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National Language Policy in the United States: A Holistic Perspective

Cody L. Knutson

English is not the official national language of the United States of America. However, this issue has often come to the forefront of many political debates, since language encompasses a wide array of political, economic and various other social implications. Acknowledging the right to the retention of local culture, a historical and cross-cultural study of language policy is interpreted to justify a limitation on the number of languages at the national political level if flexibility is maintained for individual states to adjust to the needs of their constituencies.

The creation of an official national language is only the surface manifestation of a variety of political, managerial, economic and other social implications. On this basis, it is not surprising that the question of whether or not English should be inaugurated as the official US language has been increasingly debated in recent years. These discussions include a grab bag of ideas and terms such as bilingualism, bilingual education, multilingualism, unilingualism, monolingualism, English Only, Official English, US English, English First, English-Plus, English as a Second Language, transitional English, two-way/dual-language English. While all of these topics are interrelated to some degree, many people are mixing arguments and concepts to draw conclusions based on irrelevant and ambiguous definitions of linguistic principles and practices. This has led to a wide array of strong opinions that often lack basis and do not contribute meaningful insight into the issue of national language policy.

The following generic opinions regarding these national language policies were obtained from a scan of various literature resources. They illustrate the difficulty involved in formulating a solidly based argument on this subject. They are divided into the pros and cons of the implementation of some form of national language policy. Some of the pros include:

- 1) language is symbolic of history and is a transmitter of cultural values
- 2) it necessary to help all people to enjoy the full benefit of society
- 3) it will stop the threat of dominance by other cultures
- 4) it is necessary for the creation of national unity, allegiance and identity
- 5) language induces commonality and illustrates a commitment to being American
- 6) there are claims to the linguistic dominance of English
- 7) it will reduce the economic costs of bilingualism that doesn't work anyway

- 8) it is common sense legislation since 97% of the American population are fluent in English.

However, there are many con opinions :

- 1) language is symbolic of history and is a transmitter of cultural values
- 2) necessary to help all people to have the full benefit of society
- 3) will stop the threat of dominance by other cultures
- 4) it is not necessary since 97% of the American population is fluent in English
- 5) it would create commonality and reject diversity
- 6) such legislation is unconstitutional
- 7) it would create prejudice against non-English speakers
- 8) bilingualism is necessary for worldwide interaction and competition
- 9) there is confusion about what would be banned and what it would set a precedence for
- 10) border businesses want more business with Spanish speakers which legislation will negate
- 11) bilingual programs do work and other countries are successfully bilingual.

These lists are by no means exhaustive, but they illustrate some of the perceptions of the American population regarding this national language policy. Some of the general topics are related to national cohesion and the formation and maintenance of an American identity versus the protection of an immigrant's native culture and language, the importance of learning more than one language versus being forced to learn another language, questions on banning languages, linguistic prejudice, and the constitutionality of a national language. One difficulty in distinguishing these comments is that many of the arguments apply to both sides of the issue depending on one's perspective, while others are completely contradictory. In addition, these comments reflect not only aspects of creating a national language, but also express

concerns over the teaching of languages in school, bilingual voting, political domination, and other topics. Many interrelated topics must be addressed in order to accurately assess these issues; it is essential to examine each aspect separately.

This paper will address each of the main points separately to determine if there is consensus or validity to the various arguments. First, several aspects of linguistic theory will be discussed, and then the legal and applied aspects of official language policy along with bilingual education policy will be presented. Examples of how other countries are dealing with this problem may provide some guidelines for future implementation or research.

LANGUAGE

There are no "primitive" or "advanced" languages - all languages are equally complex and capable of expressing any idea (the principle of linguistic relativity). In addition, the use of a particular language does not reflect "superior" or "inferior" traits since every "normal" child is capable of learning any language to which he or she is exposed. Because of this universal acquisition process, many researchers theorize that all humans are born with the genetic capacity to learn language and that the content and structure of the language we learn is purely the result of the circumstances of our socialization (culture) (Fromkin and Rodman 1993).

Complementary to this, "language is the most fundamental and most distinctively human attribute because it allows for the transmission of culture" (Research and Education Association [REA] 1994:94). Without access to the indigenous language, a portion of that culture may be lost. Research by Grobsmith (1981:87) among the Lakota Sioux on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota demonstrates this concept. She states that:

... much of the social and cultural life at Rosebud consists of types of activities in which all Lakota (and non-Indians) can participate. However, there is a segment—and quality—of Lakota life that is accessible only to native speakers and those with knowledge of native tradition. For the native Speaker, life—whether daily routines or participation in traditional affairs—takes on a different quality and has a different set of priorities than for the Lakota that only speaks English. In the same manner that a traditional language and lifestyle unify one segment of the reservation population, lack of access to traditional life because of a lack of knowledge of the native language widens the gulf between traditional and assimilated, and permanently separates children from the elderly, the roots of traditionalism. [In addition, the non-native speakers] cannot initiate, observe, or fully appreciate the types of activities that traditional Lakota are continually involved in because they lack knowledge of the native language. This segment of the population relies less on traditional interpretations

of events; their thinking and perceptions more closely resemble those of the non-Indian world.

In accordance with this, "speakers of particular languages use sets of terms to organize, or categorize, their experiences and perceptions" (Kottak 1994:304). Through this reflection of culture, language is an essential mode of transmission to future generations, as well as for the study by social sciences. Therefore, inasmuch as people have the right to retain their culture they must also have the right to maintain their language.

NATIONAL LANGUAGE ISSUES

With this basis, we will now examine the legal and practical issues of a national language in the United States. This section will discuss some of the arguments related to the intentions of the "founding fathers" when forming this nation and the history of language legislation in the United States.

The Origins of Our Country

It is often said that the question of a national language was first brought forward in America when John Adams proposed to the Continental Congress in 1780 that an official Academy be created to "purify, develop, and dictate the usage of English." His proposal was rejected as undemocratic and a threat to individual liberty (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU] 1996). Proponents use similar arguments to defend national language legislation: "Founded by immigrants of all nationalities, the melting pot assimilates new influences and is strengthened by them. This assimilation has always included the adoption of English as the common means of communication" (US English 1996a).

The real question is whether the founding fathers intended the creation of a multicultural or assimilative nation or some combination of the two. The view of cultural diversity in a country as something good and desirable is called multiculturalism. "Multiculturalism seeks ways for people to understand and interact that don't depend on sameness but on respect for differences. Multiculturalism stresses the interaction of ethnic groups and their contributions to the country. It assumes that each group has something to offer and learn from the others" (Kottak 1994:59). The opposite of this model is the assimilationist model. The assimilationist model stresses that "minorities are expected to abandon their cultural traditions and values, replacing them with those of the majority population" (Kottak 1994:59). This model typically includes the loss of the native language and the acquisition of the new "host" language. This question must be answered before any "founding fathers" debates can be accurately defined on linguistic grounds.

US Linguistics: Before World War I

Though language prejudice and conflicts were certainly present at many times throughout this country's history, the first real legal issues were raised in the pre-World War I era. At this time, sentiments of a common language were introduced when many states passed laws prohibiting public or private instruction in any language other than English. "Through such laws, in combination with severely restrictive immigration legislation and a flood of 'anti-alien' rhetoric, the so-called Americanization Movement attempted to implement the rapid, forced acculturation of all immigrants in the name of national unity" (Tarver 1989:229). For example, Nebraska passed a law in 1919 prohibiting the use of any other language than English through the eighth grade. The Supreme Court subsequently declared the law an unconstitutional violation of due process (ACLU 1996). Additionally, in 1923 the US Supreme Court ruled that the "protection of the Constitution extends to all, to those who speak other languages as well as those born with English on their tongue" (Abale 1996).

Current Debate Participants

The current debate regarding national language policy includes many different individuals, policies and organizations. The most dominant names among this dialogue include organizations such as US English, English First, and the Center for Equal Opportunity; English Only and Official English legislation; and legislators such as Senator Richard Shelby of Alaska, and the late Representative Bill Emerson. Probably one of the most active and well funded of all advocates is US English (Rodriguez 1996). This is "the largest national, non-partisan citizen's action group dedicated to preserving the unifying role of the English language in the United States. Its efforts support making English the official language of government at all levels and encourage immigrants to learn English" (US English 1996a). Funds from this organization are often used to promote the passage of English Only or Official English legislation, which are interchangeable names applied to the idea of declaring an official US language and having negative implications towards bilingual education. These laws are often promoted and introduced by politicians such as Richard Shelby and Bill Emerson.

On the other side of the debate, there are also numerous, though often less prominent, active opponents to this legislation. These consist of organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for Bilingual Education, the national PTA, the Council of Great City Schools and National Education Association (Rodriguez 1996), many grassroots organization, as well as English Plus legislation, which is based on the teaching of two languages

simultaneously. It is important to note that most of the groups listed in this category support bilingual education, and are not necessarily fighting against a national language. However, since politicians generally combine bilingual education and a national language policy, those groups may be forced to support anti-national language activists.

There seems to be some discrepancy about the beginning of the English Only movement. One reference states that "the recent English-only movement got its start in Miami in 1978, after, Emmy Shafer was unable to communicate with any of the clerks at the Dade County Municipal offices. They spoke Spanish; she, only English" (Abale 1996). Her protest led to an English Only ordinance by Dade County in 1980, which barred public funding of activities that involved the use of languages other than English including all multicultural events and bilingual services (ACLU 1996). Tarver, however, states that "the current move to codify the dominance of English and promote its exclusive use in US public life began in January of 1983 with the formation of the organization called US English" (1989:227).

State Level

With the backing of the previously cited groups and the sponsorship from US politicians, variations of English Only legislation have been introduced in recent years, some being approved by various legislatures. Currently, twenty-three states have passed some form of "English Only" legislation. These "English Only" laws vary. Some states statutes declare English as the "official" language of the state. Other state and local edicts limit or bar government's provision of non-English language assistance and services. For example, some restrict bilingual education programs, prohibit multilingual ballots, or forbid non-English government services in general (ACLU 1996).

Although most have been successfully adopted, the Federal Court struck down Arizona's official English law in 1990. Federal District Judge Paul Rosenblatt concluded that the law violated First Amendment guarantees by curtailing free-speech rights (Abale 1996). The Arizona official English law is currently before the US Supreme Court. However, the courts have upheld other official English laws which limit the circumstances in which the government provides services in languages other than English (US English 1996c). In 1988, New Mexico's legislature voted down an "English Only" law and endorsed "English Plus" stating that "proficiency on the part of our citizens in more than one language is to the economic and cultural benefit of our State and the Nation" (Abale 1996).

Federal Level

At the federal level, precedence for the use of bilingual education has already been established. In 1973, the *Lau vs. Nichols* Supreme Court decision guaranteed children the right to equity and access to education, including bilingual education (Rodriguez 1996). Nevertheless, in 1996 alone, there were eight bills before Congress that would proclaim English the official language of the United States, most of which included some provision for the elimination or reduction of bilingual education (Rodriguez 1996). In recent years, many such bills have been rejected; however, some variations have met with more success. The House of Representatives has passed H.R. 123—The Bill Emerson English Language Empowerment Act of 1996—and the Senate has passed Senator Richard Shelby's similar S.B. 356, both of which omitted any mention of bilingual education.

On the other side, the American Civil Liberties Union (1996) has recently stated that they believe "English Only" laws are inconsistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment which, in part, guarantees citizens the right to due process of law and equal protection under those laws. For example, laws that have the effect of eliminating courtroom translation severely jeopardize the ability of people on trial to follow and comprehend the proceedings. In addition, questions are arising regarding the millions of US citizens and nationals on the island of Puerto Rico, Native American Reservations, or US territories in the Pacific whose right to communicate in a native language is protected by treaty or custom. Some groups also claim that English Only laws would forbid the official use of American Sign Language (Handsnet 1995). Additional claims will undoubtedly be brought forward from both sides as discussions continue.

WHAT WOULD A NATIONAL LANGUAGE MEAN?

There seems to be some confusion on what a national language would mean to immigrants and other American citizens. This confusion is reflected in the actual legislation proposed in recent years. Excerpts from two legislative bills from 1995 and two from 1996 are described below. These reflect differences in opinion and general themes between politicians about what a national language should specifically represent.

The Declaration of Official Language Act of 1995

This Act proposed in the United States House of Representatives (USHR, 1996) seems to be a "hard line" approach to national language policy. The legislation states that under this document:

- 1) English would be the official language of the Government of the United States, and as such the Government of the United States shall promote and support the reading, writing, and use of English to the extent of citizen's physical and mental abilities.
- 2) Communications by officers and employees of the Government of the US with US citizens will be in English.
- 3) The Immigration and Naturalization Service shall enforce the established English language proficiency standard for all applicants for US citizenship, and conduct all naturalization ceremonies entirely in English.
- 4) This legislation does not apply to the use of a language other than English for religious purposes, training in foreign languages for international communication, or the use of non-English terms of art in government documents.
- 5) This chapter preempts any State or Federal law which is inconsistent with this chapter, specifically referring to the repeals of Bilingual Education (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (other than sections 7201 through 7309) and the Bilingual Ballot (section 203 of the Voting Rights Act).

The Language of Government Act of 1995

This act, also sponsored by the USHR (1995), seems to be a less strict policy of English-Only. This is similar to the above legislation except that: 1) the use of English for government purposes does not include actions, documents or policies that are not enforceable in the United States, actions or documents that protect the public health, and actions that protect the rights of victims of crimes or criminal defendants; and 2) this act shall not preempt any law of any State.

H.R. 123—The Bill Emerson English Language Empowerment Act of 1996

This act passed the House of Representatives on August 1, 1996 and makes English the official language for government use. It would also repeal the bilingual ballot mandate, but does not address bilingual education. They have also loosened the legislation to mean that government use of English also does not include national security, actions that facilitate the compilation of the US Census, or tourism, among other things). On the Senate side, Senator Richard Shelby has introduced a similar bill (Senate Bill 356) which does not consider the repeal of the bilingual ballot (Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute 1996).

Even in politics, there is no clear message about what a national language would mean to the American public. From the above legislation, it seems evident that English would be the "working" language of the US government except when it deems necessary to do otherwise. However, no matter what legislation is proposed, it would mean that the United States government would be required to perform certain duties only in English. This could create the situation where certain citizens would be restricted in some form from fully participating in the functions of the United States of America. These individuals would include current full US citizens and naturalized citizens who have never been required to learn the English language (naturalization does not require English literacy for people over 50, and/or who have been in the US for 20 years or more [ACLU 1996]), possibly Native Americans and similar individuals who have protected access to their own language, those that use American Sign Language, and individuals who for whatever reason who are not completely fluent in English.

Bilingual Education

Bilingual education goes hand in hand with official language policy. As noted previously, federal law states that children are guaranteed the right to equity and access to education, which includes bilingual education, but the debates regarding bilingual education rage on. The literature again evidences confusion regarding exactly what bilingualism and bilingual education are and how they should be applied.

For the purpose of this discussion, bilingualism refers only to the speaking of two languages. A bilingual country is one "where the principal institutions provide services in two languages to citizens; the vast majority of whom may be unilingual" (speak one language) (Canadian Heritage 1996). Bilingual education is generally divided into two types, transitional and two-way/dual-language. The more widely used transitional bilingual education uses a person's native language is used to teach them other subjects while they are learning English (learning English is the goal), while the two-way/dual-language approach is used to develop fully bilingual students (teach more than one language) (Rodriguez 1996). There are also other approaches to teaching English that are not bilingually based such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and other "sink and swim" methods (Rodriguez 1996). These methods teach English with no involvement with their native tongues.

Rodriguez (1996:53) summarized the debates regarding bilingual education: "From a teacher's standpoint, there is no debate regarding bilingual education: Students' understanding in their native tongue makes school subjects accessible. The only debate is over which bilingual education model is effective." Some individuals disagree;

Leo (1994:22) stated that "studies of field surveys show that 71% of transitional bilingual education programs were no different from doing nothing at all for non-English speakers," and that "in bilingual programs, the English speaking kids did not learn how to speak Spanish." Others stress that programs such as ESL are more effective for teaching English (US English 1996a).

Legislative and Bilingual Conclusions

Throughout the history of the United States, many questions and bodies of legislation have been brought forward regarding this issue. Of these documents, several have been passed which limit the use of language, a portion of which have been repealed as being unconstitutional. In addition, some legislation has been passed protecting the use of language, a portion of which are now being challenged by national language policy issues. It seems that legislators must determine the guidelines as to which parts of these policies are unconstitutional and which parts shall remain protected before progress can be made in this area.

Many assessments are in direct contradiction to others in regards to bilingual education. It must be determined which programs are working and which are not. No matter what policy is implemented, it is undeniable that there will be a need to teach non-English speakers the English language. Therefore, the best methods for teaching must be identified; this is best left in the hands of the educational and linguistic professionals, not the politicians.

AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Besides maintaining diversity and cultural heritage and similar arguments, there is also another consideration to be addressed. By not having an official language, any of the over 300 languages (US English 1996) spoken in the United States would have an equally valid claim for representation at some level. Emerson (1965) discusses the concept that when a group becomes politically active, one tool that can accomplish unification and a representation of their power is language. Therefore, it would not be unexpected for many minority groups to wish to have their language represented. It then becomes a question of what is feasible for a country (based on democracy and the rights of its citizens) with a multitude of languages to achieve in terms of linguistic equity. A cross-cultural review will help summarize insights that various countries have gained.

Belgium

"Belgium is one of the countries that supporters of bilingualism hold up as shining examples of how peoples of

different languages and diverse cultures can be held together through a federalist system that asks no one to assimilate" (Mosier 1994:22). However, there are only two primary languages in the nation, and they are geographically separated, except for Brussels. "Brussels is the only officially bilingual region of Belgium. The city is 85% French speaking with the remainder and the surrounding region predominantly Flemish. Brussels has been described as a bilingual mess. There are cultural disagreements on the dominance of each language, areas are highly segregated and some people hold separatist inclinations" (Mosier 1994:23).

Canada

Bilingualism has not failed, but cracks are plainly showing in the policy created when Parliament passed the Official Languages Act of 1969. Some linguistic communities are calling for unilingualism (Quebec). Revisions such as the relaxing of federally mandated bilingual policies are being called for. One alternative many academics support would preserve a measure of bilingualism within the federal government, but leave most language policy up to the provinces. The private sector regulation of bilingualism is being relaxed (Allen 1991).

Russia

Russia had the same arguments about educational bilingualism from 1865-1914 that the US is having today. Their arguments were based on a division between three movements: the left-wing Social Democrats demanded full linguistic rights, the moderates supported the Il'minskii system (use of the native language along with Russian or as a tool for learning Russian), and most others followed the "natural method" (no use of native language in teaching). An important feature of their system was that considerable discretion about the method of teaching in primary schools was left in the hands of local school authorities. In evaluations from subcommittees and teachers, the Il'minskii method was chosen as the most "middle ground" and best method of teaching Russian; but all recommendations made to the national politicians were rejected, although certain Il'minskii schools or some aspect of the system did make their way into Soviet language and school policies (Dowler 1995).

Ukraine

In 1990, Ukraine demonstrated how political a national language can become. Just prior to independence, the country named Ukrainian as their sole national language

even though 52% of the population spoke primarily Russian. However, by 1992, legislation was passed which also established Russian as a state language and ruled that all national minorities had the right to be instructed in their native language in state schools (Dowler 1995).

Pakistan

The issue of language is clearly related to political identity in Sind, and language remains a marker of the existing ethnic division. For the Sindhis, language became their major symbol of identity, transcending local loyalties in response to the Muhajir challenge. The Sindhi language movement (including riots) can be seen in relation to the competition between these two groups for power (jobs, goods, and services) in Sind, which the coming of the modern state with its expanded bureaucracy, urbanization, and education as a means of social mobility has brought about (Rahman, 1995).

Taiwan

When the Kuomintang (Nationalist) government fled to Taiwan in 1949, after the communist revolution on the mainland, it sought to suppress the local culture, particularly language. Mandarin Chinese, not Taiwanese, was the official language, in line with government policy that the Kuomintang still ruled all China. This is becoming relaxed as Taiwanese culture is resurfacing (Taiwan Correspondent 1993).

India

The Indian constitution states that any group having a distinct language, script, or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve it, and the state legislatures may utilize the local languages of the area concerned. For educational purposes a tripartite structure, common in many countries, has been evolved. Accepting the view that children can learn most effectively through the medium of their own mother tongue, the schools start with the local language. Hindi is taken up at the next level and English and other foreign languages are taught to the more advanced students. Many scholars have commented that the retention of the mother tongue is wise, but they do question the repercussions of only teaching upper-class students the English and other foreign languages. They fear that this system will create linguistic stratification in which only some groups or individuals will be allowed to hold office and function in certain circles, while the masses will not move above the local language and its cultural horizons (Emerson 1965).

Nigeria

Nigeria has four official languages: Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and English (the official business language). However, the "Government encourages that the medium of instruction in the primary school should be initially in the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community" (Ajulo 1995:172).

China

In China, a great majority of the population speaks some approximation of a common tongue. The existence of one standard written language, whatever the burdens of its ideographic script, provides a base from which to replace by a single common language the regional diversity of spoken dialects (Emerson 1965)

Internationally Common Aspects

From these examples, it appears that each country has its own distinct problems and concerns when dealing with this issue although, there are some common aspects between some of them:

- 1) The national level has a set number of languages that they rely on, although some have more than others.
- 2) They stress the importance of allowing regions within a nation to govern their own language use but stipulate that a connection with a national language shall be maintained.
- 3) They stress that the individuals have the right to learn their local language.
- 4) They warn against language stratification.
- 5) They agree that language has political aspects.

In accordance with these findings, K.C. Wheare examined the issue of official languages in federal states. He states that where a federation is multilingual, each constituent state or region should acquire the main languages of the federal government in addition to its own local languages. (Ajulo 1995). These findings, along with concepts from the preceding sections, show the variability and complexity of this issue, yet can still be generalized to form certain basic suggestions.

CONCLUSION

In the past, traditional colonialism and other types of nationalism have set precedents for the domination of traditional aspects of language in many areas of the world. Today this is changing, as many societies are realizing the

validity of their language and the strengths of maintaining it (or the costs of failing to do so), and groups are becoming sufficiently empowered to demand their rights for the preservation of culture and language. In the case of the United States, the country must finally decide if they wish to follow the multicultural or assimilation model, or decide which blending of the two is appropriate. Whichever model is chosen will still require the teaching of English to non-English speakers. It must be recognized that politicians and educators do not necessarily have the same ideas on this subject. Therefore, experts on education and linguistics must be allowed to develop appropriate models for educating individuals and the politicians should make decisions based on those recommendations along with a consistent interpretation of the US Constitution and the will of the people they represent.

Though there are gray areas that must be worked out before informed decision making can be implemented, some generalizations can be made. One of these is that most countries realize that some limitations need to be established at the national level for the reduction of governmental duties. However, they also stress that there should be flexibility in the system to allow regions within the nation to meet the needs of their constituents. This may be especially feasible for the United States, which is already divided into specific geographic areas with variable linguistic demographics (non-English speakers are not generally spread across the country uniformly and because of immigration and differential population growth, Whites are now outnumbered by minorities [many of whom speak another language] in many urban areas [Kottak 1994:59]). In maintaining this regional flexibility, most nations recognize the need to allow the preservation and use of local language while still maintaining a common language between all levels of government. This creates a common bond and means of communication between all groups and diffuses the concept of linguistic stratification, while still allowing the transmission of local culture, the facilitation of local empowerment, and the means to ensure that all constituents are able to fully participate in the operations of the United States.

The question then becomes which languages should be the common languages and how should the local languages be taught to individuals. English has been the unofficial *lingua franca* throughout the history of the United States. Since 97% of the population is fluent in English and 99.96% of the governmental paperwork is currently printed in English, it seems reasonable to suggest that English would continue to play that role. However, the basic mandate of the government is to meet the needs of its constituency. Therefore, the basic needs of citizens, including non-English speaking citizens, must be met. Whether this should be dealt with at the state or national level is open for debate, although

some compromises would surely be necessary. This would again require some flexibility in organizations and policies to incorporate new ideas and changes over time, in order to ensure equal representation for all citizens.

In the case of teaching individuals their local language, it would seem reasonable that this may be handled best through flexible state policies after additional research by educators and linguists. In some areas of equal linguistic demographics, a full bilingual educational program may be feasible. Other areas of high English literacy may be best adapted with transitional language programs. Though the extent of the available information is beyond the scope of this research, some highly variable linguistic cities may not be economically capable of sustaining all bilingual programs and may need to rely on outside agencies and community support. The point is that a federal blanket coverage may not fit the needs of local populations but should be supportive of those measures that the state and educational and linguistic researchers deem necessary. In addition, it must be stressed again that these programs should be appropriately funded, researched, organized and documented for the accurate dissemination of information and the efficient use of limited funds.

Such focus on research, organization and cooperation may also reduce the anxiety expressed by some individuals regarding the formation of factions along linguistic boundaries that is common in many countries. Regarding his cross-cultural research, Emerson concluded, "But though the risks of discord and separatism are undoubtedly real, the likelihood is that the deeper wisdom lies with those who are prepared to recognize and build upon diversity rather than with those who seek to crush it out and march with direct ruthlessness toward national uniformity" (Emerson 1965:144).

In conclusion, this paper only scratches the surface of the number of arguments, organizations, legislative documents, theories, practices and perspectives dealing with national language policy. It does demonstrate the need for additional holistic analysis from several different perspectives in order to make informed decisions. As always, there are differences between theoretical and applicable implementations of policy; however, by using a systematic and holistic approach, one can gain deeper insights into underlying factors essential to appropriate action.

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