity; and (3) the performance of each high school graduate in tertiary education.

In 2001, Tan Sri Musa Mohammed reported that the university quota system, which reserves 55% of places in public universities for Malay students, would not be affected by the merit-based system. Royal Professor Emeritus Ungku Aziz however disagreed with direct meritorious selection because "it was reminiscent of the way the Mandarins were picked in ancient China or even the way students were selected in Singapore" (*The Straits Times*, August 11, 2001). The unequal system of selection by ethnicity therefore continues to be a perennial problem for UMNO and BN. The problem is that even with the help of the racial quota system, the Malay bumiputera students are not performing as well as their non-bumiputera counterparts, as seen in the ratios of first class honors by 'race' in Tables 2-1 to 2-3.[3]

Table 2-1
Proportion of First Class Honors for Malay and Non-Malay Students
(University of Malaya)

University of Malaya	First Class Honors			
	Malay	%	Non-Malay	%
1994	29	21.5	106	78.5
1995	34	22.4	118	77.6
1996	38	18.8	164	81.2
1997	46	19.5	190	80.5
1998	72	23.7	232	76.3
1999	96	27.0	259	73
Total	315	22.8	1069	77.2

Table 2-2
Proportion of First Class Honors for Malay and Non-Malay Students
(Universiti Teknologi Malaysia)

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia	First Class Honors			
	Malay	%	Non-Malay	%
1994	3	6.3	45	93.7
1995	1	2.2	44	97.8
1996	1	2.7	36	97.3
1997	6	15.8	32	84.2
1998	10	16.9	49	83.1
1999	7	6.9	95	93.1
Total	28	8.5	301	91.5

Table 2-3
Proportion of First Class Honors for Malay and Non-Malay Students
(Universiti Utara Malaysia)

Universiti Utara Malaysia	First Class Honors			
	Malay	%	Non-Malay	%
1994	-	0	17	100
1995	1	6.7	14	93.3
1996	-	0	39	100
1997	-	0	50	100
1998	1	5.9	16	94.1
1999	-	0	1	100
Total	2	1.4	137	98.6

It seems that regardless of the kinds of obstacles that non-bumiputera students face, including the racially based selection system to university, they continue to outperform their bumiputera counterparts. This has led to many questions about the value of the racial quota system and the extent to which it has effectively helped Malay bumiputera students:

> UMNO politicians are worried about how to explain the (merit-based) policy to their grassroots supporters given that the party's rallying cry has long been '*UMNO membela Melayu*' (Umno provides for Malays)...[under the affirmative action/quota system of bumiputera preferential treatment] a non-Malay student needs ten As to qualify for medical school but a Malay student is accepted with only seven As...it is also a poorly kept secret that university lecturers are often asked to lower the passing grade in order to enable Malay students to get through their courses. (*The Straits Times*, August 11, 2001)

How then does the policy analyst make sense of the kind of failure of a racial quota system to produce the kinds of results that it was intended to have achieved in the first place? Let us explain. The ethnocratist Malay state represents a complex matrix of power where the primary ethnic community captures the state in order to promulgate public policies primarily for the benefit of co-ethnic Malays (Rappa, 1999c:90-120). Since the capture of the state by the Malay ethnic community, there has been a general level of tranquility and the Malaysian state has also secured a sufficiently high standard of living for most Malaysians since independence in 1963.

As a result of Malay power, Malay has become the national language for all Malaysians. Theoretically, the status and value of Malay should be at least equivalent to that of other local languages and English. But this does not appear to be so among the Chinese Malaysian community, for example, for the following six reasons:

(1)   many Chinese Malaysians prefer to send their children to Chinese medium schools, rather than national type schools where the medium of instruction is Malay;

(2)   Chinese Malaysians have been trying to build a Chinese university with Chinese as the medium of instruction for over 33 years and have only recently been given Cabinet approval;

(3)   many Malaysian Chinese prefer to send their children overseas to the National University of Singapore, the Nanyang Technological University, and other world universities rather than to Malaysia's many universities;

(4)   the Chinese protested the introduction of Malay as the language of instruction in the early 1970s;

(5)   many Chinese in Kuala Lumpur and their own communities elsewhere in Malaysia prefer not to use the Malay language because it reminds them of the unfavorable power imbalance between their community and the Malay community; and,

(6)   there is much unhappiness between the Chinese and Malays communities. However no one community overtly expresses it because of:

- the importance of the national community over the self and the ethnic community;
- the belief in nationalism and the importance of the imagined community over the politicized one;
- the fear of political coercion from the state vis-à-vis the Internal Security Act;
- since the implementation of the NEP in 1971, the Chinese have become increasingly insular with a tendency towards political apathy, and a 'preference' for political in-fighting within the Chinese community, while simultaneously attending to business development and familial ties;
- neither the Chinese nor the Malays want a return to the riots of the 1960s.

The problem here is that the generation that remembers the political violence and riots of the 1960s is now in its 60s and 70s and will soon die out over the next 15-25 years. The people in the next generation who are in their 40s and 50s are themselves

too young to vividly remember the riots of the 1960s. Therefore, there are inter-generational differences of memory between and across cohorts that often makes attitudes between and across generations less than stable. The status of Malay is therefore dependent on the attitudes of the Chinese, Indians, Eurasians and the Malays themselves. But because the Malay language has the backing of political power there will continue to be a level of distrust of power and the use of power to enhance Malay language and culture within the Malaysian democratic transition.

The immediate post-British era saw the rise of Malay in nationalist colors and a rejection of all things that were associated with the colonial period. Yet the development of English as an international language has resulted in this language gaining an international prominence that cannot be thwarted by emotive appeals to traditional language use or to authoritarian policies that demand certain languages be used over others. English has become irresistible. It is part of a globalized modernity, not only to Malaysia and Malaysians within the modern frame (Rappa, 1997b:1-56), but also to all other states and societies across the globe.

The national education system has therefore played an important part in entrenching the Malay language in modern Malaysia. The system also has provided an integrating and assimilating role for all Malaysian students to help 'nation building' and 'racial integration'. For their part, the Malaysian vernacular schools hold closely to the traditional and cultural bases of value and are themselves sites of social resistance against the modernizing forces of educational change in Malaysian modernity. However, there are limits to the use of local vernacular languages for these Chinese and Tamil schools since they only exist at the primary and lower secondary levels. Up till recently, the closest entity that the Malaysian Chinese community had in terms of higher education in Chinese was the Tunku Abdul Rahman College or Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman (the main campus is in Kuala Lumpur). When, in Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew closed down the Nanyang University and merged the campus with the University of Singapore to form the National University of Singapore in 1980 there was no other place in Southeast Asia that offered Chinese-language in the vernacular medium for the Chinese Diaspora.

However, after over 33 years of battling various Malay-bumiputera governments from the time of Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Abdul Razak to Hussein Onn and Mahathir Mohamad, a new university was finally launched in June 2002 to cater to the needs of the Chinese community. The Malaysian cabinet approved the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) in 2001. Unlike the other Malaysian universities that use a quota system for its selection of students – therefore giving Malay bumiputera students a much greater chance than they would actually have – UTAR implements a meritorious system of selection regardless of the student's background. However, the political reality is that those who qualify for a university place are likely to be Chinese since they tend to outperform the Malay bumiputera students and often even in Bahasa Malaysia. However, UTAR is likely to come under pressure to accept non-Chinese students under the former Mahathir government. There is no current campus and UTAR will have to rent office space from a local newspaper, the old Star Office Building in Petaling Jaya, for a period of three years for RM594, 000, which adds to the other problem of over 3000 applicants for 500 university places.

UTAR's main funding is likely to come from state coffers with the backing of

the Barisan Nasional or National Front (BN) component, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) under Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik. The leading faction of the BN is Mahathir Mohamad's UMNO. The students who qualify will have the option of choosing from eight different Bachelors' Degree courses including a Bachelor of Arts (Honors) in Chinese Studies. The Education Act, the Universities and University Colleges Act, and the Malaysian Ministry of Education's National Accreditation Board will govern UTAR like the other Malaysian universities. The formation of UTAR is highly political even within the Chinese community since not all Chinese Malaysians support the MCA which has been the main political party backing the project as seen in this press release by the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) Central Executive Committee Member, Penang State chairman, and Member of Parliament (MP) for Tanjung, Chow Kon Yeow:

> Malaysians are shock[ed] today that the MCA president Datuk Seri Ling Liong Sik has gone against the grain of widespread opposition of the [Chinese] community to complete the purchase of Nanyang Siang Pau and China Press...Many MCA members are already feeling the heat from the community over the party's handling of issues ranging from the closure of the Damansara Chinese primary school, its support for Vision School, the abuse of the quota system in university admission, the Chang Min Thien Education Fund and the J.E. Humanitarian Fund. (DAP media conference statement in Penang, May 29, 2001)

Apart from the political in-fighting within the Chinese community, it is also not publicly clear why the Malaysian government has consistently delayed the setting up of a university for the Chinese over the past 33 years. Part of the reason for the delay might be the fear that a Chinese university in Malaysia would facilitate the education of university-educated Chinese elites in Malaysia who would pose a formidable political challenge to traditional Malay rights.

It is possible that these long delays could be linked to the NEP that tried to correct the imbalances between the (mainly Chinese Malaysian) citizens who tended to possess economic wealth and the (mainly Malay Malaysian) citizens who did not possess economic wealth but had economic power. The intention of the NEP was to ensure a 30% stake in 'their' economy by 1990. Not surprisingly – as affirmative action policies tend to be – this target was not achieved and a new policy called the National Development Policy was implemented, lawfully of course, by the Malaysian government in the years 1990 to 1991. The indirect consequences for the educational policy have been made public by the opposition:

> a narrow attitude that bumiputera students must be helped at all cost, even at the expense of other citizens who are high achievers in public examinations...It does not make sense for Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamed to propose that the much disputed quota system be extended to the private sector which would further curb the limited opportunities available to non-bumiputera. (DAP media conference statement in Penang, May 28, 2001)

Thus, there continues to be much resistance from the ground against the Malaysian government's use of the ethnic quota system. As we have seen, the NEP and NDP have been consistently used as instruments for controlling student intake at the university level and in the Malaysian Civil Service (MCS), and this has resulted in more Malay bumiputera students gaining places in Malaysian universities since 1971 (see, for example, Tables 2-1 to 2-3). This means that very good non-bumiputera students were

forced to seek alternative universities overseas, including the National University of Singapore where student placement is based on educational merit, language ability in English and a second language, rather than on ethnic identity. While Chinese Malaysian students now have a (limited) opportunity to pursue higher tertiary education in Malaysia at UTAR, the actual number of places is too small to accommodate other non-bumiputera students such as the Indian Malaysian student population. Currently, and since Malaysian independence in 1963, Indian students have no recourse to institutions of higher educational where the medium of instruction is in their own various vernaculars such as Tamil and Hindi. (*New Straits Times*, January 21, 2002)

There is also an increasing problem of 'numbers' as the section on demography showed since the bumiputera population is much greater than all the minority ethnic groups in Malaysia combined. The use of a quota system (legitimized by the bumiputera policy) has skewed the nature of meritorious education and education as a means of knowledge acquisition to that of state rhetoric and ring-side challenges from the political opposition. For example, Lim Kit Siang, the DAP national chairman, suggested that Tan Sri Musa Mohamad and Datuk Mahadzir Khir were wrong when they claimed that bumiputera students constituted only 55% of all local public universities (IPTA) and 10% of all local private institutions of higher learning (IPTS). Lim suggested, rather, that bumiputera students in IPTA "formed between 65.9% to 69.9% in 1990" (Lim Kit Siang, Minyak Beku DAP Branch Anniversary Dinner, May 26, 2001). These are very strong allegations against a powerful state but apparently there has been no official response to Lim's allegations.

While the Malaysian education continues to grapple with the problems posed by a quota system favoring the bumiputera, the difficulties it faces are compounded by the fact that it simply cannot afford to ignore the importance of English. This is underscored by the New Education Policy (not to be confused with the New Economic Policy – the NEP, 1970-1990), which is designed to move the national-type and vernacular schools towards achieving Wawasan 2020 (Vision 2020) and represents former prime minister Mahathir Mohammad's strategy for achieving developed nation status for this nation-state. In order to accomplish this goal Malaysia needs to have a world-class education system and must acquire the use of world languages, the most important one of which is English. Malay is of course not a world language, which is why the DBP continues to struggle with its mission. Whatever the case might be, the Malaysian government faces a pressing need to remain democratically legitimate by ensuring that its own political support at the ground level does not falter or begin to be eroded by PAS and other similarly directed political parties; and in order to sustain the ground support for UMNO and the BN the political leaders cannot sever links with their bumiputera policy of guaranteeing the special position of the Malays.

This special position requires a strategic kind of policy maintenance and affirmative action for those who are unable to keep up with the Chinese and Indian communities because of social class, cultural background, or economic impoverishment. The choice of such a strategy has unfortunately developed a 'crutch mentality' among many Malay bumiputera. While the bumiputera policy has helped create a large Malay middle class and has made many Malays millionaires overnight, there continues to be a large and growing underclass especially in the larger, more traditional, more religious, economically poorer northern states in the peninsula. The

'crutch mentality' has generated resistance to the concept of meritocracy and prevented the implementation of newer more efficient and less costly policies. There continues to be a fear among many Malaysians about English and the study and use of English as a medium for the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The current prime minister believes that:

> [Malaysia] must embrace meritocracy positively and view it as an opportunity to gain dignity for the community by proving we can achieve success on own merit...Our approach to achieve excellence should follow the tide of changes in line with current development and globalized environment...To remain relevant, we have to upgrade the quality of our struggle by understanding not only internal challenges but also world issues surrounding us. We would not be able to come up with effective decision making without taking into consideration the impact happenings in other countries has on us...We have to face competition head-on and meritocracy will drive us towards becoming more committed, ambitious and hard working to achieve successes. (*The Star*, Sunday, June 9, 2002)

The fear of failure seen in the light of global competition requires the state to perform an important function, as all states do, even if divergent segments of their citizens do not support the value of what we will now turn to, the politics of cultural gatekeeping in Malaysian modernity.

2-5   CULTURAL GATEKEEPING

In colonial times, decisions concerning the Malay language and culture had to be approved by the British, who declared that:

> the Sultan receive and provide a suitable residence for a British Officer, to be called Resident, who shall be accredited to his Court, and whose advice must be asked and acted upon in all questions other than those touching Malay religion and custom. (Gullick, 1969:100-5)

The postcolonial Malay ethnocratist state has since 1955 taken on the function of the former British Residents in addition to issues "touching Malay religion and custom". Naturally, the politics of governance today in Malaysia is far more complex than when it was at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Pangkor in 1974 (Rappa, 1999c:99-120). This situation of complexity is demonstrated in terms of the re-introduction of English as *a* medium of instruction as opposed to *the* medium of instruction in Malaysian schools. For example, we recall that on June 7, 2002, the deputy education minister Shamsudin Aziz announced that English would be compulsory for all Malaysian students. On June 11, he announced that the mathematics and science subjects would be taught in English but only in primary schools (*Star-Asia News Network*, June 11, 2002). This was in reaction to reports about English being simultaneously introduced at the secondary school level. The introduction of English at the primary level is considered much easier since the students are relatively younger and the subjects much less complex, but this is made more difficult at the secondary level because the students are older, in their adolescent stage of development, have

more difficult subjects, and have more habits that are not easily modified. There are greater political risks for the incumbent party such as:

- the parents of school-going children have greater investments of time, money, and effort in their children's education, and changes in the curricula with consequences for the student's examinations have a(n indirect) bearing on the future of their children;
- while teachers may have received elementary training in English, their exposure and experience in teaching in the English medium is very limited;
- the number of experienced teachers is limited and the state may be hard put to devote more resources towards expatriate teachers since the results of these efforts may only be known a generation later when the students themselves begin work; and,
- the political parties in power have a limited mandate beyond which they have to return to the ballot box for extension of their terms of office. The state needs to defend its policy initiatives and program implementation under the following:

  - the maintenance of the national interest (military security, economic development, cultural and social unity, political stability);
  - the devolution of power to agencies that also require sufficient resources for carrying out the tasks;
  - the prioritization of values and norms that are important for the efficient functioning of state and society. The notion of cultural gatekeeping tends to fall under the third category.

The deputy education minister's political rhetoric for example shows the difficulties involved in carrying out what might be seen as a simple task of getting people to learn English for the benefit of the national economy. The negotiation between competing demands is a function of the cultural gatekeeping role. How does Malaysia maintain its special identity, retain values, continue to be internationally competitive, and survive modernity? As the gatekeeper of values, the state has to negotiate a fine balance between the demands of its electorate (whose support it needs for extending its political mandate) and the demands of surviving in a dynamic, international neo-liberal world system. The role of the gatekeeper is to decide on what is best and how to keep what is wanted and deflect what is not wanted for the general good of society.

Yet the Malay-Malaysian state is bent on employing a kind of linguistic protectionism not only through politically weak instruments (such as the DBP) but also through the rhetoric of the prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. His rhetoric illustrates how cultural gatekeeping occurs at the domestic political level. Here, Malay values and *adat-istiadat* that are 'integral' and 'inherent' in the language are protected by the non-introduction of English-medium schools that have been ruled out as a backward step. Note how he immediately ties in the issue with the National Education Policy:

We will not reintroduce English-medium schools because it would be contrary to the National Education Policy... Schools will also be introducing contemporary English Literature to further expose students to the language... The Government will always ensure that the status of Bahasa Melayu is maintained as provided for in the Constitution and as part of efforts in building a united country with its own identity... But we also have to accept the fact that amidst the era of globalization, mastering at least one foreign language for business, knowledge and international relations is crucial. (*The Star*, Friday, May 17, 2002)

The strategic use of both languages affords the potential to the Malaysian state to act as a cultural gatekeeper to ensure that the machinery of state that keeps the economy developing and producing through an English language interface with the outside world of global communications technology, shipping, transportation, advances in science and industry, and other forms of externally produced goods and services; while the Malay language ensures that the cultural fabric within the Malay community and across communities within Malaysia retains its shape and form and does not buckle under the increasing weight of the global forces of modernity such as the universalization of human rights, and the weakening of traditional political boundaries by transnational corporations and other non-governmental organizations. But the emphasis given to the paramount importance of Malay only makes for a tenser situation over languages:

> It does look like a warped sense of insecurity sometimes... There may be instigators and opportunists at work here, but the fact that feathers can be ruffled by this sort of thing 45 years after Merdeka [Malaysian independence] says much about the level of mistrust that still remains to muddy national objectives... Such theatrical demonstrations can be tolerated in a democracy. But they are harder to forgive should they seek to turn their quibbles into a politically motivated condemnation of the Government. When there are fewer resources, foreign languages become marginalized. (*New Straits Times* March 16, 2002)

The debate over the concept of the Vision School is another Pandora's box. The state introduced the Vision School, which puts three Malay, Mandarin and Tamil medium primary schools in the same physical compound to "promote integration and unity among students of various races" (*Malaysiakini*, June 7, 2002). The state also appears to be caught on the wrong foot by acting as a cultural gatekeeper of the Malay community. The clearest rationalization and realization that the bumiputera policy cannot remain in place forever can be seen in the modernist rhetoric of its political elite. In the excerpt below, he advises Malay students not to be overtly dependent on the bumiputera policy, and to rid themselves of the 'crutch mentality' as seen in a recent statement by the current prime minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) (*Seminar Kecemerlangan dan Kepimpinan Mahasiswa Melayu* of the *Institut Pengajian Tinggi Awam* (IPTA) 2002). Then there is the question of English as the language of modernity, and how Malaysian can remain competitive without widespread English language proficiency. The Universiti Malaysia in Sarawak (Unimas) spent RM1.6 million on multimedia systems in 24 out of 33 lecture halls in their own preparation to connect with a globally changing world and to prepare the Sarawakians for their future role in this dynamic world. Unimas has also taken the initiative to promote English language usage, recently announced by its vice-chancellor Yusuf Hadi:

> Universiti Malaysia Sarawak will use English to teach 50% of its courses from the new academic year... Several faculties, like Medicine and Health Science, Engineering and Information Technology, had been using English for most of the teaching... English is the language of the Internet, the international community and a language of knowledge...It is critical for the learning process at the university and the workplace... Practice lifelong learning by cultivating the reading habit as well as sourcing and processing knowledge using the information and communication technology. (*The Star Online*, June 1, 2002)

It is not known how Kuala Lumpur – which is geographically displaced from Sarawak – is likely to react to this in terms of its national cultural gatekeeping role. It is likely to be more supportive of the Unimas initiative for three reasons:

(1)   Unimas will stand as a model university for including the language of
        modernity into its curricula besides being a new university with less administrative and
        academic resistance to change;
(2)   Unimas is displaced from the different complexities that comprise KL politics;
(3)   if Unimas is ultimately successful – and this is likely to take many more years before
        results can be first reaped – then it will circumscribe and undermine the position of
        opposition-held, right-wing states such as Kelantan and Trengganu which are much less
        IT savvy, with lower literacy levels, and with greater Islamic resilience.

The former prime minister of Malaysia himself, Mahathir Mohamad, in his 'semi-official' capacity as the principal gatekeeper of the mandated values of the Malays stirred up a hornet's nest when he announced that 10 per cent of all places in national-type junior colleges would be opened up to non-bumiputera Malaysians because it would help inter-ethnic understanding. This move is radical because it supports a more meritocratic basis for education. However, in order for it to be truly effective, he needs to also deal with the following three factors:

(1)   *Akta Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional* 1997 (Akta 566) and its legal
        agency, *Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional* for all (bumiputera and non-
        bumiputera) Malaysian students has limited funding for its loans and bursaries;
(2)   the pro-bumiputera quota system remains in place for university places and *biasiswa
        dan pinjaman pelajaran* (scholarships and study loans);
(3)   the current pro-bumiputera business provides start up funds, shares in blue-chip
        companies; and low-cost housing financial arrangements while not providing any
        alternatives for the non-bumiputera;

Badawi's position on the bumiputera policy is likely to elicit political resistance from three main sources:

(1)   the opposition PAS and DAP;
(2)   right wing and fundamentalist *ulama* (religious teachers); and,
(3)   vernacular and national school education officers previously burdened
        with changing state language policy at the national and state levels.

Therefore the New Education Policy and the changes to this policy seem to be incongruent with the NEP and NDP at least superficially. The real objective of achieving the status of a developed nation demands that present and future Malaysian cabinets, including the prime minister as the primus inter pares political leader of UMNO and the BN-coalition, negotiate a fine balance between the value of retaining Malay as the national language (Bahasa Malaysia), and the value of incorporating English into these schools as a hedge against the pressures of modernity.

Apart from this balancing act between state and society, and between the state and other states, the federal government has engaged language issues through the legitimate use of the Merdeka Constitution, the National Language Acts of 1963, 1967, and 1971; and the National Education Act of 1961, and the New Education Act (1995). In addition, Article 152 of the Constitution states that "the national language of

Malaysia is Malay and defines a Malay as, one who habitually practices Malay traditions and customs, speaks the Malay language and embraces Islam". No other ethnic community – Chinese, Eurasian, Singhalese, Arab, or Tamil – has a similar Constitutional definition, and a virtual legal guarantee of their ethnic existence. Although a careful examination of the definition reveals that almost any person could potentially become Malay simply by abiding by the Constitutional requirements, the special position of the Malay language is unchallengeable and any person, group, or association that challenges the special position of the Malays may face the Sedition Act (1948). There have never been reports of widespread use of this draconian Act against local or foreign persons relating to the use/abuse of the Malay language. Article 153 safeguards "the special position of the Malays and the natives of the states of Sabah and Sarawak and ensures that land reserved for Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak" (*Federal Constitution*, Article 153:1-2; see also Rappa, 1997b).

Richard Mead provides three rather compelling reasons why the language policy directive to convert the legal system from an English one to a Malay one in 1981 over two and a half decades after independence was an abortive one: firstly, the prime minister did not enjoy the kinds of royal connections of his predecessors nor shared their legal training at a British University (Mahathir graduated in medicine from the University of Singapore) thereby placing him in the best of possible positions to "introduce language reforms with relative impunity" (Mead, 1988:40). The second reason according to Mead was that the language policy symbolized the dominance of Malayness, and offered Mahathir the potential for political mobilization and support of the Malay middle class – a bourgeois class with no royal connections themselves. The third reason was by far the most negative where Mead suggests that the virtual silence of the MCA and MIC indicated the sovereign position that the Malays and UMNO continued to possess since the transformation of the elite political leaders (Case, 1993) from the Alliance into the Barisan Nasional in 1974 (Mead 1988; Rappa, 1997b).

The state as the gatekeeper of languages and language policy determines which language gets in and which remains outside the realm of empowerment. Clearly, Malay is not the disempowered language at this point in Malaysian history. Malay language dominance is seen in the explicit use of Malay as it is enshrined in the Merdeka Constitution and deep within the structures of the civil service. Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language) is Bahasa Malaysia, so that the 'naming' of the national language privileges this language over the vernacular languages used by Malaysians in their everyday lives. As a policy maker of significant influence in Malaysian politics, Mahathir's own views on language are clearly seen in his early political narratives:

> We are now in the process of building a new nation which is to be an amalgam of different racial groups. The form of this new nation and this new citizenship must be such as to satisfy all the constituent races [authors: but here is the main point] An understanding of the relative rights and claims of each race is important if we are to avoid the differences which selfish racial prejudices will engender ... *I contend that the Malays are the original or indigenous people of Malaya.* (Mahathir, 1970:133, *italics* in original)

This narrative promotes the use of the single dominant ethnic community's language and culture over that of others. Apart from raising the prestige of Malay, the move to convert Bahasa Melayu into Bahasa Malaysia forces non-Malay ethnic communities to accept and validate the official and national language (Rappa, 1997).

Bahasa Malaysia is compulsory in all Malaysian schools and is the medium of instruction at all institutions of higher learning under the University and University Colleges Act and the New Education Act (1995). The problem for the Malays is that English has become the staple international language medium of science, technology, industry, finance, communications, and multi-national organizations. This means that Malay and Malaysian students cannot neglect the study of English if Malaysia is to survive as a globally competitive nation-state. Yet while the Malay language continues to dominate at Federal and local government levels with some degree of circumvention in law and the legal service, there is always a continual fear that English will usurp Malay in terms of status perception in modernity. For example, the Malaysian minister Goh Cheng Teik announced at a seminar on *Tamaddun Berbahasa Melayu Menjelang Tahun 2020* (Malay Civilizational and Cultural Development Towards the Year 2020) that Bahasa Melayu/Bahasa Malaysia be used as:

> a tool to unite the Malaysian race. That all users could follow the language effectively and to enhance the status of a Malaysian race with its own identity. Malaysians should be proud that Bahasa Malaysia as the national language was now the main form of communication among the various races...English should not exceed Bahasa Malaysia in status and value as the medium of language in administration and education. (*Berita*, July 28, 1995)

Once again we note that Malay is being pitched in instrumentalist terms. It must not lose out to English in the arenas of administration and education. In other words, the Malaysian nationalist narrative cannot be content with merely retaining Malay as a marker of cultural identity. This is necessary though far from sufficient. Malay must also be able to compete with English in social arenas typically associated with modernity, and it is this pressure to compete that forces Malay into being represented in instrumentalist terms. Anything less would be disastrous for the prestige and centrality accorded to the Malay language. In this regard, the minister's use of the phrase, the 'Malaysian Race' is instructive. This was not a merely a rhetorical device. Rather, the idea of the 'Malaysian Race' represents a calculated political motif, a *leit motif* designed on the form of 'one united people' but on the substance of a single dominant race. Since the state acknowledges that Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country and in the same breadth calls for a united 'Malaysian Race', the basis of this national race must be grounded in some value-system. And this value-system is one that uses the Malay race as metonymically standing in for all other races, thus implicitly reinforcing the rights of the bumiputera. Mahathir stated that the New Education Act (1995) has wider and deeper policy goals. As explained by Mahathir:

> The government will continue to uphold Bahasa Malaysia as the National Language and will not compromise in this matter. Bahasa Malaysia will be used as much as possible to achieve that objective [for creating a competitive society] but where found necessary we will also use other languages, especially English. Bahasa Malaysia is compulsory in the vernacular schools and students are required to take the subject in their examinations. (*Bernama*, December 14, 1995)

But the study of English has not yet been made compulsory at all levels given the closure of English medium schools in the early 1970s after the implementation of the NEP. The concern over the use of Malay *as* Bahasa Malaysia has caused unhappiness and frustration among the non-Malay communities. However, given the

power of state ethnocratism to crush dissent, any opposition to the New Education Act could be seen as seditious and unpatriotic.

2-6   CONCLUSION

The Razak report became the keystone of Malaysia's education system gazetted in the Education Ordinance of 1957. It would also the become source of future problems for the system of education in Malaysia. Language policy in Malaysia emanates from this report and the later, more crucial Mahathir Report, the New Education Policy, the NEP, NDP, and the National Cultural Policy. Malaysian language policy also faces two strategic problems. The first problem is the need to resurrect English as the language of globalization and technology that has been marginalized since the Constitution (Amendment) Act (1971). The second strategic problem is maintaining the importance of Malay as the language of all Malaysians without antagonizing the non-Malay bumiputera communities. This situation is worsened by the tendency among many non-Malay Malaysian students to openly reject Bahasa Malaysia. The first problem appears to have received sporadic attention from the Mahathir government with ironic results. His Cabinet's sometime encouragement and emphasis on the study of English language has received positive support from industry leaders and the parents of school-going children:

> Some journalists and critics believe that the government and parents have glorified English to the exclusion of Bahasa Melayu. Mahathir, supported by captains of industry, has said that Malaysians will be left behind if they refuse to learn English, the language of globalization and technology. (*The Straits Times*, March 6, 2001)

The high failure rate in Bahasa Melayu/Bahasa Malaysia as revealed by the education ministry also showed the alarming problem of one in five failures being ethnically Malay bumiputera. Critics have offered three reasons for this setback:

(1)   some Malays and Malay students have the impression that since Bahasa Melayu/Bahasa Malaysia is their mother tongue, it is fairly simple and need not be taken seriously;

(2)   Students of any ethnic community may be admitted into private colleges without a pass in Bahasa Melayu/Bahasa Malaysia. This is because the New Education Act (1995) and the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA) do not include entry/graduation requirements;

(3)   the state is torn between the push for economic development with English, and the need for the study of mother-tongue languages for social bonding.

Also, there appears to be a dovetailing of the problem with the two languages, and that given the limited time and space considerations in modernity for economic, social, cultural, and political survival, there continues to be a competition between English and the vernacular languages over the same public and private space. This problem is exacerbated when there already is an ethnic quota system that puts non-bumiputera Malaysians at a disadvantage. The question of dovetailing weakens the linguistic instrumentalism of government policy when local educational associations

suggest a covariance between the language of tradition and nationalism (Bahasa Melayu/Bahasa Malaysia), the language of modernity (English) with religious overtones. For example, the Utusan Melayu newspaper reported a recent Association of Malaysian Private Colleges statement that claimed "Malay was not an important subject and everyone closes their eyes to such humiliation as a result English has become the medium of instruction in these colleges and this is not viewed as a sin". This situation becomes amplified when one considers that Malaysia currently has one of the lowest literacy rates in ASEAN and had the lowest literacy rate in the 1993/4 periods (*New Straits Times*, 28 May 1994; *Asiaweek*, 25 May 1994) and a lack of interest in reading, according to a survey conducted by the Malaysian Strategic Research Centre. Malay-Muslims also have the additional pressure of having to be tested on their religious knowledge and conviction in a test known as the *Ujian Perkara Am Fardu Ain* (*Bernama*, December, 1993).

In conclusion, language policy in Malaysian modernity consists of a series of complex negotiations within an ethnic-based polity that cuts across class-based differences skewed over the past forty years by a series of constitutional determinants and legal decisions that have blurred rather than clarified the relationship between tradition and modernity. Any lack of clarity in the interpretations of the Malaysian Constitution will create confusion at the grassroots, among the people both bumiputera and non-bumiputera alike. We would like to recommend that there are three major implications for the lackluster, incommensurate, and incoherent language policy in Malaysia:

(1)   there are signs that Mahathir's and Badawi's pronouncements and warnings over the modernity issue have been proven correct, but the state machinery does not seem sufficiently capable of responding effectively to their cautionary speeches;

(2)   there is more likely than not to be a falling away of the political ground towards the Islamic right as the ineffective, perhaps incoherent use of linguistic instrumentalism has bungled public policy, thereby driving the middle ground (potential UMNO and Barisan Nasional voters) towards right-wing parties such as PAS rather than alternative centrist/moderate parties such as the Spirit of 46, the Justice Party, and the opposition alliance seeking to unseat Mahathir's power-base for the past two decades since 1981;

(3)   there is an emphasis at both ends where Malaysians are themselves torn between spiritual traditionalism among Chinese, Indians and Malays (the Eurasians are consistently loyal supporters of the Barisan Nasional) and the importance of traditional religious practice (Taoism, Ancestor worship, Hinduism, and Islam) on the one hand, and the capitalist attractions of the global flow of goods and services that are increasingly available to all Malaysians.

Ironically, the more Malaysia succeeds economically, the greater the dangers of it evolving into another capitalist enclave that weakens the central government's ability to act as a cultural gatekeeper, making it difficult to encourage the people towards economic productivity while simultaneously retaining their traditional values. Modernity brings success but it also brings the prospect of the dissolution of traditional and cultural values that is likely to result in a displacement of one language for another rather than a peaceful coexistence of two or main three languages in Malaysia's democratic transition.

2-7   APPENDIX

IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN LANGUAGE POLICY AND MODERNITY IN MALAYSIA[4]

1956   Report of the Education Committee (Razak)

1957   The Education Ordinance

1960   Report of the Education Review Committee (Rahman Talib)

1961   Education Act

1962   Degrees and Diplomas Act

1963/1967

   Akta Bahasa Kebangsaan (Disemak, 1971) National Language Act (Amended, 1971)

1971   *Akta Universiti dan Kolej Universiti* (University and University Colleges Act)

1974   *Akta Institusi-Institusi Pelajaran (Tatatertib)* (Educational Institutions (Discipline) Act

1975   *Semua Sekolah Rendah Inggeris selesai ditukar menjadi Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan* (all English-medium primary schools modified to National-type primary schools)

1976   *Akta Universiti Teknologi MARA* (Universiti Teknologi MARA Act)

1979   *Laporan Jawatankuasa Kabinet mengkaji Pelaksanaan Dasar Pelajaran* (Mahathir Report) (Report of the Cabinet Research Committee on Basic Educational Principles)

1980   *Akta Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia* (Malaysia Examinations Council Act)

1994   *Acta Akademi Sains Malaysia* (Academy of Sciences, Malaysia Act)

1995   *Akta Universiti dan Kolej* (University and University and University Colleges

(Amendment) Act

1996   *Akta Pendidikan* (Education Act) (Acta 550)
        Akta Majlis Pendidikan Tinggi Negara (National Council on Higher Education
        Act)
        Akta Pendidkan Tinggi Swasta (Private Higher Educational Institutions Act)
        Acta Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (National Accreditation Board Act)

1997   Education Act (Curriculum Regulations)
        Akta Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional (Perbadanan Tabung
        Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional Act)

1998   *Akta Kumpulan Wang Persaraan Guru-Guru (Sabah)(Pembubaran)*
        Teachers' Superannuation Fund (Sabah) (Dissolution) Act

2-8   GLOSSARY

Acta: Act. For example, the *Acta* DBP 1959 (DBP Act of 1959) granted the DBP the
        legal autonomy to develop and expand Bahasa Melayu, the language of the
        Malays, into Bahasa Malaysia the language of Malaysia.

Bahasa: Language

Bangsa: Culture

BN: Barisan Nasional or the National Front. The
        governing Alliance of political parties, headed by UMNO (PKMB).

Bumiputera:
        Literally, 'son-of-the-soil', it is used to refer to the indigenous people of
        Malaysia that includes the majority ethnic Malay community, and other
        minority ethnic communities such as the Land Dayak, Sea Dayak, Iban, and
        Melanau.

DAP: Democratic Action Party. A Malaysian Opposition
        Political Party that was formed from the 'remnants' of the People's Action
        Party (PAP) when the latter was still operating in Malaysia up till 1965 when
        Singapore and Malaysia separated. The DAP is linked to Socialist International
        and promotes the concept of democratic socialism, which the PAP government
        in Singapore views as a contradiction in terms.

DBP: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (The Malay Language Academy)

MCA: Malaysian Chinese Association

MCP: Malayan Communist Party
MIC: Malaysian Indian Congress

MSC: Malaysian Civil Service

NDP: National Development Policy

NEP: New Economic Policy

NIE: *New Straits Times*-in-Education program.

Partai/Parti:
       A political party

PAS: Partai Islam Se-Malaysia (Islamic Party of Malaysia)

PKMB: UMNO

UKM: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia or the National University of Malaysia.

UM: Universiti Malaya or the University of Malaysia

UMNO: United Malays National Organization or Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu
       Bersatu (PKMB). The leading political party of the governing National Front
       or Barisan Nasional.

UTAR: Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

UUM: Universiti Utara Malaysia. Unlike the other universities, there is no official
       translation of UUM into the English language, however it generally means
       'University of North Malaysia'.

2-8   NOTES

[1] We thank an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point.
[2] Peninsular Malaysia covers 131,598 sq. km, has borders with Thailand and Singapore. The East Malaysian states of Sabah (73,620 sq. km) and Sarawak (124,449 sq. km) border the Indonesian state of Kalimantan. Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei and Kalimantan used to form what was once known as Borneo or British Borneo. The Federation attained internal self-government after the 1955 watershed elections and, in addition to Sabah and Sarawak, is made up of the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Perlis, Pulau Pinang, Kedah, Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor, Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan. Sabah consists of 5 divisions: Tawau, Sandakan, Kudat, West Coast and Interior, while Sarawak has 9 divisions: Kuching, Sri Aman, Sibu, Miri, Sarekei, Limbang, Kapit, Bintulu and Kota Samarahan.Sarawak is geographically almost as large as Peninsular (West) Malaysia.

---

[3] Tables 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3 are adapted from G. Chandradas, *The Sun,* 1999-2000.

[4] Collated by the authors from the following sources: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2002; Malaysia Ministry of Education research reports (online); *The New Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), *The Straits Times* (Singapore), *The Star, Bernama, The Star Online/Asia News Network, Utusan Melayu, Berita Harian, Berita Minggu,* Commissioner of Law Revision, Malaysia, *Malayan Law Journal, Percetakan Nasional Malaysia.*

CHAPTER 3

THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

CIA World Factbook, **2005**

This chapter on the Philippines argues that Philippine society is characterized by the politics of clientelism, a tenuous democratic transition, and reluctance on the part

of most elected presidents to fully engage the issues and questions pertaining to language policy. By 'clientelism', we refer to relationships of patronage involving a patron and a client, where the latter is typically in a socially subordinate position seeking the protection and favour of the former. Clientelism forms such an important and recurrent theme in Philippine society that it, we argue, serves to characterize the Filipinos' worldview. One of our goals in this chapter, then, will be to draw out the manifold ways in which this politics of clientelism impacts on language policy in the Philippines. One consequence may be seen in the uneven distribution of economic prosperity across the 7000 islands that constitute the Philippines. Luzon, for example, continues to be better developed and attracts more foreign investments when compared to Mindanao.

Part of the reason why modernity impacts countries and regions so differently (see chapter 1) also lies in the geographical history of the place. Consider the fact that the Philippines is among the world's most disaster-vulnerable nation-states and is periodically exposed to the ravages of tropical tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, landslides and other natural disasters as it is geographically positioned within the Pacific Ring of Fire where two tectonic plates are colliding. Such a geographical predisposition hinders the rate and level of modern development, changes and limits the kind of economic development possible. This makes development a risky business, and the problems of the beleaguered Philippine economy are further exacerbated by a CPI that hovers around 8.4% to 15% in a country where the division of labor is concentrated in terms of 43.4% for agriculture, 22.6% for service industries, a very high bureaucratic level of 17.9% for government services and a low 16.1% of employable labor involved in trade and industry. The unemployment rate for the later part of the last century hovered between 8.6 % to over 15% adding to the national debt of close to US$50 billion.

Like many other Southeast-Asian nation-states, consecutive Philippine governments have advanced and promoted the use of the English language in instrumentalist terms, focusing on foreign direct investment opportunities, especially from the United States. Such economic development has also emphasized the use of English in the elite and expensive private universities and colleges of the Philippines. These educational institutions are the nurseries of the economic upper classes, the controllers of agriculture, labor, the variegated mass media, and the 'power elite' (after C. Wright Mills) that have controlled the agrarian economy for generations in addition to the children of generals comprising the military elite. In this way, the domestic relationships between and among the agents of modernity in the Philippines, namely the Spanish, the Catholic Church, the Protestant movements, the Americanized political institutions and the liberal capitalist arrangements in the Marcos and post-Marcos eras continue to be marked by the patron-client political and economic hierarchies that dominated the earlier Spanish colonial period that lasted over three centuries. The elite educational nurseries serve to reproduce the patron-client culture of previous generations of the rulers of the Philippines – the descendents and successors to the Spanish Conquistadors and American neocolonialists.

The history of the Philippines has also been marked by a significant Christian modernization of its northern territories (Brown, 1988:57) since the colonial period:

In the Mindanao area of the Philippines, the situation is different again. The area is rich in natural resources, and the level of investment has been relatively high. However the benefits have gone to industries of the northern Philippines and to the growing number of Christian settlers in Mindanao; thus the flow of investments has merely increased [the] visible economic disparities between Muslims and Christians (Brown, 1988:64-65).

The use of the English language and its association with the Christian religion is a secondary consideration since Spanish was considered to be closely related to the Christianization of the country rather than English. Spanish was thus much more strongly associated with the growth of the Christian religion rather than English. The primary anxiety for state planners does not arise intrinsically out of the language but from the kind of politics that is associated with the language. If language is perceived as being part of the elite (as English is) then there is likely to be political resistance from the grassroots against policy implementation for extra-linguistic reasons. However, if English is perceived to be associated with being 'advanced' and 'modern' it may well be welcomed by the younger MTV generation. Indeed, there is significant evidence from the Philippines broadcast media that the use of Tagalog that is interspersed with English words and phrases makes the program more attractive to its viewers. But what can we say about the linguistic identity of marginalized communities?

In the following quote, Brown includes Cynthia H. Enloe's (Enloe, 1973, 1980; Enloe and Ellinwood, 1980) arguments on state coercion as the primary variable in determining ethnic (including linguistic and religious) identity for marginalized communities:

In the Philippines, the Moros have been divided into different linguistic groups and also regionally as well as along clan and family lines. Their ethnic communal consciousness began to change, however, in response to their common experience of the state. (Brown, 1988: 65).

Thus, otherwise linguistically demarcated groups began to develop a sense of commonality in the light of perceived state oppression, leading to the continuing armed separatism in the southern Philippines among the Bangsamoro and the political problems surrounding Cotabato (Kerkvliet, 1972; McKenna, 1998:269-275; Pomeroy, 1963).

This chapter is organized as follows. After a brief discussion of the demographic character of the Philippines, we provide a description of language policy in the Philippines as it is intended by the state in the current constitution. The sections after that then delve into the various reasons why this constitutional goal has failed to be translated into actual practice. Here, we point to the lack of constitutional continuity, noting that there have been four different constitutions since the time of the American colonization. This absence of constitutional continuity has been exacerbated by the fact that, except for the administrations of Ferdinand E. Marcos (1972-1986) and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (2001-present), the history of the Philippines presidents' attitudes towards language policy has been one of general malaise and presidential languor. Only Marcos and Arroyo have come closest to making language policy an important, proactive, and explicit aspect of their respective governments. Thus, unlike the examples of Malaysia, Singapore or Thailand, Philippine modernity is widely marked by a lack of a strong and respected state, and concomitantly, a lack of continuity and commitment to a stable and consistent language policy.

3-1   DEMOGRAPHY

The demographic character of the Republic of the Philippine islands provides vital clues to understanding the patron-client relations that have evolved over the political history of the archipelago. There are approximately 76.1 million Filipinos living in an archipelago of 7,000 islands, inlets, waterways, narrow coastlines, and coastal lowlands and mountains that combine to form a total land area of 300,000 sq. km (such as the state of Arizona in the USA). About 92% of Filipinos consider themselves Christian Malay, about 4% Muslim Malay, and other statistically insignificant groups make up the remainder. This makes the Philippines the most populous Malay country in the world, and ironically, the most populous Christian country in Asia if compared with the Malaysia and Singapore context where a Malay is often assumed to be a Muslim. The Muslim minority in the Philippines is found on Mindanao and other Southern islands that border Indonesia and have recently been identified as sites and home bases of international terrorist movements with religious and ideological orientations that are often based on extreme right-wing interpretations of the Koran.

Figure 3-1   Population Pyramid of the Philippines
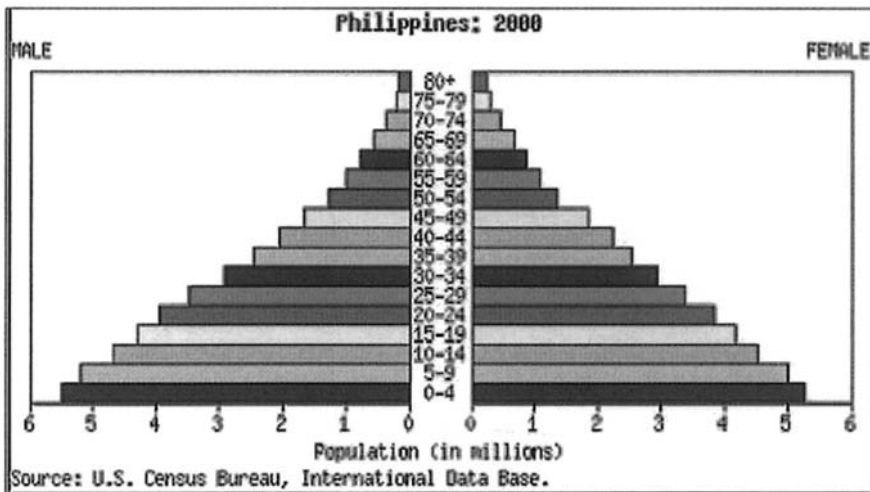
The demographic distribution of population in the Philippines bears the impact of migrations from the center in Luzon to the Muslim-dominated, Arabic-speaking areas of Mindanao. These migrations, though voluntary, are both supported and encouraged by the state. There are three clear reasons why the state supports such internal movements of native populations: (1) it helps to ease the economic and social pressures

of over concentration of native populations in resource-rich Luzon; (2) it facilitates the national distribution of human resources; (3) it serves to prevent further complications arising out of marginalized communities that embrace Islam in a largely Christian country. Yet as Brown (1988) and others have observed, the internal migration patterns result in a different kind of discord since the settlers often create greater disparities of economic and social class after having worked in Luzon and then settling in these relatively impoverished outlying areas. While these economic differences have not increased the animosity between Philippine communities in a stridently overt manner such as high levels of political violence or insurrections, at the same time the settling-in of the migrants has not helped to abate the pre-existing political, social, and economic tensions in Mindanao.

The fact that the complex levels of political violence appear to be lower between the migrant and non-migrant groups could be due to a combination of the following two main factors. One, the non-migrant and settled Muslim population tends to be politically active because of their shared sense of political tension and agitation with the center in Manila (Luzon). However, this political activism is to a large extent offset by the fact that the migrant Christian communities are purely interested in earning a living for their families for which they prefer peace and stability. This situation leads to political apathy. We must point out that the political activism on the part of the Muslim communities does not automatically imply that all Muslim Filipinos want to secede from the Republic. Rather, it is the vocal minority that tend to catch the attention of the news media and who consistently desire and draw attention to their political beliefs, which are then tied to Islam. This, rather unfortunately, makes the minority community suspicious in the eyes of the Malay-Christian Filipino majority. The vocal Malay-Muslim Filipino community tends to hold sway within their communities and hence the overt silence of their religious co-ethnics does not and cannot act as a pacifying force. Yet their political unhappiness is with the center, as can be seen in the kinds of politically violent activities and actions taken by these fledgling but influential groups. These include the kidnapping and murder of foreigners, especially Americans, the torture and rape of Catholic nuns, and the torture and killing of New Philippine Army and Philippine Army troops, and the US-trained Special Forces units such as those from the Recondo (reconnaissance commando) and Ranger units. Foreign tourists, especially Americans and Europeans, are an important source of income for the country as a whole. Ironically, the disparate terrorist networks in Sulu and Mindanao also derive income from those who are held captive, and evidence shows that most of the hostages originate from the US, the UK, Australia and Canada.

The leaders of these Islamic separatist movements are also tied to a larger international network of terrorists that have recently come to light in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York. It appears that the onus is now on the peaceful and law abiding Muslims to pressure their extremist counterparts away from their strategy of political agitation and violence. The proven international links with other Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organizations is recent proof of the age-old tension between Islam and Western modernity, and it is not surprising that these groups often associate Christianity and English as the religious and linguistic representatives of Western modernity. This long-standing divide has its roots in the Macapagal and Marcos administrations both of which failed to quell the Muslim

separatist problem. The situation however has taken a turn for the worse. On April 21, 2002, a series of bombings by the Abu Sayyaf terrorist network killed 15 people and wounded 54 in General Santos, a Christian-dominated city in the Muslim-dominated island of Mindanao. President Arroyo's permission to bivouac over 3000 American and 1000 Philippine troops in the region has exacerbated the tense situation. As Brown has earlier noted, although there were differences in the linguistic groups of this region along "clan and family lines" their ethnic consciousness has changed "in response to their common experience of the state" (Brown, 1988:65; Hawkesworth, 1988). This political change is identified in terms of a shift from a disparate linguistic motif to that of an ethnic orientation that emphasizes religion *over* language and color and therefore supports the general argument in this chapter that language policy is contingent on patron-client relations in Philippine modernity and in this case the failure rather than the success of the patron in Manila (Luzon) and the client in Mindanao. This war has characterized the global Christian-Muslim divide, so that ethnic affiliations have now been re-organized along mainly religious lines. Therefore, the demographic distribution of the population across the islands is largely the result of historical, linguistic, cultural and social arrangements that have been made increasingly complex by the on-going local war between the center (Manila) and an important periphery (Mindanao).

In addition, the continuing failure of the national language policy to get all Filipinos to accept the Tagalog-based national language on one hand, and English as the other official language (see below), on the other, has hindered the clientelism of center-periphery tensions. As a unit of urban analysis, Manila may be seen as the foreboding political patron to an agrarian periphery in a relationship that is driven by urban growth machines dominant at the center, and where the politics of clientelism at the national level dominate and percolate deep into the margins of the periphery (Rappa, 2001:5-17). In terms of realpolitik, there is likely to continue to be a weakening of the Philippine economy as precious national resources are devoted towards fighting a vocal but truculent portion of Muslim communities that themselves constitute less than 4% of the entire population and contribute even less per capita of income to the national economy relative to other Filipino communities such as the Catholic, Protestant, Arabic, Chinese, and Hindu-Filipino communities.

3-2   LANGUAGE POLICY

It is generally agreed that there exist at least eight major linguistic groups that are geographically cited as the 'major' regional indigenous languages of the Philippines, namely, Bikol, Cebuango, Hiligaynon, Ilokano, Pampangan, Pangasinan, Tagalog, and Warray. According to the Official Census of the Philippines (1960), speakers belonging to these eight groups account for 86.2% of the recorded population (Asuncion-Lande, 1971:678). Despite, or perhaps because of, this high degree of linguistic heterogeneity, language policy in the Philippines, as outlined in its current constitution, focuses on only two languages: Filipino and English. Article 14, Section 7 of the Constitution (1987) of the Republic of the Philippines dictates that, "For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English". Filipino is the virtual linguistic equivalent of

Tagalog, an important language itself that has developed in and around the Manila area. The word *Tagalog* comes from the phrase, *taga ilog*, meaning 'river dwellers' of the River Pasig. Despite the plethora of languages in the Philippines that ranges from 80 to over 120, Tagalog was chosen to be the 'core' national language of the Republic of the Philippines before the outbreak of the Pacific War four years after the establishment of the old Philippine Commonwealth (Asuncion-Lande, 1971:677; see below).

The indigenous languages of the Philippines belong to the Malayo-Polynesian sub-family of languages, of which there are approximately between 80 and 120 language and dialects. It would appear that the widespread use of English has resulted in the marginalization and demise of indigenous languages. The U.S. Peace Corps, for example, estimates that approximately three languages/dialects disappear every year in the Philippines.

The English language is the other official language of the Philippines. Unlike Pilipino, it is not a construction of a prominent indigenous language of a dominant class but a foreign language import of global value. The ensuing post-war political emphasis on the use of English during the American neocolonial period resulted in a large number of Filipinos beginning to adapt English into the native tongues in daily language use. After almost a half century since political independence there have been increasing numbers of Filipinos who have come to speak and use at least simple English in their quotidian lives, making it common to hear people speak in their local or regional dialects with some English words and phases. English was therefore initially associated with American modernity and Western modes of development and it has now become a major language in the Philippines. As a result of this widespread use of English in the Philippines, there is a very high literacy rate of 94.6% of the population aged 15 and above who can read and write. This is also aided by the fact that the Philippines had the earlier advantage of the use of the English language over the rest of Southeast Asia in the late 1960s.

It is interesting that between the two official languages in the Constitution, it is English as a foreign (as opposed to an indigenous) language that has gained wider currency and acceptance in Philippine society. One explanatory factor lies in the fact that the Republic of the Philippines had the advantage of two decades of central government experience and emphasis on the importance of English in the immediate postcolonial era (1945-1965). Another advantage is the state's view that the increasing legitimacy of the English language as the lingua franca of technology and globalization continues to remain politically salient and therefore highly functional as a tool of political governance.

Consider, in contrast, the attitudes that greet attempts to establish Filipino as an official language. What is clear is that most of speakers of the regional languages and dialects tend to resist Manila-centric attempts at establishing a common written or verbal linguistic denominator making it difficult for the state to implement a single culturally and socially bonding language. The central government has a preference for complex and lengthy bureaucratic reports, 'papers' and pronouncements that appear to be more real in the minds of the policy bureaucrat than to have become reified in the minds of the actual target group. While many citizens speak between two to four regional languages, it is not surprising that Tagalog has gained prominence since it was the predominant language of center of power in Manila. Filipinos in the actual regions,

however, do not seem to support the language initiatives of the Manila power center even though Filipino (Tagalog) has been declared many times as the official working language of the country. As Asuncion-Lande points out:

> ... the national language was derived from one of the existing indigenous tongues, however, the government's attempts to actually put that language into use has been a periodic source of controversy in the national legislature, in the news media, and among those groups and individuals who have linguistic axes to grind. For while the representatives of various geographic regions where several languages are spoken generally have demanded, and obtained equal treatment for their regions in other governmental matters, the official designation of Tagalog as the 'core' of the national language has necessarily upset the regional balance, and this in turn has precipitated a continuing inter-regional controversy in which language policy forms the major issue. (Asuncion-Lande, 1971:677)

One key reason for the weakness of language policy in the Philippines is the absence of any continuity in the constitutions. With periodic changes being proposed as new administrations come into power, or simply as a result of neglect, language policy in the Philippines has stuttered. It is no wonder, then, that the current attempts to impose Tagalog as the national language has failed to gain any widespread legitimacy. It is this issue of the failure of the constitution that forms the focus of the next section.

3-3   THE LACK OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY

The Constitution is the emblem of nationhood and signifies the important embodiment of the people's sovereignty. Constitutional law marks Philippines modernity because of three factors: (1) for the first time in modern Philippine history there was a written constitution that contained the letter of the law and the aspirations of the 'Philippine people' – sovereignty for the native people is an important departure from traditional civilization and hence a crucial marker of modernity; (2) the laws contained in the constitution are not stagnant but are evolutionary as there have been four different constitutions (see below), thus illustrating the 'progressive' and 'rational' nature of the modern influence; (3) the presence of Spanish and then American foreign settlers in the Philippines resulted in a change of habit and the imposition of different political, legal and social systems that carry with them new structures of organizing and controlling the local native populations in terms of distributive systems of justice and welfare.

Language policy in the Philippines has itself become increasingly formalized and controlled by successive Filipino bureaucracies through several legal benchmarks that have been unevenly implemented through the various structures that are briefly discussed in the following section on the 'Political System'. The Philippines has had four constitutions since the time of the American colonization. The legal benchmarks of language policy in the Philippines are enshrined and rooted in (i) the 1899 Malolos Constitution, (ii) the 1935 Commonwealth Constitution, (iii) the 1973 Marcos Constitution, and (iv) the 1987 Constitution. These four constitutions provide the historical development of state policy – and the embodiment of the people's desire through the Sovereign Universal Provider (1899), the Great Provider (1935), through Divine Providence (1973), and through Almighty God (1987) – on languages official,

regional and vernacular over the past century.

Article 93 of the 1899 Constitution signed on the 21st of January of that year at Malolos, for example, states that "the use of languages spoken in the Philippines shall be optional. Their use cannot be regulated except by virtue of law, and solely for acts of public authority and in the courts. For these acts the Spanish language may be used in the meantime." There is no other mention of the concept of language in the 1899 Constitution. Thus, over a century ago, under the auspices of the American colonial government, there was no push for a national or official language that takes cognizance of the long 350 years of Spanish rule and the quotidian value of the Spanish language for Filipinos and foreigners alike. So, while Spanish was legislated as the language of the courts, the constitution explicitly declined to regulate language use in the Philippines. While this may be considered a virtue in respecting individual preferences, it also meant that there was no attempt to create a unified national identity via the use of a common language. The 1899 Constitution does not contain any section about the importance of an official language. It is therefore difficult to discern whether the framers of the first (written) constitution were particularly interested in (1) the importance of not having any predominant language except Spanish to facilitate government and communications; or (2) were intimidated by high level of linguistic complexity (as noted by Tollefson 1991:141) and consequent difficulties involved in selecting one vernacular language over the large number of other vernacular languages.

However, the idea of legislating and enshrining in the Constitution an official language would arise some thirty-six years later in the Constitution of 1935. The move towards the use of official languages is very much a reflection of the nature of the modern project. Article 14, Section 3 of the 1935 Constitution known as the Commonwealth Constitution (of the Republic of the Philippines) ratified on May 14, 1935, states for the first time in Philippine history that the "Congress shall take steps toward the development and adoption of a common national language based on one of the existing native languages". This indicates that the move toward the implementation of the national language would not only be common to all but also be legitimized by Congressional support, since the Congress embodies the representative power of the constituents being represented.

There is a problem of political choice. Philippine law-makers continue to be troubled by the ideal selection of a language that will officiate among all other languages without marginalizing any linguistic community. This is a problem for most states in modernity. It is a political choice because there is no single and logical option. It is a political choice because it is about the exercise of power. As will be seen, significant headway has been made in terms of legislation and the speed, efficacy, and progress made towards the use of not only an 'official' but also a 'national language'. This is important as a marker of modernity because the idea of the nation-state with the distinctive feature of integral and inherent sovereignty was only created after the Westphalian Peace accords (the Treaty of Westphalia) in 1648 in what we now understand as the map of Western Europe. A nation in modernity is not only marked by its national anthem, national crest, national and patriotic song(s) of kinship and bondsmanship, national mottos, and national mascot, but also its national language, the language of the nation that is felt to express the embodiment of the people, and the people's sovereignty surrendered to the nation-state. In the case of the Philippines, the

interim language in place of the national language was to be that of the colonizer but only in order to facilitate the transition of the Commonwealth of the Philippines into the nation-state. These are the languages that are designated to be used as facilitators of political, social and economic change, that is to say, the language of the democratic transition and languages of modernity. Interestingly, this section of the 1935 Constitution goes on to state that, "Until otherwise provided by law, English and Spanish shall continue as official languages." These are the only points enshrined in the 1935 Constitution about language under its General Provisions.

One would not therefore associate the vernacular languages at this stage of Philippine modernity as being the languages of change and transition but rather as native languages associated with the past. It would only be with the concerted accreditation of Pilipino and Filipino in the subsequent 1973, 1973 (Amendments), and 1987 Constitutions that the importance of using dominant vernacular or native languages as the national language would be demonstrated at least constitutionally. The 1973 Constitution was ratified on January 17, 1973 in accordance with Presidential Proclamation No. 1102 by President Ferdinand E. Marcos. Under its Article 15, titled General Provisions, Section 3, sub-paragraph 2 states that the "National Assembly shall take steps towards the development and formal adoption of a common national language to be known as Filipino". However, sub-paragraph 3 of this section states that, "Until otherwise provided by law, English and Pilipino shall be the official languages". At this point in Philippine history, a clear legal distinction was discernible between the linguistic goal or linguistic ideal of the nation-state and the transitory linguistic form of the official language. Therefore, under the Marcos Constitution of 1973, 'Filipino' was designated the ideal linguistic form while Pilipino was decreed as the transitory official language of the nation-state. No other mention of 'language' is found in the 1973 Marcos Constitution.

There was an increasing amount of political resistance to the Marcos regime in the mid-1970s in the aftermath of the economic and social dishevelment arising out of the OPEC-induced oil crisis despite the ensuing détente between the United States and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics across the globe and in Southeast Asia. In our opinion, the 1976 amendments on the part of the Marcos administration were part of the politics of accommodation at the height of the martial law period of the Marcos administration and were results of the mounting political pressure against the regime's authoritarianism, nepotism, and cronyism. However these amendments were insufficient to quell the political ground. A decade later, the assassination of Senator Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino in 1983 led eventually to the snap presidential elections of February 1986. This was when Corazon Aquino, the widow of the former Philippine senator, and Salvador Laurel's 'People's Power' movement ousted Marcos and (some of) his old cronies. The end of the Marcos 'administration' resulted in the creation of a new Constitution in late 1987. And Article 14 of the 1987 Constitution clearly states that the national language of the Philippines is Filipino while Spanish and Arabic shall be promoted on a voluntary and optional basis. For communications and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and English. Here, we see that reliance on constitutional politics and the observance of the letter of the law in the Philippines has proven to be a necessary but insufficient strategy in developing Philippine modernity. A large part of the weakness in Philippine politics is the lack of application

of the law. It would appear that the Philippines has for the longest time experienced all the worst vestiges of a democracy in transition. Clearly, merely having the political institutions and structures of democratic governance are not enough to achieve democracy and economic success. Therefore a large part of the problem is historically rooted in the politics of Philippine clientelism, an issue to which we now turn.

3-4   THE POLITICS OF CLIENTELISM

Clientelism refers to the nexus of relationships between patrons (often part of the minority bourgeois class) and clients (part of the majority lower, working class). As much as liberal scholars believe in the growing middle class in the Philippine islands, this is mainly a political fiction; the economic demographics illustrate clearly that this reality is many years away for most Filipinos. Life in Philippine society continues to be stratified between a rich and powerful 5% of the population who own most of the factors of production; another 8 to 10% who represent the bourgeoisie, and the rest of the 87% to 85% belong to the lower working class. Patrons constitute the population profile as givers of gifts, privileges, and makers of business and political connections. The Latin word for 'patron' is of course, *pater*, meaning 'father'. Therefore, the good patron is one who takes care of his clients. Similar parallels run in the Catholic religion (introduced to by the same colonialists who named the islands) and the belief in the guidance of patron saints. The influential but informal associations and connections in clientelism are usually the result of family ties and the old-boy network that go back generations; where old ones continue and evolve and diversify, new ones may also emerge between and among populations in the rural and urban centers.

This patron-client relationship is a key aspect of Filipino ideology, constituting their expectations and understanding of the workings of their society. It is a mindset that was most likely to have been established in the time of the Spanish colonial era, over the course of 350 years. Given the ethnographic record of Spanish colonialism, life under these Iberian conquerors was physiologically very demanding, with little to no occupational prospects for the colonized people as they have in the Philippines today. This was because the Spaniards were seeking spices and trade for the benefit of their own patrons in Spain, and much harshness was effected in the name of religion and the Spanish crown. Under Spanish rule, the system of laws and local political and cultural arrangements also represented an authoritarian system of punishment that provided little to no material reward and even less incentive for local native populations to thrive physically and mentally. The people therefore came to rely increasingly on informal associations in order to eke out a material living, while the Catholic religion provided for many a source of spiritual life and support and hope in a way that modernity promotes optimism and provides hope as the new and secular 'religion' today. Because the Philippines has for centuries been an agrarian country, the parceling out of arable land was crucial for anyone who intended to survive at a basic physiological level. The fixed amount of arable land varied in inverse proportion to the growing population making it less land for more peasants over a shorter period of time. A large peasant class of 'virtual Filipino slaves' would therefore spend most of their productive hours of their day toiling the land and battling the ravages of one of the world's most vulnerable

areas to natural disasters. The availability of arable land was thus not only limited but prone to natural disasters that would restrict the development of the inchoate agricultural and fishing industry.

Several factors may be discerned from the previous discussions which are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the sustainability of language and the development of language policy over time. These factors include: (1) a relatively stable economic and geographical region; (2) a pool of speakers that is sufficiently large for the language to be passed down from one generation to the next; (3) formal political support (through law and legal enshrinement) from state agencies, quasi-state agencies, cultural organizations, and religious organizations; and, (4) appreciation for the language in terms of its functional value and usefulness in coping with the challenges of modernity. The differentials within these conditions lead to the uneven development of languages and language policies designed to control or modify them. In other words, language policy in the Philippines cannot escape being affected by pre-existing local conditions such as patron-client relationships.

A politics of clientelism exists in the Philippines because of the persistent unequal distribution of power between and among Filipinos. For example, intermarriages between male Spaniards, and local Chinese women migrants created the Mestizo and helped produce a distinctive new culture. While this contributed to the weakening and destruction of the Spanish empire (paralleled by the rise of the Dutch and British empires), it also helped create interstitial spaces for the growth of a small but powerful educated native elite who became the successors to the Spanish power in the islands. When the United States of America bought the Philippines from Spain in 1898 for $800,000, because the Americans were poor at land reform, the bedrock of Philippine agrarian society, most of the land ended up in the hands of large landowners.

The Philippine case is therefore burdened by the continuing culture of patron-clientelism that cuts across all forms of social and economic class. The resilience of this culture of patron-client relationships can be seen over three distinct periods of foreign domination beginning with 350 years of Spanish rule, the American-Spanish War that led to the occupation by US forces driven by preceding political ideologies such as Manifest Destiny, the Monroe Doctrine and a clear desire to establish the 7,000 islands as the major US colony in Asia. The outbreak of World War II and the subsequent Pacific War brought in a third set of foreign occupiers, namely the Japanese Imperial Army. This was the first time in almost four centuries that an Asian conqueror would set foot on the islands named after King Phillip II of Spain. The Japanese interregnum was short-lived and the brevity of their occupation would result in virtually no traceable impact on language policy, language acquisition or subsequent policies on languages. The return of the Americans and of Douglas McArthur saw a return of emphasis on spoken and written English in law and government that continue till today. While there were three distinct periods of foreign occupation, the harsh treatment meted out by the Spanish and Japanese colonialists resulted not only in a quick and successive rejection of their politics but also of their culture and language by the local people.

Filipinos also appear to bond through cultural and other political means (such as a history of shared revolution against the Spanish) rather than through a dependence on a common language. So it seems that language policy in Philippine modernity has mainly the status of being mere pronouncements on paper, in the form of the political

rhetoric of constitutional conventions.

3-5   BALANCING MODERNITY WITH CLIENTELISM

The politics of clientelism makes the study of language policy in Philippine modernity interesting. It is interesting because the Philippines today as a democracy lags behind most of Southeast Asia in terms of economic development and productivity despite its democratic institutions, despite its connections and networks with North America and Europe. As we have seen, a major factor in the Philippines failure to successfully negotiate the challenges of modernity lies in its adherence to the politics of clientelism.

We mentioned in the introductory chapter that the shift from pre-modern to modern societies in Europe was characterized by the breaking down of the feudal system. One impetus for this breaking down was the growing belief in the value of rationality and the autonomy of individuals. Together, rationality and individual autonomy lead to an emphasis on individual merit and ability. Clientelism, in contrast, is fundamentally at odds with modernity because it is based on relationships of patronage. In other words, clientelism is a form of feudalism. Clientelism is associated with the past and modernity is seen to be the way of the future.

We can appreciate the difficulties posed by clientelism if we consider how it affects electoral behaviours. For example, grassroots support for the representatives who amended and reframed the Constitution in the *Kongreso* and *Senado* have their political bases arranged along informal, personal, patron-client ties that cut along native languages. The political support for a co-lingual speaker of any of the native languages is determined by the depth of personal relationships that have been established over the years between democratic elections, and the extent of consistent support for the ground in times of election victories. As a result, the relative merits of individual candidates to adequately deal with the major social, political and economic issues confronting the Philippines are lost. The formal democratic political system therefore acts as a function of the informal, personal politics of patron-clientelism.

3-6   INSTRUMENTALISM, DISPLACEMENT AND COMPLEMENTARITY

Displacement and complementarity refer to two of the three possible relationships between endogenous and Western elements in narratives of Asian modernity. In the case of Pilipino and Tagalog, the questions arises as to what extent these regional dialects are being displaced by the English language as the tool of modernity in the Philippines today. Unlike the introduction of the Spanish language, the functional value and use of English was not forced onto Filipinos but encouraged in terms of its communicative value as a 'neutral' language that would prevent the marginalization or accentuation of one of the indigenous languages over the other indigenous languages. Yet the apparent value of the English language as an agent and

facilitator of modernity belies its neutral basis because it represents the language of the upper middle class, and the power elite. Tollefson's analysis on language, class and power in the Philippines suggests that a high status is attributed to English as *the* language of education (Tollefson, 1991). But while this may be so, English cannot totally displace the indigenous languages since Senators and Congresspersons who wish to ensure uninterrupted and cordial relations with their political ground (i.e. their political constituents) cannot depend only on English. Instead, they must reach out and be seen to be reaching out to their people in the regional dialects. So while English remains as a vital link between the Senatorial and Congressional class of politicians in ensuring for example foreign direct investments to their constituencies and indeed, their constituents, it nevertheless makes the use of English a kind of political taboo when politicians try to connect with the political ground. Thus, although the use of English at the national level as the 'neutral language' of modernity and globalization seems politically acceptable, the sub-national and regional political map demands that English is not used.

In the context of Philippine modernity, language can be seen as a gatekeeper (English) in allowing access to social goods or as a repository of traditional values (Tagalog/Filipino). Thus, Tollefson notes:

> When language is a gatekeeper for employment and higher education, it may become a powerful tool for sustaining inequality and hegemony. One of the clearest examples is the Philippines, where English is associated with a rigid class structure characterized by extremes of wealth and poverty. (Tollefson, 1991:136)

The inequalities that Tollefson refers to are manifested primarily as the differences in wealth and power created by the politics of clientelism. Also, the extent to which language is seen as a tool of modernity indicates the degree of flexibility about the language itself – a kind of linguistic reflexivity – and the extent to which the language might be able to adapt to the demands of the education system, the local religion, or the global and local economy, as seen in the following quotation:

> the Philippine Government explicitly recognizes the importance of English in attracting foreign investment ... the Marcos government listed the English language competence of the Philippine labor force, along with low labor costs, as special reasons for foreign companies to invest in the Philippines. (Tollefson, 1991:139)

Thus, the language policy, as it currently stands, aims to promote a relationship of complementarity between English and Filipino, where the former serves the largely instrumentalist goal of ensuring international economic competitiveness and the latter serves to mark the national identity. However, it is certainly not the case that there have not been any significant resistance to the instrumental viability of the English language, since "the Philippine Left since the 1930s has consistently opposed [the] use of English and favored [the] use of Pilipino (Tagalog) with vernaculars also having tactical value" (Tollefson, 1991:147). For a small but vocal minority such as the Philippine Left, the relationship between English and Filipino is treated as one of displacement. The Left wants to see Filipino displacing English as (sole) the language of official communication. It then envisions the use of Filipino as complementing the use of a variety of vernaculars at the local level.

However, the potential of Filipino to function at the national level is limited

mainly to the Filipino-speaking minority. Because this group does not constitute a hegemonic influence over all other language-users in the Philippines, achieving complete acceptance of Filipino as *the* national language of the indigenous people of the Philippines remains a highly difficult task.

Presently, the state essentially serves to reproduce the important value of English as the medium of instruction over Filipino in science and mathematics. This reflects the state's acceptance of the greater importance of English (over Filipino) as the linguistic instrument of modernity in terms of educational development in general and language development in particular. But interestingly the use of language as an instrument of modernity is not limited to English. For example, Macapagal-Arroyo's administration has recently considered including Mandarin in the educational curriculum:

> the President ordered the Commission on Higher Education to study the inclusion of Mandarin as an optional language in the curriculum of colleges and universities. Macapagal said that as the most widely spoken language in the world, the Chinese language would *boost the Filipino's aptitude needed in trade relations, research, and person-to-person relations.* "The modern Filipino should not only learn how to write and speak Tagalog, English, and Filipino but should be adept as well in various languages of the world," Macapagal-Arroyo said in her speech at the Grand Salute to the Filipino Flag, a pre-Independence day celebration of the Chinese Filipino Business Club at the St. Stephen's High School in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Universities and colleges offer as an elective course foreign languages such as Spanish, Arabic, Nippongo, and French. Mandarin is spoken by billions of Chinese". (*The Philippine Inquirer*, June 11, 2001, *italics* added)

3-7   THE FAILURE OF THE BALANCING ACT IN PHILIPPINE MODERNITY

Relationships between English and the indigenous languages in the Philippines therefore involve the reconciliation of English as the agent of modernity and the sub-regional languages as the resistors to modernity which appear to be best understood in terms of their functional value and functional roles, the former being used as a means of modern communications with the global world while the latter as a way of facilitating inter-group and intra-ethnic and intra-regional conversation. The vernacular languages therefore continue to play a vital role in modernity.

The contrast between the two official languages, Filipino and English, was a policy move in the right direction as English continues to make significant and signal headway in terms of technological development and innovation across the post-industrial nation-states in late modernity. The 1987 constitution was drafted based on the previous ones to add a sense of continuity of ideological purpose of the 'Philippine people' and perhaps more importantly to signify the important changes that were being faced on a global scale by the Philippines and other Southeast Asian states. The new Constitution also wanted to include the kinds of normative changes that would prevent the resurgence of a Marcos-like character. This new version of the Philippine Constitution known as the '1987 Constitution' provides under Article 2 of its Declaration of Principles and State Policies that the Philippines is both a democracy and a republican state. This reflects the ideological faith of the people's representatives in the importance of democracy as a countervailing force against authoritarianism and

dictatorship, especially in the aftermath of the Marcos administration. Whether or not this is ultimately achieved is likely to be a long and arduous process given the patron-client relationships that began most significantly with the Spanish period and the subsequent failure of the American interregnum to solve the issue of land distribution.

Constitutional law is also a sign of modernity in the Philippines. This means that the status of English and Filipino are higher because they are enshrined as the two official languages in all areas of public policy. But this also leads to the legal justification for the displacement of the many other native indigenous languages across over 7000 islands and 8 major regional language groups. This is exemplified and contained in several sections of the Article 14 of the Constitution (Education, Science and Technology, Arts, Culture, and Sports Education). Section 1 for example dictates that, "the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all" while Section 6 states that, "The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages" and that, "Subject to provisions of law and as the Congress may deem appropriate, the Government shall take steps to initiate and sustain the use of Filipino as a medium of official communication and as language of instruction in the educational system". Not only does such a law limit the possibility of other languages acquiring a greater amount of state resources, it also reflects the degree of confidence that the minority of Tagalog speakers have over the nation that has shown prolonged domination since at least the time of the framers of the Commonwealth Constitution in 1936. The language of the river dwellers along the Pasig River may have humble origins but certainly have acquired and amassed greater fortune since then.[1] The statal displacement of one language by another in Philippine modernity does not mean that the other indigenous languages do not possess the same kind of patronage and influence over their Filipino clientele as the previous discussion on the languages of the Philippine presidents has shown. Therefore, the current official languages in the Philippines exist on a legally uneven basis – an indicator that such uneven amounts of political power will rise and fall, and wax and wane with the political fortunes of their linguistic patrons – with one eventually designed to take over the other. This is a form of neo-nationalistic sentiment where only a native language can become the 'national language'. This particular article of Philippine law suggests that a kind of legalistic displacement exists as a hyperbole of itself. Let us explain. By the convention of Article 14 of the 1987 Constitution, Filipino involves a process of legalistic displacement because it uses the constitution as a vehicle to displace the other native languages. Yet Filipino does not exist as an original, indigenous language but instead is built on the Tagalog, a Manila and South Central Luzon language and dialect. Filipino exists as a hyperbole of itself because it continues to evolve in addition to the plans for its further development and enrichment "on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages" according to Article 14.

3-8   CONCLUSION

We have argued in this chapter that language policy in the Philippines is

contingent on the politics of clientelism that cuts across language, class, ethnicity, religion, and regional affiliation in Philippine modernity. This is because only a minority of Philippine presidents has taken the initiative of making language policy a priority during their administrative terms of office. Another reason is that the presidents of the Philippines appear to be more powerful than they actually are. This means that the ceremonial function of Philippine presidents has been more important than the substantive function over time. When the titular role (the president as a symbolic leader of the people) is said to have greater political salience than the executive role (the president as the political leader) the president is less effective at direct governance and more effective indirectly as an influential but player. When compared to the US president, the situation is reversed: the executive role is seen to have greater political salience than the titular role. This is exemplified in the president as both a powerful domestic leader (national economic function) and a powerful world leader (international political function). The case tends to be in the opposite direction from the US presidential situation for most Philippine presidents primarily because of the weak Philippine economy and the different political culture of the Philippine people.

As also developed in the earlier sections on democracy, and clientelism, the formal democratic political structures of the Philippines exist as a function of multivariate informal, personal politics of patron-clientelism, the latter variable being the causal agent of the other. This means that politics in the Philippines tends to be based on personal relationships in which the linguistic ability and the rhetorical and oratorical skills of the potential politician, patron, and eventual policy-maker would be just as important if not more important than the meritorious achievements of the candidate such as a degree in law, medicine, linguistics, economics, language, or the social and political sciences. This is why Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada could become presidents. It also builds on the postcolonial American urban legend and belief that any American (read Filipino) can become the President of the United States (read the Philippines).

The post-War period from 1946-1965 has not shown any significant debates on language policy except within the ambit of education and the use of the official languages vis-à-vis the vernacular languages in the various regions. The period marked by the 1973 Marcos Constitution and the 1976 Amendments to the 1973 Constitution saw a movement away from the dyadic view of languages in terms of the vernacular/indigenous and foreign language divide to one that deepened the distinction between linguistic ideal (Filipino) and linguistic transition (Pilipino). However, the political culture of the Philippines would change dramatically from the authoritarianism of marshal law (1972-1983), the wild and wide-eyed democracy of the 1986 EDSA 'People's Power' movement, and the later 'People's Power II movement' towards the end of the last century. Although Marcos introduced the importance of the national language and included it into his political plans and agenda, his initially creative vision for the future of the Philippines in his first term as President vanquished in the light of his greed in capitalist modernity. Had Marcos remained on the straight and narrow political course, he would not have been in power for a sufficiently long enough time to have achieved his vision for a Filipino-speaking Philippines.

The failure of his regime was largely due to the level of political and systemic corruption and the assassination of Senator Aquino and Marcos' own loss of political

will – and the loss of political nerve – seen in his relinquishment of marshal law in 1983 and the release of political prisoners.

In the Philippines, there continues to be an emphasis on the traditional belief in local languages, culture and the Catholic religion, which sustain the predominance of the politics of clientelism and its uneven distribution of power. Given this situation, any national language such as 'Filipino' or foreign language such as 'English' is unlikely to displace the indigenous languages.

The acculturative functions of language in terms of cultural gatekeeping, linguistic instrumentalism, and linguistic displacement have entrenched the "personal is the political" character of Filipino modernity. Political relationships continue to remain entrenched in terms of individual and small group relationships that are built across time and space rather than based on the outcome of policy output from state agencies and other state-linked business enterprises. Alliances and allegiances are developed on a system of material rewards and punishment. This is especially the case with land ownership, where the politics of clientelism is arguably at its most potent. The failure of successive governments throughout the history of the Philippines to solve the land problem exacerbated the landed interests of the bourgeoisie and resulted in a disproportionate distribution of land. The failure of the American neocolonialists to implement an efficacious system of redistributing arable land worsened the unequal class structure and increased the personal and familial wealth of the minority while diminishing the opportunities for the majority of the people who continue to be modern day peasants, but with an occasional political voice through the mass media or the auspices of a wealthy patron. Unless significant attempts are made to deal with the ideology of clientelism – and any such attempt must take cognizance of the issue of land – language policy in Philippine modernity is doomed to be always caught up in the vagaries of localized political machinations.

3-9   NOTES

---

[1] This is a different condition from one where the claim is made that 'all speakers of Tagalog are wealthy', that would bear as much truth as the claim, 'all Americans are wealthy'.

CHAPTER 4

THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

CIA World Fact Book, **2005**

In this chapter on Singapore, we concentrate on showing how the language policy of Singapore reflects the narrative of Asian modernity as it is constructed by the Singapore government. This can be seen especially in the high degree of importance that the government gives to English. Singapore's emphasis on English language proficiency is mainly motivated by the desire to ensure that Singaporeans are economically competitive in the global marketplace. But in order to do this while still maintaining an Asian identity, the government has consistently encouraged Singaporeans to be bilingual in English and a mother tongue that is officially assigned to them on the basis of their father's ethnic identity. And given Singapore's ethnically diverse society, three major official mother tongues are recognized: Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. To appreciate the ethnic diversity of Singapore and how this has impacted on its language policy, we begin with some demographic facts.

Singapore is a linguistically and ethnically diverse country with a population of

about 3.2 million (2000 Census of Population). Officially, its racial composition is roughly 76.8% Chinese, 13.9% Malay, 7.9% Indian, while the remaining 1.4% are mainly Eurasians and Europeans, and Others.[1] Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's first prime minister, has been at the forefront of framing Singapore's language policy, most notably its policy on bilingualism and the use of Malay as the national language. These policies were continued under the Goh Chok Tong, the second prime minister, from 1990 to 2004. The country will continue to experience Lee Kuan Yew's policies under his eldest son, Lee Hsien Loong, who was sworn in as the country's third prime minister at the Istana on August 12, 2004. Thus, in contrast to the Philippines situation, where language policy was hampered by a number constitutional amendments leading to a lack of continuity and consistency, language policy in Singapore, despite the changes in political leadership, has benefited from each succeeding prime minister's willingness to continue the policies set in place by his predecessor. As we will see below, some modifications have obviously been made, but these have been relatively minor ones that leave the fundamentals of Singapore's language policy largely unscathed.

Singapore reluctantly gained its independence in 1965 after being ejected from the Federation of Malaysia, due to political differences between the Singapore government and the central government. A key political difference concerned the issue of whether ethnic Malays ought to be granted special rights. Singapore's position, as articulated by Lee Kuan Yew, was that the granting of special rights would do little to improve the status of the Malays and would, in fact, create more problems. In a speech made to the Federal Parliament on May 27, 1965, while Singapore was still a member of the Federation, Lee made the following points:

> This is a very dangerous thing, leading people to believe that if we just switch in 1967 from talking English in the courts, and in business, to speaking Malay, therefore the imbalance in social and economic development will disappear. It will not disappear. How does our talking Malay here or writing to the ministers of the federal government, both Malays and non-Malays, in Malay, how does that increase the production of the Malay farmers? ... In fact, our worry is not with Article 153, which gives special reservations to Malays for jobs and licences. I am saying it is inimical to the country. ... If we delude people into believing that they are poor because there are not Malay rights or because opposition members oppose Malay rights – where are we going to end up? You let people in the kampongs believe that they are poor because we don't speak Malay, because the government does not write in Malay, so he expects a miracle to take place in 1967. The moment we all start speaking Malay, he is going to have an uplift in the standard of living, and if it doesn't happen, what happens then?

It was this debate over the granting of special rights to the Malays that would be a key factor eventually leading to Singapore leaving the Federation just a few months later. But because Singapore has no natural resources of its own, its leaders had been convinced that economic survival was possible only as part of the Federation, and had worked hard to bring that about. Singapore's subsequent departure from the Federation meant that its leaders were faced, quite suddenly, with the task of building a nation out of a racially diverse population, and with developing the nation's economy without access to any natural resources.

Here we have a uniquely Singaporean narrative of Asian modernity. The basic elements of this narrative are as follows. Singapore is a society born out of crisis: its leaders never felt that the country could survive on its own as seen in the NHK interview with Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern, independent Singapore:

...the day we started was a very painful day for me, 9 August 1965, because all out of a sudden, we were out on our own and we had to make a living by ourselves. We were the administrative and the military hub of the British Empire in Southeast Asia. They had their naval base here. They had their troops here. They governed Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Borneo, Cocos Islands, Christmas Islands in the Indian Ocean from Singapore and that was our hinterland. So, when we were asked to leave Malaysia, we knew we were in for a very difficult time because they were going to bypass us and deal direct with the rest of the world. We also had at that time confrontation from Indonesia. So, the future looked very bleak, but we had to make a living for our people; at that time, it was just over two million people. So, it meant building up a new economy which, after many trials and errors, we succeeded in doing by two basic strategies. First, we made direct links with the industrial countries –- Europe, America, Japan –- and got heir companies, their MNCs to invest in Singapore, manufacture and then re-export to the world, primarily to the developed countries. Next, we made Singapore into a First World oasis in a Third World region. In other words, in a Third World region, we created an oasis with First World standards of security, health, efficiency, communications, transportation, education, convenience for all those from the First World to come here and set up their camp, their base, their headquarters from which to do business in the region. So, those two strategies created a new economy for Singapore. (Lee Kuan Yew, *NHK Interview*, December 18,1999, Singapore)

Separation from the Federation meant that Singapore had no choice but to find a way to survive, and to do so quickly. In other words, the pressures to perform economically became a real political challenge for the first generation of leaders since Malaysian politicians expected Singapore to fail within the first two years away from the Federation. Every single area of land had to be carefully developed to its functional optimum, as seen in the case of extending Paya Lebar airport or expanding the small British-made airbase at Changi in spite of the effects of the 1973 OPEC-induced oil crisis:

We seized our opportunities as they came along and maximised our economic, social and cultural space...(Lee Kuan Yew, "Live Chat", *Straits Times Interactive* September, 29, 2001)

And therefore, there was a need to learn from the mixed economy of the UK where Lee's student days were spent observing, organizing, and clarifying his own personal convictions about politics through the study of law at Cambridge. For example, Lee quickly came to the conclusion that the British decision to nationalize coal among other things, was a move in the wrong direction since it would lead, as he saw it, to a welfare state:

[The British] nationalized coal. There was a coal shortage. There were so many things. There were the railways. When you do that, you become the provider of a buffet. I mean, subsequently it's called the buffet syndrome. The food is there; take what you want; you pay a token price. You've paid your taxes? Well, this is for you. And the waste is incredible. If you watch the hotels that provide these buffets on Sunday, people take two or three times what they can consume, and it goes into the garbage can. So watching it fail, we started working on a series of preventive measures to make people think twice. We have to subsidize health; we have to subsidize education, housing. These are basics if you want people to perform effectively. But if you take health, for instance, what we did was we don't promise you same treatment, same choice of doctors or nurses or class of wards. So we have different relations of hospital treatment. If you go to A, we don't subsidize, you pay the costs. Then you have a room to yourself, air conditioning; you choose your doctor or your surgeon. You press the button, and a nurse will come up and give you water or your medication. If you choose B, then you may share four to a room and be subsidized up to about 50, 60 percent of the cost. If you choose C, then it's about eight or 10 to a room, and we pay -- the government will subsidize 90 percent of the cost. So you pay 10 percent, so don't go stay in if you don't have to. That way, we've kept a certain check on the waste. ("Learning from the British Mixed Economy", *Public Broadcast Service*, June 23, 2002)

Lee therefore emphasised self-sufficiency, where the role of the state was to provide individuals with skills needed for them to be economically independent. This emphasis on economic development meant a correspondingly strong emphasis on learning English. As Lee puts it:

> The deliberate stifling of a language which gives access to superior technology can be stifling beyond repair. Sometimes this is done not to elevate the status of the indigenous language, so much as to take away a supposed advantage a minority in the society is deemed to have, because that minority has already gained a greater competence in the foreign language. This can be most damaging. It is tantamount to blinding the next generation to the knowledge of the advanced countries. (Lee Kuan Yew, "The Twain Have Met", *Dillingham Lecture*, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, November, 11, 1970)

But because of the country's ethnic and linguistic diversity, the promotion of English must take into account the presence of Singapore's other languages as well as feelings of the speakers of those languages. To a large extent then, the language policy of Singapore is informed by the government's attitude towards the management of ethnic diversity and the need for rapid economic development in the face of absent natural resources. In fact, as Lee makes clear in a discussion of the effects of Singapore's separation from Malaysia, the Singapore government is extremely conscious of the need to deal carefully with matters of language and race:

> I think it is not possible for all of us, for any of us who have been through that period, not to have been tempered by bruising battles. We got to know people in the raw .. what they were fighting over, why they wanted power, how they exercised power on behalf of ethnic groups. Race, language, religion became dominant themes in all these issues. So all our lives since then we have been extremely conscious that we've got to make sure that this does not take place in Singapore. We must never allow race, language, religion to dominate our politics because it will bring disaster upon us. So Chinese chauvinism was just not on. We made a decision to move away from any such tendency. Deciding on English as the working language was the first decision we had to make. We left Malay as the national language. We left the national anthem alone. We allowed the [military] commands to carry on in Malay, but we moved over to English as the working language. It was the first move, one of the first fundamental decisions we made within a few weeks of separation because we've got to have a working language. Before that, we were working on Malay as the national language. After that, we had to link up with the outside world and we decided on English. (Han *et al.*, 1998:81-3)

Essentially, the language policy in Singapore is shaped by four main ideas. The first idea is the belief that linguistic diversity is an obstacle to nation-building. Of course, in this respect, the Singapore government is by no means unique in its embracing of a Herderian conception of the relationship between language and nation (e.g. Woolard, 1998:16). As noted by Blommaert and Verschueren (1991, 1998:194, *italics* in original), this falls under a dogma of "*homogenism*: a view of society in which differences are seen as dangerous and centrifugal and in which the 'best' society is suggested to be one without intergroup differences". This is a fairly general belief and one that has led, in many countries, to policies that attempt to reduce the number of languages spoken.

The second idea is that in order to maintain harmony among Singapore's ethnically diverse population, there must be respect and equal treatment accorded to each ethnic group. This is sometimes referred to as 'multiculturalism' or 'multiracialism', and has led to an official 'mother tongue' being assigned to each ethnic community, and thus mitigating any extremist tendencies towards having a single language for the entire nation. While scholars do not use these terms interchangeably,

laypersons often do so. Multiculturalism refers to the peaceful integrative effects of cultural communities rather than races or individual persons. On the other hand, multiracialism refers to the relatively peaceful co-existence of communities traditionally built along ethnic lines or racial sub-divisions, as is commonly found in many former British colonies. In this book, we follow Benjamin (1976), discussed below, in using 'multiracialism' because it reflects the political reality rather than the political ideal.

The success of multiracialism in Singapore has in part depended on the efficacy of Lee Kuan Yew's emphasis on bilingualism and the importance of the mother tongue in providing the cultural ballast for the Chinese, Malay, and Indian citizens. A modification under the current prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, is the reconsideration and relaxing of the level of mother tongue proficiency, especially for the study of Chinese (Mandarin) for Chinese Singaporeans. This is due to the government's acknowledgement that English is growing as the home language of many Chinese Singaporeans, making it difficult for them to learn Mandarin at the level that was originally demanded of them by the state.

The third idea acknowledges the important role played by English in the world economy. Especially since the country lacks natural resources such as oil or a sufficiently strong base for agricultural export, the government has focused on developing its people, molding them into a competent workforce attractive to foreign investors. The government has also tried to ensure that the people have the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the global marketplace. A crucial part of this strategy is the recognition that English language proficiency is necessary for economic development and for access to scientific and technological know-how. But along with this also comes the fear that exposure to English can lead Singaporeans to become increasingly 'Westernized' or 'decadent' or 'morally corrupt'. Thus, in the eyes of the government, knowledge of English must be balanced by knowledge of one's mother tongue. Knowledge of one's mother tongue, it is claimed, will provide Singaporeans with a link to their traditional cultures and values, and will thus serve to counter any undesirable effects of Westernization. This belief that English and the mother tongue play different roles such that the former serves a purely instrumentalist function while the latter has a cultural-symbolic value has been described as 'English-knowing bilingualism' (Pakir, 1992).

Underlying these three ideas is a fourth, which has been variously characterized as an 'ideology of survival' (Chan, 1971) or 'ideology of pragmatism' (Chan and Evers, 1973). This is an ideology where political discourse from the government to the people tends to take the form of a crisis narrative where pressing problems are highlighted as needing to be addressed. Specific policies are then introduced and justified as the most effective and rational solutions to these crises. This ideology is 'pragmatic' because the government, in principle, is willing to abandon more traditional values and attitudes if these are seen to be incompatible with the emphasis on rational problem-solving. Again, this has been spelt out by Lee Kuan Yew:

> We were not ideologues. We did not believe in theories as such. A theory is an attractive proposition intellectually. What we faced was a real problem of human beings looking for work, to be paid, to buy their food, their clothes, their homes and to bring their children up. So whatever the final outcome, we had the immediate responsibility of getting the economy going and getting jobs and incomes ... I'd read up the theories and maybe half-believed in them. But we were sufficiently practical and pragmatic enough not to be cluttered up and inhibited by theories. If a thing works,

let's work it, and that eventually evolved into the kind of economy that we have today. Our test was: Does it work? Does it bring benefits to the people? (Han *et al.*, 1998:109)

Accordingly, Pennycook says that this pragmatism tends to "define everything in terms of economic-technical rationality, rendering antithetical all arguments based on moral or ethical grounds. Thus all decisions are defined, initiated, defended or evaluated in terms of economic gain…" Pennycook (1994:241).

The emphasis on the 'ideology of pragmatism' can be seen as a specifically Singaporean manifestation of one of the hallmarks of modernity, the 'triumph of reason' (Touraine, 1995). However, unlike the Western conception of modernity, which 'asserted above all that rationalization required the destruction of so-called traditional social bonds, feelings, customs and beliefs…' (Touraine, 1995:10), the Singaporean notion of 'pragmatism' is much more modest. It does not demand the destruction of tradition, only that if tradition is to be defended, then it too must be seen to have an utilitarian value. Intersecting this pragmatism with language policy, we will see below, particularly in the discussions of the Speak Mandarin Campaign and the Speak Good English Movement, means that languages which are perceived to be obstacles to economic development can have no place in the Singaporean linguistic landscape; they must be eliminated.

In the rest of this chapter, we will flesh out in greater detail the language policy of Singapore, the various factors that have played a role in its formulation and implementation, some of the problems with the policy, and the responses it has engendered among the citizenry.

4-1   LANGUAGE POLICY IN SINGAPORE

Singapore's official language policy is stated in The Republic of Singapore Independence Act (1965):

(1)	Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English shall be the four official languages in Singapore.
(2)	The national language shall be the Malay language and shall be in the Roman script: Provided that –
(i)	no person shall be prohibited or prevented from using or from teaching or learning any other language; and
(ii)	nothing in this section shall prejudice the right of the Government to preserve and sustain the use and study of the language or any other community in Singapore. (Government Gazette Acts Supplement, no. 1965, p100).

As the official policy makes clear, there are four official languages in Singapore. But Malay, in addition to being an official language, is also the national language. As a national language, Malay has a primarily ceremonial function: the National Anthem is sung in Malay, and military commands are given in Malay. The status of Malay as a national language is primarily due to Singapore's past as a member of the Federation of Malaysia (Malay is the national language of the Federation), when the elevation of Malay to national language status was intended to facilitate Singapore's entry into the Federation. After leaving the Federation, Singapore's retention of Malay in its national function was, for many years, motivated by a belief that, in due course,

Singapore would rejoin the Federation. Another reason for retaining Malay as a national language is essentially diplomatic: Singapore is surrounded by Malay-Muslim countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei. Keeping Malay as a national language is intended to reassure the other countries that Singapore will not go the way of becoming a Chinese state.

The other point to note is that, aside from English, there is a very specific reason why there are exactly three official languages, Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil. This is because the Singapore government recognizes three major ethnic communities, and these three official languages are 'mother tongues' officially assigned to particular ethnic communities. Malay is the mother tongue for the Malay community, Mandarin for the Chinese community, and Tamil for the Indian community. There is no official mother tongue for the 'Others' category since this does not constitute a specific ethnic community. However, as we will see below, this raises interesting questions as to what the mother tongue is for the Eurasian community in Singapore.

Since the mother tongue is officially assigned, it does not always reflect the language actually spoken at home. The data in Table 4, based on the 2000 Census of Population of Singapore, show that, except for the Malays, the officially assigned mother tongue is often not necessarily the home language.

Table 4-1   Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home (in %)

Home Type	Language Frequency (percentage)				
	Chinese Dialects	English	Malay	Mandarin	Tamil
Chinese	30.7	23.9	-	45.1	-
Malay	-	7.9	91.6	-	-
Indian	-	35.6	-	-	42.9
Others	-	68.5	-	-	-

Note that the percentages in Table 4-1 do not total 100 percent because there are other languages that may or may not be spoken that have not been captured by the 2000 Census of Population of Singapore. For example, under the Others category, most Eurasians speak English (or only English) at home but this category also includes Europeans and other home types that were not considered statistically important by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

The issue of the 'mother tongue' thus impacts on various groups of Singaporeans in different ways. For most adult Singaporeans the question is essentially a matter of how willing one is to accept the assigned mother tongue as part of one's ethnic identity. There are few actual penalties involved in not being able to speak one's mother tongue. But for younger Singaporeans who are still schooling (and by implication, for the parents of these younger Singaporeans), the mother tongue issue is a matter with very real and potentially serious consequences. The education system uses English as the medium of instruction, but requires that from primary to secondary and junior college levels, students must take the mother tongue as a second language. This bilingual policy of learning English and the mother tongue is a fundamental aspect of Singapore's education system. Passage from one level to the next, including entry into

the local universities, depends not only on academic excellence, but also on relative proficiency in one's mother tongue. The importance attached to the bilingual policy can be seen from a statement made by the then Minister for Education, Tony Tan (1986):

> Our policy of bilingualism that each child should learn English and his mother tongue, I regard as a fundamental feature of our education system... Children must learn English so that they will have a window to the knowledge, technology and expertise of the modern world. They must know their mother tongues to enable them to know what makes us what we are.

In this statement, the government's position on the relationship between English and the mother tongues is clearly laid out. There is a division of labor where English functions as the language of modernity while the mother tongues are intended as cultural anchors that ground individuals to traditional values. By assigning English and the mother tongues to different domains, the language policy thus treats the relationship between them as one of complementarity. There is no competition between English and the mother tongues, at least as far as the functions performed are concerned. Knowledge of both English and the mother tongue is necessary for each Singaporean. An important implication of this bilingual policy, to be pursued in greater detail below, is that English is not acceptable as a mother tongue.

Since the mother tongue is officially assigned, there are at least three cases where interesting problems may arise. The first is when the child is of mixed parentage, for example, where the father is Malay and the mother Chinese. In such situations, the default is that the child is assigned the father's ethnicity, and consequently, the mother tongue associated with the father's ethnicity. Parents who are dissatisfied with the assignation can petition the schools to allow their child to take on the mother's mother tongue instead. The second case is when the child comes from a community whose mother tongue is neither Malay, Mandarin, nor Tamil. For example, a number of non-Tamil Indians have lobbied to have their own language classes teaching languages such as Bengali, Gujarati or Urdu (*The Straits Times*, April 30 1994). In such cases, the child is allowed, provided the resources for teaching and learning the language are available, to have the language treated as the second language for the purpose of school examinations. Note that willy-nilly the child must offer a second language. Not to do so would mean that the child is exempt from the bilingual requirements of the education system, and might lead to charges that the child is being given an unfair advantage over other children. The third case comes from the fact that an increasing number of Singaporeans come from households where English is spoken. For these Singaporeans, there is an increasing desire to claim that English is their mother tongue. But the government's distinction between English and the mother tongues implies that English can not be officially considered a mother tongue. As mentioned, we will pursue this issue in detail later.

As noted by Goh (1982:138), only Malay and Tamil are "true mother tongues"; the former is acquired as a native language by the Malays in the home while the latter is similarly acquired by "a majority of the Indians". This of course means that there are a number of other Indians for whom Tamil is not a "true mother tongue" (PuruShotam, 1998). In the case of Mandarin, the situation is such that until the late 1980s, the Chinese community was characterized by a large number of sub-groups speaking mutually unintelligible Chinese dialects. The government dealt with this by initiating the Speak Mandarin Campaign in 1979, and by the end of the decade, census figures

indicated that the campaign had been largely successful in its attempts to replace the other Chinese dialects with Mandarin. For example, the earlier 1990 census showed that the percentage of Chinese households where Mandarin is spoken rose from 13.1% in 1980 to 39% in 1990, while the percentage where other Chinese dialects are spoken dropped from 76.2% in 1980 to 48.2% in 1990. The Speak Mandarin Campaign is an important example of how the Singapore government goes about implementing its language policy, and over its relatively long history (the campaign is still ongoing), it has raised a number of important issues which reverberate beyond the Chinese community. We discuss the campaign in greater detail below.

4-2   LANGUAGE POLICY FORMULATION

We need to appreciate the various factors that have influenced the formulation of Singapore's language policy. Possibly the most important factor in this regard is that of multiracialism. As pointed out by Benjamin (1976) and discussed above, Singapore's ejection from Malaysia was essentially over issues concerning the management of ethnic relations. While the Malaysian government favoured a policy that guaranteed special privileges to ethnic Malays (the bumiputera policy), the Singapore government wanted to make sure that no specific ethnic group received special treatment. The recognition of Singapore's ethnic diversity, and the need to ensure equality of treatment for the various ethnic groups, is a fundamental feature of the government's thinking, and other issues relating to language and culture all stem from this awareness of ethnic diversity.

The government's extreme sensitivity to issues of ethnicity led, in the years following Singapore's independence, to the adoption of ethnic grouping as the primary means of classifying the population. However, in practice, given the limited availability of public resources and the need for administrative expedience, it is obviously simply impossible to accommodate all the different ethnic groups present in Singapore. This has meant that, in 'practical' terms, Singapore's multiracialism is limited to four official categories: Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Others. While the category 'Malay' is relatively unproblematic since the Malays form a fairly homogenous group, the application of 'Chinese' has required the government to convince members of the Chinese community, especially the older members, to downplay their dialect-based identities. A similar problem arises with the application of the category 'Indian' since what is referred to as the 'Indian community' is relatively heterogeneous, comprising at least Malayalee, Sikh, Sindhi, Sri Lankan, and Tamil communities.

Does multiracialism in Singapore only have one official position? The state seems at times to adopt a 3+1 model (Chinese, Malay, Indian plus Others), and at other times to adopt a 4+1 model (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian, and Others). The difference between the 3+1 and 4+1 models revolves around whether the Eurasians are to be absorbed under the category 'Others'. The government has at times said that treating the Eurasians as part of 'Others' is merely a matter of administrative expedience, on the grounds that there are too few Eurasians.

But while numerically small, the Eurasian community has made important contributions to the development of Singapore. For example, as pointed out by Hill and Lian (1995:103), a 1993 television series *Pioneers of Singapore* featured the Eurasians

for their role in the country's history. Hill and Lian also note that the EAS had recently been reactivated, an indication that the community is intent on combating its marginalized status (see also Rappa, 2000). Finally, as recognition for the important place the community has in Singapore society, George Yeo, then minister for Information and the Arts "was appointed as unofficial Cabinet representative for the Eurasians, in the absence of a Eurasian minister" (Hill and Lian 1995:104). This came at a time when the one and only Eurasian cabinet minister, Edward W. Barker retired from politics in 1988. The current government under Lee Hsien Loong has made some concerted efforts in welcoming more ethnic minorities such as Eurasians into Parliament either through the Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP) system or at least having their views represented at the highest levels of political office. Eurasians continue to be represented by cabinet minister George Yeo, who is known to have positive relations with this community. The refinements under PM Lee indicate the possibility of ensuring a place in the sun for Eurasians in Singaporean modernity rather than treating them as a transient population. The question of whether or not Eurasian school-going children will be allowed or encouraged to exercise a freedom of choice for the selection of their mother tongue remains open and unarticulated by Lee. The treatment of minority ethnic communities is closely watched by all other Singaporean communities as a marker of an increasingly, though not fully democratic, Singapore.

Thus, on other occasions, the government makes use of a 4+1 model. The 4+1 model may not appear as practical in terms of the gross population sizes of each ethnic community (particularly given the small size of the Eurasian community) but it is certainly a more accurate reflection of the political culture of Singapore. Evidence for the 4+1 model is seen in the establishment of four self-help groups: the Chinese development Assistance Council (CDAC), Mendaki, the Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA), and the Eurasian Association, Singapore (EAS).[2] These groups are all Institutions of Public Character (IPC) and possess their own financial investment arms. Each receives dollar-for-dollar matching from the government for funds that are raised. The Central Provident Fund Board also helps with the collection of dues from Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians in Singapore.

The four self-help groups conduct thousands of activities on their own and in conjunction with government ministries and especially the state-funded organization called the People's Association that ties in the work of the Residents' Committees (RC), the Citizen Consultative Committees (CCC), and the Community Center Management Committees (CCMC). In addition the four self-help groups complement the macro functions of the Community Development Divisions (CDD) which are run by the Community Development Councils (CDC). The CDCs are large voluntary organizations that receive funds directly from the government and disburse these funds across ethnic groups while also providing counselling and other services.

Evidence for the 4+1 model is also seen in terms of Singapore's National Registration Identity Card (NRIC) system under the Singapore Immigration and Registration department (SIR) for all citizens and permanent residents. In the NRIC, there are several categories: the official NRIC number, the race, dialect, address, blood type, religion, gender (the word 'sex' is used) and a barcode containing other bits of information such as education level and perhaps, military service vocations and records. The 'race' is either Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian, or Others.

   The Ministry of Education also keeps records of students classified under Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian, and Others; likewise, in the Ministry of Defence, military personnel are classified under the same 4+1 model of Chinese, Malay, Indian, Eurasian, and Others. The four distinct 'races' have appeared in National Day Parades and other national and sub-national ethnic showcases that are held year round. This is an important feature in the process of national-bonding and nation-building. Therefore it is clear that the 4+1 model more precisely reflects the historical, social, cultural and political reality of Singapore.[3]

   This vacillation between the 3+1 to the 4+1 model indicates the government's ambivalent stance towards the Eurasians – an ethnic community that is of historical importance but numerically too small to be accorded the same level of recognition as the other ethnic groups. The Eurasian community's desire to be treated on par with the other ethnic groups raises the question of what the mother tongue of the community might be. There have been calls by members of the community for English to be treated as its mother tongue, but, as we will see below, this is not really an option that the state can seriously consider since English must officially remain an ethnically neutral language.

   We also mentioned earlier that the government views linguistic diversity as a problem for nation-building. For example, in a speech made in 1978, the then acting minister for Culture, Ong Teng Cheong, suggested that:

> This diversity, for an outsider looking in, has its colourful and charming sides, but also its frustrating ones for the nation-builder, anxious to get on with his onerous and critical task. (Opening of the Lunar New Year Fair, 1978)

But because the government's commitment to multiracialism has led to an ethnic-based classification system, and to an assignation of official mother tongues for the three major ethnic groups, this has served to act as an important constraint on the government's belief that linguistic diversity is an obstacle to nation-building. To deal with this problem of linguistic diversity then, the government has designated English as the lingua franca for inter-ethnic communication while the mother tongues are intended to facilitate intra-ethnic communication. The choice of English was motivated by a number of factors. One factor was simply that the language for inter-ethnic communication should not be any of the three mother tongues since this could be seen as unduly privileging the language of a particular ethnic group. The other factor was the presence of English due to the country's colonial history as well as its value to providing access to science, technology and business. As a former British colony, Singapore had inherited a system of political administration that had made use of the English language. Also, there was already in place a small but significant number of Singaporeans who had either been involved in education or public-administration, and who were English-educated. And finally, the majority of Singapore's early leaders, not the least being Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore's first prime minister) had received their university education in Britain. Added to all this was the urgent need for rapid economic development in the light of Singapore's sudden departure from Malaysia. The government quickly realized that, without any natural resources to draw upon for export, Singapore's economic future lay in attracting heavy foreign investment and in educating the local population to provide an efficient workforce. All these factors made English not just a convenient colonial inheritance, they also made it a language crucial to the nation's future.

In sum, Singapore's short history has consisted of the need to facilitate rapid economic development where its people are its primary resources, and the need to manage its ethnically diverse population while fostering a sense of nationhood. To do this, its commitment to multiracialism, while important in maintaining racial harmony, has also required certain adjustments among its various ethnic groups so as to fit into the four-fold classificatory system that the government has constructed. Some of these adjustments have, not surprisingly, have led to various forms of protest or resistance from various members of the population. In the next section then, we focus on some of the ways in which the language policy of Singapore has been implemented by the government, as well as the kinds of responses that have greeted these implementations.

4-3   ANALYZING LANGUAGE POLICY IN SINGAPORE MODERNITY

We organize our discussion into five separate sub-sections. The first deals with language policy in the area of the media, including both print and broadcast media. The second deals with the bilingual policy in the education system. The third and fourth sections deal with specific language campaigns. We first discuss the Speak Mandarin Campaign in some detail. We then move on to discuss a more recent campaign, the Speak Good English Movement. In the final section, we deal with the question of the relationship between English and the mother tongues. But first we want to include this brief quotation from Lee Kuan Yew that summarizes the state's attitude which views diversity as problematic for nation-building:

> We had to start with a belief, an article of faith. We are a disparate people, different peoples. Although 75 per cent were Chinese, but they came from different parts of China – Guangdong, Fujian, further north. So, we did not have that close bond of blood relations and same languages or same dialects. We spoke different dialects. Then we have Malays and the Malays came from different parts of Southeast Asia, the Indians, too, from different parts of India and you can add a few others, Europeans and others. So, the first belief we must have is that somehow, we can submerge, embrace all these people into one national whole we share equally and fairly and we've been trying to do that ever since. It will take many more years before we become a nation like Japan because if you look at the Japanese, I mean, one homogenous people, same race, same language, same culture, same religion. Here, we have different races, different histories, different languages, different religions. But we are now sharing one common language and one common school education and for the men, one common military experience in National Service. So, gradually, we find common denominators. (*NHK interview*, December 18, 1999)

4-3-1   *Media*

For many years the media in Singapore have been strictly controlled by the government. In recent times, though, the government has embarked on a process of privatization due mainly to regional and international competition. This is because for the local media to continue attracting an audience/readership, it needs to be perceived as less of a government mouthpiece. However, government ownership in both local print and broadcast media means that certain official policies still continue to be observed. In the case of language, it is instructive to note the kinds of languages used and their distribution. Where the print media is concerned, there are four major local newspapers, one for each of the four official languages: English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. Around the 1970s, while the circulation for the Chinese, English and Malay newspapers

increased, that of Tamil decreased and "no Tamil-medium newspapers of significant size are published in Singapore today" (Riney, 1998:16). The decrease in Tamil readership points to a problem for the Indian community, and by implication, for the status of Tamil as an official mother tongue. As we will see below, there are concerns about how the language can be made relevant to the community.

What is also interesting is that in the past few years, a number of local tabloids have also sprung up, and these are all in English. This points to the fact that unlike the major newspapers, the tabloids are more subject to the demands of the market, and it would appear that the demand is coming from a readership relatively proficient in English. But while this seems to indicate that a growing number of Singaporeans are increasingly comfortable with English, we need to ask: What kind of English are they really comfortable with? This is because the kind of English found in the tabloids is generally simpler and more colloquial than that found in the major local newspaper.

Where the government is concerned, the level of English needs to be improved. More specifically, the government fears that Singaporeans are actually too comfortable with a local variety of English called Singlish, and it is concerned about the need to be vigilant in ensuring that standards of English do not deteriorate. The official response has been the introduction of a campaign called the Speak Good English Movement, ostensibly aimed at improving the level of English. The campaign is discussed below.

In the case of the broadcast media, English, not surprising continues to be the dominant language with a number of channels airing programs exclusively in English. Next in line is Mandarin, which has two channels devoted to Mandarin programs. There are no channels which telecast programs in the other Chinese dialects since one measure adopted as part of the Speak Mandarin Campaign was the banning of such programs. The other official languages, Malay and Tamil, are given much more limited airtime because of their relatively small audience base. Tamil programs share a single channel with children's programs; Malay programs only begin running from late afternoon onwards. Most Singapore citizens however appreciate and accept the influence of market forces where the media are concerned. Thus, there is little concern about Malay or Tamil programs not being given as much airtime as English ones.

4-3-2   *Education*

There is greater concern, however, in the case of education. Singapore's education system is firmly committed to a policy of English-knowing bilingualism, where students are expected to learn English as well as their mother tongue, the latter being taught as a second language. There are 10 Special Assistance Programme (SAP) schools where all languages are taught at the first language level, but it is acknowledged that this is only suitable for a minority elite. For the majority, it is accepted that even having to learn the mother tongue as a second language already poses problems.

The government's implementation of the bilingual policy in the school system has taken a form where admission to the higher levels of education is dependent, in part, on how well the student does in the second language examinations. Children in the first category continue with English and one of the second languages. Children in the second category are required to take another two years of primary education before they are

allowed to sit for the PSLE, the argument being that the extra time is needed for them to become 'reasonably proficient' in two languages. Children in the third category are provided with eight years of monolingual education and are generally expected to be channeled into the vocational institutes. While it is in principle possible for a child to move from one category to another, the actual chances of doing so are extremely low. And most parents are naturally concerned that their children's futures are being decided at such an early age, with little or no chance for redemption.

There have also been cases where children have been penalized for not doing well in the second language, and are thus unable to gain admission to either the secondary schools, junior colleges or the universities despite attaining respectable grades in the other subjects. In such cases, parents may decide at some point to take their children out of the local system and send them to study overseas. In other cases, parents have acted to pre-empt the situation by giving their children an education that is entirely foreign-based. In more drastic situations, entire families have left Singapore, migrating overseas in search of an education system that is perceived to be less demanding on the children. These options are often financially demanding.

For families where an overseas education is not affordable, the most viable option is for the children to be given private tuition in the second language. But needless to say, concerns about the bilingual policy in the school system continue to be voiced and in fact, the government has had to recently simplify the Chinese language syllabus further in order to address parental concerns over their children's learning difficulties. For example, one consequence of emphasizing the value of English is that more and more Chinese Singaporeans are beginning to come from homes where English is the spoken language. In fact, the number of Chinese students from English-speaking homes has risen from about 17% in 1985 to almost 50% in 2004 so that English has now overtaken Mandarin as "the primary language used in homes of Primary 1 Chinese pupils" (Ministry of Education press release, January 9, 2004). This has forced the government to acknowledge that a significant number of Chinese Singaporeans actually have great difficulty coping with Mandarin despite the fact that it is supposed to be their mother tongue. Consequently, in early 2004, the Ministry of Education (press release 9 January 2004) announced a number of changes to the mother tongue policy. Especially interesting was (i) the introduction of a 'B' syllabus to cater to students with learning difficulties, and (ii) the willingness to exempt Singaporeans who were re-entering the education system after having lived abroad for some time. This points to a continuing tension between, on one hand, the government's desire that Singaporeans be bilingual in both English and their official mother tongue, while acknowledging that this is a goal that many Singaporeans find extremely difficult to attain. Thus, while the government continues to make use of educational incentives and penalties as motivation for learning a second language, it is also trying to demonstrate its awareness of a widespread parental concern that children are being penalized for a lack of linguistic proficiency rather than intellectual inadequacy.

4-3-3   *The Speak Mandarin Campaign*

As we noted earlier, the government of Singapore has always considered linguistic diversity to be an obstacle to nation-building. While the commitment to multiracialism

prevents the imposition of a single language on the three major ethnic communities, the government has considered it important that internal to each ethnic community at least, a single mother tongue exists to ensure that each community is given a sense of unity. The Chinese community, in this regard, posed a major challenge because it was, and still is, the largest ethnic community in Singapore, and it also was characterized by the presence of a large number of Chinese dialects.

We earlier made reference to a 1978 speech by Ong Teng Cheong on the 'frustrations' that linguistic diversity presents for the nation-builder. In that same speech, Ong has this to say about linguistic diversity and the Chinese community:

> The diversity is characteristic of the Chinese community itself, where the speaking of dialects exerts considerable cultural influence on the habits, customs and lifestyles of both the young and old. Although Chinese dialect groups share a common written script, it is often difficult for one dialect group to understand another through the spoken word. As a result, the Chinese communities have not been able to communicate among themselves as effectively as they should. For example, a Cantonese will find it difficult to make himself understood by a Teochew if both only know their respective dialects.

In this extract, we see the seeds of the Speak Mandarin Campaign being planted. The existence of so many mutually unintelligible dialects is problematized. It is a problem internal to the Chinese community since it doesn't allow the Chinese to communicate amongst themselves, and it is also a problem in the larger context of nation-building as well since a fragmented ethnic community will stand in the way of national unity. Consequently, in 1979, a year after Ong's speech, the Speak Mandarin Campaign was launched. The goal of the campaign was to encourage the greater use of Mandarin while discouraging the use of the other Chinese dialects. Every year since then, an annual ceremony is held to launch the campaign anew with government ministers reviewing the progress of the campaign and reiterating the campaign's goals.

At present, the campaign is still ongoing though as Bokhorst-Heng (1998:227) notes, some of the campaign's committee members have suggested that "the campaign might die off together with the aging dialect-speaking generation".

Essentially, the campaign pits Mandarin against the other dialects. And in addition to claiming that Mandarin can be a unifying force for the Chinese community while the dialects are a source of divisiveness, the government has also claimed that dialects are 'vulgar' and indicate a lack of education while Mandarin is refined. Related to this is the claim that dialects have no cultural value. For example, dialect speakers are claimed to be less courteous than Mandarin speakers. Also, dialects are supposedly more likely to be associated with swear words while in Mandarin, swear words are less common given its refined nature (Bokhorst-Heng, 1999:250-1).

In the campaign's discourse, the government often places responsibility on parents for the language spoken by their children, and links this responsibility ultimately to the children's educational outcomes. Parents are told that they face a choice between Mandarin and dialect, and have to make a decision that will impact on their children's education. To drive the message home, the campaign's discourse makes the following claims:

- Parents are responsible for what language is spoken at home.
- The child's learning load is lessened if there is a match between the home language and the language taught at school.

- There is a need to lessen this load especially where languages are concerned so that children do not learn more languages than is necessary.

These points are captured in a 1978 speech by Lee Kuan Yew, then prime minister:

> But, in fact, for most Chinese students, bilingualism in school means trilingualism in practice. Ninety per cent of parents have chosen the English stream schools. Chinese students spend thirty to forty per cent of instruction time learning or being taught in Mandarin.... At home, mothers speak to their children in one out of over a dozen Chinese dialects... The average student finds it difficult to master three languages – dialect, Mandarin and English...Why weigh your child down with three languages?

Given the above, parents who willfully choose to create a home environment where the language spoken does not match the language taught at school are deliberately disadvantaging their children.

Aside from addressing parents, the campaign has also been highly intensive in ensuring that the general public is aware of the importance of speaking Mandarin in place of dialects. As noted by Bokhorst-Heng:

> (b)anners, posters, and stickers with campaign slogans encouraging the Chinese to speak Mandarin are displayed in public places. T-shirts with the same slogans are worn by students. Advertisements supporting the campaign appear on television, radio and in the cinemas. Numerous activities have been generated in support of the campaign including Mandarin classes (even via telephone and the Internet) and various contests and workshops. No other campaign has seen such a sustained and extensive presence in Singapore. (Bokhorst-Heng, 1999:244)

Perhaps the most drastic measure taken as part of the Speak Mandarin Campaign was the banning of the other Chinese dialects from the media. With the ban in place, radio and television programs that made use of Cantonese or Hokkien, for example, were no longer aired. Dialect-speaking Singaporeans who used to enjoy Cantonese drama serials from Hong Kong had to get used to having these programs dubbed in Mandarin. Perhaps a more serious consequence of the replacement of the other dialects with Mandarin was the creation of a communication gap between the older and younger generation so that, in effect, grandparents, in particular, had difficulty communicating with their grandchildren. As Pakir points out:

> The attempt to make Chinese Singaporeans Mandarin-speaking in such a short span of time had another unexpected effect. The carpet has been pulled out under the feet of many 'dialect'-speaking Chinese who may want to impart traditional Chinese values to their children or grandchildren in languages which have lost status in the country. In the past, traditional Chinese values were handed down from 'dialect'-speaking parents to their children. The lesson to be taken is that the school or official languages which were not the home languages for the older generations have not been successful in imparting traditional values to their learners. It is significant that the Malay-speaking and the Tamil-speaking were observed to have kept their customs and ways amidst change in linguistic habits, and have been slower to change. (Pakir, 1993:83)

But while the official policy was aimed at the elimination of dialects, the fact that a number of older Singaporeans still clung to dialects, perhaps because they found great difficulty in learning Mandarin, had two specific consequences. The first consequence is in the political arena. Members of the opposition who continued using dialects in the election campaigns had an easier time reaching the older voters. And in

1991, a member of one of the opposition parties, Low Thia Khiang, was elected into parliament partly on the basis of his use of the Teochew dialect to communicate with the grassroots. The ruling party has had to react to this by occasionally using dialects themselves during elections, thus, in some sense, according dialects a continued, though unofficial recognition.

The second consequence, rather surprisingly, comes from the younger generation of Chinese Singaporeans. On 10 June 2001, a local columnist wrote a piece lamenting the demise of dialects in Singapore, especially among the younger generation. The following week the newspaper reported that the column had apparently struck a chord, and published a number of responses from readers (*The Straits Times*, *Life!* 16 June 2001). One reader wrote:

> Yes, I agree that dialects are important. They hold the key to our past. We are not simply Chinese. We are Hokkiens, Teochews, Hainanese, Kheks and Cantonese with roots in some specific regions of China and with long and rich histories which we need to discover and honour.

Another reader said that:

> Growing up in a generation where English and Mandarin are the main languages spoken at home, I lament that dialects are becoming less frequently used in our everyday lives.... Nevertheless, the dialects are a part of my heritage, akin to the name and race I inherited from my parents, and I want to pass them on to my children. Therefore, I try whatever way I can to re-learn and practise my parents' dialects.

And from a third reader:

> As a 21-year-old Hokkien, I have often felt sad when I was unable to express myself clearly to my grandparents. My grandmother is shrewd and lively, and thank goodness she understands Mandarin or we would barely be able to communicate. This is especially true for the generation before her, my great-grandparents, whom I can only nod painfully to as I struggle to talk about the most basic events in my life when they ask about them...I also see a trend of youngsters wanting to learn other dialects. In Xiamen and Taipei, Cantopop is played and sung with gusto. Many of my friends have also wished Hong Kong TVB imports are shown in dual sound, not because we understand Cantonese extremely well but because it is just more entertaining in its original form. Thus, I believe there is a lively interest in dialects among young and old...Thank you again for your article. I never knew how strongly I felt about this until I realised I could barely have a conversation with my elders, a frustrating feeling and surely, a pertinent concern if we are to build family harmony across generations.

Chinese dialects also currently continue to be widely used in church services in Singapore.[4] Examples include the Foochow Methodist Church and the Hakka Methodist Church. These churches almost always also have services in English and Mandarin, which tend to be much better attended than the services conducted in dialects. Thus, the persistent use of dialects is due to the presence of older Singaporeans in the congregation. Whether such dialect services will continue in the long term once these older Singaporeans pass on remains to be seen. Younger Singaporeans involved in church activities also make use of dialects, probably in communicating with the older dialect-speaking members of their congregation, and this could possibly help keep the dialects alive. Hofman (1966:128) notes a similar situation in his discussion of the use of language maintenance in parishes in America, observing that this is typically justified in connection "with appropriate activities for older members." However, the language may easily be discontinued if it is felt to no longer serve the needs of the parish (Hofman 1966:131).

These examples indicate that despite the government's success in promoting the use of Mandarin, there is still (at present) at the grassroots level a strong sense of attachment to the other Chinese dialects. And certainly this seems to contradict the government's claim that dialects are vulgar or lacking in any cultural value. And if this sense of attachment is also prevalent among the younger generation, as the letters seem to suggest, then despite the belief of some of the campaign's committee members, there will still a need for the campaign even with the passing of the aging dialect-speaking generation. Thus, it appears that the government's highly instrumentalist attitude toward the dialects is not completely shared by the people. While most Singaporeans agree that the presence of dialects may work against the goal of unifying the Chinese community, they are still reluctant to completely lose touch with their dialect background. For these Singaporeans, it seems difficult to simply consider themselves simply Chinese without specifically thinking of themselves as either Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, and so on. The dialects lend detail to an otherwise general ethnic classification. Such attachments to features of one's heritage will continue to pose a challenge to Singapore's attempts to overcome fragmentation in the Chinese community, particularly since by their very nature, they appear to be at odds with the modernist discourse which emphasizes rationality and instrumentality.

4-3-4   *The Speak Good English Movement*

In April 2000, the Singapore government launched the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM). Following along the lines of the Speak Mandarin Campaign, the SGEM was to also be an annual campaign. The term 'movement', however, was used instead of 'campaign' so that the SGEM would hopefully be seen more as having come more from the grassroots rather than being imposed from above by the government.

The SGEM was sparked off by the government's concern that the local variety of English, referred to as Singlish, was becoming increasingly popular. The catalyst for this was the success of the local situation comedy, *Phua Chu Kang*, named after the lead character, who speaks primarily in Singlish. Because the government has always considered English crucial to Singapore's economic success, especially in providing Singaporeans with the ability to access scientific and technological knowledge, and in allowing them to better compete globally, the concern was that the popularity of Singlish would lead to a decline in the standard of English. The fear was that as Singaporeans became more comfortable with Singlish, they would be unable to speak 'proper' English, making it impossible for them to understand 'foreigners' and perhaps more crucially, making it impossible for 'foreigners' to understand them. The slogan for the SGEM is 'Speak well, be understood'. And as with the Speak Mandarin Campaign, the SGEM also makes use of posters, advertisements and contests on television, radio and telephone and the Internet. *The Financial Times* (8 July 2000), in an article concerning the state of English in Singapore, reported the following two comments. The first is from Goh Chok Tong, Singapore's second prime minister:

> The fact that we use English gives us a big advantage over our competitors. If we carry on using Singlish, the logical final outcome is that we, too, will develop our own type of pidgin English, spoken only by 3m Singaporeans, which the rest of the world will find quaint but incomprehensible. We are already half way there. Do we want to go all the way?

The second is from Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's first prime minister:

> Do not popularise Singlish. Singlish is a handicap we must not wish on Singaporeans.

With the two most powerful men in Singapore coming out strongly against Singlish, the campaign has, not surprisingly, focused more on trying to eliminate the use of Singlish than on trying to promote the use of 'good' English. These two goals need to be carefully distinguished. There is no contradiction in promoting 'good' (i.e. Standard English) for international communication while allowing the use of Singlish for more informal, local, and private domains. A strategy that allows for Singlish to co-exist alongside a more standard variety is one that recognizes the existence of multiple varieties of English (Englishes) and treats the acquisition of different varieties as adding to a linguistic repertoire. And in fact, a number of studies have shown that if the goal is for students to learn a more standard variety, it is pedagogically useful to treat the variety that they already have as an educational resource that can aid in learning the standard (Wheeler 1999). But the government instead sees the relation between Singlish and a more standard variety as one of displacement. This displacement relation sees the acquisition of a new variety as necessarily requiring the elimination of some other variety. Co-existence is not an option, and hence there is no conception that different varieties can be treated as contributing to a wider linguistic repertoire. Educationally, this means that there is no place for Singlish in the classroom, and it is therefore impossible to even entertain the possibility that it might be a resource.

The government's strong stand against Singlish has become an issue of some concern among various local writers as well. A number of local playwrights and novelists have, for some time now, made use of Singlish as a means of representing with greater authenticity the kind of interactions that take place among Singaporeans. In various public forums, members of the arts community have defended the right to use Singlish in their works. But this concern is mitigated by two factors. One, the current campaign is not targeted at the arts community specifically, and two, by extension, the campaign has not pinpointed any specific local play or novel as being guilty of popularizing Singlish. It is possible, however, that if the campaign starts to pay more attention to local literature, then the arts community will be forced into taking a stronger stand on the matter.

While recognizing that there are strong local attachments to Singlish, the government has made it clear that the SGEM is targeted at Singaporeans who have very limited competence, whose repertoire is restricted to Singlish, and who, unlike their better educated counterparts, are unable to code-switch between Singlish and a more standard variety. According to the government, Singaporeans who have the 'luxury' of being able to code-switch should not make the mistake of championing a variety of English that would effectively ruin their fellow Singaporeans' chances of economic betterment. While there is a grain of truth in this argument, this does not address the fact, as mentioned above, that a strategy that treats English as a resource would be more effective in getting Singaporeans to learn the standard variety.

Both the Speak Mandarin Campaign and the Speak Good English Movement are clear indicators of the pragmatism that is characteristic of the Singapore government. Both campaigns present a problem that needs to be addressed, and both offer a solution to that problem. For the former, the problem is that of fragmentation within the Chinese community while for the latter, the problem is the popularity of

Singlish and the fear that this would lead to a decline in standards of English. For the former, the solution is the promotion of Mandarin; for the latter, the solution lies in getting Singaporeans to speak 'good' English.

In both cases, we observe that the solution requires a 'linguistic sacrifice', one which results in the elimination of dialects in the Speak Mandarin Campaign and the elimination of Singlish in the Speak Good English Movement. It is recognized that both dialects and Singlish hold some kind of emotional attachment for Singaporeans, but in the interests of ethnic unity (among the Chinese) and economic progress, hard-headed rationality must prevail.

We saw that, in the case of the Speak Mandarin Campaign, the attempt to eliminate dialects was met with resistance by both younger and older Chinese Singaporeans who felt that their dialect heritage was a crucial part of their ethnic identity. In the case of the Speak Good English Movement, there is also a degree of resistance to the government's attempts to discourage the use of Singlish. However, it would seem that attempts to champion the use of Singlish are much less robust than attempts to support the use of dialects. There are number of reasons for this. For one, there is no denying that Singlish carries little or no prestige. Couple this with the fact that English has a long tradition of prescriptivism (Milroy and Milroy 1999) and that English in Singapore, in particular, has had a long tradition of exonormativity (primarily oriented towards British English but increasingly towards American English nowadays), we can understand why there is little support for a local variety of English. Also, local champions of Singlish tend to be well-educated Singaporeans who can code-switch between Singlish and Standard English, and the government has pre-empted their resistance by suggesting that their defence of Singlish penalizes lesser-educated individuals who speak only Singlish, and who do not have the 'luxury' of being able to code-switch.

In comparison with attitudes toward dialects, English in Singapore tends to be seen in much more instrumental terms. It is primarily seen as the language which allows access to Western science and technology, and as the language for inter-ethnic as well as international communication. It is only recently that, for some Singaporeans, English might even be considered a mother tongue (see below). As such, there is little large-scale support for a local variety, and especially if that local variety is seen to be at odds with the project of modernity, there is likely to be little resistance to official attempts at eliminating Singlish.

4-3-5 *English and Other Mother Tongues*

Officially, the fundamental relationship between English and the mother tongues in Singapore is one of a division of labour. English is the language for inter-ethnic communication, for accessing scientific and technological knowledge, and for economic development. The mother tongues serve the purpose of intra-ethnic communication, and keep Singaporeans in touch with their 'cultural roots' and 'traditional values'. Singapore's English-knowing bilingualism policy is intended to ensure that Singaporeans grow up knowing both English and their mother tongue, and as a result, are able to contribute productively to Singapore's economic growth, as well as being grounded in their cultural heritage. For example, the introduction of a school

subject in 1974, Education for Living, was justified on the following grounds:

> ... the rationale for studying Education for Living in the mother tongue is that it is hoped that
> pupils will be able to grasp their own cultural and historical heritage better through the use of their
> own language. Asian moral and social values, and attitudes, such as closeness in family ties, thrift,
> filial duties and loyalty, can be conveyed and understood better in Asian languages and the pupils
> are expected to become more aware of their cultural roots and to foster a stronger sense of
> nationhood if they know their own language. (Gopinathan, 1976:78)

The mother tongues are frequently described as providing 'cultural ballast', that is, as providing a counter-balance to the unacceptable values that might be spread by the use of English since the "fads and fetishes, the disorders and aberrations of contemporary Western society" were not for Singapore (Gopinathan, 1976:77). This is a complementarity-based approach, one that sees no incompatibility in the co-existence of the mother tongues and English. Rather, they are seen as complementing each other. Structurally, we can think of this policy as putting English and the mother tongues into separate boxes, serving separate functions. The interesting question to ask then is this: Can English 'cross over' into the box reserved for the mother tongues, and vice versa? If English is allowed to cross over, this would mean that it can be considered a mother tongue. If the mother tongues cross over into the box occupied by English, then they must be accorded economic value, in addition to being links to a cultural heritage. Dealing with this question, as we will see, creates a number of problems for the language policy of Singapore.

We already saw from the discussion of the Speak Good English Movement that the development of a local variety of English called Singlish is not acceptable. But the question of whether English can be a mother tongue casts a slightly different light on things (Wee, 2002). The issue is more general than Singlish; it is a question of whether any variety of English is ever acceptable as a mother tongue. This was raised in a letter written by a member of the public to a local newspaper:

> [English is] my "mother tongue" as a Singaporean, and the "mother tongue" of a not entirely
> negligible number of other Singaporeans. Indeed, a distinguished member of the group, now
> deceased, happens to have been a past President of the Republic of Singapore. (The Straits Times,
> April 26, 1994)

The letter-writer identifies himself as Max Le Blond, whose name identifies him as a Eurasian. And there is no doubt that he was referring to Benjamin Sheares, a Eurasian who was formerly president of Singapore. The reference to the fact that a member of the Eurasian community had served as a president of Singapore can be seen as intending to underscore the community's contribution to the nation. We mentioned earlier that the community had played an important role in Singapore's history and this contribution is recognized by the Singapore government. But the absorption of the community under the category 'Others' has been a sensitive point. And a consequence of this absorption is that there is no official mother tongue for the Eurasians. The goal of Le Blond's letter is to argue that English should be the mother tongue accorded in the case of the Eurasians.

A few days later, another letter appeared, written by an M. De Souza, also a Eurasian. This letter voiced support for the first, and continued to make the following point:

> There are many like myself in Singapore, whose children are compelled to study a second language which is not their mother tongue. Our children are therefore handicapped somewhat in comparison to other children whose mother tongue is that of the second language that they are studying. (*The Straits Times*, May 2, 1994)

As far as we can tell, the government's response to this issue has been one of silence. And this silence can be read as an indication that English is not acceptable as a mother tongue for the Eurasians. In practical terms, this has proven an effective strategy since the lack of official response seems to have allowed the issue to die out (for the time being at least). But we want to explore possible reasons why English cannot be a mother tongue for the Eurasians.

The first reason, we suggest, has to do with the government's view of English as the vehicle for unacceptable Western values. If the Eurasians were allowed to have English as the mother tongue, what other language would act as a 'cultural ballast' to English? Either the Eurasians would have to be seen as being completely Westernized or the possibility that English can be a vehicle for more traditionally Asian values must be allowed. Neither of these seems to be acceptable. The first option is obviously incompatible with building a sense of national unity while the second option means that no 'cultural ballast' is needed at all. The point is put across succinctly by Lee Kuan Yew in his 1984 *Speak Mandarin Campaign Speech*:

> One abiding reason why we have to persist in bilingualism is that English will not be emotionally acceptable as our mother tongue. To have no emotionally acceptable language as our mother tongue is to be emotionally crippled....Mandarin is emotionally acceptable as our mother tongue...It reminds us that we are part of an ancient civilisation with an unbroken history of over 5,000 years. This is a deep and strong psychic force, one that gives confidence to a people to face up to and overcome great changes and challenges.

The second and perhaps more important reason is that having English as a mother tongue might open up a Pandora's Box of issues that go beyond the Eurasian community. For example, a growing number of Malay, Indian and Chinese Singaporeans have English as a household language (Pakir, 1993:75-77), and there is a possibility that this might lead to these other Singaporeans wanting to have English as their mother tongue too. This would pose a fundamental threat to the official relationship between English and the mother tongues, not to mention the policy of English-knowing bilingualism.

The third reason comes from the government's concern that there is already a social (and perhaps cultural) division between those Singaporeans who are more comfortable with English and those who are not. Typically, the discussion has focused on Chinese Singaporeans, due no doubt to the prominence of the Speak Mandarin Campaign, and opposition is often characterized as being between 'English educated' and 'Chinese educated' Singaporeans. In fact, while dialects have remained a consistent concern for the Speak Mandarin Campaign, in recent years the campaign has additionally tried to address the English-Mandarin divide by suggesting that without Mandarin, the English educated Chinese is 'deculturalized' (Bokhorst-Heng, 1999:253). The English educated are perceived to be more economically successful and Westernized, while the Chinese educated, though less successful, are seen as being truer to their cultural roots. While both groups do identify themselves as ethnically Chinese, they place different emphases on what is crucial to that identity. Of interest is that fact that the Chinese educated tend to attach more importance to language while the English

educated tend to emphasize other factors such as descent, surname, or customs and beliefs (Wee, 1990). That this not a dead issue can be seen in the current concern over the predominance of English names among Chinese Singaporeans. On June 20, 2001, *The Straits Times* ran an article with the heading 'Chinese, but they prefer English names'. A week later (June 27, 2001), the newspaper ran a follow-up, reporting that one reader had said that "Chinese people who cite ease of pronunciation as the reason for favoring English names are doing their culture a disservice", while another had attributed the practice to a "lack of self-confidence, cultural pride and character" leading to "Western worshipping". If the government were to allow some Chinese Singaporeans to have English as their mother tongue and others to have Mandarin as theirs, this would solidify the division between those who are English educated and those who are Chinese educated. This would probably divide the community, and would certainly undermine the entire reason for having embarked on the Speak Mandarin Campaign in the first place, which was to eliminate the divisiveness resulting from the use of dialects.

Thus, for a number of reasons, it seems unsurprising that while English is important to Singapore, it cannot be seen as the mother tongue for the Eurasian community since this move would have implications not just internal to the community, but for the other ethnic communities as well.

We now consider the other side of the coin. Is it possible for an officially accepted mother tongue to 'cross over' into the box occupied by English? Can a mother encroach upon the domain of science, technology and economic value? Recall our hypothesis, discussed in the introductory chapter, concerning linguistic instrumentalism. There, we mentioned English linguistic imperialism, which is an instance of 'linguicism', defined as "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (Phillipson, 1992:47). We also suggested that in the face of English linguistic imperialism, support for an indigenous language would, as a means of reclaiming more resources for the language, have to be justified by highlighting the instrumental value of the language. In fact, the claim has been made that, in the case of Mandarin, the language does not only have cultural value, it also has great economic potential given the liberalization of China's markets. This emphasis on Mandarin's economic value, in addition to its role as a cultural anchor, provides support for our hypothesis.

But to see this more clearly in the context of English linguistic imperialism, we have to go back to the polarization within the Chinese community, between those who are English-educated and those who are Chinese-educated. We mentioned that the English-educated are perceived to be economically more successful. We need to realize also that this feeling of marginalization within by the Chinese-educated, and its competition with those who are English-educated, has had a long history:

> Chinese education was viewed negatively by the colonial authorities... and in an independent Malaya.....Graduates from Chinese high schools found themselves in an inferior position – few opportunities were opened to them either for employment or higher education – in contrast to their counterparts from English-medium schools. Growing resentment and frustration eventually led to their political radicalization. This was the situation the administration in Singapore, in the political transition from colonial to self-rule, inherited. (Hill and Lian, 1995:71)

As a consequence of the importance attached by the government early on in Singapore's history to the English language, there were soaring enrolments in the English-medium schools from 51% in 1959 to 65% in 1972, and 91% in 1979 (Bokhorst-Heng, 1998, 1999). In contrast, the Chinese medium schools suffered severe drops in enrolment. For example, before the 1950s, the ratio of Chinese stream to English stream students was about two to one. By 1954, ratio was almost one to one, and in 1962, there were more Chinese students in the English than in the Chinese stream. Finally, around 1978, English-educated students outnumbered their Chinese counterparts by nine to one (Noss, 1984:23, in Hill and Lian, 1995:81).

Chinese education, particularly in the early years of Singapore's history was also associated with Chinese chauvinism, especially since there were close links with the Communist Party of Malaya. This provided added motivation for the government to downplay any support for Chinese education. Perhaps the most significant instance of this, which led to strong feelings of resentment from the Chinese educated, was the government-initiated merging in 1978 of the Chinese medium Nanyang University with the English medium University of Singapore. The resulting institution was named the National University of Singapore, and many Chinese educated Chinese took this as a major blow to the prestige of the Chinese community.

All these factors are classic indicators of linguicism, where the Chinese-educated Chinese felt that there was an "unequal division of power and resources" between them and their English-educated counterparts. And while the Speak Mandarin Campaign may have gone a long way towards assuaging concerns about the dilution of Chinese culture, restricting the role of Mandarin to being a repository of ancient values still means that it cannot compare with English in terms of prestige and current relevance. A turning point therefore came in 1985, when Ong Teng Cheong (then second deputy prime minister) highlighted the economic importance of Mandarin in addition to its cultural importance:

> The Chinese learn and speak Mandarin not only because it is the common spoken language of the Chinese community, representing our roots, but also because the economic value of Mandarin is increasing, particularly after China has started its economic transformation and adopted the open-door policy...China, with a population of more than one billion, is a large market. With the open-door policy, there will be an increase in China's external trade and economic activities. We shall no doubt face competition in our trade and economic activities with China, but we have an edge over others in our bilingual ability. Some of the recent trade activities indicate the economic value of Mandarin. Recently, an American computer company has arranged for China's computer personnel to receive training in Singapore because our computer experts can speak both Mandarin and English. They are able to explain to the Chinese in Mandarin...Some multinational corporations and big enterprises in Europe and America have also begun their hunt in Singapore for talents who can speak both Mandarin and English to represent them in China because such talents are able to do business with the Chinese in Mandarin directly. Singapore entrepreneurs are also going to China to invest in factories, build hotels, set up bank, tender for contracts and provide professional/consultative services. These economic activities require a large number of people who can speak Mandarin, particularly those who can speak both Mandarin and English. With further development in China, the economic value of Mandarin will increase (Bokhorst-Heng, 1998:254).

The significance of this is that, today, the Chinese community "no longer fears the declining market value of the Chinese language", as noted by Chan Soo Sen, a minister of state in the Prime Minister's Office (*The Straits Times*, December 1, 2001). This emphasis on the economic value of Mandarin is clearly an appeal to linguistic

instrumentalism. While the status of Mandarin as the official mother tongue of the Chinese community may have guaranteed its survival, its status relative to English still remains a sensitive issue, and the discourse of linguistic instrumentalism helps to address this by highlighting the fact that like English, Mandarin, too, has a economic role to play. Particularly in an economically-driven society like Singapore, this goes a long way towards addressing the issue of English linguistic imperialism.

But bearing in mind the government's commitment to multiracialism, we need to also ask if the 'crossing over' is applicable to all three official mother tongues. To simply expound the economic merits of one mother tongue and to perhaps, devote more resources to the promotion of that particular mother tongue at the expense of the other two might raise fears of that yet another form of 'linguicism' is being practised, one that jeopardizes the relation of equivalence among the three official mother tongues: Mandarin, Malay and Tamil. The government's sensitivity to charges of 'linguicism', and hence, its awareness of the need to demonstrate its equal commitment to all the mother tongues can be seen from the following statement by Goh Chok Tong, in his 1991 *Speak Mandarin Campaign Speech*:

> Let me assure non-Chinese Singaporeans that the government is not promoting the Chinese language or culture at the expense of the others. In fact, the Ministry of Information and the Arts is working together with the Malay Language Committee to promote standard Malay. The Ministry has also asked the Indian community if it needs help to promote the use of Tamil. We want all the ethnic communities to preserve their language, culture and values. We aim to be a harmonious multi-racial nation.

In the case of the economic value of Mandarin, it has been reported that a growing number of Indian and Malay parents wanted the schools to allow their children to study Mandarin (*The Straits Times*, April 30, 1994). The report pointed out that members of the Malay and Indian communities were asking for greater flexibility regarding the government's bilingual policy. Some minority parents wanted their children to be allowed to learn Mandarin as a third language, in addition to English and the mother tongue, while others, recognizing that three languages might pose difficulties for their children, wanted to be able to "pick Chinese as their children's second language". According to the report, the primary reason for this desire to learn Mandarin was "strictly business: facility with the language is seen as a economic asset", both internal to Singapore and in relation to China. Fore example, Abdul Halim Kader, the president of a Malay grassroots group, was quoted as saying: "The Chinese hold the reins of business in this country. If you can speak Mandarin, you are better able to sit down with them and work out problems." And the (then) deputy prime minister had noted that "(e)ven non-Chinese Singaporean businessmen are picking up some Mandarin to invest in China, manage their operations there, or just to trade with Chinese firms" (*The Straits Times* September 7, 1994).

This desire on the part of minority parents that their children be allowed to learn Mandarin is a sensitive matter. This is because if the government allows too many minority parents to replace Malay or Tamil with Mandarin, it might be criticized for encouraging Mandarin at the expense of the other mother tongues. But at the same time, to deny the learning of a language that is seen as having economic value might also be construed as holding back the economic development of the minority communities. One way out of this dilemma is to play up the economic value of Malay and Tamil so that the mother tongues of these other communities, too, might be considered as attractive as

Mandarin. This might then stem any desire on the part of minority parents for their children to learn Mandarin instead of Malay or Tamil. The advantage of this move is that it is consistent with the spirit of multiracialism. The difficulty lies in whether it can be made plausible, that is, whether Malay and Tamil can be argued to have the same kind of economic value as Mandarin.

It is therefore interesting to note that after this news report appeared another was published dealing with the Malay language (*The Straits Times*, July 4, 1994). In this second report, the Home Affairs minister, Wong Kan Seng, in speaking at the official opening of the Malay Language Month, suggested that "the rapid economic growth of South-east Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, would place Malay in a more important position". Of course the validity of this point has been affected by the subsequent Asian economic crisis, and the fact that Indonesia's economy is in tatters. Also, in that same month, the *Business Times* (July 20, 1994) carried a report where the then acting minister for Community Development, Abdullah Tarmugi, said that the "future of the Malay language here depends on the economic achievements of the Malays…Malays here must make further progress in the economic and educational fields so that the Malay language, too, will have brighter prospects". But this argument doesn't directly address the desire of minority parents to have their children learn Mandarin since it merely changes the causal relationship between language and economic development. In the case of Mandarin, the minority parents wanted to learn the language because it was already perceived to have economic value. In the case of Malay, the acting minister seems to be suggesting that economic development will help ensure the survival of the language. Parents who prioritize economic development over language preservation will still be motivated to opt for Mandarin. However, this change in the causal relationship between language and economy is still a case of linguistic instrumentalism at work since it explicitly recognizes that the survival of Malay is based on pragmatic considerations such as the economic success of the Malays rather than any importance that Malay might have an a marker of ethnic identity in Malaysian modernity (*Business Times*, July 20, 1994).

Regarding Tamil, there has so far been little or no attempt to emphasize its economic value. A possible reason for this is that in conducting business with India, English is like to be more useful than Tamil. And as we mentioned above, the readership of the Tamil newspaper has declined in comparison with that of the English, Malay and Mandarin dailies. *The Straits Times* carried a report that a number of Indian academics, teachers and professional would be attending an international conference on Tamil. The aim was to discuss how the language could be kept relevant, and one of the participants, a newspaper editor, was quoted as wanting to find ways of keeping "Tamil alive in a multi-lingual environment" (*The Straits Times*, December 1, 1994).

We see then that it is rather difficult to argue that Malay and Tamil have the same kind of economic cachet as Mandarin. At present, the situation is mitigated by the fact that, at present, only a relatively small percentage of the minority communities desire Mandarin. Obviously, the main reason is that whatever Mandarin's economic value, it is still relatively minor compared with that of English. However, as China prepares to open up its markets further and to enter the World Trade Organization, we may see an increase in the number of minority parents wanting their children to learn Mandarin. But until such a situation arises, the government appears content to stick to

its current policy where each student is expected to take his/her own mother tongue as the second language. The Education Ministry is completely not inflexible on this issue; some students of mixed parentage and non-Tamil Indians have asked to do Mandarin, and in these cases, their requests have been acceded to. But by and large, the mother tongue is expected to be the second language. Regarding the possibility that Mandarin be taken as a third language, the Education Ministry (*The Straits Times*, 7 October 1994) has made it clear that this option is offered only to the top ten per cent of pupils in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). This is because the majority would find it difficult "to cope with the extra subject on top of their normal school work and extra-curricular activities".

4-4   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have seen how the language policy of Singapore reflects the narrative of Asian modernity as it is constructed by the Singapore government. This can be seen in the importance attached to English as the language which allows access to Western science and technology, and as the language which a local workforce must be proficient in, in order to attract foreign investors. But there is also a fear that along with English will come undesirable Western values, which are considered to conflict with the desire to maintain an Asian identity with links to an Asian tradition and culture. This is the primary rationale for the policy of English-knowing bilingualism, where an officially assigned mother tongue is expected to play the role of a cultural anchor, counteracting the potential effects of Westernization. But this part of the narrative focuses primarily on Singapore's relationship with the world outside, symbolized by 'the West'. Internal to Singapore itself, the language policy needs to be sensitive to the country's racial diversity. And here, the government's commitment to a policy of multiracialism is significant as a means of assuring the population that the relation between the different mother tongues is one of equivalence. As such, each major ethnic group need not worry that support for one mother tongue will be given at the expense of another. In Phillipson's terms, the policy of multiracialism is intended to avoid, officially at least, charges of linguicism among the mother tongues.

However, no such equivalence is claimed in the relationship between English and the mother tongues. English and the mother tongues are instead seen as complementary, performing different functions in Singapore society. But given the importance attached to economic values, this complementarity inevitably leads to a fear that despite performing different functions, the mother tongues are still losing out to English in terms of prestige. Also the development of a colloquial variety of English coupled with attempts by some segments of Singapore society to claim English as their mother tongue can only exacerbate any worries that the mother tongues are losing ground to English. These are conditions that we have predicted will lead to attempts to emphasize the instrumentalist values of the mother tongues themselves, beginning with Mandarin and followed by Malay. Tamil, as we have seen, has not yet shown signs of embracing the discourse of linguistic instrumentalism. There are, however, concerns, being expressed about how Tamil might be kept alive, and it will be interesting to see if, in time to come, the discourse surrounding Tamil follows the paths of Mandarin and

Malay. Thus, while Singapore has been largely successful in its language policy, it faces new challenges to its commitment to multiracialism. The promise that all three mother tongues are guaranteed equality of treatment has been important to the government's strategy of managing Singapore's ethnolinguistic diversity. Trying to maintain this parity across the mother tongues, in the context of linguistic instrumentalism, will require creative modifications to the education system.

4-5   NOTES

[1] 'Others' is a miscellaneous official category. Whether or not the Eurasians are officially distinct from the category of 'Others' or a part of it remains a rather contentious issue. The state treats the Eurasians as an ethnic group of its own for certain administrative purposes, but absorbs them under 'Others' for other purposes. This vacillation is, in part, due to the state's recognition that the Eurasians are an important group in Singapore's history, but their relatively small numbers makes it administratively more expedient to accord them their own ethnic category. This issue is discussed further in section 2.

[2] The EAS was first established in July 1919 ostensibly as a sports club for Eurasians. By the time of Singapore's independence, it became a cultural grouping and was indeed Singapore's first non-governmental self-help association that gave aid to all Singaporeans regardless of race. In the early 1980s, Lee Kuan Yew introduced a racial self-help strategy and created CDAC, Mendaki, and SINDA. The EAS was co-opted into this government scheme. See Rappa (2000:157).

[3] For a more detailed analysis, refer to Rappa (2000:153-180).

[4] We thank Robbie Goh for providing the relevant information.

CHAPTER 5

THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND

Source: *CIA World Factbook*, 2005

Though not often described as such, Thailand is in fact both multilingual and multiethnic, with a population of approximately 65 million, a significant portion of which is still highly rural. By this we mean that a large number of the population, around 80%, lives in villages and occupies a primarily agricultural lifestyle. As we show below, this factor is relevant to a proper understanding of the language situation in Thailand. A common picture of Thailand is one of linguistic and ethnic homogeneity

with all Thais speaking the Thai language. But Thailand is really an ethnically diverse country, and amongst its peoples are about 3 million Chinese and about 1 million Malays, plus a number of Cambodians, Vietnamese, as well as indigenous tribes such as the Karens, Lahus, and Lissus. This ethnic diversity points to the fact that the notion of a homogeneous 'Thai people' is very much a social construct, ideologically serving at certain times to mask and at other times to highlight the internal diversity of the Thais, a point explicitly acknowledged by one of Thailand's kings, King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) (see Streckfuss, 1993):

> you must remember that if you are speaking with a westerner on the one hand and Lao on the other, you must maintain that the westerner is 'them' and the Lao is Thai. If, however, you are speaking with a Lao on the one hand and a Thai on the other, you must maintain that the Lao is 'them' and the Thai is 'us'.

This constructivism also extends to the issue of language, where, as we will see, despite Thailand's linguistic diversity, some languages are treated as being variants of the Thai language while others are treated as being clearly 'foreign'. Smalley (1994:1) estimates the number of languages spoken in Thailand at about 80, and points out that "the common perception of linguistic homogeneity in Thailand can be both true and false". Smalley's point, which is also taken up in this chapter, is to highlight how, despite its linguistic diversity, Thailand remains a remarkably unified country where the dominance of Standard Thai in defining the national identity remains very much unchallenged.

Where English is concerned, the monarchs of Thailand have always recognized the usefulness of the language in dealing with threats to the country's independence from colonial powers (Masavisut *et al.*, 1986:197). By monarchs we refer to the kings of Thailand as for most of its history, the king rather than the queen has exercised absolute power. This was the case until the 1932 coup that created a constitutional government with the primary power vested in the prime minister. However, the king continues to wield important social and cultural influence in Thailand in a largely symbolic role that surpasses even that of the Japanese Emperor. Since the 1960s, the Thai monarchy and its many military governments have consistently emphasized the value of the English language in the globalization of Thailand's economy without any loss of functional value in the Thai language.

A good working knowledge of the English language allowed for more effective communication on business and diplomatic matters with traders and envoys from the West (Aksornkool, 1980:73) as well as allowing for a lesser reliance on foreign interpreters. The first significant encounter with the English language took place more than a century ago in Thai royal society during the reign of King Nang Klaw (1824-1854), when American missionaries were tasked with teaching the language to young children of noble birth (Aksornkool, 1980:72). Successors to King Nang Klaw, in particular, King Mongkut (1851-1865), continued to appreciate the instrumental value of English. The latter felt that in order to maintain Thai sovereignty, there was no other choice but "to open his country to the West in order to communicate with the foreign powers and to prove to them that Siam was a civilized nation, and the equal of any foreign powers", a strategy that worked so effectively that the British were "amazed to find the Siamese to be so civilized and to speak English so well" (Masavisut *et al.*, 1986:198). That is, King Mongkut knew quite well that in a battle with the European

powers, Thailand would come out the loser. He had already observed the losses incurred by China in the Opium War (1839), and thus he authorized the signing of treaties in the 1850s to satisfy the commercial ambitions of the European powers, which served as crucial trade-offs that helped maintain Thailand's independence and its own cultural and political memories (cf. Klima, 2002). Given the early linguistic instrumentalism of the state, and as contacts with the West intensified, there was a growing need for more Thais who were competent in English (Ratanakul, 1983). The state identified the language as a potential tour de force in terms of engaging the economic development of Thai modernity. As such, while initially restricted to members of nobility, English language education became more widely available and came to be seen as one way of achieving social mobility since a good knowledge of the language was a sure way of obtaining senior posts in government. Thus from its initial encounter with the English language, Thailand has always treated it as a foreign language serving a utilitarian purpose, primarily facilitating international trade and diplomacy. Today, English is the main foreign language in Thailand. That is, although classes teaching other foreign languages such as Japanese, French or Arabic are available, it is English that is the most popular. Wongsothorn (2000:307) estimates that about 99% of Thai students learn English in school. It is, simply put, the language that allows Thailand to deal with the world 'outside'.

On the other hand, the primary language that is used 'inside' Thai society is Standard Thai. This is the primary medium of instruction in the school system, reflecting the importance attached to this language in Thai culture. In fact, official policy does not allow any other language to be used, though in the more rural areas, teachers sometimes find they need to resort to the local vernacular if a lesson is to be conducted at all. But even though not all Thais may actually grow up speaking the language, knowledge of Standard Thai is necessary if one is to fully participate in Thai society. Aside from the education system, the mass media (television and newspapers) mainly use Standard Thai. The conduct of local business agreements or simply the search for gainful employment depends on knowing the language well. But more than just a practical necessity, Standard Thai is considered among the Thais to be an important symbol of Thai national identity. This, as we will see, is due to the fact that Standard Thai emerged historically in connection with Thai royalty, and the royal family, in particular the King, are much loved and revered throughout Thailand. The King is in fact seen as the embodiment of the ideal Thai, as pointed out by one of Thailand's former prime ministers, Thanin Kriaiwichian:

> The great warrior king is the soul of Thainess, he is the centre of minds and hearts of the whole nation. Therefore, whosoever wants to destroy the monarchical institution must also destroy the people and Thailand. (Connors, 2003:92)

Connors elaborates on the role of the Thai king, Bhumiphol, as follows:

> The God-like status of Bhumiphol is not part of the family treasure, but something that hundreds of officials in the palace and other agencies have contrived to create. Key to this has been the promotion of 'democracy with the king as head of state'. The ideology of this democracy with the king as head of state is a curious mixture of traditionalist conceptions of kingship and democracy. In the traditionalist aspect the king is seen as inviolable and infallible, and remains free of any accusation. As for his Buddhist-prescribed duties (*rachatham*) to the people, it is the king's duty to use Buddhism to rule the country in line with the ten virtues. (Connors, 2003:129)

Because the king is seen to embody what it means to be Thai, this has implications for how issues of language and religion are viewed in the context of national identity. The language and religion that are associated with royalty are, respectively, Standard Thai and Buddhism. The ideal Thai, then, is expected, like the king, to speak Standard Thai and to be a Buddhist. Given this expectation, there are three primary situations that we will consider in this chapter. First, there are Thais who speak a non-standard variety of Thai. But because they are often Buddhists, religion is not an issue. And neither really is language since these Thais are often willing to attribute their inability to speak Standard Thai to a lack of proper education, a typical enough situation for the majority of Thais living in the rural areas. The second situation involves ethnic Chinese who may want to maintain familiarity with a Chinese language rather than a Thai language. In such cases, religion is often not a problem either as most ethnic Chinese in Thailand are also Buddhists. And while some Chinese parents have sent their children abroad for a Chinese-medium education, others have accepted the fact that for their children to prosper in Thai society, knowledge of Standard Thai is indispensable; this latter scenario means a voluntary displacement of a Chinese language by Standard Thai. The third situation focuses on the ethnic Malays, who are mainly Muslims, and for whom, religion is thus a major obstacle. Language, too, is an issue since for these ethnic Malays, the Malay language, rather than a Thai language, is intimately bound to their religious identity. In such cases, the combination of linguistic and religious differences sometimes lead to attempts at separatism. In our discussion of the language policy of Thailand, we will thus focus on the following questions:

Firstly, despite the high degree of linguistic diversity, much of Thai culture is centered around and dominated by Standard Thai. How is the hegemony of Standard Thai maintained? That is, how does Thailand's language policy ensure the continued prestige and centrality enjoyed by Standard Thai, and how does this affect the use of the other languages? We will see that Thailand's language policy essentially works on a binary distinction; a language is considered either Thai or non-Thai. While this binary distinction has been refined in recent years, the effect remains much the same: a language is either Thai or it is not, and if it is not, it is for all intents and purposes a foreign language. There is no middle ground for non-Thai languages which may be the native language of some members of the population. The relationship between the Thai and non-Thai languages is one of complementarity, with the former serving primarily as identity markers and the latter serving mainly instrumentalist goals. But the category of Thai languages is itself a highly ideological construct and a number of regional varieties are absorbed under the rubric 'Thai' regardless of their actual linguistic properties. This is a form of equivalence where different varieties are all treated as dialectal variants of the same language, and hence, do not in any way challenge the dominance of the standard.

Secondly, and related to the first point, are there any sites of resistance to the dominance of Standard Thai? In particular, how are the varying degrees to which ethnic Chinese, ethnic Malays, and the various local tribes assimilated into Thai culture correlated with their willingness to embrace Standard Thai as an important symbol of their identities? We will see that because the Chinese and Malay languages are not considered 'Thai', they can only be considered foreign languages even though the Chinese and Malays form a significant portion of Thai society. This means that the

assimilation of the Chinese and Malays into Thai society has linguistic repercussions, mostly involving a displacement of their native languages by a Thai language. The degree to which a group of people is willing to assimilate into Thai society depends therefore to some extent on their willingness to give up their non-Thai language. We will examine in some detail how the Chinese and Malays have, to varying degrees, in fact undergone such assimilation. The Chinese, we will suggest, have assimilated to a much greater degree than the Malays, and this can be explained by also looking at the influence of religion. As mentioned earlier, in addition to Standard Thai, Buddhism is also another important factor defining the Thai identity. And because most of them are already Buddhists, the Chinese do not have the same problems assimilating as the Malays, most of whom are Muslims. Buddhism plays an important role in the construction of the Thai identity so that it is almost impossible to feel truly Thai or feel accepted as such, unless one is willing to embrace Buddhism. Connors, for example, quotes a Thai official explaining the involvement of Buddhism in the country's government programs:

> Through the strengthening of people's attachment to Dhamma, the people will be loyal to the nation, the king, and the government; by adhering to Buddhism the people will better understand each other, thereby promoting national integration. (Connors, 2003:59-60)

In the other countries examined in this book (Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines) English can be considered a 'nativized' variety, such that these countries can be described as Outer Circle countries. In other words, English has undergone various linguistic changes as it is adapted to the needs of the speakers in these countries, and is also institutionalized by being accorded status as an official language as it is used to perform "a large range of functions in the local, educational, administrative, and legal systems" (Kachru, 1986:19). This, however, is not the case in Thailand, where the English language, despite having been present in the country for more than 100 years, is still very much a foreign language so that Thailand is more accurately described as part of the Expanding Circle of countries. Why is this so? What are the factors that have prevented the nativization of English in Thailand? One important factor is the perception that there is a need to maintain the purity of Thai identity without having it encroached upon by foreign influences. This desire to maintain 'Thai purity' in the face of foreign influences can be seen in the following statement, made by a spokesperson for the Sarit regime of the 1960s, which was essentially responsible for articulating a highly influential notion of Thai democracy:

> The fundamental cause of our political instability in the past lies in the sudden transplantation of alien institutions on to our soil without careful preparation, and if we look at our national history, we can very well see that this country works better and prospers under an authority, not a tyrannical authority, but a unifying authority. (in Connors, 2003:48)

As pointed out in our answer to (1), Thailand's language policy constructs a complementary relationship between the non-Thai or foreign languages, including English, and Standard Thai. We will suggest that the crucial factor here preventing the 'nativization' of English is Thailand's history as the only Southeast Asian country never to have been colonized by Western powers. This has allowed for an unbroken line of kings to reign, and has helped entrench the Thai language into Thai society. But the question of modernity raises important issues for the role of Standard Thai in contemporary Thai society, and we will explore how this may or may not be affected by

the growing importance of English. Throughout our discussion, we will also bear in mind our claims concerning the pervasiveness of linguistic instrumentalism, and we will ask to what extent the situation in Thailand supports our hypotheses. We will begin in the next section with an outline of Thai language policy, highlighting the extent to which it revolves around the dominance of Standard Thai.

5-1 THE LANGUAGE POLICY OF THAILAND

Thailand's language policy treats Standard Thai as both the national language and the only official language as conveyed in the passage on the cultural importance of Standard Thai:

> Standard Thai is not only the official language, but is also the national language, a symbol of identification for the Thai nation. Next to the King and along with the Buddhist religion, Standard Thai may be the strongest such symbol, even for those who speak it as a second language, or barely speak it at all (Smalley, 1994:14).

Similarly, Noss points out that:

> ...neither the nature nor the role of the national language has ever been seriously questioned. Whether this has something to do with the country's non-colonial history, or whether it merely reflects some kind of ethnic accident, there has been no serious challenge to the national language of Thailand. It is the standard version of the Central Plains variety of Thai that is officially used in all domains and which is also the most important lingua franca of the country.... No concessions are going to be made to the other Thai varieties, any more than they are going to be made to speakers of Malay in the South, to speakers of Khmer in the East, to speakers of Chinese varieties in the cities, or to speakers of minority languages in the mountains. The only real issue, then, is how best to convert other speakers into speakers of Standard Thai, and how best to spread literacy in the written form of the national language (Noss, 1984:92).

Standard Thai is thus widely used throughout the society as the language of administration and media. Domestically, activities of high prestige such as public forms of communication tend to make use of Standard Thai. The importance of Standard Thai is reinforced in the education system, where it is the medium of instruction, as well as a taught subject, although this is not without obstacles.

Other languages, on the other hand, are only available as taught subjects; they are never (officially) used as a medium of instruction though recently, some international schools have been established where English is the language of instruction (Wongsothorn, 2000: 309). This latter trend raises the interesting question of the relationship between English and Standard Thai, and the extent to which the former may come to undermine the dominance of the latter. This is a question we will return to later. For now, we note that Standard Thai is compulsory throughout both primary and secondary education, and admission into the universities requires students to take Thai language tests (Wongsothorn, 2000:309).

The central government is fully aware of the important role that Standard Thai plays in promoting national unity. But there is no central agency for coordinating Thailand's language policy. Instead, responsibility for language matters devolves upon a number of different ministries, with each ministry overseeing the impact of language issues to the extent that such issues relate to its particular area of responsibility (Noss, 1984:75). For example, the Ministry of Education aims to ensure that the Standard Thai

used across the country is relatively uniform. It does this mainly by overseeing the implementation of language policy through its teacher training programs, the design of syllabuses, and the fact that it has control over not just state schools, but private ones as well. The Ministry of Defence monitors internal and external security, and it is concerned with language in so far as it tries to make sure that language matters do not become political rallying points for social unrest or political activism. And the Ministry of Interior is concerned with the administration of the country provinces, and in this regard, may issue requirements that local officials acquire proficiency in a particular regional variety in order that such administration may be more effectively carried out.

We suggest that the following factors are relevant to understanding how the country has arrived at a language policy that privileges only Standard Thai in two ways:

(1)   the origin of Standard Thai as the language associated with the elites, in particular, Thai royalty;

(2)   the high degree of respect accorded to the royal family, especially the King.

The birthplace of Standard Thai is historically located in the site that was historically bounded by the old kingdom of Ayuthaya situated just north of Bangkok. Smalley also says that this was the linguistic variant spoken by the royal family, intellectuals and religious leaders (Smalley, 1994:31). However, the Burmese invasion in 1767 destroyed the kingdom, and led to the establishment of a new capital at Bangkok itself.

What is particularly interesting however is the powerful effect of linguistic resilience by which we mean the ability of a language to remain consistent in form and substance over an extended period of time. This is seen in the case of the Thai language. The Thai alphabet, having been created much earlier in 1283 by King Ramkamhaeng, has survived intact throughout its modern development so that a modern Thai is able to understand 13th century inscriptions fairly easily. This remarkable sense of continuity over more than 700 years has helped entrench Standard Thai as an important national symbol, and as one that has strong associations with royalty. Today, it is the Royal Institute of Thailand (established in 1898) that is responsible for overseeing the development and standardization of Standard Thai. It adjudicates in matters pertaining to terminology, the writing of grammars, and the publication of dictionaries.

This tells us how a strong association exists for the Thais between Standard Thai and royalty. However, it does not immediately explain the high regard that the Thai people have for the language. To understand this, we must realize that ultimately, 'Standard Thai is the speech and writing of relevant elites, beginning with the King and court' (Smalley, 1994:33) and we must also appreciate how deeply revered and loved the King and other members of the royal family are by the people of Thailand (Smalley, 1994:323). The fact that Thailand was never colonized by European powers meant that it enjoyed a long period of uninterrupted independence, with the effect that the current King is unquestionably seen as the direct descendent of the earlier legendary kings of the Chakri dynasty, and the Thai monarchy has developed since at least the time of King Mongkut without having its authority undermined by colonial rule (Kulick and Wilson, 1992:176). This reverence for Thai royalty is to a certain extent consciously cultivated, as suggested by Connors:

> As a leading figure in the power bloc, the palace was and is a fervent exponent of its own position and that of propagating Thai identity. Within the palace the discourse of disciplinary development and guidance over the people reached its greatest rhetorical excess, as the king's announcements became the sloganized rationale for various state projects. Sanctioned by traditional mythology taught at school, and endlessly relayed through the mass media, the palace became a centre of bland wisdom, witnessed by the manner in which royal announcements are utilized by the state in setting up or maintaining numerous royal projects, to further its work. (Connors, 2003:131)

Thus, because of its association with the royal family, Standard Thai enjoys a high degree of unchallenged legitimacy as the nation's language regardless of whether it is actually spoken by Thais or tourists. Other languages, whatever their function in the day-to-day activities of the Thai people, are not seen as occupying this privileged position at the national level.

5-2   LANGUAGE POLICY AND THAI LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES

The problem of language policy is tied directly to Thailand's economy because like all languages that are deemed worthy of support by the state, activities such as funding for research and training, expert consultation, innovation and risk-taking, cannot effectively function without drawing from state coffers. However, in the specific case of Thailand's language policy, it is clear that Standard Thai takes priority over all other languages. Its role in maintaining a national identity, built up over the centuries and uninterrupted by colonial takeovers, means that no other language comes even close in terms of reflecting a sense of what it means to be Thai. That it is also a language with strong ties to the royal family is, as we have seen, also relevant. And in fact, until recently Thailand had a traditional two-way classification of languages: Thai and foreign. That is, all languages were either Thai or they were foreign. In the case of the latter, there was no attempt to distinguish between languages which may be widely spoken among the locals (such as Malay, Vietnamese or Chinese) and languages which may be 'truly' foreign (such as German, English or Japanese). This two-way classification is a clear indicator of the dominant position occupied by Standard Thai. In 1978, however, the National Education Council introduced a four-way classification (Noss, 1984:87) as follows:

      (1)   national language (Standard Thai)
      (2)   foreign languages
      (3)   regional languages
      (4)   minority languages

With the exception of 'regional languages' which refers to provincial varieties of Thai spoken in the North, North-East and South, there is still a great deal of vagueness concerning what criteria are to be considered in categorizing a language as 'foreign' or as 'minority'. In other words, among the four categories, only the categories 'national language' and 'regional language' have any clear referents. The former refers to Standard Thai while the latter refers to other varieties of Thai so that, in effect, only Thai languages are (still) explicitly referred to in the classification. Furthermore, Noss (1984:10-11) notes that along with the introduction of the four-way classification were "five principles of educational (and official) language policy", which we reproduce below:

(1)   Education: The psychology of foreign language learning, the
        acquisition of the mother tongue as a springboard for foreign language learning,
        motivation, readiness, teacher preparation, et cetera should be considered.
(2)   National Security: The teaching of Thai should be compulsory and begin early.
(3)   Racial Integration: The teaching and learning of Thai as an avenue to
        national integration should be required at all levels.
(4)   Information Dissemination: English is the most widely used
        international language for academic and occupational purposes.
(5)   International Relations: Languages of all friendly nations are regarded
        as having the same status.

We may take these five principles as specifying the various factors that Thailand's language policy is intended to accommodate and hence, 'balance'. The policy has to serve education-related functions by preparing students and teachers to learn a foreign language (1) and this is relatable to the importance of foreign languages for jobs (4) or for international diplomacy (5). Also, the policy must pay attention to the cultivation of national unity (2 and 3). It seems to us then that among the five principles listed, it is National Security and Racial Integration that have the highest priority. The other three principles of Education, Information Dissemination and International Relations, in contrast, have a somewhat lower priority. This would account for a language policy that privileges Standard Thai above all other languages since this is the language that the Thais have historically associated with their national identity.

Notice also that the only languages specifically mentioned in the five principles are Thai and English. Thai is mentioned in relation to national security and integration, that is, in maintaining a sense of national unity and identity. And we may assume quite reasonably that 'Thai' in effect refers to Standard Thai since:

> [no] concessions are going to be made to the other Thai varieties, any more than they are going to be made to speakers of Malay in the South, to speakers of Khmer in the East, to speakers of Chinese varieties in the cities, or to speakers of minority languages in the mountains. The only real issue, then, is how best to convert other speakers into speakers of Standard Thai, and how best to spread literacy in the written form of the national language (Noss, 1984:92).

English, on the other hand, is mentioned for its role in serving academic and occupational (that is, instrumental) purposes. In commenting on these principles, Noss (1984:11) makes the important point that because Malay, Vietnamese or Mandarin are the languages of 'friendly' nations, the policy may treat these as foreign languages on par with English or French, despite the fact that Thailand contains significant numbers of native speakers of the first group of languages. This suggests that implications of the change from a two-way to a four-way classification are not as far-reaching as they might seem. Although the policy has moved towards a finer-grained form of language classification, for all intents and purposes, it still effectively acts as though there needs only to be made a binary distinction between Thai and other languages, with English being privileged as the most important of the other languages.

5-3   ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND MODERNITY IN THAILAND

We organize our discussion in terms of the kinds of issues raised by the various languages and their speakers for Thailand's language policy. We will see that

one of the ways in which the hegemony of Standard Thai is maintained in the treatment of some other languages as 'Thai', and hence as dialectal variants of the standard. This allows the speakers of these other languages to be treated as being also 'Thai', at least where the language is concerned, and it facilitates the assimilation of these speakers under the same Thai national identity. This issue of assimilation is of great importance, and by looking at the different ways in which ethnic Chinese and ethnic Malays have been assimilated (or not) into Thai society, we can also appreciate how language, in concert with other social and cultural factors, may or may not present problems for the language policy. Finally, we will look at the case of English which, as noted above, is consistently singled out as the most important of all foreign languages. We will note possible signs that the presence of English, while necessary for economic development, may be also encroaching on the hegemony of Standard Thai. Thus, our discussion will essentially cover four groups of languages:

(1)   languages which are treated as Thai
(2)   Chinese
(3)   Malay
(4)   English

5-3-1   *Languages Treated as Thai*

It is a fairly well recognized fact that decisions about whether varieties are to be considered dialects of the same language or not are often ideologically motivated rather than being based on any actual linguistic properties. For example, in a discussion of language politics in Eastern Europe:

> Albania is currently one country, and Tosk and Gheg are treated as dialects of one Albanian language (even though it is hard to understand one if you only know the other); but in the wrecked ex-country of Yugoslavia, the language people used to call Serbo-Croat began during the 1990s to be deliberately split up into three separate languages, Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian, because the speakers had fallen out politically. No one would have said before that there were three languages here, even though the Croatian Yugoslavs talked a bit differently from the Serbian and Bosnian Yugoslavs. There was assumed to be one Serbo-Croat language ... This single language would have been described as having several different dialects – regional or ethnic variants of the same basic linguistic system. But once Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia separated, the differences among the three trivially differing languages had to be emphasized and accentuated. The Serbs, stressing their Eastern Orthodox religious roots, revived Old Church Slavonic words and mandated use of the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet; the Croats stressed their Catholic roots, borrowed more words from Latin, and stuck with the Roman alphabet; and the Bosnian Muslims borrowed words from Turkish to emphasize their connections with the Islamic world. Linguistic boundary lines began to emerge to reinforce the ethnic boundary lines. (Pullum, 1999:44)

Pullum's point is that linguistic differences may or may not be glossed over, depending on political affiliations. Where there is a desire to be seen as having an identity that is distinct from some other, this may lead to the accentuating of linguistic differences so that what might otherwise be considered dialects of the same language are now treated as completely different languages. And conversely, where there is a strong sense of unity, the same linguistic differences may instead be elided, and where recognized, trivialized as 'mere' dialectal variations. This is a point that also very much applies to the case of Thailand, where a number of regional varieties are often glossed

as being Thai, regardless of their actual linguistic properties (Noss, 1984:5, 96). Also, in Thailand:

> native speakers often do not perceive major language differences to be politically important, or otherwise interpret them in some non-divisive way. The differences between the spoken Tai languages are constantly minimized, and speakers of all such languages in the country are counted as speaking 'Thai' (Smalley, 1994:2-3).[1]

One indicator of this willingness to 'minimize' linguistic differences comes from the fact that speakers of regional varieties such as Kammüang or Lao are increasingly using Standard Thai orthography, particularly for professional (as opposed to personal) communication (Smalley, 1994:82, 92). And in his discussion of Kammüang, we see that:

> In spite of a strong sense of Kammüang and Northern Thai identity, however, northerners also share the feeling that Kammüang is 'Thai'. It is not Standard Thai or Thaiklang; it has a distinct identity from them, but is nevertheless a manifestation of a larger Thai language. From the Kammüang point of view, Standard Thai and Kammüang are different kinds of Thai, along with many other languages in the country as well (Smalley, 1994:82-3).

We suggest that there is a ranking of factors relevant to cultivating a sense of Thai unity:

(1)   a desire to be absorbed or assimilated into Thai society;
(2)   a sense of respect for the King and other members of the royal family;
(3)   where language is concerned, this may also lead to a willingness to
        treat particular varieties as dialects of Thai.

There must first be a desire to be counted as a Thai, and for the speakers of these regional varieties, their long historical association with Thai society means that there is absolutely no question that they are in fact Thais despite their varied ethnicities. This is because over the centuries, generations of Laotian, Cambodian, Vietnamese and Burmese were slowly absorbed into Thai culture with the result that the people of Thailand today are in fact an ethnically diverse group. Consequently, there is today no typical Thai physiognomy or physique; Thais may be petite or statuesque, dark-skinned or fair-skinned (Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 1979:24).

The centuries of gradual assimilation under a continued system of monarchical rule has also imbued these peoples with a shared sense of love and respect for the King, which as pointed out above, is considered a fundamental aspect of what it means to be Thai. This promotes a strong sense of unity and a consequent willingness to treat linguistic differences as manifestations of dialectal variants of the 'same' Thai language rather than as indicators of a different language altogether. The fact that the King and other elites may speak a somewhat different Thai is not an issue since regional varieties are simply constructed as much more colloquial or less refined versions of Standard Thai:

> In terms of language policy there are serious consequences to the assignment of two varieties to a single language or distinct languages. Varieties that are regarded as distinct languages are often objects of nationalist sentiment while dialects are usually regarded simply as incorrect forms of the dominant variety (Anshen, 2001:710).

These factors are present to different degrees in the cases of ethnic Chinese and Malay, which may go some way towards explaining the different relationships they have with the larger Thai culture. While the Chinese appear to have assimilated much more successfully than the Malays, neither groups' language has ever been considered even remotely Thai; instead these are consistently treated as distinct, and sometimes, foreign, languages. And it is to these two ethnicities that we next turn, beginning with the Chinese.

5-3-2   *Thai Chinese*

It has been estimated about 20% of the Thai population have some form of Chinese ancestry, with about 35% of them located in or around Bangkok (Smalley, 1994:3). Sometimes referred to as Sino-Thai, the Chinese Thai have been extremely successful in business, and as such, form an economically significant ethnic minority group. The most significant influx of Chinese into Thailand took place in the later half of the nineteenth century, when large numbers of Chinese immigrants from China came over to work as laborers. A number of these immigrants stayed on in Thailand, marrying local Thai women. The offspring of these Chinese-Thai marriages subsequently married local Thais as well, thus leading, over a number of generations, to the eventual and in some cases, complete assimilation of the Chinese.

As far as language is concerned, probably the most important Chinese language in Thailand is Teochew, as it is the native language of a large number of Chinese Thai (Noss, 1984:10; Smalley, 1994:212). Mandarin is important also, but it is mainly acquired as a second language by children whose parents wish them to retain a strong Chinese identity. These children would most likely have studied Mandarin as a school subject where it is offered as an elective. But as far as Thailand's language policy is concerned, both Teochew and Mandarin are classified as foreign languages, though the latter, because of its status as the official language of China, is more widely offered in the schools. The general lack of schools offering a Chinese education results in Chinese Thais advancing through the national education system with the rest of the population most of whom end up being more fluent in Thai than in a Chinese language. In other words, unlike the languages discussed in the previous section, there is no attempt or desire to absorb the Chinese languages as varieties of Thai. Instead, they are consistently and unambiguously treated as foreign languages. This might be due to the relatively recent history of the Chinese in Thailand since as mentioned above it was mainly in the late nineteenth century that they became a significant part of the population.

However, another factor that might explain why there is no attempt to treat the Chinese languages as Thai comes from the Chinese themselves who, it would seem, have been quite willing to make the shift to Thai, allowing the Thai language to displace their own Chinese dialects. There is a pragmatic motivation for this language shift. For example, Coughlin (1960) suggests that there has been an increasing appreciation amongst the Chinese of the usefulness of a Thai education. A good knowledge of Thai is indispensable for business negotiations in Thailand, and parents who insisted on sending their children overseas (perhaps to Hong Kong or Taiwan) for a Chinese education have found out that a lack of proficiency in Thai can be a major handicap

when these children return from their studies. In fact, the assimilation of the Chinese into Thai society has been so complete that a number of them have also taken on Thai names, itself an important indicator of the success of assimilation.

Finally, we have to remember that the Buddhist religion also plays an important part in defining what it means to be Thai. For example, while Thailand allows a number of different religions to be practiced, the constitution requires that the Thai kings be Buddhists, and about 90% of the population is Buddhist (Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 1979:48). And here, it is crucial to bear in mind that a large number of Chinese are already Buddhists. In fact, Buddhism has always been dominant in Laos, Burma, Cambodia, Vietnam, as well as China. This shared religious faith is thus an important uniting factor that not only facilitates the assimilation of the Chinese, it also allows the speakers of the regional varieties discussed in the previous section to feel 'Thai'. Because the Buddhist faith permeates most aspects of everyday living (Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 1979:49-50) in Thailand, it is extremely difficult to fully assimilate into Thai society without also embracing Buddhism. For example, the laity has close daily contacts with Buddhist monks, particularly during the morning food collections where people can acquire 'merit' by donating food. Also, all major Buddhist holy days are national holidays, and at important occasions such as the opening of a new business or a housewarming, Buddhist monks are present to bless the events. Finally, it is a traditional Thai custom for young males to be temporarily ordained as Buddhist monks for anywhere from a few days to a few months.

We will see in the next section how critical religious issues can be for the assimilation of Malays, and especially when religious identity is linked with the Malay language, then language itself may become highly politicized in the context of inter-ethnic relations.

5-3-3 *Thai Malays*

As a result of the various historical waves of cultural and religious influence since the onset of Thailand's pre-modern period, the Thai Malay communities are primarily located around the southernmost provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala and Satun, with the majority of them being Muslims (Tarling, 1999). There is no doubt that the Islamic religion receives official support from the government and the King. For example, the King provided financial support for a project translating the Koran into Thai, and government-employees are allowed to take leave for important Muslim holidays. Four months leave with full pay is also granted for those who wish to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, known as the *Haj* (Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 1979:51). However, despite these forms of official support for the Muslims in Thailand, there have been occasions when the Muslims have felt alienated from the larger Thai society, and in certain cases, have attempted to create a completely separate state. In this regard, of particular interest is Pattani Malay, for two reasons (Smalley, 1994:155-6). Firstly, Pattani Malay speakers constitute the majority of Malay speakers in Thailand. For example, there are approximately one million Malay speakers in Thailand, and of this, over 800, 000 are Pattani Malay speakers. Secondly, it is mainly the Pattani Malay speakers who have been persistent in pursuing secessionist

movements over a period of more than two decades. Thus, in contrast to the picture of relatively easy assimilation presented in the previous two sections, our discussion of Pattani Malay will focus more on the somewhat antagonistic relationship the speakers have with the larger Thai society. The basis for the antagonism is both religious and historical since:

> To begin with, most ethnic Malays are Muslim and most ethnic Thai are Buddhist. Beyond that, long standing antagonisms between a conquered people and their colonizers continue to fester. Malay sultans had ruled these southern provinces in the past. Pattani in particular had an illustrious history at times. Descendents of those sultans and of the elite around them still live in the area, some in Malaysia [which shares its border with the south of Thailand: ALR and LW] and some in Thailand (Smalley, 1984:155).

These religious and historical tensions are not easily forgotten because current conditions in Thailand, unintentionally or otherwise, tend to highlight the often fundamental differences in worldviews and cultural values between the Muslim Malays and their Buddhist counterparts. For example, Thai officials may, in an attempt to display goodwill towards their Muslim counterparts, wear a Malay hat. But they may do so while eating pork in a Chinese restaurant, thus causing serious insult to Islamic sensitivities. And conversely, the Malays who do hold official positions often feel the need to segregate themselves from their Buddhist counterparts during mealtimes since, as Muslims, the consumption of pork and alcohol is forbidden (Smalley, 1984:163, 165). Similarly, attempts on the part of the Thai government to support Islam are sometimes viewed with suspicion, either as political interference or as covert attempts at controlling the Muslim population. In one instance, a Muslim official was appointed by the Thai government to act as the spiritual leader of all the Muslims in Thailand, as was a Central Islamic Committee, whose members were selected by the Ministry of the Interior. This did not go down well with the Pattani Malays, in particular, who simply viewed this as government interference (Surin, 1985:102-9). No doubt such moves on the part of the state often only serve as reminders that large-scale policy initiatives concern Islamic matters lie in the hands of those who are themselves not Muslims. A consequence of these tensions is reluctance on the part of the Pattani Malays to abandon the Malay language since it is considered to better reflect their view of themselves as fundamentally Malay rather than Thai.

This sense of alienation from Thai society is also facilitated, perhaps encouraged even, by the fact that southern Thailand shares its border with Malaysia, a country where Malay is the official language and Islam the official religion. This gives the Pattani Malays the option of sending their children across the border to Malaysia for Malay-based education, an option that is particularly important since it means accessing an education where the medium of instruction is Malay, and one where the Islam is not merely a school subject, but part of a larger cultural worldview. This is not to say that no linguistic differences exist between Pattani Malay and Standard Malay, but here we once again encounter the ideological nature of linguistic classification. Even though Pattani Malay is sometimes viewed by Malaysian Malays themselves as 'unsophisticated' and even though there are differences in pronunciation and grammatical structure, the crucial point is that both are seen as belonging to the 'same' language category of Malay, as opposed to the category of Thai. This opposition to the category of Thai is also manifested in the writing systems used: we saw above that the speakers of the regional varieties such as Kammüang or Lao are increasingly using

Standard Thai orthography. Pattani Malay speakers, on the other hand, insist on using the Arabic script for both Pattani and Standard Malay, a strong indication of how religion is, for the Pattani Malays, tied in with their language.

Here, we see that the required displacement of the Malay language by Standard Thai has religious repercussions. Unlike the Chinese language and the regional varieties, which are not seen as deeply related to any particular religion, the Malay language is felt by its speakers – and here, we refer specifically to the Pattani Malay speakers – to be a crucial aspect of their identity as Malay-Muslims. Thus, the Malay language raises particular problems for Thailand's language policy since assimilation into Thai culture requires a willingness to symbolically, if not in terms of actual proficiency, embrace Standard Thai. But the Pattani Malays consider this too high a price to pay, feeling that it would mean compromising their commitment to their religion.

5-3-4   *English*

The status of English in Thailand is quite different from that of other countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines or Singapore. In these other countries, English is both important for international as well as domestic communication. In Singapore, for example, English is the main medium of instruction in the education system such that the official mother tongues are in fact taught as second languages. Both the print and broadcast media use English widely, and political speeches, including parliamentary debates, are conducted in English. And in an increasing number of households, children are growing up with English as the home language. To a less degree, the same might be said of Malaysia and the Philippines. While English is not quite as much a home language in these other countries, it is prominently used as a language of education, and a large number of societal functions (such as government administration and the production of literary works) do make use of English.

In Thailand, however, the use of English is much more restricted. As we have seen, Standard Thai is the language that dominates the domestic scene. It is the language of education, and it is only in recent years that a few private schools have been allowed to use English as the medium of instruction. Most Thais come from homes where the language spoken is some variety of Thai. Very few grow up with English as their first language. And this situation holds especially for the people in the rural areas, which, as mentioned, is a very large proportion of the population:

> In poor rural areas English does not even have much snob appeal...The need to use English for international communication likewise cannot compete with the family need to remove children from school to harvest rice, care for the younger children, or fulfill other responsibilities...Standards of teaching English in the schools, especially in country areas, frequently remain low, as well. Teaching materials may not be available, or may be inadequate in poor schools. Although their own average education has improved markedly in recent years, some Thai teachers themselves have little command even of Thai English, since they have not had much more education than their pupils (Smalley, 1994:23).

Thus, the difference between Thailand and countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines or Singapore is that unlike the latter, Thailand was never colonized by a Western power. And this means that domestically, the hegemony of Standard Thai was

never challenged. Instead, the uninterrupted reign of Thailand's monarchy allowed the dominance of Standard Thai to grow in strength. In contrast, the colonization of Malaysia and Singapore by the British led to the domestic placement of a governing infrastructure that made use of English as the language of administration. It also meant strict colonial control over the use of the local languages (such as the Chinese dialects or Malay) by the local population, particularly where education was concerned. Finally, it also had the consequence that internal to the country, aspirations of upward social mobility were seen as being best fulfilled by knowledge of English. Similar considerations apply in the case of the Philippines, which was colonized first by the Spanish, and later by the Americans.

But because English is not widely needed internal to Thailand, the language is mainly acquired as a foreign language, which means that the number of Thais who actually speak English proficiently is extremely small. This is further compounded by the fact that English language instruction, as noted above in connection with the rural population, is not very good in the first place, which means that English language teaching in Thailand has so far not been particularly successful. Aksornkool (1981:6) citing a number of studies, points to concerns that "the level of English proficiency of entering university students is remarkably low". This is despite the fact that among the non-Thai languages, English has always been granted special treatment. For example, for a number of years, English was the only foreign language actually subsidized by the Thai government (Noss, 1984:9). And, of course, recall that among the five principles discussed above in connection with the language policy, other than Thai, English is the only language that is specifically mentioned, described as "the most widely used international language for academic and occupational purposes".

Of course, this singling out of English for special treatment is also due to the recognition by the Thai government that the people themselves, particularly those living in the cities and coming from the middle classes, place great importance on English language proficiency. For example, Noss (1984:9) describes the 'enormous' public outcry that resulted when, in the 1970s, the then minister of Education proposed that the teaching of foreign languages be abolished at the primary level since this would have meant that no English would be taught at the primary level (see also Sukamolson, 1998:88). In 1996, English was made compulsory from grade one onwards in order to ensure that Thai students have a continuous exposure to English from their primary to secondary education (Wongsothorn, 2000:4). And more recently, the country has embarked on a renewed effort to recruit foreign retirees to come teach English, with incentives in the form cheap housing provided in tourism provinces (*The Straits Times,* March 16, 2002). The attraction of English also lies in the fact that for the Thais, and perhaps for most other Asians as well, the language symbolizes "modernity, being part of a larger world, being 'with it'" (Smalley, 1994:17). As such, English brand names are used for advertising Thai products to Thai consumers because 'Thai words sound corny or awkward' whereas "English brand names gives these products credibility and implies superior standards or production" (Masavisut *et al.,* 1986:203-4).

The current situation suggests that English in Thailand exists in a relationship of complementarity with Standard Thai, since each language carries distinctly different cultural connotations. Despite the prestige associated with it, there is no danger of English challenging or undermining the position enjoyed by Standard Thai. English is

associated with the world outside Thailand; it is the language of modernity. It is the language by which one can hope to aspire towards socio-economic success, particularly if one's sights are firmly set on the upper echelons of Thai society. However, this is an aspiration for a relative minority since for the majority of Thais in the countryside, economic betterment is more realistically secured via proficiency in Standard Thai than English. Here, we have a picture of both English and Standard Thai viewed instrumentally, as the means by which upward social mobility might be achieved.

But it is still only Standard Thai, on the other hand, that is associated with Thailand itself, with the King, and with being Thai. The place of Standard Thai in the national sense of identity remains unaffected by the presence of the English language:

> Thai who have a really good working knowledge of English often had part of their education abroad. Some studied in England, India, Australia or the United States when they were children or young people, sent there by wealthy parents or as beneficiaries of scholarships or of high school programs. Others spent one or more years in foreign English-speaking universities. A few Thai have native or near-native mastery of English. People with such education are generally the ones who speak for Thailand to the outside world, or interpret for those who must speak only in Standard Thai. But, on the other hand, a Thai who is only educated abroad is handicapped for lack of opportunity to study Thai language and culture, and Thai is the indispensable internal language of the country (Smalley, 1994:24).

5-4   CONCLUSION

A language such as Standard Thai has survived the processes of modernity and the pressures that arise out of the effects of modernity because of its engagement in a division between the politics of the center and the politics of the margin. The center of linguistic power (Bangkok-centrism) does not possess complete and immediate access to the peripheral regions (the disputed lands in the North bordering Myanmar; the area along where the upper Mekong draws it natural source; and, the southern states bordering Malaysia), with the consequence that Standard Thai cannot permeate every facet of marginal Thai society without encountering some form of political and linguistic resistance and/or resilience. The conceptual division between the metropolis in Bangkok and its peripheral areas have for centuries adroitly carved out important social, economic, cultural, and indeed, linguistic niches that sustain and maintain the politics of difference against foreign and local domination. Consequently, there are three emerging politico-linguistic possibilities that Thailand might have to be concerned with. These are:

(1)   the issue of separatism among the Pattani Malays;
(2)   the growing role of English internal to Thailand; and,
(3)   the need to ensure the relevance of Standard Thai as the country
          modernizes.

Binding all the above three issues are problems pertaining to economic development, and the need for the country to narrow the socio-economic gap between those living in the cities and those living in the countryside. For example, Thailand's past experience with rapid economic growth in the 60s and 70s was marked by massive migration of Thais from the countryside to the cities, as well as "serious social and

economic imbalances" between different parts of the country (Office of the Prime Minister, 1979:255-6). And one particular source of social tension has been the fact that the people living in the more remote areas were feeling left behind, leading to a number of instances when government installations were attacked. This is particularly so with the Pattani Malays, who are often looked upon as potential security threats by the government (Smalley, 1994:164). As we have already seen, assimilation into mainstream Thai society is not always easy for the Pattani Malays, nor is it necessarily a path that they would actually wish to pursue. This is especially because doing so would mean displacing the Malay language in favor of Standard Thai, and this is particularly costly because it also impacts on their religious identity as Muslims. For some time since the 70s, the Thai government seemed fairly confident that the best way to deal with the Pattani Malays was to ensure that the southern provinces also benefited from the country's economic growth:

> The government's response was to build roads into their areas, bring health care, educational facilities and agricultural improvements to villages. Though the task is far from complete, the policy has reaped considerable success and insurgency has been reduced....It is felt that once development projects have been implemented in all parts of the country insurgency will cease (Office of the Prime Minister, 1979:276-7).

However, it remains unclear how successful such a strategy really will be since it assumes that the problems are primarily economic in nature, and does not take into cognizance the religious and socio-linguistic dimensions. That is, there is no doubt that better health care and transportation systems will be welcomed by all, but in the education system, the choice of which language to use as the medium of instruction and the kind of acceptable script for the language are all still highly sensitive matters. And it is unlikely that these will find any kind of easy solution.

As we have observed a number of times, some of the problems arise because of Thailand's insistence on maintaining what is effectively a policy that has only Standard Thai at its center. The only other language with any form of support appears to English. Which leads us to the question of what will happen as more and more Thais start to become better speakers of English. Already the English language in Thailand has undergone a number of changes, such as incorporating aspects of Thai phonology, including the use of Thai tones, and introducing particular grammatical constructions (Smalley, 1994:19). These are not unusual developments, but simply point to the fact that, while English in Thailand may not yet have the status of a nativized variety, it might come to do so as Thailand requires more of its people to access technological and scientific information, conduct business negotiations with regional and international partners, and work at more senior levels in the advertising and media industries. As this happens, adults who work in these areas may choose to use English as their home language, which would mean that their children may grow up being more comfortable with (Thai) English rather than Standard Thai. There is a danger then that the heretofore unchallenged dominance of Standard Thai might then be undermined. This is because English already symbolizes the modern world for most Thais, but if in addition to its symbolic power, it is also a language that they have grown up speaking, then this might lead to a displacement of Standard Thai as an important marker of Thai national identity.

One way in which this scenario is being countered comes from the attempts at

further developing Standard Thai so that it can be more widely used for various functions. There is, in fact, no other option for the Thai government. The Thai narrative of modernity cannot afford to leave behind Standard Thai, given the language's fundamental role in unifying the Thai people. But to simply allow it to be seen as a 'bastion' of traditional values would also be untenable. This is because a large part of the hegemony of Standard Thai derives from the prestige that it is seen to possess, and if it were to be perceived as being irrelevant in a changing and modernizing economy, there is a danger that its prestige would also be undermined. The importance of prestige in language maintenance cannot be underestimated and while it may be difficult to pinpoint exactly what factors go into establishing the prestige of a language (Grenoble and Whaley 1998:x), there is no doubt that making Standard Thai relevant to the modern economy can only help in this regard. For these reasons, the government has embarked on a number of attempts to ensure that Standard Thai has a useful role to play in the country's modernizing process rather than being relegated to a merely ceremonial status. For example, its lexicon has been considerably expanded with the addition of new words that allow the language to be used in discourses concerning modern scientific concepts, Western philosophy and world affairs. While some of the vocabulary is based on English words, others are built out of more traditional sources, such as Sanskrit roots (Smalley, 1994:313). And there are also attempts to create ways of using technology with the Thai language, as seen in the work of the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (Nectec) (*Bangkok Post*, November 7, 2001).

As such efforts succeed in making Standard Thai more useful in economic and technological discourses they may lead the language to be seen in more purely instrumentalist terms. The language would still then be valued by the Thai people, but for very different reasons. Whether this may adversely impact on the status of Standard Thai as a marker of national identity marker remains to be seen. But here, we have a dilemma that highlights the linguistic paradox of Asian modernity. The spread of English requires a response in the form of a narrative that has a place for the local language or languages. But doing so often means entering into a competition where the latter are also constructed as having instrumentalist values. The paradox lies in the fact that these languages may then end up sacrificing their values as sources of traditions or cultural heritage, a value that English would have found difficult to challenge. Instead, they have entered a competition where they have no chance of winning; the best they can hope for is to stay a close second to the unassailable instrumentalist value of the English language.

5-5   NOTES

---

[1] 'Tai' denotes a family of related languages spread over different countries while 'Thai' refers to the Tai languages of Thailand (Smalley, 1994: 379).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

THE VICISSITUDES OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN
MODERNITY

6-1   INTRODUCTION

In this book, we raised the issue of dilemmas for language policies in Southeast Asian states and societies. We also presented a framework for analyzing these dilemmas, particularly in the context of language policy and modernity in Southeast Asia. In connection with this, we presented four case studies of nation states attempting to resolve some of the problems and issues surrounding language and modernity, discussing in separate chapters the language policies of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. In this closing chapter, we wish to review what we see as some of the major similarities and differences encountered by these nation states, extracting where possible generalizations that transcend the specificities of these nation states, and asking what possible future directions of inquiry they point to. We began by noting the prominent status of English in Southeast Asian interpretations of modernity. Therefore, our discussion and analysis has tended towards the idea that English is not a language that the Southeast Asian nations can afford to ignore, particularly because of its importance in facilitating economic development. Keeping English out of these countries is, therefore, not an option. But 'letting it in' means possibly compromising, if not actually jeopardizing, the status of the indigenous languages. What options are open to these countries then, and what are the implications of these options? This scenario, although considerably simplified, is, as we have seen, generalizable over a number of different Southeast Asian nation states. The specific options available to individual nation states depend, of course, on their particular histories and socio-political imperatives. But even here, we want to argue, there is much that they have in common.

The argument we have developed in the previous chapters is that English has come to represent linguistic instrumentalism par excellence, and this creates a situation where individual nation states often have no choice but to respond by emphasizing the linguistic instrumentalist values of their own indigenous languages. To do this, however, is to put these languages into a situation where they are compared with the English language, particularly in terms of how well they allow their speakers to cope with the demands of modernity. And this is a comparison where these other languages are unlikely to come out favourably. This seems pessimistic, but it is, ultimately, a reality that those interested in or involved with language policy and planning in

Southeast Asia must come to terms with. Only then can appropriate measures be undertaken that will allow for the successful management of 'the English language question'. One purpose of this concluding chapter is therefore to pursue and develop the argument further.

Another purpose is to focus on the implications of our observations for our analytical framework. Here, we revisit the relations of displacement, complementarity and equivalence, and ask if these are sufficiently comprehensive or if there are other important relations that we might have missed. We also offer some further reflections on the relative merits of treating language policy as a metaphorical balancing act.

We then close by returning to a discussion of the implications of our work for the question of modernity and the field of language policy studies. In particular, we focus on issues such as linguistic human rights and linguistic citizenship, and we examine how these issues overlap with other phenomena associated with modernity such as the breaking of traditional solidarities and patterns of consumption and commoditization.

Our conclusions are organized into three sections, one section for each of the three strands just mentioned. The first, *Linguistic Instrumentalism*, explores the rise of linguistic instrumentalism in Southeast Asia. The second, *Language Policy As A Balancing Act*, reflects on the framework used in this book. Finally, the third section, *Language And Modernity*, covers a broader range of issues that arise from studies in modernity as well as the politics of language.

6-2   LINGUISTIC INSTRUMENTALISM

Common to all four countries examined in this book, as we have seen, is the need to carefully manage the role of the English language in their various language policies. There is no possibility for any of the countries of ignoring English. This, of course, is due to the fact that the English language is often regarded as the language of modernity, and this reminds us of Tomlinson's (1991) description of modernity as a phenomenon that all societies must grapple with, whether they wish to or not.

For the Southeast Asian countries we examined (and certainly for many others as well), English represents the language of modernity specifically because it exemplifies linguistic instrumentalism better than any other language around:

> English is used as an official or semi-official language in over 60 countries, and has a prominent place in a further 20. It is either dominant or well-established in all six continents. It is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, medicine, diplomacy, sports, international competitions, pop music, and advertising. Over two-thirds of the world's scientists write in English. Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English. Of all the information in the world's electronic retrieval systems, 80% is stored in English. People communicate on the Internet largely in English. English [language] radio programmes are received by over 150 million in 120 countries. Over 50 million children study English as an additional language at primary [elementary] level; over 80 million study it at secondary level. (Crystal, 1997:360, cited in May, 2001:199)

As Stephen May comments:

> Not surprisingly perhaps, a consequence of this increasing global ascendancy of English is that the language has come to be linked inextricably with modernity and modernisation, and the associated benefits which accrue to those who speak it. In particular, the spread of English is linked to modernisation in two key ways. First, it is seen as a central tool by which the process of modernisation can be achieved, particular in developing societies. Secondly, and relatedly, monolingualism (preferably in English) is seen as a practical advantage for modern social organisation while multilingualism, in contrast, is viewed as a characteristic of 'premodern' or 'traditional' societies. (May, 2001:199)

While we agree with May's first point, we take issue with his second. Regarding the first, certainly there is no doubt that English is regarded by many as a tool for modernization, and in fact, May's use of the term 'tool' reflects the view of English in instrumentalist terms. English is therefore an agent for change that possesses clear functional results in surviving the pressures of globalization, the vehicle of political, social, and cultural change in modernity. Regarding the second, however, our examination of Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand makes it clear that monolingualism is not necessarily considered an advantage (much less monolingualism in English) and multilingualism a disadvantage. In fact, as we have already seen, the narratives of modernity created by these countries are strongly committed to the position that multilingualism is the only possible option. The dilemma they face is how to construct a relationship that simultaneously accommodates the presence of the indigenous languages and English. As we noted in the opening chapter, following Ong (1999), the narratives of Asian modernity are attempts at constructing alternative ideologies, ones that, in contrast to the tenets of modernization theory, do not aim to simply replicate Western institutions or values. Rather, these narratives prefer to assert the importance of local values and languages, and strive to make the case that it is only through an appropriate combination of Asian and Western influences that modernity can be successfully managed.

May therefore tends to overstate the case when he suggests that monolingualism in English is preferred. If May were correct, this would amount to a preference for a complete displacement by English of the indigenous languages, but this is clearly not an option for our Southeast Asian nations simply because English is not regarded as a local language, and is unlikely to be so regarded in the near future. We need to bear in mind that modernization in the narrow sense (of accessing technology, or conducting international diplomacy, etc) is not all that is at stake for countries in Southeast Asian. There are broader concerns that policy makers are all too aware of, such as the desire for pride in one's cultural heritage, the importance of managing ethnic diversity, and the need to build a sense of nationalism. And inextricably embedded in these broader concerns are the indigenous languages.

Malaysia, for example, with its bumiputera policy, is committed to ensuring that the Malay identity is not merely protected, but flourishes. This was institutionalized in the governments of Malaysia since 1963, from Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Razak, Tun Hussein Onn, Tun Mahathir Mohammad, and to the current prime minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in 2005. As a concomitant, this requires statal policies that are alert to any possible threats to the Islamic religion as well as to the sole national language of the country, Bahasa Malaysia. If the opposition party PAS, for example,

promotes a right-wing form of Islam for an Islamic State of Malaysia based on Koranic images then it would only be prudent for the ruling party UMNO, as the centrist Malay political party, to become even more adept at the use of Koranic quotations, and in effect, become more Islamic than PAS itself. However this has to be achieved by the pro-Muslim state without sacrificing the central role that Bahasa Melayu *as* Bahasa Malaysia continues to play in language policies of Malaysian modernity. Similarly, in Thailand, the status of Standard Thai as the sole national language remains unchallenged. It is such a fundamental aspect of how the Thais define themselves that a shift to English language monolingualism is unthinkable, and would spell immediate political disaster for any administration that was intent on such a move. And while Singapore doesn't have the same historical commitment to a particular indigenous language in the same way as Malaysia or Thailand, it is committed to a policy that discounts the possibility of English being a mother tongue, so that depending on one's ethnicity, a Singaporean will be expected to be bilingual in both English as well as the officially assigned mother tongue. And even here, we saw that despite acknowledging that an increasing number of Singaporeans are coming from English-speaking homes, the state's response is to aim for a more 'realistic' level of proficiency in the mother tongue while reiterating its belief in the importance of the mother tongue. Abandoning the bilingual policy is simply not an option. And in the Philippines, whatever problems may surround the attempts to impose Tagalog as an official language, the debates often involve the question of whether some other local language would be a better candidate, not whether English monolingualism is to be seriously pursued. Thus, it is clear that for all these countries, the preferred state is not monolingualism; rather, it is a multilingualism (or more specifically, bilingualism) that includes the indigenous languages and the English language.

Continuing with the case of the Philippines, we have seen that the state has advanced tremendously in terms of formal constitutional arrangements and legal-rational facsimiles of language doctrine. Also, language doctrine in the Philippines tends to depend on the personality of the incumbent president and the degree to which she or he is willing to emphasize the importance of language in a highly complex and bureaucratized system. The presidential office, since the time of Ferdinand Marcos right through the administration of Corazon Cojuangco Aquino and the incumbent Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, acts as the primary executive agent that facilitates the linguistic instrumentalism needed for effecting language change in the Philippines. Language policy by amendments to the Constitution is most overt in the case of the Philippines while Singapore and Malaysia continue to rely on incremental changes in regulations at the level of bureaucratic administration by the Singapore and Malaysian civil services. Unlike Singapore, the Philippines tends to be bogged down by the problems of economic modernization and the seemingly irresolvable problem of land distribution and land acquisition policies that are skewed tremendously by the politics of clientelism. The interests of the power elite are naturally found in dominant-regime continuance, and the extension of the 'tradition' of a fractured, 'landed' peasantry dependent on patrons for the well-being and survival of their families and their own lives. While such a system of clientelism might appear in some instances in Malaysia and Thailand, it is clearly endemic in the Philippines. Therefore, language policy in Philippine modernity is more likely to play a secondary and contingent role, and

instead, be a function of the politics of patron-clientelism that continues to shadow the majority of Filipinos today, despite well-meaning legal-rational attempts to modify the status quo as seen in the Marcos and Macapagal-Arroyo administrations. The endeavor to facilitate and promote English and Tagalog as official languages serves the purposes of the landed elite and military class of generals who continue to silently control politics in the Philippines. The resistance to bilingualism in schools and the promotion of Tagalog as a Manila-centric linguistic favourite arises out of the plethora of alternative languages that compete with Tagalog at the local and sub-national level while simultaneously playing into the politics of clientelism between the center in Manila, and the agrarian periphery. The Islamic resistance in Mindanao and the recent use of US troops in joint exercises have overshadowed potential presidential directives over language promotion and use. The complexities of language policy in Philippine modernity continue to sit uncomfortably with the problems of urban life: terrorism, kidnapping of wealthy Filipinos of Chinese descent, a love-hate relationship with the United States and American popular culture, and a divested interest in rebuilding the self-esteem of the Philippine people from the ravages of Marcos's economic plunder.

This brings us to the notion of linguistic instrumentalism. Discourses about linguistic instrumentalism do not arise in a vacuum. They arise because of the recognition that much of current social life is driven by economic demands. This does not in any way amount to any kind of materialist social theory. But what it does mean is a commitment to a theory of power which acknowledges that the different forms of capital are not equally valued; economic capital tends to wield greater influence than other capital. Such a theory can be found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Although a detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this book, it is worth noting that despite the fact that many different kinds of capital exist – social, symbolic, economic, cultural (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, 1991; Thompson, 1990) – these forms of capital exist only in relation to specific fields. And while each field may be said to have its own logic, so that the field of art, for example, is characterized by its own internal struggles for honor and prestige as well as money, no field is completely autonomous. In fact, one of Bourdieu's key insights was to point out that multiple fields exist in relation to a more general 'field of power' where the latter is mainly characterized by the pursuit of economic capital more so than any other (Calhoun, 2003:299). And fields that may be high in cultural capital but low in economic capital are still often at a disadvantage in relation to fields where economic capital is most valued. As Calhoun puts it:

> Directly economic capital operates in a money-based market that can be indefinitely extended. Cultural capital, by contrast, operates as a matter of status, which is often recognized only within specific fields. (Calhoun, 2003:299)

It is precisely because money-based markets have a greater reach than cultural ones that the discourse of linguistic instrumentalism has had such an impact in Southeast Asia as well as other parts of the world (e.g. Budach, Roy, and Heller, 2003 ; Heller, 1999a, b). In the case of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, linguistic instrumentalism arises because, as we have seen, that is how these countries have apprehended the role of English – in instrumentalist terms. Having framed the English language in this manner, the implications for the indigenous languages are understandably correspondingly framed as well. That is, these languages are either

likewise conceived in instrumentalist terms (e.g. Bahasa Malaysia in Malaysia) or they are cocooned off as serving non-instrumentalist functions such as acting as 'mere' repositories of traditional knowledge (e.g. the mother tongues in Singapore).

Neither of these options is completely satisfactory. Consider the latter option, where indigenous languages are seen as providing anchors to an ancient cultural heritage. This already tends to give such languages a lower status vis-à-vis the English language, precisely because they then lack the connotations of modernity so vital to motivating younger generations of speakers to actually want to learn these languages. Thus, even with strong institutional support from the state, the older generation of speakers tends to be dissatisfied if the indigenous languages are positioned as having a primarily historical value instead of any current relevance. And as we saw in the chapter on Singapore, even the mother tongues, particularly Mandarin Chinese, are slowly being reconstructed in instrumentalist terms.

This brings us to the first option. Here, the question of how to conceive of the relationship between the English language and the indigenous languages becomes one of competing linguistic instrumentalisms. That is, how can the indigenous languages be developed (codified, elaborated, etc.) so as to better deal with the 'threat' posed by English? This is the option taken up in Malaysia (for Bahasa Malaysia) and Thailand (for Standard Thai). In these countries, it is culturally and politically unacceptable that these particular languages be any less prestigious than English. Hence, there is a tendency (clearly pronounced in Malaysia and perhaps latent in Thailand) to construe the relationship between Bahasa Malaysia or Standard Thai and English as one of linguistic displacement, leading to concerted attempts at lexical innovation so that new terms are coined which, hopefully, allows such languages to be better used for the communication of scientific or technological information. In both Malaysia and Thailand, therefore, we also find the use of Bahasa Malaysia and Standard Thai, respectively, as the medium of education, and detractors claiming that these moves penalize the students by negatively affecting their proficiency in English. For example, the senior Malaysian statesman and former Prime Minister, Tun Mahathir Mohamad, has delivered strong critiques of the performance of ethnic bumiputera Malays under the affirmative action policies that were introduced approximately three decades ago, suggesting that the teaching of Mathematics and Science should be conducted in English. This has evoked strong resistance from a number of delegates of UMNO (United Malays National Organization) as well as members of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, the Malay language academy. This resistance is based on the conviction that Malay rights and privileges are non-negotiable so that any attempt at displacement of the Malay language is viewed as an immediate threat. Under Mahathir's successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the focus on agriculture and Islam Hadhari has not nullified the senior statesman's influence since October 23, 2003 when Badawi took over from Mahathir. Badawi has remained focused on the grassroots activities and combating corruption within the elite Malaysian administrative system. He is likely to remain committed to the kinds of strategic policies on language that the previous prime ministers have implemented.

Yet regardless of specific attempts at developing the instrumentalist functions of particular indigenous languages, an important generalization that should not be missed is that the indigenous languages have entered a competition where there is no

possibility of beating the incumbent title-holder, the English language. In other words, there is no possibility of ever displacing, much less superseding, English as the language of modernity par excellence, and by implication, as the prime exemplar of linguistic instrumentalism. The gap between English and these other languages cannot be eliminated so that the best that the various language policies of Southeast Asia can hope for is to ensure that the gap is not too wide. Put more negatively, by attempting to play up the instrumentalist functions of the indigenous languages, the Southeast Asian nations are 'condemning' their indigenous languages to playing linguistic catch-up with the English language.

In this connection, we must emphasize that the concern motivating policies which aim to cultivate the instrumentalist values of the indigenous languages does not necessarily result from a fear that the languages will die out. While there may be occasional expressions that language death is something to worry about, there is, for the foreseeable future at least, no real reason to believe that Standard Thai or Bahasa Malaysia are in any real danger of dying out. However, this does not make the expressions of concern any less grave. To better understand what is going on, it is helpful to review Fishman's Graded Inter-generational Disruption Scale (Fishman, 1991, 2001; see also May, 2001:2), a well-known formulation of the processes by which language shift can take place. Because we are interested in the relationship between English and the indigenous languages, the version we present below has been modified accordingly.

> Stage 1: use of the indigenous language in prestige domains (higher level educational, occupational, governmental, media-related functions)
>
> Stage 2: use of the indigenous language in less prestigious domains (lower level educational, occupational, governmental, media-related functions)
>
> Stage 3: use of the indigenous language in the work sphere, mainly for informal interaction.
>
> Stage 4: use of the indigenous language as medium of instruction in education
>
> Stage 5: informal use of the indigenous language in the home, school, and community
>
> Stage 6: intergenerational family transmission of the indigenous language
>
> Stage 7: indigenous language still spoken, but most speakers are beyond child-bearing age
>
> Stage 8: remaining speakers of the indigenous language are old and dying out

Our adaptation of Fishman's scale allows us to see how in a given society, an indigenous language, while widely used in highly prestigious domains, can, over time, become restricted to 'mere' community and family-based interactions. And crucially, as younger generations of speakers lose touch with the language so that most speakers tend to come from the older generations, there is, in the final stage, a very real possibility that indigenous language may be completely displaced. Correlating with this decline in the fortunes of the indigenous language, of course, is the rise of its potential replacement, English.

The point, obviously, is that we do not have to reach stage 8 for alarm bells to start ringing since even apparently 'secure' national languages are vulnerable to domain attrition. In Sweden, for example, constitutional amendments have been proposed in order to protect the national language Swedish, which is considered to be increasingly under threat from English on the one hand, and from various minority languages on the

other (Boyd and Huss, 2004). According to Boyd and Huss, legislative measures are being considered because:

> The status of Swedish as the undisputed national majority language, which can be used virtually everywhere by virtually everyone, has until recently been taken for granted. The language has not had official status, nor has legislation been considered necessary to guarantee its position. Ongoing political, economic and social changes have however led to a greater concern that status planning may now be desirable. (Boyd and Huss, 2004:842)

In many official domains in Swedish society, such as those of business, culture or communications technology, English is often used along with Swedish and on a number of occasions, as a complete replacement even. And because Sweden has had a relatively long history of encouraging linguistic diversity, the use of minority languages, such as Finnish, Tornedal and Sami, is also increasing. The problem faced by Swedish is not an isolated case, but applies to many other European languages also (Boyd and Huss, 2001).

For countries like Malaysia and Thailand where there is a strong internal drive to maintain the prestige of Bahasa Malaysia or Standard Thai, any shift away from stage 1 is already cause for concern. That is, the issue for Bahasa Malaysia and Standard Thai, as with that of Swedish, is not the resuscitation of a dying language. Instead, the issue is one of ensuring the continued wide use and prestige of an indigenous language. Thus, Malaysia and Thailand, there are constant attempts to ensure that the indigenous languages remain at stage 1. But for the reasons already discussed, the most that can be hoped for is a narrowing of the gap between English and these languages in a game of constant linguistic catch-up. Otherwise, over generations, it may indeed be the case that displacement by English will occur.

We want to close this section by making two points. One, as we have been careful to stress, there is, for the most part, no real danger of actual language death. Rather, the issue is one of national pride in maintaining the prestige of the national language vis-à-vis English. But as Holmes points out above, shift can occur rapidly especially if there is a degree of complacency about the status of the ethnic language. Second, while we have argued that attempting to establish the linguistic instrumentalism of the indigenous languages so as to compete English is, ultimately, a losing battle, we want to suggest some positive strategies which might facilitate the continued use of these languages. Our suggestion is that rather than construing the relationship between English and the indigenous languages as one of displacement, language policies might aim for a version of complementarity. But unlike the complementarity exemplified by Singapore, where the mother tongues are viewed as cultural anchors to traditional knowledge and thus cast in opposition to things considered modern, we suggest a complementarity that is firmly associated with being modern itself.

To better appreciate what we mean, it is important to remember that modernity is multi-faceted. While often typified by hard technologies and scientific know-how, modernity is also manifested in the service, fashion, advertising and entertainment industries. Thus, Lash and Urry (1994:57) point out to the highly significant impact of the culture industries, where people invest their personalities or identities in styles of dress, dance, sport, music, etc. As they go on to observe:

In the sphere of work, more than cognitive reflexivity is involved. The creation of culture itself and the growing component of design in increasingly symbolically coded material goods entails an important aesthetic component in production itself. Hence, ... we analyse, not so much increasing knowledge- or information-intensivity in production, but design intensivity and, with the decline of importance of the labour process, the growing importance of the 'design process. (Lash and Urry, 1994:57)

The importance of design is reflected in the emphasis paid to branding, niche marketing, and customer service. And here, the indigenous languages are more likely to find a current, albeit primarily domestic, relevance that has social and economic value. In this way, exhortations from older generations or from the state to learn the indigenous languages need not be seen as being divorced from either economic realities or from the positive connotations associated with being modern. This is because such industries are more likely to be able to accommodate local cultural practices (and in fact, it is arguable that 'local flavor' is part of what makes such industries marketable in the first place). There is evidence that such strategies are slowly being developed in Southeast Asia, albeit on a much smaller scale and in a more tentative fashion than in the West. For example, the Thai government places a number of restrictions on the use of English in advertising. English can only be used in foreign brand names or jingles. In the rest of the advertisement, Standard Thai is required (Masavisut *et al.* 1986:205). And in Malaysia, while programs in English are broadcast, programs using Bahasa Malaysia, a number of them locally produced, predominate. Similarly, in Singapore, there are dedicated channels for programs in English as well as the various mother tongues so it is possible to access the content of news, advertisements and entertainment features in all four official languages. The potential impact of these initiatives in serving the state's particular narrative of modernity is not to be underestimated, though whether they will have the same level of impact as Western cultural industries remains doubtful. Nevertheless, as we recall Benedict Anderson's argument that print capitalism was crucial to the invention of the 'imagined community' so important to cultivating a sense of nationhood, it becomes logical to extrapolate from print capitalism to the power of the mass media in general. As Kennedy notes:

the role of the mass media and the dissemination of popular cultural forms are absolutely crucial because they provide abundant and seductive resources for the construction of 'imagined worlds'. (Kennedy, 2001:11)

We have seen in this section that developing a language policy that positions the indigenous languages with respect to English is no easy task. The main reason for this difficulty comes from the strong, almost unbreakable link between English and modernity. Conceived in this manner, any other language which wants to lay claims to modernity will tend to see its relationship with English as a competitive one. In the terms of our framework, the relationship is one of displacement. In the next section, we reflect further on the framework we have employed in this book.

6-3   LANGUAGE POLICY AS A BALANCING ACT

We recall that our emphasis on the nature of policies as being influenced by institutional narratives in the form of nationalist ideologies continues to be

demonstrated in the political rhetoric of these nation states. Such statal narratives are undoubtedly highly ideological, but their articulation is crucial both to the justification of specific policies as well as to the national imagining so necessary for the building and sustaining of nationhood. Recall also that we have, following Touraine (1995), treated modernity as essentially the "diffusion of the products of rational activity" and the global spread of such products means that no nation state can claim to be completely insulated from modernity. Rather, the point of interest lies in how different states, given their particular histories and priorities, attempt to deal with the question of modernity.

As our interest has been in the language policies of Southeast Asian nations, we have dealt with these as part of the narratives woven by the various states. And here, we believe our approach has been useful in bringing out the different considerations faced by particular nations while maintaining the analytical focus on matters pertaining to language. In this regard, we think it extremely important to continue approaching the analysis of language policies in terms of a balancing act. As we have pointed out, this is partly because policy makers themselves often engage in just such a process of weighing and prioritizing a multitude of considerations, so that the balancing act metaphor actually frames the ways in which policy issues are being approached. As analysts, approaching the study of language policy in this manner helps put us, in a sense, in the shoes of these policy makers. And while there is admittedly some danger that empathy can lead to sympathy, the point to bear in mind is that to the extent the analyst is intent on making policy recommendations, such empathy also forces the analyst to be as realistic as possible in terms of the kinds of recommendations made. The benefit of this should not be underestimated. For one, it lessens the commonly-made charge that as academics living in 'ivory towers', we are prone to unrealistic and idealistic policy recommendations. Two, and relatedly, it helps put the relationship between policy makers and academics on a less antagonistic footing.

We are also optimistic that in treating relationships between languages in terms of equivalence, complementarity and displacement, we have helped to highlight rather than disguise, the nature of the various problems and issues faced by Southeast Asian nations as they grapple with modernity. This is because the fundamental problem posed to the state by modernity is a relational one, such as how to conceive of the relationship between the 'old' and the 'new', the 'liquid' and the 'solid', the indigenous and the exogenous? Any attempt to deal with this relational problem immediately comes up against two further problems. One is a further relational issue of how to conceive of the relationship between the various 'olds' since most Southeast Asian countries are linguistically and ethnically diverse. The other is that any policy on the nature of such relationships is always formulated against a backdrop of resources which, rightly or wrongly, are perceived as being limited. Given such considerations of formulating relationships in the context of limited resources, we believe there is a tendency for particular relationships to be recurrently and predominantly framed in terms of exchanges. An item (language, credential, currency) X may also count as item Y for purposes of obtaining or achieving resource Z. Or the use of item X may be limited to the acquisition of specific resources while Y may be limited to the acquisition of a disjoint set of resources. Finally, the use of X may be threatened by Y so that in the desire to acquire Z, Y may be preferred and X considered irrelevant. Clearly, these are the kinds of scenarios that fall, respectively, under the relations of equivalence,

complementarity or displacement. Such an economically-informed approach is undoubtedly controversial, but it is one that we believe makes sense (see our earlier remarks concerning Bourdieu's field of power). As Touraine (1998), among others, has pointed out, the changes associated with modernity and globalization are most advanced in the domain of economics. Like most theorists, Touraine is fully aware that modernity and globalization are certainly not limited only to economic changes. Nevertheless, he points out that it is in the arena of economic activity that we witness "the most radical rupture ever observed between the actor and the system" (Touraine, 1998:130). Thus, we believe that crises of cultural fragmentation or problems in identity construction are first and foremost experienced, particularly by the state, at the level of economic activity. Thus, how such economic experiences are dealt with often provides the logic that informs the management of other aspects of modernity.

Our focus on equivalence, complementarity or displacement is thus derived from what we see as likely to be analytically useful in understanding the relationship between language and modernity. We are not committed to the position that these are necessarily exhaustive. But we believe that our investigation into the language policies of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand have demonstrated the value of thinking along these lines. At this point, it is appropriate for us to discuss in more general terms the relationship between language and modernity, which we do so in the following section.

6-4   LANGUAGE AND MODERNITY

Theorists of modernity are often particularly interested in how modernity impacts on traditional assumptions about ethnic identity, language, religion, and culture. As we saw in the opening chapter, Connolly's (2000) notion of cosmopolitan complexity refers to a kind of modernity where behavior is no longer predictably grounded in traditional identities. In a similar vein, Bauman's (2000) metaphor of a 'liquid modernity' refers to the destruction of traditionally 'solid' ties and loyalties, resulting in a modernity that is highly individual and private since each person, without recourse to larger patterns of social predictability, must now take on the responsibility of deciding for him/herself what counts as a coherent and morally acceptable lifestyle. In this sense, both Bauman (2000) and Giddens (1991) tend to emphasize the high degree of self-reflection or reflexivity that they see is an important consequence of living in a world marked by modernity.

In our view, perhaps the most significant issue in the relationship between language and modernity is the question of how the role of language in marking ethnic identity has been affected. If theorists such as Connolly, Bauman, and Giddens are correct, then a consequence of modernity is the loosening of the otherwise traditionally strong ties between language and ethnic identity. The general expectation that if one claims membership in a particular ethnicity, then one should be expected to speak the language traditionally associated with that ethnicity would be weakened. Taking this argument one step further, it would suggest that while previously conceptualized in more essentialist terms, ethnic identity itself is becoming increasingly situational (Barth, 1969; Moerman, 1974). Under a situational view of ethnicity, identity markers are

drawn upon as significant or discarded as irrelevant as sociohistorical circumstances change, leading to the possibility that amongst members of a given ethnic group, there may be disagreements over what markers are to be considered criteria for that identity. However, as we noted in the introductory chapter, this dichotomy between situational and essentialist notions of identity is not very helpful in the case of ethnic identities. As the work of Anthony Smith (1986, 1991, 1998) suggests, ethnic identities have both a historical and symbolic dimension, involving shared memories, a sense of intergenerational continuity, and a belief in a common destiny, making them less open to change or self-fashioning as other identities may perhaps be. And so, however plastic an economically-motivated identity may be, to the extent that it is based on some notion of ethnicity, the constraints noted by Smith will no doubt still apply. Smith's own concern with the relatively fixed, though by no means essentialist, nature of ethnic identity, it seems to us, is entirely consistent with more recent semiotically-based approaches (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004; Irvine and Gal, 2000; Silverstein, 1985, 2000) to understanding identity. Such approaches, while treating identity as being recurrently and locally performed in various contexts, nonetheless acknowledge that such contexts are dialectically related to prevailing macro-social ideologies, including those which have been historically and collectively ratified by group norms. While such semiotically-based approaches have been used in demonstrating how status identities are locally and strategically manipulated (Duranti, 1992, Irvine, 1989 [1974]), they are also useful in accounting for how other kinds of identities, especially those pertaining to gender (Adkins, 2003; McNay, 1999) and ethnicity (May, 2001), are less easily negotiated.

Our investigation of the four Southeast Asian countries suggests that the view where language is comfortably seen as a clear marker of particular ethnic identities, and as a bearer of traditional and cultural values associated with these ethnic identities, is being transformed in statal narratives that attempt to come to grips with the challenges of modernity. Not surprisingly because such changes do not proceed at a uniform pace across all segments of society, they can give rise to intra-communal disagreements as to what it really means to be a member of ethnicity X. For example, our discussion of Singapore saw that the Chinese community was internally divided into those who were considered English-educated and those who were considered Chinese-educated. The English-educated, in contrast to their Chinese-educated counterparts, tended to place less importance of knowledge of Mandarin as a key criterion of being Chinese. And our discussion of Thailand saw that some of the Chinese parents there were keen to maintain some knowledge of Mandarin as part of their ethnic identity, leading them to send their children overseas to Taiwan or Hong Kong for their education. Other Chinese parents, on the other hand, adopted the more pragmatic attitude that economic success and assimilation in Thailand requires a good knowledge of Standard Thai, so that knowledge of Mandarin is considered of lesser importance. The situation in Malaysia is similar but more complicated. It is similar because of the state's metanarrative of Malay indigenousness and non-Malay Malaysian anxieties associated with encountering over three decades of systemic racial quotas in education and other public services and financial benefits that divides Malaysia into a country of two distinct classes of citizens: Malays and non-Malays. The complexity arises out of continuing attempts by the Malay Right to enforce these class distinctions while emphasizing Bahasa Melayu, the Malay

language, as Bahasa Malaysia, the national language, in the midst of an unchanging cultural mindset among many Malays as decried by former Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohammad.

As these different perspectives over how crucial the language in question is to the ethnic identities grow, the nation states, in order to pre-empt any possibility of ethnic unrest, find themselves tasked with addressing the role and relevance of the indigenous languages in their various narratives of modernity. And a common strategy is to play up the linguistic instrumentalist values of these languages, which brings us right back to the discussion in section 2 of this chapter.

A second issue arising from the relationship between language and modernity concerns what might broadly be called the question of language rights. This issue is related to the first because, if particular languages are seen as possessing crucial gatekeeping functions in providing selective access to social goods, then language rights are intimately tied up with issues such as social discrimination. But if particular languages are not seen as holding any particular relevance for social mobility, but are positioned purely as providing historical links to cultural tradition, then, once again, the question arises as to whether these languages or their speakers should be accorded any form of state support or protection (Mufwene, 2002:76-7).

The issue of language rights has been most articulately developed in the works of Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (see chapter 1). Much of their writing is directed towards ensuring the protection of the 'mother tongue' languages spoken by these minority groups against the 'antagonism' of the 'linguistic majorities' (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995:495), and in this enterprise, they seem to assume that identifying the mother tongues of particular minority groups is not a major problem. However, as we have just noted, under conditions of modernity, it is not always clear what the mother tongue of a particular group is. The Singapore chapter, for example, indicates that while the state may officially assign specific mother tongues to particular ethnic groups, there may be claims from segments of the population that a language such as English be treated as a mother tongue. And for reasons already discussed, the Singapore narrative of modernity, as articulated by the state, considers English 'emotionally unacceptable' as a mother tongue. The other problem for Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas is that even the identification of minority groups itself is problematic. As May points out:

> The principle problem here is that advocates of linguistic human rights tend to assume the identity of linguistic minority groups as given, the collective aims of linguistic minority groups as uniform, and the notion of collective rights as unproblematic ... but the way the argument is formulated assumes that the linguistic community in question is easily definable in the first place -- or, rather, that all members of this group are (or will want to be) principally identified and identifiable by their language. And yet this simply cannot be assumed, not least because of the processes of language shift and loss...which may already have led many group members to abandon the minority language in question and/or any identification they may have had with it. (May, 2001:8)

May's critique coheres with Bauman's emphasis on modernity as liquid and fluid, and suggests that the porosity and malleability of group identification needs to be fully addressed before further progress can be made in the issue of linguistic human rights. In other words, under conditions of modernity, as individuals come to assume greater responsibility and perhaps control over the kinds of identities they wish to be associated with, the state has no choice but to take greater cognizance of individual

goals and desires as it attempts to weave a narrative that individuals from disparate backgrounds may find coherent and unifying.

One way forward, suggested in Stroud (2001; see also Stroud and Heugh, 2004), is to pursue the idea of linguistic citizenship rather than linguistic human rights. Stroud's suggestion takes into account the very point we have been making, that linguistic instrumentalism is highly relevant to language maintenance. As he notes citing S. Othman (1996):

> It is quite clear that in the majority of cases, the programmes that fail most dismally are those that seek to use the 'minority' languages of the most *marginalised* and poverty stricken speakers as media of instruction. Speakers such as these, view their languages as dead ends educationally and of little use in official labour markets. Those languages which suffer the greatest lack of materials or appropriate grammars are also the ones that have historically been so insignificant politically so as not to merit any attention from linguists or textbook writers. In other words, we need recourse to a perspective that can accommodate the social distribution of minority language programme failure, and that acknowledges that problems in MT [mother tongue] programmes are at bottom problems of deprivation, marginality and poverty of the speakers of the languages. (Stroud, 2001:341, *italics* in original)

Stroud's notion of linguistic citizenship is based on a distinction between affirmative and transformative orientations to problems of resource redistribution and status recognition. An affirmative orientation attempts to resolve such problems "by positively affirming, or recognizing, the cultural uniqueness, identity and /or value of the collectivity in question, thereby also underwriting the right of groups to equal treatment or, even more radically, 'positive discrimination'"(Stroud, 2001:344). This is the basic orientation behind linguistic human rights. In contrast, a transformative orientation attempts to "deconstruct the previously devalued identities of stigmatized collectivities, and solves the problem of a more equitable distribution by means of general welfare strategies" (Stroud, 2001:344). Thus, in contrast to an affirmative orientation, which assumes the clear identification of specific groups, a transformative orientation highlights the ways in which assumptions about groups may be problematic, it foregrounds for political debate issues of group recognition and in the process, may well lead to a blurring of group differentiation (Stroud, 2001:345).

Linguistic citizenship is transformative in its orientation because the concept of citizenship itself has historically been an avenue by which a host of different issues (from economic rights to gender) are thrown up for public discussion (Stroud, 2001:345). The extension to citizenship to issues of language, Stroud believes, thus "provides a more theoretically grounded and adequate conceptualisation of the problems confronting a politics of language than does the notion of linguistic human rights" (Stroud, 2001:346). Whether or not linguistic citizenship can ultimately deliver on these promises is too early to tell. However, it is a concept worth exploring further because it does not take group identities to be givens, and in fact, openly seeks to problematize such identities. In this sense, at least, linguistic citizenship seems better equipped to deal with the intersection between language and modernity.

6-5   CONCLUSION

In this final section, we highlight two possible directions of inquiry arising from the above discussion. The first concerns the discourse of linguistic

instrumentalism, and the second concerns the role of the nation state under conditions of modernity.

Regarding the first, it would instructive, we believe, to undertake an investigation into the kinds of assumptions that recur in specific discourses where linguistic instrumentalism is invoked. At this moment, it seems to us that there are three significant features of linguistic instrumentalist discourse. One feature is monolithicity, by which we refer to a tendency to speak of the instrumentally valued ('target') language as though it was a single homogenous variety, thus rendering linguistic variation 'invisible' or 'devalued'. The variety most visible is often the 'standard'. The other feature is exonormativity, which we think may arise as a consequence of monolithicity. If, as is often the case, the standard or target variety is only acquired in contexts of formal language learning, then the variety learned at home or in informal communal contexts becomes perceived as an 'incorrect' or 'deviant' version of the standard. This 'ideology of the standard' (Milroy, 2001) is exacerbated when we look at the spread of English across the globe. Though our focus in this book has been on Southeast Asia, there is no doubt that the struggle over what can or should be considered a 'standard' is an issue for all societies. Here, 'nativized' varieties acquired in the home or used informally are doubly denigrated for, one, not being standard, and two, for being considered unintelligible or ungrammatical even when compared to more colloquial 'native' counterparts. The third feature of instrumentalist discourse is resource-orientation, which refers to the fact that consequent upon identifying the target variety, initiatives are proposed where time, money, and manpower are maximally allocated to ensuring the proper teaching of the target variety. This, of course, is a familiar scenario, thanks mainly to Phillipson's (1992) work on linguicism. The extent to which the three features just mentioned can be said to characterize the discourse of linguistic instrumentalism is an empirical one that, we believe, merits further research.

As for the second line of inquiry, while there are those who believe that the nation state has been superseded by transnational migrant flows or supra-national loyalties based on religion or ethnic diasporas, there are yet others who continue to hold that "in many situations the nation state and nationalism continue to provide a pivotal axis around which individuals and collectivities frame their sense of cultural affiliation and feelings of belonging" (Kennedy, 2001:2-3). However, the 170 new nation states since 1945 is sufficient empirical evidence to suggest the continuing resilience of the concepts of sovereignty and nation state, despite the pressures in modernity to weaken the traditional political borders through the communications revolution and the Information Age. We have tried to demonstrate how language policy in Southeast Asian modernity creates a powerful and valuable segue into understanding the hubris surrounding the politics of language in this part of the world in terms of the relationships that have evolved between the vernacular and 'foreign' languages, the importance of the English language, and the political, cultural and economic cleavages, intersections, undercurrents, and malformations within states and societies in the 'progressive' and 'rationalistic' experience of modernity.

REFERENCES

Adkins, L., 2003, Reflexivity: freedom or habit of gender? *Theory, Culture and Society,* **20**(6):21-42.

Aksornkool, N., 1980, *EFL planning in Thailand: A case study in language planning.* Georgetown University PhD dissertation.

Anderson, B., 1991, *Imagined Communities: Reflections On the Origins and Spread of Nationalism,* Verso, London.

Anshen, F., 2001, Language planning, in: M. Aronoff and J. Rees-Miller, eds., *Handbook of Linguistics,* Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 704-713.

Asuncion-Lande, N., 1971, Multilingualism, politics, and "Filipinism", *Asian Survey,* **11**(7):677-692.

Barth, F., 1969, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference,* Little, Brown and Co, Boston.

Baugh, J., 2000, Educational malpractice and the miseducation of language minority students, in: J. K. Hall and W. G. Eggington, eds., *The sociopolitics of English language teaching,* Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp. 104-16.

Bauman, Z., 2000, *Liquid Modernity,* Polity Press, Cambridge.

Bauman, Z., 2005, *Work, Consumerism and the New Poor,* 2nd ed., Open University Press, Berkshire.

Benjamin, G., 1976, The cultural logic of Singapore's "Multiracialism", in: R. Hassan, ed., *Singapore: Society in Transition,* Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 115-133.

Benjamin, G., 1988, *Grammar and polity: The cultural and political background to Standard Malay,* manuscript, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore.

Berman, M., 1982, *All that is solid melts into air: The experience of modernity,* Simon and Schuster, New York.

Blommaert, J., 1996, Language planning as a discourse on language and society: The linguistic ideology of a scholarly tradition. *Language problems and language planning* **20**(3):199-222.

Blommaert, J., 2001a, The Asmara Declaration as a sociolinguistic problem: Reflections on scholarship and linguistic rights, *Journal of Sociolinguistics,* **5**(1):131-42.

Blommaert, J., 2001b, Review of T. Skutnabb-Kangas' Linguistic genocide in education – or worldwide diversity and human rights? *Applied Linguistics* **22**(1):539-41.

Blommaert, J. and Verschueren, J., 1991, The pragmatics of minority politics in Belgium *Language in Society,* **20**:503-531.

Blommaert, J. and Verschueren, J., 1998, The role of language in European nationalist ideologies in B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, and P. V.

Kroskrity, eds., *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory* Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 189-210.

Bokhorst-Heng, W., 1998, Language and imagining the nation in Singapore. PhD dissertation, University of Toronto.

Bokhorst-Heng, W., 1999, Singapore's speak Mandarin campaign: Language ideological debates in the imagining of the nation, in: J. Blommaert, ed., *Language Ideological Debates*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 235-265.

Bourdieu, P., 1984, *Distinction*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Bourdieu, P., 1986, The forms of capital, in: J. G. Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research in the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood Press, New York, pp. 241-258.

Bourdieu, P., [1980], 1990, *The Logic of Practice,* trans. by R. Nice, Polity/Stanford University Press Cambridge/Stanford.

Bourdieu, P., 1991, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Boyd, S. and Huss, L., 2001, Introduction, in: S. Boyd and L. Huss, eds., *Managing Multilingualism in a European Nation-State: Challenges for Swede*n, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp.1-12.

Boyd, S. and Huss, L., 2004, Do the national languages of Europe need a national language policy? Some reflections on the report of the committee for the advancement of Swedish from a multilingual perspective. Proceedings from the 2002 Second International Symposium on Bilingualism, University of Vigo, Galicia-Spain.

Brennan, T., 2000, *Exhausting modernity*. Routledge, London/New York.

Brown, D. 1988. From peripheral communities to ethnic nations: Separatism in Southeast Asia, *Pacific Affairs*, **61**(1):51-77.

Brown, M. E. and Ganguly, S., 2003, *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

Bucholtz, M. and Hall, K., 2004, Language and identity, in: A. Duranti, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, Blackwell, Oxford, 369-394.

Bucholtz, M., 2002, Youth and cultural practice, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, **31**:525-552.

Budach, G., Roy, S., and Heller, M., 2003, Community and commodity in French Ontario, *Language in Society*, **32**:603-627.

Calhoun, C., 2003, Pierre Bourdieu, in: G. Ritzer, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Major Contemporary Social Theorists*, Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 274-309.

Case, W., 1993, Semi-democracy in Malaysia: Withstanding the pressures for regime change, *Pacific Affairs*, **66**(2):183-205.

Chan H. C., 1971, *Singapore: The Politics of Survival*, Oxford University Press, Singapore.

Chan, H. C., and Evers, H. D., 1973, Nation-building and national identity in Southeast Asia, in: S. N. Eisenstadt and S. Rokkan, eds., *Building States and Nations: Analyses by Region*, Sage, Beverly Hills, pp. 301-319.

Chatterjee, P., 1993, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Cobarrubias, J., 1983, Language planning: The state of the art, in: J. Cobarrubias and J. A. Fishman, eds., *Progress in Language Planning: International Perspectives*, Mouton, the Hague, pp. 3-26.

Connolly, W. E., 1988, *Political Theory and Modernity*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Connolly, W. E., 2000, Speed, concentric cultures, and cosmopolitanism, *Political Theory*, **28**(5):596-618.

Connors, M. K., 2003, *Democracy and National Identity in Thailand*, Routledge, London.

Cooper, R. L., 1989, *Language Planning and Social Change*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Coughlin, R. J., 1960, *Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Coulmas, F., 1992, *Language and Economy*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Crystal, D., 1997, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Das Gupta, J. and Ferguson, C., 1977, Introduction, in: Rubin, J., Jernudd, B. H., Gupta J. D., Fishman, J. A., and Ferguson, C. A., eds., 1977, *Language Planning Processes*, Mouton, The Hague, pp. 3-7.

De Koninck, R., 1979, The integration of the peasantry: Examples from Malaysia and Indonesia, *Pacific Affairs*, **52**(2):265-293.

Douglas, M., 1966, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Praeger, New York.

Duranti, A., 1992, Language in context and language as context: The Samoan respect vocabulary, in: A. Duranti and C. Goodwin, eds., *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 77-99.

Durkheim, E., 1984, *The Division of Labor in Society*, Macmillan, London.

Easton, D., Gunnell, J. G., and Stein, M. B., eds., 1995, *Regime and Discipline: Democracy and the Development of Political Science*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Emerson, R., 1934, The Chinese in Malaysia, *Pacific Affairs*, **7**(3):260-270.

Enloe, C. H., 1968, Issues and integration in Malaysia, *Pacific Affairs*, **41**(3):372-385.

Enloe, C. H., 1973, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston.

Enloe, C. H., 1980, *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies*, Penguin Books/University of Georgia Press, London/Athens.

Enloe, C. H. and Ellinwood, D., eds., 1980, *Ethnicity and the Military in Asia*, Transition Books, New Brunswick.

Esman, M. J., 1972, *Administration and development in Malaysia: Institutional buildingand reform in a plural society.* Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Esman, M. J., 1990, Language policy and political community in
        Southeast Asia, in: B. Weinstein, ed., *Language Policy and
        Political Development*, Ablex Publishing, Norwood, pp. 185-
        201.
Fardon, R., 1999, *Mary Douglas: An Intellectual Biography*, Routledge,
        London.
Fishman, J., 1968a, Sociolinguistics and the language problems of
        developing countries, in: J. Fishman, C. Ferguson and J. Gupta, eds., *Language
        problems of developing nations*. Wiley, New York, pp. 3-16.
Fishman, J., 1968b, Nationality-nationalism and nation-nationism, in: J.
        Fishman, C. Ferguson and J. Gupta, eds., *Language problems of developing
        nations*. Wiley, New York, pp. 39-51.
Fishman, J., 1973, Language modernization and planning in comparison
        with other types of national modernization and planning, *Language in society*
        2:23-43.
Fishman, J., 1989, *Language and ethnicity in minority
        sociolinguistic perspective*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon.
Fishman, J., 1991, *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical
        Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Multilingual Matters,
        Clevedon, England.
Fishman, J., 2001, From theory to practice (and vice-versa): Review,
        reconsideration and reiteration, in J. Fishman, ed., Can
        Threatened Languages be Saved? *Multilingual Matters*,
        Clevedon, pp. 451-483.
Flathman, R. E., 1992, *Willful Liberalism: Voluntarism and Individuality
        in Political Theory and Practice*, Cornell University Press,
        Ithaca.
Gal, S., 1979, *Language Shift: Social Determinants of Linguistic Change
        in Bilingual Austria*, Academic Press, New York.
Gates, C., 1999, The East Asian crisis and global integration:
        Mismanagement and panic revisited or a new beast? *Institute of Southeast Asian
        Studies Working Papers* 4:99.
Gardels, N. P., 1995, *At Century's End: Great Minds Reflect on Our
        Times,* ALTI Publishing.
Gellner, E., 1983, *Nations and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the
        Past*. Blackwell, Oxford.
Gellner, E., 1993, *Nationalism*, in: W. Outhwaite and T. Bottomore,
        eds., *Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Social Thought*,
        Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 409-411.
Giddens, A., 1976, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, Hutchinson,
        London.
Giddens, A., 1979, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, Macmillan,
        London.
Giddens, A., 1990, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity, Cambridge.
Giddens, A., 1991, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Polity, Cambridge.
Goh C. T., 1991. Mandarin is more than a language, *Speeches*, Ministry
        of Information and the Arts, Singapore.

Goh S. T., 1982, Singapore, in: R. B. Noss, ed., *Language Teaching Issues in Multilingual Environments in Southeast Asia*, SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, Singapore, pp. 137-176.

Gopinathan, S., 1976, Towards a national education system, in: R. Hassan, ed., *Singapore: Society in Transition*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 67-83.

Grabe, W., and Kaplan, R. B., 1986, Science, technology, language, and information: Implications for language and language-in-education planning, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, **59**:47-71.

Grenoble, L. A., and Whaley, L. J., 1998, *Endangered Languages: Current Issues and Future Prospects*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Gullick, J. M., 1969, *Malaysia*, Ernest Benn, London.

Gunnell, J. G., 1968, *Political Philosophy and Time*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown.

Gunnell, J. G., 1979, *Political Theory: Tradition and Interpretation*, Winthrop Publishers, Cambridge.

Gunnell, J. G., 1980, Method, methodology, and the search for tradition in the history of political theory: A reply to Pocock's salute, *Annals of Scholarship*, **1**:26-56.

Gunnell, J. G., 1986, *Between Philosophy and Politics: the Alienation of Political Theory*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst.

Gunnell, J. G., 1998, *The Orders of Discourse: Philosophy, Social Science, and Politics*, Rowman and Littlefield.

Gunnell, J. G., 2001, Wittgenstein and political theory, paper prepared for delivery at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Aug 30-Sep 2, San Francisco.

Guyot, D., 1971, The politics of land: Comparative development in two states of Malaysia, *Pacific Affairs*, **44**(3):368-389.

Hall, S., [1989] 1996, New ethnicities, in: S. Hall, D. Morley, and K. H. Chen, eds., *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, Routledge, London, pp. 441-449.

Hall, S., 1997, New and old ethnicities, in: D. Morley and K. H. Chen, eds., *S. Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies*, Routledge, London, pp. 441-49.

Hamel, R. E., ed., 1997, Special issue on 'Linguistic human rights from a sociolinguistic perspective,' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 127.

Han, F. K., Fernandez, W., and Tan, S., 1998, *Lee Kuan Yew: The man and his ideas*, Times Editions, Singapore.

Haugen, E., 1966a, Linguistics and language planning, in: W. Bright, ed., *Sociolinguistics*, Mouton, The Hague.

Haugen, E., 1966b, *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian.*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Hawkesworth, M. E., 1988, *Theoretical Issues in Policy Analysis*, State

University of New York Press, Albany.

Hawkesworth, M. E., 1992, The science of politics and the politics of
    science – Contending conceptions of science, in: M. E. Hawkesworth, and M.
Koogan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Government and
    Politics 1*, Routledge, London, pp. 5-39.

Hawkesworth, M. E., 1996, Knowers, knowing, known: Feminist theory
    and claims of truth, in: L. Barbara, et al., eds., *Gender and
    Scientific Authority,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp.
    75-102.

Hawkesworth, M. E., 1998, Social sciences, in: A. M. Jaggar and I. M.
    Young, eds., *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, Blackwell,
    Malden, pp. 204-212.

Heller, M., 1999a, Alternative ideologies of *la francophonie, Journal of
    Sociolinguistics* 3:336-359.

Heller, M., 1999b, *Linguistic minorities and modernity: A
    sociolinguistic ethnography*, Longman, London.

Hill, M. and Lian, K. F., 1995, *The politics of nation-building and
    citizenship in Singapore*, Routledge, London.

Hirschman, C., 1979, Political independence and educational
    opportunity in peninsular Malaysia, *Sociology of Education*,
    52(2):67-83.

Hirschman, C., 1987, The meaning and measurement of ethnicity in
    Malaysia: An analysis of census classifications, *Journal of Asian
    Studies*, **46**(3):555-582.

Hobswawm, E., 1990, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*. Cambridge
    University Press, Cambridge.

Hofman, J. E., 1966, Mother tongue retentiveness in ethnic parishes, in:
    J. A. Fishman, ed., *Language Loyalty in the United States*,
    Mouton, The Hague, pp. 127-155.

Holmes, J., 1992, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Longman,
    London.

Hooker, M. B., 1969, The relationship between Chinese law and
    common law in Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, *Journal of
    Asian Studies*, **28**(4):723-742.

Irvine, J. T., and Gal, S., 2000, Language ideology and linguistic
    differentiation, in: P. V. Kroskrity, ed., *Regimes of Language:
    Ideologies, Polities and Identities*, School of American Research Press, Santa
    Fe.

Irvine, J. T., [1974], 1989, Strategies of status manipulation in the Wolof
    greeting, in: R. Bauman and J. Sherzer, eds., *Explorations in the
    Ethnography of Speaking*, 2nd edition, Cambridge University
    Press: Cambridge.

Jernudd, B. H., 1993, Language planning from a management
    perspective: An interpretation of findings, in: E. H. Jahr, ed.,
    Language conflict and language planning, Mouton de Gruyter,
    Berlin/New York, pp. 133-142.

Johnstone, B., 2001, Discourse analysis and narrative, in: D. Schiffrin, D.

Tannen, and H. Hamilton, eds., *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 635-649.

Jomo, K. S., 1990/1, Whither Malaysia's new economic policy? *Pacific Affairs*, **63**(4):469-499.

Kachru, B. B., 1986, *The Alchemy of English: The Spread, Functions and Models of Nonnative Englishes,* Pergamon Press, Oxford.

Kaplan, R. B. and Baldauf, R. B., 1997, *Language planning from practice to theory.* Multilingual Matters: Clevedon.

Kariel, H. S., 1963, Nietzsche's preface to constitutionalism, *Journal of Politics*, **25**(2):21 1-225.

Kariel, H. S., 1989, *The Desperate Politics of Postmodernism*, The University of Massachusetts Press. Amherst.

Kariel, H. S., 1990, The feminist subject spinning in the postmodern project, *Political Theory*, **18**(2):255-272.

Kateb, G., 1992, *The Inner Ocean: Individualism and Democratic Culture*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Kennedy, P., 2001, Introduction: globalization and the crisis of national identities, in: P. Kennedy and C. J. Danks, eds., *Globalization and National Identities: Crisis or Opportunity?* Palgrave, London, pp. 1-28.

Kerkvliet, B. J., 1972, Peasant rebellion in the Philippines: The growth and origins of the HMB, unpublished thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Kloss, H., 1969, *Research Possibilities on Group Bilingualism: A Report*, International Center for Research on Bilingualism, Quebec.

Klima, A., 2002, *The funeral casino: Meditation, Massacre, and Exchange with the Dead in Thailand*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Kulick, E., and Wilson, D., 1992, *Thailand's Turn: Profile of a New Dragon*, St. Martin's Press, New York.

Lakoff, G., and Johnson, M., 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Lash, S. and Urry, J., 1994, *Economies of signs and space*, Sage, London.

Lau, A., 1998, *A Moment of Anguish: Singapore in Malaysia and the Politics of Disengagement*, Times Academic Press, Singapore.

Lee, K. Y., 1965, Are there enough Malaysians to save Malaysia? *Speeches*, Ministry of Culture/Ministry of Information and the Arts, Singapore.

Lee, K. Y., 1978, Mandarin: Lingua franca for Chinese Singaporeans, *Speeches*, Ministry of Information and the Arts, Singapore.

Lee, K. Y., 1984, Mandarin: A language of psychic force, *Speeches*, Ministry of Information and the Arts, Singapore.

Leibowitz, A., 1971, Educational policy and political acceptance: The imposition of English as the language of instruction in American schools, *ERIC* no. ED 047 321.

Leibowitz, A., 1980, *The bilingual education act: A legislative analysis,* National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education, Rosslyn.

Linde, C., 1993, *Life stories: The creation of coherence*. Oxford
        University Press: Oxford.
Linde, C., 2001, Narrative in institutions, in: D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, and
        H. Hamilton, eds., *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Blackwell, Oxford, pp.
        518-535.
Loomba, A., 1998, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Routledge, London.
Mahathir, M., 1970, *The Malay dilemma*, Times Books International,
        Singapore.
Marx, K., 1975, *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, trans. by R. Livingstone and
        G. Benton, New Left Review/Penguin, London.
Masavisut, N., Sukwiwat, M., and Wongmontha, S., 1986, The power of
        the English language in Thai media, *World Englishes*, **2-3**:197-
        207.
May, S., 2001, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism,
        and the Politics of Language*, Longman, London.
May, S., 2004, Rethinking linguistic human rights, in: J. Freeland and D.
        Patrick, eds., *Language Rights and Language Survival*, St Jerome Press,
        Manchester, pp. 35-53.
McCloud, D., 1995, *Southeast Asia: Tradition and Modernity in the
        Contemporary World*. Westview Press.
McKenna, T. M., 1998, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics
        and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines*, University of
        California Press, Berkeley.
McNay, L., 1999, Gender, habitus and the field: Pierre Bourdieu and the
        limits of reflexivity, *Theory, Culture and Society* **16**(1):95-117.
Mead, R., 1988, *Malaysia's National Language Policy and the Legal
        System*, Yale University Monograph 30, Yale Center for
        International and Area Studies, New Haven.
Means, G. P., 1978, Public policy toward religion in Malaysia, *Pacific
        Affairs*, **51**(3):384-405.
Means, G. P., 1985-1986, The Orang Asli: Aboriginal policies in
        Malaysia, *Pacific Affairs*, **58**(4):637-652.
Metcalf, P., 1987, Wine of the Corpse: Endocannibalism and the great
        feast of the dead in Borneo, *Representations*, **17**:96-109.
Milne, R. S., 1968/9, Political finance in Southeast Asia with particular
        reference to the Philippines and Malaysia, *Pacific Affairs*,
        41(4):491-510.
Milroy, J., 2001, Language ideologies and the consequences of
        standardization, *Journal of Sociolinguistics* **5**(4):530-555.
Milroy, J., and Milroy, L., 1999, *Authority in Language: Investigating
        Standard English*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London.
Moerman, M., 1974, Accomplishing ethnicity, in: R. Turner, ed.,
        Ethnomethodology, Penguin Education, New York, pp. 54-68.
Molloy, I., 1983, The conflicts in Mindanao: Whilst the revolution rolls
        on the jihad falters, working paper 30, Clayton.
Mufwene, S. S., 2002, Colonization, globalization and the plight of
        'weak' languages, *Journal of Linguistics*, **38**:375-395.

Nagel, T., 1986, *The View From Nowhere*, Oxford University Press,
New York/Oxford.

Neustupny, J., 1970, Basic types of treatment of language problems,
Linguistic Communications **1**:77-100.

Norton, A., 1990, Response to Henry S. Kariel, *Political Theory* **18**(2):
273-279.

Noss, R. B., ed., 1984, *An Overview of Language Issues in South-east
Asia 1950-1980*, Oxford University Press, Singapore.

O'Donnell, G., 2001, Latin America, *PS: Political Science and Politics*
34(4):809-811.

Office of the Prime Minister, Kingdom of Thailand, 1979, *Thailand:
Into the 80's*, Thai Watana Panich Press, Bangkok.

Ong, A., 1999, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logic of
Transnationality*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Ong, T. C., 1978, Language and society. Speech given at the opening of
the Lunar New Year fair, *Speeches*, Ministry of Information and
the Arts, Singapore.

Orr, D. W., 1977, Modernization and conflict: The second image
implications of scarcity, *International Studies Quarterly*
21(4):593-618.

Othman, S., 1996, *Medium of instruction or medium of power?
Language practices in Tanzanian education*, Paper presented at
the 1996 International Seminar on Language and Education, Cape Town.

Pakir, A., 1991, The status of English and the question of 'standard' in
Singapore: A sociolinguistic perspective, in: M. L. Tickoo, ed.,
Languages and Standards: Issues, Attitudes, Case Studies, Anthology series,
26, SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, Singapore.

Pakir, A., 1992. English-knowing bilingualism in Singapore, in: K. C.
Ban, A. Pakir, and C. K. Tong, eds., *Imagining Singapore*, Times Academic
Press, Singapore, pp. 234-62.

Pakir, A., 1993, Two tongued tied: Bilingualism in Singapore, *Journal
of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* **14**:73-90.

Pendley, C., 1983, Language policy and social transformation in
contemporary Singapore, *Southeast Asian Journal of Social
Science*, **11**:46-58.

Pennycook, A., 1994, *The cultural politics of English as an international
language*, Longman, London.

Pennycook, A., 1998, The right to language: Towards a situated ethics of
language possibilities, *Language Sciences* **20**(1):73-87.

Phillipson, R., 1992, *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford University Press,
Oxford.

Phillipson, R., 2000, ed., Rights to language, equity, power and
education: Celebrating the 60th birthday of Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. Lawrence
Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey.

Phillipson, R., Rannut, M., and Skutnabb-Kangas, T., 1994, Introduction,
in: Skutnabb, T. and Phillipson, R., eds., in collaboration with Rannut, M.,
Linguistic human rights: Overcoming linguistic discrimination, Mouton de

Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 1-30.

Phillipson, R., and Skutnabb-Kangas, T., 1995, Linguistic rights and
    wrongs, *Applied Linguistics* **16**:483-504.

Pomeroy, W. J., 1963, *The Forest – A Personal Record of the Huk
    Guerilla Struggle in the Philippines (Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng
    Bayan)*, International Publishers, New York.

Pong, S., 199, Preferential policies and secondary school attainment in
    peninsular Malaysia, *Sociology of Education*, **66**(4):245-261.

Pongsapich, A., et al., 1993, *Socio-Cultural Change and Political
    Development in Central Thailand, 1950*-1990, TDRI, Bangkok.

Pullum, G., 1999, African American vernacular English is not standard
    English with mistakes, in: R. Wheeler, ed., *The Workings of
    Language: From Prescriptions to Perspectives*, Praeger, London,
    pp. 39-58.

PuruShotam, N. S., 1998, *Negotiating language, constructing race:
    Disciplining   difference   in   Singapore*,   Berlin/New   York,   Mouton
    de Gruyter.

Rappa, A. L., 1997a, Encountering modernity: On the political
    narratives of Singapore, department of political science, National
    University of Singapore, working paper, 14, pp. 1-28.

Rappa, A. L. 1997b, The modern frame: State theory, postcolonial
    literature and politics in Malaysia, department of political
    science, National University of Singapore, working paper, 20, pp. 1-56.

Rappa, A. L., 1999a, The politics of aging in Singapore: perspectives
    from state and society, *Southeast Asian Journal of Social
    Science*, **27**(2):123-138.

Rappa, A. L., 1999b, Fallen culture: materialism and the death of
    modernity in *Three Seasons*, in: K. C. Ban, ed., Materialism:
    Visions and Revisions, *Commentary*, 16: 93-100.

Rappa, A. L., 1999c, Political pluralism and governance in the
    Federation of Malaysia, in: F. Delmartino, A. Pongsapich, and R.
    Hrbek, eds., *Regional Pluralism and Good Governance*, Nomos
    Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, pp. 99-120.

Rappa, A. L., 2000, Surviving the politics of late modernity: The
    Eurasian fringe community in Singapore, *Southeast Asian
    Journal of Social Science* **28**(2):153-180.

Rappa, A. L., 2001, Urban political theory and the symmetrical model of
    community power, *Innovation: The European Journal of Social
    Science Research*, **14**(1):5-17.

Rappa, A. L., 2002, *Modernity and Consumption: Theory, Politics, and
    the Public in Singapore and Malaysia*, World Scientific,
    Singapore/New Jersey.

Rappa, A. L., 2003, A Critique of modernity, *Alternatives: The Turkish
    Journal of International Relations*, **2**(3/4):1-25.

Rappa, A. L., 2004, *Globalization: Asian Perspective on Modernity and
    Politics in America*, Marshall Cavendish, Singapore.

Rappa, A. L., 2005, Nietzsche's task: An interpretation of *Beyond Good*

and Evil (review), *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, **29**(1):74-76.

Rappaport, R. A., 1967, *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a Guinea People*, Yale University Press, New Haven.

Rappaport, R. A., 1984, *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a Guinea People*, enlarged edition, Yale University Press, New Haven.

Ratanakul, P., 1983, Some notes on the humanities and national identity, *Cultural identity and modernization in Asian countries*, proceedings of Kokugakuin University Centennial Symposium, pp. 138-47.

Reid, A., 1988, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680: Volume One: The Lands Below the Winds*, Yale University Press, New Haven.

Resch, R. P., 1992, *Althusser and the Renewal of Marxist Social Theory*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Ricento, T., ed., 2000, *Ideology, Politics, and Language Policies: Focus on English*, John Benjamins. Amsterdam/Philadelphia.

Riney, T., 1998, Toward more Homogeneous bilingualisms: Shift phenomena in Singapore, *Multilingua* **17**(1):1-23.

Roe, E., 1994, *Narrative policy analysis: Theory and practice*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Rosenau, P. M., 1992, *Postmodernism and the social sciences: Insights, inroad, and intrusions*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Roxborough, I., 1979, *Theories of Underdevelopment*, Macmillan, London.

Rubin, J., Jernudd, B. H., Gupta J. D., Fishman, J. A., and Ferguson, C. A., eds., 1977, *Language Planning Processes*, Mouton, The Hague.

Ruggie, J. G., 1993, Territoriality and beyond: Problematizing modernity in international relations, *International Organization*, **47**(1):139-174.

Russet, B. M., 1967, Social change and attitudes on development and the political system in India, *Journal of Politics*, **29**(3):483-504.

Schaffner, C., and Wenden, A., eds., 1995, *Language and Peace*, Dartmouth, Aldershot/Brookfield.

Schön, D., 1993, Generative metaphor: A perspective on problem-setting in social policy, in: A. Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Sekiguchi, M., 1994, Review of Aristocratic liberalism, *History of European Ideas*, **18**(5):825-826.

Silverstein, M., 1985, Language and gender: At the intersection of structure, usage and ideology, in: E. Mertz and R. J. Parmentier, eds., *Semiotic Mediation: Sociocultural and Psychological Perspectives*. Academic Press, Orland, pp. 219-259.

Silverstein, M., 1998, Contemporary transformations of local linguistic communities, *Annual Review of Anthropology* **27**:401-26.

Silverstein, M., 2000. Whorfianism and the linguistic imagination of nationality, in: P. V. Kroskrity, ed., *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics*

and Identities, School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, pp. 85-138.

Simpson, P., 1993, *Language, Ideology and Point of View*, Routledge, London/ New York.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T., 1984, *Bilingualism or Not – The Education of Minorities*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T., 2000, *Linguistic genocide in education – or worldwide diversity and human rights?* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T., and Phillipson, R., 1994, eds., in collaboration with Rannut, M., *Linguistic human rights: Overcoming linguistic discrimination.* Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

Smalley, W. A., 1994, *Linguistic Diversity and National Unity: Language Ecology in Thailand*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Smith, A., 1986, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Smith, A., 1991, *National Identity*, Penguin, London.

Smith, A., 1998, *Nationalism and Modernism*, Routledge, London.

Spolsky, B., 2004. *Language policy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Streckfuss, D., 1993, The Mixed Colonial Legacy in Siam: Origins of Thai Racialist Thought, in: L. Sears, ed., *Autonomous Histories, Particular Truths: Essays in Honour of John Smail.* Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, pp. 123-53.

Stroud, C., 2001, African mother-tongue programmes and the politics of language: linguistic citizenship versus linguistic human rights, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, **22**:339-355.

Stroud, C., and Heugh, K., 2004, Language rights and linguistic citizenship, in: J. Freeland and D. Patrick, eds., *Language Rights and Language Survival*, St Jerome Press, Manchester, pp. 191-218.

Sukamolson, S., 1998, English language education policy in Thailand, *Asian Englishes*, **1**(1):68-91.

Surin, P., 1985, *Islam and Malay nationalism: A Case Study of the Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand.* Thai-Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University, Bangkok.

Tan, T. K. Y., 1986, Parliamentary speech, *Speeches*, Ministry of Information and the Arts, Singapore.

Tarling, N, ed., 1999, *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Thompson, J. B., 1990, *Ideology and Modern Culture*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Tollefson, J. W., 1991, *Planning Language, Planning Inequality: Language Policy in the Community*, Longman, London.

Tomlinson, J., 1991, *Cultural Imperialism*, Pinter Publishers, London.

Touraine, A., 1995, *Critique of Modernity*, trans. by David Macey, Blackwell, Cambridge,

Touraine, A., 1998, Sociology without society, *Current Sociology*, **46**:119-43.

de Varennes, F., 1996, *Language, minorities and human rights*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague.

Vattimo, G., [1985], 1988, *La fine della modernity (The End of Modernity)*, Johns Hopkins University Press. Baltimore.

Vitug, M. D., 2000, *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao*, Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and the Institute for Popular Democracy, Quezon City.

Vos, R., 1993., *Gentle Janus, Merchant Prince: The VOC and the Tightrope of Diplomacy in the Malay World, 1740-1800*, KITLV, Leiden.

Wagner, P., 2001, Modernity, Capitalism and Critique, *Thesis Eleven* **66**:1-31.

Walker, R. B. J., 1984, *Culture, Ideology, and World Order*, Westview, Boulder.

Weber, M., 1971., *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Unwin, London.

Wee, L., 1990, Language and ethnicity among first-year Chinese undergraduates in Singapore, M.A. dissertation, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore.

Wee, L., 2002, When English is not a mother tongue: Linguistic ownership and the Eurasian Community in Singapore, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, **23**(4):282-295.

Wee, L. 2003. Linguistic instrumentalism in Singapore. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 24:211-224.

Wee. L., 2005. Intra-language discrimination and linguistic human rights: The case of Singlish, *Applied Linguistics* **26**(1):48-69.

Wheeler, R. S., 1999, Home speech as springboard to school speech: Oakland's commendable work on ebonics, in: R. S. Wheeler, ed., *The Workings of Language: From Prescription to Perspectives*, Praeger, London, 59-66.

White, S. K., 2000, *Sustaining Affirmation: The Strengths of Weak Ontology in Political Theory*, Princeton University Press, Princeton/Oxford.

Wilkinson, R. J. [1923] 1971, The peninsular Malays: The Pangkor Treaty, compiled by P. L. Burns in *Papers on Malay Subjects*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 100-105.

Wiley, T. G., 1996, Language planning and policy, in: S. L. McKay, and N. H. Hornberger, eds., *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, New York/Cambridge, pp. 103-148.

Wolf, E. R., 1999, *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Wolin, S. S., 1997, What time is it? *Theory and Event* **1**(1).

Wongsothorn, A., 2000, Thailand, in: W. K. Ho, and R. Y. L. Wong,

eds., *Language Policies and Language Education*, Times
Academic Press, Singapore, pp.307-320.
Woolard, K. A., 1998, Introduction: Language ideology as a field of
inquiry, in: B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, and P. V.
Kroskrity, eds., *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, Oxford University
Press, Oxford, pp. 3-47.

INDEX

Language Policy