



An Investigation of  
the Maintenance of Minority Cultures  
and Equal Opportunity with Special Reference to  
Australian Young People of Slavonic Origin

by  
**Krzysztof Batorowicz**

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## Abstract

The thesis is an investigation into the maintenance and modification of minority cultures in relation to multicultural values and the principles of equal opportunity adopted by educational institutions, with special reference to Australian young people of Slavonic origin.

This study is focused on two complementary objectives. One is to ascertain the extent to which young Australians from Slavonic Minority groups are able and willing to preserve their ethnic cultures. This part of the study was based on questionnaires gathered from young Australians of Slavonic origins (Croatian, Polish and Ukrainian), with approximately 50 people from each group. The second objective is to explore the role of the government and educational institutions in the process of cultural maintenance as against cultural assimilation, through an investigation of current legislation and policies. The basis of the second part of the thesis was an analysis of the concept of equal opportunity related to multiculturalism in postsecondary education institutions.

This thesis, in accordance with the methodology of humanistic sociology, sought to investigate the cultural needs of ethnic minorities from their point of view. The theoretical framework of Humanistic sociology, as elaborated by Znaniecki, Thomas and MacIver argues that the investigation of social and cultural phenomena is best undertaken from the perspective of the participants as active agents in their context. The framework was extended to cultural and social systems at personal and group level in relation to ethnically plural societies, with special reference to development in Australia and was then used for the analysis of the questionnaire data, federal and state equal opportunity legislation, and policy statements published by the governments and educational institutions.

The result of the research investigation highlighted the issue of preservation of ethnic cultures, especially languages in Australia. The analysis of the concept of equal opportunity and multicultural policy revealed close links between them. However, these links had little, if any, recognition in the policies and practices of the educational institutions.

This thesis also considered the political and educational implications and made recommendations of a practical nature to develop the maintenance of the ethnic languages and cultures for the benefit of the individuals, minority groups and the whole nation as well.

## DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any University; and that to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for photocopying and loan.

Signature .....

## ERRATA

Page	Line	For	Read
25	3	two non-English speaking background high school graduates	two high school graduates of non-English speaking background
30	footnote		not the titles of the articles but the titles of the journals: 'The Polish Sociological Bulletin' and 'Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology' should be in italics
43	1	books	book
151	9	The	This
188	8	the DEET	DEET
262	5	English	the English
268	9	not	no
282	7	of language	of languages
299	3	They simple	They simply
315	footnote 38	Australian Education Review	italics for Australian Education Review
323	1	a value	of value
353	16	undervaluated	undervalued
355	13-14	the majority group	the majority group (i. e. Anglo-Australians)

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My special thanks to my friend and former neighbour from Adelaide, Mr Robert Hill, for his patience in corrections of the first parts of the early draft pages when my English required continuous corrections to be understood by others, but was always understood by him.

Finally, my thanks to Dr Andrew P. Papliński for his professional advice of a technical nature when the final draft was prepared.

K.B.

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## 0.0 Introduction

Living in a plural society is often very difficult for people from ethnic minorities because of the cultural differences. Young people from ethnic minorities living in Australia are very often under strong pressure from two sides: usually family and ethnic groups want to preserve their heritage and bring them up in their ethnic traditions, whereas the mainstream of society, for the most part, still persists in the assimilationist point of view and wants rather to see them as plain Australians without their ethnic cultural difference, and many even refuse to recognize that they are not plain or pure Australians.

The dilemma is serious, although the tendency towards assimilation has been weaker in recent years. In particular the official policy has changed from assimilation towards multiculturalism and proclaims a just multiculturalism. The phenomena of many cultures, in the case of Australia, is easily seen in every day situation because of the migrant presence, resulting from the post war arrival of refugees and later planned economic migration on a large scale. In spite of the large number of migrants and the policy of increasing the population through planned migration, the concept of cultural pluralism waited for support for a long time. Perhaps this reflected the government concern at the tension and horror of ethnic confrontation in some other plural countries.

A contribution to the support of the concept of cultural pluralism in public life was made by J. Zubrzycki in his paper given to the Australian Citizenship Convention of 1968 where he encouraged the maintenance of immigrant languages and the development of studies of different cultures, explaining that such activity was not in conflict with Australian national interest since it simultaneously promoted both group and individual interests. The first official manifesto for a plural society was A. J. Grassby's *A Mul-*

*ticultural Society for the Future* (1973), which he published when he was Minister for Immigration in the Whitlam government. He acknowledged that only such a policy as this would be acceptable to people from all ethnic groups in Australia.

Later, the multicultural policy was taken up by the prime ministers of both political parties as the official policy of the federal government. Malcolm Fraser in his inaugural address to the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs in 1981 said that

Multiculturalism is about diversity, not division — it is about interaction not isolation. It is about cultural and ethnic differences set within a framework of shared fundamental values which enables them to co-exist on a complementary rather than competitive basis <sup>1</sup>.

Similarly three years later Robert Hawke stated that

Multiculturalism depends on the respect by all groups of the political, religious and cultural aspirations of others in the community <sup>2</sup>.

The present investigation of the maintenance and loss of minority ethnic languages among young people of Slavonic origin in Australia took its inspiration from the problems of living in two cultures discussed in the book *The Australian School through Children's Eyes* by Smolicz and Secombe. The editor of the series in which the book was published wrote about the work:

Very few books in Australia (or for that matter in the United States or Great Britain) tap the experiences, emotions and attitudes of minority or ethnic children like this one. It tells the educational story of ethnic Australian children in their own words and in their own style. Their writings illuminate the contrasting values of the Australian school and Polish home. The young ethnic Australians in this study rejected both assimilation and separatism. They want to keep their ethnic cultural heritage and be able to read in the language of their homeland. But they also want to be fully integrated academically, professionally and socially into the mainstream of Australian life — and most of them manage to do it ...<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>M. Fraser *Inaugural Address on Multiculturalism to the Institute of Multicultural Affairs*, Melbourne, November 30, 1981

<sup>2</sup>R.J. Hawke, *Baltic News*, March, 1984, p.1

<sup>3</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe *The Australian School through Children's Eyes*, note of the editor

This investigation follows up some of the issues raised by the Smolicz and Secombe research and, through the use of questionnaires rather than memoirs, was able to tap the views of ethnic youth of Slavonic origin, not just Polish, but Croatian and Ukrainian as well. The numbers who completed the questionnaires were significantly larger than in the earlier study.

The questionnaire investigation will be complemented by a detailed analysis of current state and federal legislation on Equal Opportunity and Human Rights. This is seen to be necessary in order to set the young participants in the context of current Australian society as a whole. The history of equal opportunity policies which have been closely linked to multiculturalism needs to be briefly outlined. A consideration of the legislation reveals the fundamental significance of Convention No.111 of the International Labour Organization. Australia ratified the Convention in 1973 and by doing so, The Australian government committed itself to uphold the terms of the Convention. The basic idea of the Act can be seen in article 2 of the Convention, which states:

Each Member for which this convention is in force undertakes to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof.

The ratification of this Convention resulted, in the case of Australia, in the passing of serious anti-discrimination legislation, at both Federal and State levels, not only in the area of employment and occupation but also in a range of other areas as well (education, land, housing and other accommodation, access to places and facilities etc.)

The first act, the Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act (1975) made it unlawful to discriminate on the ground of race, colour, national or ethnic origin in relation to places and facilities, land, housing and other accommodation, provision of goods and services,



and employment.

The New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 went further and made unlawful discrimination on the ground of race (including colour, nationality and national or ethnic origin), sex, marital status (including de facto relationships), physical and intellectual impairment, and homosexuality in the areas of employment, education, access to places or vehicles, provision of goods and services, accommodation, registered clubs. It should be noted that this Act was the first with application to education.

Similar anti-discrimination legislation on the grounds of race fully applies in the area of education and this aspect of legislation is the most important for the purposes of this thesis and will be further investigated. Of course, it is not possible to expect that the legislation on equal opportunity and/or human rights would provide active support for maintenance of ethnic languages, religion or aspects of culture, but it is possible to expect that such legislation would make unlawful any form of discrimination on the grounds of religious and political beliefs or cultural tradition or the use of other than the official language. Also the 'spirit' of the legislation, in moving towards the acceptance of community languages (or the customs of particular groups) or against them, may have influence on future legislative trends as well as the policy intentions of the legislative organs and practice of administrative institutions.

In addition some postulates *de lege ferenda* (for the future regulation) can always be appropriate.

Finally, even if the legislation does not directly concern the cultural aspects of ethnic minorities, the principles of equal opportunity, arising from the legislation could be expected to have an influence on the maintenance and development of ethnic cultures. They provide the legal framework for the development of multicultural policy in a variety of

education and welfare areas, such as the National Agenda for Multiculturalism currently being worked out by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and announced in July, 1989.

The present study has several purposes.

First of all, the most important is the investigation of the attitudes of ethnic youth of Slavonic origin towards their cultures, in particular whether they want to preserve their ethnic cultural and language heritage. If the answer is positive, the role of the educational institutions in achieving this task must be considered.

Secondly, as the particular means of investigating these minority ethnic cultures the thesis aims to establish the core values of the ethnic cultures concerned, as seen by the participants in the study and the hierarchy of their importance.

Thirdly, the thesis will examine legislation and policy documents on ethnic minorities and education, in order to understand the basic values and beliefs of mainstream Australian society, which underline these laws.

Fourthly, it is intended to compare results gained from the questionnaire investigation of language maintenance with the basic principles underlying equal opportunity revealed through the analysis of legislation.

In conclusion, the practical cultural problems of ethnic minorities are discussed together with their possible solutions based on the concept of core value and equal opportunity. The practical application of these findings in terms of school curriculum will also be considered.

These purposes will be pursued through an investigation based on the principles of humanistic sociology. The Polish-American sociologist, Florian Znaniecki, first developed the humanistic theory of culture. The basic assumption of this theory is that the central point of culture exists in meaning, or more precisely in the complex of meanings which a

group of people share and regard as the basis for their community life. In other words we can say that culture is the meaning for a group of people who use it in the form of the objects (which may be material, and hence described by Stanisław Ossowski as cultural correlates, or ideational).

When Smolicz in his work *Culture and Education in a Plural Society* introduced a model of cultural interaction among ethnic groups in plural humanistic society, he adopted a humanistic sociological perspective. He used the term *humanistic* to refer to a particular version of the social action approach to sociology, associated with such names as William T. Thomas and Robert H. MacIver. It is an anti-positivistic school and underlines the need

to accept human values and activities as fact, just as human agents themselves accept them <sup>4</sup>.

Human beings are thus made the centre of experience in social and cultural activities.

In my view, the main value of the conception lies in its really humanistic character. As a result of these humanistic or individual-centred assumptions, all social and cultural data must be taken with the humanistic coefficient, which means investigating cultural or social phenomena as they appear to the participants in the given situation. The humanistic coefficient has an important practical application. If we want to investigate, for example, the activities of individuals, it is not possible to do this without the knowledge of how they themselves view their cultural situation and social roles. We should also consider the influence of individuals on social organizations.

The mutuality and essential interaction between individuals and society is one of the central points of humanistic sociology.

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<sup>4</sup>F.Znaniiecki *The Method of Sociology* (New York, 1968), quoted by J.J. Smolicz *Culture and Education in a Plural Society*, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, p.21

In practice this humanistic sociology approach is very useful, for example, for the study of ethnic cultures in plural societies, such as the United States of America, Canada or Australia. This point of view is also of interest in education because of its usefulness for the study of educational problems from the point of view of the participants. Full acceptance of this view by policy makers and government may give students from minority groups access to the culture of their ancestors and provide them with equal opportunity in mainstream society.

## **The Formal Investigation**

In order to investigate the problem of core or central values and related aspects of particular ethnic groups, data were collected in the form of questionnaires at a number of training and/or educational camps, organised by ethnic organizations from three Slavonic groups.

### **a) The Polish group**

In the case of the Polish group, the data was collected during the second Polish Youth Leaders Training Camp which was organized by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Polish Associations in Australia in conjunction with the Polish Association in Hobart. It was held between 27 December 1985 and 1 January 1986 at the Polish Recreation Centre *Podhale* at Carlton near Hobart. The aim of the Training Camp was to provide a forum for interaction and exchange of ideas, for the planning of future programs and to prepare Polish youth for community work. The camp was opened by the Federal Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Chris Hurford, who also gave the key-note address. The second Polish Youth Leaders Training Camp was attended by 59 delegates

from all over Australia and nine local speakers and guests. All the participants received the questionnaires and 52 of them were completed at one of the sessions in the conference programme.

#### **b) The Ukrainian group**

The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations (AFUO), as the umbrella body which coordinates many activities of Ukrainian organizations in Australia, held a Ukrainian festival in Melbourne from 24 December 1985 to 2 January 1986. The participants of this festival came from all parts of Australia. An important part of the festival was the youth camp *Moloda Ukraina* (Young Ukraine), conceived by the AFUO as a camp for all young people of Ukrainian origin in Australia. It involved members of the two Ukrainian youth associations, Plast and SUM, and also those not embraced by either of these. Both organizations (Plast and SUM) have as their aim the development of Ukrainian patriotic, religious and group consciousness in the diaspora, and both strive to achieve these aims through a mix of social, cultural and recreational activities. In some aspects of style (uniforms, outdoor activities) Plast is close to the Baden Powell scouting movement. The camp was divided into four sub-camps by age: those aged 7-11, 12-17, 18-30, and from 30 upwards. The questionnaires were distributed to each of the 200 members of the 18-30 year group. The return of the questionnaire was voluntary, and respondents were expected to complete it in their own time. In all, 75 responses were received.

#### **c) The Croatian group**

The Croatian Community organized a summer school in Adelaide from 4 to 14 January 1986. The idea of the Croatian summer schools had been introduced by Mrs Branka Čop

during a seminar of teachers of Croatian ethnic schools in Sydney in 1983. The Adelaide summer school was held after a similar meeting in Kilmore (1984) and Perth (1985).

The Adelaide summer school in 1986 was held at St. Pauls' Retreat Centre, Glen Osmond and attended by 65 young people from all over Australia with the majority coming from South Australia. Participants were aged between 16 and 24. In charge of the school was the Croatian priest, Fr. Dužević, who was also the head of the Croatian ethnic school in South Australia. The activities were concentrated on lectures given by the teachers of Croatian ethnic schools, members of the Croatian community and guest speakers on topics concerned with the Croatian language, history, geography and science. Participants were asked to answer the questionnaire as part of one of the sessions and 65 questionnaires were completed.

## **Part I**

# **Humanistic Sociology**



## Introduction

Before discussing the principles of humanistic sociology I consider it necessary to explain what sociology as a science is in the conception of the 'father' of humanistic sociology — Florian Znaniecki.

In Znaniecki's view, sociology is the science of social systems. These systems may be divided into four main subdivisions: the theory of social action, the theory of social relations, the theory of social persons and the theory of social groups. For Znaniecki sociology is not only a different science from the natural sciences but also a special one among the social sciences. The crucial point in Znaniecki's view sociology is the meaning he gives to human beings. In his theory, human beings are not organisms or *natural entities* in any psychological or biological sense. For Znaniecki, a human being is a social person seen in the two simultaneous dimensions — as a conscious agent and as the object of the actions of others.

There is something that distinguishes natural from social or cultural (to use the title of Znaniecki's book) sciences — this is the human consciousness. As a result, an important feature of this sociology is its concern to investigate the activities of participants as they, the participants, understand them in the context of their situation. As Znaniecki writes,

the only way actually to experience a social system at first-hand is to be active in its construction, for only thus are we directly aware of the tendencies of the values included in its composition<sup>5</sup>.

The acceptance of social and cultural phenomena in the way in which human agents themselves accept them does not mean that during investigation of the agents the researcher personally should accept everything without any criticism, or agree wholly with

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<sup>5</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, selected papers, edited and with introduction by Robert Bierstedt, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, p.23



the subjective views of the respondents. It means that to study social reality, the sociologist must accept social or cultural facts as data which can be studied objectively, employing all the 'apparatus' of the formal principles as other researchers do, for example, in natural sciences. Then, theoretical criteria are also important in all sociology, and humanistic sociology with its humanistic coefficient is not an exception from the rule, as it might seem at first. Rather it is a part of a systematic inductive study of the phenomena concerned.

In the discussion that follows I shall concentrate firstly on outlining those principles of humanistic sociology which may be helpful in the investigation of cultural problems in an ethnically plural society, giving examples of the application of these principles. In Chapter 2, I shall provide an overview of the concepts of humanistic sociology which constitute its theoretical framework.

# Chapter 1

## Principles of Humanistic Sociology and their Practical Application

### 1.1 The principle of studying the whole meaning of an institution or phenomenon

As was mentioned in the introduction, humanistic sociology is concerned with cultural phenomena in all their complexity. Znaniecki complained of the fallacy often seen in, the comparative sociology which studies an institution, an idea, a myth, a legal or moral norm, a form of art, etc., by simply comparing its content in various societies without studying the whole meaning which it has in various societies<sup>1</sup>.

From this methodological rule given by F. Znaniecki, there emerges the notion of the necessity of looking at the full range of meaning associated with the phenomenon being investigated. To develop this idea and to show its practical aspect, let us take an example. If we want to study a church as a religious institution we should take into account the whole meaning which the church has, for instance, within the dominant and minority groups in a plural society. Then, if we choose the Lutheran Church in the United States of America, in order to look at this institution from a humanistic sociological point of view, we should investigate what meaning the church has for Anglo-Americans and also

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<sup>1</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, selected papers, edited and with introduction by Robert Bierstedt, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, p.68

for the minority groups living in the USA, such as the Italians, the Germans and the Dutch etc. Using this example it is easy to anticipate that the structure and doctrine of this church has a different value or meaning for the majority of Anglo-Americans and for the Germans as a minority group, for those who are active members of it, and for those who are not.

## 1.2 The need to consider the whole social context

With this principle two fundamental practical problems are connected and described by Znaniecki in his *Method of Sociology* i.e.: the dependence of the individual upon social organization and culture; and the dependence of social organization and culture upon the individual.

In order to understand the problem in practice, it is better to use the two questions posed by Znaniecki:

Practically, the first problem is expressed in the question, How shall we produce with the help of the existing social organization and culture the desirable mental characteristic in the individual constituting the social group? And the second problem means in practice, How shall we produce, with the help of the existing mental and moral characteristic of the individual members of the group, the desirable type of social organization and culture?<sup>2</sup>

Znaniecki adds a note which is important not only from the methodological, but also from the practical point of view, that in any investigation it is possible and desirable to include both problems. Znaniecki uses an example from the educational field, of

when we attempt, by appealing to the existing attitudes to establish educational institutions which will be so organized as to produce or generalize certain desirable attitudes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p.69

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p.69

If we would like to investigate the whole social context of an ethnically plural society such as Australia is, then, it is necessary to look at how far the attitudes of an individual, for example, a migrant or a fourth generation Anglo-Australian, depend on their membership of actual social organizations and structures in this country and vice-versa.

### 1.3 The use of two types of data (subjective and objective) in solving real problems

Znaniacki distinguishes two kinds of data:

1. the objective cultural elements of social life, which he refers to as cultural values,
2. the subjective characteristics of the members of the social groups, which he labels attitudes.

By cultural values Znaniacki understands

any datum having an empirical content accessible to the members of some social group and a meaning with regard to which it is or may be an object of activity. Thus, foodstuff, an instrument, a coin, a piece of poetry, a university, a myth, a scientific theory, are social values.<sup>4</sup>

Then, studying the cultural problems in Australia we should look at the objective cultural elements or values of the ethnic groups in Australian society and simultaneously investigate how the members of the various ethnic groups characterise themselves and feel about their cultural values. Thus for example, we can ask Italian-Australians how the Italian community and Italian culture in Australia appears in their eyes.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p.69-70

## 1.4 “The cause of a social or individual phenomenon is never another social or individual phenomenon, but always a combination of a social and individual phenomenon”<sup>6</sup>

This methodological principle is very important. If we want to find out why an Irishman has a strong commitment to Catholicism in Australia, stronger than some Anglo-Australians who are also Catholic, we have to look at the cultural values in the Irish community and try to investigate what Catholicism means in this community and simultaneously what is the cause of the active attitude that makes Catholicism a value for the individual members of the community.

It is the interactive effects between individual attitudes and group values that explain the maintenance and change in given cultural phenomena, at both individual and social level.

## 1.5 The principle of achievement

This principle was enunciated by Znaniecki *expressis verbis* and he defines it as a tendency once active always achieves the construction of the system of values it started to construct and no other, unless deflected by perturbing factors<sup>7</sup>.

If then we, study the tendency of a young ethnic Hungarian as a minority group member to participate in folk dancing we may be sure that, provided there is a Hungarian dancing club he/she can join, his/her tendency will be activated through his/her dancing, unless there are other intervening factors such as, for example, a matriculation year or intensive full-time university studies.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p.89

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, p.162

## Chapter 2

# The Concepts of Humanistic Sociology

### 2.1 The humanistic coefficient

The concept of humanistic coefficient was introduced by Znaniecki in order to distinguish the methodology needed in the social as compared to the natural sciences.

The distinction between two sciences is for Znaniecki fundamental because it is concerned with two different systems: natural and cultural. Natural systems are objectively given and exist independently from any human experience or activity. Unlike natural systems, cultural systems depend on the participation of conscious and active human agents and on the relations between them. Hence, in cultural systems the data are somebody's, existing in the experience of a particular people or group members, in their consciousness and they are objects of their theoretical reflection.

In the distinction between the two systems the humanistic coefficient must be taken into account, as an indispensable element in analysis of any cultural or social science, including sociology. The humanistic coefficient has the important consequence that all cultural data cannot be considered *in abstracto* but *in concreto*, i.e., as data belonging to a person or group of persons. Because of this fact, in cultural systems, the data have to

be studied as they appear to the participants. Another sociologist, Ossowski, whose work was based on similar humanistic assumptions, noted that:

no social institution, no social group and no social process can be developed without reference to human consciousness<sup>1</sup>.

As cultural data belong to somebody and exist in both the experience and consciousness of people, the application of the humanistic coefficient requires the study of the intentions, experience and the activities of the individuals or groups, from their own point of view, according to their own perception of the external realities. An illustration of such an approach in the study of cultural phenomena can be found in the following quotation from Znaniecki's *Social Actions*:

The action of speaking a sentence, writing a poem, making a horseshoe, depositing money, proposing to a girl, electing an official, performing a religious rite, as empirical datum, is what it is in the experience of the speaker and his listeners, the poet and his readers, the blacksmith and the owner of a horse to be shod, the depositor of the banker, the proposing suitor and the courted girl, the voters and the official whom they elect, the religious believers who participate in the ritual. The scientist who wants to study these actions inductively must take them as they are in the human experience of those agents and re-agents; they are his empirical data inasmuch and because they are theirs<sup>2</sup>.

Cultural systems cannot be investigated without the humanistic coefficient because cultural data belong to others' active experience. The investigation of cultural data without the application of the humanistic coefficient is misleading, since it does not show up the main character of the phenomena. A clear illustration of the use and the role of the humanistic coefficient is Znaniecki's example of languages:

languages, whether modern French or ancient Greek, exist only in so far as they are spoken and understood by the people using them, i.e., by a historical collectivity living in a certain area within a certain period, with the addition of some scattered individuals living elsewhere or at later periods; and they have for the philologist the characters they possess or possessed for their

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<sup>1</sup>S. Ossowski, quoted by J.J. Smolicz, *Humanistic Sociology: A review of Concepts and Methods* ... p.14.

<sup>2</sup>F. Znaniecki, *Social Actions*, New York, 1936, p.221

collectivity ... Suppose the student eliminates the humanistic coefficient: the French language then becomes an enormous and disconnected complexity of sounds pronounced through centuries by hundreds of millions of individuals belonging to the species *Homo Sapiens*, together with a still more voluminous and chaotic complexity of physiological processes going on within the bodies of those individuals<sup>3</sup>.

It must be stressed that although Znaniecki is advocating the study of cultural data from the point of view of the individual or groups involved, he simultaneously underlines the objectivity of cultural values. Cultural values in the group's life are always easy to test in a way comparable to observations made in the natural sciences.

Indeed, even such values as religion or language in a life of a particular, small ethnic group in a society can be tested. For example, if an ethnic group declares its religion as a value it can be tested, *inter alia*, by investigations into how many members of the group (or their percentage) attend religious ceremonies and how often; is religious education provided for the younger generation of the group?, etc.

Similarly, in the case of language it is possible to test whether the group uses the language and how often, to whom; what the group does to preserve the language, how language education is organised in comparison to other groups, how many newspapers and books in the language are published and how often, etc.

Sometimes it is difficult to put into practice the humanistic coefficient. This is because there are situations when a conflict exists between the experiences and intentions of the participants who are involved in particular cultural systems. This problem will be further discussed after introducing some methodological issues.

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<sup>3</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology*, Octagon Books, New York, 1968, p.37-38



## 2.2 Things and values

Parallel to the distinction between natural and cultural science, Znaniecki introduced a differentiation between natural objects and cultural objects. He named natural objects as *things* and cultural objects as *values*. The difference between a value and a thing exists in the meaning it has in the life of a group; both possess a content but only a value has a cultural meaning. The example of a coin shows the content of the coin, which is a piece of metal and its value as 'buying power'. A stone or drop of water, as things, using Znaniecki's words:

have no meaning, or at least are treated by the physicists who studied them as if they had none and suggested nothing beyond themselves<sup>4</sup>.

The last point is significant because the way in which an object is treated, as well as by whom is treated is important. Take the example of a used stamp. For an average person it is an object only, possessing a content, simply piece of paper, without value, which cannot be used for normal purposes any more because it has been used. For the stamp-collector, the same stamp, even though used, has a value, especially when it is rare or is lacking in his/her collection.

There is also a difference in observing natural and cultural objects. In the observation of natural objects we take into account only what these things signify for us based on our experience, according to our learning and interpreting from the past. In the case of observing cultural objects or values, Znaniecki writes

it is indispensable to notice how other human agents deal with them, and interpret this treatment in this light of instances where we actively shared the experience of these or similar values with other agents<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology*, ...p.41

<sup>5</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology*, ...p.174

It should be stressed that the distinction between a value and a thing has nothing to do with so called 'objectivity' or 'subjectivity'. A value, in the humanistic sociology is as 'objective' or 'subjective' as a thing. The experience of both a meaning and a content

can be indefinitely repeated by an indefinite number of people and consequently 'tested'. To experience a meaning, indeed, a certain preparation or 'learning' is needed; the individual must be put into definite conditions and be taught how to use the given value<sup>6</sup>.

## 2.3 Activity, tendency and attitude

Znaniiecki defines an activity from the point of view of the agent's own experience, as a tendency to construct a system of values in the course of its realization<sup>7</sup>.

The term 'tendency' used in this definition suggests that the system is prospectively determined, and this prospective determination may or may not be fulfilled. The feature of cultural tendency and natural tendency is similar and the similarity exists in the objective manifestation of the tendency. In terms of humanistic sociology there are also differences.

This is a result of differentiation between values and things, which has been discussed above. We can apply the term 'tendency' in relation to natural phenomena only when a tendency is manifested in the stage of its realization. In contrast to a natural tendency, a cultural tendency can be manifested not only in the stage of realization but also as an attitude. It applies to situations which are defined but not solved.

The term 'attitude' is well-known in psychology where it is often treated as

a definite appreciation of a given object as desirable or undesirable; and this appreciation may range all the way from purely intellectual approval or disapproval to a most irrational and from ecstatic 'feeling' to a dynamic 'wish'.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>F. Znaniiecki, *The Method of Sociology*, ...p.174

<sup>7</sup>F. Znaniiecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, p.174

<sup>8</sup>F. Znaniiecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ...p. 156

But the psychological view is not the sociological one. In objective terms, according to Znaniecki, the attitude is

a determination of the active treatment the given value would receive in the system which tends to be constructed, if it ever really be constructed. The attitude is, thus, a potential substitute for the act.<sup>9</sup>

However, any analysis of the interdependent relationships between an act (or an attitude in terms of a substitute for the act) and tendency must take into account that a single act which concerns only one value does not yet constitute a tendency. Only the construction of a system of values by a complex number of acts creates a tendency. A single attitude can express a tendency but a whole series of acts are needed to manifest a tendency for its complete manifestation.

The concept of tendency, when applied to a concrete human life situation meets two kinds of problems which can be stated, after Znaniecki, in the form of the following two questions:

1. Why does a tendency manifest itself at one time as activity constructing a system of values, but at another time merely as an attitude or set of attitudes towards one or several of these values?
2. Why does a tendency when active succeed in some cases in realising itself, solving the situation as defined and achieving the very system it started to construct, whereas in other cases it fails in its attempt as realization and its total result is different from the one intended?

In order to answer the first question, it is possible to use the psychological theories of motivation, which are mainly based on the assumption that human activity must and

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<sup>9</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, . . . p. 156

can be explained by human experience. The theory of motivation, however useful for the study of concrete human individuals or groups is rejected by Znaniecki because of its lack of significance for the investigation of cultural systems. In particular

we cannot and need not explain why a cultural system tends to be constructed at a particular moment by a particular agent. We cannot, because such an explanation would involve the entire past of the cultural world. We need not, because no science conscious of its task ever tries to solve this kind of problem<sup>10</sup>.

In this situation Znaniecki simply assumes the existence of a tendency and the necessity of taking a tendency as given. A tendency constructs a cultural system. The manifestation of a tendency is an activity. In the cultural sciences, according to Znaniecki

instead of asking (as psychology does) why  $x$  tends to perform certain activity, we must ask why  $x$ , though tending to perform certain activity, does not perform it but merely feels or wishes<sup>11</sup>.

We can answer the first question generally by saying that the outcome depends on how the agent assesses a concrete situation. The values which are seen by the agents as essential may be inaccessible at a particular time. In such a situation the agent can assess an active solution as not possible, and so manifest the tendency only in the form of attitudes. The attitudes chosen by the agent may be both positive and negative, depending on their relation to the system, i.e., whether they are in harmony with the system or against it. To use Znaniecki's examples:

when obstacles impossible to overcome prevent two people from marrying, their tendencies to marry manifest themselves in attitudes of romantic love towards each other and indignation at the obstacles. The attitude of reverence to religious values is never as distinctly experienced as when persecution forcibly represses activities of religious cult. When a scientist is prevented by any reason from doing active research, he develops attitudes of dogmatic certainty towards the knowledge he already possesses<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ...p. 158

<sup>11</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ...p. 158

<sup>12</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ...p.158-159

Analysing the problem, Znaniecki introduced the principle of spontaneity, according to which "a cultural tendency is always active unless hindered by an internal practical obstacle"<sup>13</sup>. This principle provides an answer for the first question.

In order to answer the second question a few problems need to be clarified: firstly, the assumption that a tendency is active does not necessarily mean obtaining all the results which are intended. Secondly, the possession of attitudes alone is important because it may result in solving a situation in the future and constructing a system when the obstacles preventing activities are removed. In this approach, even failure does not mean achieving nothing. Failure is doing something differently from that which was intended.

In contrast to psychology, the results for the cultural scientist are as "they are for the agent himself"<sup>14</sup>. The cultural scientist applies the agent's values with the humanistic coefficient and the results are 'products', not 'effects' as in natural processes.

It is easy to check from the results of the agent's activity, if the system is being constructed. Previously we discovered that the dominant tendency is manifested by the act. Sometimes the result can be different from what was intended. In such a situation we have to find which factors cause the diversion. An illustration of these problems is found in Znaniecki's example.

We find a musician starting to play a certain sonata or a religious congregation beginning to perform a certain rite. Once we know what this sonata or this rite is for the respective agents, we can easily determine at the end of the musical or religious performance whether it has ultimately become what it was originally intended to become. If so, there is no problem: matters are as we expected them to be. Suppose, however, that the musician introduced variations into the original composition or the congregation abbreviates the performance by omitting certain sections for the ritual, we naturally ask why, and look for explanation in some perturbing influences<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ... p.159

<sup>14</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ... p.161

<sup>15</sup>F. Znaniecki, *On Humanistic Sociology*, ... p.161-162

To answer the second question we can use the principle of achievement, formulated by Znaniecki, described above (1.5) and use the following example:

John and Adam, two non-English speaking background high school graduates wish to apply for entry into a university engineering course. John has the strong support of his family, where all members completed tertiary education and have professional jobs and his closest friends are already university students. Adam, who is John's friend, is a more recent migrant and still experiencing difficulties in English. His family came to Australia to 'make money' and discouraged Adam from further study as he would be useful for them in their newly opened family business. Although Adam was not as good academically as John, against the wish of his family but with John's encouragement, he also was successful in gaining a place in the same course. He was admitted on the university special entry scheme as a non-English speaking background student. John and Adam attended their classes and made plans to establish an engineering research firm and become consultants for the industry after completion of their studies.

During the first year of study Adam experienced more difficulties with English at more demanding and advanced academic level and was disappointed that the university did not offer any supporting program for NESB students in engineering. He spent all his time on his studies which was a source of conflict with his family, who expected him to dedicate at least a few hours per day for their prospering and developing business. Finally, the family requested that Adam stop his studies and refused to give him any financial support. Consequently, because of lack of financial means, Adam terminated his study.

Adam's and John's tendencies both achieved the construction of the system of values (higher education and interesting, professional job as a value). The different system of values of Adam's family ('to make money') was not able to change Adam's tendency. But

the factor in the case of Adam (academic difficulties, a result of poor knowledge of English and the lack of any chance for a scholarship as a member of a high income family) — were significant.

To continue the example further: Adam, although unsuccessful as a university student became a successful member of the family business and found more satisfaction doing simple but well paid jobs and quickly achieved a good standard of life. Consequently, he established a new value system. In the meantime, John, when Adam offered him a job in his family business on full-time basis, refused the offer because he regarded it as against his system of values.

We can simply summarise that Adam's first system of values was deflected by perturbing factors, John's was not. It illustrates the way that a tendency which is active always achieves the construction of the system of values. Other values of an opposing nature are set aside. But the appearance of new factors of perturbing character, as we have seen, can change the tendency.

The differentiation between tendency and attitude has a quite important practical significance which has been applied in sociological research. Smolicz and Secombe, for example, have applied the distinction in relation to linguistic systems in their *The Australian School through Children's Eyes*. Indeed, such application is not only possible but very useful. To take the example of an individual from an ethnic minority group, the individual, let us call him Jaroslaw, can be in a situation where it is not possible to use his ethnic language. His family may be far away in his home country, and no other members of his ethnic community may exist in the small town where he lives. He has to speak the language of mainstream society not only during the work time and official contacts with different organizations, but even during his leisure time. However, he still possesses

an attitude towards his mother tongue which constitutes a value system for him. If the obstacles are removed after a certain period of time, perhaps by changing his work for a place where there is a number of members of his ethnic community, he therefore has the possibility of using his ethnic language again. Now his tendency to activate his language can be manifested not only through the attitude but by the activity of using the language.

Based on their research at Adelaide, Smolicz and Secombe claimed that

the positive attitude of many ethnic-Australian children to the study of their mother tongue at an Australian school provides a pertinent illustration of the attitude—tendency distinction<sup>16</sup>.

The children expressed their positive attitudes to their ethnic languages and manifested their wish to develop them. However, the attitudes cannot be activated because of the lack of an interest of the mainstream school system to teach the children their community languages. Therefore the wish of a child from an 'ethnic culture to maintain the language (attitude) cannot be manifested (tendency). But when a language course is provided, let us say, on a voluntary basis, and the child attends it, the action is manifested. Consequently, following Znaniecki and Smolicz<sup>17</sup>, we can refer to attitudes as the individual's potential for action and to tendencies as manifestation of the actions.

## 2.4 Personal and group social systems

From the humanistic sociological perspective individuals have a cultural meaning which makes them social values.

Individuals play two roles in social systems. Firstly, because of their unique capacity as human beings they are active agents, and secondly, they act and depend upon the

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<sup>16</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School . . .*, p.7

<sup>17</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education . . .*, p.47



cultural values of other human beings, hence they are also social objects of the activities of other individuals. Znaniecki states that

a 'social person' is a centre of relationship with a number of other persons or group, in which relationships he appears as object of their activities and they appear as objects of his activities<sup>18</sup>.

This kind of relationship around a 'social person' Smolicz and Secombe classify as 'personal social system'<sup>19</sup>.

Different social organizations such as business, professional, academic, religious, political clubs or even an extended family constitutes a group social system where each individual is related to others. The system is the result of the activities of individuals as well as existing relationships between them. Through the fact of their participation in the life of social organizations, individuals have an influence on the organizations. Individuals participating in social organizations play then a double role: as the objects of the organization and as active agents in its cultural activity. The various social groups constitute systems of social values, or put differently, group systems

represent social stocks or reservoirs which are employed by individuals in the construction of personal social systems<sup>20</sup>.

On the other hand, almost every individual, participating actively in the group's activity, has the potential to generate some modifications of the cultural meaning given to the cultural values activated by the group.

Smolicz and Secombe, providing an extension of the theory of social values, apply the sociological distinction between primary and secondary relationships to social systems.

Primary relationships are defined

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<sup>18</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology*, ... p.132

<sup>19</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School* ... , p.9

<sup>20</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School* ... , p.9

as those in which contact is personal, informal or intimate, usually face to face, and involving the entire human personality. In contrast, secondary relations are the more impersonal, formal and restricted associations that are typical of the occupational, political, commercial and military spheres of life<sup>21</sup>.

An example of primary group system may be the clan system of an Italian family (seen not only in Italy but also in countries where the number of the Italian immigrants is significant, such as the United States of America or Australia).

Certain professional or occupational organizations can be taken examples of secondary group systems, interpreted in a very broad sense. For example,

in this way a sociologist would find his secondary social values among members of a social system that comprised his professional academic colleagues all over the world, as well as among the participants in the partially overlapping yet distinct system composed of the various staff members and students of the institution in which he served<sup>22</sup>.

The differentiation of primary and secondary relationships can be applied both to personal and group systems. At this point there is a difference between Znaniecki's theory and Smolicz and Secombe's concepts. The latter puts the focus on the individual and assumes that each has not only one but two personal systems, one at a primary and the other at a secondary level.

## 2.5 The ideological system

Social groups create a group systems of ideological values which have an influence on all the members of the groups. The term 'ideological', because it has many connotations in contemporary life, needs some clarification. In particular, the term as used here is not based on Marxist philosophy<sup>23</sup> and is not used in any direct political sense. In humanistic

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<sup>21</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School* . . . , p.10

<sup>22</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School* . . . , p.10

<sup>23</sup>Ideology is an important concept in theoretical Marxism (and also in the political life). It is not an accident that one of K.Marx's works is entitled *The German Ideology*.

sociology, following Znaniecki and Smolicz, the 'ideological system' refers in broad terms to

the group's standards of values and norms of conduct or the principle of judgement and ways of acting which members are supposed to accept and abide by. From the point of view of those who promulgate definite standards of values and norms of conduct, everybody 'should recognize' them as valid and 'should not deny their validity'; the attitudes of all who accept them are 'right', the attitudes of all who reject them are 'wrong'. (Likewise) every agent who deals with them 'ought to act' in accordance with these norms and 'ought not to act' in any way which conflicts with them; actions which conform are 'right', actions which conflict are 'wrong'.<sup>24</sup>

It must be noticed at this point, that culture is a dynamic phenomenon, not a static one and social groups constantly evaluate and change their culture over generations. The ideological system is seen to play an important part in this process. There are two main functions of the ideological system:

1. to act for each generation as the evaluating agent for other items of culture;
2. to help structure both the individual's and the group's systems.

The first function manifests itself in the analysis and constant judgement on values introduced by new generations or from the culture of other groups. The second function "is to bear upon the heritage and evaluate it afresh to meet the changing needs of the group"<sup>25</sup>.

An important part of heritage is tradition. The concept of tradition has been seriously developed and analysed from the humanistic sociological perspective<sup>26</sup>. Szacki defines tradition as that

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<sup>24</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education in a Plural Society*, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, 1979, p.34-35, and quoted by J.J. Smolicz: F. Znaniecki, *Cultural Sciences*, Urbana, 1963, p.267

<sup>25</sup>J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *The Australian School . . .*, p.12

<sup>26</sup>Particularly significant are: J.Szacki *Three concepts of tradition*, The Polish Sociological Bulletin, No.2 (1969), p.144-150; J.J. Smolicz, *The concept of tradition: a humanistic interpretation*, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, vol.10, No.2 (1974), p.75-83

part of heritage which excites feelings of approval or disapproval in the current generation by involving it in an act of identification or dissociation with predecessors<sup>27</sup>.

Tradition, in humanistic sociology, is thus not the mechanical transfer or imposition of some aspects of cultural life from generation to generation but requires

an active display of the sentiments of acceptance or rejection [and] cannot be accounted for without reference to the phenomenon of human consciousness<sup>28</sup>.

The group's system of ideological values has an influence on the personal cultural systems of group members. Generally speaking the personal ideological system of individuals depends on two factors: the quality and accessibility of the group cultural system, on one hand, and on the other, the individuals tendency to use the group systems which are available to them. The concept of tendency (and attitude) has been discussed above. However, in this context, reference should be made to the many different forces which create a tendency. Particularly significant for a tendency is the group's current ideological system. A tendency (and the maintenance of the tendency) is the manifestation of the individual's personal ideological system. This can be illustrated by using the example of a plural society like Australia. Migrants from a non-English speaking background are under the influence of the dominant group's ideological system (Anglo-Australian) as well as of the comparable system of their own ethnic group and other ethnic minority groups. In the sphere of languages for example, the dominant group ideological system professes monolingualism whereas the ideological values of minority groups from Central Europe, prefer bilingualism, i.e., in the Australian context, the maintenance of the group's language with the simultaneous development of competency in English.

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<sup>27</sup>J.Szacki *Three concepts* ...p.144-150

<sup>28</sup>J.Szacki *Three concepts* ...p.144-150

In an analysis of the personal ideological system, it is necessary to take into account such factors as the individual's personality and life experience, actions and ways of thinking. These factors are always important in humanistic sociology, with the stress on the active human consciousness. In relation to a given action an individual operates within his/her personal system and the group's system. However, there is always a degree of personal choice in the application or the putting into practice of the group values. Individual personal systems may thus be very different, with a certain degree of toleration being shown by the group to which the individuals belong. Znaniecki, in analysing ideological values, states that the acceptance of group ideological values

does not eliminate differences between individual attitudes, yet by subjecting all these attitudes to a common criteria of validity, it superimposes upon them what may well be called the same 'ideal type', which all of them presumably appropriate<sup>29</sup>.

Smolicz and Secombe point out that the ideological system at a personal level can be regarded

as made up of a series of attitudes, for each of which there exists a corresponding value at group level [...where ...] attitudes at individual level and values at the level of group can be viewed as being in a state of dynamic equilibrium<sup>30</sup>.

The dynamism of culture with its incorporation of the external cultural values to a given group system can thus be seen as the result of interaction between individual attitudes and group values.

## 2.6 Core values

The concept of 'core values' is one of the most important concepts to be considered in relation to the group's ideological system. According to Smolicz and Secombe, core values

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<sup>29</sup>F. Znaniecki, *Cultural Sciences* . . . , p.265

<sup>30</sup>J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *The Australian School* . . . , p.14

represent the heartland of the ideological system and act as identifying values which are symbolic of the group and its members<sup>31</sup>.

From a more practical perspective, each national or ethnic group is in possession of a unique set of cultural and social values in the form of group cultural systems. In the course of the group's history, some of these values become singled out as central or crucial for the survival of the group, and its members can be identified by their support for the activation of these values.

The application of the concept of core values in a plural society is particularly important. In the Australian multicultural society, an example of the core values may be the Italian family ethos, with its stress on collectivism, and the mutual interdependence of members. Such a value is not generally known among Anglo-Australians for whom individualism and independence or self-reliance within the family are important.

An analysis of particular cultures suggests that often more than one core value may be involved. In such a situation, a relative hierarchy of importance can be taken into account. Using the example of Italian culture, the Italian language constitutes a core value within the culture, but among rural Southern Italians the family as a value is even more important than the Italian language. The family ethos within the group is so strong that the Southern Italians consider family solidarity as more important than individual advancement or maintenance of the standard forms of Italian as the language of the house.

The specific recognition of the family as a value has an important consequence in relation to other social institutions within an ethnic group. Consider for example, the following studies, which investigated influence family on education.

Duncan, in a study of secondary students of Italian origin in a rural Victorian town, has argued that their poor academic achievement in the Australian

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<sup>31</sup>J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *The Australian School* . . . , p.15

school is directly related to the degree of their acceptance of the family as a basic ideological value . . . . . Italian ethnic schools in Australia are also relatively fewer in number and are generally poorly attended, in contrast with those established by, for example, the Greeks and the Ukrainians, many of whom zealously preserve their mother tongue not simply as a convenient mode of family communication but a central element of their cultural heritage.<sup>32</sup>

In the case of Polish culture, the native language has had particular significance. There are reasons for this. In the time of partitions of Poland the public use of the Polish language was forbidden. There was even a time in the Russian-occupied eastern areas when parents could be deported to Siberia because their children spoke Polish in the school corridor. Such attempts to eradicate the Polish language from public life led to the language being regarded as a national heritage to be preserved by Polish patriots. The language was elevated to a symbol of the survival of the group as a separate entity.

A second core value for Poles is the Catholic faith, which today is probably more important than even their language. Although Poland from the time of Christianity (966) has always had very strong links with the Roman Catholic Church, the Communist Party after the Second World War prosecuted the Church and promoted atheism as the official doctrine for a long time. In spite of the policy, about 90 percent of Poles are Catholics, their faith is strong and the Roman Catholic Church has a very strong position in the country. Moreover, unlike other countries, even Catholic, the number of vocations for the priesthood is still increasing, and participation of Poles in Sunday Masses is very high, with churches packed on most occasions.

Similarly, religion is a core value for Greeks (The Orthodox Church). There it takes the form of the Orthodox faith and a church which is specific to the Greek group. Greeks have traditionally relied upon their Orthodox faith as the ideological value system which

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<sup>32</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education in a Plural Society* . . . , p.59

has protected the group from the 'Islamic flood'.

The core value of the Irish ethnic group is centred in the Catholic religion. Since the time of Elizabeth I the Irish were gradually denied access to their native tongue. To retain their identity and awareness of their distinction from the conquering British Protestant they found refuge in the Catholic faith. They carried their Catholicism to the places of new settlement (America, Australia). Through a few generations people of Irish origin, living outside Ireland, lost their feelings of Irishness more readily than their Catholicism. This process is a continuation of the earlier one when Catholicism took over from the Irish language the function of core value.

In the Jewish culture, Smolicz argues that three most fundamental components play the role of core values: religion, peoplehood and historicity. All these components are well integrated. For instance the teaching of Mosaic religion becomes simultaneously a religious instruction and a review of Jewish national history. To be a Jew means not simply to be a believer in the God of Moses and the Torah, but also to be born of a Jewish mother, and to regard oneself as linked to the cultural-historic reality of the Jewish people.

Part of the purpose of this research is to investigate what aspects of culture are evaluated as core values by Ukrainian, Polish and Croatian young people in Australia.

The particular effort of the Ukrainians living in Australia in organising their own system of ethnic schools suggests that language is a core value for Ukrainians living in Australia. The other important form of their community life has been the church — but in this instance, Ukrainians are split into those who are in the Orthodox Church and those who have remained in the Catholic unite rite.

Croatians like the Poles seem to regard their language and their Catholic faith as central to their culture.



## Chapter 3

# Humanistic Sociological Concepts

## Applied to a Plural Society

Smolicz has argued that in an ethnically plural society (such as the United States, Canada or Australia) individuals may construct their personal cultural systems in several different ways. Anglo-Australians, for example, form the majority cultural group but individual Anglo-Australians may remain in the cultures of other cultural systems or also interact with cultures of minority groups. It is possible to distinguish the following forms of interaction between two cultures (which can be called culture A and culture B), depending on the method of individuals' adaptation to each culture:

1. **Separatism** where either A or B culture is adopted on its own by different individuals;
2. **Dual system interaction** where both A and B cultures are adopted by the same individuals, but activated by them in different situations;

3. **Synthesis type interaction** where neither A nor B culture exists on its own; but a new amalgam, derived from both, is adopted by individuals;
4. **Conformism** where only A or B culture on its own is used and adopted by individuals, depending upon whichever is dominant in society.<sup>1</sup>

If we apply as a criterion the nature of personal system in these various types of interaction, following Smolicz and Secombe we can call them (in chronological order as above):

1. External cultural pluralism;
2. Internal cultural pluralism;
3. Hybrid monism;
4. Dominant monism.

External cultural pluralism gives the opportunity for minority ethnic groups to preserve their culture (both cultural heritage and language) but without any serious interaction with other cultures. However, a minimum degree of interaction, especially in economic or political spheres, is usually unavoidable.

Internal cultural pluralism, in contrast to the external form, is characterised by a very strong commitment to cultural interaction. Individuals who adopt this model construct a dual system of cultural values. There is cultural interchange between the two groups concerned, or in other words there are strong relations between members of different

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<sup>1</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education in a Plural Society*, Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra, 1979, p.80.

see also:

J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *The Australian School Through Children's Eyes*, Melbourne University Press, 1981, p.20-22.

ethnic groups, because individuals have a personal system drawn from both cultures and therefore can participate in the life of both groups.

In both of the above models there is one common element, the possibility of preservation of the member's personal cultural systems. What distinguishes these two models is the level of interaction. In external pluralism the relations between two groups are limited in character to secondary relations, whereas in internal pluralism there is the opportunity for individuals to construct both their primary social and a wide range of cultural systems from more than one ethnic source and then interaction is stronger.

Hybrid monism puts stress on interaction between dominant and ethnic groups at both personal and group levels. In this model, sharing and interchange of cultural values leads to the achievement of one homogeneous cultural entity.

The orientation which favours this development assumes that cultural diversity is only temporary and takes as its ideal a new monistic solution for almost every realm of culture, such as social manners, family structure or ideology. The assumption is that, in each instance, one single system of values would eventually emerge by incorporating elements derived from a number of contributing cultural systems. It must be recognized, of course, that some parts of cultures can be integrated more readily than others and that in certain instances, such as language, effective interaction can only be of the dual system type. This shows that the orientation of hybrid monism and internal cultural pluralism cannot always be regarded as mutually exclusive and that they can both apply one and the same time to different aspects of the interacting cultures<sup>2</sup>.

Dominant monism is connected with the policy of assimilation and based on the simple assumption that the dominant group's culture must be the basis for all society and that other groups should sacrifice their culture in order to assimilate to the dominant social group's. Such a policy was predominantly accepted in Australia before the 1970s. The term 'integration' which was sometimes used in the policy in the 1960's and 1970's, before the multicultural policy approach was adopted, has nothing to do with real cultural

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<sup>2</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education in a Plural Society* . . . , p.90-91

interaction. Indeed, the term can be misleading as has been previously indicated. In the Australian context (before the establishment of a multicultural policy) the term 'integration' referred to ideological values of Anglo-conformism where the successful 'integration' meant, in practice, full acceptance of Anglo-Saxon culture by all ethnic minorities. The word 'integration' was in fact used synonymously with assimilation. Obviously, genuine interaction requires action from two sides — both from the majority and minority groups.

## **Part II**

# **Method of Humanistic Sociology**

## Introduction

Humanistic sociology possesses its own, well-developed method. The chief methodological assumption of humanistic sociology is the need to understand the phenomenon being studied in terms of those who participate in it. This involves investigating individual attitudes and their interaction with group cultural values. This is because a value or an attitude never stands alone but is always a combination of both factors. In addition the application of the concept of humanistic coefficient is necessary in any investigation. Unlike other methods, statistical analysis by itself does not play any significant role; instead, the humanistic sociological approach could be said to supplement the limitation of strict statistical methods and highlight what the statistics mean in human terms.

There is a strong emphasis in this method upon individuals' perception and evaluation through the collection of statements or descriptions of personal experiences from participants in the social and cultural phenomena being investigated. Examples of such materials from personal sources are: autobiographies, letters, diaries. The researcher and student of sociology may be included among the participants whose personal experiences are analysed. According to Znaniecki the personal experiences of the sociologist have the same objective validity as other participants', provided all are subject to the same form of theoretical reconstruction. Znaniecki, in common with the whole humanistic sociological school, is not formalistic in the construction of the method. Indeed, formal precision, using the words of Bierstedt: "has nothing to do with material significance"<sup>1</sup>.

Znaniecki, for whom statistical methods were very limited, criticised the methodological tendencies which were based on these methods, in particular simple enumerative

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<sup>1</sup>R. Bierstedt, in his introduction to F. Znaniecki *On Humanistic Sociology* . . . , p.23

induction. In contrast, he named his method 'analytical induction'. The difference lies in the fact that the use of statistical methods involves treating all participants or respondents in the same way, whereas the method of analytical induction makes the difference between cases significant from a methodological point of view.

A terminological explanation is necessary. According to Thomas, a distinction between 'methodology' and 'method' can be made.

Methodology refers to the broad and fundamental questions of theory of construction, explanation, and proof, whereas method involves the specific and technical problem of data collection<sup>2</sup>.

Because our discussion is concerned with the specific problems of data collection, the distinction seems to be useful. It is also significant that Znaniecki has entitled one of his books *The Method of Sociology*, in which the term 'method', which also involves interpretation of data, is consequently used. Hence my preference for using the term 'method'.

In this part, the sources of sociological material as well as their utilization will be discussed.

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<sup>2</sup>W.J. Thomas, *On Social Organization . . .*, p.XIV

## Chapter 4

# The Classification of Sources of Sociological Materials in Humanistic Sociology

F. Znaniecki in his books *The Method of Sociology* classifies the sources from which sociology draws its materials in the following way:

1. Personal experience of the sociologist, original and vicarious;
2. Observation by the sociologist, direct and indirect;
3. Personal experience of other people;
4. Observation by other people;

To these main sources he adds a subsidiary one:

5. Generalizations made by other people, with or without scientific purposes.

### 4.1 Personal experience of the sociologist

#### 4.1.1 original

For Znaniecki the personal experience of the sociologist is the primary and most reliable source of information in sociology. He strongly stresses that the only way to experience a



social system at first-hand is

to be active in its construction, for only thus are we directly aware of the tendencies involved in its structure and the actual significance of the values included in its composition. Just as we cannot fully experience a sentence without speaking it, a game of golf without demonstrating it ourselves, even so it is impossible to experience fully the social action of avoiding, intimidating, helping, sympathising or demanding sympathy, acquiring mastery or gaining recognition otherwise than by performing such actions; or to experience a friendship without being friend with somebody, a conjugal relation without being married, a position of teacher, student, stranger, workman without occupying it, the composition and structure of a gang, a 'secret society', a church, a national group without participating in it<sup>1</sup>.

Though Znaniecki encourages the maximum possible experience in the social systems by the individual sociologist he is, simultaneously, conscious of the limitation of the sociologist's own experience at first-hand, in all the social systems he has to study because of the principal reason that the majority of social systems require for their construction the collaboration of several individuals.

The limitation, in practical terms, is the result of the many factors involved in social systems. Znaniecki's examples provide good illustrations:

- Among social actions there are some that no individual can adequately reproduce (for example the election of a public official),
- It is obvious that the individual's experience of a friendship or a conjugal relation must be supplemented by the experience of the other partner,
- the social life of a group will be differently experienced by members who occupy different social positions within this group or take an unequal personal share in its activities.

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<sup>1</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology* . . . , p.157

In spite of the above described limitations, the sociologist, in Znaniecki's view,

must claim for his own social experiences, as far as they go, the same objective validity as students of nature claim for their methodological observations<sup>2</sup>.

The sociologist's experiences need to be turned into knowledge through reflection or theoretical reconstruction. From the humanistic sociological perspective, the sociologist should pay particular attention to identifying values and attitudes.

During the process of reconstructing active experience the sociologist must distinguish fact from explanation. The facts from the point of view of humanistic sociology "are the values which are given to us and our active treatment of these values"<sup>3</sup>. The problem of why we have values and why we have certain attitudes to the data, is not a question of data based on our experience. This is theoretical induction, analysing the connection between the facts. But before any induction

we must have the facts clear and be in possession of a reliable scientific method by which connections between facts can be established objectively without any danger of the investigator's personal bias<sup>4</sup>.

There is no difference, according to Znaniecki, between testing cultural experience and natural observations or physical experiments — an original cultural experience can also be easily tested. Checking, for example, the description of a personal cultural experience can be made

by reconstructing the system which has been experienced, making its composition and structure as near the original as it is necessary for scientific purposes<sup>5</sup>.

Just as philology or musicology have been successful in controlling the objectivity of personal experience, so also can sociology develop this approach. Hence, a certain

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<sup>2</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology* . . . , p.158

<sup>3</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology* . . . , p.162

<sup>4</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology* . . . , p.162

<sup>5</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method of Sociology* . . . , p.164

statement made by a sociologist and based on his personal experiences, can be tested by others. The testing is as efficient as the testing by a physicist or chemist. By 'testing an experience' Znaniecki does not mean proving or disproving the validity of a general hypothesis by applying it to new instances, but verifying the description of certain data based on somebody else's experience and by comparing this description with the result of a theoretical reflection about one's own experience. Such a test can be direct or indirect.

#### **4.1.2 vicarious**

Because of the practical limitation of original experiences open to the sociologist, Znaniecki introduced, as a substitute for the original experience, the possibility of using what he calls 'vicarious experience'. In order to understand the concept fully, it is necessary to compare the cultural with the natural system, considering the differences which exist between the position of natural scientists and their cultural counterparts. Generally speaking, a natural system can be:

- experimentally constructed by the scientists themselves,

or

- given to the scientists (as existing without interference of the scientists)

Similarly, students of culture can:

- investigate a system which is constructed by them;

or

- investigate a system which exists independently of their initiative.

In some ways the investigation of a cultural system by students of culture can be seen to be similar to the experiment of the scientists of nature. However, if we accept the assumptions of humanistic sociology, especially the sharp division between cultural and natural sciences, we are able to find differences. And the differences are quite significant.

Firstly, we have to recognize that the scientists of the natural world are interested only in observing the things and the natural processes between the things. It is not important at all whether they themselves have constructed the system or not. In contrast, students of cultural systems may be engaged in the construction of the cultural systems they are investigating. In this case their personal experience gives them a specific kind of information.

Secondly, and an even more significant difference in my view, is that students of culture can investigate a system which is not constructed by them but in which they can participate. They reconstruct a system which was constructed by others and do not participate in this system in a physical sense, dealing only with the values which are involved with the system. This is just what Znaniecki calls 'vicarious experience'. This kind of experience is not 'passive', as it may seem at first. It is an active experience. It is active because it requires from the agent the reproduction of somebody else's activity.

For Znaniecki vicarious cultural experience

is simply the experience we obtain of a system which originally was or is being constructed realistically with the help of adequate instruments, when we reconstruct it ideationally in a non-instrumental way<sup>6</sup>.

As an example:

a student of religion experiences vicariously a religious ceremony as originally performed by a priest when, instead of 'realistically' officiating as a priest, speaking the words, making the gestures, handling the implements of cult,

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<sup>6</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* . . . , p.168-169

praying to a divinity in order to influence it, he reproduces all these performances 'mentally' (we prefer to say 'ideationally'). He does identify himself as agent with the priest's action, though he recreates in imagination the results of this activity as he thinks these results appear to the priest<sup>7</sup>.

The ability to experience vicariously is used in every day life. Very often in order to help people or to try understand their different and sometimes difficult situations, we have to, or at least we try to, put ourselves in their place. Some professionals such as doctors, nurses, social workers, priests or teachers depend on such ability. In the same way the sociologists can use vicarious experience in their investigation. This kind of experience has been assessed sometimes as the main, sometime as the unique, source of sociological knowledge. Dilthey, for instance, stated in a form of principle that

the proper method of all cultural sciences is internal synthetic **understanding** as constructed with external observation and analytical explanation used by the sciences of nature; we live inside the cultural world and mental identification with other cultural agents gives us the only adequate knowledge of their cultural life<sup>8</sup>.

Znaniiecki especially criticised the phenomenologists because of their lack of differentiation between ideal and realistic activities. According to him there is a difference between reconstructing ideationally a system that was originally 'ideal' or non-instrumental, and reproducing ideationally a system using social instruments to influence other people in real life.

In the first case our reproduction is of the same kind as the original construction and our experience is self-sufficient; in the second, our reconstruction of the system is different from the original construction, and our experience differs from that of the actors involved.

Because of these differences it is necessary to test experience. The testing can be achieved simultaneously by:

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<sup>7</sup>F. Znaniiecki, *The Method* ..., p.168

<sup>8</sup>F. Znaniiecki, *The Method* ..., p.169-170

- comparing a certain experience with the original one;
- supplementing it by observation to be sure that the experience refers to the same system (or the same kind of system).

The following example illustrates the problem:

my vicarious experience of the woman's side in a conjugal relation, of the social rôle of a states-man, or of the structure of a parliament can be proved valid only by comparison with the actual experiences of married women, of statesmen when functioning in office, of active members of parliament. Hence, to enable others to make this comparison I must describe my objective observation, as an outsider, of women as wives, of statesmen, of parliaments, so as to make it possible for any observer to find the kind of conjugal relation, official positions, parliamentary groups I am vicariously experiencing among the systems which other people actually construct<sup>9</sup>.

Without this, the description could not be tested and assessed, furthermore there could be a danger of error by including something fictional. Hence Znaniecki formulates the general requirement or rule that the description of a vicarious experience, in the same way as an original experience "must be made in such a way as to be verifiable both by original experience and by observation"<sup>10</sup>.

## 4.2 Observation by the sociologist

In contrast to observing natural things (where we take into account what these things mean or signify in our experience from the past), in observing values it is indispensable to notice how other human agents deal with them, and interpret this treatment in the light of instances where we have actively shared the experience of these or similar values with other agents. This is one of the fundamental principles in humanistic sociology as well as other cultural sciences.

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<sup>9</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.171

<sup>10</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.172

When sociologists observe an existing cultural system outside their own construction, they must use the humanistic coefficient and remember that they need to observe values and activities from the point of view of those who constructed the system.

The need to observe the **whole system of values** is especially important in sociology. A value never occurs in isolation, but always as part of system. Take, for example, social values, or people. Znaniecki's sociological observation require that members of social groups should be viewed as social values for one another, taking into account the interdependent relations between individual and individual, group and group and individual and group. Znaniecki underlines the necessity of studying

how individuals and groups actively treat one another, and thus reconstructing theoretically step by step the habitual social action, the personalities and the groups ...<sup>11</sup>.

The sociologist should distinguish reconstruction of a system itself from the practical activity of constructing the system. It is not true, that sociological observation implies mental reproduction because

active reproduction of systems may go on, and is continually going on, without theoretical observation of these systems preceding, accompanying or followed by active reproduction<sup>12</sup>.

Active reproduction, however, may be preceded by theoretical observation, which can be seen, for instance, in Znaniecki's example of learning a language. There is an important difference between the practical learning of a language when someone is in a foreign environment for a certain period of time and must become familiar with the language, on one hand, and learning a language in the traditional way in schools, on the other. The traditional way of learning languages at school is based on the learner observing how the

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<sup>11</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.177

<sup>12</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.178

language is spoken or written before any attempts at speaking or writing of the language. Later the learner, after an analysis of a sentence into words, studies the connections between them and reproduces what he has learned. For the majority of language learners, however, the knowledge obtained in schools is not adequate for practical use of foreign languages. This is because "observation is not a substitute for personal experience"<sup>13</sup>. But, simultaneously, it does not disqualify observation as unreliable, especially when is combined with personal experience:

A foreign philologist may never have the chance to learn a language practically, and yet know more about it than even an intelligent native who relies only on his own experience and has never carried on scientific observation<sup>14</sup>.

It is interesting to note that some recent developments in language teaching methodology have tried to avoid this separation of theoretical learning as opposed to active participation in a given language.

Observation, however, has its significance in humanistic sociology and must be used in those cases where the investigated cultural systems are very different from those experienced by the sociologist. In such cases reconstruction is not possible. As Znaniecki puts it

When the sociologist is facing an unfamiliar system very different from the ones in which he has participated, theoretic observation is the only reliable approach<sup>15</sup>.

Associated with the observation by the sociologist, there is the problem of the utilization of documents. Because the latter is very important for this investigation, a separate chapter will be devoted to these issues.

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<sup>13</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.180

<sup>14</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.180

<sup>15</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* ..., p.180



### 4.3 Personal experience of other people

Generally speaking, the personal experiences of other people can be regarded only as a second-hand source of sociological material. However, this does not mean that they are not important and contemporary sociologists are beginning to pay more attention to such sources.

Znaniecki makes two general points which, according to him must always be kept in mind while utilizing this kind of material. Firstly, and foremost, they are worthless as a second-hand source of theoretical information. Secondly, they possess various degrees of reliability as information which is intended for theoretical analysis. The reliability depends on the scientific training of the person who imparts this information, as Znaniecki formulates it.

The sociologist may collect descriptions of other peoples' personal experiences when they analyse a concrete problem, or problems which will be formulated in the future. The method of collecting materials which often describe people's experiences without reference to any definite sociological problems seems to have originated among the humanistic sociological school. It was probably W. Thomas, who started this as serious scientific sociological activity with his colleagues, after collecting a large amount of material concerned with people's experiences, without any specific topics for scientific research in mind.

Among the material describing people's experience such as letters or memoirs, the more significant are those which have been collected for a particular purpose, but after their utilization have been forgotten or discarded as unnecessary. However they can be successfully used as resource material by sociologists. Not only a number of different sociologists, but even the same researcher, are able to use them from different points of

views, depending on the current focus of the study.

Among those materials which are collected with reference to definite sociological problems formulated in advance, the traditional forms of personal interviews and written questionnaires can be mentioned. Without such references, in order to obtain a description of other people's experiences, those people can be invited to write autobiographies or histories of the groups to which they belong.

The interview possesses an important advantage because of the possibility of the respondents introducing information in a spontaneous way, in addition to answering the questions. On the other hand, there is a potential danger connected with the interview. Znaniecki stresses that the interview itself is a social experience. In the eyes of the interviewed person, participation in an interview is often an important event. Hence the tendency among people being interviewed to show themselves in the best possible light which can lead to the distortion of original facts through an intentionally different description of their experience. A good example of such tendency would be a job interview.

In contrast, the questionnaire does not possess such disturbing influences, because it is not a face to face situation. However, it is not completely free of them. The advantage of the questionnaire lies in the greater possibility of planning and avoiding irrelevant digressions in advance. On the other hand, it is difficult to supplement in the questionnaire all the omissions of the answers which in practice appear to occur quite often.

In order to minimise the inadequacies or limitations of both approaches, it is possible to combine both so that a written questionnaire is followed up by a personal interview.

Znaniecki puts a very strong emphasis on distinguishing between two types of questionnaires, depending on their purposes or aims.

1. There are some questionnaires in which the purpose is to allow the respondent to give as rich and detailed a description of particular experiences as possible in his or her answers.
2. There are other questionnaires which aim only to have the respondent indicate to which one of a number of preestablished classes the author's experience belongs.<sup>16</sup>

The second type is less significant from a humanistic sociological point of view because it does not provide data which are appropriate material for such analysis. The usefulness of the second type of questionnaire applies only to those problems which can be statistically solved. In practice, the respondent of the questionnaire can only answer 'yes' or 'no', or indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement.

The school of humanistic sociology considers autobiography as the best source in the group of second-hand materials. Because of the specific role of documents from the humanistic sociological point of view, as well as the serious development in theory and practice of the utilization of the autobiographies, the problem of the analysis of documents will be further analysed in the next chapter.

#### 4.4 Observations by other people

As a source of sociological material, observations made by other people have more limited importance. This is because the adequate observation and description of a system in which someone does not participate requires from the observer special qualities. In particular, one

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<sup>16</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.191

must be free from one's own practical bias, realize the difference between one's own practical point of view and that of others, emphasize objects and facts which are important to others, even though they may seem unimportant to the observer in his function as social agent, take into account such characters as others ascribe to objects and facts, even if to himself these characters would seem illusory. This can be done only by an observer, who while intellectually interested in other people's social behaviour, has excluded his social interest from the field of his observation<sup>17</sup>.

Although almost everybody has an intellectual interest in social life, training is necessary for thorough and reliable observation. What Znaniecki is afraid of is that even if the observation is made without reference to their own social pursuits, observers with lack of training in observation

still unconsciously interpret it in terms of their own habits, norms, beliefs and prejudices. This does no harm, if the habits, norms, beliefs and prejudices of the observed are the same as those of the observer; but it obviously deprives the description of theoretical validity when they are different<sup>18</sup>.

Literature can be regarded as one source of observations made by other people. In discussing the problem of validity of literature as a source of sociological information, Znaniecki construed it as a conflict between two points of view:

1. that of the radical rationalist who would like to make sociology independent of any data which are tainted with 'subjectivism' and cannot be made absolutely impersonal;
2. that of the intuitionist who stands for the theoretic importance of a 'direct' personal knowledge of reality

Znaniecki tries to resolve this conflict in personal terms. According to him the sociologist should be free of any prejudices. The basic role of the sociologist should be the exploitation of every source of knowledge, as far as it is possible. Hence, he

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<sup>17</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.193

<sup>18</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.193-194

must depreciate both these radical views concerning the validity of artistic observation. Against the rationalist he must appeal to the empirical origin of knowledge. Personal experience and observation are the ultimate bases of all knowledge, the final criteria of validity of all general concepts and laws. And undoubtedly there is as much good observation and careful description of social data involved in works of literature as in works with scientific claims. In barring entirely the use of literature for scientific purposes we would certainly deprive ourselves of a valuable source of material<sup>19</sup>.

Whereas it is possible to use these materials for scientific purposes, they should be used in order to formulate general concepts and laws only. Particular cases have no scientific significance, and there is the tendency in non-scientific literature to use sometimes imaginary cases. Hence, Znaniecki advocates utilizing 'literary evidence' as auxiliary evidence for scientific purposes. This is because

the scientist has no right to accept the artist's presentation as an inductive basis for any generalization in the same way as cases observed by himself or by another scientist, but he may use this presentation as a help in his induction<sup>20</sup>.

In this way, the dramatist or the novelist, who is often a pioneer in observing a particular domain, may provide inspiration for a sociologist.

The above mentioned restrictions do not apply when the second-hand observations are made by scientists, because of their training in observation and objectivity and concern for the reliability of evidence. As a scientist is interested in the theoretically significant facts observed by others for the solution of his problems, Znaniecki advocates co-operation between scientists:

In a well organized science with an effective and many-sided intellectual cooperation, this mutual interest of scientists in each other's data leads not only to a high level of reliability in published observations, but also to the development of standards of selection by which theoretically significant data are distinguished from those which an individual student may wish to observe for reasons of personal curiosity, artistic sense or pedantic absorption in detail,

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<sup>19</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.195

<sup>20</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.196

but which are of little importance for the advancement of scientific theory. Unfortunately, sociology has not reached yet this stage<sup>21</sup>.

Hence, Znaniecki is very critical in his attitude to sociologists' achievements in the use of observation. As a medium he sees "the growth and systematization of sociological theory"<sup>22</sup>.

## 4.5 Generalizations used as materials

Unlike the natural sciences where general statements are theories, in sociology as cultural science, all generalizations must be treated as data to be studied. The generalizations in sociology cannot be accepted as theories or even criticized in connection with the sociologist's own theory. There are two types of generalizations. The first type is a result of the classification in social life of individuals and groups. For example, in all societies there is a number of psychological concepts which characterize individuals, subdividing them into types, such as: 'good'—'bad'; 'foolish'—'clever'—'stupid' etc. A second sort of generalization in social life can be seen in the collectively recognized norms regulating social behaviour. A typical example here would be the domain of law which is constituted by reflecting norms existing in a certain society.

Norms are by their nature abstractive. Nevertheless, norms are a sufficient material to assess what kind of behaviour is required, or prohibited in the light of these norms. In practice they are in a form of very general principles. But this obviously does not mean that all the members of the society or social group to whom the norm is addressed act according to the legal norms. Otherwise there would be no need for the norms. However,

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<sup>21</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method ...*, p.196

<sup>22</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method ...*, p.197–198

they are useful in that we can find the the general attitude which existed during the process of creation of the norms and/or what kind of social behaviour was accepted by those who have created these norms.

According to Znaniecki

the sociologist can thus use other people's generalizations as material (and first-hand material, at this) in so far as a generalization may be presumed to play a practical role:

1. to express a feature which people rightly or wrongly assume to be common to certain values and take into consideration when dealing with those values;
2. to express a rule or principle which people regard as binding for many social systems and in accordance with which they try to shape these systems<sup>23</sup>.

The theoretical adequacy of the generalizations is not important. How significant they are depends upon the range and strength of the practical influence of the generalization on existing values or systems. This can be established by investigating the behaviour of people in relation to the generalization. This is rather a question of degree, because a generalization which is accepted in society will always have some degree of practical influence.

Paradoxically, the case of generalization is governed by different rules from the utilization of materials, where Znaniecki stated that

the more uncritical, the less individualistic and independent of mind is the person from whom the sociologist takes his generalization the better material this generalisation is, for such a person is only the echo of the most potent and deeply ingrained views and prejudices of his milieu<sup>24</sup>.

There are also generalizations in the form of theoretical views of individuals where the generalizations are not a reflection of parts of their social life but general conclusions

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<sup>23</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.201

<sup>24</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.202

based on a number of particular cases and intended to apply to similar cases in the future. Hence, Znaniecki puts stress not only upon observing individual cases in an objective and thorough way but also upon the necessity of applying the proper method of scientific induction in order to pass from data to general truths.

Very often publicly stated generalizations by journalists or politicians are only a means of enhancing their own positions in society. Similarly, the use in sociology of the generalizations made by essayists, historians or travellers must be criticised.

Smolicz noticed that

Eighteenth and nineteenth century European texts are full of amazing misinterpretations of the life, social organizations and psychology of Asian, African and native American societies based on inadequate imaginative reconstruction of their social and cultural systems. Such worthless generalizations are still being perpetuated by many pseudo-scientific writers who, relying on their own intuitive interpretation of the situation, continue to misinterpret the cultural systems of other nations and create misleading cultural stereotypes thereby demonstrating the danger of superficial and faulty ideational reproduction.<sup>25</sup>

Particularly harmful seems to be the practice which persists (in many countries) of quoting as generalizations, or authoritative statements, without any criticism, the opinions of prominent persons as experts, especially politicians whose statements have a 'theoretic' character.

Rightly, then, Znaniecki writes that:

the only justifiable way in which theoretic views of individuals who are not scientists can be used is to treat them as presumptions drawn by these people from previous experience for practical orientation in their social environment. If they actually apply these presumptions as technical rules in trying to influence their environment and are moderately successful, this is a probable indication that their theoretic generalization, however unmethodologically reached and inexactly expressed, contain 'a grain of truth', correspond to some objective uniformities of facts. Without taking them as provisional supposi-

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<sup>25</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Humanistic Sociology: A Review of Concepts and Methods*, La Trobe University, Department of Sociology, Melbourne, 1974, p. 37 (footnote)



tions, helpful in formulating better defined problems and reaching more valid hypotheses.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method ...*, p.203-204

## Chapter 5

# The Study of Personal Documents

As a part of the application of the method of humanistic sociology we can concentrate on the study of personal documents and statements, which has proved very fruitful in comparison to other methods. Personal documents may be classified as:

- autobiographies,
- memoirs,
- letters,
- others (as for example personal notes and comments).

Personal statements may be collected in a number of ways, for instance, through an interview or even through normal conversation. It is also possible to encourage some people to write such memoirs and statements by preparing notes, questionnaires, or using a tape-recorder etc.

For Znaniecki, autobiographies are the best second-hand source for study of active social experiences. Through the study of autobiographies we can isolate the details of

personal activities. The value of an autobiography lies in the fact that it is distinct from the interview and provides the possibility of a spontaneous description of what the author thinks, feels or intends. The use of autobiographical documents as material in sociological research has a long tradition in the United States of America and Poland. The fundamental sociological work of Thomas and Znaniecki *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* was based mainly on an analysis of correspondence between Polish peasant immigrants in America and their families who remained in Poland. Similarly, J. Chałasiński in his later work published in Poland, *The Younger Generation of Peasants*, used specially written autobiographical documents.

Znaniecki in his article *The Importance of Memoirs for Sociological Studies* underlines the usefulness of memoirs for sociologists, even more than for any other social scientists, such as psychologists or historians. The serious development of the method of using autobiographies or memoirs as data for sociological analysis was developed further by J. Chałasiński. Although autobiographies can be analysed as an aspect of language, literature or in terms of the needs of employers, autobiographies in a scientific sociological sense must meet the general requirements of scientific data, in particular those of written documents. Hence the truth of statements in an autobiography should be verifiable. For a sociologist (in contrast to a historian, for example) the author of a given autobiography is a social fact. He is, simply, an object of study because he is a part of a certain social milieu and represents a social value for others. It should be stressed that an individual as such is not a subject of sociological investigation. As Chałasiński points out:

The sociologist studies the social consciousness of an individual and his social behaviour, and analyses the connection between that individual's mental sub-structum, on the one hand, and the objective social conditions and collective

consciousness on the other<sup>1</sup>.

The sociologist is especially interested in the manifestation of the autobiographer's social aspirations and attitudes rather than his reporting of objective facts or personal opinions. Because of this, the author's subjectivity or personal point of view is of greater value from the sociological point of view, in contrast to the historical, for example. But again this does not imply that all autobiographies have the same degree of usefulness for sociological research. Chałasiński distinguishes two requirements for all autobiographers:

1. the autobiographer must be honest in his writing,
2. the autobiography must reflect the writer's social experience directly

In relation to the second point it is possible to distinguish two attributes of a good autobiographer:

- a good memory,
- the ability to write a good autobiography

The differences between the use of an autobiography for psychologist and historian on the one hand, and sociologist on the other, are considerable. What is seen as a source of erroneous information by the psychologists and historians is seen by the sociologist as material for study. When the author of a memoir lies or makes mistakes in discussing his emotions and aspirations (because, for example, he previously experienced quite different aspirations from those described) it is for the sociologist a statement with an actual, current manifestation which forms at least a part of the social realization. According to Znaniecki we cannot speak about a true or false statement because "a statement is a fact

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<sup>1</sup>J. Chałasiński, *Autobiographies as Data for Sociological Analysis, Sisyphus*, vol.II, p.35

which in itself has that meaning which its author assigns to it"<sup>2</sup>. Znaniecki maintains simply, that people do not express an aspiration which they do not possess at all.

In an autobiography every statement is valuable as a datum. However, not every statement gives us an equal light on the author and his personality. Individuals write in their autobiographies their own history, not in an objective sense but rather the history of their feelings and experiences in their own consciousness. At the same time in all memoirs we can find information on actual social reality which is difficult to gain from any other source. For instance, it is possible to find in memoirs an account of such extraordinary events as why a crime was committed (motivation from the author's point of view), what the real reasons for migration were or what feelings were aroused by a first day at school etc.

Very important from a methodological point of view is the problem of the classification of data from memoirs. Following Znaniecki, Smolicz and Secombe we can divide the data from memoirs into two main categories:

1. cultural facts,
2. concrete facts

In the second category there are such facts as age, sex, occupation, family background, marital status, nationality, religion of the author or even historical, economic or political facts such as: dates and events related to the Second World War, an election, a time of economic crisis, or actual persons who have had a strong influence on the author etc. Broadly speaking, cultural facts can be found in the description of the authors' feelings, thoughts or aspirations. Hence views on the ways of educating children or preference for

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<sup>2</sup>F. Znaniecki, The importance of Memoirs for Sociological Studies, *Sisyphus*, vol.II, p.12

using a certain language by a bilingual individual — are all examples of cultural facts.

Smolicz and Secombe define cultural facts as

the expression of individuals' attitudes, aspirations and generalized assessments on society at large, when taken in the context of the subjectively perceived view of their own situation and social role<sup>3</sup>.

In practice it is not always easy to completely differentiate concrete and cultural facts but this distinction is useful. For example when an author writes:

I enjoy participating in Ukrainian dancing, I am member of a Ukrainian dancing group,

we can assess this statement both as a concrete and cultural fact. It is a concrete fact because it tells the sociologist that the author is a member of a group, concerned with a special kind of ethnic activity. The fact of membership and participation can be simply checked, for example on the list of the group's members. Simultaneously, it is an expression of a positive attitude of the author towards the activity of Ukrainian social dancing.

Similarly, if an author says that he prefers to use the Croatian language when he is in conversation with friends from his ethnic group, it can be taken as a concrete fact about actual language usage. But, since we also know from the author's statements that he and his friends always prefer to speak Croatian (even though their command of English is good), the statement can also be treated as a cultural fact, giving evidence of a positive attitude towards the use of the individual's ethnic tongue.

This study includes gathering both kinds of data: concrete and cultural. Of course, the cultural facts have a basic importance for sociological investigation, however, according to Znaniecki and his followers

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<sup>3</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School . . .*, p.26

the sociological process of imaginatively reconstructing another person's experience from his own writings involves taking into account of everything that is known about him. Thus the significance of cultural facts about the memoir writers could not be fully appreciated without acquiring certain concrete information concerning their family background and present situation. Such concrete facts can therefore be taken as constituting so-called 'objective' information concerning the more easily documented and material manifestation of daily living<sup>4</sup>.

The problem of analysis of memoir data may be summarized in the useful table 5.1 (from J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *The Australian School Through Children's Eyes*, p.27).

Table 5.1: Analysis of Memoir Data

	Concrete facts	Cultural facts	
		Assessments	Attitudes
SOURCES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details given in questionnaire.</li> <li>2. Information given (with little or no comment) in memoirs.</li> <li>3. Information derived from assessments made in memoirs.</li> </ol>	Comments and remarks made by memoir writers concerning: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. their own action</li> <li>2. the action of others</li> <li>3. institutions, organizations.</li> </ol>	Thoughts, feelings, aspirations expressed by memoir writers about themselves.
USES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needed for interpretation of cultural facts e.g. to know <i>whose</i> attitudes and values are being studied and what their social, economic and cultural situation is.</li> <li>2. Give an indication of what cultural values are actually being activated.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide concrete facts about actions of writers themselves and others.</li> <li>2. Given an indirect indication of attitudes of writers.</li> <li>3. Supply indirect evidence of group values.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are a direct source of the writers' attitudes.</li> <li>2. Provide indirect evidence of group values.</li> </ol>

<sup>4</sup>J.J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian School . . .*, p.26

## 5.1 Use of Personal Statements in this Investigation

In practice it is not always possible for respondents to take the time needed to write detailed personal statements. In these cases questionnaires or interviews can be used to gain the information required. Even when the majority of questions are framed in ways that allow respondents to answer quickly by ticking appropriate boxes, it has still been found most valuable to make provision for the respondents to write short comments. This can provide access to thoughts, feelings and aspirations which explain, justify or even suggest qualifications to the answers they have given. In this way a more humanistic element can be added to questionnaire research and provide the investigation with an 'inside' participants' understanding which is not available just through the ticking of the questionnaire form.

The questionnaire used with Croatian, Ukrainian and Polish groups did provide the respondents with the opportunity to make comments on a number of the questions asked. It should be stated that in the circumstances in which the research was conducted (summer camps with recreational elements for young people), it would have been unrealistic to expect from the participants lengthy memoirs or autobiographies.

In many cases these comments, brief though they were, were very valuable from the researcher's point of view. For example, when the respondents, in addition to the questionnaire ticks added comments like: "without knowledge of language nothing can be accomplished" or "it is extremely important to have knowledge of the language and culture" or "the Church keeps the Croatian community united" — we had not only the respondents' assessment of particular elements of culture but also their feelings towards their, consciousness or understanding of cultural phenomena.



## Chapter 6

# Utilization of Official Documents

In Znaniecki's view the use of written language is an instrument of social activity. As a consequence, written documents can be analysed as objective social and cultural data. Indeed, for scientific use they may be often more valuable than the direct observation of activities. In addition, the use of such documents as sociological material provides the possibility of controlling the researchers' interpretation of the documents by comparing it with that of others. The only requirements for documents to be utilized in this way are: authenticity and clear expression which allows for ready comprehension. Znaniecki gives a long list of examples of documents which can be used for scientific purposes.

Here belong such materials as correspondence between private individuals, groups members and functionaries, or functionaries representing different groups: legal enactments, administrative and military orders, judicial decisions; exhortation and preaching of moralists, press campaigns, advertising and propaganda; spontaneous or experimentally provoked expressions of desires, ideas, valuations as substitutes for full social action and aiming to influence verbally the social objects to whom they refer<sup>1</sup>.

Sociologists using official documents such as laws, regulations and policy statements can analyse only those activities expressed in the documents. And this is the main purpose

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<sup>1</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.182

on which the sociologist should be concentrating. Znaniecki warns of attempting any further conclusions and points out three important dangers which are associated with the interpretation of such data. The first, as he formulates it, is that

it is always unsafe to presume that a verbally expressed activity has provoked the reaction it aimed to provoke, unless we have either direct evidence in the form of other documents expressing this reaction or a sufficiently substantiated indirect evidence of a positive kind<sup>2</sup>.

Such a document expresses only the intention of an activity by the legislator or administrator. Any reaction in relation to a new law needs to be investigated through other data. In fact, a law can provoke different reactions, sometimes quite the opposite of those which were intended by the legislator. For example, the legal prohibition of producing and selling alcohol in the United States resulted in the massive illegal production and distribution of alcohol, the quality of which often caused serious illnesses or even death.

The second danger results from the lack of a clear distinction between action and information. Indeed, sometimes the purpose of a document is to encourage people in a certain action; sometimes the document, in the intention of the authors, is to be a source of information only. But sometimes a document includes both. A policy statement on equal opportunity in one educational institution, for example, may encourage disadvantaged groups to actively participate in education by introducing and giving to them an opportunity to achieve this through a variety of bridging courses, special programs, financial support, facilities for students with physical disabilities and so on. A statement published by another institution may include only formal information on the development and implementation of this policy with some quotations from legal acts on equal opportunity in relation to education.

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<sup>2</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method . . .*, p.182

The above mentioned examples are clear in terms of the distinction between action and information. However, in some situations (or contexts) the distinction is not always so clear. For instance, a tertiary educational institution invites and encourages Aboriginal students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and students with disabilities to apply through a Special Entry Scheme, specifically designated for these students. Many students from disadvantaged groups apply. They believe that special support has been provided, such as bridging courses for the Aboriginal students, English as a second language for the students of non-English speaking backgrounds; equipment for the disabled, including easy access to all school buildings for the students using wheelchairs etc. To the surprise of the students, the institution has not yet undertaken those steps necessary in order to help them. The actions, which should have been seen as an obvious consequence of the policy, have not yet even reached the sphere of planning within the institution.

A public document usually contains a statement of facts, a description of the behaviour of other people, and eventually the authors' activities. It is characteristic that the authors of the document play the role not only of social agents but also of observers. However, in utilizing documents we are chiefly interested in analysing the authors' active tendencies, intentions or tasks. From the content of the document we know what the authors were doing when they wrote the document, but we do not know whether their theoretical arguments to support an action are true or false. Znaniecki notes:

Often, indeed, it is possible to utilize as direct evidence even statements of facts, if these are taken without any regard to their truth or falsity, not as theoretic views, but merely as expressions of the author's practical social attitudes. For usually people who are not trained in purely theoretic observation colour their statements of the facts axiologically, use terms of positive or negative valuation. Now, every valuation, whether the object valued is or is not objectively such as the author claims it to be, gives evidence of what the author considers it should be, and verbal expressions of normative views are really potential social activities aiming to impose the norms expressed upon

human behaviour<sup>3</sup>.

The third danger concerns

a common inclination to treat the intentions or ideas manifested in such documents as being 'sincere' or 'insincere', inclinations of more or less permanent active dispositions of the individual or the group from whom the document emanates<sup>4</sup>.

Indeed it would be a serious mistake to draw any conclusions based on ideas or intentions which are manifested by a statement published by a politician or a diplomat. On the other hand, from the humanistic sociological point of view, it is equally a mistake to reject such data. It is a mistake because any verbal expression is in itself a social action. Such an action expresses a tendency, ideal or standard, which actually exists, even though it is not possible, based on the document alone, to judge whether any action has really been undertaken. The following examples from Znaniecki provide a good illustration:

The friendly intentions expressed by a diplomatist in the name of his state are actually significant, at least while and in so far as the diplomatist is entitled to act for his state; their expression is a friendly act, though it may be of very little importance as compared with other acts simultaneously performed or projected. The politician's ideas expressed from the platform are real in so far at least as their expression is meant to affect the public at the time of the meeting, although the politician after stepping off the platform may never again actualize them in his behaviour. Many of the elevated sentiments expressed by Rousseau in his autobiography are not direct indications of his character, but their expression is a *prima facie* evidence of their existence as social forces sufficient to bring forth this very action of expressing them for the benefit of the reader<sup>5</sup>.

Similar examples can be found in the area of equal opportunity in employment or education. Within the tertiary sector each institution creates its own policies and the consequent procedures or guidelines. Hence many statements pertinent to equal opportunity both in relation to employment and education have been issued. Often the 'policy

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<sup>3</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* . . . , p.184

<sup>4</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* . . . , p.184

<sup>5</sup>F. Znaniecki, *The Method* . . . , p.185-186

initiative' comes as the result of a new legislation or government policy, both at federal and state level. Sometimes, these institutions initiate very new ideas and practices based upon their own policies and/or as a result of further development of already implemented policies.

Many institutions declare in their policy statements, job advertisements, information material etc, that equality of opportunity is their policy in employment. However, an investigation of the practice of these institutions reveals, in many cases, that the principles of equal opportunity are violated. For instance, the good impression made by applicants during an interview, their polite way of speaking, their expression of beliefs or life philosophy which is in accordance with members of the interview panel, are in practice given a high priority than relevant facts concerning professional experience or qualifications. Hence the policy of equal opportunity in employment declared by the institutions may have a little practical application.

Very often the authors of policy statements are conscious of the fact that the declared policy cannot be put into practice immediately. At the most fundamental level, there is a need to change the attitudes of the individual members of the institution.

It would be interesting to look at the policy statements from tertiary educational institution to assess whether they go beyond the legal obligations and develop some ideas or not. It would be also useful to analyse, at least briefly, some practices of these institutions in the area of equal opportunity based on their policies. Part IV of this thesis includes an analysis of some policy statements based upon the methodological assumptions of humanistic sociology.

As it has been earlier mentioned, equal opportunity is very much an interdisciplinary issue but in relation to the topic of this thesis, the impact of these policies on the main-

tenance and modification of minority cultures should be taken into account.

## **Part III**

# **The Empirical Data**

## Introduction

The research was undertaken with three different ethnic groups: Croatian, Poles and Ukrainians. Questionnaires were completed by 75 Ukrainians, 65 Croatians and 52 Poles, altogether 192 young people of minority ethnic-Australian origin.

According to the methodology of humanistic sociology, the data gathered in the questionnaires can be divided into two categories — concrete and cultural facts. The concrete data are important for providing the background information needed in order to interpret the respondents' thoughts, feelings, attitudes and assessments, in the context of their social and cultural environment. Concrete data are also important in providing evidence of the activation of particular cultural values, such as speaking or writing the ethnic language, membership of various ethnic organizations and patterns of friendship.

The cultural facts (defined in Part II) will be analysed in order to understand the respondents' consideration of their mother tongues, attitudes towards ethnic languages and utilization of the languages in the everyday process of communication with members of their family, relatives and friends from minority ethnic groups (chapter 2).

In addition, an analysis of concrete facts such as attendance at ethnic classes and the period of attendance will help better understand and assess the extent to which attitudes become activated of the young respondents in relation to the ethnic languages as more concrete manifestation of the declared attitudes.

An important task, pertinent to cultural facts, is to establish the views of the survey participants in relation to what they think about teaching ethnic languages in some institutions of the mainstream schools system, and not only in the traditional ethnic schools.

The presentation and discussion of the results will focus first on describing the back-



ground of the respondents from concrete data on their age, sex, birthplace and the current occupation of themselves and their parents.

The second section will focus on the area of ethnic languages, considering both the respondents' use and command of their parents' language from the concrete data and their attitudes toward it, revealed in the cultural data.

A third section will deal with concrete data concerning social structures and friendship patterns, and with cultural data related to the respondents' sense of cultural identity.

In particular, the third chapter will overview such facts as membership of various social organizations, established by both the majority and minority groups. This will also give an opportunity to make a judgement whether the young people only declare certain attitudes, or also activate them in their social life.

A fourth section will introduce one of the most difficult, but fundamental problems for this thesis — preservation of ethnic cultures in Australia as seen by the respondents. Not only are the respondents' opinions on this basic question considered but also, in the case of the positive answers, their views on particular ways of preserving ethnic cultures in the real Australian context are discussed.

The final section will overview the respondents' appreciation of various aspects of ethnic cultures and the core or central values of the particular ethnic groups in light of the survey.

# Chapter 7

## Concrete Data on Respondents' Background

This chapter considers concrete data concerning the personal and background characteristics of the respondents.

### Age

The respondents were aged mainly between the ages of 16 and 31. The particular differentiation of the age of the participants in total as well as in particular groups can be illustrated in the form of a table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Age of Respondents

Ethnic group	Age																	
	16		17-18		19-20		21-22		23-24		25-26		27-28		29+		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	8	15.4	13	25.0	11	21.2	9	17.3	4	7.7	5	9.6	0	0.0	2	3.8	52	100
Ukrainian	2	2.7	19	25.3	21	28.0	9	12.0	7	9.3	7	9.3	5	6.7	5	6.7	75	100
Croatian	19	29.2	25	38.5	15	23.1	4	6.2	2	3.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	65	100
Total	29	15.1	57	29.7	47	24.5	22	11.5	13	6.8	12	6.3	5	2.6	7	3.7	192	100

It can be seen that participants between 16 and 22 years represented 80.8 per cent of the total. The youngest group was the Croatian (no Croatian was older than 24 years). In contrast, 32 per cent of the Ukrainians and 21.1 per cent of the Poles were over 22 years of age. The sample was therefore made up predominantly of young people.

## Sex

The number of males and females amongst the participants was very similar, with the overall difference being only 10 (101 female — 91 male). The tendency was the same in each of the ethnic groups. Only the Croatian group had a slightly lower percentage of females (47.7) compared to males (52.3). The division between the sexes in the particular groups is shown in the following table:

Table 7.2: Sex of Respondents

Ethnic group	Female		Male		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	29	58.8	23	44.2	52	100
Ukrainian	41	54.7	24	45.3	75	100
Croatian	31	47.7	34	52.3	65	100
Total	101	52.6	91	47.4	192	100

## Country of Birth

The majority of participants in all groups were born in Australia (74.3 per cent). About a fifth were born in the country of parental origin (in this case the term 'ethnic country' has been used) and only 4.7 per cent in another country. However, there were significant differences between the particular groups.

Of the three groups, the Poles had the lowest percentage of respondents born in Australia (57.7%) and the highest of those born in the ethnic country (Poland). The Ukrainians had the highest percentage of those born in Australia (87.7) and, conversely, a very low percentage born in the ethnic country (only 2.7 per cent), even lower than the population born in other countries. None of the Croats was born in another country, but over a quarter were born in the ethnic homeland.

The differences can be explained by a number of factors. The Poles born in Australia were mainly children of the Polish migrants of the immediate postwar migration, while those born in Poland were recent migrants from the late seventies and early eighties. The Ukrainians were mainly children of the post-war migrants, like the Australian-born Poles. About 10 per cent of the Ukrainians were born in the country where their parents had lived for a short time, mainly in Germany, before migration to Australia. A very low percentage of them was born in the Ukraine because there has been no possibility of migration from Ukraine to Australia since the Second World War. The majority of Croats were children of post-war migrants although the opportunities for continuing migration from Croatia can be seen in the fact that over a quarter of these young people were themselves immigrants.

Table 7.3: Country of Birth of Respondents

Ethnic group	Australia		Ethnic country		Other country		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	30	57.7	20	38.5	2	3.8	52	100
Ukrainian	65	87.8	2	2.7	7	9.5	74	100
Croatian	47	72.3	18	27.7	0	0.0	65	100
Total	142	74.3	40	20.9	9	4.7	191	100

1 case had incomplete data

The sample then, was a mirror of the general post-war patterns of migration into Australia, which reflected the political situation of the homeland.

The particulars of the countries of birth are illustrated in the table above.

### Parents' birthplace

Data on parental birthplace revealed that the majority (88 per cent of mothers and 92.7 per cent of fathers) were born in their ethnic homelands. Only one of the Ukrainian

mothers and one of the Polish and Ukrainian fathers was born in Australia. The relatively high percentage of Ukrainian mothers and fathers born in another country is a reflection of the Ukrainian political situation immediately before and during the Second World War. The country of birth of the participants' mothers and fathers can be seen in detail in the tables below.

Table 7.4: Mother's Birthplace

Ethnic group	Australia		Ethnic country		Other country		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	0	0.0	49	96.1	2	3.9	51	100
Ukrainian	1	1.3	58	77.3	16	21.3	75	100
Croatian	0	0.0	61	93.8	4	6.2	65	100
Total	1	0.5	168	88.0	22	11.5	191	100

1 case had incomplete data.

Table 7.5: Father's Birthplace

Ethnic group	Australia		Ethnic country		Other country		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	1	1.9	51	98.1	0	0.0	52	100
Ukrainian	1	1.3	62	82.7	12	16.0	75	100
Croatian	0	0.0	65	100.0	0	0.0	65	100
Total	2	1.0	178	92.7	12	6.3	192	100

### The Respondents' Present Situation

At the time of answering the questionnaire, a third of the participants were tertiary students with just under a third working full-time (30.6) and about the same proportion being secondary students (29.5). Only 3.3 per cent were unemployed and an even smaller number was doing technical training or home duties. Among the particular ethnic groups

two main differences were noticeable. A very high percentage of the Ukrainians were tertiary students (43.8 per cent as compared to 29.2 percent for the Poles and 29.0 per cent for Croatsians). A very high percentage of the Croats were secondary students (53.2 per cent compared to 27.1 per cent of the Poles and 11.0 of the Ukrainians). The details are shown in the following table:

Table 7.6: Respondent's Situation

Ethnic group	Secondary school student		Tertiary student		Working full-time		Apprenticeship/technical training		Home duties		Unemployed		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	13	27.1	14	29.2	18	37.5	1	2.1	0	0.0	2	4.2	48	100
Ukrainian	8	11.0	32	43.8	28	38.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	3	4.1	73	100
Croatian	33	53.2	18	29.0	10	16.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.6	62	100
Total	54	29.5	64	35.0	56	30.6	2	1.1	1	0.5	6	3.3	183	100

9 cases had incomplete data

### The Respondents' Level of Education

A notable feature of the respondents was the high level of education they had achieved. As many as 43.3 percent had tertiary education, 27.8 per cent had completed middle or secondary education, and 5.3 per cent apprenticeship trade school. The 23.5 per cent who had not completed middle or secondary education included a substantial portion of the Croatian respondents who were still at school.

Among the various ethnic groups there were two important differences. The Ukrainian respondents had the highest level of education; as many as 62.2 per cent of them had tertiary education, compared to 39.2 per cent of the Poles and 24.2 per cent of the Croatsians. The lowest level of education was revealed by the Croatsians, 40.3 per cent of whom had

not completed middle or secondary education. This can be explained by the fact that many of them were younger and still at school. The details of the level of education are illustrated in the table below.

Table 7.7: Respondent's Level of Education

Ethnic group	Incomplete middle or secondary		Complete middle or secondary		Apprenticeship/trade school		Tertiary education		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	13	25.5	14	27.5	4	7.8	20	39.5	51	100
Ukrainian	6	8.1	16	21.6	6	8.1	46	62.2	74	100
Croatian	25	40.3	22	35.5	0	0.0	15	24.2	62	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100</b>

5 cases had incomplete data

### Type of Primary School

The majority of the participants, both in the total and in each ethnic group, had attended state schools (57.9 per cent). However 32.1 per cent had attended Catholic primary school. The differences between ethnic groups were minimal.

Table 7.8: The Type of Primary School Attended by Respondents

Ethnic group	School System											
	State		Catholic		Independent		State & Catholic		State & Independent		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	28	53.8	16	30.8	1	1.9	7	13.5	0	0.0	52	100
Ukrainian	48	65.8	20	27.4	2	2.7	1	1.4	2	2.7	73	100
Croatian	34	52.3	25	38.5	0	0.0	6	9.2	0	0.0	65	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>

2 cases had incomplete data

## Type of Secondary School

At the secondary education level, in comparison with the primary school, the percentage of those educated in the state school was lower and in the Catholic schools higher.

In the case of Croatians, the percentage in the Catholic secondary system was higher (54.7 per cent) than in the state system. A considerable percentage of Poles (40.4) also preferred the Catholic system. These figures reflect the fact that both Croatians and Poles are predominantly Catholic. In contrast a relatively low percentage of the Ukrainians studied in the Catholic schools (27.4), although more (9.6 per cent) had attended other independent schools. Since Ukrainians are divided between Catholics and Orthodox, they reveal less interest in the Catholic education system. Also as a result of the higher occupational position of the Ukrainians' parents, compared to other groups (and consequently, higher incomes — see Table 7.10) they were more able to send their children to the expensive independent schools. The data on attendance in the different school systems are shown in the table below.

Table 7.9: The Type of Secondary School Attended by Respondents

Ethnic group	School System											
	State		Catholic		Independent		State & Catholic		State & Independent		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	27	51.9	21	40.4	0	0.0	3	5.8	1	1.9	52	100
Ukrainian	43	58.9	20	27.4	7	9.6	1	1.4	2	2.7	73	100
Croatian	25	39.1	35	54.7	1	1.6	3	4.7	0	0.0	64	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>100</b>

3 cases had incomplete data



## Fathers' Occupation

The respondents were asked to indicate the occupation of their fathers. The replies were categorized into six main groups, based on the shorter version of the "Prestige scale of occupational groups" (published in the *American Sociological Review*, vol.34, October 1969, p.657-658). Among the total respondents, the following occupational groups of the father were distinguished: 1) skilled manual (30.7 per cent), 2) professional (20.0), 3) semi-skilled (20.0), 4) service (14.7), 5) managerial (9.3), 6) clerical (5.3 percent).

Among the particular ethnic groups, there were a number of notable differences. The percentage of fathers in professional occupations was highest among the Ukrainians (33.3), as compared with the Poles (25.0) and the Croatians (3.6). The lowest percentage in the managerial category was among the Poles (2.5) compared to 11.1 per cent of the Ukrainians and 12.5 per cent of the Croatians. Of the fathers having a skilled-manual job 44.6 per cent were Croatians, 30.0 Poles and only 16.7 per cent Ukrainians.

## Mothers' Occupation

The procedure for establishing the occupation of category of the participants' mothers was similar to that used for the fathers. Unlike the fathers, the mothers of the respondents overall were employed mainly in service jobs (60.7). However there was a small group of mothers employed as professionals (16.1 per cent).

Among the various ethnic groups the following differences were apparent. A very high percentage of Croatian mothers were employed in service industries (74.1 per cent) as compared with 54.7 per cent of the Ukrainians and 52.2 per cent of the Poles. More Polish mothers were in clerical jobs (13.0 per cent) which were held by only 3.1 per cent of the Ukrainian mothers and only 1.7 per cent of the Croatian. A relatively high percentage

of the mothers among the Ukrainians and the Poles were professionals (23.4 and 19.6 per cent respectively) compared to the Croatians (only 5.2 per cent).

The occupation of the participants' fathers and mothers can be illustrated in the following tables:

Table 7.10: Fathers' Occupation

Ethnic group	Occupational Category													
	profes-sional		mana-gerial		clerical		skilled man.		semi-skilled		service		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	10	25.0	1	2.5	2	5.0	12	30.0	9	22.5	6	15.0	52	100
Ukrainian	18	33.3	6	11.1	3	5.6	9	16.7	12	22.2	6	11.1	54	100
Croatian	2	3.6	7	12.5	3	5.4	25	44.6	9	16.1	10	17.9	56	100
Total	30	20.0	14	9.3	8	5.3	46	30.7	30	20.0	22	14.7	150	100

additional 42 cases represent unemployed or retired fathers and incomplete data

Table 7.11: Mothers' Occupation

Ethnic group	Occupational Category													
	profes-sional		mana-gerial		clerical		skilled man.		semi-skilled		service		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	9	19.6	2	4.3	6	13.0	0	0.0	5	10.9	24	52.2	46	100
Ukrainian	15	23.4	3	4.7	2	3.1	1	1.6	8	12.5	35	54.7	64	100
Croatian	3	5.2	2	3.4	1	1.7	3	5.2	6	10.3	43	74.1	58	100
Total	3	5.2	7	4.2	9	5.4	4	2.4	19	11.3	102	60.7	168	100

additional 24 cases represent unemployed or retired fathers and incomplete data

To summarize the concrete facts, the majority of participants were young people between 16–22 years, the number of males and females being nearly equal. Although three quarters of the participants were born in Australia, the majority of their parents had been born overseas in their respective countries of origin. The respondents had achieved

quite a high level of education, with 43.3 per cent having completed or being involved in tertiary education, and 27.8 per cent having completed secondary education, with over a half having been educated in state schools and another third in Catholic schools. In terms of parental occupations, fathers were found across the range of occupations, with a third in skilled manual jobs and a fifth in professional and semi-skilled occupations respectively. Almost two thirds of mothers were engaged in service occupations, but almost a sixth were in professional jobs.

Comparison of the results obtained from the survey with data which are available from the 1976 and 1986 census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (A.B.S.) have proved very difficult to make.

Analysis of all the particulars in this context is irrelevant and the most important reasons can be summarised in the following way:

- The survey is concerned with only three particular ethnic groups: Polish, Croatian and Ukrainian. Ideally the comparison between data from the 1976 census and 1986 should be made in relation to each group, as the research has been done in the period between the first and the second census but not all data especially from the first one, and in relation to each group are available.
- The 1976 Australian Census gives some data in relation to languages but they are of a very approximate character because, for financial reasons, the ABS has decided to process only 50 per cent of the data. Secondly, the census questionnaire used the term 'mother tongue' only and by this limited usage of language to only one language whereas bilinguals use, by definition, more than one language and sometimes none of them is dominant.

- Based upon the 1976 Census it is not possible to establish the number of speakers of the Croatian language and, consequently to follow up the concrete data about this ethnic group in areas such as age or occupation.

During the 1976 Census many respondents stated their language as "Yugoslav", hence it is not possible to estimate the number of speakers of the Croatian language.

- Based upon 1986 Census it is not possible to establish the number of Australians who speak Croatian at home. The available data state only Serbo-Croatian with the total number only 7,061 and Yugoslav (as a group of languages) where there is a significant group of speakers of the total of 70 855<sup>1</sup>.

However, it is possible and useful to give a general picture (based on the 1986 Census) of the languages used by the Australian population in 1986 to realise the numbers of Australians speaking those languages which are discussed in this thesis:

Table 7.12: Languages (other than English) used by the Australian Population in 1986<sup>2</sup>

	ACT	NT	TAS	SA	WA	Qld	VIC	NSW	Total
Polish	1444	185	1499	9044	7259	4889	22920	21362	68638
Serbo-Croatian	266	23	53	682	581	482	2653	2321	7061
Yugoslav <sup>3</sup>	968	151	283	4104	7686	3975	24181	29507	70855
Ukrainian	272	17	175	2539	1018	980	5548	4618	15167

The following data on birthplace were obtained from the 1986 Census in relation the three countries being discussed. However there is no indication in the case of the Croats

<sup>1</sup>source: *The Australian People. An Encyclopedia of the Nation its People and Their Origins.* General Editor: James Jupp, Angus&Robertson Publishers

<sup>2</sup>Extract from *The Australian People. An Encyclopedia of the Nation its People and Their Origins.* General Editor: J. Jupp, Angus&Robertson Publishers

<sup>3</sup>Group of languages

how many of them were born in Croatia and how many in other republics of the former Yugoslavia as well as the number of Croats in general.

Table 7.13: Birthplace of the Australian Population in 1986<sup>4</sup>

	ACT	NT	TAS	SA	WA	Qld	VIC	NSW	total
Yugoslavia	3711	329	769	8774	11193	7544	59311	58409	150040
Ukraine	181	12	146	1747	752	771	3400	3459	10468
Poland	1259	148	1301	7936	6537	4843	24640	21012	67676

Comparing the collected data on occupational structure of the Croatian group with the wider occupational structure of the Croats in Australia groups in Australia and those collected from the research in relation to the following statement can be quote:

Most Croatian immigrants work as unskilled and semi-skilled labours in manufacturing and construction industries, as well as in the community services sector. Croatians also work as miners in the Broken Hill area of New South Wales. In South Australia, around Port Lincoln, a significant portion of the fishing industry, including a processing factory is run and owned by immigrants from Croatia<sup>5</sup>

The occupational general tendency described above is reflected in this research and can be found both in fathers' and mothers' occupations of the participants (table 7.10 and 7.11). Indeed, in comparison with the Poles and Ukrainians, the fathers and mothers of the Croats have a very low percentage of professionals and the highest percentage of skilled manual (in the case of fathers almost 50 per cent). Further, fathers of the Croatian respondents are more often engaged in the area of service than fathers of other groups and as many as 74 percent of the Croatian mothers work in the service sector.

<sup>4</sup>Extract from *The Australian People. An Encyclopedia of the Nation its People and Their Origins*. General Editor: J. Jupp, Angus&Robertson Publishers

<sup>5</sup>*The Australian People ...p.744*

Comparing the data on the Polish group with the overall occupational composition of the Poles in Australia we can refer to the *Occupational Structure of Labour Force: Australia, Polish-born and Recent Polish Immigrants* prepared based on the following sources: *Census of Australia* (1981), *Polish Task Force* (1983), *The New Polish Immigrants: A quest for Normal Life (sample survey)*, Sydney<sup>6</sup>.

Table 7.14: Occupational Structure of the Labour Force: Australia (Total), Polish-born and Recent Polish Immigrants

Occupational group	Australian Labour Force		Polish-born Labour Force		Recent Polish Immigrants	
	No ('000)	%	No	%	No	%
Professional, Technical, etc	857.9	13.6	3179	10.8	71	36.2
Administration, etc	334.7	5.3	1826	6.2	4	2.0
Clerical	1078.6	17.1	2288	7.8	29	14.8
Sales	537.9	8.5	1769	6.0	7	3.6
Farmers, Fishmen, etc	402.4	6.4	504	1.7	-	-
Miners, Quarrymen	36.3	0.6	130	0.4	2	1.0
Transport&Communication	301.7	4.8	1264	4.3	13	6.6
Trades, Labourers, etc	1768.9	28.1	13633	46.3	48	24.5
Service, Sport, Recreation	527.4	8.4	3208	10.9	15	7.7
Armed Services	63.4	1.0	36	0.1	-	-
Inadequately described/ not stated	383.4	6.1	1605	5.5	7	3.6
Total	6292.6	100.0	29442	100.0	196	100.0

Having the data we can use some and compare them with relevant data collected from the survey. In particular, a comparison between the percentage of professional, clerical and service groups can be made and the Table 7.14 illustrates it.

The only one very significant difference between the data on the general Australian population and the collected results of the survey group is the very high percentage of mothers employed in services (however it is not only characteristic for the Polish group but for others, with even higher percentage, as well).

<sup>6</sup> *The Australian People ...* p.744

Table 7.15: Comparison of Some Occupational Categories

Occupational group	Australian Labour Force	Polish-born Labour Force	Recent Polish Immigrants	Polish Fathers	Polish Mothers	All groups from the survey	
	%	%	%	%	%	Fathers %	Mothers %
professional	13.6	10.8	36.2	25.0	19.6	20.0	16.1
clerical	17.1	7.8	14.8	5.0	13.0	5.3	5.4
Service	8.4	10.9	7.7	15.0	52.2	14.7	60.7

Other differences can be stated as follows:

- the higher percentage of professionals in all the groups compared to the Australian Labour Force,
- the percentage of Polish professional fathers and mothers from the survey was higher than the percentage of professional Polish-born labour force (10.8) and the professional Australian labour force (13.6) but lower than the percentage of professionals within the recent Polish immigrants (36.2),
- the percentage of Polish fathers in clerical positions was lower than the average in the Australian labour force and higher in the area of service,
- the data obtained from the survey in relation to all groups show a quite significant tendency that the parents of the young respondents (irrespective of sex) have more professional and less clerical jobs than the average Australian labour force, but are much more often (particularly mothers) engaged in the service area.

Reference to other statistical data or data from different research projects in relation to cultural facts will be made in relevant sections.

## Chapter 8

# An Analysis of Data in Relation to Ethnic Languages

The focus of this chapter is data related to the respondents' knowledge of, and attitudes to, their ethnic languages.

### Mother tongue

An important question for this research is which language the participants considered to be their native language or 'mother tongue'. As many as 75.8 per cent of the participants gave the answer that they regarded their ethnic language as their mother tongue. The remaining 24.2 per cent indicated that for them English was their native language. But the differentiation among the particular ethnic groups is significant. For example, 85.9 per cent of Croats declared Croatian as their mother tongue, while only 63.3 per cent of Poles considered Polish as their native language. *A contrario*, as many as 36.7 per cent of Poles declared English as their mother tongue and only 14.1 per cent of Croats. The Ukrainians fell approximately mid-way between the Croats and the Poles. The replies to this question are summarized in the table below (Table 8.1).

The first cultural data obtained in the research relates to the issue of mother tongue. In this aspect of the study mother tongue is undoubtedly a cultural fact, in particular if



Table 8.1: Language Regarded as Mother Tongue

Ethnic group	Language							
	Ethnic Language		English		Other		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	31	63.3	18	36.7	0	0	49	100
Ukrainian	55	75.3	18	24.7	0	0	75	100
Croatian	55	85.9	9	14.1	0	0	64	100
total	141	75.8	45	24.2	0	0	186	100

6 cases had incomplete data

we consider the formulation of the question (question no.6 of the questionnaire which was given to the participants was: "what do you consider your native or mother tongue?"). Such question allows the respondents to describe their feelings with consideration and memory of their childhood. In the case of multicultural environment the question is complicated because of national, linguistic divisions in the family. There is no simple relation between country of birth or ethnicity of the participant's parents.

The replies given to this key question show that 75% of the respondents considered the ethnic language (Polish, Ukrainian, or Croatian, respectively) as their mother tongue. However as many as 24.2% claimed that the English language was their mother tongue. These results do not correspond to any other figures. The above mentioned percentages are quite different, for example, from place of birth. About three quarters of respondents were actually born in Australia, whereas only one quarter considered English as their mother tongue. Nor do the mother tongue figures relate to the birthplace of one or both parents. Although 88.0% of mothers were born in their respective homelands, the percentage of respondents who consider their ethnic language as their mother tongue was rather lower.

It was also apparent that there was no necessary bond between the declared mother tongue and the knowledge of the language. The percentage of the participants who stated that they could speak and understand their ethnic language very well (34.0) or well (31.4) is lower than the percentage of those who declared the ethnic language as their mother tongue (75.8%). There was even less relationship between the respondents who declared the ethnic language to be their mother tongue and those who claimed to use their ethnic languages only or mainly in speaking with fathers (37%) or mothers (31.9%).

To complement this evaluation of the respondents, it was important to establish which language (minority ethnic or English) was spoken by the participants. The usage of language has been divided according to:

1. whom the language is spoken with (grandparents, fathers, mothers, marriage partner, people in the youth camp, ethnic friends of the same age, ethnic friends older than the participants and brothers/sisters,
2. whether the ethnic language was used exclusively, or together with English, in varying proportions.

### **Language Spoken to Grandparents**

The majority of the respondents spoke only their ethnic language to their grandparents (52.9 per cent). Another 14.8 per cent spoke mainly ethnic. The percentage using mainly or only English was very small (1.6 per cent in both cases). However, for a quite large number of participants the question was not applicable (29.1 per cent). The most obvious difference in the particular ethnic groups was the stronger tendency toward using ethnic language among Poles (66.7 per cent) whereas in Ukrainian and Croatian groups the

percentage was very similar (47.3 per cent for Ukrainian and 48.4 per cent for Croatian). It should be noted that for a large percentage of the two last groups, the question was not applicable, probably due to the lack of grandparents living in Australia or nearby. The situation of the language usage to grandparents is shown in the table below.

Table 8.2: Language Spoken to Grandparents

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	34	66.7	7	13.7	1	2.0	0	0.0	9	17.6	51	100
Ukrainian	35	47.3	11	14.9	1	1.4	1	1.4	26	35.1	74	100
Croatian	31	48.4	10	15.6	1	1.6	2	3.1	20	33.3	64	100
total	100	52.9	28	14.8	3	1.6	3	1.6	55	29.1	189	100

3 cases had incomplete data

### Language Spoken to Fathers and Mothers

In conversation with their fathers, 39.6 per cent of the respondents overall used mainly their ethnic language and another 37 per cent used it exclusively. The usage of English only was declared very rarely (only 3.1 per cent) and only 14.6 per cent of participants of the survey said they used mainly English. In the light of the data from different groups, it was noticeable that the Poles had a stronger tendency to use the ethnic language only, 51.9 per cent compared to 30.7 percent for the Ukrainians and 32.3 per cent for the Croatians.

Very similar data were obtained on the question of the language spoken to mothers. Again the majority of participants spoke mainly their ethnic language to their mothers (47.1 per cent) or ethnic only (31.9 per cent). Mainly English was used by 17.8 per cent with their mothers but only 2.6 per cent of participants spoke English only. The tendency for using only or mainly their ethnic language with their mothers was again higher among

the Poles than among the other two groups.

A comparison of the language spoken to fathers and mothers reveals that there was a slightly stronger tendency to use their ethnic language only with fathers; in the case of mothers the usage of mainly ethnic languages was more prevalent. The participants spoke mainly English more often to mothers than to fathers, but less English only to mothers compared to fathers. The two tables below illustrate the differences.

Table 8.3: Language Spoken to Fathers

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	27	51.9	13	25.0	7	13.5	1	1.9	4	7.7	52	100
Ukrainian	23	30.7	34	45.3	9	12.0	4	5.3	5	6.7	75	100
Croatian	21	32.3	29	44.6	12	18.5	1	1.5	2	3.1	65	100
total	71	37.0	76	39.6	28	14.6	6	3.1	11	5.7	192	100

Table 8.4: Language Spoken to Mothers

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	25	48.1	18	34.6	7	13.5	2	3.8	0	0.0	52	100
Ukrainian	18	24.0	37	49.3	17	22.7	2	2.7	1	1.3	75	100
Croatian	18	28.1	35	54.7	10	15.6	1	1.6	0	0.0	64	100
total	61	31.9	90	47.1	34	17.8	5	2.6	1	0.5	191	100

1 case had incomplete data

### Language Spoken to Marriage Partner

The issue of which language was spoken to the respondents' marriage partners proved not to be very important, because the majority of the participants in the survey were still

young and for the most part, not married. The data obtained from the six participants who did provide information is not considered further because of the very small sample.

### Language Spoken to Others in the Camp

It is interesting to investigate the usage of the language which was spoken by the participants amongst themselves during the days spent together at camp. In contrast to language usage with parents, the results show that the majority used mainly English (69.3 per cent) with mainly ethnic language being spoken by 19.0 per cent and only English by 6.3 per cent. Only a very small percentage of people used their ethnic language alone (3.7 per cent). But a comparison of particular ethnic groups in the table below shows wide variations. None of the Croats spoke only Croatian during the camp. A much higher proportion of the Poles claimed to speak mainly their ethnic language. As many as 90.8 per cent of the Croats and over two thirds of the Ukrainians used mainly English.

Table 8.5: Language Spoken to Others in the Camp

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	3	6.0	23	40.0	21	42.0	2	4.0	1	2.0	50	100
Ukrainian	4	5.4	9	12.2	51	68.9	8	10.8	2	2.7	74	100
Croatian	0	0.0	4	6.2	59	90.8	2	3.1	0	0.0	65	100
total	7	3.7	36	19.0	131	69.3	12	6.3	3	1.6	189	100

3 cases had incomplete data

### Language Spoken to Ethnic Friends of their Age

The results from the survey indicated that when the participants spoke to ethnic friends of their age they used mainly English (66.3 per cent) or English only (20.9). Only 9.6 per

cent said they spoke mainly ethnic language and 2.1 per cent ethnic only. An exception from the general trend was the case of the Poles, 30.6 per cent of whom claimed to speak mainly Polish with their Polish friends. In contrast only 3.1 per cent of Croatians and 1.4 per cent of the Ukrainians claimed to speak their ethnic language with their ethnic peers. The details are shown in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Language Spoken to Ethnic Friends of Same Age

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	2	4.1	15	30.6	23	46.9	8	16.3	1	2.0	52	100
Ukrainian	2	2.7	1	1.4	52	71.2	17	23.3	1	1.4	75	100
Croatian	0	0.0	2	3.1	49	75.4	14	21.5	0	0.0	65	100
total	4	2.1	18	9.6	124	66.3	39	20.9	2	1.1	192	100

### Language Spoken to Older Ethnic Friends/Relatives

In contrast to the mainly English usage of the respondents with friends of their own age, the replies showed that they spoke mainly ethnic language (55.7 per cent) or ethnic only (21.9 per cent) with older relatives or friends of the family. Again the Poles predominated in the proportion who used ethnic language only with their elders (46.2 per cent — over twice the percentage of the Croatians and five times higher than the Ukrainians!)

### Language Spoken to Brothers/Sisters

The majority of participants declared that they used mainly English during conversation with their brothers and sisters (60 per cent in all the groups). English only was used by 17.4 per cent, mainly ethnic by 12.6 per cent and ethnic only by 7.4 per cent. Once

Table 8.7: Language Spoken to Older Ethnic Friends and Relatives

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	24	46.2	20	38.5	7	13.5	0	0.0	1	1.9	52	100
Ukrainian	6	8.0	41	54.7	25	33.3	1	1.3	2	2.7	75	100
Croatian	12	18.5	46	70.8	6	9.2	1	1.5	0	0.0	65	100
total	42	21.9	107	55.7	38	19.8	2	1.0	3	1.6	192	100

again, a higher percentage of the Polish respondents used Polish only when speaking to their brothers and sisters (26.0 per cent), compared to the Ukrainians (1.3 per cent) and to the Croatians, where none used Croatians only to siblings. Simultaneously a higher percentage of the Poles spoke English only to their brothers/sisters than was evident among the respondents of the other ethnic groups. The results are shown in table 8.8.

Table 8.8: Language Spoken to Brothers/Sisters

Ethnic group	Language											
	Ethnic only		Mainly Ethnic		Mainly English		English only		Not applicable		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	13	26.0	5	10.0	18	36.0	12	24.0	2	4.0	50	100
Ukrainian	1	1.3	11	14.7	47	62.7	13	17.3	3	4.0	75	100
Croatian	0	0.0	8	12.3	49	75.4	8	12.3	0	0.0	65	100
total	14	7.4	24	12.6	144	60.0	33	17.4	5	2.6	190	100

2 cases had incomplete data

## 8.1 Level of Speaking and Understanding of the Ethnic Language

An important aim of the research was to establish the level of knowledge of ethnic languages to be found among the respondents of the particular ethnic groups. There is an important link between levels of competence and the personal context of usage just discussed. The actual achievements in the level of fluency in an ethnic language can influence, for example, the extent of usage of the language. Participants were asked to assess their competence in oral and literacy skills in their home language. This was done by using the five categories of very well, well, fairly well, little or none by which respondents could evaluate their mastery of the language. In total, the results obtained from participants' self-assessment (in the aspect of speaking and understanding) were nearly equal in the categories: very well (34.0 per cent), well (31.4) and fairly well (31.4) with only 3.1 per cent assessing their knowledge as little and no respondents claiming to be completely unable to speak their ethnic language.

The highest level of ability of speaking and understanding of the ethnic language (very well) was found in the Polish group (47.1 per cent). Only 26.2 per cent of the Croatian group claimed this level of competence in their home language and 32.0 per cent of the Ukrainian respondents. As many as 36.0 per cent of the Ukrainians claimed to speak and understand fairly well, while 6.2 of the Croatians said they only had a little competence. None of the respondents said they had no knowledge of their ethnic tongue.

### Levels of Reading and Writing

There is no doubt that understanding and speaking of a language are easier to acquire and use in the home situation than are reading and writing. Hence, not surprisingly, the



Table 8.9: Self-Assessment of Speaking and Understanding Ethnic Language

Ethnic group	Levels of Competence											
	very well		well		fairly well		little		none		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	24	47.1	12	23.5	14	27.5	1	2.0	0	0.0	51	100
Ukrainian	24	32.0	23	30.7	27	36.0	1	1.3	0	0.0	75	100
Croatian	17	26.2	25	38.5	19	29.2	4	6.2	0	0.0	65	100
total	65	34.0	60	31.4	60	31.4	6	3.1	0	0.0	191	100

1 case had incomplete data

literacy level of the ethnic languages (reading and writing), in total and in the particular groups, was lower and seems to have been frankly assessed by the participants. In total, the highest percentage of respondents assessed their ability to read and write in their ethnic languages as fairly well (37.0 per cent). Those who considered they could read and write very well represented only 24.5 per cent, with 22.9 per cent in the 'well' category. As many as 15.1 per cent declared they had only a little ability in writing and reading, and one person had a complete lack of such ability.

Among the particular ethnic groups the highest level of literacy was achieved by the Poles and the lowest by the Croatians. Table 8.10 illustrates the level of literacy skills.

Table 8.10: Self-Assessment of Reading and Writing Ethnic Language

Ethnic group	Levels of Competence											
	very well		well		fairly well		little		none		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	18	34.6	9	17.3	16	30.8	9	17.3	0	0.0	52	100
Ukrainian	21	28.0	17	22.7	27	36.0	9	12.0	1	1.3	75	100
Croatian	8	12.3	18	27.7	28	43.1	11	16.9	0	0.0	65	100
total	47	24.5	44	22.9	71	37.0	29	15.1	1	0.5	192	100



## Attendance at Ethnic Classes

Some ethnic organizations have established schools or classes where young people from ethnic minorities have the chance to learn their languages and cultures outside normal school hours. The majority of the participants of the survey had attended ethnic classes (84.9 per cent) but 15.1 per cent had not. The percentage of the participants who had studied at the ethnic classes and not was very similar in all ethnic groups.

It was also important to investigate the length of time these young ethnics had studied in such classes. Overall, the majority had attended for quite a long time, four or more years (78.8 per cent) and only 4.4 per cent for less than one year. In the particular groups, however, there were noticeable differences. First of all, the Ukrainians had studied longer in such classes, with 100 percent indicating that they had attended for a period of four or more years. This contrasted with only 58.5 per cent of Croatians, who attended for long a period and 72.1 per cent of Poles. Among the Croatians there was a relatively shorter period of attendance at the ethnic classes. The particulars of attendance at the ethnic classes and the periods of their involvement are shown in the tables below, (8.11 and 8.12).

Table 8.11: Attendance at Ethnic Classes

Ethnic group	Yes		No		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	44	84.6	8	15.4	52	100
Ukrainian	66	88.0	9	12.0	75	100
Croatian	53	81.5	12	18.5	65	100
total	163	84.9	29	15.1	192	100

The highest percentage of the Ukrainians attending ethnic classes, in comparison to

Table 8.12: Period of Attendance

Ethnic group	Period in years									
	less than 1 year		1-2 years		2-3 years		4 or more years		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	4	9.3	4	9.3	4	9.3	31	72.1	43	100
Ukrainian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	64	100.0	64	100
Croatian	3	5.7	11	20.8	8	15.1	31	58.5	53	100
total	7	4.4	15	9.4	12	7.5	126	78.8	160	100

32 cases had incomplete data

other groups and, more importantly, the long period of attendance of four or more years by 100% of the Ukrainian participants requires further comments.

It has been noticed in the literature that the educational achievements of the second generation Ukrainian Australians, in general, has exceeded those of the population as a whole. In particular many of the second generation Ukrainian Australians have entered such professions as teaching, law, medicine and engineering<sup>1</sup>. Such educational and, in consequence, professional achievements of the group have been in harmony with the simultaneous involvement in the study of the Ukrainian language and culture, a result of a strong encouragement of their parents and the whole Ukrainian community.

This strong desire to maintain the language was a result not only of their wish to preserve the Ukrainian cultural heritage but also a result of a more specific, political factor of the "Russification" of the Ukrainian language and culture which took place after the migration of the Ukrainian parents of the respondents and during the time when the research was conducted.

The cultural needs of the Ukrainian community have been fulfilled by the Saturday

<sup>1</sup> *The Australian People. An Encyclopaedia of the Nation ...*, p.827

School system, and the tendency to preserve the Ukrainian culture by this community can be seen by the numbers of the schools and their organisational system:

By 1959 there were 52 Ukrainian schools Australia-wide, with 117 teachers and over 2000 students. For demographic reasons, the members declined until the mid-1970s. In the 1980s a revival was seen as third-generation Ukrainian Australians began to enter the Ukrainian school system. The system itself became highly sophisticated, with a federal structure, the Central Ukrainian School board, overseeing curriculum development, publishing its own journal and organising Federal Ukrainian Teachers' Conferences. By the mid-1970s the Ukrainian language was recognized as a matriculation subject in several States. This coincides with a movement to establish tertiary studies in Ukrainian. In 1983 a lectureship was established at Monash University in Melbourne under the auspices of the Association of Ukrainians in Victoria. One year later the Sydney-based Foundation of Ukrainian Studies in Australia established a lectureship in Ukrainian at Macquarie University, founded wholly by the community<sup>2</sup>.

In this sense the Ukrainians can be seen as one of the best organised and most committed communities in Australia in relation to the maintenance of their ethnic language.

### Teaching Ethnic Language in Australian Schools

The answer of the young people from the ethnic minorities to the question of whether ethnic languages should be taught in at least some state schools and tertiary institutions was particularly important because it has remained a controversial issue, as well as a practical problem, even in the undoubtedly multicultural society that Australia is today.

As many as 93.7 per cent of all participants thought that their ethnic languages should be taught in some educational institutions. Among the particular ethnic groups the percentages were very similar. However, the Croatians manifested their commitment to the teaching of their ethnic language in the highest percentage (98.5 per cent). The results were as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> *The Australian People . . .*, p.827

Table 8.13: Approval for Teaching Ethnic Languages in some State Schools

Ethnic group	Yes		No		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	46	90.2	5	9.8	51	100
Ukrainian	68	91.9	6	8.1	74	100
Croatian	64	98.5	1	1.5	65	100
total	178	93.7	12	6.3	190	100

2 cases had incomplete data.

As many as 93.7 percent of the participants believed that ethnic languages should be taught in some schools and tertiary institutions in Australia. Such a high level of support is worthy of further comments.

Teaching ethnic languages is a controversial issue in any multicultural society. From a general, philosophical point of view, it should be agreed that people from the minority ethnic groups have the right to learn their languages. It is, at least a moral and civic right for the individual. In the current Australian legislation there are phrases which have stated equal rights in several aspects, among them in languages. In particular the Human Rights Commission Act of 1981 protects the linguistic rights of minorities. Article 1 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child affirms the entitlement of the child to all rights set out in the Declaration without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, language or social origins.

A multicultural society should give young people from ethnic minorities a chance to maintain and develop their own culture.

In every day practice the problem is not an easy one.

One of the most important factors which impede the maintenance of the culture of minority groups is mainly, as Smolicz calls, the attack on languages other than the ma-

majority group and there is still no adequate understanding of the problems. Language is one of the most important aspects of culture. It should be mentioned that language is the core value for the majority of ethnic groups in a plural society. Hence the transmission of ethnic languages is an extremely important problem and, in my view it is not only the responsibility of the parents of the ethnic children but also the responsibility of the education system in plural societies. The arguments are very simple: it is not possible to ignore the fact that in Australia, languages other than English are spoken, which is simply a result of the multicultural character of this country, and migration is accepted by the government as absolutely necessary for this country. If so, then the languages of minorities must receive educational support from the mainstream system of education in order to be available to Australians of all ethnic backgrounds (as well as Anglo-Australian youth).

It is characteristic that whereas there is support for multicultural education, there are simultaneously attacks on ethnic languages. The attacks are a result of the Australian tradition of monolinguals. This tradition is based on the false assumption that it is not possible to speak, read and write in more than one language.

This linguistic ethnocentrism has frequently been camouflaged by protestations of the 'unfairness' of ethnic parents to their own children, because of their insistence on burdening them with learning their mother tongues. The majority's claim has been that in this way such parents have been handicapping their children, both educationally and in their subsequent socio-economic advance. Such arguments however, carry little credibility in view of the continuing approval of 'foreign' school languages, such as French (in the virtual absence of French migrants!). Such languages are considered as educationally broadening for the children of the majority, in contrast to the disapproval of 'migrant' languages, such as Greek or Italian which were assumed to confuse minority children when they study them in addition to English<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>J.J.Smolicz, Multiculturalism and an Overarching Framework of values: some educational responses for ethnically plural societies, *European Journal of Education*, vol.19, No.1, 1984, p20

The moves against an expansion of multicultural and multilingual education may have been prompted by economic motives. It is, simply speaking, cheaper to give limited financial support to the part-time, mainly Saturday ethnic schools with a small number of children than to provide such multicultural and multilingual education on the large scale within the mainstream education system. Such ethnic part-time schools have little prestige. But there is also a more serious danger of potential or real separatism.

In this circumstance any initiative towards teaching ethnic languages in state schools, as for example the recently created The South Australian School of Languages (from 1986) where actually 11 community languages are introduced<sup>4</sup>, should be warmly welcomed.

Lastly, a simple argument: if we agree that education is for the students and if there are in the society such aspirations and needs, as is indicated by the survey, they should be fulfilled.

### **Interest in Becoming a Teacher of Ethnic Languages**

Participants were also asked whether they would be prepared to become a teacher of their ethnic language (after a period of preparation) to establish their readiness to undertake the task. It cannot be forgotten that such a task is not an easy one. Such teachers need to fulfil at least two conditions: not only must they have a very good knowledge of the minority language, in relation to the spoken forms, but they must also have a high level of literacy, as well as a certain predisposition to teaching.

The result of the survey at this point could have been anticipated — more than half of the participants said they were prepared to be a teacher of their ethnic languages (exactly 54.8 per cent). The strongest commitment was expressed by Croatians, the lowest by the

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<sup>4</sup>(In 1991) — figures supplied by the South Australian Secondary School of Languages

Ukrainians. The particulars are given in table 8.14.

Table 8.14: Interest in Becoming a Teacher of Ethnic Languages

Ethnic group	Yes		No		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	28	56.0	22	44.0	50	100
Ukrainian	35	47.9	38	52.1	73	100
Croatian	40	61.5	25	38.5	65	100
total	103	54.8	85	45.2	188	100

4 cases had incomplete data

More than half of the participants expressed an interest in becoming a teacher of ethnic languages.

This result is strong evidence of attitudes of youth from minority ethnic groups towards multicultural and multilingual education. It can also be used as an argument against those who are opposed to multilingual education and have an 'argument' about the lack of qualified teachers for these purposes. Obviously the responses do not take account of the formal qualifications needed for the teaching of ethnic languages, nevertheless the expression of such an interest has great value. In addition, in order to disagree with the view about the lack of qualified teachers able to teach community languages, and to support my argument all you have to do is to look at the enrolment forms of students within the Department of Education of the University of Adelaide to establish that hundreds of the students who successfully completed their studies for the Diploma in Education from previous years are from minority ethnic backgrounds and are, in their minority, fluent in community languages. Furthermore some of them are employed as part-time teachers only because of the lack of opportunity to obtain full-time employment.



## Chapter 9

# Analysis of Data on Social Relationships and Identity

This chapter focuses on replies given to survey questions on membership of organisations, pattern of friendship and sense of identity.

### Participation in ethnic and Australian organisations

The social activities of the participants were investigated by questions about participation in and membership of organisations, both ethnic and Australian. Only 13.2 per cent of the participants were not members of any organisations, while the highest percentage of participants (40.2 per cent) claimed to belong to two or three ethnic organisations, and as many as 17.5 per cent declared they were involved in four or more ethnic organisations (see table 9.1).

There were, however, some differences worth noting among the three ethnic groups. While over a third of the Poles and two fifths of the Ukrainians and the Croatians belonged to two to three ethnic organisations, almost a quarter of the Poles, a fifth of the Ukrainians but only a tenth of the Croatians claimed to be members of four or more. The lower level of ethnic involvement among the Croatian respondents may be accounted for in terms of the fact that many of them were still at school.

Table 9.1: Participation in Ethnic Organisations

Ethnic group	Number of ethnic organisations									
	4 or more		2-3		1		none		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	12	23.1	17	32.7	15	28.8	8	15.4	52	100
Ukrainian	15	20.3	31	41.9	23	31.1	5	6.8	74	100
Croatian	6	9.5	28	44.4	17	27.0	12	19.0	63	100
total	33	17.5	76	40.2	55	29.1	25	13.2	189	100

3 cases had incomplete data

Table 9.2: Participation in Australian Organisations

Ethnic group	Number of Australian organisations									
	4 or more		2-3		1		none		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	3	5.9	14	27.5	15	29.4	19	37.3	51	100
Ukrainian	6	8.0	17	22.7	22	29.3	30	40.0	75	100
Croatian	2	3.1	12	18.8	19	29.7	31	48.4	64	100
total	11	5.8	43	22.6	56	29.5	80	42.1	190	100

2 cases had incomplete data

The replies also provided some evidence that young people from ethnic minority groups are not locked into their ethnic communities and their organisations, but are also members of Australian organisations. As table 9.2 shows, overall a little over half of the respondents belonged to at least one Anglo-Australian organisation, with almost a quarter saying they were members of two or three. Again, differences were apparent among the three groups. A little over a third of the Poles, two fifths of the Ukrainians, but almost half of the Croatians said they did not belong to any Australian organisation. The same proportion (three tenths) in each group were members of one mainstream Australian club, while a third of the Poles and Ukrainians, but about a fifth of the Croatians belonged to two or

more. The amount of interaction with the main stream structure was greater among the Poles and Ukrainians than among the Croatians. Again, this can be explained by the lower age of the Croatians and the consequent less time and opportunity they had for involvement in clubs and organisations.

Table 9.3: Friends of their Own Ethnic Background

Ethnic group	Number of Friends													
	none		one		two		three		four		five		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	14	26.9	1	1.9	10	19.2	13	25.0	3	5.8	11	21.2	52	100
Ukrainian	13	17.3	7	9.3	8	10.7	12	16.0	4	5.3	31	41.3	75	100
Croatian	11	16.9	3	4.6	8	12.3	19	29.2	9	13.8	15	23.1	65	100
total	38	19.8	11	5.7	26	13.5	44	22.9	16	8.3	57	29.7	192	100

Table 9.4: Friends of Anglo-Australian Background

Ethnic group	Number of Friends													
	none		one		two		three		four		five		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	21	40.4	9	17.3	11	21.2	2	3.8	3	5.8	6	11.5	52	100
Ukrainian	42	56.0	10	13.3	9	12.0	5	6.7	3	4.0	6	8.0	75	100
Croatian	36	55.4	19	29.2	6	9.2	2	3.1	1	1.5	1	1.5	65	100
total	99	51.6	38	19.8	26	13.5	9	4.7	7	3.6	13	6.8	192	100

### Friendship patterns

Three questions were asked in the questionnaire to try to establish the friendship patterns of the respondents. They were asked to indicate how many of their five closest friends were of the same ethnic background as themselves, how many were of Anglo-Australian origin and how many belonged to other ethnic groups. The responses are summarised in Tables 9.3, 9.4, 9.5.

Table 9.5: Friends of other Ethnic Background

Ethnic group	Number of Friends													
	none		one		two		three		four		five		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	29	55.8	12	23.1	8	15.4	1	1.9	0	0.0	2	3.8	52	100
Ukrainian	52	69.3	12	16.0	5	6.7	2	2.7	0	0.0	4	5.3	75	100
Croatian	29	44.6	18	27.7	9	13.8	2	3.1	1	1.5	6	9.2	65	100
total	110	57.3	42	21.9	22	11.5	5	2.6	1	0.5	12	6.3	192	100

Analysis of the interaction of respondents with the field of their ethnicity revealed that overall only 29.7 per cent claimed to have all five of their close friends among their own ethnic group, and 19.8 per cent had no friends of the same ethnicity as themselves. Having close friends among their own ethnic group was more common within the Ukrainian group where as many as 41.3 per cent had five Ukrainian friends. In contrast, 26.5 per cent of the Poles had no close friends among other Polish youth.

Choosing friends among Anglo-Australians was not so rare as might have been expected — as about half of the respondents had at least one close Anglo-Australian friend. Among the particular ethnic groups, the Poles had more close Australian friends than respondents from the other two groups. The tendency among the Ukrainians to be more exclusive was shown also in the data on friends of the other than Ukrainian ethnic background.

Over two thirds of the Ukrainian participants, but only half of the Poles and even less of the Croatians had no friends from other ethnic groups. About a quarter of the Poles, and slightly more of the Croatians had one such friend, and over one fifth of the both groups had two or more friends of other ethnic backgrounds.

## Respondents' Own Sense of Identity

The questionnaire also attempted to investigate whether the participants identified themselves basically as minority ethnics, Australians or ethnic-Australians. The identity of the respondents was investigated through three separate but related questions which were designed to explore their sense of self identity as well as their awareness of how other people, both those of the dominant majority and those of their ethnic homeland, viewed them. In relation to the first question, about half of the participants (52.4 per cent) considered themselves to be ethnic (Polish, Ukrainians, Croatians) in identity. Just under half (44.3 per cent) claimed to have dual identity, both ethnic and Australian. Only a very small percentage (3.2 per cent) considered themselves to be Australian.

Among the particular groups the Croatians had the highest percentage of respondents who identified themselves as ethnics (59.7 per cent) and the Poles had the lowest (47.1 per cent). Just under half of the Poles and Ukrainians identified themselves as both ethnic and Australian, but among Croatians the proportion was just over a third. There would seem to be a greater tendency for Croatians to maintain their identity exclusively while the Poles and Ukrainians tend more towards a dual sense of identity.

Table 9.6: Respondents' Sense of Identity

Ethnic group	Sense of Identity Claimed							
	Ethnic		Australian		Ethnic-Australian		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	24	47.1	3	5.9	24	47.1	52	100
Ukrainian	36	50.0	1	1.4	35	48.6	72	100
Croatian	37	59.7	2	3.2	23	37.1	62	100
total	97	52.4	6	3.2	82	44.3	185	100

7 cases had incomplete data

The question of self consideration in the aspect of ethnicity is one of the difficult problems. In Australia the problem of ethnicity is particularly complicated because of the great range of ethnic diversity in the country.

In the study of Charles Price the following criteria were applied: country of birth, country of birth of parents and grandparents, ancestral language, and religious origins. Price found difficulties in the studies of ethnicity and considered that it is essential to work with two general categories: subjective categories of self-identification, and objective categories (such as place of birth).

In many cases the objective categories which ignore the cultural aspects do not fully explain all ethnic problems. For instance birthplace is not a sufficient criterion in the case of a group who has no single place of residence, such as the Jews. Similarly, people of mixed ancestry create problems as in the example given by Smolicz (referring to Price's statistical analysis) of someone with only one Aboriginal parent counts for 0.5 of an Aboriginal person (although he or she may actually feel fully Aboriginal)<sup>1</sup>

Ethnicity can be seen in terms of cultural activation, which is testable by such a fact as language usage. In particular, it is possible to assess which language is used by an individual (if he/she knows more than one language), how often, under what circumstances, to whom, etc. Similarly it is not difficult to test the other aspect — language ability. Listening to a normal conversation of an individual or reading his/her letter or a more formal paper, asking him to read the latest news from a newspaper it is easy to establish the ability in speech and other forms of language manifestation as understanding, of reading and writing.

In order to investigate ethnic problems based on language usage we shall have a certain

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<sup>1</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Ethnic Identity in Australia . . .*, p143

picture of cultural activity. However, not only linguistic criteria but others, such as for example: the pattern of family, social relations or the character of religion can be applied.

Trying to find an appropriate criterion in order to classify ethnicity we cannot ignore the attitudes, aspirations and desires of an individual. Hence we have to take into account also the sense of *identity* of an individual. There are situations where under special circumstances an individual identifies with a certain ethnic group where other, traditional criteria cannot be applied.

There are cases when people identify themselves as of double or plural identity. These case in Australia are not rare. People from ethnic minorities sometimes identify themselves not as Italians, Serbs, Greeks, etc, but as Italian-Australians, Serb-Australians or Greek-Australians. They feel themselves to be ethnic within both cultures, however the degree of the feeling towards the first or second ethnicity may be unequal. The research gives evidence of this; however the problem was shown in literature earlier. Smolicz described some examples:

Our own research in depth on a sample of young people of Polish origin educated in Australian schools and tertiary institutions has revealed the extent of their sense of Polish identity and firm attachment to things Polish. In their memoirs the writes have reiterated their pride in the Polish heritage and a desire to see it continued and passed to future generations in Australia (Smolicz & Secombe, 1981). Questionnaire studies on large samples, such as the Catholic school survey in South Australia, also show a widespread acceptance of the idea of ethnic identity (Smolicz & Lean, 1979). When given a chance, parents identified themselves as British- and Irish-Australians, or as members of minority ethnic groups such as Polish-, German-, Dutch- and Italian Australian<sup>2</sup>

This last attitude of plural identity was indicated clearly from this research. However it does not apply to migrants of an older generation but to youth who are in the majority

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<sup>2</sup>J. Smolicz, *Ethnic Identity in Australia: cohesive or diversive?* ..., p.146

born in Australia, and by the fact that the respondents are migrants of the second or next generation — the percentage of those who consider themselves as ethnic-Australians (in all groups) is very high (44.3).

There is a certain paradox, that against the earlier policy of assimilation, only 3.2 per cent of the respondents consider themselves Australians. The former assimilation policy assumed that immigrants will quickly consider themselves as Australians. The research is concerned not with the recent immigrants but rather with their children, in the majority born in Australia (74.3 per cent). Therefore the former policy makers should be surprised that only a small percentage of the respondents considered themselves Australians. This is also a clear evidence of the failure of the assimilation policy.

### **Identification of Respondents**

The majority of the participants recognized that their own sense of identity was rather different from the way Australian people identified them. The results obtained on the question: "What do you think Australians generally consider you to be" showed 76.2 per cent of the total respondents thought that they were considered as ethnics (Poles, Ukrainians, Croatians) and only 23.8 per cent claimed they were regarded as Australians. It should also be pointed out that the percentage of those who saw themselves as Australians by their fellow Australians (23.8 per cent) was noticeably higher than those respondents who identified themselves as Australian alone (only 3.2 per cent). There were, however, very interesting differences between the three ethnic groups. Although the Ukrainians were most likely to have five Ukrainian friends, they were twice as likely as the Polish and Croatian respondents to be generally regarded as Australians in their perception. Table 9.7 shows the full results.



Table 9.7: Identification of Respondents by Australians

Ethnic group	Identification					
	Ethnic		Australian		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	43	84.3	8	15.7	51	100
Ukrainian	48	64.9	26	35.1	74	100
Croatian	50	83.3	10	16.7	60	100
total	141	76.2	44	23.8	185	100

7 cases had incomplete data

If we compare the percentage of respondents who considered themselves as Australians (3.2) with the figure which shows consideration of the respondents as Australians by the Australians (23.8), the difference is a significant one and needs explanation.

The Australian society is very familiar with such a phenomenon as migration because migration has existed in this society from the beginning of white settlement 200 years ago. If the differences between the mainstream of the society and some migrants are not very serious, say, in the colour of skin, accent in speech, clothes then the Anglo-Australian majority consider the individual as an Australian, and the feeling of the individual towards his ethnic origin or his cultural differences becomes less important.

If we take into account the fact that the majority of the participants of the survey were very young people and were born in Australia and as Europeans they have no anthropological differences from their Anglo-Australian counterparts, and hence they are easily accepted by them as Australians. But in the consciousness of the young people from ethnic minorities they are different because of their origin (and the cultural differences) and they consider themselves in the majority as ethnics, or ethnic-Australians (or Australian-ethnics) with the exception of the 3.2 per cent.

There are many views on identity and the definition of the concept of identity. From the theory of sociology of knowledge, identity is a social construct, the result of social processes. Jordan for example pointed out that

the essential point is that it is the location of self in a particular world which is the key to the construction of identity. A crucial issue then becomes that of discovering the locus of power for this location of the self, of establishing *whether individuals have autonomy in locating themselves in a particular world*, or whether they are subject to others who have power to locate them in a world not of their choosing"<sup>3</sup> (my emphasis).

If we accept this view we can assess that the youth from ethnic minorities have (at least enough) autonomy in locating themselves in the world of many cultures. The existence of the autonomy is a very positive aspect of the attitudes of the society and a result of an actual appropriate policy on multicultural issues.

### Identification by people in the home country

The respondents were asked how they thought people in their home country would identify them. In general the answers of the participants were divided almost equally with half (50.8 per cent) replying that they would be considered as ethnics (Poles etc.) and half (49.2 per cent) indicating that they would be identified as Australians. Many clearly thought that in their ethnic homeland they would be considered as Australians, even when they did not identify themselves in this way. There were two noticeable differences among the ethnic groups. More of the Poles claimed that in Poland they would be considered as Poles — 59.2 per cent, as compared with 53.1 per cent of Croatians and 43.2 per cent of Ukrainians. This suggests again a greater Ukrainian awareness of having an Australian identity. This can be explained that during the time of conducting the research, the

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<sup>3</sup>D. Jordan, "Census categories — enumeration of Aboriginal people, or construction of identity?", *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 1985 nr 1.

respondents' personal contacts with Ukraine as a country of origin were minimal because of political reasons, and, more importantly, the majority of the Ukrainian respondents (87.8%) were born in Australia and only 2.7% in Ukraine).

Table 9.8: Identification by people in ethnic homeland

Ethnic group	Identification					
	Ethnic		Australian		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	29	59.2	20	40.8	49	100
Ukrainian	32	43.2	42	56.8	74	100
Croatian	34	53.1	30	46.9	64	100
total	95	50.8	92	49.2	187	100

5 cases had incomplete data

The results obtained from the survey showed that the participants saw themselves as being considered during their visit to their mother country (or they think that they will be considered during such a visit) as ethnics in 50.8% or Australians in 49.2%.

It should be noted that there is a significant difference between the percentage of the respondents who believe that they are (or would be) considered in their ethnic homeland as Australians (49.2) and the percentage of those respondents who consider themselves Australians (3.2). It is clear that the respondents are conscious (based on experience or anticipated consequences of this visit) of the different attitudes of people in the ethnic homeland compare to the Australians.

Simultaneously it should be mentioned that a visit to the mother country has an important influence on their identity. An interesting experience in this matter can be found in the memoirs written by the people who have visited their mother countries. The visit to a mother country is a factor which helps to maintain the identity, as it happened

in the case of 14 year old boy who wrote in his memoir:

I have been in Poland five times. This has helped me to maintain my Polish identity. If I had never been in Poland, I would have no personal memories of Poland, and would know it only from description and photographs. But having often been in Poland, I have some idea of the 'atmosphere' there. It seems to me that without knowing the state of affair in Poland, it is hard to feel a Pole in another land ...<sup>4</sup>

There is no question that a visit to the mother country is a very important factor in order to maintain ethnic identity. However, in practical terms it is, simultaneously, a very limited factor, especially in the case of Australia (of Australia's geographical isolation) because it is expensive one.

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<sup>4</sup>quoted after J.J. Smolicz, M.Secombe, *The Australian School Through Children's Eyes ...*, p104

## Chapter 10

# The Preservation of Ethnic Cultures in Australia in the Eyes of the Respondents

Should ethnic cultures be preserved in the eyes of the participants living in a multi-cultural society? Or perhaps the participants think that the issue is not important.

### 10.1 Preservation of ethnic cultures

One of the main purposes of the research was to investigate the views of the respondents in regard to the preservation of their ethnic cultural heritage in Australia. As Table 10.1 shows the great majority of respondents (96.3 per cent) thought that their ethnic cultural heritage should be preserved in Australia and only 3.7 percent stated that. Four of the seven respondents who expressed negative attitude towards preservation of ethnic cultures, were of Polish origin.

As it was indicated from the research as many as 96.3 per cent of the participants expressed their view that their ethnic cultural heritage should be preserved in Australia. This data illustrates in the best way the attitudes of the young people from ethnic minorities to their cultural heritage. Simultaneously the ethnic culture for the participants is not a static phenomenon but a changing one. Their comments indicate that not all the

Table 10.1: Attitude to Preservation of Ethnic Cultures in Australia

Ethnic group	Identification					
	Positive		Negative		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Polish	48	92.3	4	7.7	52	100
Ukrainian	71	97.3	2	2.7	73	100
Croatian	63	98.4	1	1.6	64	100
total	182	96.3	7	3.7	189	100

3 cases had incomplete data.

cultural heritage from the past should be preserved but only "to an extent" as one of the respondents wrote (questionnaire no 46). The respondents were also critically aware of the preservation of the ethnic cultures, as a part of their cultures in Australia, which for example, do not exist in their mother country contemporarily. As an illustration of that a respondent has written:

It is a rather strange that some customs are preserved (in Australia) which have disappeared in Poland (questionnaire no.43)

The respondents can distinguish what is a living aspect of culture and what is not, they are against a mechanical preservation, they are evaluating culture.

In the theory of humanistic sociology the problems were observed and investigated. J. Szacki, for example defines tradition as "part of heritage which excites feelings of approval or disapproval in the current generation by involving it in an act of identification or dissociation with predecessors"<sup>1</sup>. Accepting this definition, Smolicz and Secombe (1981) add that:

tradition cannot be regarded as simply any type of link between the past and present, it cannot be submitted to mechanically and unthinkingly, but

<sup>1</sup>J. Szacki, "Three concepts of tradition", *The Polish Sociological Bulletin*, no.2 (1969), p.144-50.

demands an active display of the sentiments of acceptance or rejection. Thus it cannot be accounted for without reference to the phenomenon of human consciousness. To use Znaniecki's terminology tradition must be viewed with its humanistic coefficient, as it appears to individuals who actively evaluate and use it<sup>2</sup>.

The view of the participants towards the preservation of the ethnic cultural heritage is not a declaration only expressed by the respondents. If we consider the fact that as many as 84.9 per cent of the respondents attended ethnic schools, 78.8 per cent of them attended for four years or longer and more than half achieved a good level in ethnic languages, especially in the oral form and that 86.8 per cent are members of ethnic organisations and 80.2 per cent of the respondents have close friends among their ethnic groups. Then, this data produces a picture which shows that the respondents took reasonable steps in order to preserve their cultural heritage.

It should be mentioned that this data gives appropriate evidence that the expressed attitude is realised, however the picture is not full. Obviously, there many additional facts where an investigation in the form of questionnaire cannot achieve answers and we should be conscious of this fact.

## 10.2 Ways of preserving ethnic cultures in Australia

As a follow up to the question discussed in the above section, the respondents were asked to express their views on the best ways of preserving their ethnic culture in Australia. The questionnaire presented them with a list of nine statements about ways in which a minority culture could be retained. Respondents were asked to assess each on a four point scale: *vitaly important*, *important*, or *not important*. After that, the respondents were

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<sup>2</sup>J. Smolicz, M. Secombe, *The Australian Schools through Children's Eyes*, ...p.12

asked to number in order of importance the six aspects that they considered to be most important for their particular ethnic group. The responses to each of the nine statements are discussed below.

### **10.2.1 Parents' home and family**

Taking into account the fact that the participants were young people, often living together with their parents it was important to try assess the influence of parents' home and family on participants in relation to their ethnic cultures.

The majority of participants (65.9 per cent) considered this aspect as a vitally important way of preserving their culture and another 31.9 per cent assessed it as important. Only 2.2 per cent evaluated parents' home and family as not important. In the different ethnic groups, a significantly higher percentage of the Croatians assessed parents' home and family (79.0 per cent) as vitally important compared to lower percentage of the Ukrainians and the Poles which were similar (60.0 and 58.0 respectively).

### **10.2.2 Own home and family**

The response to this aspect of preserving ethnic cultures was very similar to that given to the previous question. For the majority of participants this means that preservation was regarded vitally important (65.4 per cent) and as important by another 33.5 per cent, with only 1.1 per cent claiming it to be not important. Again, a difference can be found in the Croatian group, where 75.8 per cent thought that their own home and family were vitally important and none of them assessed it as "not important". It is possible, however, that the Croatian respondents who were mostly still at school interpreted this as the same as Parents' Home and Family, rather than in relation to the homes and families they moved



in.

### **10.2.3 Having mainly ethnic friends (among own group)**

This question was not considered as important as home life for ethnic culture maintenance. Only 21.5 per cent noted it as vitally important with another 47.0 per cent claiming it to be important and about a third (31.5%) considering that it was not important at all.

The Poles, the highest percentage, assessed the aspect as not important (46.9 per cent) compared to 24.3 of the Ukrainians and 27.4 of the Croatians. The Croatians gave the highest support to this statement, with 30.6 per cent considering it vitally important compared to 21.4 per cent of the Ukrainians and only 10.2 of the Poles. Indeed, as many as 46.9 per cent of the Polish respondents evaluated having mainly Polish friends as of no importance in the preservation of their culture.

### **10.2.4 Ethnic church services and practices**

The possibility of maintaining ethnic cultures through religious organisations was given substantial support. Overall 39.0 per cent regarded religious observances as vitally important and a further 51.1 per cent said they were important. Only 9.9 per cent assessed them as not important. The number of Croatian respondents who regarded their religious observances as vitally important was higher (51.6 per cent) than the Ukrainians (34.3 per cent) and the Poles (30.0 per cent).

### **10.2.5 Ethnic Saturday Schools**

In the opinion of the majority of the participants (51.6 per cent) Saturday schools were vitally important for the preservation of their cultures in Australia. A further 41.2 per cent rated it as important, while 7.1 per cent stated that it was not important.

The Ukrainians and Croatians revealed a similar level of assessment in this regard. The Poles, however, gave ethnic Saturday schools lower rating with 40.8% claiming it to be vitally important, 49% considering it important and 10.2 per cent that they regarded it as of no importance.

### **10.2.6 Ethnic youth organisations**

Ethnic youth organisations were evaluated more highly than Saturday Schools as a mean of maintaining minority cultures. Overall, 62.8 per cent thought that youth organisations were vitally important and another 32.2 per cent rated them as important with only 4.9 per cent giving them no significance. In this case each of the ethnic groups followed a similar pattern of response.

### **10.2.7 Teaching ethnic language in Australian day schools**

This statement referred to the possibility of minority languages being learnt as an integral part of the curriculum of Australian schools. Just under a quarter (23.5 per cent) considered this of vital importance, although 51.4 per cent rated it as important, whereas as many as 25.1 per cent indicated that they thought it was of no use. Once again, the level of evaluation among the Croatians was higher than that revealed among the Ukrainians and the Poles.

### **10.2.8 Teaching ethnic languages in Australian Universities and Colleges**

This statement referred to ethnic languages being incorporated into the teaching of tertiary institutions.

The respondents rated this aspect of ethnic cultural retention more highly than the previous one. As many as 43.7 per cent of the total number of respondents suggested that this was a vitally important. Only 8.2 per cent regarded it as unimportant. Among the Croatsians 69.4 per cent saw it as vitally important and only 1.6 per cent said it was unimportant. In contrast 16.0 per cent of the Poles rated tertiary learning as not important.

### **10.2.9 Ethnics succeeding in professional and business life**

Some people from ethnic minorities realize that for the benefit of their group (as well as Australia) they should succeed in professional and business life. If successful, an ethnic group can have higher social status and recognition in the whole Australian society. Over half of the respondents (55.7 per cent) saw this as vitally important with another 35.0 per cent of estimating it is important and only 9.3 per cent seeing it as unimportant. The highest level of support came from the Croatsians, 74.2 per cent of whom regarded it as vitally important, while the lowest was shown by the Ukrainians.

The participants were also asked to number in order of importance the six aspects that they considered to be the most important for their own ethnic group. The same procedure of analysis adopted to establish the rank order of importance of the various ways of preserving ethnic culture in the eyes of the respondents was used in analysing the

replies on the core value question.

In total, the respondents gave the highest priority to parents' home and family, which had a score of 915. The second and the third ranked positions were given to the ethnic youth organisations (1006) and own home and family (1028). All the other ways of preserving ethnic cultures were judged to be much less important.

There were quite marked differences in the evaluation among the ethnic groups, however. Both the Ukrainian and Croatian respondents ranked "parents' home and family" as of the first importance. In contrast the Poles gave first place to own home and family, which has been assessed by the Ukrainians as third, and by the Croatians as fifth.

The second ranking was given by the Poles to parents' home and family, whereas in the case of both the Ukrainians and the Croatians it was ethnic youth organisations which was ranked second. In third place for the Polish respondents was ethnic youth organisation, while for the Ukrainians it was own home and family and for Croatians it was ethnic (Catholic) services and parishes. Both the Polish and the Ukrainian respondents gave the lowest priority to teaching ethnic languages in Australian Universities and Colleges, whereas the Croatians rated teaching ethnic languages in Australian day schools last.

# Chapter 11

## Core Values

There are some aspects of culture for particular ethnic groups which are vital, if the group culture is to survive, the other aspects may be less important. The examples of aspects of culture were introduced to the participants in the form of six main groups: ethnic language, religion, knowledge and appreciation about ethnic home country, folklore, social relations, living in multicultural Australia (and the respondents had possibilities of specifying others) and all groups were divided between particular, appropriate parts. The respondents were asked firstly to choose whether a particular aspect is vitally important, important or not important for the survival of their ethnic culture in Australia and, secondly, to show in order of the importance the six aspects (in the main groups) that they consider to be the most important for the ethnic group.

### 11.1 Data on the Particular Aspects of Culture

The following data was obtained from the respondents on the particular aspects of culture in the main and particular groups:

#### 11.1.1 Ethnic language

1. **Speaking.** Speaking of the ethnic language has been considered by the majority of respondents as vitally important (80.0 per cent), 18.9 per cent think that it is

important aspect, and the speaking of the ethnic language is not important for only 1.1 per cent. Simultaneously, this aspect of culture in the light of the whole survey was judged as the most important, and it must be stressed, not only in the total but also in the particular ethnic groups. However there were differences in percentage in the particular ethnic groups but they were not very significant, nevertheless the two following differences should be mentioned:

(a) the highest percentage of the Croatians think that speaking ethnic language is vitally important for the survival of their ethnic culture in Australia (89.2 per cent) compared to 76.5 per cent of the Poles and 74.3 per cent of the Ukrainians,

(b) only in the Ukrainian group were these views that speaking ethnic language is not important but in the very low percentage (2.7)

2. **Reading and writing.** Reading and writing has been considered by the majority of respondents, both in the total and in the particular ethnic groups as vitally important (63.7 per cent), however the result was not as high as in the case of speaking. 33.2 per cent of the total think that these aspects of culture are important and only 3.2 per cent considered them as not important. In the particular ethnic groups, again, the highest percentage of the Croatians think that reading and writing are vitally important aspects of culture (70.8 per cent) compared to 63.5 per cent of the Ukrainians and 54.9 per cent of the Poles.

Only 5.9 per cent of the Poles and 4.1 per cent of the Ukrainians (but none of the Croatians) think that reading and writing are not important aspects of culture

3. **Literature.** Literature in ethnic language has been considered by the majority

of participants as important (50.5 per cent) but as many as 41.6 per cent of the respondents think that the aspect of culture is vitally important and for only 7.9 per cent is not important. In comparison to the other groups, the Croatians, in their majority (50.8 per cent) have recognized literature as a vitally important aspect. Only 3.9 per cent of the Poles considered that literature was not important, whereas 6.3 per cent of the Croatians and 12.2 per cent of the Ukrainians had a similar view.

### **11.1.2 Religion**

Generally speaking, in comparison to the aspect of language, religion has been assessed by the majority of students as important only and the particular aspects of religion were assessed as not important more frequently. The attitudes of the respondents to the particular aspects of religion have been as follows.

4. **Doctrine.** Religious doctrine, according to the majority of participants is important (46.8 per cent), 32.3 per cent have assessed this aspect as vitally important and 21.0 per cent as not important. In the particular ethnic groups there were two important discrepancies:

- (a) more Croatians think that the doctrine is vitally important (46.9 per cent compared to 28.0 per cent of the Poles and 22.2 per cent of the Ukrainians),
- (b) The highest percentage of the Poles consider doctrine as not important (32.0 per cent), compared to 25.0 per cent of the Ukrainians and only 7.8 per cent of the Croatians.

5. **Liturgy and ceremonies.** This aspect of religion was assessed by the majority of

respondents as more important compared to doctrine. the highest percentage of the participants think that it is an important aspect of culture (52.4 per cent) and only 11.2 per cent not important. The differences between the particular ethnic groups in the case were not significant.

6. **Observance of church law, such as dietary regulation etc..** The participants assessed as the less important aspect in the group of religion. However, the majority still think that it is an important aspect of the culture (47.6 per cent) but a significantly higher percentage considered it as not important (34.2 per cent) and only 18.2 per cent as vitally important. In the particular ethnic groups the lowest percentage of the Croatians considered the observance of church law as not important (15.6 per cent) but it was not important for 42.0 per cent of the Poles and 45.2 per cent of the Ukrainians, and simultaneously, considering the two last ethnic groups, the majority of them think that this aspect is just not important. The highest percentage of importance in the total is a result of a higher consideration of the aspect as important by the Croatians (62.5 per cent) compared to 41.1 per cent stated by the Ukrainians and 38.0 per cent by the Poles.

### **11.1.3 Knowledge and appreciation about ethnic home country**

7. **History of ethnic group.** The majority of participants considered knowledge of the history of ethnic group as vitally important for the preservation of ethnic culture (57.9 per cent), for only 3.7 per cent this aspect of culture was not important. In the particular ethnic groups the strongest accent on vitally important was given by



the Croats (72.3 per cent), the lowest by the Poles (47.1 per cent), who rather think that it is an important aspect only (51.0 per cent). A relatively high percentage of the Ukrainians think that history of their ethnic group is not important (6.8 per cent).

8. **Geography of home country.** This aspect had a lower acceptance than history. The majority of the respondents, both in general and in the particular group think that it is an important aspect (58.9 per cent) and 8.4 per cent of the respondents considered geography as not important.

Again, relatively high percentage of the Ukrainians (13.5) have considered this aspects as not important compared to the Poles (5.9) and the Croats (4.6).

9. **Love of homeland.** Love of homeland was accepted by the majority of respondents as vitally important (57.1 per cent), however the percentage is a result of very high consideration by the Croats, who stated in 80 per cent that the love of homeland is vitally important, whereas only 45.2 per cent of the Ukrainians and 45.1 percent of the Poles had the same opinion. None of the Croats thinks that the aspect is not important, whereas just such assessment have been provided by 9.8 per cent of Poles and 12.3 per cent of the Ukrainians.

10. **Contribution of ethnic culture.** Majority of the participants think that this aspect of culture is important (51.1 per cent) but for 42.6 per cent it is vitally important and according to only 6.4 per cent — not important. In the particular ethnic groups the difference between the percentage of the Poles and the Ukrainians are not significant, whereas the Croats, in their majority have considered this aspect as vitally important (57.8 per cent) and only 1.6 per cent of the Croats think

that the aspect is not important.

11. **Customs and celebrations.** Half of the respondents considered customs and celebrations as a vitally important aspect of the culture, 44.7 per cent think that it is important and only 5.3 per cent that customs and celebrations are not important. The differences in the views between the particular ethnic groups, shown in percentage are minimal, however it can be mentioned (as it is the first case where the Croatsians have not considered an aspect as more vitally important than the other two groups) that more Poles and Ukrainians (51.0 and 51.4 per cent) considered these aspects as vitally important compared to the Croatsians (47.7) and, what more, even more Croatsians think that these aspects are important only (49.2 per cent).

#### 11.1.4 Folklore

12. **Songs and music.** 52.9 per cent of the total respondents have considered this aspect of folklore as vitally important, 42.3 per cent as important and 4.8 per cent as not important.

In the particular ethnic groups the highest percentage of the Ukrainians considered songs and music as vitally important (56.8), a little less of the Croatsians (55.4) and 44.0 per cent of the Poles. For 10 per cent of the Poles the aspect is not important compared to 3.1 per cent of the Croatsians and 2.7 per cent of the Ukrainians.

13. **National dances.** The national dances had the highest consideration by the participants in the total and 56.1 per cent stated this aspect as vitally important, 37.6

as important and 6.3 per cent as not important. The highest consideration was given to national dances by the Croatians (60.0 per cent) and, simultaneously the lowest percentage of Croatians maintained that this aspect is not important (1.5 per cent) compared to 4.1 per cent of the Ukrainians and 16.0 per cent of the Poles.

14. **Traditional arts and crafts.** This aspect of folklore had the lowest consideration by the majority of respondents, where 47.1 per cent assessed it as important, 46.0 as vitally important and 6.9 per cent as not important. Traditional arts and crafts have been vitally important for 56.8 per cent of the Ukrainians, 47.7 per cent of the Croatians and for only 28.0 per cent of the Poles. A relatively high percentage of the Poles (16.0) think that this aspect is not important, whereas this view was only presented by 4.6 per cent of the Croatians and 2.7 per cent of the Ukrainians.

#### **11.1.5 Social relations**

15. **Respect for the aged.** The majority of participants think that the respect for the aged is an important aspect only (47.9), 43.7 per cent stated it as vitally important and 8.4 per cent as not important. The differences between the particular ethnic groups were not significant, however it may be mentioned that more Ukrainians (47.3 per cent) assessed this aspect as vitally important.
16. **Close family ties.** This aspect of social relations was considered by the majority of respondents as vitally important (54.5 per cent); 40.2 per cent think that it is important and only 5.3 per cent regarded it as not important. In the group of the Croatians 71.9 per cent stated that close ties are vitally important, compared to

47.1 per cent of the Poles and 44.6 per cent of the Ukrainians, who rather think that it is only an important aspect (50.0 per cent).

17. **Friends from own ethnic group.** More respondents think that the aspect of social relations is vitally important (49.7 per cent) than important (42.9 per cent) and for 7.4 per cent only it is not important.

In the particular ethnic groups: 60 per cent of the Croatians considered this aspect as vitally important, 50 per cent of the Ukrainians and only 36 per cent of the Poles. For the Poles the aspect is rather important only (50.0 per cent). A relatively high percentage of the Poles assumed this aspect as not important (14.0 per cent) compared to the Ukrainians (6.8) and the Croatians (3.1).

18. **Marrying within own ethnic group.** This aspect was the most controversial and has been assessed by the participants nearly equally as: vitally important by 34.4 per cent, important by 33.9 per cent and even not important by 31.7 per cent. In the particular ethnic groups, the Croatians and the Ukrainians have assessed, in their majority, marrying within their own ethnic groups as vitally important (40.0 and 38.4 per cent) whereas the Poles as not important (49.0 per cent).

19. **Communication with family and ethnic community.** This aspect of culture, located within social relations, has been assessed by the respondents in the total between vitally important (50.3 per cent) and important (46.6 per cent). Only 3.2 per cent of the participants considered it as not important. Communication with family and ethnic community is vitally important for 58.5 per cent of the Croatians compared to 46 per cent of the Poles and 45.9 per cent of of the Ukrainians. A relatively high percentage of the Poles considered the aspect as not important (10.0

per cent) compared to 1.4 per cent of the Ukrainians and none of the Croatians.

### 11.1.6 Living in multicultural Australia

20. **Helping fellow ethnics settle.** In the total as well in the particular ethnic groups this aspect has been located among important (58.4 per cent) 32.6 per cent of the participants think that it is vitally important and only 8.9 per cent have considered helping fellow ethnics settle as not important. The differences between the particular ethnic groups were not significant, however the Ukrainians formed the highest percentage of respondents who considered the aspect as not important (14.9 per cent compared to 6.3 per cent of the Croatians and 3.9 of the Poles).

21. **Teaching other ethnics your language.** In this case, the majority of the respondents think that this aspect is not important (41.5 per cent), 37.2 per cent consider teaching other ethnics their own language as important, and a minority (21.3) think that it is a vitally important aspect.

The assessment of the importance of the aspect given by the Poles and the Ukrainians has been very similar in their percentage whereas the Croatians assessed it, generally speaking, in a higher position (only 21.5 per cent of the Croats think that this aspect is not important, compared to 50.7 per cent of the Ukrainians and 54.0 per cent of the Poles).

22. **Contributing to multicultural Australia.** The majority of the respondents think that contributing to multicultural Australia is an important aspect of social relations. 52.9 per cent of the participants consider this aspect as an important;

38.1 per cent think that it is a vitally important aspect and only 9.0 per cent have considered it as not important.

There is a significant difference between the Croatian and other groups. More Croats give priority to this aspect, considering it as vitally important (49.2 per cent, compared to 32.4 per cent of the Ukrainians and 32.0 per cent of the Poles.

A relatively high percentage of the Poles think that this aspect is not important (16.0 per cent compared to 8.1 per cent of the Ukrainians and 4.6 per cent of the Croats).

The participants were asked to show in order of importance the six aspects (in the main group) that they consider to be the most important for the ethnic groups. From the rating of the respondents the particular aspects of the culture, according to their importance assessed by the participants were established.

In order to obtain the appropriate statistical data (numbers) the following procedure was applied: when a respondent in his/her questionnaire has put a certain aspect of culture as number 1, the number equals 1 point, and subsequently no 2=2, no. 3 = 3 ...no 6 = 6 points. If an aspect has been missed out the score of 10 has been applied to the missed aspect. As it indicates from the above mentioned procedures, the obtained numbers should be interpreted that the smallest number means that this aspect was the most important in the opinion of the respondents, and vice versa, the highest number expressing the lowest consideration by the respondents. Using a computer for the purpose the following numbers were obtained.

Aspect of Culture Assessed by the Participants from  
All Groups (from the most important to the least  
important):

1.	Ethnic language .....	747
2.	Knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic country	871
3.	Religion .....	1099
4.	Social relations .....	1104
5.	Folklore .....	1124
6.	Living in multicultural Australia .....	1189

As we can see from the data, definitely first place (the most important aspect) was language (ethnic), the second was knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic country and after a big gap, in the third place religion. The lowest consideration was given to living in multicultural Australia. The above data is a simple sum of the score from all the three ethnic groups. It is useful to show the data obtained among a particular ethnic group in order to see the differentiation of importance of the particular aspects seen by the particular ethnic groups:

Table 11.1: Aspects of Culture Assessed by Particular Groups (from the most important to the least important)

	Polish		Ukrainian		Croatian	
1.	Ethnic language	225	Ethnic language	299	Ethnic language	223
2.	Knowledge ...	261	Knowledge ...	352	Knowledge ...	258
3.	Social relations	286	Folklore	430	Religion	347
4.	Religion	299	Social relations	450	Social relations	368
5.	Folklore	307	Religion	453	Folklore	387
6.	Living in ...	314	Living in ...	481	Living in ...	394

From the above shown data the following aspects are aparent:

In all the groups the ethnic language was considered the most important aspect. Similarly in all groups the second favoured aspect has been established as the same, namely knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic home country. In third position there were discrepancies between the ethnic groups: for the Poles the more important aspect was

social relations, for the Ukrainians folklore, and for the Croats religion.

The fourth position for the Poles is religion whereas for the Ukrainians and the Croats social relations. As the fifth aspect both Polish and Croatian groups consider it is folklore whereas the Ukrainians put religion.

The least important aspect for all the groups was living in multicultural Australia.

### **11.1.7 Reasons for the participation in the camps**

In order to know which reasons for participation in the camps were more important for the respondents — a list of reasons was introduced for them and they were asked to number in a chronological order of importance and not to consider those aspects which were irrelevant in a situation of a particular respondent.

Based on achieved data the list of the reasons was established, according to the priorities of the respondents.

The majority of all the participants maintained that the main reasons for their participation in the camps were:

- enjoyment of social activities and making friends (84.9 per cent),
- interest in discussion and activities (71.9),
- chance to participate in distinctive activities (65.6),
- chance to travel (51.0).

Less than half of the participants declared:

- family encouragement (35.9),
- influence of friends (32.8),
- parental pressure (13.2),
- other (9.4).



In the particular ethnic groups the following differences were more significant:

1. for the Ukrainians and the Croatians the most important reason for participation in the camp was enjoyment of social activities and making friends (89.3 and 76.9 per cent respectively), whereas for the Poles the most important reason was interest in discussions and activities (90.4%), which had significantly lower considerations among the Ukrainians (64.0) and the Croatians (62.2),
2. family encouragement was a more significant factor for participation in the camps for the Croatians (46.2 per cent) and the Poles (38.5) than for the Ukrainians, for whom influence of their friends (32.0) was stronger (family encouragement was considered by only 25.3 per cent of the Ukrainians),
3. relatively higher consideration among the Poles was given to the chance to participate in distinctive activities (73.1 per cent compare to 64.0 of the Ukrainians and 61.5 of the Croatians),
4. a relatively low percentage of the Poles was under parental pressure to make the decision to participate in their camp (9.6 per cent, compared to 14.3 of the Croatians and 14.7 of the Ukrainians).

## **11.2 Discussion of results in relation to core values**

This section introduces the detailed results of the survey associated with the three aspects of culture considered by the respondents as the most vital for the preservation ethnic cultures in Australia: language, knowledge and appreciation about ethnic home country, and religion.

As the problem of ethnic languages in the light of the survey is particularly important, especially when all investigated ethnic groups indicated language as the highest priority compared to the other aspects of culture, it is necessary to enlarge on this aspect in more detail.

### 11.2.1 Language

The participants of this survey gave higher priority to ethnic language as the most important aspect of culture. Reading and writing in ethnic languages was ranked second by all the participants and obtained the second position (63.7%). However, results obtained in the Croatian group show that reading and writing had the fifth position among the other vitally important aspects of culture but the percentage in the group (70.8) was higher than in the other two groups.

Analysing comments on particular aspects of ethnic languages it is possible to distinguish two views: first, that speaking is the more important aspect of language than the others (reading, writing or literature) and second that all the aspects are equally important.

An example of the first view may be the following comments from the questionnaires: "Reading and writing is important but not vital in Australia, more important to be able to converse in the mother tongue" (questionnaire no 187) and the second: "they (reading, writing, literature) are very important so Croatsians are able to express themselves in their own language" (no 169) or an expression in a simpler way "...all equally important" (no.5) The comments are also a good illustration of the respondents commitment and attitudes towards their ethnic languages, for example: "Without knowledge of language nothing can be accomplished" (70), "It is extremely important to have knowledge of the

language and culture" (118), "Children who are born in Australia with ethnic background should be proud that they can speak another language" (45) or a very short comment on preservation of language "should we? ... as much as possible" (154).

With this view of the participants about the importance of language, especially in spoken form for the survival of ethnic cultures in Australia, we can check whether it is a declaration only or whether the respondents are more or less active in this sphere of the aspect of culture. In order to investigate the problem it is possible to use the form of cross-correlation.

First of all we can investigate whether there exists a relation between the view of respondents that the ethnic language is a vitally important aspect of culture and consideration of the ethnic language as their mother tongue.

Based on the data it is possible to establish that all the respondents who declared ethnic language as a vitally important aspect of culture considered it as their mother tongue:

ethnic language in 80.4 per cent,  
the English language in 19.6 per cent,

For comparison: those who declared the ethnic language as merely an important aspect of culture, considered their mother tongue in the following way: ethnic language (58.8%) and English (41.2) and those who stated that ethnic language is not an important aspect of culture, considered it in an equal percentage (50).

There is then, a certain rule: if the ethnic language is considered as a vitally important or important aspect of culture, then the consideration of the language as mother tongue is more common.

To better illustrate this, we can use the following table:

Table 11.2: Mother Tongue and Ethnic Language

a)(in form: percentages of vertical totals)

Language considered as mother tongue	Ethnic language declared as an aspect of culture		
	vitaly important	important	not important
ethnic	80.4	58.8	50.0
English	19.6	41.2	50.0
total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The problem can be investigated differently. As a starting point we can take into account that all the participants who declared the ethnic language as their mother tongue and those who declared English as the mother tongue and then examine how many of them in the two groups think that the aspect of ethnic language is vitally important, important or not an important aspect of culture.

The data can be illustrated in the form of a table as shown below:

Table 11.3: Mother Tongue and Ethnic Language

b)(in form: horizontal totals)

Language considered as mother tongue	Assessment of ethnic language			
	vitaly important	important	not important	Total
ethnic	85.0	14.3	0.7	100
English	65.9	31.3	2.3	100
All respondents	80.4	18.5	1.1	100

We can say that those who considered the ethnic languages as their mother tongue, have a tendency to give higher priority to the importance of ethnic language as an aspect of culture.

Similarly it is possible to check the relation between the usage of the ethnic language

and its manifestation as a vitally important aspect of culture. For example, among those who think that the ethnic language is a vitally important part of culture 56.8% speak only ethnic language to grandparents and 14.4% speak mainly the language to grandparents whereas none of them speak mainly English and only 0.8% English only.

Among those who considered the ethnic language as important only 46.0% speak ethnic language only, 77.5% mainly ethnic, 3.2% mainly English and the same percentage English only.

Now we should find whether there are certain relationships between the consideration of the ethnic language as the vitally important aspect of culture on one hand and the usage of the ethnic language by the respondents to fathers on the other hand. In order to minimise long descriptions of data it is better to illustrate the question in the form of short tables and to formulate appropriate notions:

Table 11.4: Languages Spoken to Fathers and Assessment of Ethnic Language

a) (in form of horizontal totals)

Assessment of impor- tancy speaking ethnic language	Language spoken to father					Total
	ethnic	mainly ethnic	mainly English	English	not applic.	
vitally important	38.2	40.8	13.2	2.0	5.9	100
important	36.1	33.3	22.2	5.6	2.8	100
not important	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	100
All respondents	37.4	39.5	14.7	2.6	5.8	100

b) (in form of vertical totals)

vitally important	81.7	82.7	71.4	60.0	81.8	80.0
important	18.3	16.0	28.6	40.0	9.1	18.9
not important	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	9.1	1.1
total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Based on the these results it is possible to introduce the following notions:

1. Among those who consider speaking ethnic language as vitally important, a higher percentage of respondents speak to fathers in their ethnic language,
2. The percentage of respondents using mainly English or English only to fathers is higher in the case of those who considered this aspect as important,
3. Among those who speak the ethnic language (only or mainly) to fathers a higher percentage consider speaking ethnic language as vitally important than among those who speak mainly English or only English.

The same notions (even with stronger differentiation) can be found in relation to language spoken to mothers. See the two tables below:

Table 11.5: Language Spoken to Mothers and Assessment of Ethnic Language

a) in form of horizontal totals:

Assessment of speaking ethnic language	Language spoken to mothers					Total
	ethnic	mainly ethnic	mainly English	English	not applic.	
vitally important	32.5	51.7	14.6	0.7	0.7	100
important	33.3	27.8	30.6	8.3	0.0	100
not important	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	100
All respondents	32.3	47.1	18.0	2.1	0.5	100

b) in form of vertical totals:

vitally important	80.3	87.6	64.7	25.0	100.0	79.9
important	19.7	11.2	32.4	75.0	0.0	19.0
not important	0.0	1.1	2.9	0.0	0.0	1.1
total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The rule applies also in the other case of using an ethnic language: to the people in the camp, friends of the same age, friends and relatives older than the participants.

Based on analysis of the data the next rule can be obtained: the consideration of the

ethnic language as vitally important depends on the degree of knowledge of that language. A higher percentage of the participants consider the aspect of culture as vitally important when their level of speaking the language is higher.

The relation between the assessment of speaking the ethnic language as vitally important and the level of ability in speaking the language is clearly indicated from the table below (Table 11.6).

Table 11.6: Level of Ability to Speak Ethnic Language and Assessment of Importance of Ethnic Language

Assessment of importance speaking ethnic language	Level of ability to speak ethnic language					Total
	very well	well	fairly	little	none	
vitally important	85.9	80.0	75.0	60.0	0.0	79.9
important	12.5	20.0	25.0	20.0	0.0	19.0
not important	1.6	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0

As has been mentioned above, reading and writing in ethnic languages was ranked second by the participants (with the exception of the Croatian group).

The third aspect of language — literature, obtained significantly lower consideration and was ranked by the participants as follows:

- in the Croatian group as 11 with 50.8%,
- in the Ukrainian group as 13 with 44.6%,
- in the Polish group as 18 with 25.5%.

It should be remember here that in addition the participants were asked to show in order of importance the six aspects in the main group that they consider to be the most

important for the ethnic group.

The results obtained from the data show also the high preference for the ethnic languages by all the participants as well as in the particular ethnic groups.

Our extensive discussion on the question of language is justified by the fact that language, in the light of the survey, was considered as the most important aspect of culture. The conclusion that language is the most important aspect of culture should not be surprise.

In literature there are views that "language equals culture"<sup>1</sup>.

### 11.2.2 Knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic country

There is an agreement between all the groups, that the second important aspect, after ethnic language is knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic country.

Among this group there were the following aspects: history of ethnic country, geography of home country, love of homeland, contribution of ethnic culture, customs and celebration.

The highest priority (50 per cent or more) in all the groups (taking into account the consideration as vitally important aspect) were given to: history of ethnic group (57.9), love of homeland (57.1), customs and celebrations (50.0%).

Some of the questionnaires included the following comments in relation to those aspects:

- in the Croatian group:

"If you argue your point to an Australian you must have the information". (ques-

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<sup>1</sup>Such a 'label' was introduced by A. Peterson Royce (in *Ethnic Identity Strategies of Diversity*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1982, p.157) where the author describes views of Sapir and Whorf and their followers.



tionnaire no.153),

“This is part of ones ethnic identity ... part of ones ethnic feeling is that as a person of a particular cultural or ethnic group we contribute to the world/other people what is ours” (169).

“An understanding of home country process to be beneficial — to, once again, love a fuller appreciation” (175).

“extremely important in order to be able to understand why Croats ‘fight’ for what they believe in etc.” (176).

“helps others understand our way of life” (180).

“customs and love of the country are almost the same as knowledge of the country’s past” (184)

- in Ukrainian group:

“as long as it isn’t taught dogmatically (as it presently is in Saturday schools ...)” (78),

“customs/tradition are the cornerstone of Ukrainian tradition evident to others” (98),

“the language in which the above is irrelevant. Understanding and learning is more important: if one understand the above only in English so it should be taught” (111),

“traditions and customs are important” (118).

(there were no comments in the Polish group on this aspect).

If we compare this aspect (knowledge and appreciation about the ethnic country) in the above comments in the two groups (Croatian and Ukrainian), we have the impression

that the Croatian group has a stronger feeling towards this aspect. This tendency is also reflected in statistical data (described above) where the Croatian group assessed higher this aspect than the Ukrainian.

### 11.2.3 Religion

Religion in the light of the survey can be assessed as the most controversial element of culture.

In the questionnaires for the respondents religious aspects of culture were divided between three groups: doctrine, liturgy and ceremonies, laws and rules.

If we consider the results obtained based on the order of importance by the participants, the six aspects of culture (in the main groups) that they considered to be the most important for the ethnic groups then we see that religion has obtained (among all the groups) the third place, after language and knowledge with appreciation about the ethnic country, but before social relations. In the particular ethnic groups religion was considered as third by the Croats, fourth by the Poles and fifth by the Ukrainians. it is also necessary to look at the comments on religion made by the participants in the two ethnic groups (in the Polish group there were no comments on the aspect):

- Croatian group:

“(religion) keeps the Croatian community together” (153),

“(religion) should be practiced regularly” (154),

“the Church keeps the Croatian community united” (156),

“if religion depends on the people and religion is what brings people together” (160),

“people, such as Croats, and even Slovaks, Ukrainians, etc. who are at least from

their traditional churches, are quickly absorbed into Australian culture and completely lose their identity" (169),

"(religion) keeps the community together as one" (172),

"important as faith helps one to endure ... beliefs" (176)

"Croatian nationality is not synonymous with one particular religious denomination" (184)

- Ukrainian group:

"Important but ... emphasised so much" (54),

"The Eastern rite is too naturalistic and staid to be of any religious significance" (78 — the author put the tick in the questionnaire when asked about religion as Ukrainian Catholic and added: "nominally only")

"The Catholic Church is far too ritualistic to be of any benefit to me" (79),

"I think a culture can survive without specific religious dedication" (83, it can be mentioned that the father of the respondent is a priest),

"Should be one religion — Orthodox it was the original" (84),

"Aspects of religious practice and tradition I feel from the basis of Ukrainian culture e.g. Easter baskets, etc, religious denomination doesn't play a major role" (98),

"Will Ukrainian churches be able to support themselves by the year 2000 as younger people are not attending". Xmas Easters" (111).

If we compare the comments given by the two groups (where the assessment of the aspect has been the highest and the lowest based on the statistical data) it is easy to observe how the aspect is important for the Croats compared to the Ukrainians. For the Croats, the relation between the church and the community is important, in particular

they have seen the church as an institution with the influence of uniting the Croatian community.

Unlike the Croatians, in the Ukrainian group it is difficult to find a view on the role of religion in the maintenance of the Ukrainian culture.

It should be mentioned here that whereas the Croatian and the Polish cultures are rather strongly concerned with the Roman Catholic Church, the Ukrainians are members of the Orthodox, the Catholic, or any churches. Asked in the survey about their religion the Ukrainians stated that 54 of them are Catholic, 16 Orthodox and 5 were of any religion. The fact partly explains the different attitudes to religion by the ethnic group.

Surprisingly, the low assessment of religion as an aspect of culture in the research was within the Polish group. In contemporary Poland actually 81% of Poles are Catholics<sup>2</sup>.

In literature, the importance of the Catholic religion in Polish culture is often pointed out. Smolicz, for example, that stresses in relation to contemporary Poland:

one of the core values which has been particularly bolstered has been that of the Catholic religion. During the nineteenth century Catholic religion came to be increasingly identify with Polish ethnicity — a process which had began some centuries earlier in the face of mounting political conflict with largely Lutheran Prussia and Orthodox Russia. Now once again, there has been an attempt to underline the influence of the Church. This has resulted in a resurgence of the Catholic faith which now approaches, although it cannot rival, the language as a core value of at least certain section of the Polish ethnic group. Evidence of the vitality of religion can be seen in the steadily increasing number of vocations for the priesthood at a time when seminaries in Western Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon world generally are getting ominously depleted of new recruits<sup>3</sup>.

But the results of this study are very similar to the results of studies by Smolicz and Secombe among Greek, Latvian and Polish groups where in relation to religion the authors stated that:

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<sup>2</sup>Britannica Book of Year, 1987, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. Chicago; Polish sources of the Roman Catholic Church stated higher percentage (about 93%).

<sup>3</sup>J.J. Smolicz, *Culture and Education in a Plural Society*, Curriculum Development Centre, p.60.

with the interesting exception of the comparatively high priority given to liturgy and ceremonies among respondents of Polish background, the rank order given to the various aspects of religion ranked between 16 and 22<sup>4</sup>.

Knowing the attitude of the Poles towards religion from observation both in Poland and in Australia, the author of this thesis does not see any discrepancy between the role of religion in Poland and the obtained results.

Firstly, the results were not obtained in Poland but in multicultural Australia where there is not one dominant religion and the Catholics, however, (after the last census) have the highest position (even before the Anglicans whose church was a leader for a long time). Nevertheless they represent only about one quarter of the Australian population.

Secondly, the research is concerned with religion only in terms of its being a factor for the survival of ethnic cultures. Hence we cannot use the results in order to assess which group is more religious or which less, etc.

Based on the results of the research and my own observation, it is possible to state, that in the case of the Poles, religion plays quite a different role in the circumstances of life in contemporary Poland and in the case of migration in a different milieu.

In the case of the Ukrainians (especially those who are Catholic) the issue has even been more complicated as the Church and all the religious practices were underground.

Further discussion of the issues cannot be a subject for this work. One thing is certain, undoubtedly, in the case of the three ethnic groups and that is that language is a more important aspect of culture for its survival than religion. Simultaneously, it does not mean that religion as a core value is less important than language in contemporary Poland, Croatia or Ukraine but it is a different issue.

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<sup>4</sup>J.J. Smolicz, M.J. Secombe, *Community Languages, Core Values and Cultural Maintenance: The Australian Experience with special reference to Greek, Latvian and Polish Groups* in M.Clyne, ed. *Australia, meeting place of Languages*, Pacific Linguistics, 1985, p.15

## **Part IV**

# **The Institution of Equal Opportunity**

## Introduction

Daniel Jenkins in his "Equality and Excellence" noted that "little enough thinking has been done even about what 'equal opportunity' really means, let alone to think beyond it."<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, he is right. He was right at the time when his book was published, almost thirty years ago. But his comments are still very relevant. In spite of a large number of books and articles concerning equality issues, at both popular and advanced levels, the term 'equal opportunity' has not been as yet defined and the concept made precise at least in its theoretical aspect.

It is also characteristic that many legal acts regulating some aspects of equality of opportunity, do not define the term and are based rather on the concept of discrimination, which is easier to define but not necessarily relevant to the former concept. In other words, lack of discrimination is not yet a guarantee of the existence of equal opportunity.

From a religious perspective the idea of equality can be found very early. We can refer to the Christian tradition of the society of the children of God as described by Saint Paul: "There is no such thing as Jew or Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus."<sup>6</sup>

The idea of equal opportunity appears in both politics and philosophy since the seventeenth century in many countries and different political and philosophical systems. It is also important to mention that the concept of equality before the law on the basis of which legal rules have been established. The concept of equality before the law, fully accepted in

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<sup>5</sup>D. Jenkins *Equality and Excellence* ... p.17

<sup>6</sup>Letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians 3:28, *New English Bible*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1961

the theory of law and legal practice, however does not possess enough influence in social life. Equality before the law does not eliminate social inequalities. Hence in the literature on equal opportunity the distinction between 'formal justice' and 'social (or real) justice' has been made. In spite of the distinction those who advocate social justice or equal outcomes should not reject formal justice, equality before law or 'legal' equal opportunity. Simply speaking, formal justice can be the foundation or the first step to achieving full social justice. The practical application of 'social justice' (equality of output) may cause some negative problems, especially in relation to civil liberties and political rights in democratic societies. When the United Nations' covenants and conventions promoted 'affirmative action' they simultaneously recognised the conflict between promoting the rights of the oppressed groups and the rights of individuals from other groups. But the 'violation' of the rights in relation to particular individuals which may occur, has only a temporary character. More importantly, the measures required by affirmative action programs or legislation increase the scope of human rights and protect the equality of those groups or their large number of representatives, who were previously discriminated against.

The concept of equal opportunity is also important from a sociological point of view.

According to Melvin Tumin:

equality of opportunity refers to what sociologists call life chances, that is the chances of having the relevant talents and powers of an individual discovered, trained, recruited, and employed in the competition for making a living and for securing a place on the ladder of property, prestige, and power that characterise this society. Equality of opportunity does not refer to something that is quite distinct, though closely connected to life chances, namely life styles, or the distinctive ways in individuals spend their lives, including their forms of worshipping, eating, dressing, speaking, associating, thinking about the world,



recreating, educating their children, and working out family problems.<sup>7</sup>

The study of equal opportunity is not limited to one discipline. As is indicated from the above, philosophy, religion, law and sociology are interested in certain aspects of the ideal of equal opportunity. But this list of disciplines is not full because we can add history, economy, industrial relations, education and perhaps even more. Generally speaking, we can treat equal opportunity as an interdisciplinary issue which can be seen from different points of view: philosophical, sociological, industrial, legal, educational, historical etc. For the purpose of this work we will be more interested in the legal aspects of equal opportunity, discussed in chapter 13. The second important aspect of equal opportunity, related to the general topic of this thesis — educational — will be discussed in chapter 14 of this part.

Chapter 15 will deal with the specific problems of people from non-English speaking background which are related to equal opportunity. Although the issue of recognition of overseas qualifications can be classified as one of the main problems for such people, nonetheless because of the importance and complexity of the issue, a separate chapter, 16, will discuss it.

Finally, chapter 17 will analyse some formal policy statements on equal opportunity adopted by post-secondary educational institutions.

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<sup>7</sup>M. Tumin, quoted by B. M. Bullivant *Race, Ethnicity and Curriculum*, The McMillan Company of Australia Pty, Ltd, 1981, p.6

## Chapter 12

# The Principle of Equal Opportunity

In spite of the fact that the term 'equal opportunity' is so popular in the contemporary literature at both popular and scientific levels there are many difficulties in precisely describing the concept and defining the term.

For example, Williams' definition of equal opportunity<sup>1</sup> concentrates on access to certain goods. These goods are divided into particular categories. One of them is goods which not every one can possess, regardless of whether he or she wants them, such as being in a position of authority or being esteemed, which, according to Williams "are by their very nature limited". However, in this case, as Williams argues, there are goods which could be made more widely available if appropriate social reforms are conducted. Consequently, higher education can be regarded as the kind of goods which could be available to all, after social reforms. What is significant in Williams' work is the recognition of the relations between equality and attitudes to human beings. He sees equality as a human ideal, and he puts it:

there is in the complex of ideas that go to make up equality a commitment to respect other human beings irrespective of their abilities and achievements.<sup>2</sup>

What most people mean by the term 'equal opportunity' is the idea that

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<sup>1</sup>J. Rees, *Equality*, Pall-Mall, London, 1971, p.99

<sup>2</sup>J. Rees, *Equality*, Pall-Mall, London, 1971, p.101

people should have broadly similar opportunities to develop and cultivate whatever gifts they have been endowed with, and that these opportunities should not depend as much as they have in the past upon economic and social circumstances of their families.”<sup>3</sup>

Generally, we can accept this broad definition of the term. However it lacks one important element and a part of the description requires further discussion.

The element lacking in this description prior to development and cultivation of gifts is the opportunity to use them. This is most important, and clearly seen as the fundamental achievement of thought based on the concept and ideal of equal opportunity. This approach is also concerned with discrimination.

I refer here to those situations when some individuals, having already developed certain gifts and abilities, are denied the opportunity to use them as a result of certain attitudes, such as racist or sexist. Unfortunately, many examples still persist in spite of the anti-discrimination legislation, when people of different races or ethnic minorities, or women, are unable to use their skills. The degree of discrimination may be different today from that found twenty or fifty years ago, and various in different communities and countries but it does still exist. The goal of the application of the concept is to avoid any kind of discrimination, whatever its form is: direct, indirect or systemic. Hence we should remember that the goal of the concept is to give the fullest possible access to those who are still being discriminated against.

Secondly, whereas the meaning of ‘economic circumstances’ seems to be clear, the social circumstances can create more problems. In practice, very often, both economic and social circumstances are interdependent but not always. For example, a family, living in the country and having income higher than average, can see education as an

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<sup>3</sup>N. E. Bowie (ed), *Equal Opportunity*, Westview Press, Boulder & London, 1988, p.109.

unnecessary aspect of life and want to encourage children to stop their education when the compulsory stage of education is completed. For such a family, children can be a valuable, unpaid work force and any attempt made by children towards further education would be discouraged, by giving the examples of graduates, who after a long time of study are still unemployed.

Children from some migrant families can be encouraged to undertake trade activities, regardless of the children's wishes, and discouraged from further studies by the words: "look, I am not speak English well, I have no education and I have more money than majority of people in this town". Girls, after completion of their secondary education can be discouraged by both family and peer groups from undertaking a certain kind of job as "inappropriate for women" and so on.

Social circumstances thus, are not only the facts related to race, ethnicity or sex exclusively, but represent a complex of social factors, influencing the individual.

For the needs of this thesis the following attempt at description of the term 'equal opportunity' can be made:

Equal opportunity refers to giving the possibility to all individuals of access to and participation in most important aspects of social life.

Obviously, so general a description<sup>4</sup> requires further explanation. In particular, some questions can arise before the acceptance of the above described proposal. "Can all individuals participate in social life even if they have physical disabilities, are migrants without knowledge of the country's official language, have alien political views, possess different, socially unacceptable sexual preferences?", or "why give access to education to those who have spent a long period of their life in a prison?" What are the most important

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<sup>4</sup>The term 'description' is used consciously to avoid the term 'definition'. The author wishes to reserve the term 'definition' to a classical definition, according to the old Latin principle *Definitio fit per genus et differentiam specificam*. Description does not fulfil the rule.

aspects of social life? To what extent can the possibility of access and participation be given?

These or similar kinds of questions need to be borne in mind when we think about the institution of equal opportunity.

Before answers further theoretical points have to be made:

In the literature, equality is divided between **equality of opportunity** and **equality of outcome**. The first kind of equality is often assessed as procedural and formal, the second is substantive.

The radical feminist movement has criticised the concept of equal opportunity as a formal one, where it is enough to have rules which are the same for all who go into competition, regardless of the fact that the situation of those who compete is very different. In contrast to equality of opportunity, equality of outcome as a concept looks mainly into the result of the competition, namely, in terms of numbers, percentages, figures etc., and the rules of the competition are less important if they are considered at all.

In spite of some critics of the concept of equal opportunity, the concept can be defended and the author of the thesis wishes to do so.

A central doctrine of liberalism is promising equal opportunity which in the light of the doctrine is the distribution of goods in society. The goods are distributed according to merit. Therefore each individual has access to the goods and everything depends upon a person's effort. By this the concept of equal opportunity assumes that each individual starts from the same point. Life experience provides, however, evidence that it is not always like that. People with disability need special equipment to be able to perform the same job, or undertake further study. In many cases they are capable of doing a job but the need for special equipment creates a barrier which prevents them from being

offered the job. Another example is to be found in the case of women who after a long term interruption to their professional life because of child bearing need to update their knowledge as a result of the technical or other changes. Similarly, people from a non-English speaking background, who have acquired appropriate knowledge of the English language may need a short training course on interview performance, as many of them are not familiar with the job competition as it exists in the complex of their new society. For the mature age students some bridging courses on study skills can be necessary. To generalise — in the case of these examples help is needed in order to ensure that they start from the same level of competition for the goods distributed based on merit.

On the other hand, there are situations where people believe that it is not necessary to do anything. Some managers still think that some positions are not appropriate for women. In multicultural Australia some people still share the view that people with a different accent ought to be employed only in positions where contact with the public is minimal. There are views that the Aboriginal people should not have access to higher education etc.

We are here in the area of discrimination, tendential discrimination, as a result of certain attitudes. Many women, people of non-English speaking background or of Aboriginal origin are not employed in certain positions, even when they are often better qualified and have more extensive experience and skills — because of the sexism or racism of the person responsible for the decision making process. And in these examples, the application of the principle of equal opportunity can be useful. This can be achieved by the process of education in order to change the socially negative attitudes, or, in more difficult situations by the equal opportunity law, through the process of formal complaints.

The individuals from disadvantaged groups, in many cases, want only fair treatment.

When competition based upon merit is employed, people from the disadvantaged groups are often the winners. For them equal opportunity in a formal sense is an adequate weapon.

Until then, the achievement of the principle of equal opportunity in the formal sense is beneficial for many people, and simultaneously for the whole society's benefit.

It is characteristic that many people from disadvantaged groups would like to be employed not because of the fact that they belong to such a group, but because of merit. However, I would like to argue that positive discrimination, as it is called in the English literature, or reverse discrimination (in the American) is not necessary or useful, and, in many cases, may be harmful.

Furthermore, I do not believe that 'positive discrimination' is moral. A potential danger exists for individuals from other groups when positive discrimination is applied to those from one group alone. My argument is very simple: Justice cannot be achieved through injustice!

We should recognise, however, that for successful and fair competition the desirable status would be such that all competitors had an equal starting point. To try to achieve this in practice is the responsibility of the governments, the whole educational system, both public and private, the role of various social organisations as well. We can also argue (although for some it might seem utopian idea) that all individuals should help those who are "less equal". This is because the humanistic ideal of equal opportunity also includes a moral dimension.

The live experience of almost every human person provides examples of altruistic attitudes of many people trying to help other people or special groups of people. Voluntary organisations helping people with disabilities, the actions of religious groups for the poor,

or voluntary home tutors for recent migrants from non-English speaking countries who cannot attend English classes are only three from many examples.

At this stage in our discussion we can state that equal opportunity is useful institution and an ideal to change inequalities. Education should play an important role and be supported by governmental and educational institutions, social organisations and individuals who have a commitment to equal opportunity.

I would like also to argue that the institution of equal opportunity is useful not only for those people who are considered disadvantaged. The full implementation of the principle of equal opportunity can be beneficial, in many cases for those who cannot be classified in any disadvantaged groups. Throughout the formal, procedural requirements of equal opportunity in the area of staff development or selection process, especially the second, the competition is more 'open', more democratic, more professional and accountable.

We often complain that the process of implementing equal opportunity policies in many organisation is too slow. But in the area of employment, for example, it is very easy to see the differences — it is a quite different situation today than 10 years ago, even in the organisations which are not particularly seriously committed to equal opportunity. For instance, in the majority of cases all new positions are advertised publically (internally, externally or both), the process of selection is based on selection criteria, the selection is conducted by group of people, not an individual, and the interview as well as is conducted by a panel.

From the point of view of a potential applicant for a job the selection process is now better organised and one of its features is credibility. In particular, the applicant can easily obtain information about the vacancy, the requirements of the position, selection criteria and so on. When the applicant is selected for the interview, he or she has the



chance to be interviewed by the panel and ask them questions as well. When the applicant is unsuccessful there is the possibility to ask about post-selection counselling or even, in some organisations, to use an appeal process. The process is related to all applicants, both internal and external.

In this way one of the previously asked questions is answered. Equal opportunity gives a chance and advantages for all individuals.

Secondly, equal opportunity gives a chance to those who belong to disadvantaged groups. In addition to those benefits which are applied to all individuals, as described above, disadvantaged groups have an additional, specific weapon — anti-discrimination legislation. If, for example, a person from a racial minority group unsuccessfully applies for a certain position and believes that the interview was conducted in a discriminatory way and resulted in lack of appointment, the individual has the right to submit a complaint in the way prescribed by the law.

Therefore, once again, we can agree that equal opportunity gives access for all individuals with the assumption that those from disadvantaged groups have obtained specific support, depending upon and as a result of their limitations and/or needs. Nevertheless, these disadvantaged have this support just because of the requirements of equal opportunity. To use an example, not in the abstract but drawn from equal opportunity practice, The National Committee on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation advises:

- Where appropriate, the use of different languages should be introduced, for example in safety signs, or in explaining rights and responsibilities.
- Information should be given at the workplace on special needs, to assist the understanding of co-workers.
- The work environment should be modified to enable disabled people to achieve their potential.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, *Procedural Guidelines for Committees on Dis-*

The same Committee has established some principles that should be considered in the promotion and transfer process, for example:

- People responsible for selecting employees for transfer or promotion to other jobs should be trained to apply selection criteria without discrimination.
- Job vacancies and the application procedure should be made known to all eligible employees in such a way that applicants from any particular group are not excluded.
- Industry or organisation agreements and arrangements of custom and practice on job transfers should be noted and steps taken for their amendment if they contain requirements or conditions which appear to be directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- Transfer or promotion must be based on a fair assessment of an employee's potential, ability and work record. Ideally the work record should reflect an objective assessment of the employee's performance.
- All promotion opportunities should be made known to all employees.<sup>6</sup>

Now, when we have agreed that equal opportunity is beneficial for all individuals we should come back to our description of the term "equal opportunity" and try to assess its last element "the important aspects of social life."

Instead of a long discussion on all aspects of human life we can concentrate on the equal opportunity legislation, which makes discrimination in certain areas unlawful. There are small differences between state and federal legislation on equal opportunity in Australia but both state and federal acts make discrimination unlawful in very similar areas. For example the Equal Opportunity Act (Vic.) 1984 makes it unlawful to discriminate in the areas of employment, education, provision of goods and services, accommodation, clubs or community service organisations, members of municipal or shire councils and sexual harassment. One of the objectives of the Equal Opportunity Act (Western Australia) 1984 is to eliminate, as far as possible discrimination in the area of work, accommodation,

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*crimination in Employment and Occupation*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1983, p.31.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p.29

education, the provision of goods, facilities and services and the activities of clubs (section 3(a) of the Act).

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth) makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment, education, goods, services and facilities, accommodation, land, the administration of laws and programs, application forms.

As the above examples illustrate, the areas of unlawful discrimination are very similar. Not all areas of discrimination are included and therefore not unlawful. For example, discrimination in insurance or sport or in family is not unlawful. There are reasons for this, such as the goals of the acts and difficulties associated with legal technicalities. The last aspect will be discussed in the next chapter.

For the purpose of this work we can concentrate on two very 'important aspects of social life' — employment and education. Education will be discussed in chapter 14, hence the focus here will be on employment.

As we have just noticed, all the above-mentioned Acts make discrimination unlawful in the area of employment. In addition to the specific areas, discrimination, to be considered as unlawful, must be made on one of the grounds listed in the legislation. Among the grounds there is race and ethnic origin. So discrimination in employment is unlawful if, for example, someone of different ethnic origin than the majority of Anglo-Australians applies for a job and does not get the job because the interview panel thinks that people of that origin are 'lazy and rude'.

We can look at educational institutions as the employers and omit for a while their educational programs for students. It is because the institutions through special policies in employment of staff can also influence the culture of the minority ethnic groups. In particular, some educational institutions, following their policies on equal employment

opportunity (or spontaneously, without such a policy) employ a certain number of people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Some of them occupy administrative or technical positions, others are teachers or lecturers. A significant number of teachers from non-English speaking background teach languages. It is very appropriate and the best possible option if a teacher of language is a native speaker of the language. In many countries it is not always possible to find teachers of foreign languages who are simultaneously native speakers of the languages. Australia is in the fortunate position that the students of languages can be taught by teachers who are native speakers of the languages. In this way students are made familiar with the accent and the most idiomatic expressions of the language.

It is also beneficial for the students to be taught by teachers who are native speakers of the languages, as they are more familiar with the problems associated with acquisition of second language as they themselves in the majority of the cases have experienced the difficulties with the acquisition of the English language in Australia. Because of their experience they would, more likely, apply the communication approach rather than grammar translation methods. They are more practical, their expectations are more realistic and the needs of the students better assessed.

When teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds teach subjects other than languages, it can also be very positive. Firstly they can significantly contribute to academic achievement through their specific experience, knowledge of different teaching methods, educational systems etc, and, more importantly for our topic, they are able to understand better those students who are from different cultures. Students from different cultures are often proud of their teachers from the same or similar backgrounds and, at least they can feel less isolated in their school environment because of cultural differences.

The application of the equal opportunity principle in employment based on merit is beneficial for both employers and employees. In addition to achieving social justice goals it is evidence of good managerial practices. Employment of staff from a non-English speaking background who fulfil the selection criteria in the specific context of a tertiary educational institution gives an advantage of intercultural contacts, better understanding of different views from other cultural perspectives brought by the NESB staff and, by this, the overall development of science. Simultaneously, which is important for our general topic, the staff of non-English speaking backgrounds can contribute to the maintenance and development of ethnic cultures in Australia.

In order to understand fully the importance and implications of the principle of equal opportunity we need to look at its legal and educational aspects, which will be discussed in chapters 13 and 14.

## Chapter 13

# The Role of Legislation in the Development of Equal Opportunity Practice

What are the functions of law?

Can law be a useful instrument in an area which requires change of attitudes? Is it possible to eliminate discrimination by legislation? Can law reinforce equal opportunity? To what extent can the law, established by those who have power, defend those who are weaker?

These and more questions can be asked about the law and its relation to equal opportunity. For the author of this thesis the associated legal problems are very interesting but, unfortunately, this thesis cannot be devoted to theory of law, philosophy of law or sociology of law. However, we can start from the most specific question of our current interest: Can law control the internal or external actions of an individual or both?

Many writers argue that the law can only control the external actions of individuals. Perhaps law is not a very adequate tool for such deep control. In my view, even if we assume that the law is unable to control the individual action or attitudes of an individual, it can seriously influence the individual's internal actions and attitudes, especially when

combined with educational activities. The last aspect is particularly important for the purpose of achieving equal opportunity, as change of attitudes is the significant condition to avoid discrimination.

For further discussion it is necessary to emphasize here that the word "action" in law has a specific meaning. 'Action' is not only that which can be described under the traditional term *dare* (to do) but also *non-dare* (not to do). To use an illustration: a crime can be made not only when an individual takes an unlawful action, for example, a mother kills her child, but also, when an action required by law is not undertaken — when a mother does not feed an infant for a long time, and as a result of the lack of feeding, the child dies, even though there is food at home. The law is able to obligate a mother not to kill her child and to feed it.

But both the above described actions are external ones. The internal action, to continue our example with the mother, can be expressed by a question "can the law require that a mother love her child?" Yes, it is possible and an appropriate legal norm of family law to include such an obligation. This is however more difficult to control. Nevertheless, based on the every day activity of the mother, it is possible to establish whether she really loves the child. But it would be extremely difficult to force the mother, through the law, to really love the child. Such a legal norm however, reinforced by, or based upon, a moral norm can influence the mother's attitudes towards her children.

Looking at other examples: the law can state that any discrimination in employment of a person of ethnic origin or the refusal to admit such a person to an educational institution is unlawful. But the law cannot enforce that a person from the above described group is regarded as equal to others in the minds of all employers and educators. However, through such regulation the law may have an influence on the attitudes of the employers

or educationists. If some people have strong racial prejudices, the law cannot force them to love those who represent a different race. As is often pointed out by the practitioners of legislation — ‘you cannot legislate for goodness’. Now we are very close to moral issues here, but as we have just seen, law is strongly related to morality. The most desirable situation occurs when the legal norms are in accordance with existing moral norms. Hence, it is important to note (to continue the example with racism) that racism should be firstly seen as immoral. And racism is considered this way by the majority of contemporary societies. In this regard the American Catholic Bishops wrote the pastoral letter on racism in 1979 where they stated:

Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father. Racism is the sin that says some human beings are inherently superior and others essentially inferior because of race. It is the sin that makes racial characteristics the determining factor for the exercise of human rights.”<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly, the bishops, for whom the issue is mainly moral and who explain that their stand is based on religious doctrine, also appreciate the importance of law in this area (however they see certain limitations):

The bishops point out that through good laws, strictly enforced, our society has made some progress in racial justice. While it is true that laws may not be able to change attitudes, they can at least deter those who might otherwise seek to violate the rights of others. However, we are far from final success. ‘For example, the principles of ... proportionality and restraint have sometimes been violated in law enforcement within our nation. Racial justice in such areas as housing, education, health care, employment, and the administration of justice must be given high priority. The Church, too, must continue efforts to make its institutional structures models of racial justice while striving to eliminate racism from the hearts of believers ...’<sup>2</sup>

Obviously, the recognition of the problem has a deep, religious background. But

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by D. L. Lowery, *Following Christ*. A Handbook of Catholic Moral Teaching, Liguori Publications, 1982, p.148

<sup>2</sup>Daniel L. Lowery, *Following Christ*. Liguori Publications, 1982, p.148 and quoted by him *To believe in Christ Jesus*, 1976, by the Publications Office, United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C.



the support of the bishops of anti-racial attitudes and their appreciation of the law is important.

We have seen that law can be enforced by moral principles. For many people, however, the law is a result and consequence of moral principles.

As we will see later, law can also create moral principles, accepted by the majority of society.

When we want to use the legal approach to regulate equality, two ways are possible:

1. descriptive, by a simple statement that people are equal,
2. prescriptive, by a statement as a goal of the legal norm, that people should be equal.

The majority of people tend to agree with the very humanistic ideal, that people are equal. As far as equality is seen from the philosophical or romantic point of view, it is considered as something positive, especially in the sphere of general discussion without any obligations. But if the ideal is introduced at the more practical level, for example that salaries of employees, doing similar kinds of job, should be equal, or that people should live in similar standard houses (especially not too luxurious or too primitive), disagreement would be almost certain.

A legal statement that people are equal would be false as every day experience shows that this is not true and that this wonderful idea is impossible to apply fully in practical life. On the other hand, the statement can be true within the whole legal framework, as the law treats all individuals equally (the old concept of equality before the law).

But the concept for many individuals, especially those who are disadvantaged by economic or social circumstances, is meaningless. To use an example: even if a very similar case of discrimination took place and the victims of discrimination are in one case a

large prosperous company owner, and, in the other a young unemployed and uneducated woman, their chances are not equal. The first victim of discrimination probably will use the power of the law fully in order to achieve appropriate satisfaction and/or compensation, following all possible legal instances, hiring the best solicitors, advisers etc, regardless of the high cost. The second victim of the discrimination will be practically unable to use fully the whole legal process, especially when she complains against, let us say, a director of a large company. Even if her case is won in the first instance, she would probably experience difficulties in affording the cost of legal advice when the appeal is made by the second party. The whole legal process will be more stressful for her, whereas for her counterpart, the same action would be regarded as kind of play or game.

These examples illustrate that the legal concept of equality is not enough to implement fully the ideal of equality of opportunity in practice.

The legal aspect of equality and the legislation concerned cannot be seen in isolation from the whole political and philosophical context. Law, in general, takes its inspiration from many sources, and this is true of legal attempts to regulate equality in particular.

As an example, it is worth quoting the former President of USA, Truman who said:

We believe that all men are created equal and that they have the right to freedom of expression and the right to worship as they please. We believe that all men are entitled to equal opportunity for job, for homes, for good health and for education. We believe that all men should have a voice in their government and that government should protect, not usurp, the rights of the people. These are the basic civil rights which are the source and the support of our democracy.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly in Australia, equal opportunity legislation, especially at federal level, is based upon the human rights concept, which has some political elements. The Human Rights

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<sup>3</sup>Quoted in G.C. Abemethy ed. *The Idea of Equality* John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, 1959 pp. 302-10

Commission Act 1981 (Commonwealth) for example, states that the Commission shall not

regard an enactment or proposed enactment as being inconsistent with or contrary to any right ... by reason of provision of the enactment or proposed enactment that is included solely for the purpose of securing adequate advancement of particular persons or groups of person in order to enable them to enjoy or exercise **human rights equally** with other persons (my emphasis).

The major political parties of democratic societies and social scientists agree with the concept of human rights, but there is disagreement about how law should regulate the problem of discrimination, fundamental for the institution of equal opportunity.

Discussing the influence of law on discrimination we can state our problem in a form of a question. Is law an appropriate instrument to be used in order, at least, to reduce discrimination, if not abolish it?

On the one hand, law is a powerful tool, especially because of its sanctions. When people are asked why they do not disobey criminal law, their answer is very often that they are afraid of the penalty. The element of power in law is very characteristic and stressed by many writers. According to Robert M. Mac Iver, for example: "law is meaningless, or rather it is not law, unless it has the power, and makes some kind of use of the power, to punish the violator of the rule it enacts."<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the history of criminal law gives many examples showing that a very heavy penalty, including capital punishment, does not always prevent a particular kind of crime.

Also, the most 'powerful' criminal law is not a universal 'panaceum' for the elimination of all unwanted and anti-social forms of behaviour. An example in the area of interest to

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<sup>4</sup>R. M. Mac Iver, Foreword to: Morroe Berger *Equality by Statute*, New York, Columbia, University Press, p.VII.

us was the South Australian Prohibition of Discrimination Act 1966 (later amended in 1970 and 1975, and finally replaced by the Racial Discrimination Act 1984). The original Act prohibited discrimination on the ground of race in the provision of services in hotels, accommodation, employment etc. by making it a criminal offence, punishable by a fine.

The Act was not successful in practice:

during its operation from December 1966 to 1976, only four cases were brought under the Act, all of them involving the refusal of hotel service to Aborigines. Only one was successful. Critics of the Act, or rather of this way of approaching the problem of discrimination, see its failure to have real impact on the life of Aborigines as a result of its being addressed to individual (and overt) acts of racism, which it renders criminal, and not to the problem of surreptitious, institutionalised discrimination and the socially inferior position of Aborigines.<sup>5</sup>

But the lack of success of this Act does not mean that law is always an unsuccessful instrument against discrimination — later South Australian or Victorian laws are quite effective. It is rather evidence that criminal law is not an appropriate instrument to regulate the area of protection against discrimination. If then it is not appropriate to use criminal law in the area of discrimination we can go further and ask whether any kind of law is appropriate to regulate discrimination. Discrimination is based upon personal attitude. Can law change attitudes?

Robert Mc Iver points out that:

No law should require men to change their attitudes, but most laws require something that is contrary to the attitudes of some groups of men, whether large or small. No law should punish men for beliefs or attempt to suppress these beliefs, but many laws are necessary or desirable that require behaviour contrary to what some men approve of believe to be the right course. The whole sphere of opinion must be held inviolate by law, if the primary condition of democracy is to be fulfilled. But it does not follow that the behaviour prompted by opinion of belief should not be regulated for the public good ...<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Human Rights Commission, *Human Rights for Australia*, Human Rights Commission, Monograph Series No. 1, p.34.

<sup>6</sup>R. M. Mac Iver, Foreword to: Morroe Berger *Equality by Statute*, New York, Columbia, University Press, p.VII.

In Mc Iver's view, the distinction is elementary. We should agree with the view. Indeed, if some individuals have racial or sexist prejudices as a matter of conscience then this is their 'private' matter. Furthermore, in their private life they can decide whether to invite for their party people of one race only and discuss what is an 'appropriate' job for women. But when the individual is the owner of a factory or hotel, the public interest is more important than the individual's views. Then individuals cannot freely decide, according to their prejudice that accommodation will be provided for one race or one sex only or that, in the case of the factory, the wages of one racial group will be higher than other.

If a country possesses anti-discrimination legislation it is clear for the society what the position of the law is and puts those who are pro and contra discrimination in a particular position in relation to law. As it Berger points out:

This makes the opponents of equal opportunity rebels against the law, and impels them to devise schemes to circumvent its clear intent. The defenders of equality are the defenders of law, and this is usually a source of genuine superiority in moral position; it is increasingly becoming a source of superiority in political and legal position as well.<sup>7</sup>

Or from a different point of view, as described by the United Kingdom Race Relations Board, anti-discrimination legislation "gives support to those who do not wish to discriminate but who feel compelled to do so by social pressure" and "reduces prejudice by discouraging the behaviour in which prejudice finds expression."<sup>8</sup>

The legal system and the moral system are very close together. In the case of discrimination, as it has been pointed out above (p.171) some kinds of discrimination are considered a sin. If the ties between the legal and moral system are too strong, the

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<sup>7</sup>M. Berger *Equality by Statute: Legal Controls Over Group Discrimination*, p.5

<sup>8</sup>Human Rights Commission, *The Teaching of Human Rights*, Occasional Paper No.6, Australian Publishing Service, Canberra 1984, p.16

law “closes the gap between ‘private attitudes’ and ‘public morality’”<sup>9</sup> and achieves the required status quo. Therefore law can be seen as an appropriate means against the phenomenon discrimination which is socially harmful.

Even if we assume that the law can only reduce discrimination, it is still useful. According to Berger: “there is evidence that antibias laws can also influence the conditions under which our attitudes are developed and maintained . . . law is a particularly appropriate means by which to increase intergroup contact on an equal level.”<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, the increase in intergroup contacts on an equal level is extremely relevant and important for our topic. If the law is able to help establish such contacts between majority and minority ethnic groups can be considered as a very useful means, and, if the contact can be achieved on equal level, the law would be particularly valuable.

Furthermore, the law can significantly change social attitudes, and through the appropriate practice of the institutions applying the law, it can even create new values in society. Marantelli and Hawthorn stated that:

since the Equal Opportunity Board has been in operation, it is interesting to note that its landmark decisions in cases involving sexual discrimination have contributed significantly towards making the ideal of equality a principal value in our society.<sup>11</sup>

Berger gives evidence of the efficacy of law, especially

in controlling the behaviour of persons who acquire prejudice as they acquire other social values from the group to which belong, and the behaviour of those whose prejudice is more deeply rooted in personality disorders.<sup>12</sup>

Based on these notions, the impact of the law on minority groups would be very significant. The significance and importance of law in the area, M. Berger describes in

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<sup>9</sup>M. Berger *Equality by Statute: Legal Controls Over Group Discrimination*, p.173

<sup>10</sup>M. Berger, *Ibid*, pp.185–186

<sup>11</sup>S. Marantelli, R. Hawthorn *Legal studies for year 12*, seventh edition, Edward Arnold, Australia, 1988.

<sup>12</sup>M. Berger *Equality by Statute: Legal Control Over Group Discrimination*, p.186

the following way:

If law could do no more than this, it would be improving the welfare and status of minorities, giving them a feeling of genuine participation in the life of community, and fulfilling the obligation and the promise of democracy. But, as we have seen, law can do even more. It is one of the great movers and changers of basic institutions of all kinds and can help in establishing the conditions which favor group equality in a free society.<sup>13</sup>

Later, we will read that such legislation is planned in Australia, and the possibility of its introduction and eventual impact of the legislation on minority ethnic groups will be analysed.

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<sup>13</sup>M. Berger *Equality by Statute: Legal Control Over Group Discrimination*, p.186

# Chapter 14

## Equal Opportunity in Relation to Education

### 14.1 Introduction

This chapter, in addition to some historical aspects, intends to show the challenging character of the concept of equal opportunity in education. A specific interest of the chapter is an analysis of the relevance of the concept for non-English speaking background people. In addition, different versions of equal educational opportunity in the contemporary literature will be shown. Finally, an attempt will be made to make some distinction between equity and equality, not in general terms, but in the specific area of education of non-English speaking background students.

### 14.2 English Origins of Equal Opportunity in Education

The concept of equal opportunity in education has a long tradition. In the literature the term 'equal educational opportunity' has often been used in order to distinguish general equal opportunity issues from those specific to education. Historically, the first reference to equal opportunity in education was made by the labour movement in England in the 1830s. The movement requested the adoption of the principle of equal opportunity



in order to change the division divergent outcome of the educational system for working class and middle class children. For the working class only elementary schooling was considered as appropriate, whereas the middle class children enjoyed access to secondary schooling. Reference to equal opportunity was useful for the the labour movement in order to exert pressure for more education.

After the First World War, a request was made for more educational progress and structural reforms leading to secondary education for all. As Silver pointed out:

the discussion of equal opportunity in education began not in research but in socialist politics, in demand for an end to nineteenth-century class assumptions.<sup>1</sup>

The leading figure who advocated for appropriate relationships between social justice and the existing educational system was R. H. Tawney. Associated with the Labour Party, Tawney wrote for the party *Secondary Education for All* (1922) and latter published his well known work *Equality* (1931). What Tawney and the Labour Party wanted to achieve was:

the improvement of primary education and development of public secondary education to such a point that all normal children, irrespective of the income, class, or occupation of their parents, may be transferred at the age of eleven + from the primary or preparatory school to one type or another of secondary school, and remain in the latter till sixteen.<sup>2</sup>

Thirty and forty years later the problem of dealing with inequality was still being noted and assessed as a failure of British society in the area of schooling in spite of the 1944 Education Act.

The issue of equal opportunity became more associated with the social class analysis and the lack of equal opportunity explained in term of class differences. For example,

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<sup>1</sup>H. Silver (ed.) *Equal Opportunity in Education, A Reader in Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1973, p.xii

<sup>2</sup>H. Silver (ed.) *Equal Opportunity in Education, A Reader in Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1973, p.xii-xiii

Floud, Halsey and Martin published in 1956 their analysis of the social class differential in access to grammar school. Also Basil Bernstein explained the poor performance of working class children within his theory of working-class and middle class language codes.<sup>3</sup> During the 1960s and 70s failure of equal opportunity as the basis of educational reform was declared by Halsey:

In 1972 he wrote in *Educational Priority* that “the essential fact of twentieth century educational history is that egalitarian policies have failed.” A more radical interpretation of equal opportunity was being sought. In an unequal society, it was agreed, equality of opportunity could only have meaning if those who began with unequal chances had unequal support from educational system.<sup>4</sup>

Later, the Plowden Report requested more funds for the education of disadvantaged children to develop better primary schools and increase the number of teachers. Plowden used the term ‘positive discrimination’ in relation to such educational provision. The term, although very controversial both in theory and practice, had an influence on the concept of equal opportunity in education. As Silver noted:

The paradox within the concept of equality of opportunity was demonstrated — it was shown that opportunity meant no more than access, and that equal access was not as egalitarian a principle as its proponents had intended. Equality of opportunity, it was explained, meant equality of access plus positive discrimination.<sup>5</sup>

The important point made here, without a full assessment of the statement, is that equal access to education is not enough in many cases for full realisation of equal opportunity in education. The idea of positive discrimination will be discussed below after introducing the American perspective of equal educational opportunity.

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<sup>3</sup>see: H. Silver (ed.) ... (as above) ... p.xii

<sup>4</sup>H. Silver (ed.) *Equal Opportunity in Education, A Reader in Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1973, p.xxiii and quoted by him: Halsey, *Educational Priority*, 1972

<sup>5</sup>H. Silver (ed.) *Equal Opportunity in Education, A Reader in Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1973, p.xxiii

## 14.3 An American Version of Equal Educational Opportunity

Coleman was aware of the differences between the United Kingdom and the United States which he saw as mainly of class character.<sup>6</sup> Unlike England, the United States was without a strong traditional class structure. Coleman argued that the comparison between the two countries showed clearly the impact of the class structure in society on the concept of equal educational opportunity. The traditional English class structure resulted in the response of the educational system in the form of differentiated, not equal, educational opportunity in the nineteenth century. The English differentiated system of education fulfilled dual needs: those arising from industrialisation and the request for basic education of the labour force, as well as the interest of parents that their children receive a good education. More importantly, in Coleman's view, it served to maintain the existing social order with appropriate (and by this different) status position for middle and working class people.

In the United States the concept of educational opportunity had 'special focus on equality'. According to Coleman, the meaning included the following elements:

1. Providing a **free** education up to a given level which constituted the principal entry point to the labour force.
2. Providing a **common curriculum** for all children, regardless of background.
3. Partly by design and partly because of low population density, providing that children from diverse backgrounds attend the **same school**.
4. Providing equality within a given **locality**, since local taxes provided the source of support for schools.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>J. A. Coleman "The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity" in: D. M. Levine & M. Jo Bane, *The 'Inequality' Controversy: Schooling and Distributive Justice*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1975.

<sup>7</sup>J. A. Coleman "The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity" in: D. M. Levine & M. Jo Bane, *The 'Inequality' Controversy: Schooling and Distributive Justice*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1975, p.202.

Coleman described the evolution of the concept in the United States.

The first stage was that all children in the same school must be exposed to the same curriculum. During the second stage, different curricula were accepted on the basis that different children would have a different occupational future and, consequently, equal opportunity required differentiation of curricula for different types of students. The third stage was associated with the rules of the Supreme Court of United States, firstly the notion of 'separate but equal' schools (1896) and the final rule that legal separation of schools by race inherently constituted inequality of opportunity. The next stage of the evolution of the concept, as Coleman argued it was a survey of equality of educational opportunity conducted by the USA Office of Education under a mandate of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The purpose of the survey was to assess *a priori* made assumption of the 'lack of equality of educational opportunity' among racial and other groups. The final report published after the analysis of the survey stated, inter alia, that the concept of equal educational opportunity

implied effective equality of opportunity, that is equality in those elements that are effective for learning.<sup>8</sup>

## 14.4 Equal Educational Opportunity in Australia

In Australia of equal opportunity quickly became a goal in education. In early years of schooling equal opportunity meant that every child should have access to school. In the specific Australian demographic situation, characterised by a relatively small population, located mainly in a few metropolitan areas with small numbers of people scattered over the country there have been (and even today still are) problems for remote rural areas.

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<sup>8</sup>J. A. Coleman "The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity" in: D. M. Levine & M. Jo Bane, *The 'Inequality' Controversy: Schooling and Distributive Justice*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1975, p.210.

Hence to give access to schooling for all children from many remote areas has been a difficult task. In addition to this task there was the assumption that every child should receive (possibly) identical education at primary level. In particular, it was believed that school inspections and centrally devised curricula contributed towards the idea.

Later, when the state secondary schools were established, inclusion of equal opportunity consideration by the system could be seen in establishing scholarships for needy students in order to give them similar opportunity to those from wealthier families.

After the Second World War the ideal of equal opportunity in education was extended to the point that every child should have access to secondary schooling. This did not yet mean a completion of secondary schooling but, at least, attendance for a few years of secondary education. As in the United States, where the concept of equal opportunity was modified so that children did not have to have the same curriculum, the provision of different curricula became accepted in Australia. The justification of different curricula in the Australian school system was to take into account the ideal of equal educational opportunity as well as the emphasis

on making differential provision for different groups so that every child will enjoy, not a common kind of education, but an education which will suit his particular needs and develop his particular potential.

It is being recognised that people from different groups within the community have different attributes to contribute to the whole, and so the principle of equality has to be redefined to include quite different outcomes from the educational process.<sup>9</sup>

Does this mean that in Australia equality of educational opportunity on primary and secondary level has been achieved? Unfortunately, not. The influential Karmel Report 2 (being the Interim Report of the Committee of the Australian School Commission) noted some significant problems in the education system, including educational equality:

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<sup>9</sup>J. McLaren *A Dictionary of Australian Education*, Penguin Books, 1974, p.86

The Committee found three major deficiencies in Australian education — lack of human and material resources, gross inequalities in the provision of resources and educational opportunities, and lack of quality in teaching, curriculum and school organisation. The Committee expressed the belief that schooling should provide as nearly equal education for all children as was possible, enabling all to attain the minimum standards of competence necessary for life in modern, democratic industrial society.<sup>10</sup>

Consequently the Committee made some recommendations regarding the establishment of seven programs for Commonwealth Government expenditure, in particular:

general recurrent resources, general buildings, primary and secondary libraries, disadvantaged schools, special education and teacher development. The first three of these are designated to equalise resources available to all students, the second two to meet the needs of particular disadvantaged groups, and the others to improve the overall quality of education.<sup>11</sup>

A few years later, the Federal Government began to improve equal opportunity in higher education in a more planned way. A discussion paper *A Fair Chance for All* was published. The Government declared its commitments towards improving equal opportunity through its social justice strategy and social justice was described as a 'fundamental goal' of the Government.

Emphasis was placed on disadvantaged groups rather than individuals and related to education and training within the context of a social justice statement,<sup>12</sup> where the term was described as comprising: equity, access, equality and participation. Hence, referring to overcoming the difficulties of disadvantaged group in life, the *Fair Chance for All* paper stated:

Education and training are key elements in gaining that access. Equal opportunities for all people to maximise their level of education and training and ensuring more equal education outcomes across the group in Australian society is a fundamental principle of social justice. Since 1983 the Government has

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p.114

<sup>11</sup>J. McLaren *A Dictionary of Australian Education*, Penguin Books, 1974, p.114

<sup>12</sup>Australian Government *Towards a Fairer Australia: Social Justice under Labour*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1988

allocated considerable resources to achieving equity and access, participation and success in education and training for all Australians.<sup>13</sup>

The following groups were considered by the document *Fair Chance for All* as disadvantaged: people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, people from low-income families and people from rural and isolated areas, plus young people in all these categories.<sup>14</sup> Some prospective students or students can be considered as having multiple disadvantages, for example, a disabled woman from rural isolated area, or a non-English speaking background student from a low income family, etc. This what has been a certain *novum* in the strategy is the call that disadvantaged groups should be encouraged into higher education and that all institutions should be made responsible for the implementation of the program. The Government when allocating funds for equity programs would consider equity commitment and achievements in particular institutions. In practice institutions were requested to develop educational profiles as the basis for planning and funding arrangements between the DEET and particular institutions. It should be noted that *A Fair Chance for All* is not only a strategy based on the ideal of social justice per se. It also considers the economic climate and to a certain extent can be seen as the response, although unspoken, to the unemployment situation, and in particular to the fact that the percentage of unemployed was higher among disadvantaged groups. However, reference to the principle of 'economic efficiency' mentioned in relation to the White Paper (i.e. *Higher Education: a Policy Statement*, 1988) is also clear:

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<sup>13</sup>Australian Government *Fair Chance for All*, published by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (with foreword by the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training), February, 1990, p.6

<sup>14</sup>Ibid (Australian Government, *A Fair Chance for All*) p.6

Australia is moving to strengthen its economic base, with a consequent shift in the traditional profile of our economic activity, so the nation needs a well educated, skilled and flexible work force to adjust to these changes. People from disadvantaged groups form a large and diverse pool of under-used resources. They should be encouraged into higher education and contribute their skills to developing a more highly skilled and efficient work force.<sup>15</sup>

The main responsibility for implementing the strategy was given to the institutions. Although they were expected to give attention to the groups which were under the national priority, the institutions were also required to take into account, on one hand, their student population and on the other hand the general population of disadvantaged groups in the area of their catchment.

Furthermore, higher education institutions had to develop statements of intents, as well as specific plans on equity. The plans had to be signed by the chief executive officer of the institutions.

It would be difficult to discuss all the problems associated with implementation of the equity programs in relation to all disadvantaged groups within the framework of the work. However, we can show, in brief, how some programs are affecting the group of non-English speaking background people.

## **14.5 *A Fair Chance for All*, and non-English speaking background students**

According to *A Fair Chance for All*, there are two objectives within the program in relation to people of non-English speaking backgrounds:

1. to increase the participation of people from non-English speaking background groups

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<sup>15</sup>Australian Government *A Fair Chance for All*, published by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, February, 1990, p.7



that are under-represented in higher education;

2. to improve the balance of participation of non-English speaking background students by sex and discipline.<sup>16</sup>

To meet these objectives, all institutions with significant proportion of non-English speaking backgrounds groups in their catchment area were expected to provide higher education awareness programs and adequate support programs by 1992.<sup>17</sup>

The following three strategies were suggested in order to achieve the objectives and the target: adequate support programs, awareness programs and curriculum review.

Generally speaking, the program could have been expected to provide significant benefit for the people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Unfortunately, in practice the program shows many weaknesses which, in consequence make the program, at least in relation to non-English speaking background people, of little benefit. The first problem, partly acknowledged by the document, is a lack of sufficient data on the number of NESB students in higher education. Although the data have been available since 1989, the collection is considered by many institutions as relevant for the DEET only. On the lower level of institutional administration the figures are not utilised or even analysed. For example, I have never seen published statistics regarding NESB by faculty or discipline or level of qualifications, based on the DEET figures which are available and often published by many institutions, as well as centrally, in relation to women. Similar criticism can be made in relation to the disabled and other disadvantaged groups. In addition, the institutions tend to guess rather than analyse actual data on the real picture of popula-

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<sup>16</sup>Australian Government *A Fair Chance for All*, published by the Department of Employment, Education and Training), February, 1990, p.35

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, p.35

tion and representation of people of non-English speaking background in the area of their 'catchment' which is also an ambiguous term.

Secondly, people of non-English speaking background cannot be treated as one homogenous group and, consequently, a flexible approach involving different strategies is necessary. (The issue of differences between particular NESB groups will be discussed in the next part.)

Thirdly, it has proved very difficult to encourage individuals from certain ethnic groups without the appropriate encouragement of their wider ethnic communities concerned. This is a weakness of the program. The successful implementation of the program in relation to NESB must seek a close co-operation with ethnic communities and be published in languages other than English.

The suggestion would be of particular relevance in the case of new arrivals from countries without a strong, continuous tradition in schooling especially at post-secondary level. The Cambodian community, in which the majority of new settlers in Australia have only a little or greatly interrupted formal education, as a result of the past dramatic, political situation in Cambodia, can be a good illustration. To deal successfully with the situation, additional means would be necessary to recruit prospective students from the community into post-secondary courses.

In order to achieve a representation of the group in post-secondary education some work has to be done with the Cambodian ethnic communities in Australia to show the values and benefits of education for both Australia and the new community in general, if the numbers of the Cambodian community are to be active participants in the process at all levels in particular. One of the specific strategies would be the task of building awareness of education in the local Cambodian communities. This means in practice a

long term informative and educational work with the community to prepare the numbers for their role in the process of education and to raise their aspiration in the area. However, it ought to be borne in mind that such a process is a long-term one and requires a strong commitment of the educational authorities and institutions concerned in undertaking the task of close co-operation with the local ethnic communities. To begin with the activities it would be necessary to utilise people bilingual in Khmer and English and to prepare relevant materials in the Khmer language. This is because even if the publicity materials in English could be understood literally by some members, the whole context of the Australian education system and tradition, would not be clear for the majority and of little relevance, if any for them.

Fourthly, there is a false assumption in the document that “students from families where English is not the major language are more likely to fail because of lower level of competence in English”.<sup>18</sup> The fact that English is rarely or never spoken at home, does not imply a low level of English competence per se. There is no evidence for such an assumption at all. Vice versa, there is evidence (discussed previously) that bilinguals have better academic performance than monolinguals.

Finally, what can be considered as another lack in the suggested strategies is the lack of development programs for tertiary institutions, staff dealing with non-English speaking background people. Such staff development programs, in addition to encouraging curriculum review, are essential for the successful implementation of equity programs. Staff of tertiary institutions must be professionally prepared for dealing with the students by gaining a better knowledge of the problems and needs of such students, and undertaking

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<sup>18</sup>The Australian Government *A Fair Chance for All*, published by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, February, 1990, p.31

the approaches necessary to develop their full academic potential.

## 14.6 Different Versions of Equal Opportunity in Education

As with the general concept of equal opportunity, a distinction between the 'soft' and 'hard' version of equal educational opportunity needs to be made.

The soft version of equal opportunity refers to the principle of merit. In the educational context it means in practice the selection of students who meet better the criteria for enrolment in tertiary institutions, especially when the number of available places is lower than the applicants.

As is very easy to anticipate, the version does not go very far towards the formation of a more 'equal' or egalitarian society. Such factors as wealth, power or prestige are not taken into account within this version. Some writers argue that such principle does not change or prevent social inequalities. Anderson and Vervoorn, for example, noted that fewer children from lower socio-economic families completed year 12 and that the most prestigious faculties in the universities were populated by students who were relatively young, advanced, able and conservative.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike the 'soft' version of equal educational opportunity, its 'harder' equivalent is based upon the idea of 'positive discrimination'. Positive discrimination derives from the assumption that the educational system should recognise and compensate for the past discrimination experienced by those who were disadvantaged. The term 'positive dis-

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<sup>19</sup>reference to Anderson and Vervoorn made in: C. Power, F. Roberson, M. Baker, National Institute of Labour Studies Inc., Flinders University of South Australia, *Access to Higher Education: Participation, Equity and Policy*, Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Canberra, 1986, p.12

crimination' which is used mainly in the English literature has an American equivalent of 'reverse discrimination'. A. Goodman defined broadly reverse discrimination as "preferential treatment for minority group members or women in job hiring, school admission, or training-program policies".<sup>20</sup> As we have noticed the idea of reverse (or positive) discrimination has further application, not only in education. However in this chapter we will concentrate on this area. In this context C. Power and others argued that:

There can be little doubt that the application of this principle did indeed lead to a significant reduction in the gross differences in the condition under which the children of disadvantaged groups were taught. In turn, the smaller classes, better facilities and organisational changes hopefully did have some effect on the achievement and motivation of children in disadvantaged areas, thereby increasing their chances of at least joining the queue for a place in higher education and an interesting and well paid job. But in the cold times, the number of places in higher education and the number of good jobs are limited, and the well-educated children of disadvantaged families may still find themselves excluded from a place in the sun.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, the authors distinguish a 'very hard' version of equal educational opportunity, which is based on neo-Marxist analysis. This version which has aroused limited interest in Australia, is based on the assumption that in capitalist society equality of educational opportunity is impossible to achieve as the whole educational system in such a society is established in order to reproduce class and gender differences. The educational system, in the simplistic version, is only a part of the unequal capitalist society and, consequently, without changing society, it is impossible to make the educational system equal, almost by definition.

An analysis of Australian government educational policies reveals a tendency to emphasise equal opportunity outcomes. This version of equal opportunity in education also

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<sup>20</sup>A. H. Goodman, *Justice and Reversive Discrimination*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1979, p.4

<sup>21</sup>C. Power, F. Roberson, M. Baker, National Institute of Labour Studies Inc., Flinders University of South Australia, *Access to Higher Education: Participation, Equity and Policy*, Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Canberra, 1986, p.12

assumes a close connection between schooling and socio-economic opportunity.

Recently, the idea of proportional representation of particular groups of society (not only in education but also in employment, wealth etc.) has become popular. For example, if women represent 50 per cent of the population, women should be represented to this extent in education, not only in general, but also in particular sectors (including higher education), and in specific courses and faculties etc. Proportional representation emphasises importance of groups rather than individuals. There is clear evidence based upon statistical data that certain groups are under-represented in various aspects of social life, including education (especially post-secondary) or employment. But the fact that an individual belongs to the group does not necessarily mean that the person is disadvantaged. Certain individuals belonging to disadvantaged groups can be well ahead of those people representing the mainstream society in the competition for goods.

This is particularly true in relation to certain ethnic groups. From the research amongst South Australian students in tertiary educational institutions is noted that:

The Greek community is well-represented relative to its size in the South Australian population. Greek parents seem to have high aspirations for their children and to have been able to actualise them to a greater degree than other non-English speaking ethnic minorities. In particular, the children of Middle East, Italian, Yugoslav and German families appears to be under-represented.<sup>22</sup>

The idea of equality of group educational outcomes seems to be stronger for those who make educational policies. We can ask: what is the objective of equality of group educational outcomes? The objective is related to a concern about social mobility.

Greater equality should promote social mobility but the inequalities that exist at present are not so great as to prevent mobility. There is a good deal

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<sup>22</sup>C. Power, F. Roberson, M. Baker, National Institute of Labour Studies Inc., Flinders University of South Australia, *Access to Higher Education: Participation, Equity and Policy*, Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Canberra, 1986, p.45

of evidence that Australian society is a relatively mobile one. It is true that certain groups are grossly under-represented in the upper reaches of education, but apart from these, there is significant, if not equal representation of most social groupings.

Greater equality of group educational outcomes should improve access to high status occupation and high income.<sup>23</sup>

The last sentence of the quotation requires further discussion, as without analysis it gives the impression of being a true and logical conclusion. However, the fact is that even within mainstream society (or those who cannot be classify as belonging to any of the disadvantaged groups) there is not any guarantee of a higher status occupation or a higher income. Similarly there is no such relation in the case of those who are members of disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, in contemporary Australian society completion of tertiary education does not guarantee employment. Amongst people who have gained university degree there are numbers of unemployed. Also, in many cases, diploma holders from tertiary educational institutions are employees in positions which do not require academic abilities. They occupy positions lower in standard, prestige and salary level, simply because of lack of different employment prospects. This is especially evident in the case of university graduates from non-English speaking countries, who completed their studies overseas and who occupy often the position of unskilled workers in Australia. The phenomenon of graduate unemployment has also been used by the parents of secondary students, and secondary students themselves as an argument against undertaking tertiary study.

This issue is very complicated and has many dimensions, one of the most important of which is the consequent waste of human talents and abilities. The argument of so-

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<sup>23</sup>D. W. Rawson and R. G. Neale (eds) *Equality of Opportunity Reconsidered*, Papers from the Ninth Symposium of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, 1985, Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, p.5

cial justice should be taken into account. Why do those who have completed only some secondary education earn more money and have more attractive or responsible jobs than those who spend an additional three or four years of full-time education, working academically very hard and being forced to support themselves through a variety of temporary unskilled jobs? This is the question asked by many unemployed graduates who note that their high qualifications are given little or no recognition when they are applying for jobs either in the public or private sector.

Karmel noticed that:

there is no reason to suppose that higher quality education or more educational opportunity will result in a more equal distribution of income or wealth. Indeed, the contrary is possible.<sup>24</sup>

Looking at the reality in the Australian society it is true. But from the social justice point of view the status quo is not desirable. These comments are particularly relevant in relation to students from non-English speaking background.

Equality in education has been distinguished from equality of educational opportunity.

The Interim Committee for the Australian School Commission states that:

Equality has been interpreted as equal access to schools of roughly equal standards, and ...opportunity has concentrated on the possibility of prolonged schooling culminating in entry to tertiary educational institutions with a consequent claim on higher incomes. Concentration on this concept of opportunity has led to differing levels of educational attainment being accepted as the criteria justifying a greater investment of publicly provided resources in the education of some children than in that of others.<sup>25</sup>

The Committee noted different rates of participation in upper secondary and tertiary education depending upon such factors as: socio-economic status, type of school attended

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<sup>24</sup>P. Karmel in: D. W. Rawson and R. G. Neale (eds) *Equality of Opportunity Reconsidered*, Papers from the Ninth Symposium of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, 1985, Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, p.15

<sup>25</sup>D. W. Rawson and R. G. Neale (eds) *Equality of Opportunity Reconsidered*, Papers from the Ninth Symposium of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, 1985, Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, p.13



and rurality. Because of the different participation and influence of social environment a special program in education ought to be prepared. According to the Committee:

...the schools should not concentrate on merely treating all children alike and select the best. It involves action which will attempt, both within the schools and beyond them, to supplement of opportunities open to children whose general conditions of life are least conducive to the development of scholastic ability. More equal outcomes from schooling require unequal treatment of children.<sup>26</sup>

Such an understanding of equal educational opportunity is clearly different from equality, which has resulted in the establishment of many policies under the common title "compensatory education". Compensatory education has been offered to students, or potential students from so called disadvantaged groups. The following disadvantaged groups were distinguished in Australian education during the first decade of implementation of the idea of "compensatory education": students of low socio-economic background, students of non-English speaking background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, geographically isolated students, physically and intellectually handicapped students, and potential early school leavers.

Programs of compensatory education were, however abandoned in practice somewhere in the mid 80's and replaced in practice by bridging courses, and special programs to assist students during their studies. These programs had the task not only of better preparing students from disadvantaged groups to undertake study in tertiary institutions, but also of helping those students who were admitted overcome difficulties they encountered. Specific programs of this type in relation to students of a non-English speaking background will be discussed in the next chapter.

The issue of equal opportunity in education has another dimension, in addition to those

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid, p.13

of access and participation discussed earlier. This is the problem of curricula relevant to particular group of students in general, and to disadvantaged students in particular. For example, if lessons in Australian history begin with the white settlement in this country and the book is written only from the white, Anglo-Saxon perspective — they will not have any relevance for Aboriginal students. Similarly, any history book, which ignores the contribution of non-Anglo-Saxons to the development of Australia and/or the fact of continuous immigration which has brought different cultural values to Australia, — would be of little relevance for students of a non-English speaking background. If a high school with a high population of students of Asian background offers some classical and European languages only, or another high school with a large number of ‘traditional’ migrants from Greece and Italy offers, in addition to English, only the Japanese language — both would be very inappropriate for the minority ethnic students attending the school.

The point needs to be made that curricula at all levels should take into account the diversity of society in general, and the particular educational institutions should reflect the needs and interest, of local communities.

## 14.7 Equality and Equity

The differentiation between equality and equity, terms frequently used and associated with our topic, is very problematic.

In literature there are views which suggest that these terms are different. The most significant difference is considered to be the reference to quality in the case of equity, and the reference to quantity in the case of equality.<sup>27</sup> Such an approach is often concerned

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<sup>27</sup>W. Secada (ed) *Equity in Education*, The Falmer Press, New York, Philadelphia, London, 1989, p.82.

with the language rather than the intention to clarify and/or conceptualise both ideas. Kramer, for example, seeking the difference between 'equity' and 'equality' refers to the Oxford Dictionary.<sup>28</sup>

The fact is that the distinction between 'equity' and 'equality', although visible in the linguistic sphere, has not yet been made in professional educational literature in a clear way.

There is also a tendency to use the term interchangeably. A typical example can be found in the Macroaedia (Knowledge in Depth) of the Encyclopaedia Britannica under

'System of Education — Efforts towards social equity' it is stated, inter alia:

Trying to create an educational system to satisfy the goals of social equity continues to cause difficulty. The complexity of the idea of equality of opportunity is, perhaps, only now being fully understood. As applied to the educational system, for example, should equality mean (1) providing a free education up to a certain level; (2) providing a common curriculum for all children; (3) providing equivalent inputs in terms of per-pupil expenditure, school plant, and the like; or (4) providing a racial and ethnic composition in the schools proportionate to that found in the greater society? ...

As the definition of equity vary, so will the ameliorative policies. Current knowledge is not yet adequate, however, to design programs to meet many of the possible objectives of equity.<sup>29</sup>

Sometimes the interchangeable usage of the two terms can be consciously based on links between them. It is characteristic that some writers concentrate on these connections rather than differentiating between equity and equality.

Green is (a) writer who systematically tried to explore the connection between equity and equality. He maintained that equity and equality are linked, but also, he draws a distinction between those inequalities that are inequitable and those that are not: 'Inequality always implies injustice. Inequity does not'.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>L. Kramer "Equality and Standards in Education: Is There a Conflict?" in: D. W. Rawson and R. G. Neale (eds) *Equality of Opportunity Reconsidered*, Papers from the Ninth Symposium of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, 1985, Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, p.23 where Kramer quoted "Equity is 'the quality of being equal or fair; impartiality; even-handed dealing'. Equality is the condition of being equal in quantity, amount, value, intensity, etc."

<sup>29</sup>The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, volume 18, Macroaedia, Knowledge in Depth, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1985, p.131

<sup>30</sup>W. Secada (ed) *Equity in Education*, The Falmer Press, New York, Philadelphia, London, 1989,

The fact is that the distinction between equality and equity has not yet been fully made in the literature.

It is not our task within the framework of this thesis to find out the differences between the terms *in abstracto*. What should be our task, however, is to apply the terms towards building a concept which can be useful in education in general, and with a possibility of resolving our particular problem of young people from minority ethnic cultures in particular.

If we agree with the basic, fundamental distinction that equity refers to quality and equality to quantity, we can further extend the term to education and make a reference to 'educational equity' and 'educational equality'.

Now, in the context of educational equity and equality, we should ask what the terms mean in practice of the educational setting.

Educational equity means in practice, for example, the level of courses and other educational programs; the quality of the teachers in term of their skills, qualifications, abilities; the standard of school buildings; library facilities; the nature of the curriculum, etc.

Using similar examples, educational equality<sup>31</sup> will mean: the number of courses and other educational programs offered by a particular school/institution of the system, the student/teacher ratio, the percentage of teachers with higher qualifications, the number of books and other educational resources in libraries, the number of students from particular disadvantaged groups and the extent to which they reflect (in terms of percentage) the

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p.72-73 and quoted by Secada: T. F. Green, *Excellence, Equity and Equality*, in: L. S. Shulman, G. Sykes (eds), *Handbook of Teaching and Policy*, New York, Longman, p.318-41

<sup>31</sup>Obviously, this is a simplification: under our topic we dealing with 'equality of opportunity' (which is more complex than 'equality'), however for the needs our discussion here, we can make such a simplification and take into account only the term 'equality' and make some practical distinction with that of 'equity'.

social composition of community in the area of catchment (or how far they are from an equal representation of a particular social groups), etc.

Now we can go further and ask whether it would be possible to apply both concepts to some specific groups of students from disadvantaged groups in general, and to students from ethnic minorities in particular.

It seems to be possible — equality will mean how the students from disadvantaged groups are ‘distributed’ to particular schools in terms of numbers, if they have equal access to education at all levels within a system, if they have a similar kind of attention from teaching staff as other students, etc. In the case of equity we will refer to the quality of the education system in relation to students from disadvantaged groups.

Let us consider the concept of equality and equity in education for the specific group of ethnic minorities.

Equity will mean here, generally speaking, how the education system responds to the educational needs of the students, especially whether the provisions of English as a second language (ESL) are delivered, whether school programs take into account the diversity of backgrounds of the students, staff development for teachers includes cross-cultural awareness, languages offered by the school are relevant to the ethnic composition of the population, the quality of language education, etc.

Similar examples, in terms of equality understood as educational quality could be provided as, for example, the number of languages offered to students of particular background, the number of hours and years of ethnic languages and ESL provisions.

The important point is that both equity and equality, in this case are interdependent. It is easy to make the observation when we continue the example with language programs that both quality of language education (equity) and the quantity of the programs (equal-

ity) are important for students from the minority ethnic group point of view. The results of our research support the statement.

In the case of equity however, it is not (and cannot be) a simple replacement of the word 'quality'. Equity, in relation to people of a non-English speaking background in the educational setting must have (and has) a specific meaning. Generally, it comprises the specific needs of NESB students. Therefore, if the students from NESB want to preserve their languages — according to equity — the need should be taken into account and appropriate provisions made by the system. In literature there are views that educational equity consists of 'education that is multicultural'.<sup>32</sup>

We can now refer to the specific needs of young people from ethnic minorities, recognised in our research — the need to preserve ethnic languages and other cultural values. The educational system should take into account the request which is of a clear educational character, and should respond to the needs.

Therefore, we can conclude that educational equity is a helpful concept for the topic and reinforces the principle of equal opportunity in the aspect of the maintenance of minority cultures.

Furthermore, it is a useful concept to support the principles of humanistic sociology, which can be applied in education. We wish to make the link between equity and humanistic sociology. This is possible because of the aspects of an individual concern. In this respect equity is also a useful concept in order to recognise an individual's values whereas,

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<sup>32</sup>see: W. Secada (ed) *Equity in Education*, The Falmer Press, New York, Philadelphia, London, 1989, p.75, where Secade refers to the view of Grant and Sleeter, who "argued that educational equity consists of 'education that is multicultural' and social reconstructionist". Secada makes the following summary: "In this view, to be equitable, education must help students address issues of cultural differences; it should help students to understand the dynamics that have led to certain social arrangements, to question those arrangements, and to do so effectively." (p.75)

for example, equal opportunity programs deal predominantly with group discrimination.

The last point was also noted by Secada, who suggested that:

Equity should also be concerned with the individual, who in fact seems also totally absent from the current discourse on equality in education.<sup>33</sup>

If equity is (or can be) concerned with the individual, and if humanistic sociology requires analysis from the individual's point of view — both ideas are linked, at least in this aspect, and by this, useful for a better understanding and fulfilment of the needs of those individuals from ethnic minorities who wish to preserve their cultural heritage.

## 14.8 Equity and Justice

We have already discussed the relation between equity and equality. In addition, we should note that not only is the concept of equal opportunity related to justice but that of equity as well.

We will later discuss the main reason for the preservation of community languages (Chapter 20), including legal (20.3).

If the legal reasons would be considered [in ones view] as not strong enough, at least *de lege lata* (i.e. considering the current legislation), the concept of equity can be subsidiary.

If we cannot appeal to justice because of a lack of existing law dealing with a certain problem, or even having law regulating a case, but its application in this particular case seems to be inadequate to our understanding of justice — we may appeal to equity. Indeed, this is the kind of tradition of law to which McDowell and Ree, referring to Aristotle, noted that:

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<sup>33</sup>W. G. Secada (ed) *Equity in Education*, The Falmer Press, New York, Philadelphia, London, 1989, p.82

an appeal to equity was and still is — an appeal to justice that goes beyond a given law's application.<sup>34</sup>

We can argue that the preservation of the cultural heritage, especially mother tongues by young Australians of ethnic origin living in multicultural Australia is a matter of equity.

To recapitulate — equity, although a different concept than the equality of opportunity (or equality) does have some links, and can be applied to fulfil the cultural needs of the ethnic minorities.

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<sup>34</sup>in: W. G. Secada (ed) *Equity in Education*, The Falmer Press, New York, Philadelphia, London, 1989, p.82



## Chapter 15

# People from Non-English Speaking Background and Equal Opportunity

In any society, minority ethnic groups are in a quite different position than people from the mainstream society. As a result of their linguistic and cultural differences they experience difficulties, especially acute during the time of their arrival to a new country and the period which follows it — sometimes a few months, sometimes a few years, depending upon the individual situation. Some of the newcomers from minority ethnic groups decide to go back to their countries of origin, or try to migrate to another country, seeking better life conditions for themselves, or trying to avoid current problems; some of them experience discrimination throughout all of their life span.

The phenomenon of emigration is not a new one. Migration is known through history of humankind and examples can be found in each country, and each century.

Migrants have their specific problems of how to organise their life in a new country, it is especially hard for them to find permanent accommodation, employment. They also experience significant problems in education and in keeping social contacts with members of the majority group etc.

The most immediate or crucial is the problem of knowledge of the majority group's

language. At the time of arrival very few migrants are able to communicate adequately their every day needs in the language of the majority. Some of them never acquire the new language. Even for those who quickly acquire knowledge of the language at an appropriate level, different accents and expressions can still result in many problems in the professional and social life.

Latter, in addition to linguistic difficulties, migrants from ethnic minorities notice that various cultural differences play an important role.

Discrimination is often associated with ethnic minorities. Literature as well as memoirs, notes and letters of immigrants, including school children are a very good illustration of various personal experiences, their feelings and their description of various forms of discrimination.

Australia has experienced the migration phenomena since the beginning of white settlement, but the issue of non-English speaking background people emerged as significant after the Second World War.

In the contemporary Australian context, where the majority of the society is familiar with migrant problems, various forms of discrimination, both conscious and unconscious, still persist.

People of a non-English speaking background are among those who experienced discrimination. There are many reasons for this situation, ranging from open racial attitudes and prejudices, to dislike and a lack of understanding.

## **15.1 Discrimination in Employment**

There is statistical evidence that migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds

have been discriminated against in employment, and that Australian society generally is aware of the fact. As the national survey of attitudes to multiculturalism indicated: almost one quarter of Australians — and more than 40 % of NESB immigrants who have arrived in Australia since 1981 — believe that job opportunities are worse for immigrants with similar education and experience than for Australian-born workers. . . . and over 15% of NESB immigrants feel that they have suffered actual discrimination in seeking employment.<sup>1</sup>

It is particularly significant that the youth of non-English speaking backgrounds suffer higher unemployment in comparison with their Australian born counterparts. A recent analysis of statistical data states:

One in five migrants aged between 15 and 19 were unemployed according to ABS figures for April 1990. The unemployment rate for the same group of Australian-born people was 15.3%, of those migrants aged 20 to 24, 12.6% were unemployed, compare with 8.8% of their Australian-born counterparts. Overall the statistics also showed that young people looking for part-time work were unemployed for a shorter time than those seeking full-time work and nearly 60 000 students were seeking part-time work when the study was conducted.<sup>2</sup>

## 15.2 Discrimination in Education

Similarly people of a non-English speaking background have experienced discrimination in the area of education. Ronalds, describing the fact that the large number of migrants since World War II has completely changed the ethnic composition of the Australian population noted:

This change has not been reflected in the syllabi prepared by educational Authorities which still reflect the values and preoccupations of the dominant, white, Anglo-Saxon culture. During the 1950's migrant children were subjected to blatant racism from many teachers and fellow students. Little or no provision was made for English lessons to assist non-English speaking children. Left to survive in the school system as best they could, many of them suffered educational setbacks from which it was difficult, if not impossible, to recover. No attempt was made to include information on migrant cultures

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<sup>1</sup>Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.15

<sup>2</sup>Weekend Australian 26/5/90 p.36.

in any school syllabi this acted to widen the gap between home and school for migrant children. Rather than teach migrant languages such as Greek or Italian, schools continued to offer only the most traditional Latin, French and German.<sup>3</sup>

One of the tasks of any government in a democratic society is to avoid discrimination. This can currently be done through Human Rights and Equal Opportunity legislation, and some aspects of the legislation were discussed in chapter 13 of this part. Also the necessity of change in some attitudes were previously discussed. But the major problem associated with non-English speaking background people is that they need equal opportunity in their, almost all, more important aspects of life. Especially significant from the immigrant's point of view are problems of employment, education, housing, participation in public life and, for those from non-English speaking countries, almost by definition, difficulties with the English language.

### 15.3 English Language Problems/Needs

The issue, that of language problems, is particularly complicated and there are many aspects of the problem: arrival to Australia without any knowledge of English, a low level of communication skills or even illiteracy in the mother tongue, advanced age, inability to learn foreign languages, no access to language services, or even personality. The list of these aspects is not full. However it shows that this is a very complex issue, as many factors decide second language acquisition.

The best illustration of the complexity of the issue is the fact that a large number of Australians from non-English speaking background cannot speak English well at all. As

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<sup>3</sup>C. Ronalds, *Anti-Discrimination Legislation in Australia. A Guide*, Butterworths, 1979, p.49.

the 1986 census indicated about 370.000 people stated difficulties with spoken English. A much higher number of people complained about reading and writing problems in English.

English language difficulties have implications for other important aspects of life of non-English speaking background immigrants such as: employment, education, training, social welfare or social life.

The question of how to improve the delivery of the English language for non-English speaking background people is not only a matter of equal opportunity. There is also an economic dimension. In many cases, it is only after an adequate acquisition of English that the people can contribute to the development of Australia. And, from an economic point of view, they can be fully utilised by the society in terms of their skills, experiences, qualifications etc, after the acquisition of an appropriate level of English.

The very practical aspects for various courses of English, such as English for new arrivals, English for Academic Purposes, or Professional English, cannot be discussed here. However, the very different needs of immigrants should be taken into account, as well as the national needs.

New arrivals from non-English speaking countries suffer long term unemployment, not as a result of a lack of qualifications, skills or experience, but because of an inadequate knowledge of the English language. Poor knowledge of English often also makes them unable to undertake further education in the mainstream of school system. Acquisition of the English language is also essential from the country's point of view, as communication between all citizens or permanent residents is also important for the governing bodies, including the government itself.

A further investigation of immigrant needs in relation to the English language, in spite of some achievements in this area, is necessary in order to develop some courses and make

them more accessible to all migrant groups, including those in remote areas.

*The National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* has noted that:

proficiency in English is a basic resource needed to participate effectively in Australian life.<sup>4</sup>

An even stronger statement of a political nature is used in this document under section 'Language and Communication':

English is our national language and it is critical — for the individual, for society and for our collective prosperity — that every Australian be given the opportunity to master it.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, the English language in Australia is the national language, the importance of which is not questioned by the ethnic minorities from non-English speaking backgrounds, regardless of their knowledge of the language. It seems to be characteristic that the document uses the term 'national language', and not 'official language'. The tendency is clear. If English were to be called an 'official language', other languages should be consequently called 'non-official', and this is not the intention of the authors of the document, who realised that:

Australians also speak more than a hundred other languages — each they in the home, the street, the school, the shops and the workplace.<sup>6</sup>

Consequently they advocate that:

it is in the interest of all that Australians be allowed to maintain and develop their first language ...<sup>7</sup>

So languages other than English can be considered as community languages with the encouragement to use them, but there is the clear priority of English as a national language. Knowledge of English is essential from both the individual and the whole community's

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<sup>4</sup> *The National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, p.13

<sup>5</sup> *The National Agenda* ...p.37

<sup>6</sup> *The National Agenda* ...p.37

<sup>7</sup> *The National Agenda* ...p.37

point of view. The *National Agenda* gives example of this. For instance, the document notes that, on the one hand, people unable to speak English are functionally unskilled regardless of how impressive their qualifications may be. On the other hand, the cost of poor English skills to society is at least as high as \$3.2 billion each year, based on recent estimates of an economic character.

For some individuals the lack of knowledge of English creates extremely difficult situations of a personal nature or, using the expression of the document, it becomes 'an awesome and devastating barrier'

for the young immigrants whose education is irreparably disrupted, for the older woman unable to re-enter the workforce, for the low-skilled or retrenched worker unable to retrain, and for the aged retiree now lonely and isolated<sup>8</sup>

The *National Agenda* specifies the objectives of the Commonwealth Government in the area of language policy and communication in relation to English for all. According to the *National Agenda* the responsibility is shared with the states (as they control the school and the technical and further education systems), the higher education sector, and with employers. Current achievements and some new initiatives have been also pointed out.

It is difficult to give general advice on how to overcome insufficient knowledge of English. In the Australian context of permanent and planned migration, the main responsibility and coordination of all aspects associated with migration lies with the Commonwealth Government. In contrast, the main education system is in the hands of the state governments which are responsible for appropriate actions in their primary and secondary schools, as well as technical and further education. Stronger involvement of the local governments and non-government school systems seem to be also necessary. In

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<sup>8</sup> *The National Agenda* . . . p.39

addition to various governmental, Catholic and independent schools language programs, community organisations, which can specifically target adults who have up to now been beyond such programs should be more involved. Both formal and informal programs would be desirable. One of the formal programs which ethnic communities have considered as efficient, has been the subject of English as a second language (ESL) in primary and secondary schools. This program has been supported and extended by the *National Agenda*. For example, the *National Agenda* stated:

Eligibility of primary school children for Commonwealth founded intensive ESL tuition should be extended.<sup>9</sup>

Following this policy, the review of one year of the policy operation was made, and it was noted that:

The English as a Second Language Program for children has been extended to include primary school children who have been in Australia for up to 18 months, at an additional cost of some \$3 million per annum.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, as was requested by the *National Agenda*:

Additional resources will be provided for the Adult Migrant Education Program,

The review document supports the continuation during the 89/90 period of the implementation of the three-year national plan for the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP).

An additional \$5.4 million was provided under the National Agenda for the Program in 1989-90. While all migrants will retain priority status within the Program for up to five years after arrival, emphasis will be on opportunities for people to learn English to an appropriate level within their first three years.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *The National Agenda* . . . p.43

<sup>10</sup> *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. The Year in Review, August 1989 - July 1990*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.53

<sup>11</sup> *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. The Year in Review, August 1989 - July 1990*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.53



Other areas of review included: post-school English as a second Language courses, English by correspondence, English in the Workplace and the SBS "English at Work" television series. Interesting comments were made by the authors of the review of post-school English as a second Language:

Adequate English is essential for a skilled NESB migrant to make use of his or her full potential and to justify the economics of bridging courses.

This is emphasised by a recent report of the Bureau of Immigration Research which states that refugees have the highest unemployment rate of all migrant groups in Australia. Rates exceed 30 percent because poor language skill and education backgrounds have left the refugees severely disadvantaged. This contrasts with only seven per cent unemployment for employer sponsored migrants.<sup>12</sup>

## 15.4 Employment, Related Problems and Possible Solutions

The point made above is interesting indeed by the suggestion, based upon research, that there is a different rate of unemployment for refugee and employer sponsored migrants. However, the document does not explain the reasons for the status quo. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to note that, taking into account the employability of migrants, regardless of their country of origin, the classification is based upon the distinction between high and low levels of migrant employability. Whereas the people who migrated to Australia, in general, had a chance to prepare themselves in a practical way by collecting all educational and/or professional qualifications with evidence of their awarding, opinions, translations, documentation regarding employment history with particular experiences and often a certain knowledge of the English language — the refugees often did not have such an opportunity. If we take the example of so called 'boat people' mainly

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<sup>12</sup>*National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. The Year in Review, August 1989 – July 1990*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.54

refugees from Vietnam to Australia, it is clear in this case, that the decision to come to Australia has not been linked mainly to employment. Naturally, their first thoughts were to preserve their lives, not their formal documents.

According to research, the second group of immigrants, those sponsored by employers, is a specific group, for whom chances of better employment or a better paid job have been previously investigated. Furthermore, such immigrants had, at least formally, a guarantee of employment in Australia after arrival.

From the equal opportunity point of view, the first group (the refugees) need more assistance or help to begin new employment, or to return to their interrupted professional carriers than the second one. In other words, refugees are very disadvantaged in comparison with employer-sponsored migrants. It does not change the fact, that the second group, in many case also needs assistance as they would be disadvantaged in comparison with English native speakers, Australian born and the locally experienced workers.

Both groups of migrants might have the need to acquire the English language. For those who are employed, the idea of English in the workplace can be extremely useful and may give them access to better utilisation of their skills through promotion to positions where a higher standard of English is required.

For those migrants who are older, for those with family responsibilities, and the necessity to support these families financially, such a program can be, in practice, the only way of acquiring the English language.

Following the requirement of the *National Agenda* in relation to the 'English in the Workplace Program' (EWP), the Government has provided additional funding because of increasing demands from employers to train their employees. Also, staff development for teachers with the skills to run vocational courses was provided and the courses, including

teaching materials, were upgraded. The Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs promoted the 'English in the Workplace Program' with an emphasis upon the economic benefits to different organisations.

Such programs should be continued and developed in order to minimise the main source of disadvantage of non-English speaking background people — their lack of a sufficient knowledge of the English language.

It must be pointed out that currently an adequate command of English is regarded without doubt as beneficial for industry. Now it is recognised by some industrial authorities that the English language on the job is an important part of equal employment opportunities.

A landmark decision on English on the job came on 22 September 1987 from the full bench of the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission. The Commission accepted that the acquisition of English language skills was integral to the promotion of effective equal employment opportunities, that an employer would be advantaged by greater efficiency if workers were encouraged by payment of their wages to attend English classes, and that an employer would be advantaged to a degree that would offset any incurrent costs.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, English on the job is the part of some industrial agreements:

English language tuition has been secured in New South Wales through: amendment of the Water and Sewerage Employees Union Awards, Industrial agreements (Fenne Fashin), and State government directive gaining employees access to classes. As a result of extensive negotiation with government and employers, English classes have become a part of some labour market programs and industrial agreements pertaining to reconstructing of industry.<sup>14</sup>

In the current multicultural policy full utilising of migrants as a workforce in order to improve the economy is one of the major goals. The authors of the *National Agenda* are quite open about putting economic arguments before individual rights. Perhaps it is

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<sup>13</sup>G. Miltenyi "Trade Unions in a Multicultural Workforce" in : James Jupp (ed.) *The challenge of Diversity. Policy options for a Multicultural Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1989, p.162

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p.162

because the multicultural policy, however accepted by the majority of Australians and endorsed by the major political parties, has still some opponents. Hence it is important to show the economically positive factors, such as that opponents do not want to accept the rights of minority ethnic groups, including the right to preserve their culture.

The other source of inequalities between the majority group and ethnic minorities is employment. The minority groups, generally speaking, have a higher rate of unemployment, and, if employed, perform lower positions in term of social prestige and with lower payment. Traditionally immigrants left their countries of origin because of a lack of freedom, the desire to better life chances and better paid jobs.

In Australia the early migrants were expected to undertake the most simple, unskilled and low paid jobs.

Castles and others noted a general trend in labour force participation from post-war period up to the early 1970s. Generally, during the post-war period migrant participation in the workforce was higher than for the Australian born, whereas since the early 1970s, the rate for migrants has progressively fallen. This was confirmed by research:

Using data up to 1984, the important study by the Bureau of Labour Market Research (1986) identified an apparent convergence in participation rates for migrants and Australian born. Since then, however, the participation rates for the Australian born have come to exceed these of migrants. Particularly with respect to women a fairly large gap of 3 per cent had opened up by August 1987.<sup>15</sup>

The *National Agenda* does not analyse specifically the employment of people of a non-English speaking background in the form of specific chapter and this seems to be a weakness of the document. However, the *Agenda* has noticed the relationship between

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<sup>15</sup>S. Castles et al "Migrant Employment and Training and Industry Reconstructing" in: James Jupp (ed), *The Challenge of Diversity*, p.128

cultural differences and unemployment. Based on a statistical profile taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Born Australians 1988, A Statistical Profile (catalogue No.4112.91989) it is possible distinguish the following general tendencies:

- people born in English speaking countries have a lower unemployment rate compared to the Australian born;
- people from non-English speaking countries have a higher rate of unemployment compared to the Australian born;
- people born in some non-English speaking countries have a very high level of unemployment, up to 3 to 4 times of the national average.

*The Agenda* noted specifically that the particularly disadvantaged groups are: Aboriginals, Lebanese, Turks and Vietnamese. The document does not try to explain the reasons, stating generally that:

Poor English language proficiency and inadequate knowledge of the Australian labour market — problems which are particularly acute among recent arrivals — exacerbate the problem. There is a continuing need for targeted labour market assistance to address these problems and to provide opportunity for local work experience and training.<sup>16</sup>

The *National Agenda*, in trying to establish objectives in order to avoid disadvantaged of NESB people, points out the fact that it is not only that the Commonwealth has the responsibility for education and retraining systems in Australia and listed responsible agencies, including the State and Territory Governments. Undoubtedly, co-operation between all authorities would be desirable in order to achieve this common task. The following leading principle is considered by the Commonwealth Government itself:

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<sup>16</sup> *National Agenda* . . . p.30

to ensure that efficiency, effectiveness and equity objectives are met in the development and utilisation the skill of Australians from different cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds.<sup>17</sup>

The document also specifies some tasks of the Government in relation to employment, especially by assurance that:

- the labour market integration of people with overseas skills proceeds as quickly and as effectively as possible,
- appropriate labour market assistance is accessible to people from disadvantaged backgrounds with individually tailored assistance being continued to Aboriginal and NESB people who have English language difficulties and indeed to all Australians who face barriers of cultures or attitude in gaining work commensurate with their abilities.<sup>18</sup>

The first task is of a very general character. It is not clear from the document what 'the labour market integration' means. This can be understood broadly in terms of being part of the market and competing for jobs as well as a variety of help, actions and advice given to those who are employed but still need assistance. But it can be also understood narrowly as — to gain any employment for the people with overseas skills. It seems that the first interpretation, the broad one, would be the desirable status quo and the intention of the authors as well. Rightly the authors of the document consider two elements of the integration process: speed and effectiveness. Many people with overseas skills complain about the length of time, often years, of 'waiting' for a job. Furthermore, if a person with overseas skills is more qualified in some disciplines, as for example medicine or law — the process of utilising their skills is particularly long, if it is possible to overcome at all. Hence the idea of making the process as quick as possible should not be questioned.

The second element 'effectiveness' is also associated with the speed. It is because if the process to gain employment is very long, the skills, as a result of their non-utilisation, are

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<sup>17</sup> *National Agenda* . . . p.31-32

<sup>18</sup> *National Agenda* . . . p.32

neglected, and in consequence will require updating and further training. This is harmful for both the individual and the community at large. But effectiveness, in this case, means also utilising the skills in such an area, which is the same, or the closest to the kind of job previously performed overseas. In practice many immigrants are prepared to accept any employment because of the labour market situation of increasing unemployment or, especially in the case of refugees, acting under strong financial pressure, in order to fulfil basic family needs, and they are generally satisfied if they are employed in any position, regardless of their skills and qualifications. For instance, a professional refugee, who sees his/her many colleagues working in unskilled positions will be glad if a para-professional job is offered to him/her, regardless of the fact that he/she could be as an efficient professional as previously, and consequently additional resources will be spent in the training of other people. These resources could be sacrificed for other community needs. Effectiveness also means here an avoidance of unnecessary formal training or retraining, which serve only the interests of bureaucrats. For example, if a doctor with appropriate overseas qualifications, skills, and understanding, because of the local needs is obligated to pass a few theoretical medical subjects (passed previously in a different language) in order to be able to perform his/her profession in Australia, whereas his/her only problem is a lack of fluent communication with the patient as a result of an inadequate knowledge of English — such a requirement would be useless. Generally speaking, the task, if understood broadly with a knowledge of all the specific issues related to immigrants, should be accepted.

The second task also has many practical problems. Unfortunately, the idea of 'appropriate labour market assistance and access of disadvantage groups' has not been yet realised in practice. The implementation of the policy to assist disadvantaged groups

could be beneficial for the groups. But, if treated seriously, the equity issue in terms of better representation of disadvantaged groups in employment across different occupations, including professional and managerial, such assistance would be essential indeed. For the first time, instead of talking in general terms about disadvantaged groups, the document recognised a very important aspect and names it as 'individually tailored assistance' (my emphasis). Indeed, just such a way of assistance is necessary, as only such an approach can be really effective. It is the time to realise that talking about non-English speaking background people is more or less the same, whether using the term Negroes in the United States or French speaking people in Canada. The national, linguistic, ethnic or racial element is not so important here. We are in the field of employment where only skills, qualifications, experiences, knowledge and ability are important. People of non-English speaking backgrounds are not a monolithic group!

They are very different. On the one hand, we can find within the same group of non-English speaking backgrounds unskilled and uneducated individuals, and on the other highly qualified professionals or academics with doctorates, higher doctorates and an international recognition.

Overseas qualified doctors or lawyers represent a variety of experience and status within their country of origin. For some of them it would be relatively easy to practice medicine or law in Australia, for some it would be impossible. Some of the professional can start their jobs immediately after gaining formal recognition of their qualifications in Australia, for others special assistance needs to be given to update the knowledge and develop their skills towards local requirements and needs. It must be strongly pointed out, once again, that only an individual approach to help gain employment for non-English speaking background people is reasonable to follow fully the principles mentioned in the



document of 'efficiency and effectiveness'.

Finally, the third element requires discussion — the equity objectives. The equity objective is difficult to fulfil. This is because people of non-English speaking backgrounds, as has been mentioned above, are not a homogenous group. The only common feature which distinguishes the group is that its members have a cultural background different from the Anglo-Saxons. It can often be associated with certain difficulties with the English language but not necessarily in each case. In some case, regardless of different linguistic backgrounds, the level of English can be very high, even higher than some native speakers. Non-English speaking background people are not under-represented in the labour market as a whole. However, in practice they have minimal chances for appointment to higher positions, and are seriously under-represented in political and governmental bodies. This should be overcome by an access for non-English speaking background people to such positions. There is no simple way to get a high position, in terms of prestige in society. Not only strong and successful political activity, or level of education, academic achievements or a high knowledge of a subject can decide about such a candidate for an appointment. Appointment on merit is currently strongly declared, but still the principle of merit is not always applied in practice. The concept of merit, still not clarified in the literature cannot be discussed here. However, if it is finally developed, must take into account people of non-English speaking backgrounds as well. A special dimension of the group should be established when the concept is applied in relation to a particular institution, that is employers. This is because the NESB people, from the point of view of the institution can contribute to its development. Specially, the ability to use previous experience from different countries, and to modify it in the new country are often beneficial for the development of the organisation.

Looking at the equity issue on a more practical level, it should be noted that the Commonwealth Government took some steps towards equity for NESB people, some of them were of a very specific and practical character, the *National Agenda* pointed out some, and the more significant of them should be listed here:

- the provision of bridging training places for overseas qualified immigrants under Jobtrain and the national skills components of Innovative Training Projects;
- the introduction the job search training courses for recently-arrived migrants;
- the recent introduction of equity provisions for apprenticeships to encourage the employment of the disadvantaged young people, on the same basis as equity provisions for traineeships<sup>19</sup>

As we have seen, people of non-English speaking backgrounds experience many problems with employment, education and acquisition of the English language in Australia. On the other hand, there are various programs and good practices established by the government and other organisations<sup>20</sup> in order to resolve or minimise the problem.

We can ask the question whether there is any relationship between these problems and the issue of the preservation ethnic cultures in Australia.

In spite of the first impression, a relationship not only exists but their relation is strong indeed. Appropriate regulations and practical chances for NESB people to gain employment, even in times of high unemployment rates, can effect their attitude towards the education of their children, and the question of preservation of their cultures. Similarly, the value and relevance of education as a factor contributing to employment prospects should be reinforced. In particular, educational qualifications must maintain their proper value.

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<sup>19</sup> *National Agenda* ... p.33

<sup>20</sup> For details see, for example: C. Niland, R. Champion *EEO Programs for Immigrants: the Experience of Thirteen Organisations*, Bureau of Immigration Research, 1980

The minimum would be the avoidance of discrimination against the NESB people but without additional programs for the majority and minority ethnic groups, it would not be possible to expect any meaningful progress.

One of the problems associated with employment of NESB people is recognition of overseas qualifications. As the problems in this area are complicated and related to equal opportunity as well, an additional chapter will overview the issue.

# Chapter 16

## Recognition of Overseas Qualifications

### 16.1 The Qualified Migrants' Problems and Equal Opportunity

The issue of recognition of overseas qualifications is very important from the immigrant's point of view as it is essential for achieving equal opportunity in employment. Recognition of their qualifications gives immigrants access to compete for jobs in the area of their professions. Lack of such a recognition often works against the principle of equal opportunity and in some cases even has a discriminatory character.

Thousands of immigrants have come to Australia with qualifications from the countries of their origin, and sometimes from other overseas countries where they studied. These qualifications are of different levels — from certificates of the completion of primary school, through to technical and trade qualifications, matriculation certificates, university diplomas and degrees, including doctorates and higher doctorates as well.

Very few immigrants try to inform and familiarise themselves with the equivalence of their qualifications prior to arrival, through the Australian Embassy in their countries of origin, or other institutions in Australia. Even those who did so did not always receive

full and accurate information, resulting in later disappointment.

Some immigrants tried to translate their qualifications into English, believing that such a document was an equivalent of such qualification in Australia. Many immigrants did not know the nature of occupational relations, including the accreditation procedure, or even the structure of occupation in Australia.

There is a permanent need for counselling in this area, which unfortunately is not easy to fulfil for a variety of reasons.

The issue is so complicated as there is not (and cannot be) an automatic process of recognition of overseas qualifications. There is a lack of legal recognition of overseas qualifications or any legal framework of a procedural nature. In addition, there has been confusion as to who is responsible for the process of recognition. There are many bodies and independent institutions engaged in the process. It is also very confusing for migrants that practice that one institution can 'recognise' a diploma whereas another institution refuses to recognise the same document.

In the case of university diplomas there is the practise of the assessment to an equivalent or comparable academic qualification in Australia, taking into account the country which issued the diploma, the educational system or even a particular university (or other tertiary educational institution), date of issue of the qualifications, length of study, the context of the curriculum and received marks, grades, classes, divisions, etc.

To understand better the practical difficulties of assessment of overseas qualifications, the assessing body needs not only a deep knowledge of the subject, for instance, medicine, law, agriculture, but also an understanding of the whole education system in a discipline, both in Australia and overseas.

Currently, government policy is stressing that the issue of recognition of overseas qual-

ifications, or, as it is now commonly called, recognition of skills (a result of an emphasis on skills rather than formal qualifications) is a matter of social justice and equity. Hence, the necessity to discuss the issue within this Part.

### **16.1.1 The Government's Response**

The Australian Government recognises the difficulties associated with recognition of overseas qualifications and realises that the present process requires urgent reforms.

Before an analysis of the current process of the reform and appropriate policy directions, a comment of a general nature is necessary. It may appear that the issue of the recognition of overseas qualifications is of a technical character and has nothing to do with equal opportunity. In fact, the relations are very strong. The issue involves not only the avoidance, or refusal, to recognise overseas qualifications but also cases of inadequate assessment, i.e. that is recognition below the real level of the Australian standard, whereas the qualifications concerned, are really higher in terms of their value. This often creates discrimination or, at least, an unequal treatment caused mainly by the fact that the qualifications are gained overseas. It can be also pointed out that the other extreme also exists in practice. Some people or institutions consider overseas qualifications, from certain countries, as much higher than Australian, in spite of the fact that the comparable level of educational standard is lower than in Australia or very similar. This is based upon high, international prestige of some of the traditional universities, mainly European, or the outstanding reputation of some American institutions.

## **16.2 Attitudes of Professional Groups**

An other related issue is that some professions create specific barriers in the form of additional regulations, creating tendential barriers in order to protect the interests of

people in the profession. For example, some professional groups operate as closed groups, which try to minimise any kind of competition. Licencing the registration provisions are not always established for the benefit of consumers or the wider community — they act rather to protect the occupational groups concerned. Iredale, analysing the existing forms of the control of entry to some professions states:

...not only income and working conditions of the occupational members are protected, but also there is evidence to suggest that the nature of the service providers is also controlled. The desire to keep an occupation as the exclusive domain of a particular group (by gender and ethnicity/race) cannot be ignored.<sup>1</sup>

The point made here has clear implications for people of non-English speaking backgrounds. The organisational structures of some professional institutions are a typical example of systematic discrimination of non-English speaking background people, as their real purpose is to protect a particular professional group, namely, de facto a group of professionals of the majority group; they ignore the needs and aspirations of professionals from the ethnic minorities, as it is in accordance with their interest — to be a closed group, free of external competition. Consequently, they fully control the membership of the occupational organisation.

### 16.3 The Process of Recognition in Practice

There are three ways of assessing overseas qualifications in current practice: formal examination, analysis of the formal evidence of qualifications held (such as diplomas, certificates or degrees) and the mixture of the two.

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<sup>1</sup>R. Iredale "The Recognition of Overseas Qualifications and Skills", in James Jupp (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity*, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1989, p.165

Various authorities or professional associations at both the the federal and state level conduct the assessment of overseas qualifications, for example the Institution of Engineers, Australia, the Australian Medical Council, the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia or government departments.

The mechanism and process of recognition of overseas qualifications has been systematically criticised not only by the immigrants, but also by a few governmental committees established in order to review the system.

Fry, in his report 'The Recognition of Overseas Qualifications in Australia' noted the confusion of manpower and assessment issues.<sup>2</sup>

Another report, *Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services* prepared by Jupp's Committee stated:

the frustration of people whose overseas professional, technical, trade and other qualifications have not been recognised in Australia continues to be a major cause of concern which was raised repeatedly with the Committee.<sup>3</sup>

The Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies (CAAIP), referring to the above mentioned reports, reiterated their criticism of the

confusion, inefficiency and inequity. Both called for reforms that encourage national standards, better counselling and systematic links between qualifications recognition an refreshing training, retraining and language training. Unfortunately, little progress has been made. Reform has been caught in the rivalry between State and federal jurisdictions, in protracted tripartite negotiations and in the acquiescence of government agencies to the restrictive practices of some professional associations.<sup>4</sup>

On of the major problems pointed out by the Committee, in addition to the emphasis given to formal qualifications rather than skills and assessment of the system as

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<sup>2</sup>R. Fry *The Recognition of Overseas Qualifications in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1982

<sup>3</sup>*Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services. Don't Settle for Less: Report of the Committee for Stage 1 of the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1986

<sup>4</sup>Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies (1988). *Immigration: A Commitment to Australia: Report to the Committee ... (Fitz Gerald Report)* Australian Government Publishing Service



'fragmented', was the discriminatory character of the system, at least in its outcomes. The problem, of discrimination in this sphere was noted not only by the CAAIP. Iredale describes the issue more carefully as 'possible existence of discrimination in assessment processes', but gives data support and appropriate directions for future development.

While most people from English-speaking countries (90 per cent) tend to get their qualifications recognised, those from non-English speaking countries have much lower success rates. The reason may legitimately be that the training programs in some countries are not the same standard as those in Australia. However, the aim should be to accredit people who have a comparative standard of competency not an 'equivalent' qualification.<sup>5</sup>

## 16.4 'National Agenda' and Recognition Overseas Qualifications

The *National Agenda* realised that human resources can be wasted if the recognition of overseas qualifications is discriminatory and skills are not being utilising. The document also noted the fact that many immigrants who wanted to work in their areas of previous training were prevented from this by many factors, especially the inadequate recognition of overseas qualifications. Inadequate recognition of qualifications, together with a lack of opportunity for further study or work experience were, using the language, of the *National Agenda*: 'significant causes of our failure to capitalise fully on these overseas investment of our human capital'.<sup>6</sup> The authors of the document are perfectly right — it is a failure from the national point of view that the overseas skills are not used for the benefit of the country.

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<sup>5</sup>R. Iredale "The Recognition of Overseas Qualifications and Skills" in: J. Jupp (ed) *The Challenge of Diversity*, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1989, p.171

<sup>6</sup>"National Agenda" . . . . .p.27

But we should not forget the second dimension — the stress, disappointments or sometimes even trauma of the thousands of immigrants whose “real” qualifications in terms of knowledge and experience, are not being used because of bureaucratic, conservative views, or sometimes reasons which cannot be logically explained. Hence, the statement at the end of the short paragraph of the *National Agenda*, discussing the problem of overseas qualifications is worthy of quotation:

We must also ensure that we put in place complementary domestic policies in order that the skills acquired overseas are actually used to benefit all Australians<sup>7</sup>

But the ‘National Agenda’ did not stop at criticism in relation to current status quo, but clearly initiated a significant process of reforms.

The institution that most criticised was the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ). Robyn Iredale, for example noted that:

COPQ has progressively moved into individual assessments rather than just information provisions. Further, as the number of source countries of immigrants to Australia has expanded COPQ has moved towards the promotion of more assessment by examination as the means of dealing with an ever widening range of qualifications<sup>8</sup>

or

(COPQ) has been widely criticised by immigrants, and ethnic communities in general, as being remote, inaccessible and insensitive to the real situation facing people with overseas qualifications. Many do not see COPQ as trying to help them achieve recognition of their qualifications but as protecting the interest of Australian trained workers.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless it must be recognised that the Council performed an important, pioneering role in the area of overseas professional qualifications. A comparative approach to

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<sup>7</sup> *National Agenda* . . . . . p.27

<sup>8</sup> R. Iredale “The Recognition of Overseas Qualifications and Skills”, in J. Jupp (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity*, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1989, p.166

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p.169

overseas qualifications can be found in well known “Compendium of Guidelines” published by the Council. For some immigrants the statements of the Council on the ‘recognition’ of a qualification to a certain Australian level had an important, practical role. Such statement enabled immigrants to apply for a job in Australia successfully where professional qualifications were required. Many employers refused to assess any overseas qualifications and, in practice such an assessment had a benefit for job applicants with overseas qualifications. An evidence of some achievements and pioneering work of the Council can be seen in the still persisting practice of using the compendium, prepared and written by the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications, however in the modified and revised versions. This is still an important source of practical information about various academic qualifications from many countries.

Nevertheless, the current needs are more complicated and the requirements both from the Governments and overseas qualified professionals — higher. Hence, in consequence, the need for a change in policy and practice, seeking a new, different approach.

Highlighting the issue as important and of a national character, the *National Agenda* called for the establishment of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition. This Office, subsuming the former Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications is responsible for:

- promoting national standards for skills recognition;
- improving access to education and training;
- encouraging competency-based assessment,
- developing counselling and referral services;

- promoting occupational deregulation.

The issue of overseas qualifications was also discussed by 'The Year in Review', which, referring to the failure to recognise such qualifications, noted that:

Up to 7000 skilled migrants each year do not have their skills fully recognised.<sup>10 11</sup>

The Progress Report 1991 of the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition claimed:

The annual cost to the Australian economy is estimated at \$100 million and \$250 million. There are also personal, social and community costs. In the last twenty years Australia has wasted, partly or completely the skills of an estimated 200 000 skilled migrants.<sup>12</sup>

Following the criticism of the ways of recognition of overseas qualifications, the Government has bound itself to introduce reforms in this area.

## 16.5 Recent Achievements and Reforms for the Future

'The Year in Review' noted significant achievements in the three broad areas of recognition of overseas qualifications:

development of national competency-based skills standards in a number of professions and improved access for migrants to the Australian education and training system;

provision of better information resources to improve skills recognition processes, and general advice and support services to migrant settlers, including migrants and sponsors; and

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<sup>10</sup>*The Year in Review*

<sup>11</sup>The same estimate of 7000 thousand immigrants annually with unrecognised skills in Australia is stated in the Progress Report on Migrant Skills Strategy, June 1991, based on research conducted by the National Population Council in 1988 and other institutions

<sup>12</sup>National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition *Migrant Skills Reform Strategy*, Progress Report, June 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1991, p.13 with a reference to research by the National Population Council.

international developments involving and affecting Australia<sup>13</sup>

One of the formal achievements was previously mentioned — establishment of a new body which dealt specifically with the recognition of overseas qualifications — The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition. The Office replaced the former Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications. The change was not of a cosmetic nature. The name of the office suggests, what is true in practice, an emphasis on **skills** rather than formal paper qualifications. The second emphasis is on the **national** character of the office, underlining the importance of the issue and its scale.

There are also structural differences: the Office was established by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training (not Industrial Relations as previously) and located within the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The work of the office is associated with activities of the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition (NACSR), comprising professionals, academics and labour market leaders.

The Government undertook a review of the Office's 13 occupational panels and 4 examining councils during the period of three years. The objectives of the review of the panels and councils, formulated as follows:

- assist in the development of national skills standards in each of the professions for which there is a NOOSR panel or examining council;
- link the application of national skills standards to the recognition of overseas-trained professionals by State and Territory registration boards;
- and
- link the application of national skill standards to curriculum development by higher education institutions for TAFE courses.<sup>14</sup>

These objectives have been partly met by actions undertaken by both the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition and the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition.

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<sup>13</sup> *The Year in Review* ... p.35

<sup>14</sup> *The Year in Review* ... p.36-37

The general directions for the future appear to be clear but, considering the variety of aspects associated with a large number of very different educational and training systems around the world, the directions ought to be carefully analysed in the light of experience, and their application systematically monitored.

More practical aspects of the process of recognition of overseas qualifications were introduced in a paper circulated by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training under the title 'Migrant Skills, Improving Recognition Processes'. The document, once again acknowledged the seriousness of the problem, and, referring to the estimates of the Bureau of Immigration Record on migrants who came to Australia in 1988-89 stated:

While two-thirds or more of migrants professionals, para-professionals and tradesmen and women who seek recognition get their skills and qualifications recognised by appropriate Australian authorities, the remainder do not. The situation is worse for recent arrivals non-English speaking background, two-thirds of whom do not work in occupations fully utilising their skills.

This is a substantial waste of a pool of skilled labour, a pool which has over the years expanded to many tens of thousands of men and women who have not been able to make fully their mark in their adopted country. The resultant costs can be measured both in the diminution of national productivity and income, and in the very human problems of personal frustration, loss of self-esteem and unfulfilled potential.<sup>15</sup>

Recognising these facts, the document introduces appropriate reforms of overseas skills recognition with a skills recognition model named as 'a simplified approach to the assessment of overseas qualifications and skills'<sup>16</sup>

The document describes 'national skill standards' as:

the core skills needed for the performance of fundamental tasks required in every day practice of a given occupation, and the level of competence to adequately discharge those tasks. These would be applied regardless of where the individual has gained his or her training<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Migrant Skills. Improving Recognition Processes*. Circulated by the Hon. J.S. Dawkins MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, November 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1989, p. iv-v

<sup>16</sup> *Migrant Skills* . . . p.5

<sup>17</sup> *Migrant Skills* . . . p.13.

Access of skilled migrants to adequate education and training opportunities was also mentioned. A number of courses for overseas qualified professionals have been established.<sup>18</sup> This is because a significant proportion of migrants have unrecognised qualifications. But even when the qualifications are recognised, some immigrants, in addition to the improvement of their professional English, will need to upgrade their skills or refresh their knowledge with emphasis on local (i.e. Australian) practices and demands.

The Government rightly recognises that only those migrants who have their professional qualifications fully recognised will fulfil their occupational aspirations. The general strategy for the future in the area of overseas qualifications/skills appears to be clear but, considering the various practical difficulties associated with a large number of professional, educational and training institutions and their various practices, the strategies and particular programs ought to be carefully monitored and analysed in the light of future practices.

In spite of different approaches and a general progress in the area of overseas skills recognition, there have been from time to time tendencies to discriminate against emigrants with overseas qualifications. A particularly long battle has taken place in relation to overseas trained doctors and other medical practitioners.

Launched by the federal Minister for Health, Housing and Community Services in 1992 report *The Future of General Practice* called for limiting the entry of overseas qualified doctors into the local practice to ten per cent of the output of Australian medical schools, as well as advocating the abolition of temporary entry visas for foreign doctors.

Those recommendations as well as other restrictions regarding overseas medical prac-

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<sup>18</sup>See, for example, courses under the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition's Innovative Mainstreaming Funds (NIMF) mentioned also below

tioners were criticised by the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition. The Committee's chairman, Sir William Keys, stated, inter alia,:

...any attempts to impose the annual quotas on numbers of overseas trained doctors eligible to sit appropriate recognition examinations should be regarded as unfair and discriminatory<sup>19</sup>

When referring to the restrictive practices of professional groups in Australia, he made a reference to equity and access as principles which must be followed in recognition of overseas qualifications to be a benefit for Australia:

Only fair and equitable arrangements for skills recognition and access to the local labour market for all overseas trained will assist in the construction of a more skilled and more "clever" Australia.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the issue of the recognition of overseas qualifications cannot be seen in isolation from equal opportunity. The practice should be free from any unjustified restrictions or discriminations against any ethnic or professional groups. Any discriminatory practices would not only be against individuals concerned but, in fact, against the country as well (the damages can be partly expressed in terms of money as was estimated above).<sup>21</sup> Therefore the criticism of the Committee is fully justified and must be supported.

## 16.6 The Most recent Changes

The most recent changes in the area of overseas qualifications/skills recognition<sup>22</sup> are significant. One of the problems which seems likely to be resolved soon is the issue of the recognition of skills between states in Australia. So far, states and territories in Australia

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<sup>19</sup>quoted in: *Migrant Skills Newsletter*, Issue No 7, June 1992, p.2.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid, p.2

<sup>21</sup>In addition the restrictions recommended by some groups would decrease competitiveness, a phenomenon which is not positive from the nation-wide point of view.

<sup>22</sup>the term "skills recognition" is now used in all governments policies, papers, etc.



have not automatically recognised qualifications from other states and territories. Immigrants and even citizens of Australia born in this country who have professional or trade qualifications have to have them 'recognised' or experience other formal difficulties (such as a new formal registration in different state, licence or passing an exam) when moving to other state. This problem was noted by the government and the former Minister for Employment, Education and Training who made the following comparison:

For many professionals, it is easier to move between countries in Europe than between States in Australia.<sup>23</sup>

The Special Premiers' Conference in October 1990 discussed the issue and agreed on a framework to give mutual recognition to professional, para-professional and trade skills through Australia.

The Commonwealth Government's Migrants Skills Reform Strategy was endorsed by the states and territories, and in co-operation with the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition and the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, migrant qualifications boards were established in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Amongst the activities of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, the NOOSR Innovative Mainstreaming Fund (NIMF) which aims to integrate bridging courses for skilled migrants who need to upgrade their skills into the mainstream courses provided by higher education institutions, should be mentioned.

In addition NOOSR embarked upon a substantial three year project to compare education and training systems of 85 countries through the publication of comprehensive sets of "Country Profiles" for each major world region.

As the most important in this area the government considers the reform of skills and

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<sup>23</sup>John Dawkins, 3 December 1990, quoted in: *Migrants Skills Reform Strategy, Progress Report*, June 1991, National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1991, p.17

the recognition process, and the development of national competency standards for particular professions. There is an understanding, however of the complexity of the problems faced by the NOOSR:

There will be no universal quick fix: the issues are complex, and interests of the groups involved are various and numerous. The best solutions will depend on informed understanding of the issues and co-operation in the process of reform. The Migrants Skills Reform Strategy is necessarily a long term strategy.<sup>24</sup>

Although the process of reform in relation to overseas skills recognition can be considered as significant, its further systematic analysis from the equal opportunity point of view, in particular whether it is not discriminatory against non-English speaking background migrants, will be necessary in the future.

## **16.7 Recognition of Overseas Qualifications, Equal Opportunity and Impact on Preservation Ethnic Cultures**

Finally, there are two closing points on overseas qualifications to be made.

The issue is an important one from the equal opportunity point of view and our main problem — the preservation of ethnic minority cultures in Australia.

In terms of equal opportunity, the recognition is important because it is the only way to give immigrants access to the professions they previously practiced in their countries of origin. Analysis of the process of recognition of overseas qualifications from the equal opportunity point of view requires a strong critique of discriminatory attitudes or unnecessary barriers of a protectionist character.

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<sup>24</sup>National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition, *Migrants Skills Reform Strategy, Progress Report*, June 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1991, p.14

It can also be seen to be related to the issue of the preservation ethnic cultures. Indeed, people who perform their role in society appropriately to skills and knowledge can better utilise the skills in a more effective manner than when employed below the level of their capacity. Migrants with fully recognised qualifications are also more confident in manner and willing to share their cultural heritage in a work place situation.

It must be noted that the recognition of professional qualifications of first generation migrants of non-English speaking backgrounds has a considerable impact on second generation attitudes towards cultures different from the majority one. To illustrate this statement: if the children of migrants know that their parents are employed according to their overseas qualifications, skills, and knowledge, although acquired in a different language, they have a strong motivation, and more positive attitudes towards their parents culture (and language). In contrast, when they know that their parents' skills are not being utilised because they are from a different culture or because of their parents' difficulties with the English language (often not related to the job which they would be capable of performing), they may come to consider the parents' language as the main source of the problem. Consequently such children would be more likely to become monolingual. Also parents who have experienced discrimination would be unlikely to encourage further study of their native language or to display other distinctive features of their cultural heritage. *A contrario*, children of migrants from non-English speaking countries, who had noted that their parents are able to fully utilise their overseas professional skills in Australia (including sometimes their language in the employment situation), will be strongly motivated by this fact towards the preservation and development of their cultures.

Hence, recognition of overseas qualifications can have an important impact on the preservation and development of minority ethnic cultures, although usually indirectly.

The relevance of social justice in the area of overseas skills recognition cannot be questioned. It is no accident that the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition includes in its statement of mission the following sentence:

The mission of the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition (NACSR) is to enhance economic efficiency and **social justice** in Australia through its contribution, in an advisory capacity, towards recognition and utilisation of overseas acquired skills (emphasis added).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition, *Migrants Skills Reform Strategy, Progress Report*, June 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1991.

## Chapter 17

# The Analysis of Policy Statements on Equal Opportunity in Educational Institutions

The task of the chapter is to analyse some samples of formal policies on equal opportunity adopted by some educational institutions in order to investigate how these institutions see equal opportunity in their practices and whether they refer to multiculturalism.

Simply, we will look at any reference to multiculturalism or people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Consequently, the analysis should give an answer to the question of whether the statements have any relevance, and if so, to what extent, for the particular needs of young students from minority ethnic groups.

The method of humanistic sociology will be employed to analyse the documents which are of a public or official nature.

### 17.1 Analysis of documents in the light of humanistic sociology

In Chapter 6 of Part II we have discussed the problem of the utilisation of official documents. It was stated, *inter alia*, that analysing policy statements, sociologists can only analyse those activities which are expressed in the documents. Also the following

three important dangers were listed:

1. it is always unsafe to presume that verbally expressed activity has provoked the reaction it aimed to provoke, unless we have direct evidence in the form of other documents expressing their reaction, or sufficiently substantiated indirect evidence of a positive kind;
2. lack of a clear distinction between action and information;
3. a common inclination to treat the intentions or ideas manifested in such documents as being 'sincere' or 'insincere' indications of more or less permanent active dispositions of the individual, or the group, from whom the document emanates.

Therefore, the concentration in this short analysis should take into account only these activities which are associated with the statement made by educational institutions. However, the activities which will be of an interest to us are only part of the broader concerns of the policy. Therefore, our intention is to investigate only these activities which would be relevant to people of a non-English speaking background.

## **17.2 Multiculturalism and Equal Opportunity**

As we have previously indicated, there have been strong, interdependent relationships between equal opportunity and multiculturalism. Therefore, we should expect that the relationships should be reflected in the various policy statements adopted by educational institutions. Although they do not have to refer specifically to multicultural policy, they could be expected to refer to the equal treatment of people, both staff and students (including prospective students) regardless of their ethnic origin. From the legal point

of view, as was previously discussed, equal treatment should be assured at least in the two areas related to the main functions of all educational institutions — education and employment.

However, taking into account the specific needs of NESB people, the right of using and developing their languages and preserving their cultural heritage should be ensured.

Following the principle of humanistic sociology, we should also look at the issue of equal opportunity from the participants' point of view, that is, in their specific situation, how the statements are relevant and significant from the NESB staff and students' perspective.

### **17.2.1 The sample**

Eleven statements from various post-secondary institutions were collected between 1988–1991. Some of the institutions latter become affiliated or amalgamated with others, during the process of establishing the national unified system and are now known under different names. Although the sample is concerned with a small number of institutions located within two states: South Australia and Victoria — it does illustrate the general tendencies in institutional perceptions of relations between multiculturalism and equal opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

### **17.2.2 The specific purpose of the analysis**

Each statement on institutional equal opportunity was analysed in order to establish whether there was any:

1. specific reference to ethnicity;

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<sup>1</sup>We are well aware of the distinction as Jewson & Mason call it “the dimensions of equal opportunities policies” such as: existence of formal program, its implementation, effectiveness or perception of the programs, and, more importantly, we are aware of the gap between formal statements and strategies of implementations (as Feuchtwang calls it) or programmers (Jenkins’s distinction). For further details see: N. Jewson & D. Manson “Monitoring Equal Opportunities Policies and Practice” in: R. Jenkins, J. Solomons (eds) *Racism and Equal Opportunity Policies*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.127 and 5

2. reference to race (as the term includes ethnicity);
3. reference to staff and/or students of a non-English speaking background;
4. specific reference to legal acts in the area of equal opportunity, especially to the Race Discrimination Act 1975;
5. reference to multiculturalism;
6. other statements or actions included in these statements which could be relevant to the investigation.

### **17.2.3 The results**

Among the eleven institutions, only five made a reference to ethnicity in their statements (one used the term 'migrant'). However, nine of the institutions made a specific reference to race. Only two institutions referred in their statements to staff and students of non-English speaking backgrounds. Six of the investigated statements referred to the legislation, although one of them did not list the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, but referred to the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (South Australia).

None of the institutions included any reference to multiculturalism or multicultural policy.

Two statements anticipated specific actions which were relevant and useful for our investigation:

The University of Melbourne, in its statement on equal opportunity, encouraged faculties "to acknowledge the possibility that gender and ethnicity enter into the construction of knowledge and take into account of this in the process of curriculum planning."



Although the directive is of a very general and non-compulsory character, the recognition of ethnicity as a factor constructing knowledge, and an appropriate request for curriculum planners seems to be significant and far-reaching.

As a very significant statement for the topic should be considered a specific policy of the Hawthorn Institute of Education which requires the Institute, where appropriate, to “translate documents into relevant languages.” Such a requirement must be assessed very positively as relevant for the multicultural community to whom educational institutions should serve.

The details of the analysis are summarised in the table 17.1.

#### **17.2.4 The overview**

Although the majority of the institutions refer to ‘race’, the term which in Australia legally includes ‘ethnicity’<sup>2</sup> as well, they should refer also to ethnicity. This is because equal opportunity statements are addressed to a wider community, and have an informative and educational role.

Surprisingly, only two statements referred to non-English speaking background people, the group which is considered as disadvantaged both in employment, and in education. Six of the eleven institutions referred to specific state and federal legislation, but only four listed the Racial Discrimination Act 1975. It is clear that none of the institutions sees any specific relation between equal opportunity and multiculturalism. This is the most critical point and requires immediate improvement by an incorporation of multiculturalism within their policy statements. However, one institution used the term ‘migrant’ and two required

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<sup>2</sup>The Racial Discrimination Act, following the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination refer to: “any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin . . .” [section 9(1) my emphasis].

Table 17.1: .

No	Institution	Date of the policy (if stated)	Is a reference to ethnicity made?	Is a reference to race made?	Is a reference to NESB students/staff made?	Is a specific reference to the legislation made?	Is a reference to multi-culturalism made?	Additional comments
1	The University of Adelaide		No	Yes	No	EO Act (SA) 1984 AA Act 1986 Racial Dis. Act 1975 Sex Disr. Act 1984	No	
2	Philip Institute of Technology		No	No	No	No	No	Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity
3	Newport College of TAFE	June 1987	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	
4	The South Australian Institute of Technology		Yes	Yes	No	EO Act (SA) 1984 Racial Dis. Act 1975 Sex Disr. Act 1984	No	
5	La Trobe University		Yes	Yes	No	EO Act (Vic) 1984 AA Act 1986 Racial Dis. Act 1975 Sex Disr. Act 1984	No	
6	Gippsland Inst. Adv. Educ.	May 1987	No	Yes	No	No	No	
7	The University of Melbourne	1991	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	encourages faculties "to acknowledge the possibility that gender and ethnicity enter into the construction of knowledge and take into account of this in the process of curriculum planning"
8	Monash University	July 1990	Yes	Yes	No	EO Act (Vic) 1984 AA Act 1986 Racial Dis. Act 1975 Sex Disr. Act 1984 Human Rights & EO A. 1986	No	
9	Hawthorn Institute of Education		No	Yes	Yes	EO Act (Vic) 1984 AA Act 1986 Racial Dis. Act 1975 Sex Disr. Act 1984 Human Rights A. 1981	No	"where appropriate translate documents into relevant languages"
10	Roseworthy Agricultural College Victoria	Feb. 1985	Yes (referring 'migrants')	No	No	EO Act (SA) 1984 AA Act 1986 Sex Disr. Act 1984	No	
11	College of Agric. and Hortic.	1986	No	Yes	No	No	No	

specific actions relevant for ethnic minorities. The two actions must be considered as very appropriate and innovative in post-secondary education: the inclusion of the ethnic point of view in the curriculum can be treated as a *novum*, a non-formal requirement in an area which perhaps is more important, and more useful, for non-English speaking background people undertaking study than a formal policy statement that they are not discriminated against by an institution.

Similarly significant, in no more, is the intention of the Hawthorn Institute of Education to translate documents into relevant languages. This is a very valuable action. The Institute, based upon its profile of origin of the Institute's staff and students knows which languages are relevant in the community. This can be seen as an appreciation of multiculturalism in general, and community languages in particular.

Both initiatives would be worth following by other institutions.

### 17.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis we can make some clear observations and recommendations meaningful for our topic.

It is very clear from the investigation that institutions do not realise or ignore the inter-dependent relations between multiculturalism and equal opportunity. Therefore, it should be recommended that the institutions ought to consider the inclusion of a statement on, and commitment to, multiculturalism within their statements on equal opportunity. This would be beneficial for the development of equal opportunity practices of the institutions, and multiculturalism in a specific educational setting. Moreover, this would be of significance to the young people in the research, and thousands of students of non-English speaking backgrounds living in multicultural Australia, as well as students coming from

other countries to Australia for study as full-fee paying overseas students. It may also benefit a small number of staff of non-English speaking backgrounds, whose number can, and should, increase under institutional equal employment opportunity programs. The second recommendation which could be made is the appreciation of the need to make a reference in the policy statements to anti-discrimination legislation, and the reference always ought to include the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth). Until specific legislation on multiculturalism is established, a reference to the "National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia" can be made, as this represents national policy with some specific references to education.

Thirdly, in reference to multiculturalism from the equal opportunity point of view, an appreciation and understanding of the needs of non-English speaking background people (as well as other disadvantaged groups) could be included within the statements.

In addition, more specific actions undertaken by institutions, similar to those of the University of Melbourne or Hawthorn Institute of Education could be recommended and developed by other institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, a commitment of a more general nature, following the suggestions of the humanistic sociological distinction between attitudes and actions, the policy statements should include reference to more specific actions. This would make the documents more credible, easier for implementation, and showing the real commitments of many educa-

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<sup>3</sup>We realise that the majority of the institutions have their Equity Programs in higher education, where the issue of special needs of non-English speaking backgrounds is incorporated under various strategies and/or actions.

We also realise that very few institutions in Australia have their own, specific multicultural policies but a reference to multiculturalism within equal opportunity would be appropriate. This would be particularly valuable from a strategic point of view as there is a common tendency contemporarily to 'mainstream' various programs under the Access and Equity Strategy well known in the public sector. We would however much prefer to suggest a specific separate policy statement on multiculturalism, with an additional reference to the institutional equal opportunity statements.

tional institutions towards the principles of equal opportunity and multiculturalism.

## **Part V**

# **The Question of Preservation of Ethnic Cultures and its Political and Educational Implications**

## Introduction

During the time of gathering data for this research nobody could have anticipated the dramatic changes that took place around the world in 1989–1991. Incidentally, these changes also took place in relation to all the ethnic groups involved in this research. In all the countries of origin of these young ethnic people: Croatia, Poland and the Ukraine, there has been a fast process of change in the political system towards full democracy, and, in two cases, new fully independent countries have appeared on the contemporary political map of Europe.

It would probably be impossible to imagine a better kind of evidence than these actual political changes to show that ethnic issues are not only a matter of interest to the relatively small ethnic groups in Australia, or to the few researchers of their narrow cultural problems in this country, but they are, in reality, important social phenomena, both of historical and contemporary character. Unfortunately, these phenomena have not been adequately investigated so far. There have not been suggested solutions in the literature, or practical directions for the future.

When this topic of the work was introduced a few years ago, some could treat these problems as not significant enough for a long, time consuming investigation and analysis. Many questions have appeared like, for example: ‘Is it worth analysing cultural problems of an ethnic group which has no independent country of origin any more?’ or ‘Ukraine lost its independence more than half century ago and will never be free’ or ‘Why pay any attention to the Croatian group as the Croats are a de facto part of Yugoslavia’, and so on.

These changes have had an impact, also in Australia, not only on the ethnic com-



munities themselves, but on a national scale, as a result of the world-wide implications. But whilst analysing the difficult, long, and not always appreciated efforts at cultural and linguistic maintenance among these ethnic communities in Australia, especially the Ukrainian and Croatian, we must note that their hard work towards the preservation of their cultural heritage can be clearly considered as beneficial, for both the ethnic communities, and for Australia as well. The achievements of the communities can be utilized just now when all contacts with the new, independent countries, from basic diplomatic ties, through to trade, scientific and cultural contacts, need to be quickly established. In particular, these ethnic communities would be able to perform the important role of a 'bridge' to initiate the first contacts, be actively involved in the process of establishing good relations between countries, as well as economic and cultural co-operation now and for the future.

Therefore, we can be sure that the ethnic question is not only an academic issue. Indeed, contemporary events in the former Soviet Union, Eastern, Central as well as Southern Europe, with the great implications for the whole world in their political, economic and cultural aspects, have shown how the issue of ethnicity, the struggle of people for their national, cultural or linguistic values, is important.

It would even be possible to draw a long history of each nation of the countries concerned, with the creation of a new map of modern Europe as a starting point of the importance of cultural values for a particular national group. The political aspects seem to be overdescribed in any analysis of the events, whereas the main source of the changes lies much deeper, and involves complex cultural reasons, which are very difficult to conceptualize.

We can, however, refer to our previous discussion of core values.

Indeed, the struggle about cultural values is much more complicated than the political one. The conflicts of racial or ethnic character, almost unknown in Australia, the 'lucky country' are not the domain of one continent or political system.

Looking at any political magazine with a wider international interest, as for example the "Time", we can often find a description of contemporary events associated with social or ethnic problems. In addition to the events in Eastern, Southern and Central Europe, The former Soviet Union (both in its European and Asian part), racial and ethnic problems in the United States, Canada, South Africa, Middle East, almost in every region of our globe, are often noted. And this is not an exaggeration or an attempt at eloquence to make and create better awareness of racial and ethnic problems. The issue is even very relevant for well established countries, which have an international reputation of good, democratic traditions, well developed economies, and cultural tolerance. In Austria, for example, the Freedom Party used its campaign posters to declare that "Vienna must remain the hometown for the Viennese". The leader, Jörg Haider claimed that he was not anti-foreign, but 'native friendly'. Such a policy however has strong anti-racial and anti-immigration implications. The 'Time' noted:

Haider's nativist appeal is gaining momentum in a country where, according to the recent poll, a third of the population has negative feelings for foreigners and 19% believe the country would be better off if it had no Jews, who at present number a mere 6.000. Such sentiments have been aggravated over the past two years by the influx of tens of thousands of immigrants from Eastern Europe, swelling the total number of foreigners among 7.8 million Austrians to about 500 000.<sup>4</sup>

The issues of ethnicity and race are also taken into account in the current political debate in Belgium where the party of Vlaams Blok seeks to expel North Africans and establish an 'independent' Flanders. The 'Time' writes:

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<sup>4</sup> *Time* (Australia), November 25, 1991, p.39

Vlaams Blok gets 20% of the vote in Antwerp, where its headquarters sell WHITE IS BEAUTIFUL stickers and cartoons portray the Belgian flag as toilet paper. 'We've fought to preserve our Flemish identity against franco-phonization' says Vlaam Blok Deputy Filip Dewinter. 'Now we don't want to be colonized by Muslims'. Vlaams Blok posters of giant boxing gloves carry the slogan SELF-DEFENCE.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to such policies, in Australia there is a recognition and acceptance of multiculturalism by the major political parties, and formal government policies at both federal and state level. These policies contribute towards overcoming serious racial and ethnic struggles, so typical for other societies. However, even this continent is not fully free from racial or ethnic conflicts, and the discussion on immigration policies is ongoing, involving not only political parties, but Australian society as well.

In Australia, there is an agreement that immigration should be a continuous process, consistent with Australian tradition, and the real needs of the country. What is discussed, is the level of immigration, and the specific number of immigrants to be taken in every year, as well as the particular groups to be represented, based on specific criteria such as business migration, family reunion or humanitarian reasons.

What must be discussed within this part is not the policies of immigration as such but the consequences of the planned process of immigration, both past and present. The emphasis should be not so much on interdependent relations between majority and minority groups in Australia, but rather on specific cultural problems.

The main issue for ethnic minorities can be stated as the question of the preservation of ethnic cultures and languages in Australia. The implication of the question for the whole of Australia, including political and educational aspects, will be discussed in detail.

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<sup>5</sup> *Time* (Australia), November 25, 1991, p.41

## Chapter 18

# Multiculturalism and Languages

In the literature there was stated that, in a sense, equal opportunity means that “individuals should be afforded the means of fulfilling their natural capacities (the social system assures responsibility for overcoming initial disadvantages that have social cause — for example, disadvantages owing to low income or social class or one’s parents)”.

*Per analogiam*: when we are in the sphere of multicultural society, where each member of a minority group possesses a natural capacity to develop, the ‘natural capacity’ should be afforded the means, in this case, of young ethnic people, access to schools when the language is thought. The whole social system of multicultural society should therefore assume this. Indeed, this is not only the problem of an individual. As the knowledge of other languages is a benefit for the whole society (and not necessarily a multicultural one, but multicultural in particular), hence the involvement of the social system, especially governmental organizations, ought to take place in order to, at least, encourage young people to develop knowledge of their languages.

The interdependent relationships between equal opportunity and development of ethnic cultures were discussed previously.

Here we should ask, in the first instance, whether ethnic cultures should be preserved. If so, to what extent, which way, by whom, and how to conduct such a complex and

complicated process, in a specific situation of a multicultural society.

If we agree, in principle, that such preservation should take place, the implication of a political nature should be addressed, both in its positive and negative aspects.

In addition to political implications there would be also educational implications, a consequence of acceptance of the principle. The educational implications would be, in this case, probably more important and practically more difficult to solve.

To begin the problem of preservation of ethnic cultures let us answer 'no' to the question. This would be based on the assumption that society is not interested in any other culture, including languages, wants to support the main culture of the society only, or more precisely, the majority group culture. Such an attitude or point of view is possible.

What advantages of such a policy could be noted? The answer to the question can be only one — none. Maybe from the point of view of the majority group, for political, social, or organizational purposes, it may appear to be useful, but, in fact, such an attitude would be a negation of reality.

Let take into account one aspect of culture — religion. The long war against any form of religion in the Soviet Union, including prosecution, did not stop people believing, and, when later publicly acknowledged as a right — attracted many people, including non-believers and members of the former Communist Party, previously declared atheists. But more importantly, the example of the Soviet Union shows that it is not possible to ignore this aspect of culture, and that it would be impossible to expect the assumed result, that the very discriminatory policies and practises, including those reinforced by more or less open prosecution, are able to prevent the preservation of culture. Yet, in the case of the Soviet Union, religion was preserved by particular nations in all denominations, within

different traditions, including the native languages of professing of their believers. Non-acceptance, or lack of full acceptance of other cultures does mean the end of problems for the majority of representatives of the main and their governing bodies. Language is not an exception.

The case of Poland, a country absent on the political map of Europe through the period of more than one century, after the partition by three different empires shows that language can be preserved for an extraordinary period of time. It can be added that all countries involved in the process of Poland's partition undertook long term policies and means, including penalties, to make the Poles speakers of Russian or German respectively.

Similarly like the policy and practices in relation to religion and negative attitudes towards other ethnic groups in the Soviet Union presented from the governing centre, the long term assimilationist policy in Australia was unsuccessful. Although there are differences between those policies (in Australia based on the assumption that all immigrants will speak English), there is also an analogy between them. In the case of Australia, the assimilationist policy did not result in the whole of Australian society acquiring the Anglo-Saxon culture (and the English language in particular).

In spite of the wishes of the social policy makers, it is not always possible to acquire the language of the ethnic majority by the whole society. Members of many ethnic minorities, even those who have been in Australia for twenty years or longer are still not able to undertake basic communication in English. Mono-cultural policy rather contributes to the defensive strategy of some ethnic community groups to create so called 'ethnic ghettos'.

There are still results of this, for example, some large groups of older Greek, Italian or German people who, in spite of the assimilation policy, are able to communicate only in their ethnic languages, living permanently in ethnic enclaves and avoiding contacts

and interactions with the majority groups. Obviously, such an ethnic ghetto cannot contribute to the development of their cultures in the framework of multicultural policy, or the cultural development of the wider community. This was the outcome of the assimilationist ideas, de facto against many members of the wider community not only ethnic groups themselves.

Indeed, the only reasonable policy in a multicultural society, addressing the social needs, can be multicultural policy as a natural consequence of the society real status quo.

## 18.1 Multiculturalism and Multilingualism

Continuing our discussion, with frequent reference to language, we can state that multiculturalism, in a multicultural society, must be linked to multilingualism as its part. But acceptance of multilingualism in a social life, it is not only the acceptance of multiculturalism, as its natural consequence. The ties of multilingualism are also very strong with the concept of equal opportunity. Once again, people from non-English speaking backgrounds (or ethnic minorities in the Australian context) should have the opportunity to preserve their languages in a society which is de facto multicultural, regardless of whether some people appreciate the term or not. This is because in the Australian landscape multiculturalism is real, and it is not very important whether we appreciate this or not, or wish to have such a society, we have positive or negative attitudes, ignore or admire the fact. To realize this fact we do not even need to look at statistical data, percentages etc, as it is an easily observable fact in any large Australian community, on our streets, public transport, schools or universities, churches and clubs etc. We can easily notice not only the racial mixture of people, but linguistic diversity as well.

Non-English speaking background people regularly use their languages in many of

the above described places, and in many situations. If we assume a situation where a specific law or rules are established in order to avoid, let us say, speaking other languages in public places, as it had happened in some dark periods of history around the world, such a rule would be considered contemporarily, undoubtedly as an obvious example of discrimination. Fortunately, today, prosecution or even discrimination, because of the usage in public places of ethnic languages, has only a historical dimension. However, still, the reaction in society to the usage of ethnic languages in Australia is very different, various is the degree of tolerance or acceptance, and, in a very few situations, there is an encouragement towards using ethnic (community) languages.

## **18.2 Attitudes towards Multilingualism**

Experience based on observation of minority groups shows that there is an emphasis on the usage of the majority group language, pressure from some individuals, especially those who have achieved a good level of English. This can be explained in terms of the long existence of an assimilation policy. In the memory of older immigrants there are still cases of unpleasant reaction when ethnic languages were used; they have a fear of speaking to each other in their mother tongue, and, in many cases without adequate acquisition of English. Older migrants talk about it as a past experience in Australia. On the other hand, there is still lack of appreciation of the usage of languages other than English in Australia. Languages other than English are considered as of lower value. This is in contrast with some rather, or predominantly, monolingual societies where a sound of 'foreign language' is admired. Furthermore, more hospitality is offered to those who speak other languages and/or represent different cultures.

One more point should be addressed in relation to multicultural policy, in addition to



the argument of the right to preserve ethnic languages. The point is the idea of 'a truly authentic democracy' as Schiavoni calls it.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, multiculturalism fits very well into the concept of democracy. What is a typical feature of democracy, is an appreciation of diversity in society, acceptance of a variety of political parties, religions, different views. Therefore, linguistic variety in addition to the one official or national language, should be appreciated as a part of the democratic process.

Furthermore, positive attitudes towards multilingualism can overcome not only the disadvantage, as Parkin and Summer call 'underrepresentation of ethnic and racial minorities'<sup>2</sup>, but could also result in better involvement of those ethnic groups within the political scene. Undoubtedly, increasing the political activism of ethnic groups would be desirable. From a nation wide perspective the fuller participation of minority ethnic groups in the political life of the nation, would better advantage that so called 'ethnic lobby', which according to Parkin and Summers 'has been particularly active in seeking to shape immigration policy in ways that favour family reunion and the maintenance of ethnic communities'<sup>3</sup>.

And yet, analysing the relation between multilingualism and multiculturalism, multilingualism should not be seen as a marginalized issue within multicultural policy. As it Schiavoni pointed out for whom it is essential that:

to defend centrality of the cultural and linguistic question in the debate on multiculturalism — not merely on the basis of important theoretical reasons but because of the serious implications this approach has for government policies and practices<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, the implications of the multi lingual aspects of multiculturalism require cer-

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<sup>1</sup> Franco Schiavoni "The case for linguistic pluralism" in: D. Goodman et al (ed) *Multicultural Australia: the challenges of Change*, Scribe 1991

<sup>2</sup> A. Parkin, J. Summers "Ethnic Groups and Aborigines" in: *Government Politics and Power in Australia. An Introductory Reader, Fourth Edition*, Edited by J. Summers et all,

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Parkin ... Ibid, p.281.

<sup>4</sup> F. Schiavoni "The case for Linguistic Pluralism" in: D. Goodman et all (ed) *Multicultural Australia: the Challenges of Change*, Scribe, 1991, p.38.

tain realistic policies and practices, appropriate to the social needs and specificity of the problem. But first of all the government of Australia, the government of a multicultural country, must take a clear position for now and for the future in relation to the languages of Australia. Unfortunately, the position is not clear, and some government documents on the issue are not consistent. This is not a situation which may satisfy both the majority and minority ethnic groups. For example, the discussion paper published by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training seems to be a departure from the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* and was seriously criticised by many prominent Australian scholars. This is also a departure from the "National Policy on Languages" report<sup>5</sup> (the documents because of their importance for the topic will be discussed separately).

Here, we should come back to the relations between multiculturalism and multilingualism, which are indeed interdependent. There is rather an agreement in contemporary literature that multiculturalism in Australia is based upon two separate models: social justice and cultural<sup>6</sup>.

I would defend the position that both multiculturalism, as well as multilingualism, should include both elements: social justice and the cultural approach are not only compatible, but extremely complementary and interdependent. It is an important domain of social justice to give an access to ethnic languages for those who are disadvantaged, and on the other hand, as language has an important value for many minority groups — should be preserved for the benefit of these groups, as well as all Australians (cultural

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<sup>5</sup>Commonwealth Department of Education *National Policy on Languages* (J. Lo Bianco), Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1987 (known as Lo Bianco report).

<sup>6</sup>see for example:

S. Salagares *Multiculturalism in the Public Sector: A Matter of Access and Equity* paper presented during the National Conference: Professional Cross-Cultural Staff Development: Inside and Outside Universities, Adelaide, October 2-4, 1991,

F. Schiavoni "The case for Linguistic Pluralism" in: D. Goodman et al (ed) *Multicultural Australia: the challenges of Change*, Scribe, 1991, p.38.

approach). Or, in other words, an ethnic group, as a disadvantaged group, should have an 'access' to their own language in order to be able to communicate fully and more effectively. Simultaneously, the language of the group is a part of the national heritage of the whole multicultural (and multilingual) nation, and should be preserved as such.

Consequently, whatever stance we represent: social justice or cultural, the question of the preservation of ethnic languages has only one answer — ethnic languages should be preserved.

### **18.3 Some Consequences of Language Preservation or Lack of Preservation**

It should be noted that the lack of opportunity to preserve, or even lack of encouragement by the government and/or social organizations, may create great damage not only for the individuals concerned and, for that matter their families, as, for example, the elders who can be isolated from other family members because of linguistic division and lack of communication, but the whole society as well. To use a real life example:

A student teacher during her teaching practice, specialising herself in teaching a community language in a main stream school, was congratulated by a science teacher of the school for teaching the students a subject of a great social importance. She described to the student teacher her own, painful, family case that she did not have the possibility of a continuation of the study of her mother tongue after arrival to Australia as a child. As a result she lost the ability to communicate in her first language, firstly with her brothers who started to speak English only, but later with her parents. Her parents were not able to learn English as they arrived in Australia in their forties, and both worked as labourers

in a factory to support the family. Now, when they are old and retired, they are not able to communicate with their own daughter-teacher. Today she regrets not learning her first language and as a consequence, its loss. Understanding the feelings of her parents she decided to study the language now in order to be able to communicate with her parents and to help them to communicate with English speaking people. Her parents often ask for interpreters when they contact government or social organisations.

Not always are the consequences of a lack of preservation of the ethnic language so dramatic as in the case of this family. However, in every case, the social cost of the lack of preservation of the first language is always high.

An important argument of a practical nature should be also added that it is much easier to work in order to preserve and develop a language (whether first or second) when the learner is young and there are good chances even to maintain, or acquire, the accent of the native speaker.

Not preserving ethnic languages creates a wasting of talents, and unrealized social needs in the development science, both physical and cultural, trade, international co-operation, social development, personal contacts etc.

In the current Australian economic recession the competition for new markets for trade, or to increase export to countries where export is not big, knowledge of the languages which are spoken by Australian ethnic communities, and their development and utilization for these purposes, can help to intensify export. This was noted even by the former Australian Prime Minister who said:

with the inevitable emergence into the global economy of the countries that once formed a block of centrally planned nations — the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe — Australians will need to ensure we can compete in these new markets on their linguistic terms<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup>Robert Hawke quoted in *Vox — The Journal of the Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural*

However, the argument of 'economic value' seems to be of a supplementary nature only to the problem of the preservation of ethnic languages, nevertheless it can be taken into account. The above-quoted statement is very relevant to all ethnic groups being the subject of the research. All the young respondents who preserved their mother tongues, and developed them to a good level, will have an additional opportunity to contribute to the development of Australian export to the countries of their (or their parents) origin. The benefits of the preservation of language, and opportunities, are, however, much wider than that of a commercial nature only: chances of the study of cultural interchange in the country of origin, a variety of intercultural interactions, and the natural consequences of knowledge of a second language (reading books, newspapers, listening to the radio, watching TV, direct conversation with other people, etc.).

## Chapter 19

# The Question of Languages other than English in the Light of “The Australian Language and Literacy Policy” — a critique.

### 19.1 The Government’s Policies on Languages

The Australian government realised to a certain degree the importance of languages other than English, and worked on a special policy in this regard. However, the declaration of such policy does not necessarily mean a full appreciation of the problem, and its full complexity in all implications. The policy itself requires improvement, and different philosophical emphasis, as well as many clarifications, especially for the future. In particular, the economic issue can be seen only as an outcome of the policy, rather than one of the major factors for creation of such a policy.

The document discussed below can be compared to the previous “National Policy on Languages” by Lo Bianco<sup>1</sup>. The new policy is, unfortunately, a departure in many cases from the previous one.

In particular, the former document refers to the policy of multiculturalism, which is

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<sup>1</sup>Commonwealth Department of Education, *National Policy on Languages*, J. Lo Bianco, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1987.

defined as “equity for all community groups and cultural diversity within national cohesion and unity.”<sup>2</sup>

The new policy fails to recognize that multiculturalism is associated with equity for all community groups in the most important area of the interest of the document — language. Also there is a lack reference, as has been previously mentioned, to languages spoken in Australia as the so-called “community languages”. It is no accident that the new policy uses the term ‘language’ in its title of the document in singular, referring to the English language only. The previous policy did not ignore the other community languages in Australia in this way, but advocated the learning of English **and** other languages.

Consequently, the “Australia’s Language” does not refer to the “language pluralism of Australia”, which, according to Lo Bianco was “regarded as valuable national resource enhancing and enriching cultural and intellectual life and as valuable economic resource in its potential for use in international trade.”<sup>3</sup>

The new policy thus fails to promote bilingualism as had been done in the “National Policy on Languages” which stated, inter alia, that:

it will be advocated that children who are potentially bilingual ought to be assisted by schools to develop their potential.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, strong emphasis on bilingualism, especially to maintain home languages of primary school children, was recommended by the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts. The Committee recommended:

The learning of languages at primary school level should be substantially increased to give more children the opportunity to maintain their home languages or to acquire other languages.<sup>5</sup> (recommendation 78)

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p.6

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p.6

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p.8

<sup>5</sup>Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report on National Language Policy*. Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1984,

Unlike "Australia's Language" the previous policy on languages was based on six principles, one of which recognized the importance of community languages other than English, and anticipated increased opportunities for those Australians who continue learning their first language.

In a recently published policy document "Australia's Language" the government stated, under goal two, that:

The learning of languages other than English must be substantially expanded and improve the enhance educational outcomes and communication within both the Australian and the international community.<sup>6</sup>

It is an important goal, with a reasonable justification through the document. But even this paper, which seems to be not radical in this area, noted some important facts in the area of language education. These facts must be quoted in full, however, as these facts are described in 'soft language' and a moderate tone, further comments seem to be necessary in some cases:

despite .... important benefits, the level of language study in Australia has fallen dramatically in the last 25 years. In the 1960s, about 40% of final year school students studied a language other than English. Today fewer than 12% of Year 12 students do so, and many of these are native speakers of the language. Fewer than one percent of all higher education students complete a language unit at any stage of their course.

Choice of language to study is also uneven. For example, in year 12, 24% of students study French while only about 6% study the Indonesian/Malaysian language. Of the students enrolled in modern languages in higher education, over half are studying any one of another 28 languages, often in very small numbers.<sup>7</sup>

The drop of percentage of those students who were studying languages (in 1991) was dramatic indeed. If we take into account the fact that only 12% of final year students

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<sup>6</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.14.

<sup>7</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.15.



learn languages other than English, it means in practice, that even not all native speakers of languages other than English study their mother tongue! It seems to be a result of inappropriate policies (or their lack), a lack of encouragement of students from both English and non-English speaking backgrounds to undertake study of languages other than English, ignoring real needs of students, inappropriate practices, lack of interest of school management etc. It is very dramatic that the development of language education at a secondary level is so seriously neglected.

This happened at a time when society was supposedly becoming more aware of linguistic problems, and realising the benefits of knowledge of other languages.

There is more pressure from parents as well as from students regarding teaching other languages.

There are serious consequences of the status quo: it is difficult to study a language in a later stage of education, and it is less effective because of age and later different, urgent life responsibilities such as professional/vocational activity and/or family responsibility.

The fact that only one percent of all university students complete a language unit is also dramatic. Despite the extremely low percentage, one unit of language study is not a significant achievement. Language learning is not only a complicated process but also and, more importantly, a very long process. One single unit of language study is very little indeed.

Another issue which the document addresses is the choice of languages for study. There are many reasons influencing the choice of a language by students, for example: the interest of a student, knowledge of a language prior the decision, the ability to study language, similarity of the language to the first language (i.e. the same group of languages), tradition of the teaching of a language (like Latin or French), pressure from parents who are

familiar with a language and are prepared to help the student, contacts with speakers of the language, popularity of the language, a prospective visit to a country where the language is spoken, business requirements, and so on.

The high percentage of the students undertaking the French language for study cannot be explained in terms of usage of the language in Australia. The French language has a lower position (12th based on 1986 census) within languages other than English spoken in Australia, with 52 790 speakers (compare with 415 765 speakers of Italian or 277 472 speakers of Greek.)<sup>8</sup> France, or other French speaking countries have never been the top source countries of arriving immigrants to Australia. There are not significant economic ties with France any more.<sup>9</sup>

The high percentage of students of the French language can be explained in terms of the tradition of teaching the language, and its earlier availability on both a secondary and a post-secondary level, and easy access to French courses. This is also perhaps a question of conformist attitudes to keep French in Australian schools, in order to avoid a competition between two significant community languages: Italian and Greek. This is because French was considered a traditional language, with more relevance to education than minority community languages, because of its popularity and long tradition of teaching. By the continuation of its teaching as an academic study, some believed there was no need for community languages.

The document noted a high enrolment for Japanese language. This seems to be the result of strong economic emphasis, especially significant trade and export expansion from

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<sup>8</sup>Based on ABS Census 1986

<sup>9</sup>Whereas in 1971-72 export to France was on the level 2.67% and placed France on eight place of Australian exporters, in 1989-90 France disappeared from the list of Australia's top twelve partners. Export to Germany, China, the Netherlands and Italy was on a higher level than France. (based on data of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade; published in the companion volume to the Policy on Language paper, p.24).

Japan. There was no special tradition to study Japanese previously in Australia, but rather hostility towards Japanese immediately after the Second World War, as a result of the conflicts and atrocities experienced. Similarly, as in the case of French people, the Japanese do not migrate to Australia, however tourism from Japan and financial investment play an important role.

The policy document underlines, on the one hand, the diversity of languages which could be taught, and the limits of available resources, on the other. Hence, according to the authors of the document, a balance between them should be maintained. The document states that:

the establishment of priorities is complicated by the wide range of language groups represented in our own community. Notwithstanding these difficulties, some selection is inevitable in order to guide our effort in curriculum development, teacher training and resource allocation. Priority attention must be given to languages of broader national interest to Australia.<sup>10</sup>

An analysis of the statement can provide the notion that there is a discrepancy between the interest of "language groups represented in the community" and "broader national interest". This also suggest that the "broader national interest" group of languages is more important, and different from, the group of "language groups represented in the community". This is based upon an a priori assumption, and must be criticised for the following reasons:

Firstly, "national interest" should include the interest of "community groups" as parts of the nation.

For example, the Italians, Chinese or Germans in Australia, because of their contribution to the development of the country, should have a right to express their issues as part of the national voice, not as separate ethnic groups only.

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<sup>10</sup> *Australia's Language...* p.15

Secondly, the interest of community groups is just an interest of a national character, as in the case of language, each of the groups have an "interest" to maintain their languages, and it is simultaneously the interest of the nation as a whole. This is because Australia can have much easier contacts with countries which have people of ethnic origin, who have cultural ties with their countries of origin, in particular when the language is maintained.

Thirdly, the broader national interest is not just maintenance of each language spoken in the country, but all inhabitants.

Finally, when making any nation-wide policy on languages, such interest should firstly be taken into account.

This does not mean that the implementation of such a nation wide policy is free from difficulties, but it is possible. The idea of establishing "priority of languages of broader national interest to Australia" makes the implementation more difficult, because of a lack of community support. Furthermore, the policy without clear criteria will be considered by some community groups as an injustice.

In an educational setting, this policy means an underestimation, or even ignorance, of teaching community languages, and looking for a mixture of other misleading criteria in order to justify a previously assumed policy.

The departure of the policy from the Australian community social needs, is in the light of the document justified by "Australia's location in the Asia-Pacific region and our patterns of overseas trade". It seems to be rather ironical that at the end of twentieth century, with significant development in transport and communication, when the world is called "one small village", the argument is brought to the attention now, in spite of Australia's historical ties with other parts of world. It is also necessary to warn about trade relations. What is a current tendency does not mean that it is the best option.

Trade is a very changeable factor. Although certain priorities can be made regarding trade directions, as contemporary events show, there are very frequent changes.

As an example, the current practice of economic sanctions established by the international community in relation to countries which violate human rights or are acting against international law. In some cases such sanctions are successful, especially when undertaken by the whole international community. More likely such sanctions are applied against countries whose political situation is not stable, and where there is a lack of democratic traditions. Application of economic sanctions may take place for a long time and, consequently, have an impact on current trade direction.

In addition, trade directions are not a static factor, but very changeable (page 268, footnote 9). Australia-France trade can be used as an example.

Before an analysis of the practical implications of the policy, a statement should be made that the main weakness of the policy is a serious underestimation of community languages, and the needs of ethnic minority community in this regard. Also, the document does not recognize the links between these needs and the Australian national interest.

However, justice must be done that the "Australia's Language" policy realises the needs of linguistic pluralism in Australia, and encourages multicultural education. The following comments from the companion document to the policy are worth quoting, where the document noted that:

Knowledge of or positive attitudes to languages spoken within community may also promote greater social cohesion. Linguistic pluralism in Australia need not be an additional cost to governments as language learning may occur within mainstream schooling, the family, or the language community. Multicultural education can promote better inter-generational communication within families with non-English-speaking members, greater tolerance within the broader community of linguistic differences in Australia and internationally, and greater confidence for people whose first language is recognized as an

individual and national resource rather than a nuisance.<sup>11</sup>

## 19.2 Government, Ethnic Schools and Community Language Maintenance

The policy on language recognizes that ethnic languages maintenance is valuable but refers the matter to ethnic communities, and simultaneously criticises the ethnic schools for the lack of good teaching material, and effective teaching methods.

In the government's view, school-based support for many community languages is improving without classification of what this means in practice. Also, the policy needs a clear statement on the relation between government and ethnic schools, and the mainstream schools, especially whether they should be separate, or links between them developed, and if so, to what extent. Ethnic communities may have the impression that their schools ought to be replaced by government ones. The companion to the policy noted for example:

As a result of the development of the State and Territory language policies and strategies, some of the languages supported under the ESP, particularly Italian, are taught increasingly through school programs and through 'Saturday Schools of Languages' or their equivalent, funded by State system. *Education systems now have the ability to offer both second language and language maintenance programs in more languages than was possible in the past*<sup>12</sup> (my emphasis).

But the main policy document advocates this policy even more strongly:

Accordingly school systems will be asked to take over responsibility for the program, with some additional founding to enable them to make improvements. Systems will be encourage to work closely with the relevant community groups in the provision of ethnic school classes.

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<sup>11</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy.* Companion Volume to the Policy Paper released by the Hon. John Dawkins MP Minister for Employment, Education and Training, p.63

<sup>12</sup> *Australia's language .. companion volume,...* p.80

States and Territories have developed their own strategies for teaching languages other than English in their school systems. In most cases, priority languages are identified for more widespread teaching. Five languages (French, German, Japanese, Indonesian and Chinese) are priorities in all State and Territory strategies, while Italian and modern Greek also receive special recognition<sup>13</sup>

The statements from both documents are a clear departure from community needs, and, unfortunately, they are against the wishes of the policy makers to represent the 'national interest'. The authors speak in support of 'language maintenance programs' but they act in favour of different ideas. Of the five priority languages listed above, only two are spoken widely by the ethnic communities in Australia. The most important, in terms of number and usage by the two main ethnic groups — The Italian and Greek languages — according to the document 'received special recognition', but there is no clear indication of what is meant by this 'special recognition', particularly when in this statement, they are not priorities.

It is quite clear that language maintenance programs are not the main priority in the teaching of languages and relevant government strategies. Policy which does not take into account the needs of community, both current and for the future, and where the needs are of a 'national character' — should be revised in this direction as soon as possible.

It ought to be yet pointed out that the discussed policy document stated clearly in relation to language maintenance program that:

... Commonwealth assistance will be focused on a core of eight languages to be nominated by each State and Territory Minister from the following priority languages: Aboriginal languages, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, p.16

<sup>14</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, p.16

Let us come back to our research, and the ethnic groups represented within it, in order to assess how important and relevant for them is this government policy. None of the ethnic groups concerned: the Croatians, Polish or Ukrainian, in the light of the policy, would be able to have access to their own language maintenance. Under this policy their ethnic schools will not receive significant funds, if any, and there is a clear indication in the document that the ethnic school system should be replaced by a government one.

This is the clear picture of practical application of the policy not only to our three ethnic groups of young Australians from ethnic minorities but to many others as well. Furthermore, the policy makes the problems of the maintenance of the language extremely difficult, if possible to overcome at all. Moreover, before the policy was established all the groups enjoyed, to a certain degree access to programs of learning their own languages. These programs were also available for those who were not native speakers of the languages.

Based on data collected by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, in relation to year 12 in 1990 — 193 students at year 12 level studied Croatian, 138 — Polish and 24 Ukrainian.<sup>15</sup> In 1990 two higher education institutions offered Croatian and Polish and three Ukrainian. The institutions offered those languages in their award courses. The number of students (equivalent of a full-time student unit) was a small one in all the groups (16 Croatians, 14 Poles and 13 Ukrainians)<sup>16</sup>

Now, in the light of the policy, the situation of these groups seems to be extremely difficult in practice, in spite of the declaration by the government of the need for language maintenance, with the practical impossibility of a continuation of language study in any

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<sup>15</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy.* Companion Volume to the Policy Paper released by The Hon. John Dawkins, August 1991, p.69

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (companion volume), p 70



school system.

Let us analyse the necessary quote from the companion document to the policy paper, referring to ethnic schools programs:

Education systems now have the ability to offer both second language and language maintenance programs than it was possible in the past.

The dedication of a large proportion of insertion class funds to second language learning for new learners rather than to language maintenance, has removed source of the ESP's distinctiveness as a language maintenance program. The capping of the ESP in 1986, designed to control the previously unlimited growth in the insertion classes, has also reduced the program's ability to service its language maintenance character, as newly arrived groups now have difficulty gaining access to the program.

Continuation of a language program parallel to but separate from system-based language provision can no longer be justified, particularly in the case of the insertion classes.<sup>17</sup>

Who then will be responsible and/or a provider of the languages of the young people from the research, or for the other thousands of youth from minority ethnic groups, whose languages are not in the group of priority languages?

The answer to the question is not clear in the light of the policy. It seems, however, that the government does not wish to take such responsibility through its educational system, nor wishes to support the ethnic schools. On the one hand there is, in the policy document a declaration about language maintenance programs and, on the other, having the list of priority languages established, it is clear that the issue of language maintenance is not a government priority.

An establishment of courses of many languages in the higher education sector does not resolve the problem. Such courses can be attractive for a very low number of those enthusiastic about language learning. This strategy would be not practical (on this level we are dealing with adults who want to get into a profession as quickly as possible, with

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid, (companion volume), p.80

little time which can be sacrificed to language learning).

Although the higher education sector cannot play the main role in language education as such, education must begin on the primary and secondary level, there would be a role for this sector in the development of language education for those students who gain basic skills in languages other than English.

We may suggest the following main ways of teaching languages on the university level:

1. education on the highest level for those who will undertake study towards a degree in a specific language or a group of languages (eg. Italian, German, Chinese, Roman or Slavonic or Asian languages) as specialists in languages;
2. Language education for those who need the language for professional progress as a part of a course, for example Italian for doctors (during the course of medicine) German for engineers (as a part of the course), Chinese for economists, etc.
3. intensive courses of languages other than English for people with little background in languages who wish to learn them quickly, and need them for professional, business, or leisure purposes. This would be rather recommended on the post-graduate level, or as separate, additional courses provided by various Language Centres.

The particular group of courses may, but does not have to, contribute towards the maintenance of ethnic or community languages in Australia.

The first group may fulfil the role in the best way. However, we should be aware of a limited number of students in general, and a small number of the young ethnic minority people who will dedicate their future to develop their native languages with a vision to use them for professional purposes, the limited needs for language specialist with the degree per se, etc.

The second group would be associated with languages for professionals (in areas other than languages). Here, students from ethnic minorities, or with a knowledge of a language, should have the opportunity, supported by encouragement from the university, to develop the knowledge of languages to the appropriate professional level in the area of primary interest. It would be aimed at that each course of study should give students the opportunity to use and develop a language other than English. For those students who are native speakers of a language, but without a knowledge of the professional vocabulary, it would be also beneficial, although the main goal would not be the development of the language as such.

The third group of courses, of an intensive character, can help the students who have no knowledge, or only limited knowledge of a language, but need this for business purposes, or in the area of practical, professional expertise. However, other students who neglected the learning of languages either as their first language (and lost the ability to communicate) or languages learnt a long time ago but not used any more, may come back to their learning.

On a more practical level, anticipating some problems such as a small number of students interested in a particular language which is not thought of widely in Australia (for example: Hungarian, Korean), possible less formal arrangements can be suggested in order to accommodate the needs of students by inviting a tutor of the language to another university on, for example, a sessional basis, to organize joint classes for students from a few institutions, etc. Particularly beneficial would be an option of undertaking overseas study in a country of origin of the students.

The above suggested model can, but only in a certain degree, have an effect on the maintenance and development of languages other than English. It could be made clear

that the higher education sector would not be able to replace the primary and secondary school system in this regard.

Further, the role of the tertiary system is discussed under "Tertiary Language Education" (Part V, sec. 22.3).

It must be noted that the best effect of the maintenance of community languages other than English can be achieved especially in relation to those young people for whom a language other than English is their mother tongue. If utilized correctly and supported by government, community and family, the young people can master their native languages, develop them and utilize them in their professional life. In addition, if combined with a high level of English, such a group can create, in the future, the best translators, interpreters, teachers of languages, bilingual professionals etc.

Obviously, it must be recognized that for the newcomers a priority in the sphere of languages will be quite clear — a concentration on an acquisition of the English language firstly. This fact is an important one from both the national and individual point of view. There is, fortunately, a clear understanding of the needs by all involved in this aspect of education — the school systems, the parents and the students. But the problem of the first language maintenance must be also understood by all involved. A particular role should be played here by educational institutions. The parents of the students will need from them continuous encouragement and support during the process of first language preservation and development. Various ethnic and community organizations should be also active in this area.

Students who maintain a good level of bilingualism, or in some cases multilingualism, should be adequately rewarded and appreciated by the school system. Appropriate attitudes should be also created within peer groups of the students. On a more general

level, awareness of the issue should be raised in order to create positive attitudes towards bilingualism in the wider community.

The Commonwealth government is interested in the quantity of students studying languages other than English. The recommended figures apply however not only to language maintenance, but to second language study as well. In particular, the government wants to achieve a previous situation, in terms of numbers of students, a situation which existed in Australia a few years ago.

The joint efforts of State and Territory Government provide the basis for a substantial increase in the number of students studying languages, and should lead to long term gains in the language proficiency of the Australian population. As a basis for action, The Commonwealth proposes that the proportion of Year 12 students studying a language other than English should be increased to 25% nationally by the year 2000.<sup>18</sup>

The proposal to monitor the number of students studying a language other than English at the Year 12 level should be a good indicator. It can be assumed that these students began their language study at least at level 7 or 8 (depending on state) during the time of commencing secondary school. To ensure the correctness of the assumption, the number of students should be monitored at the beginning of secondary school, and on a year by year level. It would be useful to see the break down of the collected data between students for whom it is the first or the second language, and how different is the student retention in language classes in the two groups of students. Probably the interest in language learning in two mentioned groups will be different, the motivation will be various, as well as such factors as support of family, peer groups etc.

We must, however, be aware of the different linguistic abilities of students and the need for long term study towards a significant achievement in any language usage.

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<sup>18</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy...* p.17

Hence it is necessary to avoid any pressure on figures. We should not ignore students' interest, ability, and the time and commitment to other subjects.

Discussing the figures anticipated by the government, planned to be achieved before the year 2000, it should be noted that the percentage aimed for was designed in relation to the secondary school level only. In order to achieve the required percentage of students in the highest level of secondary schooling in reality, the start should be made as soon as possible at the primary level, beginning at least at level 5 of primary schooling. This would be important not only in order to achieve a significant increase of students learning languages other than English on the secondary level, but also, commencing at this stage of learning, the achievements can be the best. To begin a language other than English at the primary school level is important in both groups: second language and language programs. In the case of the second group, if the study of the mother tongue is interrupted at this stage for a long period of time, it is very likely that the language education must be almost from the beginning. This would be an extremely wasteful process, a natural consequence of interrupted language education. Thus, following the government idea to increase the proportion of students on the highest secondary level, appropriate numerical targets, expressed in the percentage of students learning languages should be designed at the primary school level as soon as possible.

The Commonwealth's goal implies in reality, to be successful, a more comprehensive approach at each level of educational steps, including pre-school education where some good attempts, such as the Montessori pre-school education, were successfully made.

Consequently, a better chance of continuation of second (or first other than English) language education should be given to the post-secondary level in both TAFE and higher education sector. This stage of learning of languages is more difficult to plan as a variety

of factors can play a role. However, as an important factor, any achievements on the primary and secondary level will be taken into account.

One of the institutions with a significant achievement in language education is conducted by the Victorian Ministry of Education — Victorian School of Languages. The school, established in 1935, currently provides tuitions in languages other than English for those students who cannot obtain the languages in their own schools. Tuition in most languages is available from grade 1 to Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). In standard and content these courses are comparable to those offered in day school language classes.

In 1992 the school used 24 different locations, all over Victoria and offered 37 languages, among them: Croatian (by six locations), Polish (by three) and Ukrainian (one). Schools are open from 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

It is useful to mention that some attempts to establish professional and/or vocational courses in languages other than English in post-secondary education have been made. They should be continued with a careful evaluation and systematic assessment of these programs. Without comprehensive research and analysis of the practices, it is too early to make any recommendation for the future in this area.

In conclusion of the discussion on “Australia’s Language” policy it should be recommended as essential to develop the Commonwealth policy in such directions that:

1. emphasis should be placed on community languages as the main and only priority;
2. language education, in relation to languages other than English, will be extended to all levels of formal education — from pre-school to higher education;
3. language education, including languages other than English, will be actively sup-

ported by the government and its education system.

Finally, we ought to come back to our main question, what to do if the government does not want to go towards the above described directions.

### 19.3 New Initiatives in Tertiary Education

The recent decision of the University of Melbourne to award bonus marks to Victorian Certificate of Education students with a language subject is part of a long term university plan to lift the profile of language in all faculties. The University intends to introduce the bonus marks scheme for Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) students with foreign language subject in 1995. According to the scheme, "students seeking university entry will receive a 10 per cent bonus on their VCE marks in that language if the mark is grade D or higher."<sup>19</sup>

The University of Melbourne also plans to give students in some faculties (especially Law, Economics, Commerce and Engineering) greater access to language studies. These plans are based on the assumption that graduates should be prepared to work in an international economy and therefore are advantaged if they know a language other than English. According to professor Penington, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne:

It's very important when people are studying these courses (such as Law, Economics/Commerce and Engineering) to be able to study language. These are the most obvious faculties when it comes to the internationalisation of trade.<sup>20</sup>

Although the justification of the scheme is rather to correct an imbalance in the

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<sup>19</sup> *The Australian*, Higher Education Supplement No 631, June, 17, 1992

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, interview with Professor Penington by Carolyn Jones.



recognition and status of language studies — it will contribute to a higher appreciation of languages in general. Such a policy, although not directly, can contribute towards the maintenance of ethnic languages. Young ethnic people could be more interested in the preservation of their languages, they would consider a knowledge of languages as an economic benefit, as well as important for family cohesion or cultural identity. The knowledge would not be only rewarded and utilised, but also significantly developed and marketable. This is because the decision was undertaken in the framework of other actions:

The University has already developed some business language courses with the Horwood Language Centre — a division of Arts Faculty's Linguistic and Language Department — which caters mainly for students at the university's Graduate School of Management and external students.

The University is reviewing its language teaching methods<sup>21</sup>

It can be expected that other universities will follow the University of Melbourne's intentions in this regard. Similar initiatives, from the bottom rather than governmental decision made by departments at the top, would be more effective and appreciate the linguistic needs and aspirations of the community.

A different initiative, which is also worthy of note, is, once again an initiative from the University of Melbourne, based on donations from employers under the Commonwealth Training Guarantee Administration Act 1990<sup>22</sup> and an establishment of the Training Guarantee Fund by the University to satisfy tax requirement.

Employers may either nominate an area where they wish their donation to be spent or lease it to the discretion of the University to distribute the funds. Last year the University allocated some funds towards the building cost of the newly established Information Technology Centre and to the Horwood Language Centre for the development of Intensive Beginners Language Courses which were conducted during the 1992 Summer School; these intensive language courses allow students to complete the equivalent of a first year undergraduate

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<sup>21</sup> *The Australian*, Higher Education Supplement No 631, June 17, 1992.

<sup>22</sup> The Act requires any employer with a payroll in excess of \$214,000 in the 91/92 financial year, to spend at least 1/5 of salary and wages on approved training.

subject in 150 hours of instruction over 5 weeks. The subjects offered this year were French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Russian.<sup>23</sup>

## 19.4 Language Education in a Case of a Lack of Government Support

What kind of a solution can be offered to young Australians of ethnic origin, who see their first language as an important value?

In the case when the government is not prepared to fund the maintenance of community languages, the issue must be taken up by the various ethnic organisations and appropriate strategies undertaken. They ought to act with other, wider, non-government community organizations, including the churches, cultural societies, embassies of particular countries or even external cultural associations of the international community. Support for parents of non-English speaking background students, and the students of various community languages, would be essential.

The possibility of the establishment of new, special, non-government schools of languages, especially in capital cities, should be considered to be based on the mobilization of all available means of the communities. Perhaps even the governments of the countries of origin of the students or their parents might be approached, such as Italian, Greek, Dutch etc. Currently, considerable support is given by some overseas governments (especially Spanish, French, German, Greek and Italian). Regardless of ethnicity, all ethnic organisations would be in a full co-operation. This would avoid the potential difficulties which smaller and less-established ethnic communities might have experienced in compar-

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<sup>23</sup>The University of Melbourne, *Training Guarantee Fund Report*, June 1992

ison with those with a long history of emigration to Australia. Students of Anglo-Saxon origin willing to study community languages would be admitted to such schools and, if necessary, student fees for all students would be introduced.

To reduce the cost of running such schools — community ethnic organisations such as clubs or national houses, local churches could be used. Even large private houses can be considered if they can contribute to reducing the cost, or are more convenient for students.

In some case it would be possible to approach teachers who would be able to perform the role of unpaid, voluntary instructors. At the primary school level, especially for classes of native speakers, instruction could be given by parents.

Although previously the ethnic schools experienced a shortage of language teachers in Australia, this is not an issue any more. There is a large number of trained and qualified teachers who are able to perform the role. Some of them work in different areas, a result of the lack of the possibility to work according to qualifications, or are even unemployed.

Many parents are prepared to pay for language tuition, so the teachers could be able to receive a certain remuneration for teaching. (This would create an obvious industrial problem in formal, public employment, but in ethnic or community schools it would be possible to achieve satisfactory arrangements, taking into account real possibility.)

One of the problems associated with learning languages other than English, especially for non-native speakers is the motivation of students. In a successful learning situation motivation should assist during the whole process of language study. In order to increase the motivation, students who spend a longer time on language study should receive some recognition for university entrance. Students, who attend language classes and achieved good results in language education may, and even ought to be, granted easier access to university, at least to some language related courses. Hence, the new initiative of the

University of Melbourne described above should be welcomed.

In addition to more or less formal community organisations, many individuals could do their best to maintain their own and their children's languages, as for many this is a problem of moral obligations and value. The individual enthusiasm would be of great importance for the communities left without government support.

Undoubtedly, without the support of the Australian government maintenance of languages other than English would be very difficult but possible. The history of many countries shows that the languages of minority groups are preserved regardless of formal governmental attitudes, including negative attitudes, with discouragement, or even prosecution. Australia would not be an exception. Furthermore, even here, in spite of assimilationist policy, community languages were preserved, showing the fiasco of the policy and introducing multiculturalism. Consequently, we can go towards a more optimistic conclusion: lack of government positive action in relation to community languages can be only temporary. Any government in Australia would not be able to ignore in the long term the important aspect of the social reality of the multilingual life of Australian society.

## Chapter 20

# The Main Reasons for Preservation of Community Languages — in the Response to the Request for Preservation by the Young Ethnic Australians from the Research

### Introduction

The overwhelming response of young Australians of ethnic origin from each of the investigated groups, that ethnic cultures should be preserved in Australia, requires further analysis. The participants were not asked about the reasons, they only expressed their viewpoint on this aspect based on their own, their friends, and family experiences and feelings. Based on the method of humanistic sociology we have a clear indication of the respondents' attitudes. But in addition to this formal investigation we need look at the specific issue of languages of the minority ethnic group from different points of views. We need a full analysis of the problem also from philosophical, political, legal or social points of view, taking into account arguments which are for and against the preservation of ethnic cultures, and specifically ethnic languages. The importance of language has been previously mentioned, as a specific or main aspect of culture, or, in many cultures, a core

value.

## 20.1 Political

The government of any country where there are ethnic minorities is interested in creating a relationship between majority and minority groups which would be able to avoid ethnic or national conflicts. The conflicts have different aspects, from military struggles of a national group(s) against other group(s), to social conflicts on cultural issues.

Australia, a typical multicultural country, with immigration planned centrally on an annual basis, fortunately has not experienced any serious conflicts as has happened, for example, in the former Soviet Union, Germany, Spain, former Yugoslavia, Cyprus, South Africa or even Canada. The Australian government is interested in creating harmonious community relations which prevent ethnic conflicts and some formal policy documents are a clear indication of the government's attitudes. The most specific political manifesto in this area is the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* which tries to respond in a positive manner to the fact of cultural and ethnic diversity in the country. Issues of cultural identity, social justice and economic efficiency are taken into account within the political concept of multiculturalism.

The established rights through multicultural policies have a clear, defined purpose stated by the Commonwealth government and most of the States. The purpose is that the policies:

will help us better manage our diversity in the interest of social cohesion and justice<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia ... Sharing Our Future*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, p.7.

From a political point of view, however, the limitations of multiculturalism, stated in the document are important. They include: commitment to Australia, acceptance of the basic structure and rights of society, including freedom of speech and religion, and English as the national language. Multicultural policies, according to the *National Agenda*:

impose obligations as well as conferring rights: the right to express one's own culture and beliefs involves a reciprocal responsibility to accept the rights of others to express their views and values.<sup>2</sup>

Politically thus, the *National Agenda* accepts the rights of minorities to express their own culture, which includes the rights to use own language.

It ought to be pointed out that the Australian experience in the area of social cohesion is greater in comparison to other countries. The best evidence is that Australia has not been a witness to ethnic struggles between minority ethnic groups and the majority or between particular ethnic groups. The work towards greater social cohesion in Australia is remarkable, both theoretically and in the practical life of the society.

The policy on multiculturalism consequently declares, inter alia, specific rights related to culture:

All Australians should have the opportunity to acquire and develop proficiency in English and languages other than English, to develop cross cultural understanding.

All Australians should be able to develop and share their cultural heritage.<sup>3</sup>

It is useful to note that in the sphere of languages, both English and other than English, the document speaks about 'opportunity', not 'rights'. Such an expression implies a significant role of government in providing such opportunity, which is, de facto, the output of the policy.

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<sup>2</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia ... Sharing Our Future*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, p.7.

<sup>3</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, p.7.

Also important for our topic is the second statement on the development and the sharing of the cultural heritage of all Australians. Similarly, like previously, the expression 'should be able to develop and share' implies an active role of the government in creating such an opportunity that the cultural heritage can be really developed and shared. The other political purpose which the government wants to achieve, declared *expressis verbis*, is the promotion of social harmony, insurance of a 'fair go' and 'harnessing of Australia's human resources'.

Promotion of social harmony is one of the most important political goals of the policy, we can even argue that it is the main one. Indeed, such a goal can be achieved through a multicultural policy, and such a policy can be considered as the best tool for the purpose. To be successful, however, this would require an understanding of mutual character by the majority and minority groups, in practice, by the whole society. And yet such a policy must be appreciated by the society. This can be achieved through discussion and education on the advantages of the policy on a national scale. The practice shows, however, positive attitudes of the society. The Australian experience and achievements in the process of the implementation of the multicultural policy can be used and adopted as a model worth following by many other countries, especially those with a large number of minority ethnic groups.

This mutual understanding, if achieved, can encourage further interaction of a cultural and social nature between the majority and minority ethnic groups. Obviously, the minority ethnic groups have a clear interest in a maximum involvement in social and cultural activity of the majority group. This is because the degree of the involvement will de facto decide in the practice of any multicultural society, the personal success of particular members of ethnic communities.



Very few members of ethnic minorities deliberately decide to be isolated from socio-cultural activity of the mainstream society. They have been in practice rather isolated by the majority group. However, some members of the majority group act unintentionally. Simply, they do not encourage the ethnic minorities to participate in social or cultural activities. The role of the ethnic majority can be seen as more active in the area of encouragement of ethnic minorities towards participation in cultural or social events (as well as sharing with the majority of their own heritage). This is also a matter of the involvement of any government of a multicultural society which is de facto responsible, inter alia, for the creation of good social relations between citizens and inhabitants of different racial or ethnic origin.

On the other hand, comparatively few members of the majority group have been involved in social and cultural activities of minority groups, or even one of them. This is often the result of a lack of interest, rather than discrimination and again, a lack of appropriate encouragement from the government.

It is necessary to acknowledge that there are various practical difficulties associated with its implementation but, obviously, the most desirable would be the model of social and cultural interaction between majority and minority groups, and between minority groups as well.

It means, in practice, emerging full co-operation of the majority group and minority groups among themselves in various activities in order to be familiar at least with the basic, or main elements, of particular cultures, exchange their cultural heritages and enjoy the specific features of different cultures.

To use an example in the Australian context, in a small area of culture, let's say, painting. All minority groups should have an access to, and the opportunity to, appreciate

Australian paintings, which are not well known overseas.

It can be done through appropriate publications, reproductions, or frequent exhibitions of Australian painting organised in all states and large towns, not only capital cities. It can be done on a large scale, as for example, Australia Post achieved it through issue of a few post stamps with reproductions of some famous Australian painters which later have been known to a larger number of people using Australian postal services. For many recent migrants, who are frequent customers of Australia Post it was the first contact with Australian paintings at all. (The additional advantage, or perhaps from Australia Post's point of view, the main idea was the popularisation of Australian painting overseas, as the majority of the stamps were price appropriate for overseas mail, parcels, etc.) Such reproductions were almost unknown to many members of ethnic minorities, even for those from countries with older traditions in painting, with famous painting schools, history, and education in this area. They have not seen them in their countries of origin, where Australian painters were not popular and they do not have the opportunity to be familiar with the works of Australian painters in Australia. Some Europeans, including those from countries of the greatest tradition in painting, such as Italy or Holland, enjoy only the arts of their masters, but have never the chance to be familiar with the works of painters of China or Japan, from books or other publications. Anglo-Saxon Australians are often unfamiliar with both. However, living in a multicultural society gives a better opportunity for intercultural exchange in this area of art. Sometimes it is only a problem of encouragement and better information.

Similarly, it would be possible to discuss many aspects of culture such as literature, music, film or language.

Better knowledge and appreciation of various aspects of cultures may help to develop

better community relations<sup>4</sup> in a multicultural society, which is the intention of the Australian government expressed in the political document<sup>5</sup>

It is usually considered that the function of any government should be the creation of social cohesion in a country. Such cohesion of a national character is more difficult in a multicultural society, but as the case of Australia illustrates, this is possible even when a nation is culturally mixed. The Australian government, however, is aware of the potential problems and has employed a strategy to improve community relations through a number of specific projects with designated funds.<sup>6</sup>

In Australia there is not only mixture of people of different national origins but also of people of different linguistic, religious, racial and other backgrounds. But appreciation of linguistic diversity should go together with encouraging the development of proficiency in community languages as well as cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, rightly, the policy makers wrote in the *National Agenda*, and this is worth of quotation in full, that:

In a society comprising people from many cultural traditions — some of whom may never have experienced living in an unfamiliar culture — there is an ever-present potential for misunderstanding and conflict. Different perceptions, values and models of behaviour can contribute to social tensions. There is an obligation on both sides to try to understand the other — an obligation on those born into and on those who choose to live in such a mixed society. There is a need for opportunities to develop cross-cultural understanding particularly among people who have always lived within a single cultural framework.

Multicultural policies therefore seek to ensure that all Australians have the opportunity to acquire and develop proficiency in English, to speak languages other than English, and to develop cross-cultural understanding.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>The government defines community relations as “the interaction of the groups that constitute the wider community and society as a whole” (see footnote below quoted on page 2).

<sup>5</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet *Community Relation Strategy: An Initiative of the Commonwealth Government's National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, April 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

<sup>6</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet *Community Relation Strategy: An Initiative of the Commonwealth Government's National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, April 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

<sup>7</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia ... Sharing Our Future*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, pp.37-38

In addition to the above-quoted statements, it must be clarified that the government makes it clear that Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds have a right to maintain and develop their languages. The government, through the mainstream school system and, in co-operation with the ethnic communities, the ethnic school system should take the responsibility for realization of the right.

One of the three immediate objectives in the area of language policy and communication, in the light of the *National Agenda* is that:

children whose first language is not English should be able to maintain and develop that language through the mainstream and ethnic school systems.<sup>8</sup>

In conclusion, multicultural policy as stated in the government document *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* should be appreciated and fully implemented. Maintenance of community languages is an important right of minority ethnic groups and there are also political reasons to support that right.

## 20.2 Philosophical

The question of the preservation of minority ethnic cultures is also a matter of adopting a clear philosophical view. This is not a large scale philosophical theory, as objective idealism or Marxism, but rather a more limited social philosophy which provides theoretical direction for the practical solution of a political problem.

The problem is whether in a society where there are majority and some minority ethnic groups, and where these groups represent different cultures, sometimes not only different in some aspect, but even very exotic and difficult to understand, the all minority culture groups should be preserved or rejected. If the idea of preservation of cultures is supported,

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid *National Agenda* ... p.41

or rejected, there are important consequences for both groups and, consequently, for the whole country as well. The idea of preserving minority cultures can be very attractive for some ethnic groups, but less for others. Similarly, it may be considered as very important by some members within a given ethnic community but not by others. Also, it would be naive to expect strong support for such an approach from all members of majority group. However, for some members of the majority group such an approach would be very attractive, and they would reject the idea of a monocultural nation. We should also take into account the interest of the whole society which is not always a simple sum of individuals' interest. Furthermore, we can be more abstract in our thinking and say that there are some values which must be considered by individuals, that the desires and policies of the government are not important. We are here in the sphere of natural law, a law given to humankind which cannot be changed by any government. Even if a government decides to change a law or establish a legal norm which would be in contradiction with natural law, such a norm or law would be invalid. The explanation of invalidity lies in the fact of a contradiction with natural law. The equality of a human person, regardless of nationality, race, origin, language or any other distinction can be considered as natural law. Consequently, we can say that whatever is the economic situation of a country, or governmental policies on languages, or the cultural heritage of minorities — this is a natural law to preserve one's own language by an individual, and of an individual (which implies not only responsibility of the individual but, generally speaking society as well).

There are and always have been different languages since the beginning of humankind's history. Some of them are spoken by a large number of people, some by small groups only, some of them have been more popular in certain periods of time but the speaker of a

language has the right to speak that language, where it can be used as a communication mean with others.

History shows different attitudes towards different languages, not spoken by the majority. In all too many cases, unfortunately, there has been discrimination against people who have not use the language of the majority. This has often proven to be the source of a variety of social tensions or conflicts. On the other hand, in some societies there has been a tendency to admire foreigners and their customs, and offer special hospitality towards them. In Russia, for example, Peter the Great admired customs observed in Western Europe and when he came back from his visit required the introduction in his country of similar customs, and encourage them to follow them, even ones as unreasonable as smoking a pipe.

The Russians have been known as people of a special hospitality. Even during the time of communist regime there were places reserved only for foreigners, such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, not available for the ordinary citizen. Although it had a special political dimension based on an intention to show to the foreigners the country's high standard of living, the ordinary people of Russia have always shown their hospitality to any foreigners. Europeans visiting China also experienced a particular hospitality. In Poland, tourists who spoke other languages have been served quicker and with a greater respect.

The right of using one's own language cannot be treated only as an abstractive one, as this is a social issue. It should be a problem of the interest of particular governments, especially those governing a large number of immigrants.

Any government is a very challenging institution, even within one state. Borders of countries and even the existence of states are also changeable. Contemporary events

in very stable post-Second World War Europe show that changes are still possible or even necessary. New countries appear on the map, some are the result of the collapsing of large states, combining with fighting about creation of separate, independent smaller states based on historical and ethnic tradition. Hence, the governments are involved in the process of ethnic and cultural issues.

The case of Australia is a unique one as it is one country on one continent, which although divided into states and territories but the division is rather of an administrative character, without any significant cultural differences between them.<sup>9</sup>

The role of government in the future seems to be less traditional and very challengable. The current political situation of a world-wide character gives ground for such interpretation. Governments however are not the only organizational form of societies. We can now concentrate on the role of social organizations, following the thoughts of John Paul II as his broader views can be applicable to solutions of current and future cultural problems. By social organisation we mean any form of human organization, large or small, formal or informal, including not only government, but also political parties, churches, community organizations, scientific or cultural associations, groups of interest etc.

According to John Paul II there are two principles of social organisation which can never be abrogated and which constitute the basis of any social organisation. The first is:  
the inalienable dignity of every human person, irrespective of racial, ethnic,  
cultural or national origin, or religious belief

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<sup>9</sup>We are not able to discuss within the framework of this thesis the significance of culture of native habitats of Australia which cannot be regarded as an ethnic problem. This is a much more complex issue with many moral, political and legal aspects requiring a long and specific discussion.

Similar position has been often represented in the Australian literature. [See: for example the DEET's publication *Ethnicity, Education and Equity* (Canberra, September 1987, p.i-ii) where the distinction between indigenous and immigrant ethnic minorities has been made. We should fully agree with the view expressed there that: "Although in some respect their situation may be similar, there are also fundamental differences which must not be overlooked. Aborigines cannot be treated as just one or more ethnic group. The grave, complex problem they face require separate treatment if progress is to be made towards their resolution.")

and the second concerns:

the fundamental unity of human race which takes its origin from the one God, the Creator, who in the language of sacred scripture. 'made, from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth' (Acts 17:26).

The unity of the human family requires that the whole of humanity, beyond its ethnic, national, cultural and religious differences, should form a community that is free of discrimination between people and that strives for reciprocal solidarity<sup>10</sup>

Within this philosophical framework the Pope recognizes the rights of minorities in any social organisation, including a nation or a state. Amongst the rights of minorities John Paul II specifically listed the right "to preserve and **develop** their own culture".<sup>11</sup> (my emphasis). Consequently, the cultural rights of minorities in any social organisation means not only freedom from discrimination, the right to preserve cultural heritage of a minority group, but also its development. And, as language is undoubtedly a part of culture, therefore, following the statement the same right to preserve and develop will apply in relation to language.

Such an approach reinforces our discussion on the preservation of languages of minority groups.

The Pope's views are relevant to the study in the thesis. This is because the young people who participated in the research investigation stated that they wished not only to preserve their ethnic heritage, but also to develop it. Unfortunately, this desire is not always understood and appreciated by other members of the multicultural society, including governments. Consequently, if they do not understand that the cultural needs of the individuals or whole ethnic groups should be respected, the conceptualisation of the rights as of a more general and universal character could be useful.

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<sup>10</sup>John Paul II "Respect for Minorities" in: *Migration Monitor*, January 1983, p.3

<sup>11</sup>Ibid p.3



Some people from the majority group often use a popular argument: 'O.K, migrants may preserve or develop their cultures but in their own countries, not here where they are in minority. In their own countries we would not have such rights'. They simply refuse to grant migrants the right of preserving of their cultural heritage. In part, this is a problem of good will. It can also be explained in terms of a lack of understanding of the phenomenon of migration, the feelings, often associated with personal drama and real motivation of migrants. The reason for becoming a migrant or a refugee are very different and, because of the complexity of the problem, cannot be discussed here. However, it must be pointed out that often immigrants, and almost always, by a definition, refugees, are forced to leave their countries for various, justified reasons. Sometimes leaving a country is the only way to survive. Many immigrants or refugees left their countries with the intention of returning to their country of origin as soon as possible, for example: when the government changed, or democracy was restored, or the war or social conflict ended, etc. They simply treated migration as a temporary, painful, but necessary event. In these circumstances, the lack of a chance for maintaining and developing the culture, especially the mother tongues of their children, would be particularly painful. Those who decided to live in the new country because of lack of progress, or the unchanged or worsening situation in their countries of origin, wish, and this is natural, to keep their cultural ties with the members of their ethnic communities. Obviously, they need to communicate with members of their own ethnic group and, more importantly, with their own children in their own mother tongue. Hence, there are important reasons to accept the rights of ethnic minorities and their cultural activity. Moreover, the cultural activity should be supported by the host country, not only for the benefit of the immigrant individuals, but the country as well.

The acceptance of the philosophical view that ethnic minorities have the right to

preserve and develop their culture, may have positive influence on the government and the majority, as well as the migrants themselves. If governments consider this as an obligation to the majority group, this could help to make their attitudes more positive. Immigrants would then feel more secure and stable in their new countries. In consequence, such philosophical thought can contribute towards more harmonious relations in a multicultural society.

This approach, if undertaken seriously and reinforced by international law, can be applied in any multicultural society and for that matter, even in every country, as the problem of immigration exists in almost every country in the modern world, although to a different degree.

Australia, however, because of its significant progress in the implementation, continued development, and progress of multicultural policy can be a leading country in this area.

## 20.3 Legal

The right of people to preserve their own culture, including language, has been recognized in international law. In particular, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the United Nations clearly states in article 27 that:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minority exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.<sup>12</sup>

The expression 'enjoy' suggests that minority groups have not only the formal right in terms of lack of prosecution or discrimination, but also right to 'use' their culture in

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<sup>12</sup>The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 and entered into force 23 March 1976, in accordance with Article 49.

terms of activation of cultural values. To 'use their own language' refers, as an example, to the enjoyment of culture, and consequently, gives the right for minorities to develop their own languages as well. Protection from discrimination on some grounds, including specifically mentioned language, has been ensured by Article 26 of the Covenant, which says:

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

The right to use one's own language can be interpreted as a part of universal human rights. According to Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):

Everyone has the right to nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality.

The ties between nationality and language are very strong indeed. Hence Ivo Duchacek argues the 'right to one's own language' based upon following interpretation of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

The nationalist is bound to see that the loss of nationality begins when the use of his native language is denied in the schools, courts, administration, legislation, mass media, and entertainment. In multilingual and multiethnic states the right to communicate in the language one knows best is an important constitutional right. The freedom of expression and the right to petition have little political value if a linguistic minority is unable to communicate with the authorities.<sup>13</sup>

There is also a need in Australia to recognize the right of the minority ethnic groups to their own language in a form of a legal act in addition to existing policy statements. However, the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* announced work on multicultural legislation. Such legislation should include a statement acknowledging the linguistic

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<sup>13</sup>I. D. Duchacek *Rights & Liberties in the World Today: Constitutional Promise & Reality*, ABC-CLIO Inc; Santa Barbara, California, Oxford, England, 1973, pp. 83-84.

rights of the members of multicultural society. The *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* obligated the Office of Multicultural Affairs to examine the desirability of a act on multiculturalism.<sup>14</sup>

There is still ongoing discussion on such legislation. The Law Reform Commission, for example, has recently issued a number of papers, including "Multiculturalism and the Law." The paper describes the Commission's approach to Multiculturalism and the Law project, seeks comments and announced wider consultation process.<sup>15</sup> The Attorney-General of Australia, referring to some specific legal problems such as family law, formation and performance of contracts (including specifically consumer contracts) and law creating offences, stated before a reference to international law that

Australia is a multicultural society, made up of people from differing cultural backgrounds and from ethnically diverse communities

and requested that the Commission should

take adequate account of the cultural diversity present in the Australian community<sup>16</sup>

It is significant that the Commission analysing the problem of cultural values in a culturally diverse society, recognized familial relationships, religion or other value systems, and language as factors determinating an individuals's identity, and stated as a matter of importance for the Commission's reference that:

many Australians identify themselves as Australian and as members of one of the many ethnic communities that constitute Australian society. As Australians, they share a cultural identity with all other Australians although the significance of this may vary among individuals. To the extent that they identify with a particular ethnic community within the large community, they

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<sup>14</sup>Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, July 1989, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p. x

<sup>15</sup>The Law Reform Commission, *Multiculturalism and the Law*, Issues Paper No 9, January 1990.

<sup>16</sup>Terms of reference of the paper of The Law Reform Commission, *Multiculturalism and the Law*, Issues Paper No 9, January 1990.

may also share a history and heritage, language and literature with the other members of that community that is not shared by the Australian community as a whole.<sup>17</sup>

The realisation and recognition of the existence of ethnic communities identifies, and especially appreciation of their cultural identity is of great importance. Consequently, the Commission's approach is to

identify minority cultural values that are not reflected, or not adequately reflected, by the current law

- consider how those values could be accommodated and the implication of doing so and
- assess whether or not any change should be proposed<sup>18</sup>

The additional question, important also from the legal point of view is why to identify the cultural values. This is important from technical, legislative reasons if we really intend to change the law in order to protect the real values. Therefore, rightly the Commission made the point that:

The question for the Commission is whether particular laws should be changed so that they respect and protect ethnic minority cultural values that are not now accommodated. This cannot be done unless the underlying values protected by the relevant laws are identified. Where the law reflects a balance of competing values, the reasons for that particular balance should be identified as far as possible.<sup>19</sup>

The research which constitutes the earlier part of this thesis identified such cultural values of three ethnic minority groups. The overwhelming value is however the language. Internal Australian legislation does not protect language as a value for minority ethnic groups. Although Australia is obligated by International Law to protect linguistic rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination in relation to ethnic minorities, especially by the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention

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<sup>17</sup>The Law Reform Commission, *Multiculturalism and the Law*, Issues Paper No 9, January 1990.

<sup>18</sup>The Law Reform Commission, *Multiculturalism and the Law*, Issues Paper No.9, January 1990.

<sup>19</sup>The Law Reform Commission, *Multiculturalism and the Law*, Issues Paper No.9, January 1990.

on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, there is a clear need not only to respect the obligation but also, in accordance with internal needs — to extend the rights. Language as a value for ethnic minorities is not reflected by current law. This value however can be easily accommodated in future legislation.

Concluding the discussion on legal aspects, it is vital to protect language as a core value of many ethnic minority groups through the Australian legal system and this is the main recommendation *de lege ferenda*.

In addition to the protection of the usage of language by ethnic minorities, the right of preservation of other cultural values should be safeguarded. There would be no collision between such a law and English as a national language, and simultaneously an important value for all Australians, irrespective of ethnic and/or linguistic background. In the case of language there would be clearly no collision with these values. Such law would have a positive effect towards more respect for ethnic community languages other than English, and a greater appreciation of languages as a value of a nation-wide character.

Additional means encouraging those of the majority group to learn a minority language as, for example, a majority language program, could be established. However, this would be beyond the discussed legal framework.

## 20.4 Social

There are also important social reasons for the preservation of ethnic cultures. Although the preservation of ethnic cultures might be seen as a problem of an individual in a multicultural society, an individual who has some choices and opportunities — cultural interaction and cultural behaviour has an impact on his/her social relations. If individuals

lose the language of their ethnic group, they are likely to be isolated by it. The loss of the language can create not only isolation from an ethnic group, but also poor relations with the individuals' close family, including sometimes even the nuclear family.

On the other hand, if individuals try to preserve only ties with their own minority group, avoid any 'external' cultural contact or interaction with the majority group, and do not consciously acquire the language of the majority and other cultural values — such an ethno-centric approach would be considered integration. Adaptation to the mainstream society is desirable from the individual's point of view, as the opportunity to play any role in wider society will otherwise be minimal, existent. In addition, from the social point of view individuals who fail to integrate require special assistance for a long period of time and cannot fully contribute to the development of the community. Neither situation is desirable from the social point of view. In a culturally plural society the interaction of any individual with the majority group, the individual's own group (if he/she belongs to minority group) and other minority ethnic groups is necessary indeed, and should not lead to the loss of the individual's own cultural identity.

This discussion, however, concentrates on one aspect of the problem — the preservation of ethnic cultures from a social point of view. It must be stressed that the preservation is not only important from the individual's point of view, but is also beneficial for the whole society.

Let us take into account, as an example, one aspect of ethnic culture which is not as yet fully appreciated by the majority of society — particular attitude towards older people, which can be called 'respect for the aged'. This aspect, combined with a family ethos in some cultures, creates in practice the situation that older and younger members of the family live together with one, two or even three generations in one house in a co-operative

manner. Even if the older members are not able to do much work around the house because of the natural limitations of their age they are not sent to nursing homes or other similar institutions for the aged, but still live together with their own family. In addition to some financial support and, more importantly, the work associated with nursing the aged, they have natural family support, share the family's problems and pleasures, and fully, to the extent of their physical and intellectual possibilities, participate in family life. There are significant psychological and sociological reasons which justify living in such an extended family group and giving preference to such a solution rather than placement of the elders in nursing homes or similar institutions.

If the life style of the majority of Australians changed from the predominantly nuclear family towards a more extended family with a greater appreciation of the problem of the aged, such a solution would be better from a social point of view, seen on a nation-wide scale and, especially better for the aged.

To extend the example, if respect for the aged is not maintained by the particular ethnic groups for which it is a value, the elders are in a more difficult situation. This is because, according to their cultures, they still expect such a respect from the younger generation. In many cases the elders from ethnic minorities will need a language assistance (this is a natural process, even when they have acquired a knowledge of English in adulthood, they will come back to their first languages — see below) when placed in nursing homes.

In addition, they will usually feel extremely isolated in a 'foreign' environment, experience barriers in communication and, especially painful for that, broken family ties. Possible alternative solutions, such as the placement of the aged people from non-English speaking backgrounds in separate ethnic nursing homes, are not able to replace natural



family ties and are associated with organisational difficulties.

Language maintenance in ethnic families plays an important role, also in relation to the aged. Rightly Gatt-Rutter and Carallaro noted that:

For the aged, language maintenance means the presence of mother tongue speakers to provide care and companionship to those who progressively lose their ability to communicate in English, if they acquired the language in adulthood and revert to the language learnt in childhood.<sup>20</sup>

If the whole family preserves the minority language and shares the respect for the aged as a value, it is able to help particular members, including the aged. If not, there is an urgent need for government intervention through the establishment of ethnic nursing homes with bilingual staff, or interpreters etc.

Based on the above examples it can be argued that the preservation of minority cultures, at least some aspects of the cultures, is clearly beneficial for the whole of the multicultural society. Furthermore, such values, as respect for the aged can be presented to the majority group and adopted by the whole society. The cultural value of respect for the aged, in addition to its deeply humanistic character, can be considered also from the economical point of view (lower cost of care taking by the whole society) or social (reinforcement of family ties).

For some ethnic groups the preservation of a particular kind of religion can be very important as religion, which was previously discussed, can be a core value for certain ethnic groups. A certain kind of religion can be a distinctive feature of an ethnic minority living in a multicultural country. This is an important tie which helps to determine about the group's existence. For example in the Irish culture the Catholic religion, not the language creates the national identity. Whereas many Irish people are involved in political activity,

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<sup>20</sup>J. Gatt-Rutter, F. Carallaro "Voices of the Generations to Come: What Future for Minority Immigrant Languages", *VOX — The Journal of the Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education*, Issue No 5, 1991, p.77.

when they live abroad, they try to preserve their Catholicism as a cultural value. The point is that for them religion has an additional connotation, or a larger meaning. The problem of the preservation of religion in other cultures can be seen as only a private problem, not often relevant to the group as such.

The next question is whether the preservation of religion by ethnic groups is of any relevance for the whole of the multicultural society.

In practice, a particular kind of religion can also be professed by a part of the majority group and an ethnic community, and so that it can be seen as cultural or religious value shared by some members of both groups.

To continue the example of religion, it would be worth noting that some churches are not only engaged in a purely doctrinal religion. These churches are also active in many social areas: providing education, neighbourhood contacts, support for the poor, involvement in health services, and many other activities. These social services are additional to their religious activities but, nevertheless, help to unite people of the same religion across their different ethnic origins. This has happened especially in the case of the Catholic Church and, to the less extent, the Anglican Church in regard to Asian, and especially Chinese-Australians. The preservation of religion may have an important role to play indeed. On one hand it is useful for the preservation of the individual and group identity and, on the other, can provide benefits for the wider community. The example of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, the Bratherhood of St Lorence or the activities of the Salvation Army, all connected with religious values and a broader social interest are a good illustration.

One more comment should be made. The recent signals of activity similar to the religious one, but de facto having nothing to do with religion, were the subject of serious

public concern. A so-called satanic cult, discovered in Australia, was considered to be very harmful socially and associated with illegal activity.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, rightly the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 uses the term 'lawful religious activity' for the purpose of preventing discrimination. Obviously, any unlawful activity cannot be supported by the law.

It can be also noted that any attempts to accept only one form of religion, or trying to eliminate the importance of religion in the case of a multicultural society would be against human rights. Australia itself has not experienced religious wars and has avoided extremes of religious intolerance.

In the years after the Second World War Australia has been changed by religious tolerance. In some cases sometimes conflict over religion can be stronger than arguments about language or ethnic autonomy. Different means have been undertaken in order to undermine religion by various regimes. Stalin, for example, was aware that Catholicism in Poland under the communist rule could not be easily eliminated from social life. Hence the persecution of the Catholic Church during the Stalin era was different than in other communist countries. On the other hand, Stalin underestimated the influence and role of religion in his own country, where different forms of religion were professed illegally and underground and were preserved in spite of 50 years of persecution.

As we have seen there are also social reasons to preserve ethnic culture in a multicultural society.

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<sup>21</sup>Although only the majority ethnic group members have been engaged so far in this cult, even if they were joined by members of other ethnic groups their activities would be impossible to accept.

## 20.5 Educational

There is no question that teaching any language in general, and a community language in particular, is of educational value.

The Senate Standing Committee's report of October 1984 stated that:

Language policies should be developed and co-ordinated at the national level on the basis of four guiding principles namely:

- competence in English;
- maintenance and development of languages other than English;
- opportunities for learning second language.<sup>22</sup>

As we can see three of the four principles are concerned with languages other than English.

Lo Bianco recognises the linguistic pluralism of Australia as 'a valuable national resource enhancing and enriching cultural and intellectual life ...' and advocates help, especially for bilingual children, and even potentially bilingual children. According to him:

schools should be encouraged and assisted to make concerted efforts to foster the bilingualism of their pupils during normal schooling arrangements preferably, or in concert with community organizations or by other arrangements where this is not possible.<sup>23</sup>

While advocating bilingualism, Lo Bianco is simultaneously aware that for the majority of Australians, bilingualism will mean a second language other than English. He gives a long list of reasons for bilingualism. His stance, however, goes well beyond the traditional justification of learning foreign languages and their inclusion in curriculum, by underlining cultural enrichment combined with social values and benefits, especially for children in the context of Australia's cultural (and linguistic) diversity. As he puts it:

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<sup>22</sup>Commonwealth Department of Education *National Policy on Languages*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1987, p.4.

<sup>23</sup>Commonwealth Department of Education *National Policy on Languages*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1987, p.8.

there is persuasive evidence from research that individuals, particularly children, who attain a high level of bilingualism, i.e. a high level of proficiency in two languages, often gain nonlinguistic as well as linguistic benefits in their intellectual functioning. Specifically these advantages, related to higher levels of verbal intelligence, a greater mental flexibility. The significant cognitive benefits which accrue from bilingualism, however, require rigorous learning, sound teaching, complementary development of the two languages and occur under special conditions in which both languages are valued.<sup>24</sup>

Although when Lo Bianco advocates bilingualism, he refers rather generally to 'evidence from research' without references to particular research findings, there are indeed important research investigations in this area. The research investigations were conducted by specialists in bilingual education. Some writers and investigators noted the significance of bilingual education during the process of primary education. Gardner, for example, gives five reasons supporting bilingual education, but three of them are concerned with primary school children: The reasons are: "to avoid or lessen scholastic retardation, to strengthen bonds between home and school, and to avoid the child's possible alienation from his/her family."<sup>25</sup> To justify the bilingual education of adults he listed: "to make it possible to achieve reasonable literacy so that the potential asset of bilingualism is not wasted and, in general terms, to conserve a nation's resources of language competence."<sup>26</sup>

It ought to be noted that there has been a certain conflict in research on bilingual children. For example, Tucker and d'Anglojan presumed negative effects of bilingual schooling on the intellectual and emotional development of child.<sup>27</sup> But an influential study of Peal and Lambert which was based on their own research on bilingualism and intelligence found no evidence of a bilingual deficit among children.<sup>28</sup> They conducted

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid, p 46

<sup>25</sup>quoted in: *Australian Education Review*, No 18, Bilingual Education and Australian Schools. A Review. Australian Council for Educational Research, 1982, p.8.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid, p.8

<sup>27</sup>Described in: *Australian Education Review*, Ibid p.26

<sup>28</sup>Ibid, p.26

their investigation among children from six French-medium schools in Montreal and found also that:

bilinguals performed significantly better than monolinguals on both verbal and non-verbal intelligence test.<sup>29</sup>

Consequently:

Their positive findings, and their criticism of the methodology of earlier research, led to re-examination of old prejudices and, subsequently, to more carefully controlled research into bilingualism and bilingual education.<sup>30</sup>

Mills, commenting on the research findings described above, noted that there are two important points which distinguish the Peal and Lambert study: the selection of really bilingual students, and the fact that their students had access to two prestigious and socially relevant languages (English and French, the official languages of Canada).<sup>31</sup> The selection of students for the research was better, as Mills argues, because Peal and Lambert selected 'balanced' bilinguals. In particular, this selection was based on elimination of such bilinguals where one of their languages was 'much more dominant'. The second distinction as Mills comments was that, by contrast to Peal's and Lambert's prestigious languages

earlier research subjects were often Spanish-American students of low socio-economical status, learning through the national (an universal) language, English, and their own locally stigmatized language, Spanish.<sup>32</sup>

Although the second comment made by Mills may seem to be very controversial, the point was taken well indeed and requires further discussion.

The problem of motivation in a study of any subject and study of languages in particular, where systematic and long work is necessary, and the first results are seen after a relatively long period of time, is a matter of a particular importance. But, perhaps

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid, p.26

<sup>30</sup>Ibid, p.26

<sup>31</sup>Ibid, p.26

<sup>32</sup>Ibid, p.27

more importantly, in the sphere of languages attitudes of family members of students of languages, their friends, schools, work environment, and even governments, play an important role, whereas in the case of other subjects, such influence or attitudes of the social environment are not so significant. The 'prestige' of the language in terms of international importance does not play a specific role. It can be even argued *in abstracto* that, whereas both French and Spanish are the official languages of the United Nations, Spanish is more important, as spoken by the inhabitants of more countries or by a higher population etc. Where language plays the role of a core value of a culture it must be recognized as a most significant factor that many 'non-prestigious' languages, spoken by a small number of people, have been preserved, regardless of long periods of persecution or forbidding their usage, making them non-official or implementing policies aimed at their elimination. Learning any language ('prestigious' or 'non-prestigious') by any person has an educational value. However, social pressure towards the study of a second language with simultaneous pressure to maintain both languages or a pressure to study a language in order to replace one language by another, has an influence on motivation. For a young boy or girl the pressure from family, the atmosphere of a family home to keep their own language by all family members, and encouragement to develop it, is important. When the children know that other families use their languages in every day family life, it also influences motivation. If they have contacts with their peers speaking the same language it is also helpful for the preservation of their language. In addition, the influence of schools cannot be forgotten. The teachers in their schools may actively support their education in both languages, and see them as languages of equal importance, or to try to replace their first language by the second, saying or showing that only the second language is significant, encouraging them to replace the 'irrelevant' mother tongue. That

is why we should agree with Peal's and Lambert's differentiation between 'additive' and 'subtractive' language setting.

For them an **additive** language setting means a situation where a bilingual is educated in such a setting where

his/her home language was secure and a second language was being added for cultural or economical benefit

and a subtractive

in which national educational policies and social pressures force an ethnic community group to given up their home language in favour of the majority language.<sup>33</sup>

They underlined the importance of controlling for the degree of bilinguality and noted a positive influence of additive language setting. Their findings were confirmed by studies conducted in Western Canada, Singapore and South Africa.<sup>34</sup>

Preservation and development of first language have an impact on skills of the second language. UNESCO report prepared by Skutnabb-Kangas and Tonkomaa on language development of Finish immigrant children in Sweden showed that the children who had best preserved Finish as their mother tongue were also best in Swedish.<sup>35</sup> The report also noted that:

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<sup>33</sup> *Australian Education Review*. Number 18. Bilingual Education and Australian Schools. A Review. John Mills, Australian Council for Educational Research, p.26-27.

<sup>34</sup> Study conducted by Cummins and Gulutsan; Torrence, Gowan, Wu, and Aliotti; Ianco-Worrall (listed by John Mills in: *Australian Education Review* (Ibid) p.27.

<sup>35</sup> *Australian Education Review*, Number 18, Bilingual Education and Australian Schools, Australian Council for Educational Research, pp 26-27, 32. The described report intended to investigate the following hypothesis, which was proven:

"The level of  $L_2$  competence which a bilingual child attains is practically a function of the type of competence the child has developed in  $L_1$  at the time when intensive exposure to  $L_2$  begins"



Finish children who had immigrated at the age of nine or ten, after developing skills in Finish to the abstract level at school, maintained a level of Finish close to Finish students in Finland and achieve Swedish language skills comparable with those of Swedish children. By contrast, Finish children, immigrating, say before or at the age of entry to school, found learning the new language the most difficult.<sup>36</sup>

The study has been supported by others.<sup>37</sup>

But perhaps more important for the topic, and specifically for educational rationale of bilingual education, is advocating for positive discrimination of the minority groups children who are socially and economically disadvantaged. The justification of such measure is to prevent the dislocation or loss of the first language, a result of Cummins's investigation.<sup>38</sup> Such an approach for disadvantaged children, in the opinion of bilingual specialists, is necessary, as their situation is different in comparison to so called 'socially secure children' with a well developed first language which is the official or majority language. Unlike the disadvantaged children, 'socially secure children' seek an 'additive' form of bilingualism. There is a higher probability of these children achieving a good competence in both languages. Or, in other words, an 'additive' form of bilingualism take place.

There are possibilities of preventing 'subtractive' bilingualism of disadvantaged children. This can be achieved by special programs for disadvantaged children, as, for exam-

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid *Australian Education Review* p.32

<sup>37</sup>John Mills listed the following evidence: "There is a study of a program in Italian and English for New Caledonian children (Shapsen and Purbkoo, 1977). There is a study of bilingual-bilaterate program in Navajo and English at Rock Point school in Northern Arizona (Rosier and Farella, 1976). Most of the studies supporting vernacular education should be included here, especially the well-controlled study by Modiano (1968) of Mexican-Indian children learning in the vernacular and Spanish. Finally Hébert (1976) has reported on the progress of minority francophone students in Manitoba, Canada, who received 80 per cent of their instruction in French and 20 per cent in English yet did just as well in English as anglophone children of the same IQ in either bilingual or regular English programs." (in: *Australian Education Review*, Number 18, Bilingual Education and Australian Schools, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 32-33).

<sup>38</sup>*Australian Education Review*, Number 18, Bilingual Education and Australian Schools, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 34)

ple, the long term 'language-shelter' programs in Sweden or transitional bilingual education program of 'sufficient depth and duration'.<sup>39</sup>

Mills analysing various research investigations on bilingual education concludes that:

"There would seem to be obvious social, emotional and motivational grounds for preserving and developing the mother tongue of and bilingual child ... there are also well-substantiated reasons in the cognitive domain for this approach to be adopted."<sup>40</sup>

In short conclusion of this chapter it can be stated that some aspects of ethnic minority cultures should be preserved for the benefit of the individuals concerned (identity problems), ethnic minority groups (importance of cultural values) as well as the whole society (through the interaction of particular ethnic groups and the majority group, some cultural values can be adopted with or without modification by the whole society for its own benefit).

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid, p.34

<sup>40</sup>Ibid, p.34

## Chapter 21

# Teaching Community Languages in Australia (a framework for the future)

The question which we have to ask firstly is whether community languages should be taught in the mainstream Australian school system and, more importantly, why these languages should be taught. If the answer is yes, is it only for the benefit of the individual students for whom English is not the first language? What is the value for wider community or is it for the benefit of ethnic communities only?, etc.

The arguments for teaching community languages have been summarized by Clyne.<sup>1</sup> He puts the arguments into the following main groups: family cohesion, self esteem, natural resources and development of the individual.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, knowledge and development of the first language by a student contribute to family cohesion. The student will communicate more effectively in the family, both with nuclear and extended family members, for whom often the home language is the only one. The student will have strong support from the family towards study of the language,

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<sup>1</sup>M.Clyne (ed), *Australia, Meeting Place of Languages*, Pacific Linguistics, 1985, p.137.

<sup>2</sup>Similar arguments, although in a broader context of language learning and maintenance were stated by Lo Bianco in his 1987 report (see: *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*. Companion Volume to the Policy Paper, released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra 1991, p.62.

help during the process of learning, correction of grammatical errors, help in written exercises etc. The family will benefit by better communication, avoidance of isolation by the younger generation etc. This is of particularly great value when some members of the family are old and community language is the only language of possible communication.

The problem of self-esteem of children of non-English speaking background is very complicated. For the majority of them the first day at school, irrespective of whether they arrived in Australia before beginning school, or were born in Australia into homes where the English language is not spoken, is the day of 'cultural shock'.<sup>3</sup> The language issue plays an important role, difficult to overcome during the first years of schooling of children of non-English speaking backgrounds. Simultaneously, during the time of schooling, the relations of the students with families become more complicated, conflicts on the grounds of language use appear. As Clyne noted:

Children from non-English speaking families often develop the misconception that their family's language is worthless language because it does not play a role in the school domain and that their parents are stupid because they cannot speak English like native speakers.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, such situations occur very often, but the response would be quite different if the child finds out that his/her language is also taught in the school, even for a very small group of students, that there is a support from a teacher of their own language, that there are also other children who speak languages other than English and study them. Simply speaking, the child should realise that his/her home language is also a valuable means of communication, perhaps not so common as English but, nevertheless of a practical value, recognized by the school system and the community, not only by the narrow circle of the family.

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<sup>3</sup>see also: children memoirs in: J. Smolicz, M. Secombe *The Australian Schools ...*

<sup>4</sup>M. Clyne, *Ibid.* p. 137

The first language in Australia cannot be treated solely as the language of home instruction and/or a simple routine of every day conversation. The first language, to be alive in the family and maintained by the child requires continuous development, appropriate to the development stages of the child and his/her intellect. Today it is widely appreciated that preserved and developed languages other than English are valuable resources for the country as the one nation, a nation which needs bilingual citizens for a variety of social and economic purposes. The benefit of bilingualism can be utilised in Australian society in variety ways: science, trade, cultural interaction between nations, marketing etc. From an economic point of view it is much better to utilize all the 'national resources', especially of young ethnic Australians, who are the native speakers of the languages, and to develop existing knowledge rather than to begin a long process of language education. Teaching community languages of young ethnic people is the most efficient and effective, not only in terms of better utilised financial and educational resources but also in terms of the best results of such an education. This is because they are fluent speakers with native accent, more accurate in translation/interpretation, knowing better the cultural differences. If the process of language education is conducted during all the years of primary and secondary education, the students at tertiary level and later, as professionals, can contribute, as really bilinguals, towards the development of science, using their natural capacity to co-operate and communicate with the speakers of other languages, presenting papers and information in the way of the exchange programs etc. can be really significant. They can also contribute to the intellectual enrichment of local ethnic communities and will fulfil the various roles of translators, interpreters or educators for the older members of the ethnic minority groups.

Teaching languages in the school system also contributes to the intellectual develop-

ment of individual students and, simultaneously, having better educated individuals, more open minded, well prepared to live between two cultures and to interact between them, will benefit the nation as a whole.

There are serious statements in literature that bilingual students have better academic achievements than their monolingual colleagues. Clyne, for example, referring to overseas investigations noted that:

Research, particularly in Canada, suggests that bilinguals are superior to monolinguals in logical thought and conceptual development.<sup>5</sup>

Such results should influence a serious research investigation of the problem in multi-cultural Australia as well.

The above reasons and their justification give sufficient evidence that community language education is very important. Now is the time to begin community language education seriously, on a large scale, and as soon as possible. The current, in reality continuous and permanent, discussion on immigration intake is not relevant to our discussion here. If the level of immigrant intake is lower, or even minimal, the only implication is to begin the process of education in community languages now, when the human resources are available. When the ethnic language is lost there is not only a problem for individuals, but for the minority groups and, on the macro-scale, for the nation as well.

The next problem which requires discussion is the problem of the organization of the education of community languages. The ideal would be a community language program in every school of the mainstream system having students from minority ethnic groups. Such a solution in practice is not always possible because of various reasons, such as a limited number of students, lack of teachers or resources etc.

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<sup>5</sup>M. Clyne, .... p. 138

Teaching community languages should be a mixture of central, state wide co-ordinated programs, taking into account the needs of the local community and its aspirations. As a starting point, an analysis of the existing centres and their assessment should be made. In addition, there will be a need for statistical analysis of community composition, taking into account ethnicity and languages spoken and suggested/recommended by the community motions.

In spite of various organisational difficulties, we cannot accept the assumption proposed by the "Australia's Language" policy document regarding the list of priority languages. The only 'list' possible to accept is the 'list' of community languages spoken in Australia. The additional view presented here is that the real list of community languages spoken in Australia can be produced from time to time, especially after census results. This is because the number of speakers of particular languages is a dynamic factor, influenced by the new immigration process, different degrees of importance of languages in particular cultures (see discussion on core values), various demographic structures (where age plays a role), successful preservation of some languages and the loss of others, etc. Such a list could play an auxiliary role in the process of planning by educational authorities.

As it has been pointed out earlier, language education should have a variety of forms but the particular emphasis, in addition to English and English as a second language, should be on community languages for native speakers (or as a first language other than English). Education and teaching of community languages other than English for non-native speakers should not only be maintained, but developed as well. This is a practical solution if we are serious about teaching languages at all and if we really want any development of languages (or for the matter even their preservation as a minimum task)

and if we really want to stop wasting talents and real opportunity. Obviously, we do not need a large army of specialist in linguistics but we need indeed professionals, or para-professionals, who are able to communicate in languages other than English.

The issue of language education in a broader sense should take into account its priority. There will be only two main priorities in language education: English and the community languages for native speakers. A special place will be still reserved for English as a second language but this subject would have a temporary character with the goal to assist the young arrivals to acquire English as soon as possible and, when a required level is achieved, the students should be placed in classes of 'mainstream' English with additional hours of instruction for non-native speakers at first year(s) of attendance, depending upon individual needs of students.

English as the national language for all, and the main language of majority students ought to be highlighted with revision of current programs, as well as taking into account all possibilities of its extension in order to make the program more relevant and attractive to students and appropriate to the demands of all academic requirements, contemporary knowledge, communication needs etc.

Community language education for the native speakers should be seen as fully utilizing the linguistic potential in Australia approach on one hand, and respecting the individual, family and social needs of ethnic minority groups on the other. This will fulfil both national needs and the individual cultural aspirations in accordance with the principles of equal opportunity, including equal educational opportunity. The fulfilment of the principle of equal opportunity will take place as students should have an access to their own language education to overcome their disadvantage.

Thirdly, the approach is in line with the principles of humanistic sociology, as the



first language is a value from the participants' point of view. The participants in such language education programs will have a stronger motivation towards a language study.

Finally, in respect to the philosophical ideal of the appreciation of human dignity — this approach takes a fuller account the students as individuals, appreciate their situation in terms of linguistic diversity, helps to keep the natural ties with family and develops cultural enrichment.

## Chapter 22

# Recommended Organisation of Language Education Program

What should be expected to emerge from the discussion is a practical guide towards an educational model which takes account of a possible form of language learning for all Australians. This, however, is best made in the more general framework of general language education policy. We wish to follow up the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* and related policy papers, and recognize fully the importance of English as the national language of Australia. Its role cannot be questioned. In order to possibly give full access to learning, or improving, English for all inhabitants of Australia, the 'English as a Second Language' program requires further development.

### 22.1 English as a second language

A specific role in language education will be played by the English as a second language program. On the one hand, courses of English as a second language should be maintained and conducted on a permanent basis for those who come as immigrants to Australia. On the other hand, these will have a temporary character for the students, especially for the younger generation of non-English speaking background inhabitants, who as experience shows, acquire English in a relatively short time, especially when the courses are provided

for up to the middle level of secondary education. Whereas the courses/programs of English should be offered at all levels of schooling, from preschool up to tertiary education inclusively, it seems to be adequate that courses of English as a second language may begin at the primary school level and be conducted for up to two years on the secondary or post-secondary level (in the second case, depending on the age and extent of the students' contact with English — it can take longer). As soon as possible, English as a second language courses should be terminated, and the students placed in the mainstream classes of ordinary English.

In some case, however, additional assistance may be required for a transitional period. The programs of English as a second language should be as flexible as possible, tailored to the individual needs of students. The justification of a flexible, specific approach to the ESL is based on the fact that the programs should be adequate for students who speak other languages only, for those who arrived in Australia after some years of schooling in a non-English speaking country (completed or interrupted primary, secondary or post-secondary schooling), and so with a certain general knowledge. Those students who come to Australia after completion of primary education will experience more difficulties with English than their younger colleagues. The need for ESL courses will be higher for the senior secondary school students and much higher for adult students. Hence, it should be remembered that courses for these students ought to be of a more intensive character in comparison to those offered at the primary level. This is because the acquisition of English at the post-primary level is slower, and their low level of English will make participation in the mainstream school program very difficult for these students. This is relevant also to those subjects which are less language related, such as mathematics or science.

### **22.1.1 English as a second language in tertiary institutions**

English as a second language often proves more difficult to organize in the tertiary education sector. Among the many potential clients of such courses we can have a variety of specific situations. The variety of the situations imply, in consequence, a variety of students' needs. Without pretending to provide a full classification, it is possible to distinguish the following groups for the purpose of ESL provisions:

1. non-English speaking background potential students, who have completed some secondary schooling in Australia but are still experiencing some difficulties with English, which may increase at a more demanding academic level;
2. students of non-English speaking background, who came to Australia directly after the completion of secondary schooling in their countries of origin;
3. students with some tertiary education (uncompleted), who are prepared to start their tertiary study in Australia from the beginning (often with the motivation that this would be the best option for the acquisition of English, while gaining knowledge of academic subjects from the Australian perspective);
4. overseas graduates seeking not only the acquisition and development of English, but also the updating of professional knowledge to make themselves more relevant to the Australian scene (both aspects can be equally important, or there may be a stronger emphasis on the first or the second need);
5. overseas graduates who want to get an 'Australian paper' or qualification (diploma or degree) to better their employment prospects, while expecting a certain improvement in English;

6. non-English speaking background professionals who realised that they must change their profession in Australia;
7. non-English overseas professionals who wish to update their qualifications in Australia in the areas of their expertise;
8. full-fee paying overseas students from non-English speaking countries (this group, in the majority of cases, intends to leave Australia after the completion of their studies). The needs of this group are less relevant to the topic, however their specific ESL requirements should be taken into account;
9. mature age immigrants, who after the achievements of a certain life standard have decided to come back to study as a matter of interest and/or improvement of social position.

As it has been mentioned, this list is not full, but illustrates the complexity of the problem and difficulties associated with the designing and delivery of ESL courses in such a way that they will be relevant to students' needs. Hence, as not all the students will require systematic tuition, in addition to bridging courses conducted before enrolment (or after enrolment). However, a permanent, less formal assistance should be given to them on a rather more individual basis. For example, some students will experience difficulties when writing essays, or preparing for an oral presentation or participation in tutorials, etc. Appropriate assistance should be available through the duration of the whole course for all students who need it, including post-graduate students. Special attention should be given to new immigrants as well as full-fee paying overseas students. This is because these students, in addition to possible language problems, will need familiarisation with the Australian education system and the cultural differences of a more general character.

## 22.2 Community Languages for Native Speakers (CLNS) Program

The next part of the language education policy which would be recommended is the Community Languages for Native Speakers (CLNS) Program. It is important to underline that the CLNS education should be treated as having the same kind of importance as the English language courses. Although from a political point of view, English is the most important language, being the national and official language of primary significance for all Australians, irrespective of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds — community languages other than English should be treated in the sphere of language education policy as equal in terms of their significance for the community concerned, and its individual members. Consequently, the same time of instruction should be allocated to community language education for native speakers, and they should be taught, wherever it is practically possible, in the mainstream school system (public, catholic and other independent schools) and at both the primary and secondary level. Justification of community language education has been previously discussed; here we only reiterate the rights of non-English speaking students to preserve and develop their languages and the benefit for the nation of having first-rate bilingual specialists.

The Community Language for Native Speakers program can start on an experimental basis in selected kindergartens. These kindergartens where the community languages are introduced will be carefully investigated by researchers. There is an important reason for the attempt to introduce community language education at the kindergarten level, as children of a non-English speaking background, especially those who have no brothers or sisters and lack contacts with their ethnic peers, are likely to lose their native language.

The language in such situations may be the only means of communication with parents. Although the time span for attending preschool is not long, some contacts with the first stage of language here would be beneficial for the child from linguistic, psychological, sociological and educational points of view. This would also be an excellent introduction and a bridging exercise towards the first language education at primary school level. Overall, this would be the most desirable transition between family – preschool – primary school, supported by family, teachers and peer groups.

### **22.2.1 Community Language Education for Native Speakers at Primary Level**

The Community Language Education for Native Speakers must start seriously at primary school level just as the English language programs do. The Australian traditional practice to introduce other than English languages at the secondary school level is not sufficient. To put it simply, this is too late for an individual to achieve a competent level of bilingualism. Beginning the formal education of a mother tongue in a secondary school is not only ineffective, but can be considered an obvious injustice. The argument is simple: any individual must have the right to study his/her first language as a part of elementary (primary) education.

In practice there are problems when there is no continuity of teaching of the mother tongue at primary and secondary school level. The process of learning should be ongoing. If the learning of mother tongue is not continued at school and replaced by a second language, it can lead towards a partial, or even complete disappearance.

It has provided effective to consider structure like Victorian School of Languages which makes program of the learning of the middle range of community languages in the most cost effective way (see previous comments about the school).

Serious neglectance of the language learning process, even if the process of learning is undertaken on the secondary level, gives a zero result from the educational point of view. This would be a very regrettable situation, not only from an effective educational point of view, but in terms of both individual and social benefits as well. It is not an exaggeration as it may seem to be at first. If the first language is not included in the every day education program in a multicultural school system, the loss can be total. Furthermore, such situations, unfortunately, happen quite often. This is because typically a child of a non-English speaking background is brought up in family which, after migration to Australia, is looking for a new way of life, organizing everything from the beginning: home (usually renting), attending courses for new arrivals, looking for a job, etc. The financial needs of the migrant family are high, and when a child begins primary school there is an opportunity for the mother to be engaged in occupational work outside of the home. The children of migrants during this time are more often left alone, discussion or even long conversation are sporadic, because of the parents' lack of time. When the parents are at work, the child has more contact with speakers of the main language only, and without school, first language support becomes not the opportunity for bilingualism, but leads to the replacement of the first language by the second, which is used as the only language of school, and the child's peer group's closest environment.

It is important to note the apparently obvious fact that the child who begins primary education is illiterate. This fact is very significant for the first language. Unlike non-English speaking background adults, the child cannot use ethnic newspapers; ethnic radio programmes or TV movies are not relevant for him/her and, in the majority case, the child has a very limited contact, if and, with peer groups using the same first language. Therefore, it must be recognized that the preservation of the first language (in the case



of a young child, when the language is, *ipso facto*, not yet developed) is a very difficult and complicated task, much more difficult than in the case of older students. This must be realised by both the school system and parents as well. Often parents note when it is too late that their children respond to questions asked in their first language, in English. Child language cannot be developed in a social vacuum. Routine every day conversation with parents is not able to develop the language to a proficient literary level. Hence, full co-operation between family, school and, to a lesser extent, social organisations is essential.

In conclusion, there are strong arguments showing the necessity of beginning education of the community language for native speakers at the primary school level, education which is as equally important as English from the child's point of view and seriously treated as the normal part of primary curriculum. Such community language education for a child for whom the first language is not English, ought to be continued through the next stage of schooling and be available for study on at least one tertiary institution in Australia.

### **22.2.2 Community Language Education (as a second language) for English speaking Australians**

The teaching of a community language as a second language to children of an English speaking background also plays important complementary place in the language education program. Generally, we are against a list of languages which should be taught under the program. Only as a guide, a list of community languages may be prepared, preferably after every census data publications informing the community on which languages are spoken in Australia where, let us say, languages spoken in Australia by more than 30 000 people would be considered as widely used community languages. The list of languages offered under this program is less important, as the students, in the majority of cases, will

start to learn languages unknown, or almost unknown, to them. The main point regarding the selection of a language is that the choice should be given to students. They should be given a chance to select their language for study from a list of a variety of languages. On the other hand the list should include only community languages and especially languages relevant for the local community. This can be considerable in practice. For example, if a student has a number of friends and/or neighbours of Croatian or Italian origin, the student will have a stronger motivation to learn Croatian or Italian than, let's say, French or Japanese as he/she probably knows a few words, or some expressions in the languages, and realises that they are more relevant to study because of the opportunity to use and develop them in a real life situation, during social interactions with friends. It should be pointed out that in the Australian context, learning languages has a unique value as they are widely spoken, and, by this fact, the students of community languages have the opportunity to put the knowledge into practice.

As with English and Community Languages for native speakers, the program for the Community Second Language learners should begin on the primary school level. This is because research suggests that this is the best possible age for the student to acquire languages relatively quicker and develop during later secondary and post-secondary education.

Yet a question of a practical nature, the continuation of the study of languages on higher than primary levels, needs to be mentioned again. We can anticipate a situation when a student of a language at the primary level wishes to continue to study the language on secondary level, but such a language is not offered in the new school. The opportunity of changing to another language should be a possible option if this is the real wish of the student or his/her parents, although it would not be desirable. For maximum effec-

tiveness of language learning students need to be able to continue learning at secondary school the language they have been introduced to at primary school. Then it may be necessary to provide supplementary programs of community languages for beginners for the sake of those students who have just completed primary education but who have had no community language component in their curriculum.

### **22.2.3 Teaching other Languages**

Finally, as the last part of the language education program at secondary level, there is the question of teaching other languages. By other language we mean all languages, which are not included on the list of community languages and cannot be considered as the community languages in Australia because of the very small number of their speakers, languages which are specifically required for various purposes including trade and cultural interaction, traditional ancient languages such as Latin or Greek (which are still considered valuable, especially for academic purposes) and Esperanto. These languages would be taught since the beginning of secondary schooling and continued up to, and including, study at tertiary level. The time of language instruction should be organised in such a way that students who wish to study simultaneously Latin and an additional language should have such an opportunity. Similarly, if a student of Vietnamese (as a second language) would like to study also, let's say Estonian, which cannot be currently considered a community language of a wider usage; because of an intended business trip in the future with family — he or she should have an access to the language course, through a distance education centre, a government or community provider of the language course.

## **22.3 Tertiary Language Education**

One more part of language program requiring a discussion is tertiary language educa-

tion. We can expect and recommend that any university should be a highly specialised provider of a language education and there should be a provision for the majority of community languages to be included in a tertiary institution, at least somewhere in Australia. The university language courses must be very carefully planned for the future. Observing current practice we can note that on the one hand there are presently offered programs which are well developed in some community languages, in particular Italian, French and German, and to the lesser extent Spanish and Russian. Not only more languages would be necessary, but different courses as well. The programs need to take into account the variety of students' needs, special courses for language teachers, as well as current achievements and real knowledge of languages presented by the students.

Also, on the one hand emphasis should be placed on those languages where the universities have been a significant provider on a high level and, on the other, the increased knowledge of the languages presented by students as a result of a language education, which began on the primary school level. Consequently, the universities will take into account the higher achievement of new students in the area of language. On a more practical level courses of languages should be designed in such a way that they will be able to fulfil the needs of students, who have:

- completed language education on the secondary level only,
- completed language education on the both primary and secondary level,
- completed a language course only at the post-secondary level (for example a TAFE course),
- are native speakers, but require language development to an academic level in their languages.

Further, the courses should be oriented towards:

1. students who will become specialist in linguistics in a variety of professions (teaching languages, translating, interpreting, research, comparative linguistics, etc.);
2. students who would like to gain a working knowledge of a language to use it for their professional purposes (e.g. Italian for doctors, German for lawyers, Russian for engineers, Polish for economists, Spanish for teachers, etc.);
3. to gain a general knowledge of a language, previously unknown, for a variety of purposes (study, overseas trips, etc.)

The enormous tasks associated with language education on the university level requires institutional specialisation and cooperation between universities. Such factors as current university tradition and achievements in the sphere of language teaching, area of expertise need to be taken into account in addition to more general factors, such as students' needs and interests, social needs and demands, etc. It would be a very difficult task (and beyond our topic) to introduce all possible methods of language delivery from an organisational point of view. As an example, we can note the possibility of specialization in teaching certain languages (e.g. Roman languages, Slavonic languages or Asian languages) by particular universities, development of external language courses, special courses for native or very advanced speakers of languages, etc.

A particular role in language education should be given to language education provided by the TAFE sector. In general, the TAFE sector may and should play the most flexible language education delivery. It would be suggested that in addition to some advanced courses for those who continue a language education on the primary and secondary level a variety of courses for such purposes as pleasure, basic communication, business trip, over-

seas training, courses for immigrants to prepare them for training or further, education, courses for interpreters etc.

On the one hand a variety of language courses can be useful under the general title of *Second Language for Everyone*, with the list of all the languages available, which, as above suggested, would be the domain of post-secondary education, especially the TAFE sector. On the other hand, highly specialised language education (languages other than English) with the aim of offering further development of acquired knowledge and practical language skills, should play a more significant role in the all suggested programs. The emphasis should be placed on the continuation of language study for specially gifted students in this area. This program can include those who are native speaker of a language which has been seriously developed and those who performed very well during the extensive period of language education.

Finally, language education should be considered as an area of education where individual student attention is of a great importance.

This chapter can be summarised in the form of a table 22.1.

Table 22.1: Proposed Language Education in Australia

Level of Education	English	English as a Second Language (ESL)	Community Language for Native Speakers (CLNS)	Community Language (of wider usage) as a Second Language (CSL)	Other Languages (including Latin, Ancient Greek) (OL)
Preschool	×		(only in selected pre- × schools of experimental character)		
Primary	×	(up to two years × after arrival or if necessary)	×	×	
Secondary	×	(intensive × program up to two years after arrival)	×	×	×
Post-Secondary (TAFE, Other Colleges)	×	×	×	×	×
University	×	(additional bridging courses and: - permanent assistance based on students' needs - bridging academic courses for immigrants, aboriginal & overseas students) ×	×	×	×

## Chapter 23

# Ethnic Languages in the Future — Towards Full Application of Multicultural Policy and the Principles of Equal Opportunity

### Introduction

There is ongoing discussion on immigration policy and practice in Australia. The discussion is sometimes serious, sometimes of an emotional character with the voices of some enthusiasts of a significant increase of immigrants on the one hand and a very strong opposition towards immigration advocating its minimum level on the other. There is however, rather an agreement that immigration is necessary for Australia, and the disagreement exists in relation to what extent to keep the level of immigration on annual basis and who should be preferred migrants to Australia: those who have already their families here, the best qualified and experienced, those with significant financial resources able to develop the economy through investment, the refugees who are hungry for real democracy and experiencing prosecution in their own homeland, or perhaps people who are living in poverty and should have an opportunity to improve their every day existence. For some inhabitants as well as decisionmakers in the immigration area it is important



who is coming into Australia: white people from English-speaking countries, people from Asia, black Africans, Latin-Americans or migrants from non-English speaking countries but traditionally associated with the previous waves of immigrants, such as Italians or Greeks.

Regardless of the future trends in immigration policy and planning we cannot lose the current status quo. The significant, beneficial for the whole Australia linguistic resources are just here. But, it is simultaneously true that they are underestimated, undervalued, and even ignored. Before is too late, they ought to be recognized, maintained and developed as soon as possible. The main assumption in relation to languages in Australia should be spelled out in a simple way: **teaching languages in Australia should be recognized and based upon the linguistic composition of the society.**

This is a simple assumption, logical, acknowledging social reality, and based upon the principle of social justice and equity.

### **23.1 Linguistic composition of society and teaching languages.**

The assumption that teaching languages should be based upon the linguistic composition of society has many consequences for the practice of teaching languages, especially in a multicultural society.

Firstly, community languages should be taught to an extent to which they are represented in the society. Indeed, when certain languages are significantly represented in the community, their teaching should be considered as of the first importance, before any other reason such as priority for trade, international co-operation, the prestige of a language, etc. If many languages are significantly used within the community they should

be taught in such a proportion as they are represented in the society.

Secondly, teaching community languages should be free of any political assumptions. Some political lobby groups may advocate preferential treatment of a nation or group of nations, a continent, a 'geographic location' etc. The above suggested and recommended assumption, would be a clear criterion, avoiding any preferential treatment or attitudes towards a language or a group of languages.

Thirdly, the assumption does not preclude any specific form of help or encouragement towards the teaching or learning of those languages which are spoken by a small number of the community, and the community is not able to provide adequate means and support to maintain and develop the language(s) because of financial or organisational reasons. This is because, on a practical level, there would be a considerable problem of how to facilitate teaching these languages which have a small number of speakers in the community.

Perhaps a consideration of different approaches will be necessary in this case. Obviously, they will need more support than those communities which are better established, with a long tradition of preserving languages.

Currently, there is an emphasis on the 'economic value' of languages as a means of communication in international trade. Few languages are selected and recommended for teaching based, rather not on historical or present trends in the trade, but planned future directions. Thus, the next problem requiring discussion is the problem of those languages which should be used in trade and to provide economic change. It is true that trade directions can influence the demand for particular languages which are not considered to be significant community languages in Australia because of the small proportion of the population using them. However, in the real Australian multicultural context it would be very unlikely that a language which is in high demand is not used in the community

or used by an inadequate number. It is rather a matter not only of their preservation (although further work in this area would be necessary) but also their development in terms of the quality of the skills. If the teaching of languages is established and developed towards real current and potential needs, usage of only existing resources would be adequate and, consequently, the trade argument can be used as an auxiliary for teaching community languages. Consequently, the issue of trade should reinforce teaching community languages. In trade not only the language, but also further knowledge of the cultural context, is important. Thus the community members who are native speakers of a language, with a deeper knowledge of the cultural context, give a guarantee of better performance.

## **23.2 Community Languages, Multiculturalism and Equal Opportunity**

The issue of teaching community languages cannot be seen in isolation from both multicultural policy and equal opportunity principles. Both, although relatively new, are well established in the political tradition of Australia. However, neither multiculturalism or equal opportunity are free from controversies and criticism.

In our discussion below we need to tackle the issue of the preservation of ethnic cultures, and specifically languages in the light of both multiculturalism and equal opportunity concepts, with some general directions for the future. In the previous chapter we discussed the proposals of teaching/learning community languages and some other aspects of culture within the programs.

Discussing language teaching we must note that, in practice, we dealing with a large number of community languages. However, in practice, these should be taught, not

limited. Once again, the only assumption should be that teaching community languages should be in such a proportion as they are represented in the community. (This idea is similar to the principle of proportional representation in the election systems of some democratic societies.)

The general policy development on multiculturalism expressed so far in the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* and the papers which follow the document require more consultation and discussion on a nation wide level. Multiculturalism ought to be discussed more in both its theoretical and practical aspects with emphasis that this is the only realistic approach towards community relations in contemporary multicultural Australia, an approach not free from difficulties, but working in practice. Hence, in addition to language education, a general education, especially at the senior primary and secondary level, regarding multiculturalism, requires development, so school children will be aware of their rights and obligations in this policy respect.

It can be assumed that a work on federal legislation on multiculturalism, with clearly stated rights to preserve and develop the culture of ethnic minorities, including languages, will be undertaken.

When we agree that minority cultures should be preserved in a multicultural society, and having established a framework of a general policy, previously discussed, we will now concentrate on the role of the educational system to achieve the task.

In addition to an obvious assumption that the system must follow the general policy framework, we should look at the structure of the system in terms of its social representation. Both the policy of multiculturalism and equal opportunity, accepted by the government, imply participation of non-English speaking background people in a social life. The problem is that people of a non-English speaking background are underrepre-

sented in the education system, especially on the level of policy making and management. Consequently, following the principle of equal employment opportunity, people of non-English speaking backgrounds, through their input into policy and decision making could be more involved, often based on their first hand experience, especially in the development of community language education, and better contribute towards multicultural education and to give the program more credibility.

### 23.3 Multiculturalism and Multilingualism

It is a true that many people realise the strong correlation between multiculturalism and multilingualism. We accept the view. But before further discussion of the relation we need more comments on multiculturalism.

There are both enthusiasts and enemies of the policy in social life, although multiculturalism is officially considered a public policy.

One of the difficulties is a problem of what to precisely understand by 'multiculturalism', as there are problems with a definition of the term.

However, there is even a legal definition, provided by the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs (SAMEAC) Act, which in its 1989 amendment states:

multiculturalism means policies and practices that recognize and respond to the ethnic diversity of the South Australian community and have as their primary objects the creation of conditions under which all groups and members of the community may:

1. live and work together harmoniously;
2. fully and effectively participate in, and employ their skills and talents for the benefit of, the economic, social and cultural life of the community;  
and
3. maintain and give expression to their distinctive cultural heritages.<sup>1</sup>

It should be pointed out that the title of the act refers to the whole community (in

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<sup>1</sup>The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Act, 1989

this case South Australian), not only to ethnic communities.

Secondly, it is clear that priority is given to community relations (harmonious) and the cultural heritage is the last one (and language is not listed). There is considerable difference if we compare the Act to the characteristics of multiculturalism described in the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*:

cultural identity: the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion.<sup>2</sup>

As we can see the *National Agenda* listed 'cultural identity' in the first place, and language was specifically mentioned, whereas the South Australian Act did not refer to language directly, however language can be considered under the Act's term as a 'cultural heritage'. On the other hand, the South Australian Act, referring to 'cultural heritage' uses the term 'maintain'. The term 'maintain' is stronger than Agenda's 'express' as 'to maintain' means, in relation to culture, some action towards preservation of the culture. This may include learning or studying history, literature or language of the culturally distinctive group. To 'express' gives only the right of using, without further right to develop the culture.

Both the quoted South Australian Act and the *National Agenda* can be improved and used as a starting point towards federal legislation on multiculturalism, in particular, what is relevant to our discussion, towards a right of maintenance and development of minority cultures in Australian Society. Such rights would be not only a manifestation of appreciation of individual rights, but the whole society as well.

One of the practical problems is the question of the acceptance of multiculturalism. As it was mentioned previously, the policy of multiculturalism was accepted by the major

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<sup>2</sup>Office of Multicultural Affairs, *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, 1989, p.vii

political parties in Australia, however there are still voices against the policy.<sup>3</sup>

To avoid long discussions, polemics, or description of the history of multiculturalism in Australia we can ask a simple question 'is multiculturalism useful in practice?' or 'what is an advantage of the policy for Australia?'. One of the best accounts of the Australian multicultural policy in a world wide practical comparison was given by Jupp. Let us quote him to answer the above question:

...qualifications about Australian multiculturalism are not condemnatory. Australia has avoided the pluralist confusion of the United States. It has avoided the racism of Britain and the strict limitations on immigration now imposed by Britain, The Netherlands and West Germany. It does not have the separatism movements of Canada, Wales and Scotland or the violence of Northern Ireland. Its Aboriginal policies have not been a market success but the problem of native peoples in the United States, Canada and New Zealand have not been solved either. It does not have violent city ghettos based on disadvantaged ethnic minorities. Unlike West Germany, it aims to integrate immigrants into society as citizens. Australia is among the most successful multicultural societies in the world, even though its public policy in some areas has been modest and unadventurous.<sup>4</sup>

One of ways to develop multiculturalism is a stronger commitment to languages other than English used by the community. In the area of education it would mean their teaching, maintenance, and development. As Franco Schavoni puts it:

The solid presence of languages other than English ... would strengthen the multicultural and multilingual sensitivity of the community, and act as a part of the humanistic antidote against some of the alienating tendencies of mass society.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, the presence of community languages in a more visible form would strengthen the multicultural sensitivity, and would make multiculturalism more open.

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<sup>3</sup>For example, amongst these against the policy there are: Prof. Chipman, Bruce Ruxton, Prof. Blainey

<sup>4</sup>J. Jupp, "One Among Many" in: Davied Goodman et al, *Multicultural Australia, the Challenges of Change*, Scribe, 1991, p.132

<sup>5</sup>F. Schiavoni, "The Case for Linguistic Pluralism", in: Davied Goodman et al, *Multicultural Australia, the Challenges of Change*, Scribe, 1991, p.42

It can be assumed that further development of language education, multicultural education and clarification of the concept of multiculturalism by academics, practitioners, and mass media will contribute towards not only greater acceptance the policy of multiculturalism per se, but also a stronger commitment to multiculturalism for the benefit of all.

## 23.4 Equal Opportunity as a General Approach

David Cox advocates maximising equality for opportunity for minority groups.<sup>6</sup> He argues that more than access and equity initiatives are needed and ‘a degree of affirmative action.’ It is not clear, what he understands by affirmative action in this context but we can agree with him that access alone cannot benefit ethnic minorities. Perhaps it can benefit a few individuals to gain the first, main step in such areas as employment or education, but most likely it will result in a failure of the rest, for whom only access without further support is offered. Hence, well developed equal employment opportunity programs in the Australian Public Sector, or in some universities (especially in New South Wales), include many specific actions in order to achieve equal employment opportunity, or, as Cox prefers to call it ‘maximising equality of opportunity’. To put such programs into practice we can use the full potential of the disadvantaged group. These programs are helpful in developing the existing skills of immigrants and, on the other hand, fulfilling their needs. The programs can include: specific training on the job, a variety of staff development activities, better opportunity for promotion etc. Also, in the case of students,

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<sup>6</sup>D. Cox, “Social Justice and Service Delivery” in: Goodman at al (eds), *Multicultural Australia*, Scribe, 1991, p.194



especially those who are new arrivals from non-English speaking backgrounds, giving them the opportunity of access without English language support during studies, may result in study termination.

In addition to these general comments, we have to look at the future, not in terms of details of a practical nature of different aspects of various cultures, but based on a more general framework, which should be conducted towards the preservation and development of a variety of cultures in multicultural Australia. Similarly, as in the case of various reasons justifying teaching community languages (and previously described), there are many reasons suggesting their support and development in the future. Without the ambition of finding all of them, we can concentrate on the following four main approaches, namely:

1. Multicultural Policy approach,
2. Equal Opportunity,
3. Human Rights approach,
4. Economic framework (updated by, and associated with, many other reasons showing benefits of cultural preservation).

### **23.4.1 Multicultural Policy approach**

Many reasons were previously listed which suggested multicultural policy as the only one realistic and positive approach in dealing with the variety of social and political problems in a multicultural society. In particular, we noted that multiculturalism worked in practice of Australian life particularly well. The existence of the policy is accepted by

the majority of Australians. The problem for the future is not whether to maintain the policy, but rather how to develop it.

We have already discussed some relations between multiculturalism and multilingualism. A strong point was made by Schiavoni who noted that:

the education system should be entrusted with the responsibility of strengthening second language teaching by offering a small choice of languages other than English as part of the compulsory core at both junior and senior level.

This approach, which is almost universally theorised about and practised in Western countries, is paradoxically more unpopular in multicultural Australia than before the official adoption of multiculturalism. It must be related both to the more general predicament of the humanities in educational institutions as well as to the unconscious arrogance by native speakers of English. Such an approach to language policy would be in harmony with multiculturalism as defined in the *National Agenda*; and would involve not a return to, but a modernist re-invention of the humanist model of education. The cross-cultural function which had once been entrusted to the classical languages would be now assumed by modern languages.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, Schiavoni is right — there is still a lack of strong ties between multiculturalism and multilingualism in practice. Multilingualism should play a more significant role within the practice of multiculturalism, and, in spite of some practical difficulties, the relation ought to be stronger. Consequently, there is a need for creating a more appropriate climate for languages other than English. A positive climate towards community languages may and should be creative at the beginning of the educational process at the primary school level.

Multilingualism helps create better relationships within the community and gives a better access to community services and participation in community life for those who have not acquired the English language. A return to monolingualism would be against social justice. Clyne, for example, argues that:

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<sup>7</sup>F. Schiavoni, "The Case for Linguistic Pluralism", in: David Goodman et al (eds), *Multicultural Australia, The Challenges of Change*, Scibe, 1991, p.42

if we return to monolingual society, or rather a society of language assimilation like the 1940's and 1950's, undoubtedly a large section of the Australian population would be completely alienated.<sup>8</sup>

The *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* distinguish cultural identity (“the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion”<sup>9</sup>) as one of the three dimensions of multicultural policy — the policy should play a significant role in the preservation ethnic cultures, including languages. We can trust that the policy will be further developed and implemented in this regard in the future.

### 23.4.2 Human Right Approach

Individuals from ethnic minority group can have different attitudes towards their own culture. Some of them have very strong attitudes towards their own culture and will do everything that is possible to preserve the culture for themselves and/or their children. Others are more passive in this regard, however, when they have the opportunity and encouragement, they will participate in ethnic events. Others think that their interest is to be like the majority group, and easily accept assimilationist tendencies.

There is no evidence that acceptance of assimilationist tendencies is for the benefit of the country which hosts the immigrants. On the other hand, it is often the case that a person with a strong ethnic identity is a very good citizen.

The attitude of the majority group can have an influence on the behaviour of some immigrants. If the immigrants are encouraged by the majority towards keeping ethnic identity, they will do so. If they are discouraged, some of them will keep this only in their

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<sup>8</sup>Michael Clyne, quoted in: *Multicultural Marketing News*, June, 1991

<sup>9</sup>*National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* . . . p.vii

homes or in very closed ethnic circles of relatives and friends. Whatever the attitudes of the majority really are, the majority should be aware of the rights of minorities to preserve their own identity and their cultures. Perhaps there is a need for a formal guarantee of such rights through legislation, but the process of education on this topic to create such attitudes in society ought to be a campaign prior to the legislation. Creating a respect for the rights of ethnic minorities in plural societies would be, undoubtedly for the benefit of the whole society, not only minority ethnic groups or individuals.

A clearly defined approach towards the preservation of the ethnic may contribute to sharing by the ethnic communities of their cultural heritage with the whole society, instead of keeping it in a closed group, or in the case of discrimination, underground.

The tolerance of cultural differences by the majority is important for the individuals, as well as the support of other members of ethnic communities. Similar attitudes are required to all cultural groups. Discrimination against one culture, or some cultural groups, can result in a strong defence of the discriminated, living in ethnic ghettos, or a militant response, which disadvantages the whole society.

### **23.4.3 Equal Opportunity**

We can anticipate a further development of equal opportunity policy in the broader context of social policy. This will include two commonly accepted aspects of equal opportunity: access and equity.

Access, in terms of the preservation and development of ethnic cultures will mean giving a chance to an ethnic background person to be active in a sphere of an ethnic culture. In the case of young people of ethnic origin, it will mean an access through a formal school system to a program which will be able to preserve and develop the

individual's culture, including language, on the same basis as the children of the majority group have an access to their culture.

Equity usually refers to equality of participation. This is rather a difficult aspect in the area of the preservation of cultures. This is because the preservation of cultures and their development, depend upon the possibility of full access of ethnic minorities and, consequently, their full participation within the process of learning or study. It would not be realistic to aim for full or almost full participation of ethnic minorities, for examples in the area of study of their languages to such a degree as the majority's study of English, for a number of practical reasons. This is because the provision of such courses cannot be continued for a long period of time, they cannot be established everywhere and, finally, not all immigrants will need such an education. There are people representing ethnic minorities, who, as mentioned above, wish to be considered as members of the majority group, and, by this fact, they will not be interested in any activity towards the development of their cultures. However, as the principle of equal opportunity suggests, we need further development of ethnic cultures to such an extent as it fulfils the needs of ethnic minorities.

The equity aspect, in this context, refers to possible equal participation in language education in languages other than English by minority groups to such an extent, as the minority group participates in English language education.

#### **23.4.4 Economic Framework**

There are also other reasons which have been advocated, namely, the preservation of ethnic cultures, especially languages — of an economic nature. *The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* puts it in the following way:

...A facility in language other than English is an important asset both to

individuals concerned and to the nation as a whole.

Global economic forces are demanding changes in the structure of Australian industry, in our ability to compete in world markets, and in our readiness to adapt to new jobs, new career structures, and new technologies. The changes will require new skills in communications, understanding and cultural awareness, in the workplace as much as in the international marketplace. They will also place added pressures on our education and training systems.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, this part of the document seems to anticipate rightly the requirements of the future. The quotation includes two important elements for our topic, namely: "facility in languages other than English", and "cultural awareness". Undoubtedly, much better results, in term of quality, in both aspects, can be achieved if cultures of minority ethnic groups would be preserved — the individuals who will do so, would have a good level of languages (native speakers), and an understanding of the culture of both systems. It would be much easier, simpler, quicker, and a less costly process, just through the preservation of ethnic cultures by the school system, than to begin the process of education or 'training' (the term does not appear to be appropriate to the goal) from a zero point, dealing with adults (as mentioned previously age is an important factor in acquiring the knowledge of a language).

The companion document to the *Australia's Language* goes further with the knowledge of other languages and cultures for trade needs:

Australians must develop proficiency in languages other than English, as well as knowledge of the culture and customs of other countries, to enable Australia to strengthen its international trade position . . . in more sophisticated and competitive global market-place and with the shift in our trading partners away from countries where English is spoken as a first language, this is no longer adequate in bilateral trading negotiations. Advanced secondary and tertiary economics are characterised by a grater preparedness to interest in human resources, including training the workforce in the major trading

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<sup>10</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.1

languages.<sup>11</sup>

The document also noted changes in the Australia's role and relationships with the world community, as well as changes in patterns of international trade. Especially, the document anticipates 'substantial economic opportunities' for Australia.

The tourism industry in Australia requires for the non-English speaking background tourists a range of service personnel, who will have the knowledge of the cultures of their clients and, possibly, their languages.

There are also needs for other languages in the public sector (for better contacts with non-English speaking background people, and better services).

Perhaps the most effective way to encourage immigrants to maintain and develop ethnic languages for them and their children would be to work out models, and publicise the best examples of Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds who contributed to the development of the country through using their languages in everyday professional activity, such as tradepersons, business people, scientists, teachers etc. This positive and realistic approach can motivate them better.

Economic reasons for teaching languages should not be undervalued, on the other hand, discussing the problem of languages from the economic point of view and to compare it with others, it must be made clear that this is not the most important argument. Although the tendency of advocating in the early 90's 'economic efficiency' or 'economic rationalisation' pushes for arguments of an economic nature, this cannot be seen as the main, or even one of the main arguments for teaching and learning languages other than English. We can assume that this is a temporary tendency (in the sphere of social policies,

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<sup>11</sup> *Australia's Language. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, released by The Hon. John Dawkins MP, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, August 1991, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p.23.

potentially dangerously limiting). We see language as a value, understood and explained by humanistic sociology. Economic rules are not able to assess the full value of languages. This value cannot be expressed in dollars or any other currency.

## 23.5 Preservation Languages — Migrants' or National Problem?

Finally, we can ask whether the preservation of ethnic cultures would be for the benefit of individuals from ethnic minorities only?

We must respond negatively to the question. Furthermore, it is possible to argue, and to argue strongly, that such preservation is even more beneficial for the multicultural society as a whole than the individuals concerned. Let us analyse the problem from the point of view of an individual, an average migrant who arrives in Australia from a non-English speaking country.

Our migrant quickly realises that his/her life chances in the new country depend upon the knowledge of English. Indeed, to get employment, to educate children, to communicate with neighbours, to have the company of people other than from the same ethnic group, to be treated as a 'real' citizen, he/she needs a knowledge of the English language. Consequently, an effort is made by the individual to acquire, develop and master the English language as soon as possible. And, indeed the motivation of immigrants towards learning English is usually strong. It is an obvious fact for immigrants that their future depends on English. They are aware of the fact after their first experience when living in Australia. As a result of it, they neglect the development of their own language, and education of their children in the language. Furthermore, some recent migrants with



children of a school age, realising how quickly they are able to acquire English at school and 'pick up the Australian accent', in their own interest have more conversations in English, and make the process of English acquisition quicker by encouraging their children to speak English at home. In this way English becomes the home language.

Indeed, there is often a lack of motivation in the family to come back to ethnic language. Paradoxically, if a family is more successful and quicker in the acquisition of English, gaining employment and becoming involved in social life with members of the majority culture, the processes of 'assimilation' are quicker. If there are not altruistic factors or moral arguments for the first culture, including language, it is lost almost completely in the children's generation. The loss of the generation means, in practice, that the whole society is 'less rich'. Every possible effort should be made to avoid this.

Unfortunately, such an often typical process in an average immigrant family from a non-English speaking background, is not a subject of particular interest of the majority group.

Consequently, not only the acquisition of English, but also the maintenance of ethnic languages should be taken more seriously, if we want to be a really multicultural society.

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