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Ruiz Tribute Article

The Development and Expansion of Multilingual Education in Cambodia: An Application of Ruiz's Orientations in Language Planning

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Abstract

In honor of Richard Ruiz and his legacy of contributions to the field, this article highlights the influence of Ruiz's seminal 1984 article "Orientations in Language Planning." Ruiz proposed a framework of three orientations to language planning—*language-as-problem*, *language-as-right*, and *language-as-resource*. Ruiz argued for a language-as-resource orientation to alleviate some of the problems and conflicts emerging out of the other two orientations. In this article we demonstrate the continuing relevance of Ruiz's framework by applying it to our current research on the development and expansion of multilingual education (MLE) for indigenous ethnic minority students in the remote mountainous (highlands) region of northeastern Cambodia. Specifically we analyze the problems and tensions that stemmed from problem- and rights-based orientations in the initial development of MLE, and highlight more recent shifts to a resource-orientation in current efforts to further develop and expand the program to serve a greater number students.

Introduction

The unexpected passing of Dr. Richard Ruiz in 2015 was a shock and a great loss to our field. Richard leaves behind a rich legacy of contributions to the fields of bilingual education, language policy, and others related to the education of language minority students. In honor of Dr. Ruiz, in this paper we focus on the particular contribution of one of his seminal and highly influential articles published in 1984 in Volume 8 of the *NABE Journal* titled "Orientations in Language Planning."

In the first section we provide a summary of Ruiz' article and discuss its contribution and impact on the field. We then apply Ruiz's framework to our current research on the development and

expansion of multilingual education for indigenous ethnic minority students in the remote mountainous (highlands) region of northeastern Cambodia. We will briefly describe the history of the development of multilingual education in Cambodia, noting the ways in which differing orientations—and conflicts between them—have shaped current policy and practice. When then use Ruiz's framework to consider recent shifts in these orientations through an analysis of Cambodia's Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP) 2015 – 2018, which was recently approved in January 2016 and forms the roadmap to further development and expansion of the program.

Ruiz's Orientations in Language Planning

At the time of Ruiz's (1984) *NABE Journal* article, there were few conceptual models or principles available to scholars and educators upon which to orient the language planning literature or to guide effective practices in developing and implementing language policies. Ruiz proposed a framework of three orientations to language planning—*language-as-problem*, *language-as-right*, and *language-as-resource*. He explained that orientation "refers to a complex of dispositions toward language and its role, and toward languages and their role in society" (p. 16). He noted that these dispositions "may be largely unconscious and pre-rational because they are the most fundamental level of arguments about language" (p. 16). An understanding of these orientations can be used to discover them in existing policies and proposals, and also to propose and advocate new ones. Ruiz explained further:

> Orientations are basic to language planning in that they delimit the ways we talk about language and language issues, they determine the basic questions we ask, the conclusions we draw from the data, and even the data themselves. Orientations are related to *language attitudes* in that they constitute the framework in which attitudes are formed: they help to delimit the range of acceptable attitudes towards language, and to make certain attitudes legitimate. In short, orientations determine what is thinkable about language in society. (p. 16)

Applying these orientations to the existing literature at the time, Ruiz found that two of them—language-as-problem and language-as-right—were predominant and in competition in the planning literature. To address this issue and to redirect the field in a potentially important way, Ruiz proposed the language-as-resource orientation. In identifying these orientations and acknowledging the frequent conflicts between "problem" and "right" orientations, Ruiz argued "one should realize that these are competing but not incompatible approaches: … while one orientation may be more desirable then another in any particular context, it is probably best to have a repertoire of orientations from which to draw" (pp. 17-18). He then goes on to consider each of three orientations in detail.

Language-as-Problem

Ruiz found that the bulk of the language planning literature focused on identifying and resolving language problems. He attributed the domination of the language-as-problem orientation to the facts that most language planning activities took place in the context of national development, leading figures defined language planning as a problem-solving endeavor, and efforts focused on

treating practical development issues such as "code selection, standardization, literacy, orthography [and] language stratification" (p. 18).

He also attributes the language-as-problem orientation to the focus in the 1950s of addressing issues of language education for large numbers of non-English speaking Americans, and the focus of the Civil Rights Movement to address needs of the disadvantaged. He notes the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 grew out of this movement, but was intertwined with solving issues of poverty. While the poverty criteria were dropped in subsequent versions of the BEA, bilingual education remained widely viewed as a program for poor and disadvantaged students. Ruiz found other examples of how associations of non-English heritage and bilingualism with social problems—particularly economic disadvantage—became entrenched in popular thought.

Ruiz further notes that early efforts in bilingual education as driven by the courts (e.g., *Lau v. Nichols*) and federal education policy (i.e., the Lau Remedies) were never about promoting individual and societal bilingualism through the development and maintenance of students' home languages, but rather about solving the "social problem" of minority languages by promoting programs designed for rapid transition to exclusive instruction in English. Ruiz concludes, "Since language problems are never merely language problems, but have a direct impact on a spheres of social life, the particular [language-as-problem] orientation towards language planning may be representative of a more general outlook on cultural and social diversity" (p. 21).

Language-as-Right

Ruiz noted that bilingual education was viewed by many advocates as a preeminent civil rights issue for Hispanics in the U.S. and for other language minority students within the U.S. and internationally. The *language-as-right* orientation sees language as a basic human right. However, Ruiz noted several problems with this orientation in terms of how language fits into general conceptions of right, and what is meant by language as a right. He noted the important distinction made by Macias (1979) between "the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of language," and "the right to use your language(s) in the activities of communal life" (pp. 88-89). Nonetheless, Ruiz argued that because language touches on so many different aspects of social life, "any comprehensive statements about language rights cannot confine itself to merely linguistic considerations," and thus "an exhaustive list of language rights is difficult to compile" (pp. 22). He notes several important cases that offer protections for language-minority communities—Meyer v. Nebraska (1932), Yu Cong Eng v. Trinidad (1925), U.S. v. Texas (1971), and Lau v. Nichols (1974)—are actually less about language rights and are more about protections based on national origin. He notes other cases (e.g., Garcia v. Gloor, 1980) where the connection between language rights and national origin were denied.

While acknowledging the importance and accomplishments of legal efforts led by advocacy groups on behalf of language minority students to fight for language rights, Ruiz issued a caution:

> One cannot deny the problems of this approach. The most important of these could be that terms included in the legal universe of discourse do not incline the general public

> toward a ready acceptance of the arguments. Terms like "compliance," enforcement," "entitlements," "requirements," and "protection," create an automatic resistance to whatever one is talking about. Their use creates confrontation. … More generally, rights-affirmation is also confrontation. (p. 24)

Language-as-Resource

Given the problems outlined above, Ruiz questioned if a language-as-problem or even language-as-rights orientation are a sufficient way to address our language needs. Ruiz then proposed the language-as-resource orientation[1] as a more suitable approach:

> A closer look at the idea of language-as-resource could reveal some promise for alleviating some of the conflicts emerging out of the other two orientations: it can have a direct impact on enhancing the language status of subordinate languages; it can help ease tensions between majority and minority communities; it can serve as a more consistent way of viewing the role of non-English languages in U.S. society; and it highlights the importance of cooperative language planning. (pp. 25-26)

Ruiz argued this orientation could help addresses the deficiency of the language capability of the country to address issues of national security, diplomacy, international commerce, and international communication. He noted proposals to increase foreign language training to address this issue ignored the fact that needed language skills were present among language minority students that could be further developed and maintained:

> What is missing in these proposals is a direct concern with resource conservation; what is worse, there seems to be no acknowledgment of the fact that existing resources are being destroyed through mismanagement and misrepresentation. … the irony of this situation is that language communities have become valuable to the larger society in precisely the skill which the school has worked so hard to eradicate in them! (p. 26).

Ruiz argued the situation could be different: "A fuller development of the resources-oriented approach to language planning could help to reshape attitudes about language and language groups" (p. 27). Such an orientation could potentially lead to regarding "language-minority communities as important sources of expertise" (p. 28). He also noted the "considerable body of literature on the positive effects of multilingual capacity on the social and education domains" (p. 27). Hence, bilingualism is also a resource for academic learning and reducing inter-group conflict. Ruiz concludes:

> This sort of [language-as-resource] consideration in language plans can only contribute to greater social cohesion and cooperation. On the question of affording that benefit, the language-as-problem orientation offers no hope; the right orientation has had mixed results. (p. 28)

[1] Ruiz credits Thompson (1973) for first suggesting a "resources-oriented typology," but notes the suggestion appeared in a very brief report, was not fully elaborated, nor had it been developed by others in the literature.

Impact

The *NABE Journal* where Ruiz's (1984) article was published was an academic journal published by the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), and later became the *Bilingual Research Journal.* At the time it was one of the only academic journals with a specific focus on bilingual education, and one of the few to address issues of language and education more broadly. Thus, it was widely read by both scholars and practitioners and has had a substantial impact on the field.

Ruiz acknowledged at the end of his article that "a resource orientation in language planning is not without its problems, and the development of a more comprehensive model based on it is a matter for consideration elsewhere" (p. 28). He went on to encourage "the compilation of a strong literature with an emphasis on language as a resource" (p. 28). Many scholars and educators heeded his call, and Ruiz's *Orientations in Language Planning* has provided a framework for many studies. That influence continues today. Baker's (2011) widely used textbook *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* now in its 5th edition, includes an entire chapter (Ch. 17) titled "Bilingualism and Bilingual Education as a Problem, Right, and Resource." A cursory search on Google Scholar revealed over 800 articles with specific citations to Ruiz's original article, including 275 since 2011. In addition, since 2011 there are over 327 works using the phrase "language-as-resource" and 885 works that included the phrase "language as a resource," suggesting that Ruiz's framework has become so widely known it has entered the lexicon of scholars and educators and is often used without attribution.

Ruiz's influence is further evidenced by the biographical entry on him in the *Encyclopedia of Bilingual Education* (González, 2008). As noted in this entry, Ruiz was frequently sought after internationally as a consultant because of the popularity and utility of his framework:

> He became a regular consultant and presenter for international agencies (e.g., UNESCO), national governments (e.g., Bolivia, Mexico, Guatemala, United States), and academic bodies (e.g., National University of Columbia, Mexican Academy of Sciences, and the American Educational Research Association).
>
> An example of his work took place in Guatemala, where he helped draft and evaluate adult literacy programs in indigenous languages. Ruiz's main approach was to dispel the popular belief that any of the 23 officially recognized indigenous languages were partially at fault for the low socioeconomic status of indigenous communities, and instead assisted educators to understand that the vernaculars were an integral part of the cultural wealth of those communities. (Reyes, 2008, p. 725)

Ruiz's work in Guatemala sought to change a language-as-problem orientation to a language-as-resource orientation in terms of language planning and policy for speakers of indigenous languages. In the sections that follow we consider the ways in which the different orientations have come into play in Cambodia's efforts related to education for its indigenous ethnic minority populations, and how a language-as-resource orientation has helped to gain government support for the adoption and expansion of multilingual education programs.

Methodology

Data for this article are drawn from a larger study incorporating analyses of policy and curricular documents, interviews with government officials and international and local staff members of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) actively involved in bilingual education, and observations of bilingual teacher trainings and classrooms at bilingual primary schools (Wright & Boun, 2015). Primary data collection took place in Cambodia during the summer of 2011. To keep apprised of new policy and program developments, we maintained contact with key international staff members through informal conversations and correspondence in country and via e-mail. These contacts also provided the latest policy documents, including the *Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP)* 2015-2018—officially launched at a formal signing ceremony in January 2016 with great fanfare. This document marks the culminating efforts to date in the development of multilingual education in Cambodia, and charts the path for further development over the next 3 years.

We imported all of our field notes, interview transcripts, and the program and policy documents into NVivo, a powerful qualitative data analysis software program. NVivo facilitated our thematic coding of the data, and our ability to make connections within and across various types of data. This process enabled us to identify patterns in the data and specific examples corresponding to each of the orientations in language planning as identified by Ruiz (1984).

Development of Bilingual Education in Cambodia: Problem- and Right-based Orientations

For more than a century, Cambodia's tumultuous history was rife with political upheavals and chronic civil wars, including the French colonial rule (1863-1953), the wars with Vietnam (1970-1979), the genocidal Pol Pot regime (1975-79) and the Vietnamese occupation (1979-1989). This period of rampant strife and instability ended with the signing of the 1991 Paris Peace Accords which resulted in the establishment of an independent state and the administration of Cambodia's first-ever democratic election in 1993 under the auspices of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) (Ayres, 2003; Clayton, 2005). With relative peace and stability following the national election, the Cambodian government called for assistance from the international communities in an effort to rehabilitate the country's shattered socioeconomic and educational systems (Clayton, 2006; Dy, 2004; Dy & Ninomiya, 2003). Although the government made great strides towards educational development with an increased number of schools and higher net enrollment rates, the results were far from satisfactory. The lack of success was attributed to a number of key factors, among which was the marginalization of indigenous ethnic minority children in the rural and remote regions of the northeastern provinces from access to education (A. Thomas, 2003).

With a strong commitment to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of universal access to education, the Cambodian government ultimately turned to bilingual education as a way to redress the nation's educational achievement gaps. At that time, explicit policies on language in education and bilingual education were somewhat non-existent. The national language, Khmer, was the sole medium of instruction in public K-12 schools in Cambodia, despite the fact that there are an estimated 19 languages and 30-40 ethnic minority groups in the country (UNESCO, 2007). The initial development of bilingual education was a lengthy and political process, and, to a large extent, reflected the government and other

stakeholders' orientation towards language as both a problem and a right. In what follows, we will elucidate the ways in which the problem- and rights-based orientations pervaded the development process.

Ruiz (1984) maintained that "the bulk of the work of language planners . . . has been focused on the identification and resolution of language problems" (p. 18). Moreover, as Fishman (1974) put it, language planning "as the organized pursuit of solutions to language problems" (p. 79) has been carried in the past in the context of national development. Such an orientation that deems language as a social problem to be identified and resolved through treatments like transitional bilingual education is more pervasive than one may expect. This is particularly true in the case of Cambodia, in which access to equitable education by indigenous ethnic minority students was constrained by—or more accurately, attributed to—their lack of basic Khmer language skills. In his speech at the National Education Forum in 2002, the Cambodian Prime Minister (cited in A. Thomas, 2003) stated that:

> The overall enrolment and admission rates in Ratanakiri and Mondukiri [two northeastern provinces] remain too low . . . This induces us to review and develop specific and viable strategies to address the *unique access constraints* [emphasis added] in ethnic minority areas, such as the development of bilingual curricula and programs where Khmer is used as a core language. (p. 4)

In this excerpt, the development of bilingual curricula was couched in terms of the need to address the "access constraints" experienced by the ethnic minority students. The statement thus implied that the problems lay with these ethnic minority populations or, as Ruiz (1984) eloquently spoke of the Bilingual Education Act in the U.S., these minority students have "a handicap to be overcome" (p. 19).

In Cambodia, the bilingual education initiative started out as a non-formal bilingual literacy program, with a focus on adult literacy, in the late 1990s (A. Thomas, 2003). The International Cooperation Cambodia (ICC), a Christian development organization committed to serving the least-served in Cambodia, spearheaded the initiative in Ratanakiri, a northeastern province of Cambodia. Prior to that, all instruction in both non-formal and formal education was conducted in Khmer, and the idea of creating a bilingual education program was at best foreign to the government, not least the education ministry officials. In an interview, the Director of ICC described the government's initial reactions to the idea:

> At the beginning there were reactions and concerns *not* from the [ethnic minority] communities, but from the educated [*government officials*]. The process [during the pilot program] involved many workshops and community visits . . . The ministry wanted bilingual education because it was a new initiative, but the ministry and RAC [*Royal Academy of Cambodia*] conducted more research to find out if that was the real need of the communities or it was just a sham in order to commit an [*criminal*] activity.

As the above excerpt revealed, although the bilingual education initiative appeared to be welcomed by the ethnic minority communities, the government officials expressed dubious attitudes towards it because they needed to conduct research to ensure it was legitimate approach and addressed the actual needs of the communities. Such reactions from the government's

education officials were also echoed in other interviews we had separately with two senior staff members of CARE Cambodia, an international development organization working on promoting the rights and interests of marginalized communities, including women and indigenous ethnic minorities.

The above concerns or presumptions were leveled in educational, linguistic and political terms against the indigenous ethnic minority communities and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved. In a UNESCO report on the *Highland Children's Education Project,* Middleborg (2005) summarized the following concerns about bilingual education that are often expressed by government officials:

(1) The national language is more important than the mother tongue;
(2) New script will lead to the tainting of the national language;
(3) Bilingual education takes twice as long to learn;
(4) Students will be confused by learning two languages, therefore not learning the correct form of the national language;
(5) Bilingual education will lead to demands for autonomy by ethnic minority groups;
(6) Bilingual education will lead to political instability in border areas; and
(7) Bilingual education will be used by organizations as a cover for political/religious activities. (p. 15)

The first two statements illustrate the concerns regarding the differential statuses of languages within a multilingual Cambodia. In particular, indigenous languages are considered the culprit of the "tainting of the national language" because the latter is considered "more important" and thus should be used as the medium of instruction. Similarly, the third and fourth statements, albeit empirically and pedagogically untenable, suggest the corrupt nature of indigenous languages. In essence, incorporating the indigenous languages in the classroom (i.e., promoting bilingual education) means the delay in the students' learning because "bilingual education takes twice as long to learn." Moreover, the indigenous languages will interfere with the mastery of the national language due to the confusion caused "by learning two languages" at the same time. The last three concerns are political in nature and reflect the government's attitudes toward, or attempt at, cultural supremacy, on the one hand, and political domination, on the other. From a language-as-problem orientation, as Ruiz (1984) pointed out, maintaining the subordinate first language is analogous to promoting "intellectual limitation, linguistic deficiency, provincialism, irrationalism, [and] disruption" (p. 20). These concerns demonstrate the government's language-as-problem orientation thorough its indifference to language diversity and potential language loss. The last three items can also be viewed as a language-as-right orientation on the part of indigenous ethnic minority communities, as perceived—and feared by—the government. This reflects the tension that can arise from a right-orientation, as Ruiz has asserted.

Viewing ethnic minority languages from a problem-oriented, deficit perspective has a significant implication for the type of education program to be created and the ways it should be implemented. With the foundation laid by ICC's non-formal bilingual literacy program, in 2002 CARE Cambodia piloted the first-ever primary school bilingual education programs in Ratanakiri for children who speak Tampuen and Kreung. With financial support from UNIFEC and AusAid, and in collaboration and with support from local village leaders and the Ministry of

Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS), CARE established community primary schools in six remote villages where no schools had ever been established before. Interviews with key staff members from CARE revealed that their original proposal to the ministry was for a 6-year developmental bilingual education program model (grades 1-6). However, government ministry officials insisted on a transitional bilingual education model restricted to grades 1 to 3. CARE's Senior Technical Advisor explained:

> It [3-year program] is not the model we would like. We would like a model to go right through to grade 6. And maybe even grade 7 or grade 8. But why that model? It's because the ministry wouldn't allow us to do any more. At one point, initially the program was funded by AusAID for three years. And that was going to be the end. So, the initial model was for three years. And then, under the original proposal, for Grade 4, there was an expectation that the children would go to the local state school, which were going to miraculously appear from somewhere within the three years, which of course never happened.

The above excerpt illustrates the government's assumption that the goal of the bilingual education program is to transition ethnic minority children into mainstream Khmer-only classrooms as soon as possible. This assumption, based on a language-as-problem orientation, ignores a sizeable body of research emphasizing the benefits of long-term, maintenance bilingual education programs (Cummins, 1981; W. P. Thomas & Collier, 2002). Given the lack of local mainstream state schools for students to transition into, CARE's community schools provided education up to grade 6, and grades 3 to 6 were also taught by bilingual ethnic minority teachers, but the language of instruction was Khmer and followed the official state curriculum. Nonetheless as fellow community members, these teachers understood the local culture and could provide linguistic support as students moved into Khmer-medium instruction. Cambodia's insistence on a transitional model limited to grades 1-3 was criticized in an external evaluation report by Benson (2011), who recommended the extension of the bilingual program through the end of primary school.

Just as the problem-based orientation provided solid grounds for bilingual education development in Cambodia, so did the language-as-right orientation serve as its sine qua non. Ruiz (1984) contended that one of the foci of language-rights orientation is to "advocate consideration of language as a basic human right" (p. 22) and the importance of the protection of language minority groups. The discourse of language rights gathered significant momentum in Cambodia as a result of the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) adopted at the Jomtien Conference in Thailand in 1990 and the *Dakar Framework for Action* adopted at the World Education Forum in Senegal in 2000. As noted above, Macias (1979) suggested that two kinds of language rights should be considered: "the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of language" and "the right to use your language(s) in the activities of communal life" (p. 22). As one of the signatories, the Cambodian government ensured that the rights guaranteed in these Declarations, Covenants and Conventions were incorporated in the Cambodian Constitution and other pertinent policy documents.

Several international conventions and national policy documents that laid the foundation for the conception of bilingual education in Cambodia include the following:

- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Convention on the Discrimination Against Women
- Constitution of Cambodia
- Education Law (Cambodia)
- Education For All (EFA) National Plan 2003-2015 (Cambodia)
  (Chey, The, & Thomas, 2003; Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2015; A. Thomas, 2003).

For instance, Article 2 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1992) affirms that:

> Persons belonging to national or *ethnic*, religious *and linguistic minorities have the right* to enjoy their own culture . . . and *to use their own language*, in private and in public, freely and *without interference or any form of discrimination.* (p. 9, emphasis added)

By the same token, the second goal of the Cambodia's EFA National Plan 2003-2015 states that "by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and *those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality* [emphasis added]" (Royal Government of Cambodia, 2003, p. 39). The common emphasis in these and other international conventions and national policy documents is the consideration and recognition of language rights in the larger context of human and educational rights, as evidenced in the use of such terms and phrases as "ethnic," "linguistic minorities," "use their own languages," "without interference or any form of discrimination," and "ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education."

The emphasis on language rights was, and has been, the key driving force for bilingual education development, as reflected in vision statement of the long-awaited, newly promulgated Multilingual Education National Action Plan 2015-2018 (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2015). One of the visions, for instance, affirms that, "All ethnic minority children have the right of access to basic education, including the use of their mother tongue in the initial stages of education" (p. 6). In Cambodia, where human rights violations have been an ongoing debate for over three decades, the government's emphasis on the promotion of the rights of ethnic minority communities, albeit critical to some, should be highly commendable.

As seen in the discussion above, the development of bilingual education programs in Cambodia was largely influenced by the problem- and rights-based orientations. While the development and implementation of bilingual education program are laudable and worthwhile, bilingualism and biliteracy are not the end goal. In her paper prepared for the Education of All Global Monitoring Report on the importance of mother tongue-based schooling for educational quality, Benson (2004) argued that "In an effective bilingual program students become bilingual, or

communicatively competent, in the L2 as well as the L1, and biliterate, or able to read, write and learn in both languages" (p. 13). She documented numerous empirical studies conducted in both developing and developed countries that found that the more the first language is developed, the better the results in both languages. Her findings were corroborated by a recent longitudinal study on the effectiveness of bilingual education in Cambodia which found that students in the bilingual schools performed better in mathematics than their peers in the monolingual schools (Lee, Watt, & Frawley, 2015).

Shifting Orientations in Language Policy: Towards a Resource-Oriented Multilingual Education

Since the official introduction in the late 1990s, bilingual education programs, both non-formal and formal, have proved to be effective. Several reports from UNESCO and CARE Cambodia highlighted the positive impact of the programs on a number of sectors including school enrollment and completion rates, student performance, socioeconomic status, and education policies, to name just a few examples (CARE, 2008, 2009a, 2009b; Middleborg, 2005; Noorlander, 2008; UNESCO, 2007, 2008).

These noteworthy successes, in turn, have an important influence on the government's shifting attitudes towards bilingual education programs and policies that embody the language-as-resource orientation. As Ruiz (1984) maintained, a resources-oriented approaches to language planning has the potential to alleviate tensions between majority and minority communities, to enhance the status of subordinate languages, and to "reshape attitudes about language and language groups" (p. 27). In this section, we discuss some recent initiatives pertaining to bilingual education, at both the program and policy levels, that epitomize the shift to a resource-orientation.

As evidenced in the discussion earlier, bilingual education development was not only an educational endeavor, but also a political process imbued with dubious reactions and skepticisms from the government's education officials. However, the positive experiences from CARE's community-based bilingual education program have had a significant influence on the changing perceptions of these officials. In our interview with the Deputy Director of the Provincial Office of Education (PoE), he talked about how the reactions from the MoEYS officials have changed:

> Of course, the establishment of the bilingual education programs was very complicated in the first place. Why do I say so? Because some MoEYS officials did not believe; they did not understand what bilingual education was . . . I was seriously confronted by them; however, [*CARE's Program Director*] managed to back me up. That's the challenge we faced. But we have tried to explain to them about the benefits of bilingual education. And now they have understood what bilingual education is and what contributions bilingual education makes to the achievement of EFA goals in 2015. Without bilingual education, we cannot achieve the goals because that's what remains—the ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc.—that percentage [of students] that still remains to be handled.

This changing reaction was also discussed in Middelborg's (2005) report:

> The MoEYS has gone from a skeptical point of view on bilingual education to throwing quite enthusiastic support behind it. The provincial education authorities have shown more resistance than at the national level, but through detailed information and advocacy, resistance has turned into support. (pp. 39-40)

Similarly, a report from CARE (2009a) added that, "Through six years of work, CARE Cambodia has managed to replace government skepticism about bilingual education with enthusiasm," (p. 1) leading to a heightened sensitivity among government and NGOs on indigenous language. As a result, CARE's six bilingual primary community schools have been officially recognized by the MoEYS as annex schools and granted full recognition. These shifting attitudes were attributed to the intimate relationship between CARE and the Education Ministry at national, provincial and district levels. Middleborg (2005) described this as a key factor for both the implementation and the long-term sustainability of the project.

Perhaps, one of the most significant manifestations of the shift in the government's orientation to language planning and bilingual education is the adoption and authorization of several policy documents pertinent to language in education, including:

- Guidelines on the Implementation of Bilingual Education Program for Indigenous Children in Highland Provinces (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2010)
- Prakas on Identification of Languages for Khmer National Learners Who Are Indigenous People (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2013)
- Multilingual Education National Action Plan 2015-2018 (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2015)

The content of these key policy documents demonstrate the growing attention and support of the government for the education and livelihood of ethnic minority communities across the country.

In Cambodia, a Prakas (proclamation) is "a ministerial or inter-ministerial decision signed by the relevant Minister(s). A proclamation must conform to the Constitution and to the law or sub-decree to which it refers" (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2006, p. 1). According to CARE's Senior Education Advisor, because the original policy on bilingual education was developed at the lower level of guidelines, it did not have to go through the higher-level inter-ministerial body (Council of Ministers) for approval. Given the fact that bilingual education at its earlier development stages was not very well received by senior government officials, this move by MoEYS and CARE was strategic, and provided what Benson (2003) calls a "foot-in-the-door strategy." As the government officials became more involved in the efforts and bilingual education became more positively viewed, comprehensive and higher-level policy documents were able to be considered and adopted (i.e., Prakas and Multilingual Education National Action Plan).

Informed by the Guidelines and the Prakas, the Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP) provides detailed discussion of roles of bilingual education that go beyond the problem- and right-based orientations towards a more resource-oriented approach. One

noticeable aspect regarding these policy documents is the changing terminology in the national discourse from "bilingual" to "multilingual" education. In the Guidelines, the Prakas, and other earlier policy documents, the term "bilingual education" was used. However, in the newly adopted MENAP, the term "multilingual education" is used throughout the document, with only minimal reference to "bilingual education" when citing previous reports. When asked about this shift in a recent conversation, CARE's former Senior Education Advisor speculated the reasons may be that "there are many contexts around the world that are truly multilingual as opposed to bilingual," that "multilingual education is seen as more *inclusive*" [emphasis added], and that many schools in Cambodia can also be seen as multilingual. Thus, this shift in the national discourse from *bilingual* to *multilingual* education marks an effort to more inclusive and afford greater recognition of the multilingual resources within the communities and schools.

Another notable aspect of the MENAP that epitomizes the government's inclination towards the language-as-resource orientation is the wording for the MENAP's objectives:

(1) To ensure ethnic minority boys and girls have *inclusive access* to quality and relevant education;
(2) To *build the capacity of national and sub-national education officials* to manage and monitor MLE implementation;
(3) To *scale up MLE provision* in relevant provinces; and
(4) To *promote demand for quality MLE* amongst School Support Committees, parents and local authorities. (Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, 2015, p. 5, emphasis added)

Other striking aspects embodied in the MENAP include the emphasis on program sustainability through the capacity building of ethnic minority teachers and the enhanced community involvement. As stipulated in the MENAP, two of the strategies include:

- Select teacher trainees (priority) from ethnic minority communities to attend the Provincial Teacher Training College (PTTC), and become state school teachers, where they will receive additional training in MLE as a long term strategy.
- Mainstream the status of MLE community teachers by providing official recognition of those who meet criteria of the certain minimum standards and the training they have received, so that they can become state school teachers (i.e. civil servants) (p. 11)

As shown in the above excerpt, the government acknowledges and leverages the resources of the ethnic minority communities by recruiting bilingual community members for teacher training. The strategy also points to the government's recognition of the training and experience of current ethnic minority teachers. These teachers received training and support through CARE's bilingual teacher training program, and did not attend an official state teacher training college. Thus, the new law also recognizes the valuable resource of these teacher's training and experience by providing a path for them to receive official status as state school teachers. The MENAP also acknowledges that studies of successful sustainable multilingual education programs share many characteristics, including the following:

- Community members take leadership in planning, implementing and maintaining their program.

- The community has taken responsibility for the program. They make the decisions about it; they evaluate it, and they decide what changes are needed (p. 11)

These aspects of the new law are inline with Ruiz's (1984) assertion that language planning efforts which take a language-as-a-resource orientation are likely to consider language minority communities as important sources of expertise.

Last but not least, the effectiveness of CARE's community-based bilingual education program enabled the government to go from merely endorsing the programs to adopting the model for replication and expansion to other provinces and for speakers of other indigenous ethnic minority languages. According to the MENAP, in the 2014-2015 academic year, there were 54 bilingual schools in five different provinces, serving speakers of 5 indigenous languages (Tampuen, Kreung, Kavet, Brao, and Phnong), enrolling over 3,500 students. The MENAP established goals with the projected expansion to more than 100 MLE schools enrolling over 8,500 students by the 2018-2019 academic year (MoEYS, 2015). In addition, the MENAP highlights the strategy to increase MLE delivery and establish MLE classes in new languages such as Kuoy in Preah Vihear province and Jarai in Ratanakiri province. More importantly, the MENAP further calls for "an action-research/pilot with a new model of MLE for the entire primary school cycle (Grades 1 – 6) that would include the extended use of the mother tongue, as well as Khmer, the national language" (MoEYS, p. 11). This timely and worthwhile call represents the government's shifting attitudes towards resource-oriented multilingual education.

Conclusion

Richard Ruiz's 1984 article "Orientations in Language Planning" is a classic and seminal work in our field. As we have demonstrated in this article through our application of Ruiz's framework to our current research on the development of multilingual education in Cambodia, his work remains highly relevant and useful. In the development of Cambodia's policies and programs, we found many instances in which both a language-as-problem and language-as-right orientations were enacted by policy makers and other stakeholders. We observed many of the same types of problems inherent in these orientations, and the tensions between them, as described by Ruiz. While elements of these orientations remain, we found that the shift towards a language-as-resource orientation has resolved some of these issues and tensions, and has set Cambodia on a path to further develop and expand its multilingual education program over the next few years in a manner that will greatly benefit thousands of indigenous ethnic minority students in the rural and remote mountainous regions of northwestern Cambodia.

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