ACCOMMODATING MULTICULTURALISM AND BICULTURALISM IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND: IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATION[1]

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ABSTRACT   *The field of language education in Aotearoa New Zealand, as elsewhere, has developed significantly since its early and almost exclusive focus on the acquisition of English literacy in schools. As the field has expanded, so too has the range of language education sectors addressed and the theoretical approaches and understandings employed in relation to language and literacy education. Both developments have resulted in a more coordinated literacy education policy – exemplified to date most clearly in the New Zealand Literacy Taskforce – and a more situated, less monolithic understanding of the widely different literacies available to learners. Despite these developments, however, one area still remains noticeably under-theorised and marginalized in relation to the ongoing development of language and literacy education policy in Aotearoa New Zealand – the place of second language learners within it. This paper explores this lacuna and the potential policy implications of addressing and integrating first and second language educational concerns within an evolving national literacy education policy. This has particular implications for the further development of bilingual education – both for Māori and, possibly, other minority groups – and for the related possibilities of multicultural education. It also requires a wider and clearer recognition of minority language education rights, as developed within both international law and political theory, in order to apply these rights appropriately to an Aotearoa New Zealand context which is currently witnessing rapid and extensive demographic (and linguistic) change.*

INTRODUCTION

These are both exciting and challenging times for language education in Aotearoa New Zealand. These are exciting times because the academic field of language education in New Zealand, in line with international developments, continues to expand rapidly. For those of us who have been involved in this field over the last 15 years, we have seen it develop from an initial focus on reading and writing in schools (although this focus remains ongoing of course), to also encompass adult literacy education, and a much wider theoretical debate on the nature of literacy itself – particularly the various, often multifaceted forms it can take – basic, functional critical, and technological literacies for example (see Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lankshear, 1994; Rassool, 1999; Roberts, 1995). These debates, in turn, have increasingly come to inform wider educational policy in this area, not least via the National Literacy Task Force, convened in the late 1990s (Ministry of Education

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1999a) and by the recent and ongoing development of a national strategy for adult literacy (see, for example, Ministry of Education 2001).

But these are also challenging times for language education in New Zealand because, while the previous developments *are* clearly significant and important, they still do not address adequately, at least in my view, an area that is increasingly regarded as also being a central part of the language education field – and that is the place of second language learners within it. And the central question or concern here is how best to ensure that students who have, for example, English or Māori as a second language, acquire the necessary literacy skills in these languages without this being detrimental to, or at the expense of, their first language.

Why is this issue so important for New Zealand education at this time? For three reasons:

1. Demographics

For much of its postcolonial history, Aotearoa New Zealand has not had to address seriously issues of second language learners because, put simply, the history of immigration to this country from the nineteenth century until the late twentieth century has been dominated by migration from Britain and other nation-states where English is a national language (Australia, the USA, Canada, South Africa). While there are long-standing Asian language communities (e.g., Chinese, Indian) as well as European language communities (e.g., Dutch, German, Greek, Polish) in New Zealand, all these communities have remained, until recently at least, relatively small. Certainly, New Zealand did not follow other ex-British colonies such as Australia and Canada in opening up its immigration in the immediate post-Second World War period (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Pearson, 2000).

This overall pattern of New Zealand migration was only first modified in the 1960s when Pasifika peoples began migrating in significant numbers. South East Asian refugees (particularly from Cambodia and Vietnam) came in the 1970s, while in more recent times there has been a relative increase in refugee settlement, most notably in relation to Somalians. However, it is only over the last decade that New Zealand's demographic profile has become markedly more diverse, along with the languages spoken within it. This has been due to a combination in the 1990s of the relative decline – for the first time – in migration from Britain, allied with an exponential increase in Asian migration, reaching its height in the mid-1990s but still ongoing.

These recent, marked changes in immigration patterns, coupled with the now long-settled Pasifika population, many of whom are now second or even third generation migrants, suggest that New Zealand will be a very different place in the 21st century than it was in the last. For example, 232,000 people, 1 in 16 of the total population, identified themselves as Pasifika at the time of the 2001 census, nearly half of whom (115,000) were Samoan. Moreover, 6 out of 10 of these Pasifika peoples are New Zealand-born – that is, they are now second or third generation migrants (Statistics New Zealand, 2002a). Meanwhile, it is projected that the Asian population in New Zealand, which has for the first time overtaken the Pasifika population, will rise from its current numbers of approximately 240,000 to 370,000 by 2016 – an estimated 9% of the total New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand 2002b).

The change in these immigration patterns has also resulted in a significant increase in languages other than English and Māori in New Zealand, along with a rapidly increasing number who do not speak English as a first language. For example, in a national language survey, the Māori Language Commission found that in 1990 over nine out of 10 of New Zealand's then 3.5 million inhabitants identified themselves as first language speakers of English (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 1995). This made New Zealand, at least at that time, one of the most linguistically homogenous countries in the world. Projections from the 2001 census suggest that this is now below 90%, with over 100,000 speakers of Pasifika languages (80,000 of whom speak Samoan), approximately 95,000 speakers of the various Chinese languages, 50,000 speakers of languages from the Indian subcontinent, 20,000 speakers of Japanese, and 15,000 speakers of Korean, not to mention the 27,000 users of New Zealand Sign Language (Statistics New Zealand, 2002c).

And this is not to forget, of course, the 160,000 who identified as Māori speakers in the 2001 Census (ibid), although the recent *National Māori Language Survey* (2001) suggests that there are only as few as 22,000 *highly fluent* Māori speakers, many of whom (73%) are 45 or older, with a further 22,000 with medium fluency levels.

Given these rapidly changing demographics, we can no longer presume then that New Zealand students will be first language speakers of English.

2. The Legacy of Subtractive Bilingualism

We also know that traditional educational approaches adopted towards second language learners in New Zealand, as elsewhere, have not served these learners well, to say the least. This is because such approaches have tended to adopt a subtractive rather than additive view of students' bilingualism. That is, they have assumed that the first language of the students is an educational obstacle to be overcome – usually by excluding the use of the language within schools – rather than as an educational and social resource to be valued and used within the school (see Corson, 1993, 1998; Cummins, 1986, 1996).

This view was most closely associated historically in New Zealand with the overtly assimilationist approaches adopted towards Māori throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century (cf. Bishop & Glynn, 1999), but is by no means limited to them. The ongoing construction of NESB (Non-English Speaking Background) students as deficient in English – as the term itself implies – rather than as bilingual learners with control of more than one language, is still widely evident in approaches to teaching English as a second language in New Zealand schools (cf. Ministry of Education, 1999b, 1999c).

The educational and wider social consequences of devaluing and/or excluding the first languages of students from the schooling process are equally clear – subsequent limited educational success for many of them. For example, in the recent adult literacy report *More than Words* (Ministry of Education 2001), it was noted that current adult literacy levels in English are consistently lower overall for both Māori and Pasifika adults when compared to the New Zealand population as a whole.

These patterns of relative disadvantage are replicated at school level analyses of literacy acquisition. For example, while New Zealand students perform very well internationally in relation to the acquisition of school-based literacy in English at both age 9 and 14, as measured by the regular IEA evaluations of all

OECD countries, they only do so *if they are already first language speakers of English*. In fact, these IEA evaluations have now highlighted for some time that the 'home language gap' – that is, the gap between the literacy achievements of students whose home (or first) language corresponds with that of the school and those students for whom it does not – is the *largest* of any OECD country at both 9 and 14 years. In other words, New Zealand has the *poorest* performance across the OECD in the successful acquisition of English language literacy for those students who do not speak it as a first language (cf. Wilkinson, 1998).

3.   Competition Rather Than Complementarity

Where educational approaches that do value the first languages and attendant cultures of students have been used in New Zealand, they have often been viewed as mutually exclusive, or at least as potentially obstructive of one another. Thus, there is still a tendency in New Zealand to view approaches to bilingual education in a strict hierarchy – with Māori-medium, or full Māori language–immersion at the top, while approaches which use both English and Māori are viewed as 'lesser' or 'less adequate' forms (cf. Jacques, 1991; Keegan, 1996; Ohia, 1990; Spolsky, 1987). While there is undoubtedly a minimum threshold of use required in a minority language to make bilingual education effective, wider international research suggests strongly that a number of approaches to bilingual education can be successfully adopted, depending on both the particular aims of the bilingual programme and the context in which it is located (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998; Cummins & Corson, 1997). In fact, dual-medium bilingual programmes are increasingly being promoted, particularly in relation to the benefits of first-second language transfer in acquiring academic literacy in the second language (see Cummins, 2001; Freeman, 1998; Lindholm-Leary, 2001).

Another example of this tendency to exclusivity can be seen in the ongoing scepticism towards the further development of multicultural education in Aotearoa New Zealand. This has meant that multicultural education – though widespread elsewhere, particularly in the USA (Nieto, 2000; Sleeter, 1996, 2001) – has not been actively or consistently pursued in New Zealand since the 1980s, in theory, policy, or practice, except at localised school level.

There are two principal reasons for this. The first has to do with the educational limitations of the particular form of multicultural education that was promoted at that time – most notably, via the notion of 'taha Māori' (Department of Education, 1984). I will return to these limitations shortly, but suffice it to say at this point that they were significant.

The second reason had to do more with the perception, particularly among Māori, that the development of multicultural education as part of a wider policy of multiculturalism, with its focus on a wide range of minority groups, would undermine and/or subvert prior bicultural commitments to Māori education, and Māori language education in particular (cf. Irwin, 1989; Simon, 1989; Smith, 1990).

Specifically, relegating Māori to the status of a single group among many (albeit a large and influential one), via an advocacy of multiculturalism, was seen to disadvantage Māori in two ways:

> It denies Māori people their equality as members of one among two (sets of) peoples, and it also tends to deny the divisions of Maoridom their separate status while exaggerating the status of other immigrant

groups. In the end, Māori interests become peripheral, combined with other 'special problem' areas. (Benton, 1988, p. 77)

The Waitangi Tribunal is equally clear on this point:

> We do not accept that the Māori is just another one of a number of ethnic groups in our community. It must be remembered that of all minority groups the Māori alone is party to a solemn treaty made with the Crown. None of the other migrant groups who have come to live in this country in recent years can claim the rights that were given to the Māori people by the Treaty of Waitangi. Because of the Treaty Māori New Zealanders stand on a special footing reinforcing, if reinforcement be needed, their historical position as the original inhabitants, the tangata whenua of New Zealand... (1986, p. 37)

Given that the one of the specific aims outlined in the then Department of Education's multicultural education policy (Department of Education 1984) was to use biculturalism as a *stepping stone* to the achievement of wider multiculturalism, rather than as seeing it as distinct in itself, the scepticism of multiculturalism's many opponents seems well founded. This position was also reinforced by an awareness that support for multiculturalism amongst some Pākehā arose less out of a valuing of diversity, and/or a concern for the interests of minority groups, than from a fear of the possible fulfilment of Māori bicultural aspirations (Simon, 1989). In short, Māori educationalists, along with other critics of the policy of multiculturalism being promoted at that time (including myself; see May, 1991a; 1992a), argued that if you cannot meaningfully address bicultural commitments within education, then advocacy of multiculturalism amounts to little more than meaningless rhetoric.

As I hope this brief analysis makes clear, both these positions were at the time wholly correct. But the theory, policy, and practice of multicultural education have also changed and developed significantly since that time (see May, 1999a; Modood & May, 2001; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter, 1996, 2001), as has Māori language education (see Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Smith, 1997). Meanwhile, as I hope to make clear, there is a potential way around the tension between biculturalism and multiculturalism that it is at least worth exploring further – not least because of the rapidly changing demographics within New Zealand that I have briefly outlined earlier.

So, those are the three principal challenges that I see as currently facing language education in Aotearoa New Zealand. What should our response be? At the very least, a more theorised, integrated, and wide-ranging approach to these issues.

This requires in the first instance, some further careful theorising about first and second language acquisition and bilingualism, as well as a critical examination of the most appropriate and effective pedagogical approaches for addressing and promoting the first and second languages of students within schools (cf. Corson, 2001; Cummins, 2001).

Following from this, I believe we need to develop a more coordinated and consistent approach to the implementation of a range of different language education models in schools – Māori language-medium education, bilingual education in English and Māori, bilingual education for other language groups,

the teaching of English as an additional language, and multicultural education (cf. Waite, 1992a, 1992b). In short, I want to suggest in what follows that these various approaches to language education can be potentially complementary rather than oppositional – but *only* if we first address and engage sufficiently with relevant theory, adopt an integrated approach, and coordinate consistently and effectively the subsequent pedagogy and practice.

In light of this, what I want to do in the remainder of this paper is to explore in some indicative ways how we might begin to go about this not inconsiderable task. And I want to do so by way of charting key aspects of my own academic journey, and how these aspects might contribute usefully – I hope – to the beginnings of this wider conversation. I should perhaps forewarn you though that this journey, like most, does not go directly from A to B, and is certainly not always linked directly to language education. This is a consequence of having worked in three academic disciplines over the years – linguistics, education and sociology – and in engaging in a wide range of interdisciplinary debates. But I do hope that you will bear with me, even if the connections are not always immediately apparent, because I will try to draw the various threads together at the end.

FROM BENEVOLENT TO CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM

There have been two distinct, although allied strands to my academic work over the years. One has been a focus on multiculturalism and multicultural education (see, for example, May, 1992b, 1993, 1994a, 1995, 1999a, 2002a, in press; Modood and May 2001). The other has been on minority languages, language rights and language education (see, for example, May, 1991b, 1992c, 1994b, 1997, 1998, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, in press). In both instances, I have explored these two topic areas in specific relation to schools, primarily in my early work, and more broadly in relation to the development and implementation of national language and education policies, as evident in my more recent work.

Let me begin with the issue of multiculturalism. Much of my early academic work in New Zealand, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was concerned with the theory and practice of multicultural education. At that time, multicultural education – exemplified in New Zealand, as I have already suggested, via the notion of 'taha Māori' – was still being touted as the best way of both addressing increased cultural and linguistic diversity in schools, as well as improving the educational experiences, and longer-term educational success of minority students, particularly Māori students. The principal theoretical notion underpinning this approach was 'cultural pluralism' – which in much of the academic literature at the time, and certainly in terms of common educational practice in schools, amounted to the idea of including, recognising, and valuing the different cultural heritages of all students within the classroom.

Following Gibson (1976), I described this broad approach to multicultural education as 'benevolent multiculturalism' (see May, 1992b, 1993, 1994a). Its principal problem was that it didn't work. Or more accurately perhaps, what it argued it could accomplish, and what it actually did accomplish were two quite different things. In particular, the valuing of cultural pluralism within schools, while undoubtedly well-meaning, remained problematic for a number of key reasons:

1.   It Tended to Treat Culture in Historicist and Essentialist Ways

Benevolent approaches to multiculturalism tended to view cultural heritage as just that – heritage or history – rather than as a dynamic and ongoing construction of a student's cultural identity in the present. This led to an allied tendency to treat culture as static and closed (cf. Hoffman, 1996, 1997) – attributing culture to students in ways that did not account for their real, lived experiences, or the fact that culture, while clearly important and influential, is only one aspect of one's identity.

2.   An Emphasis on Lifestyles Rather than Life Chances

A strong tendency in benevolent multicultural educational approaches was to overstate the significance of cultural recognition – as if recognising and valuing cultural differences could, in itself, change not only schools but also the wider society (some multicultural advocates actually came close to suggesting this). Antiracist educators were particularly scathing about multiculturalism in this regard (see, for example, Gillborn, 1995; Hatcher, 1987; McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993; Troyna 1993), suggesting that an emphasis on this 'superficial culturalism' was invariably at the expense of broader, structural concerns – not least the ongoing racism and discrimination facing many minority students on a daily basis, both within schools and beyond them.

Similar criticisms have since been levelled at this approach from within the multiculturalist paradigm itself. Thus, Kincheloe and Steinberg, from a US perspective, could observe that much of this kind of multicultural rhetoric engaged "in its celebration of difference when the most important issues to those who fall outside the white, male and middle class norm often involve powerlessness, violence and poverty" (1997, p. 17). While from an Australian perspective, Kalantzis and Cope argue:

> Whilst mouthing good intentions about pluralism ... this sort of multiculturalism can end up doing nothing either to change the mainstream or to improve the access of those historically denied its power and privileges. It need not change the identity of the dominant culture in such a way that there can be genuine negotiation with 'minorities' about matters social or symbolic or economic. It need not change education in such a way that issues of diversity are on the agenda for all students. It need not change education so that diversity might become a positive resource for access rather than a cultural deficit to be remedied by affirmation of difference alone. (1999, p. 255)

I should perhaps add that Mary Kalantzis has a much more succinct version of this, when she describes benevolent multiculturalism as all about 'feeling good about yourself in the dole queue'!

3.   Peripheral to the 'Normal' Theory, Pedagogy, and Practice of Schools

Another key problem with benevolent multiculturalism was its additional, or peripheral nature, within most schools. In short, a kapahaka group, though not unimportant or inconsequential in itself, does not a multicultural education programme make. If multicultural education *is* to make a difference, it needs to be

central to school organisation, school-community relations, pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation – all aspects of the school in fact. This includes critically re-evaluating and, where necessary, reconstructing our educational approaches in order to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of minority students (cf. Corson, 1993, 1998; May, 1992b, 1994a, 1995).

4.   The Exclusion of Language

And finally, while much of the emphasis in multicultural education policy and practice has focused on culture, this focus has also surprisingly tended to sidestep, or exclude, the issue of language and language education. For example, the Swann Report in Britain (DES, 1985), the definitive statement on multicultural education there, specifically rejected bilingual education as a component of a wider multicultural education policy. Likewise, in the actual practice of many schools, the inclusion of minority languages often extends only to the use of greetings – certainly, instruction *in* a minority language in schools, or as a central or pivotal part of a wider multicultural policy, has not been a prominent feature of these approaches (cf. Corson 1990, 1999; May, 1994b, 1997).

This, then, was the critique of multicultural education with which I, along with many others, first engaged. But I have also not been content to leave it there, and have since been concerned to explore and develop an alternative approach to multicultural education that specifically addresses these various limitations. This alternative approach I have subsequently termed 'critical multiculturalism' (see especially May 1999a) and over the last 10 years or so I have developed this approach from two different directions.

The first was principally school-based, and came via the critical ethnography I undertook in the early 1990s of Richmond Road Primary School in Auckland. In Richmond Road, and the educational approach that it had developed under its visionary principal Jim Laughton, I found an exemplar of just this kind of critical multicultural education, operationalised at the school-wide level. For example, the school had:

• Developed a theorised, educationally coherent, and critical approach to its educational practice which overtly and deliberately linked the micro-politics of school reform to the macro politics of multiculturalism, bilingualism, and the wider systemic issue of redressing educational inequality for minority groups, and

• Reorganised the whole school, systematically and systemically, in order to reflect the diverse languages and cultures of its students *structurally* within the school. This included a whole range of highly innovative and progressive educational developments that led to the fundamental restructuring of the organisation, pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment practices of the school.

Central to these changes was a view of bilingualism as a cognitive and educational advantage – an additive view of bilingualism, in effect – upon which the subsequent development of bilingual education within the school was predicated. Thus, at the time that I undertook my research there, the school had Māori, Samoan, and Cook Islands Māori bilingual rōpū, or vertical class groupings. In fact, Richmond Road was the first urban mainstream New Zealand school to incorporate bilingual education so centrally into its school pedagogy and practice.

I do not have time to go into any further detail here about the many other ways in which Richmond Road successfully operationalised this critical approach to multicultural education (see May 1994a). Nor sadly, do I have the time to explore why so many of those initiatives have since been lost. But suffice it to say, I have continued to argue that Richmond Road's approach, at least at that time, remains one of the rare examples internationally of just what can be achieved in the effective implementation of a critical approach to multicultural education at the school level.

FROM CRITICAL MULTICULTURALISM TO MINORITY RIGHTS

The second direction was via the further development of the theoretical tenets of critical multiculturalism (see May 1999a, 2002a, in press), along with other academic commentators such as Peter McLaren (1995, 1997) in the USA. This has involved me in wider theoretical debates on ethnicity, culture and identity, particularly in relation to the postmodernist rejection of singular and fixed notions of identity, and their consequent scepticism towards any claims, by minority groups in particular, to a distinct, or distinctly different, cultural and linguistic identity. As Edward Said states, "no one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting points" (1994, p. 407).

I accept this postmodernist position on the plural and contingent nature of identity – that we can never be defined or delimited, nor should we ever be, by just one aspect of our identity. However, I do not accept a related assumption that many postmodernists then make, which is to assume that just because an aspect of identity, such as language, is contingent, it is therefore unimportant – or at least, no more important than any other aspect of identity. This is because clearly, in the real world, a particular ethnicity, culture and/or language *can* still be a significant or even a central part of one's identity – particularly, as is often the case for minority groups, when these are under threat from more powerful groups (see May, 1999a, 2001). How else can we explain the many ongoing conflicts in the world that centre on exactly these issues? As Charles Taylor (1994) and Margalit and Raz (1995) have argued from within political philosophy, people today may well adopt (and adapt) a varied range of cultural and social practices but this does not necessarily diminish their allegiance to an 'encompassing group' with which they most closely identify.

Nor does the ongoing valuing of a particular minority group identity simply amount to an exercise in nostalgia, or preclude ongoing cultural and linguistic change, as some postmodernists are also at times wont to suggest (see, for example, Benhabib, 1999; Waldron, 1995). As the prominent political theorist Will Kymlicka has argued, most claims to distinct minority group-based identities are not about wanting to return to some long-past notion of cultural and linguistic 'purity' or 'authenticity', but are rather about the ability "to maintain one's membership in a distinct culture, and to continue developing that culture in the same (impure) way that the members of majority cultures are able to develop theirs" (1995, p. 105).

Kymlicka proceeds to describe this type of minority claim as a form of 'external protection'. What external protections presuppose is the opportunity and right of minority groups to seek to protect their distinct identity by limiting the impact of the decisions of the larger society. External protections are thus intended to ensure that individual members are able to maintain a distinctive way of life *if*

they so choose and are not prevented from doing so by the decisions of members outside of their community (see Kymlicka, 1995, p. 204. n.11). Certainly, arguing for the right to retain one's first language via education, rather than having that education undermine it, could be said to constitute an external protection (cf. May, 2000a, 2001).

And then there is also the question of fairness. If members of dominant ethnic groups typically value their own cultural membership and first language, as one assumes many do, it is clearly unfair to prevent minority groups from continuing to value theirs. Or, as Kymlicka again observes, "leaving one's culture [and language], while possible, is best seen as renouncing something to which one is reasonably entitled" (1995, p. 90).

FROM MINORITY RIGHTS TO LANGUAGE RIGHTS TO LANGUAGE EDUCATION

What I have just outlined is obviously a very brief, and rather simplistic, account of these often complex and convoluted debates about identity, but I wanted to mention them here because of their importance to the wider story, not least because it was by way of these debates, primarily within social and political theory, that I came also to directly address the question of minority rights. And it is from my involvement in these discussions on minority rights that I believe I have since:

*   Discovered a mechanism to address the potential tension between bicultural and multicultural claims and rights in Aotearoa New Zealand,
*   Developed and elaborated a specific theory of minority language rights, and
*   Begun to explore the consequences of both a) and b) in relation to their implications for language education

Each of these developments will be discussed in turn.

1.   Accommodating Biculturalism and Multiculturalism

By drawing on debates within political theory, particularly the work of Will Kymlicka (1989, 1995; see also Kymlicka & Norman, 1999), it is possible to distinguish between, but also to jointly pursue, bicultural and multicultural rights. We can do this by first distinguishing between two distinct types of minority groups within modern nation-states, and the different minority rights attendant upon each:

National minorities: who have always been associated historically with a particular territory, but who have been subject to colonisation, conquest, or confederation and, consequently, now have only minority status within a particular nation-state. These groups include, for example, the Welsh in Britain, Catalans and Basques in Spain, Bretons in France, Quebecois in Canada, and some Hispanic groups in the USA, to name but a few. They also include, crucially, indigenous peoples, who have increasingly been regarded in both international and national law as a separate category of peoples (see May 1998, 1999c, 2001).

Ethnic minorities: who have migrated from their country of origin to a new host nation-state, or in the case of refugees have been the subject of forced relocation (cf. Castles, 2000).

The distinction between the respective positions of national and ethnic minorities in modern nation-states can be illustrated by the terms 'multinational' and 'polyethnic'. As Kymlicka observes, most states are actually a combination of both: "obviously, a single country may be both multinational (as a result of the colonising, conquest, or confederation of national minorities) and polyethnic (as a result of individual and familial immigration)" (1995, p. 17). However, most countries are also reluctant, more often than not, to acknowledge this combination in their public policy.

Thus, in so-called 'immigration societies', such as the USA, Canada, and Australia, there is recognition of these countries' polyethnicity, but an unwillingness to distinguish and accept the rights of national minorities such as Native Americans, Hawaiians and Puerto Ricans in the US context, Native Canadians and Quebecois in Canada, and Australian Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia. In some European states, however, the reverse applies, where the rights of national minorities (in Belgium and Switzerland for example) have long been recognised but an accommodation of immigrants and a more polyethnic society has been far less forthcoming.

Recognising both dimensions, and the respective rights attendant upon them, is the central challenge for developing a more plurally conceived approach to public policy in modern nation-states. In this respect, Kymlicka argues that in addition to the civil rights available to all individuals, national minority groups can lay claim to what he terms 'self-government rights' and ethnic minorities to 'polyethnic rights' (see 1995, pp. 26-33). Self-government rights acknowledge that the nation-state is not the sole preserve of the majority (national) group and that legitimate national minorities have the right to equivalent inclusion and representation in the public domain, including the retention and representation of their language and culture where they so choose.[2] This clearly accords in the New Zealand context to the notion of tino rangatiratanga for Māori, and to the state's bicultural commitments to Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi, including here the retention and promotion of te reo me tikanga Māori within education and the wider public domain. The key in providing for such rights is their *permanent* status. They are not seen as a temporary measure or remedy that may one day be revoked.

Polyethnic rights are somewhat different: they are intended to help ethnic minority groups to continue to express their cultural, linguistic and/or religious heritage, principally in the private domain, without it hampering their success within the economic and political institutions of the dominant national society. Like self-government rights, polyethnic rights are thus also seen as permanent, since they seek to protect rather than eliminate cultural and linguistic differences. However, their principal purpose is to promote integration *into* the larger society (and to contribute to and modify that society as a result) rather than to foster self-governing status among such groups.

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[2] In this sense, self-government rights are not principally, or even necessarily associated with secession, as the term 'self-government' often implies. The central principle is that national minorities have the right to greater *autonomy* or control of their own affairs within the nation-state.

Taken together, these two kinds of rights can be regarded as distinct but not necessarily mutually exclusive.[3]

2.   Language Rights

I have since been involved in exploring how this distinction might be usefully applied to language rights, language policy and language education. Indeed, developing a normative theory of language and language education rights is the central focus of my most recent book, *Language and Minority Rights* (2001), and relates directly to my research over the last few years on minority language and education policy in Europe, particularly in Wales and Catalonia (2000b, in press).

Much of this work has focused on how the politics of nationalism, the organisation of modern nation-states, and the role of mass education in particular, have contributed historically to the decline of many minority languages – issues that I have discussed at length elsewhere, (see May 2001 for a full overview). But I have also specifically explored here how nation-states can reformulate their language and education policies in order to promote and sustain minority languages, on the basis of the application of minority language rights.

With respect to language rights, we can make a broad distinction between two types of rights: *tolerance-oriented* rights and *promotion-oriented* rights (Kloss, 1971, 1977; see also Macías, 1979).[4]

Tolerance-oriented rights ensure the right to preserve one's first language in the private, non-governmental sphere of national life – the family, church, cultural organisations and private schools, for example. The key principle of such rights is that the state does "not interfere with efforts on the parts of the minority to make use of [their language] in the private domain" (Kloss, 1977, p. 2). Under general principles of international law, and human rights, it is clear that *all* minority groups should be accorded these rights (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

The issues become more complicated though in relation to promotion-oriented rights which regulate the extent to which minority rights are recognised within the *public* domain, including here within state or public education. In other words, what obligation does the state have to promote or foster minority languages within state schools? And if the state does become involved in this, how can it set reasonable limits on who might be eligible for such language education?

This is where I believe the national and ethnic minority distinction applies. In other words, the state has a historical and territorial obligation towards national minorities, including indigenous peoples, to provide such language education *as of right* since such groups have always been associated with those particular territories. This principle is increasingly being adopted worldwide – Norway has provided this right for its indigenous Sámi people in the Northern Province of

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[3] Kymlicka also discusses a third right – 'special representation rights' – available to groups that have been discriminated on the grounds of, for example, gender or sexuality. However, these rights are only temporary – once the discrimination has been redressed, the right no longer applies.

[4] Macías distinguishes between two broadly comparable sets of rights: the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of language, and the right to use your language(s) in the activities of communal life (1979, p. 88-89).

Finnmark, Canada for its Inuit peoples in the new province of Nunavut, and for the Quebecois in Quebec. Catalonia and Wales have likewise enshrined the provision of Catalan and Welsh medium education, respectively, in law (see May 2001).

It is somewhat more complicated for ethnic minorities, but there is a principle in international law that can be usefully applied here as well and that is the criterion 'where numbers warrant'. In short, there is an increasing recognition within international law that significant minorities within a nation-state have a *reasonable* expectation to some form of state support, including educational provision in their first language (de Varennes, 1996). In other words, while it would be unreasonable (and impractical) for nation-states to be required to fund language and education services for all minorities (cf. Carens, 2000), it is increasingly accepted that where a language is spoken by a significant number within the nation-state, it would also be unreasonable not to provide some level of state services and activity in that language 'where numbers warrant'.[5] Canada adopts this criterion in relation to French speakers outside of Québec, via the (1982) Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, while a similar approach is adopted in Finland with respect to first language Swedish speakers living there. India provides perhaps the best example of this principle in operation since the Constitution of India (Article 350A) directs every state, and every local authority within that state, to provide 'adequate' educational facilities for instruction in the first language of linguistic minorities where such numbers warrant, at least at primary school level. South Africa's establishment in 1994 of formal multilingualism in 11 state languages also has the potential to follow the Indian model in the provision of minority language education along these lines (see May 2001, Chp. 5)

3.   Language Education

These language rights principles – allowing for the promotion of first languages for minority groups within schools – also correspond with, or are closely supported by the educational and linguistic research on language education over the last 40 years (see Cummins & Corson, 1997; Baker & Prys Jones, 1998 for useful overviews).

Despite widespread perceptions to the contrary, this research has found *unequivocally* that:

Active bilingualism is a cognitive, academic, and social advantage rather than a deficit. It is now widely recognised that bilinguals mature earlier than monolinguals in acquiring skills for linguistic abstraction, are superior to monolinguals on divergent thinking tasks and in their analytical orientation to language, and demonstrate greater social sensitivity than monolinguals in situations requiring verbal communication (see Baker 2001; Corson, 1993; Cummins, 1996; 1998; Romaine, 1995).

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[5] This also accords with the wider principle in international law – formulated by UNESCO in 1953 – that, where possible, a child should have the right to be educated in their first language.

Additive forms of bilingual education are recognised internationally as the most successful bilingual education programmes. Additive or group-maintenance bilingual education programmes not only successfully maintain and foster the first languages of students but, if properly managed, are also the best means by which students can transfer their first language skills to a second language (i.e., to successfully acquire a second language). Returning to an earlier point, it is not so much the percentage of the minority language within the bilingual education programme (i.e., full-immersion versus dual-medium) that is the key variable here but whether an additive view of bilingualism is adopted in the first instance. Thus, transitional bilingual education programmes have been proven to be less successful educationally because they continue to hold to a 'subtractive' view of individual and societal bilingualism. In assuming that the first (minority) language will eventually be replaced by a second (majority) language, bilingualism is not in itself regarded as necessarily beneficial, either to the individual or to society as a whole, and this limits the educational effectiveness of the approach in light of the advantages detailed in research on active bilingualism.[6]

The *least* effective way of teaching a majority language (English, in our context) is via the problematisation and/or exclusion of first languages. In light of the point above, the process of first-second language transfer is central to the successful acquisition of academic literacy in a second language. Or, put another way, high level second language proficiency depends fundamentally on well developed first language proficiency (see Cummins, 2001 for a useful overview). As such, it should come as no surprise – although it obviously still does to many – that minority language students who receive most of their education in English rather than their first language are *more* likely not to acquire literacy in English, and consequently also to fall behind and drop out of school (cf. the adult literacy rates, and home-language gap discussed earlier).

LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Which brings me back, finally, to the current challenges and opportunity facing language education in Aotearoa New Zealand. In light of all this, where might we go from here?

As I said at the start, we need first and foremost to develop a properly theorised and coordinated approach to language education which recognises, values, and *uses* the first languages of students as an educational and social resource, rather than perceiving these to be an obstacle to be overcome or eliminated, as in the failed policies of the past (and at times, still, the present). Such an approach might include:

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[6] In the largest study to date on US bilingual education programmes, Ramírez et al. (1991) compared English-only programmes with transitional and group maintenance bilingual programmes, following 2,300 Spanish-speaking students over four years. The findings clearly supported bilingual education and found that the greatest growth in mathematics, English language skills and English reading was particularly evident among students in additive bilingual programmes.

1. The Further Extension of Māori-medium Education

The Kōhanga, Kura Kaupapa and Wharekura Māori-medium schools should be further developed and resourced. This should be based not only on their considerable educational achievements in fostering te reo me tikanga Māori, alongside wider academic success – for which they are already widely recognised internationally – but also because such an additive bilingual education, or at least the option of one, constitutes a basic 'promotion-oriented' language education right for Māori. This, in turn, is based on their status in international law as a national minority, or indigenous people, in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2. Exploring Other Forms of Bilingual Education for Māori

Now that Māori-medium education is becoming more well-established, we also need to revisit the question of how best to develop alternative forms of additive bilingual education for Māori in so called 'mainstream' education, where over 90% of Māori students are still being taught. This requires a close and active engagement with the extensive international research literature on the various approaches to bilingual education that have been adopted in different educational contexts, including research on dual-medium education which may be more practicable in mainstream education contexts. Surprisingly, this research has not been consistently pursued, let alone applied, here as yet, at least as far as I can see, with many Māori/English bilingual units in schools being established as an ad hoc response to community demand, and without necessarily a clear underlying pedagogical approach.

3. Where Possible, We Should Extend Similar Access to Bilingual Education for Ethnic Minority Groups, 'Where Numbers Warrant'

This has already begun to occur for Pasifika students, particularly at the pre-school level, but only with respect to the adoption of full-immersion approaches – for example in the nascent emergence of comparable Pasifika preschool language nests (modelled on Kōhanga Reo).[7] At the school-level, there is still little coordination beyond individual schools themselves, and little consistency, as yet, in pedagogical approaches to either full-immersion or dual-medium bilingual education.

In this respect, given the growing size of the Pasifika population, a wider national strategy for Pasifika bilingual education is desperately needed. The fact that just such a policy is imminent is a very welcome development, although if it should adopt a transitional bilingual education approach, as is currently being suggested, this remains highly problematic in light of the international research on bilingual education. This research, as already highlighted, clearly indicates that additive bilingual education is by far the most successful educational approach to adopt with second language learners. Given the changing demographics in Aotearoa New Zealand, we may also, over the longer term, need to address the

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[7] There were 177 such language nests in 1993, catering for 3877 children (Bishop and Glynn, 1999).

role of first language education for Asian groups as well – again, one hopes, from an additive rather than a transitional bilingual education approach.

4.   Where Bilingual Education is Not an Option, We Need to Develop Critical, Language-centred Multicultural Education Programmes in Schools

In many instances, for reasons of resourcing, expertise, or the nature of the school population, a bilingual education approach, of whatever kind, may well not be practicable. This requires us to develop critical, language-centred, multicultural education programmes which avoid the limitations that I outlined earlier and, in particular, harness first languages centrally as an educational resource. Such programmes must retain at their core, a commitment to biculturalism, in light of its central and ongoing role in the mediation of Māori/Pākehā relations in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Adopting a critical approach to multicultural education also requires rethinking the way that so called Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) students are taught. For example, it has been found that English as a Second Language (ESL) withdrawal models – still common in New Zealand schools – tend to ghettoise both ESL teachers and their students, and are often less effective than an approach which integrates ESL students in mainstream classrooms, but with support from bilingual teaching assistants (Bourne, 2001; Corson, 2001). More broadly still, this reconsideration should involve the development of a whole-school approach to language policy that specifically addresses the language and literacy learning needs of both first and second language learners (see Corson, 1990, 1999, 2001; May, 1991b, 1994b, 1997).

5.   Developing and Adopting a Nationally Coordinated Language Education Policy

Finally, we need urgently to develop a wider language education policy that situates the current nationally-coordinated initiatives in literacy education, which are still primarily targeted at first language speakers of English, alongside and in conjunction with these wider issues. The possibilities of just such an approach was proposed in the early 1990s, in the Draft National Languages Policy *Aoteareo* (Waite, 1992a, 1992b) but this Report, and its recommendations, have since been largely ignored.

CONCLUSION

These tasks are clearly not easily accomplished, or easily resourced for that matter, and just as clearly have significant short- medium- and long-term implications, not only for schools and teachers, but also teacher education and wider educational policy and practice. That said, while there will clearly be initial costs involved in pursuing the development of such a nationally-coordinated language education policy, these costs are not as great as are often assumed (see Grin & Vaillancourt, 2000). And when one balances these initial costs with the longer term educational and social benefits of such education – particularly in light of the ongoing unfavourable educational and social indices for Māori and Pasifika students as a result of current language education policies – the economic arguments take on a whole new dimension. We cannot talk about building a 'knowledge economy' unless we are concerned to adopt and pursue those educational approaches best

suited to accomplishing this for *all* students – not only for first language learners, but for second language learners as well. Given this, the development of a language education policy that encompasses both first and second language learners must be a priority for New Zealand education, and we should start on it immediately.

As for my part, I hope to be able to use my own experiences and expertise to contribute to and, where necessary, further catalyse these discussions. I also intend to exploit the innovative and forward-thinking establishment of this position of a Chair in Language and Literacy Education at Waikato, the first of its kind in the country, to establish this university as the central academic base for further research and policy engagement in language and literacy education. Not on my own, I hasten to add – but by working with the enormous experience and expertise of staff already here within the School of Education, and across the university as a whole. To this end, I have already been involved, along with other colleagues here, in two new developments, with which I will finish.

One is the development of a Postgraduate Diploma in Language and Literacy Education which, via its combination of papers, will provide the latest research perspectives on all aspects of language and literacy education, including first and second language literacy acquisition, and bilingual education. We are hoping that the provision of this Diploma will be available on-line from 2003 to teachers and all those involved in any aspect of language and literacy education from throughout the country.

The other, complementary, development is that I am in the early stages of convening an International Conference of Language, Education and Diversity which will be held at the University in November 2003, where I hope to bring together other leading researchers from around the world to discuss the various aspects of language education that I have outlined to you today. I am hoping too, that the academic discussions held there will be able to centrally inform any further policy developments in the field of language education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

So, there is much still to be accomplished in the language education field, and much at stake. But there are also enormous possibilities, prospects and opportunities, and I look forward immensely to contributing further to bringing these about.

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