

"ability to communicate effectively," are major issues in the "outsider" context, they become secondary to the native teacher. In most of the literature, the natives usually find themselves as the objects of study. In an effort to break down some of the stereotypes embodied in the anthropological literature, we have focused our studies on groups and institutions in Western society. So now the native students are taking on the role of anthropologist and studying the primitive society of the school. They compensate for the lack of appropriate literature by generating their own.

We have also learned that the training of educators, native or non-native, requires more than the inclusion of a few anthropology courses in the teacher training curriculum. Such a limited focus runs the risk of putting just enough information in teachers' hands to make them dangerous, even when well-intentioned (see Kleinfeld, this publication). The development of a cross-cultural perspective in education requires that the person being trained have extensive guided field experience in which the methods and concepts provided in the training are blended with actual working experience. Only after having coped with the uncertainty and confusion engendered in a cross-cultural experience, can a person fully internalize a perspective which transcends cultural boundaries, and only when such a perspective is fully internalized can the person use it productively.

For most native students, cross-cultural experience is implicit in the daily life of the individual. Engaging in academic training, itself, contributes to that cross-cultural experience. The problem, then, is one of identifying and understanding the forces shaping that experience, and developing the capability to deal with it more objectively. By examining and analyzing the confluence of external and locally derived experiences through close and sometimes intense personal interaction with non-native team members within the community context, the native student is able to inductively build and gradually internalize a "transcultural perspective," while at the same time retaining his own cultural integrity.

For the non-native (or native) student without previous cross-cultural experience, the process of internalizing a "transcultural perspective" appears to be more difficult, consisting of three identifiable stages, and of at least one year duration. The three stages may be generally classified as (1) enamoration, (2) antipathy, and (3) transcendence. In the first stage the new experiences are all exciting and different. New insights are spawned, the causes of problems are easily identified, and hope for the future abounds. Then reality sets in, and we are in stage two. The problems are not as simply formulated as they first appeared, and the solutions become even more evasive. Human relationships become increasingly complex and difficult to manage. Basic value orientations are called into question. Disenchantment reaches the point of anger and frustration. Careful guidance is necessary at this point to prevent the onset of avoidance behavior, or complete rejection of the experience. Failure to go beyond stage two will result in bitterness and an aversion to cross-cultural issues which is often manifested in a regressive attitude implying "I have been there and it didn't work." Careful planning and support must be provided to insure that the persons being trained are given the opportunity to reconstruct their view of reality and basic value system within the context of a transcending conceptual framework. Once they have achieved such a reorientation, they have begun to internalize the cross-cultural experience.

Finally, we have learned that the processes by which education takes place are often more important than the content that is being transmitted. The field-based nature of the program appears to be more influential in the students' development than the material being presented in the courses. The graduates are frustrated as teachers, in part, because their field experiences, while progressing through the conventional teacher training curriculum, exposed them to educational processes beyond the school. Those experiences are reflected in the behavior of graduates who are striving to develop comparable field experiences and approaches in their work as "educators." If the adage, "You teach as you are taught" is correct (and we believe it is), then our task as a program staff is to provide a model whereby the processes through which we train teachers will also be applicable to the education of children in the communities. Though we continue to strive for more appropriate and useful content in the academic coursework, the process through which the content is presented remains our primary focus of concern.

Another dimension of the field-delivery process that has been critical to the implementation of this approach is the nature of staff/student relationships. The closer the personal relationship between staff and student, the more effective and productive the learning experiences have been, and there is a big difference between "personalizing" and "individualizing" those experiences. Using course completion as an indicator, we have had very little success with canned correspondence and strict competency-based courses. Although such courses were usually mechanically efficient and flexible in terms of alternative routes and timelines for completion, if the instructor did not provide personalized attention to each student's needs, the courses were generally neglected and ineffective. Education is not an efficient process, and attempts to make it so can often undermine the purpose for which it is intended--the medium becomes the message.

The most successful courses have been those in which the instructor has been aware of the students' needs and has devoted considerable time and effort to take interest in, and personally address issues, problems, and concerns raised by each individual student. Though this may seem obvious, it is often difficult to achieve because instructors rarely meet students face-to-face and are not able to convey ideas, feelings, and impressions in the usual manner to which they are accustomed. A personal note on an assignment becomes much more significant under these conditions than in a campus context, so instructors must reorient their perception of students. Since effective teaching under these conditions can be extremely demanding and time consuming, we have sought to limit the size of the program and the number of students, and thus provide an opportunity for strong staff/student relationships to develop. Without such relationships, though some students might be coaxed through a limited number of courses, few will complete a four-year degree program. And while, for some purposes a few courses may be sufficient, the long range educational needs of rural Alaska call for fully degreed and credentialed native persons who can begin to assume professional responsibility for, and control of, the programs serving their people. We, therefore, have attempted to develop a program oriented to the needs of students working toward a four-year degree. To offer less would only perpetuate the second class status to which native people are often relegated in schools today.

These are only highlights of what we have done and have learned over the past few years. We intend to continue learning, from our successes as well as our failures, because only through continued exploration of alternatives can we build upon our experiences and push back the frontiers of our understanding. Hopefully, then, the education of the children of tomorrow will benefit from our experiences today.

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## PART IV

# TEACHING/LEARNING ISSUES

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*It was not a caprice of the moment when Jesus admonished his own followers to "pray in this way: . . . lead us not into temptation," rather than "help us to overcome temptation when we encounter it." Very simply, preventive tactics constitute a pragmatically superior strategy to formulating responses in the face of crisis. So those of us who are seriously concerned with the problem of constraining cultural bias in cross-cultural encounters will want to focus our efforts more on causes than effects, and attack the problem in the formative stages—we will want to develop preventive measures that will preclude the problem's ever taking shape.*

—Bill Vaudrin

The following articles focus on the cross-cultural classroom, where many of the students from small villages first encounter "Western society." The problems inherent in this encounter are still a long way from being resolved, but the developing awareness and sensitivity reflected in these articles indicates that progress is being made. The greater participation of Native people in the schooling process, and the adaptability of new programs and teaching approaches has the potential of reducing the negative consequences of schooling and enhancing some of the positive consequences. The extent to which this occurs depends to a large extent on the ability of educators to establish a learning environment that is accommodated to the unique attributes of the learner, rather than requiring the learner to always accommodate to the schooling environment. As these articles indicate, this is a complex task with sometimes subtle and unanticipated ingredients. Cultural biases, whether in the individual or the institution, are not always obvious, and even when they are, they can be deep-seated and difficult to overcome. The greater our awareness of the manifestations and consequences of our biases, however, the more able we are to deal with them. To this end, these articles are directed.

## POSITIVE STEREOTYPING: THE CULTURAL RELATIVIST IN THE CLASSROOM

by

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(Ed. note: Reproduced by permission of the author from *Human Organization* 34: 269-74, 1975.)

The Ethnocentric Teacher has been tried and convicted for causing severe damage to Indian children. As many anthropologists have testified, these teachers with their disapproval of Indian parents' "permissiveness," their shock at adolescents' "promiscuity," and their scorn for children who are "noncompetitive," undermine Indian students' sense of worth. Viewing their educational mission as "imprinting the American ideal" on Indian students, these ethnocentric teachers find themselves confronted with class after class of silent, resistant students who "just do not want to conform to the American way."<sup>1</sup>

The ethnocentric teacher can still be found in the cross-cultural classroom. However, my own research<sup>2</sup> on the effects of different teaching styles with Indian and Eskimo students suggests that he or she is becoming a rarer specimen. By and large these are older teachers who were socialized in the "cultural deprivation" traditions of ten or so years ago. At that time, the theoretical paradigm which the teachers learned in professional training was that minority group children did badly in school because deficits in their home background resulted in inferior intellectual, language, and social skills. According to this theory, the schools could produce school success for minority group children by providing in the classroom the educational experiences that the home had not provided. This "cultural deprivation" paradigm dominated educational research and led to numerous program efforts in the "compensatory education" framework.

A dramatic change, however, has occurred in educational programs for minority groups. The pejorative appellation, "culturally deprived," has given way, thankfully, to the term "culturally different." Cultural heritage programs have replaced compensatory education programs, and a new type of teacher is emerging in the cross-cultural classroom. In his orientation to Indian students, he could be named the "cultural relativist."

This teacher poses perhaps a more insidious danger to Indian students than the ethnocentric teacher because in some ways he embodies reforms long recommended in Indian education. He tends to be young and has entered Indian education from partly altruistic motives. He is usually well traveled and well educated. He has read and been strongly influenced by the anthropological literature on culture and education. Indeed, this research is often his primary source of knowledge about Indian students. As one said:

Having had no previous experience working with Eskimos or Indians, and a notice of my position that was so short there was no time for preparation, I was completely new to this situation. I was well aware of the difficulties this could make and I came with an intense desire to do my best and make a

success at working with Native students. As soon as possible, after being notified of my position, I began studying Native culture and reading everything I could to make myself informed relative to working with them.

This teacher has great admiration for Indian culture, at least in its aboriginal form, and is eager to learn more about it from his students. In his classes, he tries to introduce as much culturally relevant material as he can find. Disapproving of past educational pressures toward acculturation, he urges his own Indian students to retain their culture. This teacher is acutely aware of his own cultural biases and wary of imposing any of his own values on Indian students. Yet, the cultural relativist often finds himself confronted with Indian students as silent and unresponsive to his teaching as they are in the classes of his opposite, the ethnocentric teacher.

A close examination of teacher-student interaction in the cultural relativist's classroom suggests a few of the bases for Indian students' unresponsiveness. These teachers' emphasis on differences between Indians and Whites often creates unease among Indian students and reinforces their fears of being peculiar and strange. While the following dialogue was stimulated by my research, which involved videotaping of classrooms, it provides an example only somewhat more extreme than usual of messages frequently transmitted in the cultural relativist's classroom.

The cameraman joked with the students as he panned the room, "OK, say cheese." To this, the teacher added nervously: "You are assimilated into Whiteman's culture. You know you are supposed to smile when he says cheese." The students giggled apprehensively. "Why is he taking a picture of this class?" There was no further response except more nervous giggling. "Do you think if this were a White class he'd be here?" the teacher asked.

The cultural relativist celebrates Indian culture, but the culture celebrated is too often a romanticized version of aboriginal life with which contemporary Indian students actually have had little association. Indeed, some of these presentations, where, for example, the teacher expounds at length on the technological virtues of a bone fishhook, embarrass Indian students. While overtly praising Indian culture, this teacher's subtler messages are often patronizing and demeaning:

The teacher was reading Indian poetry (written in pidgin English with many grammatical errors) to the class. "Now this poem shows many of the things we've talked about," the teacher summed up. "We've commented on how most of the Native people aren't aggressive, nowhere nearly as much as White people. The idea of a competition and bragging and boasting are alien to them, and so we think of them as very quiet and shy and insecure."

The fact that Indian students in this type of teacher's class often turn out to be indeed quiet, shy, and insecure raises the question of what effects the teacher's stereotyped cultural role expectations may be having on Indian students. Teacher expectations can be powerful determinants of student behavior (Rosenthal, 1966; Rosenthal and Jacobsen, 1968). The cultural relativist teacher may well be socializing Indian students into stereotypes—albeit in the teacher's view positive ones—that his readings in

Indian culture and model personality have led him to expect.

Another serious problem is that Indian students' instruction suffers because these teachers often use students to advance their own anthropological interests. Assignments too often consist of asking the Indian student merely to describe his home village or his feelings about school or city life. When such students reach college their professors have pointed out, "The kids have a lot of experience writing about their feelings. Their essays are very touching. But they have had no practice in analysis and synthesis."

Always cognizant of Indian students' different background, these teachers tend to place them in a special category where they are exempt from academic and other standards applicable to other students. In mixed classrooms, White students resent the easier assignments, tests, and grading system used exclusively for the Indians. They often take it upon themselves to redress the inequity by a little reverse social discrimination of their own. Moreover, not only does the cultural relativist's special treatment arouse animosity in White peers, but overly individualized treatment gives Indian students no sense of meaningful standards toward which to direct their efforts.

After class, an Indian girl came up to the teacher and told her that she had been sick and had missed the last test. "What should I study for it?" she asked. "Don't worry," the teacher replied, "I'll make up a special test for you and you'll do well on it." "But I don't know what to study," the girl persisted. "Don't worry," repeated the teacher, "I'll make it special for you. You'll do well."

The cultural relativist teachers tend to view any deviant behavior of an Indian or Eskimo student as an expression of his culture which they should be very hesitant about trying to change. Believing their own values to be "culturally biased," the teachers have no notion of what standards, if any, they should apply to Indian students. The absurd lengths to which this viewpoint leads and the harm that can be done children in the process is illustrated in the following teacher's analysis of an Eskimo child's behavior in her classroom:

A family has just moved to town from a village where everything is shared. There is no emphasis placed on ownership. Everything is community property. The child enrolls in the urban elementary school. Possessions of others begin to disappear from desks, lockers, teachers' desks, etc. Library books are seldom returned—they are passed on to others in the family and to friends. Items belonging to the peer group are found in the child's desk. Her peers complain loudly that "she is a thief—she steals." The child has difficulty comprehending this. Socially, the child is now an outcast, and from then on, when one of her peers misplaces something, the Native child is immediately blamed, whether or not she has taken the item.

Oblivious to the fact that the other Eskimo children in her class were not expressing their traditional sharing-values in quite this way, the teacher doubted that she should try to "change the child's culture" and "get her into the mainstream of White society" by discouraging her from stealing.

These teachers' concern about cultural differences results in a per-

vasive anxiety and uncertainty in dealing with students. Their approach is inevitably hesitant, tentative, worried. Such anxious handling in turn increases the Indian students' nervousness in the classroom. As Erickson (1959:13) has pointed out, more important to the development of a healthy personality in children than a few isolated negative acts is the ability of adults to "represent to the child a deep, almost somatic conviction that there is meaning to what they are doing." These teachers may avoid at least overtly destructive actions toward Indian children. But, disturbed over the legitimacy of their teaching, the cultural relativist teachers cannot transmit to Indian students an underlying sense of meaning or of purpose in what they are teaching. Because they themselves lack confidence, these teachers cannot give Indian students confidence that they are learning things of value which will enable them to become competent adults.

Cultural relativist teachers often view Indian students as cultural abstractions. They see Indian students more as pasteboard representations of aboriginal culture than as children and adolescents, concerned in many ways with the common problems of living and growing up—finding friends, dealing with sexual impulses, looking attractive. Thus, the teachers make little attempt to identify or to empathize, to understand their Indian students' problems through recalling similar problems of their own. It is as if the teachers had decided that "You are Indian and I am White, and there is nothing about us that is alike." Indeed, in some instances these teachers made progress in developing the rapport essential to successful teaching when they finally said in exasperation, "I don't go along with this culture business. He acts just like my kid brother!"

In short, the new breed of teacher emerging in the cross-cultural classroom is as "racist" (in the dictionary definition of the word) as the older type. Both the ethnocentric teacher and the cultural relativist teacher assume that social traits and capacities are determined by race, that races differ radically from one another, and that one race is superior. But, while the ethnocentric teacher views such racial differences as deficiencies to be corrected, the cultural relativist views them as assets to be cultivated. Implicit in his view is the tired theme of the "noble savage" who, in the Indian context, is defined by superior cooperativeness, equalitarianism, and concern for others. Positive racial stereotypes, in short, have replaced negative ones. How has this reversal come about? Why is the cultural relativist replacing the ethnocentric teacher in the classroom?

There are many different causes and many different levels of explanation. The change to this new type of teacher has resulted from the general change in the climate of ideas in the 1960s when the old melting pot and equal treatment ideology gave way to the rise of ethnic consciousness and the linkage of economic and political power to ethnic group status. The failure of the compensatory education approach and the search for new educational directions are also important to this change.

The most direct source of the attitudes that spawn the cultural relativist teaching style, however, are the concepts of anthropology which professors present to teachers in university training and in anthropology and education publications. While the portrait drawn here is the "ideal type," these teachers quite often uphold numerous avant-garde educational notions they have come across in their professional socializations, a potpourri unified by little more than academic fashion.

Anthropologists may be surprised, indeed flattered, by the deadly seriousness with which teachers seem to apply their ideas in the classroom. But exactly what ideas are they applying? It is not the case, as Keynes has said, that men's minds are ruled by the ideas of "some academic scribbler of a few years back" (1935:383). Rather, as a later scholar noted, men's minds are ruled by the vulgarization of these ideas. It is vulgarized concepts of anthropology that teachers are applying in their classrooms.

One of these concepts is the notion that traditional cultural attitudes and values influence Indian students' current behavior. Teachers commit the logical fallacy of equating the proposition, "traditional culture is expressed in Indian students' current behavior," with the proposition, "Indian students' current behavior is an expression of traditional culture." The fallacy is the same in kind as reasoning that because all redheads are human beings, then all human beings are redheads. The first proposition is true but the second false because both redheads and traditionally based current behavior are subsets of a larger class. Teachers slip into this fallacy both because of the emphasis placed on traditional culture in anthropology and education courses and because of the primacy given in the discipline of anthropology to traditional culture as the key explanatory variable.

The second anthropological concept causing problems in the classroom arises out of the cultural relativist school of thought that cultural differences should be understood in context and respected. While cultural relativism has been an important corrective to the ethnocentrism of the past, teachers often vulgarize this viewpoint to mean that no standards they hold can be applied to Indian children. This misinterpretation occurs, first, because teachers are unaware of the arguments anthropologists have advanced against extreme versions of the cultural relativist position. Second, teachers are unaware that in many important areas cultural values and standards are held in common. As a discipline, anthropology emphasizes differences between cultures because such differences provide explanations, enable tests of theories, and are interesting. But emphasis on interesting cultural differences draws attention away from the many areas of agreement across cultures. When the disciplinary emphasis on cultural differences is combined with the ideology of cultural relativism, teachers see serious ethical problems in applying their own standards to Indian children even where in actuality no difference in standards exists.

What could anthropologists do about such problems? One useful approach might be to deal directly with these issues in courses and publications directed toward teachers. When I have brought up these concerns in my own courses, teachers have been greatly relieved at the notion that there are areas of cultural similarity which legitimize making certain academic demands on Indian students. Upon applying this viewpoint in their classrooms, teachers have reported favorable results:

When it became apparent that the four Natives would dutifully bring the body to class, warm the seat, but leave the brain outside the window or somewhere else, I decided to use some thoughts presented in the course on understanding the Native. Particularly, I began to concentrate on the statement that Natives are no different from other students (note this teacher's vulgarization of the idea I had presented in class, that there are areas of similarity and areas of difference),

that demands must be made upon them, that they should not be treated as exceptional. Instead of using the don't ruffle the feathers, he is a Native theory, I began to insist on written work from them. The results are rewarding. Janet has returned to her old strength self.

Another possibility for avoiding the cultural relativist teacher problem is to place more emphasis on the "situational" approach to cultural differences being used in the areas of cross-cultural cognition and language (Cole and Scribner, 1974; Phillips, 1972). The situational approach emphasizes not cultural differences in themselves but rather the specific situational factors that lead to specific types of cultural response. Why, for example, are Indian students talkative in certain situations, like the playground, but silent in other situations, like the classroom? What types of situations encourage or impede verbal communication by Indian children? Teachers could use this type of information to structure their classroom situations in positive ways.

As currently applied in anthropology, however, the situational perspective still suffers from the defect of too exclusive a focus on traditional cultural patterns as the sole basis of responses to different situations. Recognizing that Indian students' responses to a situation stem from other factors as well might be a more useful approach to the solution of Indian students' actual classroom problems. An example of this kind of overfocusing on traditional culture as the key explanatory variable came up in my own fieldwork. I was accompanying a home school coordinator who was counseling an 18-year-old Eskimo student who wanted to move out of his boarding home. The young man was upset about the strange behavior of his Eskimo boarding home mother, whom the home-school counselor knew quite well. The boarding home mother had recently migrated to a socially disorganized, White-dominated regional town from a relatively stable, traditional village. According to the student, the woman was always nervous and upset and scolded him and her husband for no reason. She didn't take care of the house and was always buying things she didn't need. While I was pondering the sociocultural consequences of migration, the home-school counselor placed her hand on the student's knee and said, "Oscar, have you ever heard of menopause?" As Harry Stack Sullivan has pointed out, "We are all more human than anything else."

While these kinds of correctives may help, I have begun to think there may be a more fundamental problem in applying concepts of anthropology in the classroom. This problem may lie in the inadequacies of the concepts themselves, in the general focus on cultural differences as the explanation for minority group children's problems in school. Dissatisfaction with these concepts is becoming increasingly evident in anthropology and education. As Lantieri and Storey (1973:x-xi) point out:

School children who are "culturally different" on the other hand, are not in every case best understood as alien, as being so different as to be mere remnants of obscure tribal histories than as American citizens, or as mysteries only an anthropologist can fathom.

Anthropologists are searching for new ways of analyzing educational situations which do not necessarily involve the concept of cultural differences. Gearing's (1973) effort to develop a general theory of cultural transmission is an example of such an attempt.

The present state of affairs in anthropology and education may be an instance of Kuhn's (1962) notion of the failure of a scientific "paradigm." The paradigm refers to the underlying set of assumptions and concepts that define the research problem, the conceptual tools which may be used to solve it, and the acceptable standards of solution. Kuhn suggests that a crisis occurs in a scientific community when the paradigm that has guided past research is found inadequate. Such a crisis is signalled by a sense of dissatisfaction in the scientific community and by different attempts to come up with a fundamental reconceptualization that opens up and changes the field.

Perhaps the field of anthropology and education needs a new analytic paradigm, a paradigm that generates fresh problems, different methods, and useful solutions to the educational problems of minority group children. Until such a paradigm emerges, however, anthropologists should be aware of the harm done children by vulgarized versions of the old one. Theories about cultural differences may merely be replacing theories about cultural deprivation as an excuse for teaching failure.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. This quotation, as well as other teacher statements quoted in this paper, was written by teachers in an in-service training course in Alaska. Teachers were asked to describe a problem in their classrooms involving Indian or Eskimo students, their methods of solving it, and the results.
2. This research, from which some data have been drawn from the present paper, is report in J. S. Kleinfeld (1975). The methodology consisted primarily of observation and interviews of approximately 40 teachers of academic subjects in two all Native boarding schools and five integrated urban high schools during the 1970-71 school year. The major criteria of teaching effectiveness were (1) whether Indian and Eskimo students verbally participated in class, and (2) the cognitive level of their verbal comments. The rationale for the choice of this measure and a description of supplementary experiments designed to test propositions developed in this research may be found in the SCHOOL REVIEW article.

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## TEXTBOOK REVIEW: CRITERIA FOR ALASKAN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

by

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*"Our tests place a heavy load on any child who cannot identify with the white ethnocentric point of view. When children feel that their forebears didn't count in molding the past, they feel that they have little chance to shape the future. It is the responsibility of textbooks and other teaching materials to make all children feel their true importance."*

Foundation for Change  
"Guide to Racism Rating"  
*Testing Texts for Racism*

### Introduction

Any Alaskan classroom teacher who agrees with the quotation on the preceding page is probably aware of the need for standards or **criteria** to aid her/him in the development and selection of instructional materials. The first textbook review committees were born during the 1960's Civil Rights movements, but many such committees also exist today, functioning in advisory (most prevalent) or policy-making (less frequent) capacity in cooperation with local school boards, Indian Education Act programs, and special interest groups advocating the needs and interests of minority students. Organizations such as the Foundation for Change, Inc. and The Council on Interracial Books for Children have undertaken the task of disseminating guidelines for textbook and supplemental reading evaluation. The National Council of Teachers of English and other national educational conferences have addressed the problems of racism and bias in the teaching of English and the content areas. In a special gesture, the State of Montana amended its constitution in order to recognize "the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians" and to commit "in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity."<sup>1</sup>

Where does this widespread professional interest in textbook review leave the Alaskan classroom teacher? Probably back where she/he started—**anxious to examine her/his own materials for accuracy and honesty, but unsure of how to proceed.** Despite national awareness of the need for textbook evaluation, teachers typically receive no coursework or training in review as part of their undergraduate programs in education.<sup>2</sup> Ethnic studies and curriculum development projects occasionally address the problem, but it is rare for local school boards to undertake the difficult task of textbook review before being coaxed to do so by minority parents and teachers.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the classroom teacher who is seriously interested in materials evaluation may encounter a school board that is unable or unwilling to help her/him. In addition, the parents of the students will most likely hold diverse attitudes about the need for standards in textbooks and about what the standards should be.

The information in this report is designed to be read, modified where necessary, and applied by Alaskan classroom teachers in all subject areas and grade levels who want their students to "feel their true importance."<sup>4</sup>

#### Which Materials Should be Evaluated?

Most teachers would probably agree that evaluating all of the materials they use in their classrooms would be a time-consuming, perhaps endless, task. However, continuous materials review should be built into each school day, and teachers will certainly want to work along with students, school personnel, and parents for effective, efficient review.

Generally speaking, any instructional or supplemental (enrichment) material which will be made available to students needs to be thoroughly examined by their teacher. Books, newspapers, magazines, other periodicals, films, filmstrips, slides, tapes, records, workbooks, programmed learning packages, games, and activity kits deserve equivalent examination and review procedures. Social studies materials and all kinds of literature frequently attract the attention of textbook review committees, particularly because of inaccurate portrayal of the contribution of Black and Native Americans. In Alaska, materials which depict the traditional and modern lives of Alaska Natives (Eskimos, Aleuts, Athapaskans, Tlingits, Haidas, and Tsimpsians) warrant special attention, and in any locale, teachers should scrutinize carefully the materials which describe the so-called minority and majority groups in the immediate area.

In an effort to limit its review project to a workable scope, the American Historical Society's all-Indian organization of scholars and historians held a conference to establish criteria for the adoption of books in history and social sciences in 1965. This textbook correction program opened up the whole state of affairs concerning education ABOUT Native peoples; it is also blamed publishers, educational writers, and school administrators for failure to provide accurate classroom instructional materials. A direct result of the conference was the creation of an independent Indian publishing house, the Indian Historian Press, Inc.

By centering its efforts solely on textbooks, the American Indian Historical Society became the first organization to recognize "a difference between a book for general readership and one accepted for classroom use."<sup>5</sup> The Society maintained that books for "free reading" by the general readership need to provide the individual with choices, even if these choices include misinformation, distortions, or omissions of important history. Students, on the other hand, are compelled to study from approved textbooks, and in this case, we have a right to insist upon truth, accuracy, and objectivity.<sup>6</sup>

The following statement, summarizing the viewpoint of the American Indian Historical Society, is accepted by the majority of the textbook review committees surveyed by the Council on Interracial Books for Children. Nevertheless, a growing number of committees are extending their pre-screening authority to include supplemental and non-textbook instructional materials.

We believe everyone has the right to his opinion. A person also has the right to be wrong. But a textbook has no right to be wrong, or to lie, hide the truth, or falsify history, or insult and malign a whole race of people.<sup>7</sup>

### What is "Racism," and Whom Does It Hurt?

According to "Definitions of Racism, A Contemporary Glossary" published by the Foundation for Change, racism is more powerful than racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Any attitude, action, or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of color can be racist—if the force required to carry out systematic discriminatory practices is present. In other words, "power + prejudice = racism."<sup>8</sup> There are various kinds of racism, too, such as institutional, individual, White, and paternalistic; and some people classify sexism as a subcategory of racism. Most important to the classroom teacher, racism in textbooks can be identified without long years of special training. An open mind and a thorough background in her/his subject area are the teacher's essential ingredients for useful textbook review.

Slurs and halftruths about non-White and other minority groups are often easier to spot than slights or omissions. Textbooks have given generations of American students the mistaken notion that nothing important happened in the "New World" until the continent was "discovered" by White Men. Most history books tell only the story of European occupation of North America from a one-sided point of view:

... Native Americans (Indians) become important only when they block the path of expanding white domination; Mexican Americans (Chicanos) get attention only when Whites are ready to take over the Southwest; and Blacks make history only when they pose problems as slaves or modern-day militants.<sup>9</sup>

Alaska-Natives are hardly mentioned at all, and this restricted view of history fosters the development of White ethnocentrism by assuming that a superior role for Whites is needed to fulfill America's destiny. While recent textbook revisions have corrected some glaring errors, teachers must search for books which treat minorities as a basic part of American history. "History through whose eyes?" is a question that social studies teachers should constantly ask of their books and their own classroom presentations. Teachers—and their students—should also be alert for stereotyped definitions which often appear in racist social studies books: Is a primitive any dark-skinned, half-naked person who utters strange sounds while a proud White male discovers the shore by planting his country's flag in the sand? Does progress for White people deny a land of plenty to Americans of other colors? Is the word **problem** used to describe whatever or whoever is troublesome to the Whites in power, and are the problem-makers usually poor, dissatisfied non-Whites?

Other loaded words such as **savage**, **conniving**, **lazy**, **treacherous**, **wily**, **inscrutable**, **docile**, **happy**, and **patient** may be used subtly to refer to minority persons, and students can even make a class project out of checking their texts to find out who gets most of the favorable and unfavorable adjectives.

The "bigger" the book, the more important a check of its index becomes. Does it include Blacks, American Indians, Asian Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and Alaska Natives in their own right or only in relation to White society? Are minorities listed separately or only under such headings as "Slavery," "Migrant Workers," or "Wetbacks"? Teachers and students should also be aware that many publishers "pad" indexes: checking is necessary to be sure that each reference is a real one to the group in

question, rather than just a passing comment, map citation, or one-sentence footnote. Comparing the number of genuine index entries for all groups, including Whites, will give an indication of the book's balance—or lack of it.

#### Analyzing Books for Racism and Sexism

Racist and sexist books and other media distort perceptions until stereotypes and myths about minorities and women are presented as reality. It can be difficult for teachers to question society's attitudes and to encourage students to discuss racism and sexism in a book. However, **discrimination**, in the positive sense of the word, is an essential survival skill for modern children and adults; knowledge about and respect for the similarities and differences among human beings are values that develop slowly over the experiences of a child's lifetime, particularly her/his school experiences since many children do not see "different" people in their neighborhoods.

The following guidelines for detecting racist and sexist biases in children's materials are excerpted from the **Interracial Books for Children Bulletin**, vol. V, no. 3, 1974. Criteria for picturebooks, primers, and fiction are contained in Part I, with additional standards for school books and reference works outlined in Part II.

#### PART I: Children's Free-Reading Materials

1. Check the illustrations for stereotyped oversimplifications of particular groups, races, or sexes. Watch for pictures with characters that are demeaned or ridiculed because of race or sex. Be on the lookout for tokenism, non-White characters with White features on slightly tinted faces. Examine the lifestyles of minority characters and their settings (such as "dirty" houses) for unfavorable, yet unstated, bias. Are minorities always associated with ghettos or primitive village living? Or do stories which attempt to depict other cultures go beyond generalizations and offer real insights into different lifestyles?

2. Check the story line.

- a. Relationships: Do Whites function in power- and decision-making roles while minorities serve in subservient positions?
- b. Standard for success: Do non-White characters have to exhibit superior qualities to succeed? Does the non-White in a friendship do most of the understanding and forgiving?
- c. Viewpoint: Are minority people considered "problems" where solutions ultimately depend upon White benevolence?
- d. Sexism: Are achievements of women and girls based on their initiative and intelligence rather than on their good looks or relationship with boys? Are sex roles incidental or paramount to characterization and plot: that is, could the same story be told if sex roles were reversed?

3. Ponder the effects of the book on the self-image and self-esteem of children; sometimes books establish overt or covert norms which limit children's aspirations and self-concept.

4. Consider the author's and illustrator's credentials. Read the book jacket and check the author's qualifications to deal with minority themes and other topics. Books ABOUT minorities and women but not written BY them

should be very closely examined—even if their stated purpose is to present the majority opinion. (NOTE: These observations do not preclude the ability of writers and illustrators to empathize with the experiences of people with different sexes and racial heritage, but the chances for honesty and authenticity are probably not as good.)

5. **Examine the copyright date.** Lots of hastily written books on minority themes appeared in the wake of the 1960's Civil Rights movements; many were composed by White authors and have obviously White viewpoints. The children's book world reflects only remotely the realities of a multi-cultural, multi-racial society, and "it has just begun to reflect feminists' concerns."<sup>10</sup> Of course, there is no guarantee that a book with a recent copyright date is relevant or sensitive. But books are usually written one to five years before they are published, and this time lag is important in the field of children's books, where awareness and conscious elimination of bias is increasing daily.

#### PART II: School Texts

6. **Determine the author's perspective.** There is no such thing as a truly objective account of anything; every story is told from some point of view. White, European male perspectives dominate certain content areas, and this has influenced the content and presentation of instructional material. Naturally, there is more likelihood that a textbook will reflect the contributions and values of a multi-ethnic society if minority authors help to produce it.

7. **Note the copyright date,** remembering that it takes much longer to produce a textbook than a story book. In addition, the first (or oldest) date given on the copyright page is the one you should notice; although publishers are occasionally willing to make necessary (and costly) revisions of older editions, "editing out" viewpoints which are pervasively racist or sexist is nearly impossible.

8. **Watch for loaded words,** especially those which "purr" at majority characters or persons and "snarl" at minorities. Sexist language encompasses adjectives that ridicule women and, in some cases, the use of the male pronoun to refer to both males and females. The generic use of the words "man," and "mankind" was once accepted, but its exclusive use today is usually interpreted as an indication of the writer's lack of awareness.

9. **Notice the heroes and heroines.** Textbooks, in particular, seem to limit themselves to "safe" minority heroes and heroines—those who avoided serious conflict with the White establishment of their times. Today minority groups are maintaining that they should define their own heroes and heroines, based on their cultural values and struggles for justice. Always double-check indexes to be sure that names cited therein are actually included in the text and treated in full rather than fleetingly or disparagingly.

#### Additional Criteria for Reading and Literature

By comparison with social studies materials, English and language arts materials might seem to contain insignificant amounts of racism and bias. In reality, it is through language arts materials that most students receive "images" as well as "information" about themselves and other persons, races, and cultures. It is essential that these educational materials foster in each student a sense of her/his personal dignity and an understanding of

the positive aspects of diversity in American society. In many areas, including a number of Alaskan villages, bilingual materials are the only answer for Native students, but conventional English courses and reading programs still need revision. Because many elementary, secondary, and college courses are organized around an anthology or basic text, the National Council of Teachers of English Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English recommends the following criteria for materials in the language arts fields:

1. Literature anthologies to be used as basic texts and having inclusive titles and/or introductions (such as *American Literature, A Survey Course*) must be balanced (reflecting diversity of style, subject matter, and social and cultural view) and fair (more than tokenly representative of all groups). In other words, works by non-Whites must be included, in substantial numbers, to avoid the implication that members of these groups are less worthy or significant than White American writers.

2. Hostile or sentimental depictions of non-White groups must be balanced with realistic ones.

3. In collections where any writer is represented by only one selection, the basis for its inclusion must be made clear.

4. When a dialect of English appears, it must not be exaggerated or inconsistent, but appropriate to the setting and the character (for fiction). Non-fictional materials written in dialects of English need not be ignored; however, they must be presented accurately with appropriate attention paid to the writer's purpose, audience, and subject. Representations of the speech of bilingual Americans should not be suggestive of cultural insensitivity.

5. Editorial and critical commentary must depict in full the role played by non-White writers in continuing literary development, and literary criticism must draw as heavily as possible from the critical writings of non-Whites.

6. Historical commentary and interpretations must not present idealized or otherwise distorted pictures of social and political history out of which Americans have written and are writing.

#### Specific Criteria for Children's Literature

"Literature is what learning to read is all about!"

"Children's literature makes a definite contribution toward creative development in boys and girls . . . ."

"True literature stimulates the imagination . . . ."

These quotations from James A. Smith's *Adventures in Communication*<sup>11</sup> describe the place of literature in the education of children. Good children's literature possesses the following characteristics:

#### IT CAN

1. stimulate children to write for themselves.
2. provide a means of therapy for troubled children.
3. help build skills in expression, defining, and elaboration.
4. help build a colorful vocabulary.
5. become the basis of constructive daydreaming and problem identification.
6. make children more discreet in passing judgments and

- making choices, especially in diction (choice of words).
- 7. be a source of creative stimulation.
- 8. develop sensitivity to places, sights, sounds, words, lifestyles, and people.
- 9. help children build values or standards for creative writing.

Good books should be read, shared, and enjoyed rather than just taught. With the teacher functioning as intermediary between author and audience, the children develop their tastes in reading for pleasure. "Social studies books reach the minds of children, but literature reaches their hearts."<sup>12</sup> According to James A. Smith, good literature recaptures the mood of life and transplants the reader to another time or place. Empathy and projection are developed through good literature and therefore, literature can be used to complement social studies lessons by providing a "feeling" for a different way of life in addition to the facts about a country or people.

Books read aloud to children must be particularly relevant:

1. The story should be meaningful to the children and their situation.
2. It should have a fresh, moving plot or deal with an exciting event.
3. The story should have uniqueness.
4. Plausible, direct conversation should tell much of the story.
5. The characters should be fully developed.
6. The outcome(s) of the story should appear authentic and believable.<sup>13</sup>

Honest sentiment, moral values, understanding of children's abilities, and meaning which continues after the story itself is forgotten are other characteristics of good children's literature.

Books surveys developed to assist teachers in planning reading programs at various grade levels are useful if they serve as broad guidelines rather than as total programs or policies. Children do tend to have specific interests at different ages, although preferences may vary greatly among individuals and certain groups. Generally speaking, young children like single-plot stories with predictable outcomes, direct conversation, natural climaxes, and single boy heroes or girl heroines. Illustrations are also very important. Older children may develop interests in specific animals, folk literature, historical fiction, biographies, and stories built around a variety of themes taken from real life and the supernatural. Imaginary and real "other children"—with their own characteristics, problems, and backgrounds—are favorite subjects for stories. Teachers should guide but not dominate students in the selection of individual reading materials, choosing from a variety of contemporary and classic, written and recorded media.

#### Who Evaluates What, for Whom and Why?

One of the purposes of the American Indian Historical Society conference on textbook correction was to determine where the responsibility for honest textbooks lies. The conference consensus was that publishing companies and educational writers and school administrations must share the blame for past inaccuracies, but that all members of any educational community must work together for the improvement of teaching materials.

It follows that the best (that is, the most balanced and fairest) textbook review committees are broadly based, including teachers, students, other school personnel, librarians, administrators, school board members, racial and special interest groups, male and female representation. School districts can establish comprehensive review boards to formulate goals for entire boroughs and cities, but each school should also have a textbook review committee of its own, with a membership that is representative of that school's population of teachers, students, parents, and other interested community members.

Because of the complex nature of school communities, textbook review committees seem to function best when they are allowed to determine their own organization, methods of operation, and by-laws. Some offer training workshops in evaluation, while others cooperate with local civil and human rights organizations to disseminate materials on textbook review. Actions which textbook review committees can take include, but are not limited to, these:

1. Discuss the biases in books with family members, community youth groups, Literary Appreciation Clubs, and other groups; make a point of uncovering hidden messages and implied values in books and other media.
2. Hold "open" as well as "closed" meetings to exchange ideas with others interested in analyzing books and classroom materials.
3. Plan school and community-wide meetings with speakers on racism and sexism; hold workshops for administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Make sure that there is substantial local input to such workshops, particularly in initial planning and implementation stages.
4. Encourage open analysis of textbooks and other materials rather than pre-censorship in the classroom. Support classroom innovations which lead to the creation and sharing of book "critiques" as well as book reports by students.
5. Set up special sections for racist and sexist books in the library; let students working in groups decide which books merit special placement. Post book reviews written by students on library shelves.
6. Write, and let children write, to book publishers, complaining about specific passages and their offensiveness. Send copies of such letters to local newspapers, and urge others to do likewise.
7. Inform other local, state, and national organizations of your efforts and exchange ideas with other concerned citizens.
8. Avoid the "all-of-the-people-all-of-the-time" syndrome.

For newly organized textbook review committees, guideline number 8 is perhaps the most important one to remember: textbook evaluation must be performed with rational, realistic judgment as well as with an eye for undue bias. A book which presents stereotyped images may not always be inaccurate or in need of burning. For example, women did function much like slaves in certain periods of history, and a Black man may be lazy,

although it is not his "Blackness" which makes him so. Rather than burn all books which contain racist and sexist images, we must teach children to recognize and confront prejudice, to formulate values based on adequate information, and to resist "snap" judgments of human personality. The story of Chiang and Chiquita Applebaum, a brother (?) and sister (?) with unstable personal identities, describes what can happen when a writer yields to special group pressures and tries to contrive a story that will offend no one. The moral of this story is that a children's story which offends no one also inspires no one and is unrealistic because no honest point of view is represented. This kind of writing is "emptier" than biased writing, which presents only one viewpoint or maintains that one lifestyle is superior to all others.

### Conclusion

The most constructive attempts at educational materials evaluation occur every day in the classroom, where students and their teacher discuss textbooks and other media in an honest, discriminating fashion. From these discussions, projects such as the rewriting of local history or the staging of historical skits to correct inaccuracies can develop. One teacher in a New York public school asked her class to re-enact famous events in American history from a non-White viewpoint. Here are some of the springboards that the students used to get started:

\* Thanksgiving is a day of mourning for Native Americans.

\* Harriet Tubman was the greatest heroine of American history.

\* The U.S. government plotted a war against Mexico in order to steal its lands.

\* The U.S. is not helping Puerto Rico to independence—but is helping itself to Puerto Rico.

Other classes of students have participated in restructuring classroom library corners to include more books that appeal to minority (and majority) students. Middle-school children have written book reviews for younger students and designed their own reading lists.

Working with other children on book review projects and "correcting" misleading information is an adventure for most students. Learning not to accept everything in print but at the same time recognizing and appreciating honest, vital literature is a bold undertaking which involves meeting issues such as racism and sexism headon, becoming personally involved with fictional characters and real people, and developing individual tastes in reading by sharing books with others. Children, like textbooks, can be "culturally deprived"—if they know nothing about themselves and their real contribution to culture; if they know nothing about their own history.

### Recommendation

What can a teacher, school, school board, and school district do when relevant, unbiased materials about their community are lacking? Conduct a community-wide writing campaign to produce the necessary materials! After some initial training in educational materials design, young and older people working together, in Native languages and English, can enjoy writing, publishing, evaluating, and revising their own textbooks and supplements.

## FOOTNOTES

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2. C. Katasse, informal survey in ED 627, summer 1974.
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11. James A. Smith, *Adventures in Communication: Language Arts Methods* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972), p. 287.
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# CROSS-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCIENCES

by

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## Introduction

Most students have been exposed to mathematics and some form of science education for each year of their first nine grades. Many have gone on to increase their skill in these subject areas while in high school. Nevertheless, the most commonly referred to nemesis of a given student's college degree aspirations are the associated math and science requirements.

The low matriculation rate of minority students into the fields of mathematics, physical sciences, engineering and chemistry, herein referred to as the basic sciences, has become a major concern of the professional sciences. A large component of this concern originates with the economic pressure attendant to the recently enacted affirmative action statutes. More recently, however, the concern about minority representation in the basic sciences has been increasingly motivated by more humanistic and academic considerations. In the first place, an increased minority participation in the workings of basic science would add dimension to the field. In the second place, the question itself is interesting: "Why is there not more minority representation, at any educational level, in the fields of the basic sciences?"

Clearly the question has a partial answer by virtue of the fact that many potential minority students of the basic sciences are intimidated by a negative anticipation of the curriculum. However, this partial answer will logically lead one to ask why the minority student should be so decidedly affected in this way when compared to the typical student of the dominant culture and race. Such questions were raised during the recent development of courses designed specifically to meet the needs of Native Alaskan university students.

At the start of the fall semester, 1972, two special cross-cultural science courses were offered at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF). These courses were developed in response to a growing awareness that many culturally different and rurally educated students did not go on to complete their college degree aspirations simply because of the difficulty they experienced while trying to satisfy course requirements that implied a working knowledge of math and the associated scientific method.

At the beginning of each course, questionnaires were passed out. The intent of the questionnaire was to determine the average working knowledge of the class in math and science. Once this norm was established, the courses would begin at that level of math and science and work upward, reaching, hopefully, a point at which each student could successfully compete in other

scientifically oriented courses on their own. The results of the questionnaires were surprising. For instance, in the class offered during the fall semester of 1975, a questionnaire was passed out during the second meeting of the course—before instruction began in earnest in any course at UAF. The questionnaire contained problems of a mathematical and physical nature. The questionnaire was anonymous and there was no time limit. An example of the type of problem found on that questionnaire is "What does  $7 - 8$  equal?" Also: "What does  $1/2 + 1/3$  equal?" There was another problem of similar nature and also one word problem. The word problem was constructed so as to give its own answer. Out of 22 respondents, 13 students answered all the math problems incorrectly. Of the 22 students, 18 could not answer the word problem, even though it gave its own answer. Similar student performance has been noted within every class of every semester that the courses have been offered.

The question as to why there is not more minority representation in the basic sciences, and the question concerning why the minority student should so negatively anticipate a scientific curriculum seems to have been largely answered by the results of these questionnaires. That is, typical rurally educated Alaskan students were being sent to college grossly under-prepared for the academic challenge that would face them. The next question that arises, then, is how the college level educator might successfully instruct this group of students in the sciences, their academic preparation notwithstanding. Indeed, given their preparation, why should this group of students even be required to take science?

In answer to the latter question, the value of scientific education can be seen to manifest itself in many ways; the most obvious of which is to allow the student a certain flexibility in a technologically bound society. By learning the vocabulary and method of science, a student opens up broad areas of experience that would normally be closed to him. But this is only a narrow pragmatic aspect of the value of a scientific education. If we consider what cognitive areas are represented in science, we see that education therein, if appropriately done, could facilitate cognitive mobility in exactly those areas. The obvious cognitive task involved in science is abstract thought. Thus, by constructing science or math courses that deal not only with the pragmatic aspects of science education but also with cognitive mobility in abstract thought, the student could benefit by being involved in a directed effort that explicitly addresses development in at least one of the major consequential cognitive areas of the formal education process itself.

To answer the former question, one must appeal to cultural and educational research. In concurrence, it is the purpose of this paper to present the results of educational research that was performed for the intent of improving the effectiveness of the afore-mentioned cross-cultural science courses. While the results of the research were addressed to the need of the particular group of students of the class being taught, it is thought that these same results could just as easily be applied to any group of culturally different students at any educational level. That is to say, the orientation of the educational research was broad in scope and it was concerned with the determination of which cognitive parameters were of primary importance in the education of the culturally different.

### Cognitive Ability: Genetics Vs. Environment

Cultural minority groups are often composed of people who may also be considered as racially minor. It is well known that I.Q. test data yields consistent associations between the type of cognitive response being assessed by the I.Q. test and the race of the testee. Alternatively, the same test data will show a strong association between culture and cognitive ability. Consequently, a large portion of the research associated with cross-cultural education concerns itself with the polemic issues surrounding the cognitive consequences of culture or environment versus race. This issue is germane to the endeavor of this paper, for if certain racial groups are cognitively incapable of academic success in the basic sciences, the question of minority participation in those sciences is largely answered. The same is true if certain cultural groups are cognitively incapable of academic success in the basic sciences. There is one important difference: If scientific cognitive capability is largely under racial genetic control, short of eugenics, little can be done to achieve a productive and viable racial balance within the basic sciences. If, on the other hand, scientific cognitive capability is under a dominant cultural control, much can be done to increase minority participation in the sciences by appropriate changes in curriculum materials, teaching styles, etc.

A good part of the problem of assessing the cognitive capability or intelligence of a particular cultural or racial unit is the lack of an acceptable definition for what is meant by cognition or intelligence. Many researchers simply define intelligence as that cognitive component that is measured by the I.Q. test. Jensen (1969), using such a definition of intelligence, showed that intelligence is functionally related to race. In a later and much broader analysis of the genetics-environment argument, Baker (1974) concluded much the same thing as Jensen. Baker's main thesis was that given the easily assessed morphological differences between racial norms, it would be inconceivable to assume that the potential cognitive capability of one race was exactly the same as that of any other race.

Myriad papers have been written in rebuttal to, especially, Jensen's argument that intelligence is genetically heritable. Essentially, these rebuttals filled in those areas that concerned the cultural and environmental influence on intelligence that were either neglected or superficially treated by both Jensen and Baker. Some papers took a general exception to the idea of relating phenotypical and genotypical traits among biological populations (see, for instance, Layzer, 1975). The rebuttal arguments were persuasive and when taken in conjunction with the genetic position showed the need for a continued effort into the question of the cognitive influences of culture and environment, as opposed to race.

It has become increasingly clear that there are many cognitive influences in our lives; two of the most important of which are the cognitive influences of language and formal education. It will be recognized that language is a function of culture, or in some cases, contact among cultures. Formal education is virtually always a cultural contact experience for the culturally different student. Whorf (1956), using a Hopi Indian example, established the hypothesis that differences between linguistic structures imply differences in cognitive processes. To exemplify this hypothesis, we need only consider the grammatical emphasis on time exhibited by the currently dominant Western culture and compare that with the lack of emphasis on time found in most American Indian cultures. As an example,

in the Inupiaq (Eskimo) language to say "four seals" is perfectly feasible whereas to say "four hours" is not. In Inupiaq, there are event oriented time designations for morning (uvlaaq), afternoon (qitingnguq), and night (unnuk), (Wilson, 1975), but time durations, like the hour must be somehow specified according to the given time designations. For instance, "the man stayed four hours" might be translated in Inupiaq as "the man was here in the afternoon." Whorf showed that the Hopi language is similarly event oriented with respect to time. It is Whorf's contention that this grammatical difference is a manifestation of a different conception of reality. While Whorf's thesis is not universally accepted, it does point to some difficulties of a grammatical nature that may be encountered in cross-cultural education. Shribner and Cole (1973) in their paper on cognitive consequences of formal education showed that classification, articulation and abstract thought are among the more easily defined cognitive consequences. Whorf's point thus falls into perspective. If different linguistic schemes imply different cognitive topologies, then surely at least one of the consequences of formal education becomes involved: viz., articulation. Academic success at the college level depends heavily on the ability to articulate well in the accepted fashion of the given educational community. A cross-cultural student whose lexicon is different from the academic community in which he is a member will find articulation difficult. Consider then the problems that may be encountered if the student's conception of reality is also different.

Colby (1975) suggests the term culture grammar to describe the operational function of culture. Colby quotes an unpublished description of his meaning, written by Schwartz as: "There are a number, probably not large, of basic and powerful heuristic modes of problem construal and approaches to solutions which are variably manifest and developed in different cultures. Where these heuristics are present they may be specific to certain tasks or they may be general—in other words, available for the solution of novel problems." The heuristics described by Schwartz are synonymous with Colby's culture grammar. If the culturally different student's conception of reality is not exactly different, his culture grammar most assuredly is. Hence, this student's form of expressing reality, or more particularly, his behavior will also be different. Given different modes of problem construal and approaches to solutions, the culturally minor student will exhibit a propensity toward failure when faced with the task of interpreting contingencies that are culturally specified in ways that are, by definition, outside his scope of experience.

It will be recalled that a high percentage of the students involved in the cross-cultural science courses could not answer the worded problem. This word problem and the average student's inability to answer it points to a general non-interpretable contingency. That is to say, the student's familiarity with scientific lexicon and syntax was minimal. Consequently, the student could not encode the information contained in the question. That the student could decode the question, if understood, is testified to by his ability to complete the rest of the questionnaire. That the student could cognitively process the question, once it was encoded, is apparent because of the relatively simple cognitive task built into the problem. It is not clear whether Whorf's contention that a person of a different linguistic community possesses a different conception of reality was represented in the response that was recorded for this question. It is clear, however, that the difficulties

encountered by the students in understanding such a question are easily overcome. This was demonstrated by asking similar questions at a later date and receiving a predominantly correct response on each occasion.

Cole and Scribner's book, *Culture and Thought* (1974), suggests that abstract reasoning is not intrinsic to most traditional cultural units. While this suggestion is imminently reasonable, the concept of a relation between cultural traditionality and the possession of abstract thought is not simple. On one hand there is a temptation to equate articulated or nonarticulated abstract cognitive processes with "Western" modes of thought. However, if one traces the cognitive development of Western man, it is found that the abstract thought processes were not made explicit until rather late in history. The Greeks brought to explication abstract reasoning in the West when they further developed and articulated the various logical systems. Nevertheless, Denny (1972) would argue that a substantial portion of any "Western" sample of people use thought processes that are distinctly nonabstract (so-called concrete thought). So, if the Greeks brought formal abstract processes to the West, there are, evidently, still a great many Westerners who haven't yet caught on.

On the other hand, one might take the position that while abstract thought may not be universal to Westerners, it is in the West that such modes of thinking reside, to the exclusion of other civilizations. However, a study of Pre-Columbian civilizations firmly establish that the American Indian practiced the scientific method (Brown, 1975) and, as a result, must have incorporated abstract thought processes into their culturally specified cognitive patterns. Indeed, Gallenkamp (1976) has pointed out that the Maya developed fully articulated versions of certain scientific concepts that even the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans did not possess. Other examples of this type of cognitive development within various ancient civilizations of man can be cited.

Where does this leave us? As stated before, there is no simple relation between traditionality and abstractness. This statement now becomes more persuasive in as much as we can establish the existence of concrete thought among some persons of Western culture and abstract thought within some "traditional" cultures. The position we consider the most useful for further conceptual development is to make the extent to which abstract cognition comprises high probability behavior in a particular culture part of the definition of its traditionality. Thus, rather than implicitly assuming a cause and effect relationship between traditionality and abstractness, they become associated by definition.

#### **Academic Success**

Academic success has been mentioned throughout the preceding discussion concerning the periphery of a few important aspects of cognitive ability and intelligence. Cognitive ability and intelligence were dealt with primarily because they are at the core of questions that involve a student's ability to complete successfully a scientific curriculum. In one sense, the assessment of cognitive ability and intelligence is a precedent of the academic endeavor, while academic success is a post-factual evaluative device. However, we agree with Wallach's (1976) persuasive presentation that test scores, college grades, et cetera, do not correlate very well with external achievements in the real world. Nevertheless, for minority students, performance in

the present academic setting is itself a realistic "real life" situation in which to achieve. This in addition to the usual avenues of achievement within their culture of origin.

If we examine the cognitive attributes of a given student or group of students and then allow those attributes to infer something of the capability of that student or group of students, we are in somewhat of a conjectural milieu. This is because no precedent cognitive evaluation can portray the entire cognitive spectrum needed to construct a comprehensive prediction. Using academic success as the metric of cognitive ability or intelligence, on the other hand, requires no conclusions of a conjectural nature, other than those raised by Wallach (1976). From the realistic point of view, academic success is a more meaningful measure of cognitive ability than I.Q. tests, et cetera, simply because the academic success criterion is a means whereby one may quantify that which exists in fact. Inductive reasoning may then be invoked to attempt to explain the reason why behind the factual observation. For these reasons, the academic success criterion will be defined and thereafter used in conjunction with the point of this paper.

Academic success is presently defined as the achievement of a grade point average (GPA) equal to or greater than 3.00 (grade = B), while at the same time enrolled in courses that comprise at least 12 semester hours.

Relating the various cognitive components of academic success, as it has been defined, to the existing I.Q. tests and other precedent cognitive measures is outside the scope of this paper. It can be inferred, however, that the academic success criterion does contain many of the same parameters that characterize the I.Q. Test, provided that the course structure implicit within the criterion is sufficiently broad in scope. In addition, the academic success criterion implicitly contains cognitive parameters that are not generally assessed by precedent evaluative tests. We thus assume the validity of the academic success criterion as a metric of total cognitive ability, with the proviso that care must be taken in examining the implicit course structure that affects the criterion. In so doing, it is felt that we are using a more unified cognitive assessment tool and one that is, in any case, post-factual.

#### **Student Orientation Services**

The Student Orientation Services (SOS) was begun at UAF in 1969 in response to the needs of students from rural areas of Alaska and students whose cultural background was different from the major culture of the campus. From the inception, the SOS student body has been composed primarily of students with a Native Alaskan racial and cultural heritage. Usually, a student served by SOS receives financial assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Academic funding from BIA is contingent upon the race of the applicant. At least one-quarter Indian or Eskimo blood (Indianid) is mandatory by law for the applicant to qualify for financial assistance. Part of the BIA scholarship assistance applications contain certain questions that seek to establish each applicant's racial background. SOS seeks to establish racial heritage for each student under their auspices since these statistics are a part of their operational objectives. Both BIA and SOS are aided in their endeavor by the recent enactment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. To receive benefits under the new Act, each registrant must have a verifiable Native Alaskan ancestry. Consequently, most students who are a part of the SOS student body have an

accurately known racial heritage. In addition to this valuable racial profile for each student, the cultural heritage may be inferred from the student's village or town of origin and the schools attended.

Hybridity among the Indianid population is common. Most hybrids, however, are at most third generation or less. As a result, the majority of SOS students are known to be  $0/4$ ,  $1/4$ ,  $2/4$ ,  $3/4$ , or  $4/4$  Indianid-White hybrids. A few students fit the racial fractions  $3/8$ ,  $5/8$ ,  $7/8$ , and  $15/16$ . In actual fact, these racial fractions do not exactly fit many of the SOS population students. This is a consequence of a constant genetic input from European and Asian races for at least the last 150 years. However, this genetic input has been sporadic and generally far removed in terms of the generation of the current SOS population. By now, this genetic population loading influence must be random and slight. It can therefore be assumed that the racial fraction listed by each individual student applies accurately to the average of all students who list their race with the same fraction. Quite easily, then, those SOS students who can be described by the given racial fractions can be grouped into two populations defined as  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid and  $>2/4$  Indianid. Moreover, the Indianid genetic influence within these two populations will be known to an unusual accuracy.

Cultural and societal isolation is a very tangible quality of Alaskan life. The immense area of Alaska combined with its sparse population renders most towns and villages easily accessible only by air. If it is known that a particular village or town is isolated, except by air, and that it is comprised primarily of Indianids, the cultural demeanor of the village may be inferred. In this example, it could be said that a member of the village under consideration has been exposed to a more traditional culture than some arbitrary member of another town or village that was neither so isolated nor populated so predominantly by Indianids. Thus, SOS students who have listed their village of origin can at least subjectively be placed into three categories that best describe the type of cultural influence they have had in their early life. The categories that will be used here will be defined as Native background (NB), rural background (RB), and urban background (UB). NB corresponds to the type of background described in the above example. The RB category corresponds to those students whose origin is listed as a rural town or village which is known to have a cultural demeanor that departs radically from the traditional culture of the Indianid members. Such a place would be Glennallen, Alaska, which has a significant Indianid population but which is accessible by road and which is culturally "western." Another RB location would be a coastal village whose economic base has shifted to commercial fishing; an enterprise governed by western culture. The UB category is obvious. In this category were placed all students who were raised either outside Alaska or within one of Alaska's urban centers. Foreign Indianids were excluded from consideration because their racial and cultural makeup could not be determined as accurately as U.S. Indianids.

The majority of the members of the generation of students being discussed here received their primary education in their village of origin. This is not the case for their secondary education. Because most villages have too small a population to support a high school, the State of Alaska and the BIA deemed it appropriate to offer secondary education only at schools that were removed from the student's home. Boarding home programs were established and students from the outlying villages populated the programs.

When a boarding home student was sent to an educational institution that was meant primarily for native or BIA students, that student was categorized as receiving a native education (RE). Those students who were fortunate enough to have a boarding home school located in their village and, as a result, attended that school were also categorized as receiving a native education. Most boarding home schools were, for the generation of students under consideration, located in an area with a high Indianid population. If the school was, on the other hand, located in a rural or urban area and was not meant primarily for boarding home students, then the student was categorized as either receiving a rural education (RE) or an urban education (UE). Students who did not attend high school or who received a high school diploma by examination or correspondence school were categorized as GED.

In addition to tabulating students according to background and education, a table was constructed which delineated the number of students of each racial fraction according to their year in college, their sex, and whether or not they have declared a major. This later category was included because a declared major implies a more directed academic endeavor as well as implying more academic advisement from counseling sources outside of SOS.

#### Data Analysis

The data were arranged so as to form a table which gave the total number of SOS students by racial fraction, background and education category, NB, NE, et cetera. This was done for the group of students who attended college and took 12 units or more during the fall semester of 1974 and also for the spring semester of 1975. There was a total of 172 students counted during the fall semester of 1974 (F74) and 142 during the spring semester of 1975 (S75). Each student included in these numbers could be unambiguously placed into a racial, cultural and educational category; otherwise they were excluded from the count.

Once it was known how many of the total number of SOS students of each semester were represented in each compound racial, cultural, and educational category, it was then determined how many of these had achieved a semester GPA greater than or equal to 3.0. The two numbers were then compared. First, the number of students who, on the basis of chance alone, would be expected to fit a given compound category was compared with the number actually occurring in that category. This gave information as to whether the number of students appearing in a given category was above or below that number of students which could be expected to occur at random. Next, a statistic related to chi-square was applied to the numbers of each compound category so as to determine the significance between the relative magnitudes represented by the numbers, if any.

Table (1) shows the results of this procedure. The numbers appearing in each compound category are termed  $\alpha$ -numbers. To clarify the meaning of the  $\alpha$ -numbers, consider the table and the category of students who attended college during F74 and who were less than or equal to one-half Indianid. The  $\alpha$ -number for the background section UB F74  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid set is +89. This means that random fluctuations alone would produce the number of F74  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid academically successful (AS) students appearing in that factor 89% of the time, given the background structure of the SOS population. The sign indicates directionality and shows that the AS factor number exceeded expectation (+) or that the AS factor number was

TABLE (1)

	575 Union	575 > 2/4	575 ≤ 2/4	F74 Union	F74 > 2/4	F74 ≤ 2/4
NB	.82	.93	+70	.87	+91	.82
RB	.90		+88	.95		+90
UB	+84	+66	+74	+95		+89
NE	+85	+92	+63	+88	+89	+77
RE	.91		+86	.96		+91
UE	.90	+84	.76	.96		.93
GED						
YR1	100	+78	+73	.94	.96	+94
YR2				+96	+90	.80
YR3-4				+95	.85	+84
M	.93	.91		.94	+94	.83
F	+91	.92	+73	+87	.97	+87
MAJ	.88	.85	.90	.88	.96	+95
RACE		.88	+8.		.90	+90
NO. IN AS SET	19	8	11	26	13	13

below expectation (-). The same factor listed for the 575 > 2/4 Indianid set shows an  $\alpha$ -number of +66. In the same manner, the +66 value indicates that the number of 575 > 2/4 Indianid AS students occurring in that factor would occur by chance alone 66% of the time, given the background structure of the SOS population. The other  $\alpha$ -numbers imply the same interpretation.

Given the meaning of the  $\alpha$ -number, we see that those factors that have the lowest  $\alpha$ -numbers are the most significant. That is to say, a factor with a low  $\alpha$ -number simply says that the AS population number appearing in that factor would appear by chance alone less often than if it had a higher  $\alpha$ -number. In that case, it is evident which factors are the more significant to which racial types.

From the table it can be seen that the most significant background features of academic success among the group of students of each semester who are  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid are, respectively, NB, UB, and RB. Among those students of each semester who were greater than 2/4 Indianid, the most significant background feature seems to be the UB category. The data are incomplete for this set but the  $\alpha$ -number given for the 575 > 2/4 category suggests that it is highly significant whether or not the Native students involved were raised in an urban setting. It should be noted that the directionality for this category is positive. In other words, those students who fell into this category exceeded expectation. This result corroborates the idea that an urban background provides a person with a cultural grammar that possesses more cognitive components requisite to academic success than does the Native or rural background.

In support of this interpretation, consider the union set for each semester. We see that, on the average, a person raised in the traditional culture falls below expectation while those raised in settings indicative of a dominant cultural influence usually exceeded expectation. Those raised in a wholly urban setting always exceeded expectation.

The education section of Table (1) shows that the GED factor was in all cases not amenable to the type of statistics used in the analysis. No attempt was made to develop means whereby this factor could become statistically analysed.

From the education section some very interesting observations immediately emerge. It is noticed from the data that the NE directionality remained positive across the semester for the  $\leq 2/4$  sets. For this same set, the UE factor remained negative. This is in contrast to what would be expected. A rural native education should equip a student academically less well than the urban education. The reverse seems to be the case. Here we see that those students with a rural native education exceed expectation while those students characterized as receiving an urban education achieve at a rate that is less than expected. Judging from the magnitude of the significance, we cannot assume that the unexpected behavior of one or two students have caused this curious situation to have occurred. The  $> 2/4$  set indicates that the magnitude of the significance of this category changed little from F74 to S75 but the directionality was negative. However, the significance levels are so slight here that little meaning can be attached to the directionality.

Recalling the criteria used to categorize a student as either NE or UE we see possibly important differences that may affect the student's later academic potential. An obvious consideration is whether or not the student was removed from his traditional background to attend a school that reflected a different cultural milieu. In analysing the data it was found that during F74, 20  $> 2/4$  students were categorized as NB. For this same group of students, it was found that only 10 were categorized as NE. Similarly, RB = 30 and UB = 18 while RE = -27 and UE = 28. Obviously, there is a divergence of students from the rural and native background setting into the urban education setting. The students so displaced may have reacted to their environment to result in a population of students who received the "benefits" of an urban education but whose psychological and cultural impact problems overlaid those educational aspects assumed to be beneficial. This conclusion has been reached independently by Kleinfeld (1974).

Considerations other than prior background or education enter the equation for academic success. For this reason other categories that suitably describe each student have been included in the data. The YR. STANDING section, has been included both because the information is easily obtainable and because the data can serve as a check to see if the SOS student body and their academically successful students follow the same yearly trend as the general UAF student body. At UAF and most other universities, the year standing of the student has much to say about their chance of becoming academically successful. A higher percentage of upper division students attain the 3.00 GPA than lower division students. In other words, the year standing becomes a more and more significant aspect of academic success. Most of the S75 data is not usable to determine whether or not this is the case with the SOS student body. The F74 data shows, however, that the tendency for SOS students to academically succeed, the longer they remain in college, matches the general tendency of the UAF student body. That this is so adds credibility to the tacit assumption that a given SOS student is representative.

The MAJ factor was included for reasons previously stated. We notice

from Table (1) that the significance is slight but it is noticed that, except for the union set, the significance increases from one semester to the other. The greatest change and greatest absolute significance is recorded for the  $> 2/4$  Indianid group of students. Moreover, the directionality shows that this group of students fell short of expectation. Declaring a major implies an increased level of academic advisement from counselors outside of SOS. For the  $> 2/4$  Indianid student, who would exhibit more of the difficulties associated with a student of a rural native background and education, this advisement may be detrimental. In keeping with this interpretation, we notice that within the  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid group of students, the MAJ category is less important than it is for the  $> 2/4$  Indianid set. The  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid student body contains fewer students with a rural native background or education. Hence, unenlightened academic advisement would be expected to affect them less.

Turning now to the implications attendant to the racial factors, we notice only a marginal significance. It is interesting to note that the  $\leq 2/4$  Indianid students exceeded expectation during both semesters while the  $> 2/4$  Indianid group fell below expectation. However, as can be noticed, the significance in the racial factors changes from one semester to the next. This would suggest that the racial factors are confounded with other factors. The directionality notwithstanding, the significance levels for this factor when compared with the significance levels of other factors indicate that while race may enter into the equation for academic success, other factors are potentially much more important.

#### Discussion and Conclusion

To summarize the results that have been obtained by analyzing the SOS student body data, it has been found that various factors enter the equation for academic success. The most significant of these factors was found to be related to whether or not the student had been displaced from his traditional cultural environment to receive his secondary education. It was found that if a student was so displaced, the supposed beneficent aspects of the displacement were in fact translated into a propensity for failure, insofar as achieving a high grade point average in college was concerned. On the other hand, if the student remained within his own cultural unit to receive his secondary education, this was translated into a propensity toward success. This, in spite of the fact that the urban integrated school is considered the superior educational environment when compared to the rural, often, nonintegrated school.

The next important term that entered the equation for academic success at the college level was found to be related to the students' early cultural environment. In particular, those raised in an urban setting were found always to exceed expectation whereas those raised in rural or traditional cultural environments, on the average, fell below expectation.

In the data analysis it was also found that the race of the student was of less importance than the student's cultural and educational background. For instance, correlations between the race of the student and whether or not that student became academically successful was found to be of marginal significance. On the other hand, if the student were raised in an urban setting, expectation was exceeded regardless of the racial type considered.

But, how might one translate this information into a meaningful educational process specified for the Alaskan minority student?

In the first place, it should be apparent that the delivery system for secondary education in rural Alaska needs to be overhauled. If the results of the data analysis reported herein are correct, it is obvious that the present delivery is detrimental to the average student. That is, the data suggests that it is better for a student to receive his education within the cultural unit in which he was raised. This is evidently true even though the rural secondary programs are not in general able to meet the same academic standards as the urban secondary programs. Hence, the delivery system should be changed so as to allow more students to receive their education, in total, within the cultural unit in which they are raised.

However, this is a long range goal and does nothing for those students who have been displaced and who are now displaced in deference to their secondary education. To develop viable educational programs for this group of students, one must consider what the net educational effect must have been in the displacement of these students.

From a simplistic point of view, we may say that students displaced from their traditional culture to receive their secondary education simply did not "learn" at the rate expected. More precisely, we may say that such a student did not incorporate the consequential cognitive tools, usually provided by the formal education process, into a modified culture grammar that would allow them to compete successfully in an urban professional or collegiate setting.

Moreover, those students who were raised and also educated within their traditional native environment may be considered in somewhat the same manner. Albeit to a far lower degree, these students also have not incorporated the necessary cognitive components within their operational culture grammar that will allow them to compete successfully in an urban academic or professional environment.

Any educational process specified with respect to these students should, therefore, contain the specific objective of reinforcing those cognitive areas that have here been postulated as weak. In other words, the educational process should, among other things, stress the development of the cognitive tools that are known to be important in the academic endeavor. For instance, English courses could, among other things, stress encoding and decoding so as to increase general articulation skills.

Perhaps one of the more valuable courses that may be offered the group of students under consideration here is a course concerned with the conceptual development of the scientific method. The reason for a science course being singularly important is because basic introductory science deals with very narrowly defined conceptual processes. There is very little subjective area for a student to deal with in solving a problem in the basic sciences.

Since science and math is nothing more than highly specialized logic, and hence, abstract thought, the narrow conceptual format may be utilized in a very advantageous way. As an example, a student could be asked to delineate verbally what one is actually doing when one solves a simple math problem. The narrow conceptual format of the problem does not allow the student to stray very far from the cognitive process being described. Moreover, in asking the student such a question, one would be giving the student

valuable practice in how to articulate her/his own thoughts. This ability has obvious value regardless of whether the student continues on in college or not.

Again using the narrow conceptual format of science to advantage, practice in encoding complicated verbal information is also easily given the student of a science-course. For instance, the teacher can give the student an equation to solve, write down the solution verbally and then ask the student to solve the equation. The syntax and lexicon of the verbal solution could be varied, thus giving the student practice in encoding broad areas of articulated information.

Science has been a widely neglected area of education in most rural school systems of Alaska. This is evident when one considers the remarkably poor performance, recorded for the afore mentioned questionnaires which were passed out to some 200 SOS students over a period of seven semesters. This apparent neglect of science education is indeed unfortunate for it has been shown that science can be an extremely valuable tool in facilitating cognitive mobility in exactly those areas that are known to be consequential to the formal education process itself. Further, sending students into a technological society, many times to participate in a collegiate or professional enterprise, only increases the probability that those students will fail in their particular endeavor.

In view of this, the authors of this paper strongly advise the development of rural educational programs that include science education as an important component. It is felt that in so doing the future practical, professional, and educational viability of the rurally educated person will be considerably enhanced.

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## PART V

# LANGUAGE ISSUES

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*Languages bear within them the biases of their originators—their attitudes and values. So that if young people grow up speaking and learning in the language of their ancestors, then certain central components of their cultural heritage are absorbed by them automatically. If, on the other hand, a language emanating from some other culture becomes the primary language of young people, then their most important link with their own cultural past is broken, their cultural identity begins to weaken, and ultimately, perhaps, the attitudes and values cherished for many generations by their own people are supplanted by those of the alien culture by which the language was imposed.*

—Bill Vaudrin

Language has been a central issue in rural Alaskan education programs for many years, but has just recently emerged as a focus for local influence and involvement in educational programs and as a means for revitalizing cultural identity. Bilingual education has evolved into a major political movement which has affected nearly all rural, as well as some urban schools in the state. Though the momentum for bilingual education has been sustained largely through political processes, a growing awareness and acceptance of the educational and cultural significance of indigenous language in the school has led to the development of numerous Native language programs with a variety of purposes and rationales. The following articles address the issues from different perspectives, but all point to a clearer understanding of the role of language and an increased use of indigenous languages, both directly and indirectly, in the educational process.

## BILINGUAL PROGRAMS: A NATIVE POINT OF VIEW

by

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Education is something that a person acquires that nobody takes away from him. What is education? Is learning education? If learning is education, then learning in any language and culture must be education. Some Native Alaskans used to think that education was only being able to speak the English language. They did not realize that what they had learned to do in their language and culture was education. The children are taught how to carve, to sew, to hunt, to determine the weather, to learn the respectful ways of life and many, many more things. A lot of these things are learned in the classroom by city children. We all happen to have come from some sort of racial background. Our first education in essential living was learned through our immediate language and culture. We do not notice this until we see it in another culture. Language and culture goes very closely together.

Many of us had narrowed our education on English education only. Unfortunately focusing our education on only English has made some of us drift away from our original background.

We are not overlooking English education. It is a must for us, especially living in this widely English-speaking country. It opens many doors to deeper knowledge, but it should not let us stray away from our original culture. We can develop from where we are, without changing our image.

Bilingual education has been misinterpreted and misunderstood by many people. As soon as the word "Bilingual" is heard, it is thought of as teaching in a Native tongue only. We forget the real meaning of it, which is really using two different languages. I personally hope that most of us interpret bilingual education as studies in two cultures and their respective languages.

Bilingual programs vary in Alaskan communities. For those who speak their Native tongue, the Native tongue is used as a first language in instructing children in the classrooms when they first start school, because many of these children know very little or no English at all. For the communities whose language is English or both English and Native, the Native language is taught as a second language. The concept of bilingual education for those who are from Native speaking communities is teaching that in a Native tongue is to teach them in the language they know and understand. But that is not all. It is also to carry on the language and culture that is important and original to them, to show them that they can be educated and still continue to live their own culture. For those who are mixed Native and English communities—Native language is taught as a second language so the younger generation can learn their original background and appreciate it. I have already seen the appreciation of learning and knowing the Native Alaskan culture by many children and the younger generation.

Since education has been based on only English, we have drifted away from using our own Native language, and using English language has made us slowly drift away from our own culture. We had been too busy to

realize all this. We should be grateful that reviving our language and reviving our culture are included in our educational system now before it completely fades away. For those of us who have a deep feeling about our language and culture, it means so much to us. It is not borrowed, it is something that is there, passed on from generation to generation. Do we want to get careless and let it all fade away? I would hate to see something that is meaningful and original fade away.

It is sad that some people do not realize the importance of our language and culture. Recently I was told that it did not matter whether the Native language and culture is preserved or not, and that the only importance of using Native language is a tool for the Native children to learn to speak better English. That was like telling me that it did not matter whether an Alaskan Native race survived or not. I did not forget that. It encouraged me to work harder toward studying and upgrading our own Native Alaskan teachings. Yes, it is helping children to understand and speak better English, but teaching in Alaskan Native is also to teach them to learn in their own respective Native language and culture.

The bilingual programs have helped in many ways. It is giving good results in teaching children in classrooms, especially in Native-speaking communities.

How is the bilingual education helping in the village schools? I come from a strictly Native-speaking community. When I go home, many things change for me—the language, the culture, food, behavior, and I feel good about it, because it is the original me. When I attended grade school, it was very difficult to understand what was being taught by English speaking instructors. We guessed a lot. When we were asked questions, we were afraid to respond in English for fear that our English was poor. We held back a lot, knowing our expressions were different than the white teacher. We were labeled retarded for not being responsive. Some of us were fortunate to have parents who cared about our education. I had a lot of help from my father who taught and explained school work and studies to me in Yupik. I did not understand half of the lessons in school. When my father explained in Eskimo what I did not understand, then I began to learn. I remember this and it made me feel good to learn.

When teaching an Alaskan Native language it has to be prepared and taught in the Native culture, or else it loses its taste when it is taught from an English teaching point of view. These are two different cultures. One has to have lived and experienced a culture in order to fully understand it. Speaking techniques differ when switching from one culture to another. The manner of speech has to be entirely from the particular view point of the culture and language that is being used. That is why the technique in Native language teachings need to be prepared by the Native instructor instead of being prepared from only the English point of view. When teaching in the Alaskan Native culture, the curriculum should be prepared to meet the needs of the children. The teaching should begin with the immediate surroundings. It is important that children begin to learn from their immediate environment and to gradually expand to wider areas as they become aware of distant events in life.

Today with bilingual program included in our schools, I have seen a tremendous change in the children's attitude toward school and towards their white teachers. I can speak for St. Lawrence Island schools because I am more

familiar with the schools there. First of all when the children first go to school their teachers are Eskimo teachers who teach them in Yupik the concept of English learning. They are responsive to what is being taught because they are being taught in the language and manner they know. They feel accepted and appreciated as students and because they are not criticized for what they are and how they expressed themselves. They are not afraid to express themselves to their English teacher because they readily feel accepted from their Native teacher. Good motivation to learn has shown itself in these students because they are understanding what is being taught to them and the way in which they express themselves in their own culture are accepted. School is fun for them now. This is showing them a greater understanding in their own culture as well as white culture.

Do we have to change our image to be accepted by larger societies? Sometimes we feel we have to, because we feel out of place and not belonging to the accepted culture. I have heard Native people saying they hesitate to express themselves in larger communities because they feel they are not accepted the way they are. Then they try to change their identity in order to be accepted. They feel bad for not being able to meet the culture of a city. We are only hurting ourselves when we try to change our identity and if we feel we don't meet the standards. We must help our children to appreciate their heritage and feel comfortable about expressing it. I have often heard the expression by some village people asking why all of a sudden we are trying to set them back to the old way of living. We are not trying to set them back. The idea for many of us who are concerned is, that Native Alaskans don't have to change their identity to be educated in the whiteman's world. You can stay just what you are and still become a professional in any field. I would like to mention that it should be emphasized, especially to the village children that they should act just the way they are. The feeling of being unable to measure up to a white culture in cities is really a set-back to the education of students from rural areas. They do not have to meet the standards of city life to be educated.

Teaching in the Native language in Native speaking villages is working because the children feel comfortable being taught in the manner they know. It is also expressed that it is hoped that Native instructions would no longer be needed in Native-speaking communities because teaching in English only is anticipated in the future. This kind of problem arises from misunderstanding of what we Natives want in our schools. Although we do not have any authority, we are concerned about our children's education and future. We have a right to express our feelings. I am encouraged to see more and more Alaskan Natives getting interested in Native language teaching as well as English teaching. Not everybody speaks two languages.

Bilingual education is important to us because it will give us a broader knowledge and understanding of one another. It is a troubled world already, we must work together and prepare a better future for our children so that they may feel comfortable just the way they are and accept each other. God made us what we are—why should we change to something we are not. We have an origin—we have a given talent, let us put that talent to work and progress from there—as a Native.

I feel sad with the Alaskan Native high school and college students who come to our University language office and express that they have no knowledge of their language and background. They are beginning to be aware of

the importance of their culture and want to learn about it. It is a slow movement and we will have some more differences about the program but I don't feel discouraged. To see these young people becoming interested in learning their language and culture is the beginning of reviving the original Alaskan culture. Because if we don't do anything about it, another culture will take over and our Alaskan Native language and culture will only be history.

# DEFINITIONS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN ALASKA

by

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(Ed. note: Presented at the 34th Annual Meeting, Society for Applied Anthropology, Amsterdam, March, 1975.)

Definitions are not always clear, nor is it always clear just why definitions are necessary. The paradox of definitions lies in their being simultaneously necessary and useless. A sandwich may be defined as "two adjacent slices of bread separated by a comestible", but try to order one by its definition and you may get hungry, if not assaulted. We communicate by words not by their definitions but without definitions, words would be arbitrary, and hence, useless.

One of the joys of our lifetime has been the passing parade of new technical terms claiming to add efficiency, precision, and clarity to an otherwise complex existence. While no field is immune to neologisms, the practitioner in any field has the responsibility of making its definitions useful. By useful, I mean precise and comprehensive.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the usefulness of various attempts to define "bilingual education" with particular emphasis placed on their meaningfulness for multiple audiences; consumers as well as educational and political practitioners in Alaska's multilingual environment.

Before proceeding to the definitions and their evaluation, let me first give you some background about the nature and extent of bilingualism in Alaska. This background will also describe the various conditions under which the term "bilingual education" is currently being used, appropriately or not.

## Bilingualism in Alaska

First, let me describe some general patterns of bilingualism in rural Alaska. Urban Alaska, though confronted with bilingualism represents sociolinguistic patterns beyond the scope of the present paper. A straight forward definition of bilingualism is given by Weinreich as "the practice of alternately using two languages . . ." the person involved being called bilingual (Weinreich, 1954). But beyond the simple and straight forward there lies considerable complexity. Language use for any particular person may also involve the relative levels of competence in understanding languages heard (receptive skills), as well as the ability to produce languages (expressive skills) for communicating. Expressive skills may be further elaborated as speaking and writing skills; and receptive skills may also include reading in addition to listening skills.

In the case of bilingualism these definitional refinements are important because they require a closer look at the individual, since there are obviously many ways a person can practice the use of two (or more) languages. There is also educational importance insofar as the business of education is to develop proficiency. If there is more than one way of being proficient, then there are a like number of jobs to which educators must attend.

Linguists vary in the amount of proficiency a person must show before he can be called bilingual. On one end of the spectrum, Bloomfield (1933), claims equal and native-like proficiency must be shown before one may be called bilingual, whereas Diebold (1968), at the other end, suggests only passive (receptive) ability need be shown in a second language to qualify.

For Alaska, a useful definition of bilingualism should allow us to describe meaningfully as many bilingual persons and bilingual contexts as possible. Therefore, for purposes of practical application, it is probably the wisest course to accept the least conservative definition (Diebold's) as the most useful because it allows for the most sensitive system possible for describing bilingualism in Alaska.

Krauss (1973) has employed a system for describing Alaskan communities according to their level of native language use, not inconsistent with the above definition requirements. The system classes each native community as one of three possible types:

- Type A. Monolingual Native: (fluent native-language speakers of all ages, including all or many children),
- Type B. Bilingual: (few or no speakers under 10 years of age),
- Type C. Monolingual English: (few or no speakers under 30 years of age).

A number of points should be made about the descriptive system to make clearer its educational importance. First, each type of community is "bilingual," even though two, types A and C, are listed as "monolingual." The key factor is language contact. Type A communities are in the constant position of contact with the national language, largely for purpose of commerce and other communication with the outside. Type C communities are generally in a state of transitional change away from a native language, the degree of transition varying from place to place. Table 1 shows the numbers of Alaskan communities of each type, by general language group.

#### Definitions of Bilingual Education

Given some understanding of the dimensions of bilingualism as a concept, and a cursory look at its distribution among Alaska's language groups, let us turn to definitions of bilingual education.

Table 1  
Numbers of Alaskan Native  
Communities by Language Group and Language Use

Language Use <sup>a</sup>	Language Group					Total
	Eskimo-Aleut	Athapaskan-Eyak	Tsimshian	Haida	Tlingit	
Type A	31	5	0	0	0	36
Type B	40	7	0	0	0	47
Type C	54	39	1	2	13	109
Total	125	51	1	2	13	192

- a: A - All people speak the native language including children.
- B - Some children speak the native language.
- C - No children speak the native language.

In the **Draft Guidelines** for preparing program proposals under Title VII—Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1967 amendment), the following definition appears:

Bilingual education is instruction in two languages and the use of those two languages as mediums of instruction for any part or all of the school curriculum. Study of the history and culture associated with the student's mother tongue is considered an integral part of bilingual education (1967, p. 1).

Similarly, Gaarder (1967) defined the **bilingual school** as one "which uses, concurrently, two languages as mediums of instruction in any portion of the curriculum." He goes on to say, "teaching of a vernacular solely as a bridge to another, the official language, is not bilingual education . . . nor is ordinary foreign language teaching."

The National Education Association's Task Force on Bilingual-Multicultural Education (1974) defined bilingual education as "a process which uses a pupil's primary language as the principal medium of instruction while teaching the language of the predominant culture in a well-organized program encompassing a multicultural curriculum."

The fourth definition comes from the **Education Amendments of 1974**, enacted into law as U.S. Public Law 93-380 on August 21, 1974. It says, in part:

The term 'program of bilingual education' means a program of instruction designed for children of limited English-speaking ability in elementary or secondary schools, in which, with respect to the years of study to which such program is applicable—

1. there is instruction given in, a study of, English and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system, the native language of the children of limited English-speaking ability, and such instruction is given with appreciation for the cultural heritage of such children, and, with respect to elementary school instruction, such instruction shall, to the extent necessary, be in all courses or subjects of study which will allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system.

Implied in the first two definitions, and explicitly stated in the last two is the requirement that the child possess a primary native, or home language other than English, in order to be a legitimate target for bilingual education.

These definitions make clear the importance of the language as a **medium** of instruction not just as subject matter, in order to qualify as bilingual schooling. Stressing the point, Anderson and Boyer (1969) take care to note that **English as a Second Language (ESL)** programs, and cultural awareness programs are often mislabeled **bilingual education**. They made a needed point that "such indiscriminate use of the term renders it meaningless."

There are distinctions worth maintaining among types of bilingual programs; all of which may qualify under the above definition. Mackey (1969), addressed this problem by conceptualizing a typology of bilingual education which accounts for ten basic curriculum patterns for five types of learners. Beginning with the latter, Mackey sees the home and school

language congruence as a key to typing bilingual education situations. The five types are:

1. Unilingual home: where the home language is the school language.
2. Unilingual home: where the home language is not the school language.
3. Bilingual home: both home languages include one school language.
4. Bilingual home: both home languages exclude school languages.
5. Bilingual home: both home languages include both school languages.

The ten curriculum patterns Mackey identifies vary according to five factors:

1. The **medium of instruction** may be one language, two languages, or more; in other words, the school may have a single medium or a dual medium curriculum;
2. The **development** pattern may be to maintain two or more languages, or to transfer from one medium of instruction to another;
3. The **distribution** of the languages may be to present different or equal amounts during the day;
4. The **direction** may be toward assimilation into a dominant culture, toward acculturation, or toward reintegration into a resurgent one, or it may be neither, but simply the maintenance of the languages at an equal level;
5. Finally, the **change** from one medium to another may be complete or gradual.

It should be pointed out that Mackey's typology is not consistent with the earlier definition in that two languages need not be present as mediums of instruction in order to be classified. The only requirement is for a bilingual context to exist either in the school, or in the interaction between the school and the learner's home, his community, or his country. By so doing, Mackey created a comprehensive scheme capable of describing virtually all cases where bilingual schooling in some form may be relevant.

Unfortunately, while the above definitions and Mackey's typology account for all of the important forms a language-sensitive education program can take, none are designed to account for the social or political aspects of the situations in which the programs exist. Describing the educational intentions of program planners gives only a portion of the picture, leaving the practitioner unable to evaluate the appropriateness of the educational plan for its social context.

Recent works by Spolsky (1974), and Erickson (1974) draw attention to the social context of bilingual education by adding non-school factors to existing descriptive models. Erickson stresses the "political" factors entering the descriptive system, suggesting the "politics of speaking" in a community are important to evaluating the appropriateness of a particular education approach. To translate an example given in Erickson's account into the present discussion of descriptive systems, a program may be intended to have the effect of language maintenance, but without accounting for the

social context establishing the program, it could literally succeed by failing or fail by succeeding. As Erickson states:

By analyzing the actual "politics of speaking" in a program, researchers could determine how much the formal curriculum and social organization of the program was fostering first language maintenance. In addition, and perhaps even more importantly, this approach to evaluation could determine whether or not the informal or "hidden" curriculum and social organization of the program was inadvertently discouraging students from using their first language, despite the best intentions of the staff, parents, and the students themselves.

Spolsky sought to develop a formal model to account for the total context of bilingual programming. The model is based on a hexagon, each side of which represents a set of important factors influencing the educational program. The factors Spolsky considers important are labeled psychological, sociological, economic, political, religio-cultural, and linguistic. While each set has special significance for influencing the nature of an educational program, not all factors are equally important for all programs, and may even assume differential importance at different phases in the life of a single program.

The details of the descriptive systems offered by Spolsky and Erickson are too involved for the short introduction given here, and you are advised to pursue the source documents for further elaboration. The main reason for their being discussed is to give you some idea as to the complexity of the situations in which bilingual programs find themselves.

#### Limitations of the Definitions

Definitions of complex phenomena often risk having key limitations. Legend has it, for example, that one day Plato set the academy to defining man. After a full day's dialogue they settled tentatively on the definition "man is a featherless biped." The following day Diogenes appeared at the Academy with a plucked chicken, and stated, "Plato, here is your man." Plato sensed the problem lay in the overinclusiveness of the first attempt and so added the discriminating feature, "with broad nails." Man then was "a featherless biped with broad nails," a slight improvement.

The central limitation of all widely used definitions of bilingual education lies in their not properly accounting for cases where the children possess the residual effects of an indigenous language but are not able to speak it. In such cases the children may be every bit as estranged from school's standard English curriculum as children possessing a minority language. To their additional disadvantage, however, they have no alternative language to which the school can turn to provide a meaningful educational experience. Furthermore, the school may tend to treat the children as if language were no factor since, if the children do not speak another language, the school is free to use standard English.

Native communities where the native language traditional to the area has been replaced by a nonstandard dialect of English are not rare in Alaska. Table 1 showed the number of communities within each of Alaska's language groups at general levels of native language strength. The overall percentage in Alaska of type C communities (where no children speak the native

language) is about 57 per cent. If the number of communities where only some of the children speak the native language is added to that figure it rises to 81 per cent!

If we assume the vast majority of these communities to be in a state of linguistic and cultural transition, it follows that the children carry into their school years, residual effects, linguistic as well as cultural, capable of exercising profound influence on their ability and desire to function in a school environment comprising standard English consistently tangential to their life experiences.

With few exceptions (e.g., Kari and Spolsky, 1973), little is known about the sociolinguistic forces governing this transitional situation, making the job of creating a culturally and linguistically appropriate curriculum doubly difficult. As noted by Kari and Spolsky:

With a few distinguished exceptions, the student of an Amerindian language has paid little attention to the sociolinguistic situation of his informants, except to remark how few speakers there are or how poorly they remember the language. From their studies, one can learn incidentally about the language loss and destruction, but seldom are there indications of the process itself, of what other languages are adopted, or of the nature of bilingualism. Only very recently, with the impetus of interest on the one hand in the ethnography of speech and on the other in bilingual education has there been a smattering of studies focusing on Amerindian bilingualism (p. 1).

Since nearly all of Alaska's rural communities can be shown to be bilingual in some sense, it follows that, given the necessary sociolinguistic research, an appropriate program could be devised in which the native language occupies a significant role in the curriculum. Each community has different needs and desires where the native language is at issue. Thus, for Alaska, a useful definition of bilingual education must be flexible enough to meet the specific needs of each community. Two things must be considered: the bilingual situation in a particular community, and the kind of language program appropriate to that situation.

Table 2 lists the number of schools operated by the Alaska State Operated School System (ASOSS) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) by language situation and whether some form of bilingual programming currently is in operation, or expected to be in the near future. As can be seen, a sizeable proportion of situations still remain with unmet bilingual programming needs. Also, the proportion of current unmet needs in the type C communities where, understandably, the greatest potential controversy exists on the role of native languages in the curriculum. Clearly, in such cases, the native language would have to undergo extensive community-wide revival of a magnitude capable of sustaining it as an instructional medium. On the other hand teaching the native language as a second language (NSL) in such cases might well be considered an integral part of that aspect of the curriculum devoted to enriching the child's sense of cultural roots.

Definitions that rule "ordinary foreign language teaching" out as bilingual education do so because it is taught as a subject matter and not used as a medium of instruction. While it would follow, then, that NSL programs would suffer the same exclusion logically, NSL is not inconsistent

Table 2  
Numbers of ASOSS and BIA Alaskan Schools by  
1974 language situation and bilingual program status

Agency	Language situation <sup>a</sup>							
	A		B		C			
	Tot.	No. with Bil. Program <sup>b</sup>	Tot.	No. with Bil. Program	Tot.	No. with Bil. Program	Tot.	No. with Bil. Program
ASOSS	15	10	17	7	66	35	98	52
BIA	25	10	15	1	12	0	52	11
Total <sup>c</sup>	40	20	32	8	78	35	150	63

a. Source: Krauss, Alaska Native Language Center Report, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1973.

b. Source: Personal communications with Kathy Perrin, ANEB; Frank Berry, JOM; Baxter Wood, ASOSS; and cross reference of various agency directories.

c. Information on Alaska independent school districts was unavailable at the time of this report.

with the probable intent of all definitions of bilingual education.

Once again, quoting Gaarder (1967), the following is a main reason listed for using a minority community language in the school curriculum: to avoid the alienation from family and **linguistic community** that is commonly the price of rejection of one's mother tongue and of complete assimilation into the dominant linguistic group (emphasis added).

These purposes are well served if indigenous language teaching is included even where it no longer is used in the home, because in the home and in the child there may still reside a cultural, historical, and familiar connection with that language and its associated culture. Such connections are organic whereas the Alaska native child's potential connection to French, German, or Spanish are not. His native language, even though disused, is part of his emotional and cognitive structure in a way no other language, perhaps save English, could ever be.

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## TEACHING NATIVE LANGUAGE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

by

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(Ed. note: Adapted from a thesis presented to the University of Alaska by V.A. Wilson, August 31, 1976.)

Natives in Alaska want to revive and maintain their languages. Members of each community now realize that extinction of their language will be sure and swift if their children do not learn it. Therefore, they have turned to the schools, which have been a powerful force in suppressing Native language, to reverse the process and save the language by teaching it to the children, many of whom have not learned it at home.

Is it wise to expect so much from schools when their record for teaching competence in second—i.e., foreign—languages is abysmally poor? Do people realize that children can really learn Native language only by using it at home and in the community? Dependence on a school program to teach the children Native language if adults in the community continue habits of speaking only English, is sure to hasten the extinction of the language. It is essential, then, that people concerned with the survival of the language ask how, where, and by whom can Native language be taught. The best answer is simply that home, school, and community all teach by the only sure method for learning any language, using it in all facets of communication. In many communities, however, this method has become an impossibility as a generation has already grown to adulthood without command of their Native language. In other communities, it would be a process of extreme frustration for adults and children alike to begin to try to communicate in a language which the children do not understand. Most speakers of a language can only use it, not teach it or even understand how it works. The problem, then, if communities do want to use the language, is who should teach it to the non-speakers and how.

All Native speakers should be teachers of the language, in the home, in the community, and in the school; but this means that they need to learn how to teach it as a second language. If the community truly wants to maintain a viable language in active use, then it must assume the responsibility for learning how to teach it. No longer can language workshops be only for bi-lingual teachers; they must be for all speakers in the community. Everybody will learn to read and write stories of their experiences, memories, ideas, and feelings. And, most important, everyone will learn some way to teach their language as a second language.

People need a way to teach that is easy to learn and seems fairly natural to use. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate an active method for teaching a second language through real communication and to suggest procedures for developing effective lessons and teaching materials. The activities suggested are most effective in groups, however the terms "teacher" and "class" should not suggest limiting the use of these techniques to the school. A class can be any group of children, teenagers, or adults; and the teacher is any Native speaker who is willing to undertake the discipline of leading the group. Classes may be held in school, homes, or the community center.

## An Active Method for Teaching Real Communication in a Second Language

(All material printed in *italics* is to be expressed in the Native language.)

To be effective, second language teaching should involve teacher, students, and Native language speakers physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially in learning experiences that will make them feel good about themselves; each other, the language being learned, their capacity for learning, and the value of communication. A good first lesson is:

*I'm Ginny. You are \_\_\_\_\_.*

The teacher, or leader, sits in a small circle of students and gets them to identify themselves and each other. Then the teacher points to each one, asking:

*Who is this?*

After this lesson it is not difficult to proceed with further identification:

*I'm a woman. This is a man. Are you a man or a woman?*

*I'm a teacher. Are you a teacher or a student?*

*Are you Eskimo or Indian?*

Soon it should be possible to go around the circle with everyone identifying themselves in various roles, the teacher beginning:

*I'm Ginny. I'm a woman. I'm a teacher.*

Afterwards each participant recalls what someone else has said:

*You are \_\_\_\_\_ You are \_\_\_\_\_*

Of course there are a number of possible ways to identify yourself, such as *My name is \_\_\_\_\_*, or *I'm called \_\_\_\_\_*. Beginning with *I'm \_\_\_\_\_*, however, enables a teacher to expand the use of subject pronoun and linking verb to add vocabulary that has real meaning for the participants so that from the first lesson they are communicating, not just mimicking or naming things.

Lessons progress in a sequence of increasingly complex grammar objectives. Each lesson typically includes: (1) teaching activities for presenting a new grammar concept; (2) talking activities introducing new vocabulary; (3) making books to illustrate open-ended, emotionally involving questions; and (4) social activities to stimulate use of the language in the community.

### Teaching Activities

Teaching activities physically involve students with actions, objects, and people at the same time they are learning the words describing them. These activities are brief, only continuing long enough for students to be able to say what the teacher intends for them to learn and to understand what they mean when they say it.

### Talking Activities

These activities, such as interviews or talking about pictures, get students mentally involved, associating the language with mental images of actions, people, and things. There is considerable mental involvement in all the activities of this method - the active thinking necessary to generalize the use of the language to create new utterances or use familiar ones in new situations.

### Activity of Making Books

The open-ended questions add a dimension of emotional involvement as they deal with what people like to do, what is important to them. Answering open-ended questions requires a vocabulary which teachers cannot anticipate. Therefore, it is suggested that students make quick drawings to illustrate their answers. This activity ends with a conversation circle in which all participants, including the teacher, share their answers to the question, illustrating their meaning with the pictures they have drawn.

### Social Activities

Social involvement with Native-speaking members of the community is sought by asking students to find out answers to a variety of questions. Such assignments are usually directed toward a student's parents or grandparents. Since some students may not have Native-speaking families, it would be of great value for the teacher to help such students "adopt" Native-speaking grandparents. Daily activities requiring active use of the language in the community are vital to the success of the teaching program and to the very survival of languages in danger of dying out of use. Planning such activities and having them reported in the class are of utmost importance.

### Choice of Language

The lesson modeled here is printed in a combination of roman type and italics for the purpose of discriminating between the language that students will learn to use in the lesson and other teacher-talk—directions, commands, conversation—that students may understand only in a very general way. Everything written in italics in the model lesson is instructional material—to be expressed in simple, direct Native language which teachers will expect their students to learn to understand and use rather well. Teachers' directions to students should also be in the Native language but they will vary according to the students' previous experience with the language. Teachers can experiment with making themselves understood with gestures, pictures, and demonstrations. They should be very careful to make students feel comfortable and secure in understanding—at liberty to say "I don't understand."

## A MODEL LESSON

### OBJECTIVES

**Behavioral objective:** Students describe physical activities; respond to commands.

**Grammar objective:** Students use:

*"I'm, you're, he's/she's \_\_\_\_\_ing"*

Construction *like to* . . .

### TEACHING

Introduce the vocabulary and the verb conjugations by demonstrating a physical activity, saying what you are doing, and then telling someone to do it. Students can recognize commands by your gestures.

*I'm walking. (Student A), walk!*

*I'm running. (Student B), run!*

*I'm jumping. (Student C), jump!*

*I'm crawling (Student D), crawl!*

While the students continue the various activities, ask:

*Who's walking?*

*Who's running?*

*Who's jumping?*

*Who's crawling?*

*What is (Student A) doing?*

*(Student A), what are you doing?*

Continue with all students. Change persons doing activities and give everyone the opportunity to act and talk. Seat students in circle with activities around the outside of the circle. If the class is large, make two circles, one inside the other. Have the outer circle do the activities and the inner circle talk; then reverse positions.

#### TALKING

With teacher and students sitting together in a circle, ask some questions about what students like to do. New vocabulary can be explained by gestures, demonstrations, or pictures. Encourage the students to ask each other and you.

*Do you like to walk or do you like to crawl?*

*Do you like to run or do you like to jump?*

Continue with other activities, indicating the action by pantomime.

#### MAKING A BOOK

In a conversation circle, ask the open-ended question:

*What do you like to do?*

Since the students will not know the words to describe the activities they like, let them draw pictures. Give each student paper and drawing materials and have them draw pictures of what they like to do. While they are drawing, walk around looking at the pictures and asking:

*What do you like to do? Ah, you like to (name of activity).*

*Do you like to...?*

Let the student answer and then write under the picture:

*I like to (name of activity).*

When the pictures are finished, form the circle and ask the question, letting all the students show their pictures and answer. Then have the students recall all the answers:

*(Student's name), you like to (name of activity).*

The teacher participates also, with a picture and an answer. When the activity is finished, collect all the pictures and fasten them together with a cover, making a book for the library shelf.

The emphasis is on the personal use of the language—being emotionally involved with the significance of words and structures. Therefore, the class environment is most helpful if there is a comfortable atmosphere of acceptance and a willingness to experiment.

#### TALKING AT HOME

Have students ask five people in the community what they like to do. The next day, in a conversation circle, get students to report what each person they talked to likes to do. Afterwards each student recalls what another student said.

### Development of New Lessons

Native speakers can learn to create new lessons and audio-visual materials; however, they probably need the help of a linguist to discover what are the basic grammar concepts of their language. They need to think about how they ask and answer such questions as:

*Who is this?*

*What is this?*

*What is \_\_\_ doing? What did \_\_\_ do? What is \_\_\_ going to do?*

*Who is doing it? (Singular, dual, plural)*

*Who is he/ (are they) doing it to? (Singular, dual, plural)*

*How? When? Where? Why?*

They need to decide in what order to teach the grammar concepts and what vocabulary to use, taking into consideration what is necessary to beginning conversation and the degree of difficulty for the learner. The greatest difficulties teachers face are limiting their own language to what their students can understand and limiting their teaching to one grammar concept at a time. This can best be done by working out a detailed lesson plan for each day.

New lessons can be patterned after the model by following these steps:

1. Determine the specific grammar objective—that is, the prefix, verb, stem, postbase, verb ending, noun case, etc.—that students need to learn.
2. Determine the behavior objective for the kind of language situation to be mastered.
3. Think of specific physical actions that will demonstrate the meaning of the word or concept and give students the opportunity to use it over and over again with questions and answers for each of the three persons I, you, he/she.

#### Example 1

The teacher sits with a few students in a circle and hands them small tools.

Mike: *I gave you the screwdriver, please.*

*Who gave me the screwdriver?*

Mike: *ask me for the wrench.*

*Did I give Mike the wrench?*

Mike: *did I give you the wrench?*

Student:

*Mike gave it to you.*

*Give me the wrench, please.*

*Yes, you gave it to him.*

*Yes, you gave it to me.*

4. Plan interviews, games, or other talking activities that will involve students with each other using the new vocabulary and grammar concepts. Talking activities develop mental involvement. They broaden the scope of the lesson from what is simply available in the immediate surroundings to things that may be of more interest to students or more appropriate to Native culture. Audio-visual materials—dialogs or stories with illustrations—are very effective. These are recorded and used with questions and answers that help students to discern the various components of sentences and words.

#### Example 2

Project a picture of a young Eskimo working on

his snow machine, and play the tape of language master: *Roger's working on his Sno-go.*

Teacher:	Recording:	Student:
<i>Who's this?</i>	<i>Roger's working on his Sno-go.</i>	<i>It's Roger.</i>
<i>What's this?</i>	<i>Roger's working on his Sno-go.</i>	<i>It's a Sno-go.</i>
<i>Whose Sno-go is it?</i>	<i>Roger's working on his Sno-go.</i>	<i>It's Roger's.</i>
<i>Is it Roger's Sno-go?</i>	<i>Roger's working on his Sno-go.</i>	<i>Yes, it's his Sno-go.</i>
<i>What's Roger doing?</i>		<i>He's working on his Sno-go.</i>
<i>Who's working on his Sno-go?</i>		<i>Roger's working on his Sno-go.</i>

5. Think of an open-ended question that will require the use of the grammar concept just learned—a question that will be a good theme for making a book. Personal questions, such as those in the following example, get students emotionally involved.

**Example 3**

*What do you like to do?*  
*What do you have that makes you feel good?*  
*Where do you like to be?*  
*What makes you happy? Sad?*  
*What do you do very well?*  
*What bothers you or makes you angry?*

*When did you learn to... (a number of accomplishments)?*  
*When did you first... (activities)?*  
*What have you done that made you feel good? When did you do it?*  
*What has someone done for you that made you feel good?*  
*What have you done for someone that made them feel good?*

*What does someone tell you to do? Who says it, and how does it make you feel?*  
*What did someone used to tell you to do?*

*What are you going to do tomorrow? What would you like to do tomorrow?*  
*What are you going to do next summer? What would you do if you could?*

6. Make up grammar-practice questions to use with books that students make.

**Example 4**

From the student-made book *What Do You Like to Do?* the teacher reads:

*I like to fish.*

Teacher:

*Who is this?*

*What is A doing?*

*In the picture, is A fishing?*

*Is A fishing now?*

B, ask A if he is fishing.

C, ask A if he likes to fish.

*Does A like to fish?*

D, ask A what he likes to do.

These questions and answers make good worksheets if they are written out, leaving words or parts of words blank for students to fill in, as in the following example.

**Example 5**

*Mary likes to fish.*

Who is this?  
 What is Mary doing?  
 Is she fishing?  
 \_\_\_ Mary fishing?

Mary, are you \_\_\_?  
 Mary, what \_\_\_ you doing?  
 Do you like to fish?  
 Mary, what \_\_\_ like to do?  
 Does Mary like \_\_\_ fish?  
 Who likes to \_\_\_?

*Sam likes to dance.*

Who is this?  
 What is Sam \_\_\_?  
 Is \_\_\_ dancing?  
 Who's \_\_\_?

Sam, do you like to dance?  
 \_\_\_ Sam like \_\_\_?

This is \_\_\_.  
 She's fishing.  
 Yes, \_\_\_ fishing.  
 Yes, \_\_\_.  
 Yes, I'm \_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_  
 Yes, I \_\_\_ to fish.

She likes \_\_\_.  
 Mary \_\_\_ fish.

This is \_\_\_.  
 He's dancing.  
 Yes, \_\_\_.  
 Sam \_\_\_ dancing.

Worksheets are made for each class of verbs so that morphological or orthographic changes are observed by contrast, as in *fish: fishing; dance: dancing*. If worksheets are made for each grammatical structure, using such conversational topics as those in Example 3, then students will write their own grammar workbooks.

- Plan social activities that will motivate students to talk Native with people in the community and learn from them. Each question used to make a book can be used for homework activity as well. Have students ask five people in the community and return to class to report what they have learned. Invite people to come to the class for an interview or to talk about their interests. Exploit the resources of the community to make the use of the language as lively, interesting, and stimulating as possible.

**Conclusion**

These lessons will help Native language speakers teach language in a functional way and use it in simple, but real, communication with beginning students. A series of such lessons for learning Inupiat Eskimo have been written and used successfully at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. They have also been used in the Barrow schools and translated for use in the Nome-Beltz High School. Similar lessons are being incorporated into a curriculum for teaching Yupik as a second language from kindergarten through high school.

So far, however, there has been little training for teachers in developing and using such lessons and no wide-spread training of all the speakers of any community in teaching their language to non-speakers. The need is great; only if every speaker is teacher and every child is using the language will the survival of Native language be assured.

## IDENTITY SYMBOLS AND BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE: SOME FUNCTIONS OF SPEECH FORMS IN RURAL ALASKA

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Despite their homogenous appearance to an outsider, Alaska Native communities often contain a variety of sub-groups which are delineated in both overt and subtle ways. When a particular speech form is used to delineate these group differences, the speech cannot be fully understood apart from the context in which it occurs. Often this context cannot readily be discovered or understood by those who do not share the same cultural or social experiences as the participants. But understanding the nature of the differences is secondary in a process in which one must first of all realize that differences do, in fact, exist. Often, by careful observation, teachers and others will be able to pick up cues that will help them order their experiences and responses in a linguistically appropriate manner, even though much of the implicit meaning underlying the relationship may never be fully understood. Speech forms may constitute many kinds of unspoken assumptions that an outsider may never know, but if he realizes that certain speech forms and social acts may represent specific problems and functions in group identification he may be able to increase effective interaction with the participants of these groups.

Barth (1969) argues that close attention to, and analysis of, boundary maintenance systems and the social organization of group differences may yield valuable information regarding the nature of groups which interact with each other. The forms of interaction that reveal group boundaries may tell us more about the internal structures of those groups than studies dealing with the cultural traits of a specific group. He suggests a focus of investigation that deals with boundaries of groups and the systems that maintain them, rather than with the cultural context of the separate group or groups.

The following observations and comments concerning some functions which speech forms may serve in rural Alaskan communities represent an initial attempt to address a particular set of concerns about language function which have been a neglected part of the training for new teachers going into Alaskan bush schools. Such information may also be useful for any other persons who live or work in a social environment which is different from that with which they have previously been familiar.

In this paper, I will discuss ways in which forms of speech function to delineate boundaries between sub-groups in some Alaskan communities. I will look, in part, at the cultural (speech) and organizational requirements for certain systems of boundary maintenance between groups and between specific value spheres.

Language is often cited as an indispensable component in the maintenance of group identity and boundaries; this implies that language variations are necessary for generating specific groups and for maintaining their identities. Such variations are viewed as being the primary factor in generating group solidarity and in making manifest group boundaries. Recent socio-linguistic findings, however, indicate that "significant differences in speech

between various kinds of groups that are in frequent contact are not, in themselves, responsible for the establishment and maintenance of group boundaries. These differences rather reflect features of social organization through a process of social codification, and thus serve as idioms of identification with particular group values, whether sanctioned internally or forced upon the group by outsiders" (Blum 1969: 83).

In many situations, the relevant structure for communication of group boundaries is speech form rather than the language itself. DeVos (1975: 16) suggests that group identity can even be maintained by minor differences in linguistic patterns and by style of gesture.

The processes of group identity can be illustrated on a continuum starting with interaction to establish personal identity and extending to people interacting to make manifest a national identity. I would like to deal with a smaller continuum representing what I feel are the major components in group identity processes people experience in Rural Alaska. At one end of this continuum is the situation in which people of the same group go through the mechanics of establishing rules of identity. This often takes place in an intra-ethnic or intra-group context. Further along the continuum, another point which represents perhaps the halfway mark, is the situation in which different groups interact with each other in defining their boundaries. This could be referred to as inter-group interaction and basically deals with social identity rather than ethnic identity. At the other end of the continuum, I would describe the situation as being where people and groups are seen by a broader group—Rural Alaskans affiliated in some sense, usually in the sharing at some level of values. These three situations or contexts are obviously not mutually exclusive and indeed overlap in many ways, but they are representative of points on the continuum and can be used as a heuristic device to illustrate the point.

The three contexts thus can generally be described as follows:

1. Broadest context of the Rural Alaskan life style.
2. Inter-group affiliation within specific communities of the broader Rural Alaska context.
3. Intra-group affiliation, usually seen in the context of the ethnic identification processes.

What I will be concerned with here is the codification of speech forms and their use as idioms of identification and their function in delimiting inter and intra-group spheres within these contexts.

#### Rural Alaska Lifestyle as a Group

In Alaska, there are numerous Native groups, identified as Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut in the broadest sense. And among these groups there are many sub-groups differentiating themselves by language, culture or geographical location. Although each village is unique in its own right, the majority of Natives and others living in what is often referred to as "the bush," have similar experiences in terms of the physical, social and political environment, which cause them to see themselves as belonging to a special class of people. There is general feeling that sharing these experiences gives one an affiliation with the group. This "group," as one can imagine, has a rather amorphous nature, and boundary lines are highly flexible and fluid depending upon the specific situation in which the boundaries of this value sphere are identified. Whether the individual is accepted into the fold of his

or her group depends on many things, including the specific experiences and the ability to send out recognizable and accepted signals identifying oneself with group membership. These signals will be received and translated by the group; and the level of participation in the group activities will thus be determined. There is a limit to the level of participation, depending on the specific experiences of both the individual looking for recognition and the receiving group.

I would like to share an experience which I think demonstrates how identity signals are received and translated into admittance into specific group value spheres. This example illustrates how a specific speech form, a "village dialect" of English, was the overt signal which alerted an audience to my background and allowed me to share in certain experiences with that particular group. Working with the Alaska Federation of Natives, I had occasion to visit the villages of Gambell and Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island. On one of the first visits, I went in with a number of state and federal officials who also had business in these villages. In Savoonga, we met as a group with the Indian Reorganization Act Committee, school board, and other interested people. During a break of our all-too-familiar show and tell program, an Eskimo woman asked if I was part Eskimo or Indian and if I was from some village. There were no physical characteristics to make me stand out from the State and Federal people who were on the same program. I assured her that I was neither Eskimo nor Indian, but had spent considerable time in the Tlingit community of Kake. She replied she suspected as much because "you talk like us." Evidently during my presentation I had inadvertently slipped into a form of village dialect which she recognized. The use of this speech form identified me as having had some experience in a rural community, at least enough for me to have picked up some use of the village dialect. It implied much more, and after being asked more specific questions about my years at Kake, I was accepted as a member of the group, at least up to certain specified levels. Use of village dialect was an overt signal which allowed me admittance to the sharing of certain activities which were denied the other visitors, including invitations to visit homes for tea and meals and to share sleeping quarters rather than being bunked in the school. The use of village dialect contained overt signals with positive attributes allowing for inter-action in value spheres that would otherwise have been denied. This is **not** to suggest that outsiders consciously attempt to use village dialect as a means of gaining admittance to a village community; but only to illustrate my point regarding some functions which speech forms serve.

Although the above example is one which shows speech form as a positive attribute, there have been, and are, situations where such signals are clearly received and translated as a stigma. The following examples illustrate how village dialect can be translated as a negative signal which can result in classifying the dialect speaker to an inferior status.

In many situations, especially inter-group interaction, village dialect functions as a stigma, an overt sign or signal, usually negative in connotation, identifying a person as belonging to a certain category. Stigma is an attribute which distinguishes between **virtual** social identity and **actual** social identity of individuals or groups. Virtual social identity is the characterization of an individual based on what others feel a person should be. The characterization of an individual based on the person as he exists constitutes his actual social identity. If these characteristic attributes are negative, so that the person is

viewed as less than his virtual social identity, then these attributes may be classified as stigmas and constitute a special discrepancy between virtual and actual identities (Goffman 1969: 3). However, the stigma *per se* is not the discrediting factor so much as the relationship of those involved in the process of identifying the stigma.

One example of speech as stigma can be seen as reticence on the part of many Native people to discuss or communicate with members of the dominant culture, reflecting a feeling of inadequacy in their ability to express themselves properly, explicitly, and articulately. For many village people, the self-perceived inability to express themselves effectively in a standard or acceptable dialect of English will often cause them to remain silent, rather than to give themselves away as poor speakers.

In reality, however, village dialect can actually enhance a given communication, since certain social and cultural phenomena may be made more meaningful when communicated through a particular form of speech. For example, certain personal relationships have categorical values that are best expressed within a particular form of speech, one of which may be village dialect. Emphasis on particular phenomena through specific speech forms may make manifest a meaning that could not be duplicated by standard English. Nevertheless, many see this form of village English as a stigma and avoid situations in which such "incompetence" could be recognized. This reluctance to speak in certain situations may be internally sanctioned, though such internal values often have outside pressures as their sources.

This, I would suggest, is the origin of the following example. In this situation, village dialect is seen as a stigma by another group, usually some form of the dominant culture, such as a bureaucracy, educational institution or other formal organization. When people speak in a village dialect, they are often stigmatized as incompetent and inept in understanding the ways of the organization or person being addressed. Being identified and placed in such a category often results in being talked down to in a patronizing and derogatory manner.

An example of this can be seen in the client relationship between Natives and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance program when the program was operated out of the BIA headquarters in Fairbanks and managed for the most part by career employees. There was much dissatisfaction expressed by the Native clients, who stated that there was little understanding on the part of the BIA Assistance officers and that they were always "talked down to." BIA employees often complained that the Natives could not manage money or that they drank it up. But what was extremely important, in terms of the issue here, was the frequency that the comment was made by BIA personnel that the Natives could not even speak "proper English." My limited field observations suggest that those who spoke a village dialect were treated differently from those who spoke standard English with a minimum of dialectal variation.

When local Native organizations later contracted with the BIA to administer the General Assistance program, Athabascan and Eskiimo case workers were hired and there was, in general, a change in attitude toward the relationship between client and case worker. At this time, I had the opportunity to observe at close hand many client transactions, and one thing absent in the interaction was complaints by caseworkers about the Natives not speaking proper English. There was also more informal communication

between client and worker, and though I made no systematic comparison, I suspect there was much more interaction than there had been between the client and the career BIA employee under the old system. I would like to emphasize that there were a great many factors influencing these interaction situations and ensuing attitudes; however, the speech form which had previously functioned as a stigma was now removed as an intervening variable.

As Alaska Natives move into positions of influence, they are becoming less concerned about village dialect and other overt signals which were once perceived by themselves and others as stigma. They are now speaking out without fear and shifting the responsibility of understanding to the listening party.

This last example has several interesting implications that may be worthwhile to discuss. When the BIA was running the program the interaction was inter-ethnic; that is, it was basically Native interacting with another socio-cultural group, the BIA. Shultz (1972: 15) states that inter-ethnic encounters tend to be characterized by a lack of intimacy, and that participants usually prefer to discuss only "safe" topics, that is topics which tend not to get personal, such as weather, formal business, et cetera. This type of communication makes for some measure of social distance, and where one group or participant is dominant the distance becomes vertical as well as horizontal. When the reorganization of the General Assistance program came about and Native people were hired and the participation took place in the local Native Center, the type of interaction changed—it became intra-ethnic. Shultz (1972: 16) describes intra-ethnic encounters as more intimate and less concerned with institutional identification. Although the context of relationships tended to be impersonal and bureaucratic, it was couched in an ethnic context as well, which made for a much different quality of relationships. Ethnicity establishes a more informal context for interaction because of its known historical and social relationships.

#### Inter-Group Identification Processes

I will now focus on the boundary maintenance processes that take place at another level of group identification—that of various sub-groups within larger community or regional contexts—and how speech forms are used by such groups as methods of delineating and recognizing group boundaries. The identity process on this level is mostly social, although ethnicity can be a factor in many of the situations.

Perhaps a comment on social identity is in order. In most Alaskan communities there is a "lot of action." The source of this action comes from increased economic opportunity and increased political power, the two main phenomena behind these increases are the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and the Alaska Natives Claims Settlement Act. There is no need to go into detail about the effects these have had on rural Alaska, except to say that they have brought great social, economic, and political changes throughout the State. So much so in fact, that there has been a trend toward the formation of new groups along economic and political lines. As Wax (1974: 165) has indicated elsewhere, being a contemporary Indian may be a matter of social and political identity, as well as cultural identity. The nature of interaction between groups at this level is less formal than the previous level, but for the most part still revolves around "safe" topics. Again speech forms can play important roles in identifying and helping maintain the boundaries of the

group though this first example involves village dialect, the use of the Native language and its function as stigma occurs in a less overt and more subtle way than the previous examples. These situations were observed in the communication structures and patterns in a rural elementary school. I knew the teacher and most of the students fairly well, and for the most part I attempted to play the passive observer, being fairly unobtrusive and not interfering noticeably with any interaction taking place. There were eleven children in the classroom (grades 1 through 4) and the teacher. The students sat in a semi-circle around the chalkboard. The teacher used this central location when something had to be written on the chalkboard or when some general information was given to the whole class.

As the teacher helped an individual student, the remaining children would often start to talk to one another. The talking was not loud, and had a sort of constant, buzzing effect. Occasionally the teacher would interrupt her discussions with individual students to warn the class to be quiet and continue with their work. After several instances of this, it was noticeable that the teacher spoke directly to two particular children most of the time. There was not noticeable loud talking from these two to distinguish them from other students when they were reprimanded for making too much noise. It seemed that the other children were making similar levels of noise, although there was no accurate way in which the noise level could be measured.

What did become distinguishable upon closer observation was occasional use of the Native language by the students. It was when these two students, and occasionally others, would speak their Native tongue that the teacher would respond, as though the sound of the Native language was an indicator of distraction. When the Native language became audible to the teacher, for whatever reason, her attention was attracted and she responded by reprimanding those children who were perceived as "making noise." The evidence is not sufficient to suggest anything except that on this particular day in this particular school it seems that the teacher responded unconsciously to the Native language as excessive noise, in that sense a stigma. This phenomenon is discussed in Lambert (1964) in more detail where he deals with individual responses and attitudes to a comparable statement in two languages or dialects. The above is a similar situation in which two languages are being used and one language elicits a more favorable response than the other.

One of the things that has happened here is a break in the primary group identity through the encroachment of symbols from another group. The primary group is the class which includes the teacher. When several students start talking the Native language, signals are being transmitted that indicate they are acting as a different group, to the exclusion of others, most importantly to the exclusion of the teacher. There are a number of ways in which this process could establish in-group/out-group relationships; Kutchin/Non-Kutchin speakers, Teacher/Students, or Native/Non-Native. However these relationships were interpreted, group boundaries were made visible by speech form which elicited alternative response by the parties involved.

Another example of the function of village dialect in maintaining boundaries occurred in a relatively large rural community, where the outward appearance provides very few overt signs of the various sub-cultures

that live within the community. However, there are, as in most communities, many different groups with different value systems, all of which are differentiated by specific though fluid boundaries. Sometimes speech form becomes one of the instruments used to distinguish these different spheres of values.

One faction of young people in this community perceives themselves as belonging to a higher social class than some of the others namely, the less educated and those from the smaller villages. They often speak disparagingly about the "dumb Indians," who are often identified as being unable to read, write and speak standard English. The comment, "The dumb Indian, he can't even write or speak right," is often bandied about. I observed a group of these young people for a time when they discussed the "dumb Indians . . ." All the participants were Native themselves. My presence was probably not a factor, since I was in the bedroom babysitting and few of the group were aware of my presence. As the discussion progressed, it became apparent to some of the participants that the label "dumb Indians" may be putting themselves outside the identity boundaries of generalized "Indians," as seen by the people of this area. Before they reached this stage of introspection, the group began consciously using exaggerated village dialect. The juxtaposition of the forms of speech was used to create stylistic effect depicting the speakers' attitudes. It was done as an act of reaffirmation of identity with the larger group, and their identity as "Indian" was reinstated and verified by use of this particular form of speech. This exaggerated use of village dialect declared their ability to cross boundaries and to participate in two value sub-systems while maintaining their identity as "Indian," an activity in which the "dumb Indians" could not engage.

It is interesting that these students turned to village dialect instead of their Native language to reaffirm their identities. One of the reasons is that many young people in this area do not speak their Native tongue. The village dialect, therefore, represented an overt signal of group characterization used to establish group and individual identity. In this particular case, village dialect was perceived both as a stigma and as a positive symbol in identifying particular group boundaries in the same sphere of interaction.

#### **Personal and Ethnic Contexts of Group Identification**

The third level of identification process I wish to discuss is the function of speech form in maintaining ethnic identification. The major difference between ethnic identity refers to direct cultural and historical relationships between people. Ethnicity is defined here in the narrow sense, in that it is past oriented and is primarily a sense of belonging to a particular ancestry and sharing specific cultural phenomenon as language, religion and other traits (DeVos 1975: 19). This level of intra-ethnic interaction is characterized by higher levels of intimacy than the other two, and in fact intimacy seems to be the main structure of the interaction.

The city of Ft. Yukon is not a traditional village site, but was a central trading place for the nearby villages, and after the Hudson Bay trading post was established, it became the largest population center on the upper Yukon. Many of the inhabitants of Ft. Yukon are from the surrounding villages and although there are situations in which people interact and see themselves as Ft. Yukoners, the more common focus of identity is ethnic. Ethnic identity is an important factor in dealing with problems, particularly when conflict

is involved. These problems may be personal, social, economical or other, but support of one's primary ethnic affiliation is very important in the solution of these conflict situations. The following example relates how, in a conflict situation, speech form was used to emphasize ethnic differences.

In certain situations, even standard English may imply stigmatic characteristics. In this instance, a young lady had some sort of conflict with one of her friends in which the argument grew heated. She later expressed her actions and feelings as follows: "I really told her off! I told her off in my very best English!" The unmistakable innuendo here is that being told off in proper English was a real insult. The implication of being "cussed out" in proper English is that that person had to be spoken to in proper English, and that she is less than "Indian." It implies that the person is outside specific group boundaries and requires a specific form of speech for comprehension. The symbolic message of understanding only proper English makes that form of speech a stigma to the person to whom it is spoken.

In this instance, village dialect can be seen as a restricted form of speech or code to be used only where trusted "Indian" identities are necessary for the interaction. Eidheim (1969) gives similar examples of this among the Lapps and Norwegians, where Lapp is spoken at certain times to those who are known to share similar social identities and value spheres.

In another example, there was a group of young women visiting my house, staying over to catch a plane back to their village. They were sitting around talking about various things when the question of language came up. The girls proceeded to test one another on their abilities to speak the Native language effectively. After establishing that each was an "expert," they proceeded to discuss how others spoke the language differently and perhaps not quite as correctly. One of the girls would say something imitating the dialect from another village, and the other girls would gleefully laugh and joke about how "funny" the other villages spoke the language. Soon another girl would start in by saying, "Here, let me show you how (such and such) people say something." Then, to much laughter and ridicule of the dialect, she would proceed. This became a major source of entertainment for them and lasted for some time. One of the things that was happening here was that the girls were reaffirming themselves as a special ethnic group and at the same time identifying those dialects by which they can differentiate between members of their group and outsiders.

#### Summary and Implications.

As I have tried to illustrate, speech forms are often much more complex and influential than they appear on first observation. In this paper I have examined a number of diverse speech-forms and tried to show how they function in identifying and maintaining group boundaries. Although there are a number of ways in which speech forms complete this task, the two with which I have been primarily concerned are how speech forms are perceived as having stigmatic attributes and how they are used as identity symbols, depending upon the social context in which they are used.

If indeed, identity maintenance is an important process in the functioning of small communities, knowledge of that process should be of considerable value to teachers, both as educators and members of the community.

There are some differences, however, in how identity-related processes

can affect non-Native and Native teachers. When non-Native teachers are in a rural Native community, they are often strangers to the complex web of group affiliation that is so typical of these communities. As teachers become more aware of these processes and the underlying structure of local group identities this knowledge can be influential in establishing relationships within the community. On one level, at least, the non-Native person can often act with immunity to sanctions against improper behavior by virtue of her/his role as a learner. It is not uncommon for teachers to be given great latitude in their behavior and interaction patterns because of their unfamiliarity with locally established patterns. The communities appear to have a high tolerance for learners, by allowing such persons to make both quantitatively and qualitatively more mistakes than would normally be tolerated. But non-Native teachers become aware of the new social situations with which they are confronted, and they learn the new roles that these situations require. They are expected to behave in an appropriate manner.

The Native teachers too are involved in the identity maintenance process, but in a way different from that of the non-Native teachers. If the Native teachers are within their own cultural milieu, they already know a great deal about the various groups and sub-groups within the milieu. But the Native teachers are a part of that system themselves and are, therefore, more intimately involved with the interaction. One of the differences in the relationships being the level of intimacy as described in intra-ethnic as contrasted with inter-ethnic encounters.

The Native teacher, being so closely related to the social system, may find that the knowledge of group identities is restrictive rather than helpful in dealing with specific problems. The tolerance for error is much less for these teachers, as they have two positions; one as teacher and one as community member, and, therefore, are not accorded the tolerance given to the non-Native "learner."

Referring to the example of Native language as an indicator of noise level, a Native teacher would probably not be forgiven for the same behavior if it was known. On the other hand, it is improbable that a Native teacher would have responded in the same manner.

The new role the Native acquires as a teacher may enhance her/his social prestige, but the added requirement of acceptable community behavior required of the dual roles may be a source of serious conflict.

I see the solution as perhaps not a dual role situation, but as group identities are being redefined with the ensuing economic and political change taking place, new roles will emerge for "Native teachers." Although the nature of these roles is speculative, it will probably require a new set of expectations and identity more consistent with the existing social order.

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