

L I N G U I S T I C M I N O R I T I E S I N E N G L A N D

A Short Report

on the

L I N G U I S T I C M I N O R I T I E S P R O J E C T

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September 1983

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INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION

England is now, more obviously than ever before, a multilingual society. Many of its citizens - in some areas more than a quarter of the inhabitants - use other languages alongside English every day of their lives for a wide range of purposes. Many of these bilinguals are British-born citizens.

England's newer languages include Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Gujerati, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Panjabi, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian and Urdu. There are many work-places, shops, and offices as well as minority social, cultural and religious institutions and associations where these languages are spoken. There is also an extensive ethnic press; some linguistic minorities have their own music, theatre and dance groups; some now have programmes on their local radio stations and on national television; video tapes and films in minority languages are also widely available. Although the percentage of totally monolingual non-English speaking adults in England is relatively small, the number of bilingual people in England is not likely to decrease dramatically in the near future, since the use of minority languages is in part a reflection of the economic and social value of the languages to their speakers.

In areas of high concentration of particular linguistic minorities there is particular potential for minority institutions, including community-run mother-tongue classes, to be organised. The establishment of these "voluntary" classes reflects the importance accorded by parents to the cultural, and sometimes also the specifically religious heritage of the populations, expressed through and fostered by the different languages. The classes are particularly valued by migrant parents and their children who feel that they are not fully accepted in this society. The more members of linguistic minorities feel this lack of acceptance, (as a result for example of economic and social discrimination, or lack of freedom to use their own language and express their own culture), the more they are likely to develop strategies to support their own values and institutions. It may be, therefore, that for the new generations of bilingual youngsters language will become an increasingly important aspect of ethnic identity.

A view of national cohesion as depending on cultural and linguistic uniformity is not the only possible one. British society has developed from, and still retains a wide diversity of cultural influences, differentiated by regional, socio-economic, religious and linguistic factors. Recent changes in British society call for a re-examination of previous assumptions about national cohesion. There may well be cultural and linguistic tensions as society evolves, but such tensions can contribute to necessary and beneficial changes. One way to maximise the benefits is to support social and educational policies which recognise bilingualism and linguistic diversity as a resource for our whole society, as well as an important factor in the educational development of already bilingual children.

There are signs of local and national agencies evolving in a positive direction by, for example, employing translators and bilingual staff, or by printing bilingual or non-English monolingual material for information or business purposes. But educational initiatives set up over the last ten years for adults have almost exclusively focussed until recently on the learning of English. Home-tutoring or industrial language training schemes are examples of this. (Incidentally, the little experience gained so far of providing services in and through languages other than English contributes also to the development of, for example, the interpreting and translating facilities needed by visitors and foreign students in England. The development of these and other services catering for tourists, as well as the increase in overseas travel, have contributed to increasing numbers of formerly monolingual English speakers needing or wanting to learn different languages.)

The expansion of the various ethnic economies may encourage language maintenance. There is some evidence that this expansion is already taking place, especially in areas where the decline of the traditional manufacturing industries has led to high levels of unemployment. The development of "ethnic sectors" of the economy, which would tend to give minority language skills a positive market value, is especially likely in areas where there is a high concentration of speakers of a single language, such as for example Bengali in Tower Hamlets, Greek and Turkish in Haringey and Panjabi-Urdu in Bradford. In the future we are also likely to see an increase in diplomatic and economic relations with a wide range of third world countries. The ability to use their languages will be a necessary condition for success in communicating in competitive or conflictual political and economic situations.

Bilingual members of our society, from whatever socio-economic background, have linguistic repertoires which often consist of several different varieties of English, as well as a range of varieties in their mother-tongues. New varieties of English and of some of the other languages are emerging among adolescents, reflecting their distinctive patterns of socialisation and social interaction. Partly as a consequence, if the schools they attend promote the exclusive use of Southern British Standard English, bilingual children may experience similar imposed disadvantage to their monolingual peers whose speech reflects working class or regional or Afro-Caribbean affiliations. Explicit or implicit school language policies still almost always mean that bilingual children in England do not have the opportunity to use the language of their families at school. Only rarely are these languages considered as aids to learning, as legitimate means of expression, or as examination subjects of equal status with other languages. Such policies, at their most dramatic, mean that monolingual non English-speaking, but usually English-born, children arriving at school face crucially damaging delay in their linguistic and conceptual development, since it is difficult for them to work solely in English from the very beginning.

The almost total change in patterns of language use from the home to the school environment is likely to hold back not only the linguistic and conceptual, but also the general educational development of many bilingual children. Even when the home-school linguistic transition is relatively successfully managed, the monolingual policies in most of our schools have at least two damaging consequences. Most bilingual youngsters do not have the opportunity to develop all their early oral skills in more than one language, or to establish literacy in the language other than English. Similarly, monolingual English youngsters miss the opportunity of experiencing the use of two languages as a normal and natural phenomenon, and of becoming interested in the study of how language and languages work.

In recent years many schools have tried to develop comprehensive 'language across the curriculum' policies. As yet there are only a few examples of systematic efforts to employ more bilingual teachers of all subjects, or to develop language awareness courses for monolingual teachers so that they can capitalise on the linguistic resources of their classroom for the benefit of all pupils. In many more schools too, modern language options could be widened to include the languages of minority communities in England.

It is true that the shortage of appropriate learning materials obviously causes problems in this connection, but even the simple recognition by the school of a child's bilingual skills, as a positive rather than a negative characteristic, would be a first and fundamental step without major expenditure implications. Going beyond this, there are specific strategies that need to be developed for promoting first language skills. Starting in the home, parents need to be better informed and reassured by the school as to why they should continue to encourage their children's use of their mother tongue alongside English. Then the home language could be used more extensively in nursery and infant schools as one of the mediums of instruction. At the next stage of schooling teaching of literacy skills in the language other than English could be promoted in "mother-tongue" classes, either in LEA or in community-run schools. In both cases there is of course a need for trained teachers, appropriate premises and materials, and close collaboration between parents and teachers in the two types of school. At the secondary and further education stage too there are arguments on educational grounds for taking support for bilingualism more seriously. For example, in some secondary schools and colleges at least, encouragement should be given to the introduction of the languages of linguistic minorities into the modern language curriculum available to all pupils.

These arguments derive from the responsibility of state schools not only to provide bilingual pupils with appropriate teaching with fully trained staff in regular school hours, but also to allow monolingual pupils an opportunity to develop more positive attitudes to language learning and to the status of minority languages and their speakers. Some minority teachers and parents, however, argue that as things stand at the moment the community-run schools can offer better provision. The reasons given are either that they do in some cases have their own resources and expertise, or that they are suspicious of the motives and the lack of consistent and fully-informed support offered by LEA schools.

Participants in the debate about "mother-tongue" teaching in England now acknowledge that sometimes the language to be taught is the spoken home language of the pupils, but that sometimes too it is a related language: the standard, national or religious language of that particular linguistic minority. Discussions need therefore to encompass not only support for the spoken languages (especially important at the primary level but needing to be continued throughout school), but also support for the development of literacy in related languages. Achievement in both needs to be certificated through examinations recognised for entry to higher education, professional training and employment.

Most discussion in England so far has focussed either on the nursery-infant or on the later secondary end of the spectrum, and there has been almost no discussion about the use of two languages as mediums throughout the school. (This contrasts, for example, with developments in Scandinavia or in Germany.) There are many schools of course where the large numbers of different languages spoken make such arrangements quite unrealistic. However, there are other schools where the predominance of one minority language would in principle allow teaching through the medium of two languages, with participation also by monolingual English children who were interested. Such bilingual education programmes are being developed with increasing success in Canada and in Australia for example. The fact that most people find this easier to imagine when schemes involving Greek, Italian or Spanish are mentioned is perhaps a reflection of the low status in the wider society of other languages spoken by far larger numbers of pupils in England.

While some of these options have very difficult logistic implications, it is important to remember three important facts. First, initiatives encouraging bilingualism among monolingual and bilingual pupils are already under way. Second, some developments have been introduced with minimal cost by a redeployment of existing bilingual teachers from other teaching jobs. Third, teaching organised by community organisations or embassies and high commissions is expanding in many areas of the country, and relatively modest support from an LEA can go a long way to making such provision more effective. If parents are to have the possibility of exercising their right to choose the most appropriate schooling for their children, then supporting bilingualism means assisting parents, both bilingual and monolingual, to understand the issues: they must be offered real options on the basis of full information and careful discussion.

The different balance between the various linguistic minorities in each area inevitably means differences in detailed policies. But whatever practices are developed in the near future, there is great educational advantage even in predominantly monolingual English-speaking schools, in building upon whatever linguistic diversity there is in the school. It should be remembered that this diversity may include pupils' English dialects, as well as languages other than English. And whatever detailed policies are developed by LEAs in terms of supporting mother-tongue teaching in schools or supporting existing community-run initiatives, for a long time ahead there will be a need to support and link the resources and expertise located in both types of provision. In all cases there is a need for the development of appropriate teaching materials, for the training of bilingual teachers from linguistic minorities and of monolingual teachers from the English-speaking majority, and for much more information and understanding about language use in general among all the members of our multilingual society.

THE LINGUISTIC MINORITIES PROJECT

The Linguistic Minorities Project (LMP) was set up in 1979 at the Institute of Education, University of London, funded by the Department of Education and Science for a period of three and a half years. Its function was to investigate patterns of bilingualism in different parts of England, and to assess the educational implications of linguistic diversity. The original team of five research officers was extended in 1981 with the appointment of an assistant programmer. In January 1981 the Commission of the European Communities (EC)-funded LINC (Language Information Network Co-ordination) Project was attached to LMP with the task of exploring strategies for the active dissemination in Britain and Europe of the methods and findings of LMP. The LINC Project is due to end in December 1984.

In 1979 several linguistic minority organisations were campaigning for public support of mother-tongue teaching, either by introducing it in LEA schools or by supporting the existing local community-based initiatives. Although in some areas there were community or Embassy-run classes, many were unable to meet the total demand or to develop appropriate teaching methods because of lack of resources and expertise. At this time there was also an increasing number of teachers and professional associations who acknowledged that those concerned with educating children for life in a multilingual society could not ignore the implications of linguistic diversity for both bilingual and monolingual children. In other parts of Britain the interests of Welsh and Gaelic speakers had been recognised, with the development of bilingual education schemes. But England itself still did not even have comprehensive information about the languages spoken by its population. The lack of interest in the non-indigenous languages of England implied by this information gap was evident when the draft 'mother-tongue' Directive of the European communities was rejected by nearly all those who debated it in England in 1976. The 1977 Directive, which was to come into force in 1981, was the third major impetus to the evolving public debate about mother-tongue teaching. The debate was then focussing on why mother-tongue teaching was important, who should be responsible, how it should be introduced, and on the social and economic implications it might have for society as a whole.

The Linguistic Minorities Project aimed therefore to gather basic information about linguistic diversity in the school system, and about patterns of language use in different social contexts. Its work covered a range of linguistic minorities, including those from Eastern and Southern Europe, South and East Asia. The researchers developed four survey instruments, each focussing on respondents' reports of their language skills and use, and on their attitudes to mother-tongue provision. In the two schools surveys care was taken to involve all children. In our Schools Language Survey, finding out the number of children reporting bilingual skills meant questioning each child, not only those whom teachers assumed to be bilingual. In our Secondary Pupils' Survey, the involvement of all pupils in the classroom was part of our strategy to present bilingualism as a potential resource for the whole society as well as for the individual. In the two community-based surveys, to indicate the Project's recognition of the status of the various mother tongues, local bilingual interviewers asked the questions in their own language, using English only when a clear preference was expressed for that.

Together these four surveys have begun to build up pictures of the patterns of language skills, use and attitudes in Bradford, Coventry and parts of London. LINC continues to disseminate survey findings, in the first place to those who participated in the research process, including pupils, parents, teachers, minority organisations and LEAs. In the summary accounts which follow we illustrate briefly some of the major features of our data from each survey. For fuller accounts and discussion, see our Full Report to the DES and the forthcoming book The Other Languages of Britain (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).

THE SCHOOLS LANGUAGE SURVEY

The Schools Language Survey (SLS) was developed as a policy-related instrument, to help Local Education Authorities document the range of linguistic diversity among all schoolchildren in an LEA and the extent of literacy in the minority languages. This survey was administered with the collaboration of a very high proportion of non-specialist teachers in five LEAs. The process of collecting information also proved an effective means of raising the teachers' awareness of the languages used by their pupils. LMP has now developed a Manual of Use which is to be made available to other LEAs who wish to undertake such Language Surveys, and two Authorities - Brent and Hounslow - have already taken advantage of this facility.

The basic findings from the five LEAs in which LMP carried out the SLS are set out in the pie-diagrams of Figure One.

More details of the Schools Language Surveys for these five LEAs are included in the series of First Reports and Second Reports prepared for each individual authority surveyed, and in the LMP/LINC Working Paper 3: The Schools Language Survey: Summary of Findings from Five LEAs, May 1983 (available from the Information Office, University of London, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL). A full account of the background to the Survey, and a discussion of its major findings will appear in later LMP/LINC Working Papers. The Manual of Use for other LEAs wishing to administer the Survey is being piloted: details from Community Languages and Education Project, 18 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0NS.

The experience of preparation, survey administration and dissemination of results of the SLS has shown how in some LEAs the question of linguistic diversity was recognised as a major responsibility of the Modern Language, or the English or the Primary Adviser, whereas in other LEAs the question was essentially the remit of the Multicultural Adviser. The open evenings and telephone advice service which were an integral part of the preparatory process often uncovered existing resources and expertise among local teachers. However, overall the survey process revealed the very limited knowledge of many teachers about the languages spoken by their pupils. It also suggested that some bilingual pupils either lacked this kind of knowledge themselves, or judged it more appropriate to use language labels such as "Indian" or "African" in the school setting.

In some LEAs we saw SLS findings contributing to the development of a mother-tongue policy or of in-service initiatives. In some we encountered the mistaken belief that language statistics necessarily correspond closely to the ethnic composition of the school population. We thought it important at all times to stress the linguistic characteristics of the data, and their relevance above all for planning in relation to language education, while not denying of course their wider social and educational interest.

(Appendix A, on page 19, reproduces the questions teachers were asked to put to the pupils surveyed.)

Notes on the Schools Language Survey Findings

Basis of the SLS data collection:

The data of this Schools Language Survey is based on pupils' self-report, mediated through teachers and inevitably collected in a range of differing classroom situations. Readers should bear in mind that:

- (a) The survey questions were designed to elicit reporting of even modest language skills and, therefore, make it impossible to comment on the level of language ability of the pupils, either in oral or in literacy skills.
- (b) The process of recording the data inevitably involved some element of interpretation by the teacher of what the pupil reported speaking, reading or writing.

Naming of languages:

The level of detail in a pupil's answer or teacher's reporting of it may be affected by very local factors (even to the level of what other pupils in the class have said, or the kind of relationship between teacher and pupil). One tendency is for some teachers in classes where there is a large number of pupils of one language group to give detailed information about dialects and places of origin, while in classes with fewer pupils answering "yes" to the first SLS question ("Do you yourself ever speak any language at home apart from English?"), or where there is a wide range of languages, little more than the language name is given.

The method by which pupils and teachers (neither of whom may have a detailed knowledge of the linguistic background) were asked to record answers to a single question meant that some answers referred to the local spoken dialect used at home, some to the regional standard spoken language and others to the language of community loyalty or even the language of literacy.

Thus, for example, a number of pupils with a Pakistani background may have reported speaking Urdu when in fact it is likely that their first spoken language is a regional variety of Panjabi, and that Urdu for them is a language of literacy which may also be a second spoken language. Other children of similar language background may have reported speaking Panjabi.

The term used to refer to a language or dialect also varied according to the pupil's or teacher's perception of the status of this language or dialect in the wider community, either in the country of origin (e.g. Urdu given for Panjabi), or in England (e.g. "Pakistani" given for Panjabi, "Italian" for Sicilian, "Indian" for Hindi, Panjabi or Gujerati).

"Creoles" refers to a large group of diverse languages which we divided into two main categories: "French-based" and "English-based and all other Creoles".

"Chinese" is a group including all language labels referring to one of the regional Chinese languages, e.g. Cantonese, Hakka, and the general label "Chinese".

In other categories simple language labels, and those which give more detailed geographical or dialect specifications, were all grouped together under the name of the national or regional official language, e.g. Kutchi is subsumed in the Gujerati group and Sicilian in the Italian group.

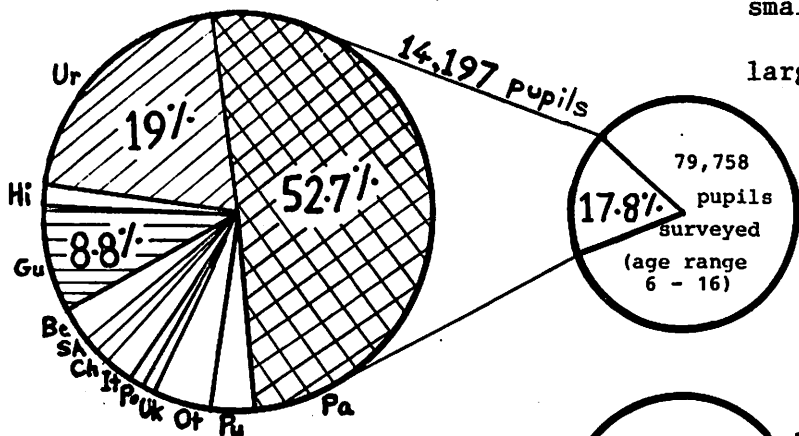
LITERACY	Out of total number of pupils reporting the use of a language other than English:				
	14, 201 in Bradford	7,189 in Coventry	7,407 in Haringey	2,408 in Peterborough	5,521 in Waltham Forest
% of pupils reporting some degree of literacy in any language other than English	52.3	41.4	50.5	50.5	49.0

Literacy is to be interpreted in the broadest sense, i.e. "Pupils have reported that they can read and/or write one or more of the spoken languages given, or have reported one or more separate languages of literacy".

SCHOOLS LANGUAGE SURVEY

Figure One : Main languages reported as SPOKEN in the 5 LEAs surveyed

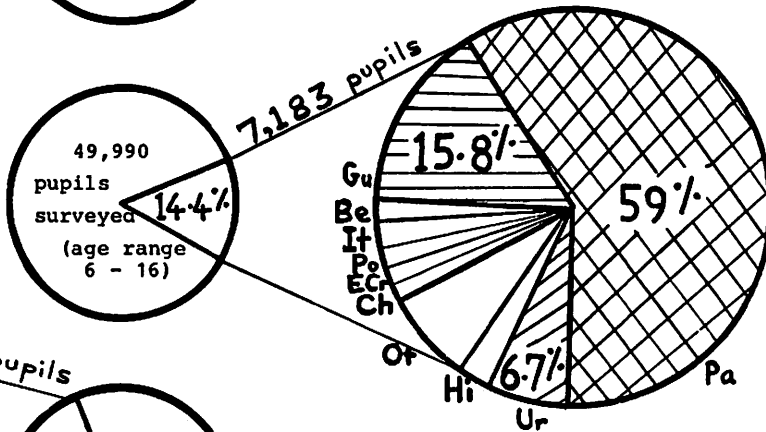
MARCH 1981 BRADFORD



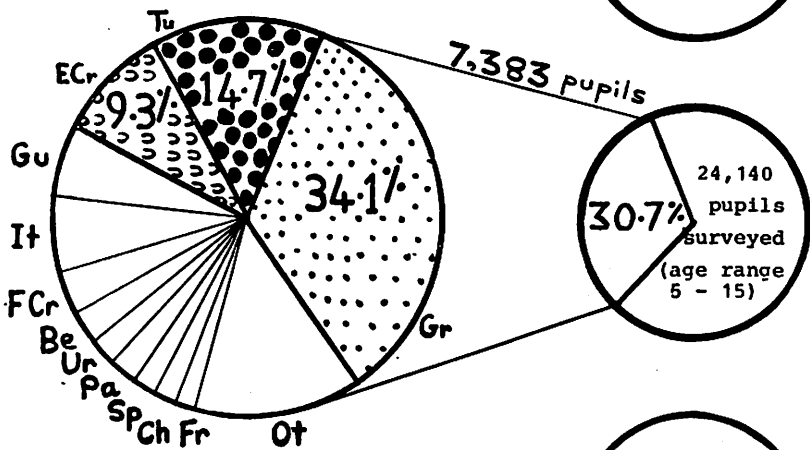
small circles = all the pupils surveyed

large circles = the pupils reporting languages other than English

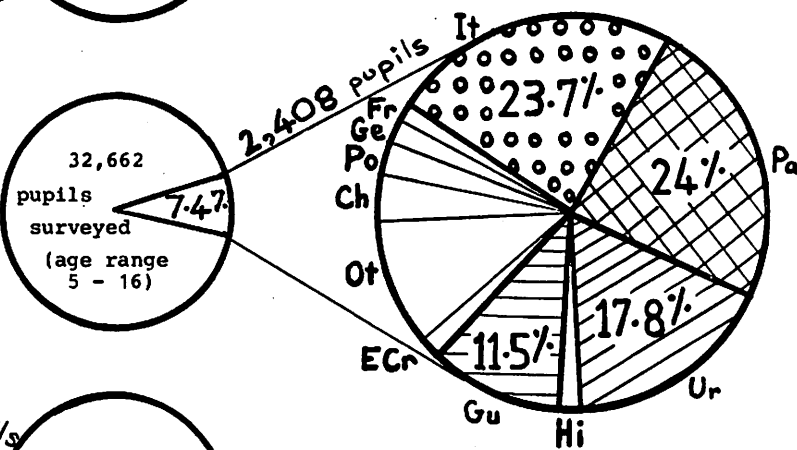
COVENTRY MARCH 1981



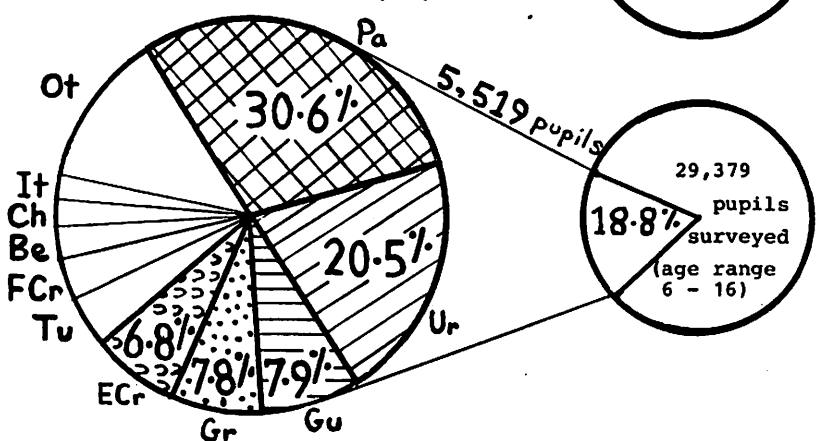
JUNE 1981 HARINGEY



NOVEMBER 1980 PETERBOROUGH



NOVEMBER 1981 WALTHAM FOREST



ECr Gr Gu It Pa Tu Ur

English-based Creoles Greek Gujarati Italian Panjabi Turkish Urdu
 Be-Bengali Ch-Chinese Fr-French FCr-French-based Creoles Ge-German
 Hi-Hindi Ot-Other Po-Polish Pu-Pushtu SA-other S.Asian languages Sp-Spanish Uk-Ukrainian

THE SECONDARY PUPILS' SURVEY

The Secondary Pupils' Survey (SPS) was developed initially as a sample survey, to allow both monolingual and bilingual secondary school pupils to offer information about their own language use and perceptions. It was intended to complement the teacher-administered Schools Language Survey with a wider range of information on more limited numbers of older pupils. With the help of the LINC project, an illustrated version was produced which made it more attractive in its other role as teaching material for exploring linguistic diversity in the classroom, and for use in in-service training.

The SPS questionnaire asks about the pupils' language-learning experience, their assessment of their current language skills, their perceptions of their own and other languages spoken in their neighbourhood or learned at school, and their involvement in mother-tongue classes. SPS was used, with varying degrees of emphasis on the survey function and on the curricular function, in Peterborough, Bradford, and the Inner London Education Authority. A set of Guidelines for Teachers has been developed so that individual schools or teachers can continue to use the questionnaire as teaching material.

The findings from the SPS are not easy to present in a summary form, but we include here as Table One some data about patterns of language use with family members and school friends, from surveys of Peterborough and Bradford pupils identifying themselves as bilingual. The patterns of language use for these respondents were only analysed for the cases where English was one of the two languages mainly used now with family and friends.

There is a clear pattern suggesting that English is used most of the time with the younger generation, while the minority languages are used more often with parents and grandparents. There are also some indications, at least in Bradford, that the minority languages are used more when speaking to females, e.g. mothers and sisters. However, it is important to note that the data presented in Table One relates only to 130 or so 11-year olds in Peterborough, and around 200 14-year olds in Bradford. The majority of bilingual pupils in our Bradford sample were speakers of Panjabi or of Urdu; in Peterborough there were almost equal numbers of these and of Italian speakers. Extrapolation to other age-groups in other places could be highly misleading.

The girls in the sample showed no statistically significant differences in terms of language use from the boys. The differences between the patterns for Peterborough and Bradford probably relate to the different linguistic make-up of the sample. There are more Italians in Peterborough, and a comparison of them with the Panjabi and Urdu respondents in the same city suggests for example that while 30 out of 47 Panjabi or Urdu speakers use only the minority language when speaking to their fathers, only 7 out of 32 Italians use only Italian. When talking to their brothers 17 out of the 23 Italians use only English and a single speaker reports using only Italian. This compares with 19 out of 44 using only Panjabi or Urdu, 9 only English and 16 a mixture, among the Panjabi and Urdu speakers.

Table One: Secondary Pupils' Survey Questions 10 - 20
Language Used by Bilingual Pupils with Family Members and Schoolfriends

	Peterborough				Bradford			
	n*	% minority language	% English	% both equally	n*	% minority language	% English	% both equally
To my father I usually speak:	129	51	17	32	203	71	16	13
To my mother I usually speak:	132	62	13	25	209	78	11	11
To my brother(s) I usually speak:	112	16	50	34	200	19	60	21
To my sister(s) I usually speak:	107	17	49	34	189	25	54	21
To my grandfather(s) I usually speak:	83	74	16	10	127	87	6	6
To my grandmother(s) I usually speak:	95	78	13	9	130	78	6	16
My father usually speaks to me in:	128	62	16	22	203	76	14	9
My mother usually speaks to me in:	133	70	14	16	206	87	8	5
My grandfather(s) usually speak to me in:	83	82	14	4	131	87	8	5
My grandmother(s) usually speak to me in:	95	82	11	7	132	88	9	3
In school breaks, my friends and I usually speak in:	131	3	81	16	202	9	84	6

* n - the number of valid answers on which percentages are based - varies because pupils did not all have the same number of relatives, or did not give answers about all of them.

Our experience of SPS makes clear that its value crucially depends on how teachers prepared for the activity, and on how ready they were to respond to and develop the interest generated among their pupils. It seemed that this exercise often taught the teachers as much as the pupils! The response to this questionnaire encouraged LINC to develop two related initiatives:

- (a) The production of a video-programme entitled "Sharing Languages in the Classroom", in collaboration with LMP and the ILEA Learning Materials Service T.V. Centre. The programme is based around SPS and has already been widely shown, in particular in teacher training contexts.
- (b) In collaboration with the Schools Council Mother Tongue Project, the production of teaching materials for primary school teachers and pupils, involving families and neighbourhood, entitled "The Children's Language Project" (CLP). The piloting phase has shown how useful and productive the project was, and that teachers were in great need of such materials. The final version will be available from a publisher in 1984.

Copies of the SPS questionnaire and Guidelines for Teachers, and details about the SPS video-programme and the CLP materials, are available from LINC, 18 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0NS.

(Appendix B, on page 20, reproduces the page of the illustrated version of the SPS questionnaire, from which the data presented here derived.)

THE MOTHER-TONGUE TEACHING DIRECTORY SURVEY

The Mother Tongue Teaching Directory (MITD) Survey was devised in collaboration with the National Council for Mother-Tongue Teaching. This Survey aimed to document the extent and types of mother-tongue teaching existing in LEA and community-run classes or schools, both those enjoying financial support from the LEA, and those without such support.

There are two MITD Survey questionnaires: Stage 1 elicits basic factual information about existing mother-tongue classes and schools, and Stage 2 gathers more detailed information covering historical and attitudinal aspects of mother tongue teaching, among other matters. LMP administered both Stages of the Survey in Coventry, Bradford and Haringey in 1981-82, in collaboration with appropriate local organisations.

In this Short Report we present only one set of data from the MITD Survey, based on answers to our Stage 1 questionnaires. We have selected the aspect of the responses with most obvious and direct policy implications for the LEAs and for central government - the question of financial support for mother-tongue teaching from public funds.

The piloting, development and findings of the MITD Surveys confirmed for us that there is by no means a clear dividing line between LEA provision and so-called "voluntary" provision. The many intermediate cases (e.g. classes initiated by local groups and now partly integrated into the school curriculum, or put on the LEA school timetable but with the teacher's salary paid by an embassy) illustrate the marginal status of this parallel form of schooling. The feedback from the team of bilingual interviewers provided a valuable qualitative understanding of the constraints experienced by many teachers and minority institutions in their attempts to obtain public recognition and support for mother-tongue teaching.

Table Two and Figure Two set out our categorisation of all the classes we were able to find on the basis of the material support they received for what we took to be the two major expenditure headings - cost of teachers and of teaching accommodation.

An MITD Survey Manual of Use has been compiled so that local groups and LEAs can carry out further Surveys under the supervision of the NCMTT, and contribute to a national data bank to be based at the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research in London. It is intended to make this Manual available through NCMTT during 1983, and LMP/LINC will also produce a Working Paper based on the three individual MITD Survey Reports already distributed to the teachers and organisers of the classes surveyed (available in late 1983 from the Information Office, University of London, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL).

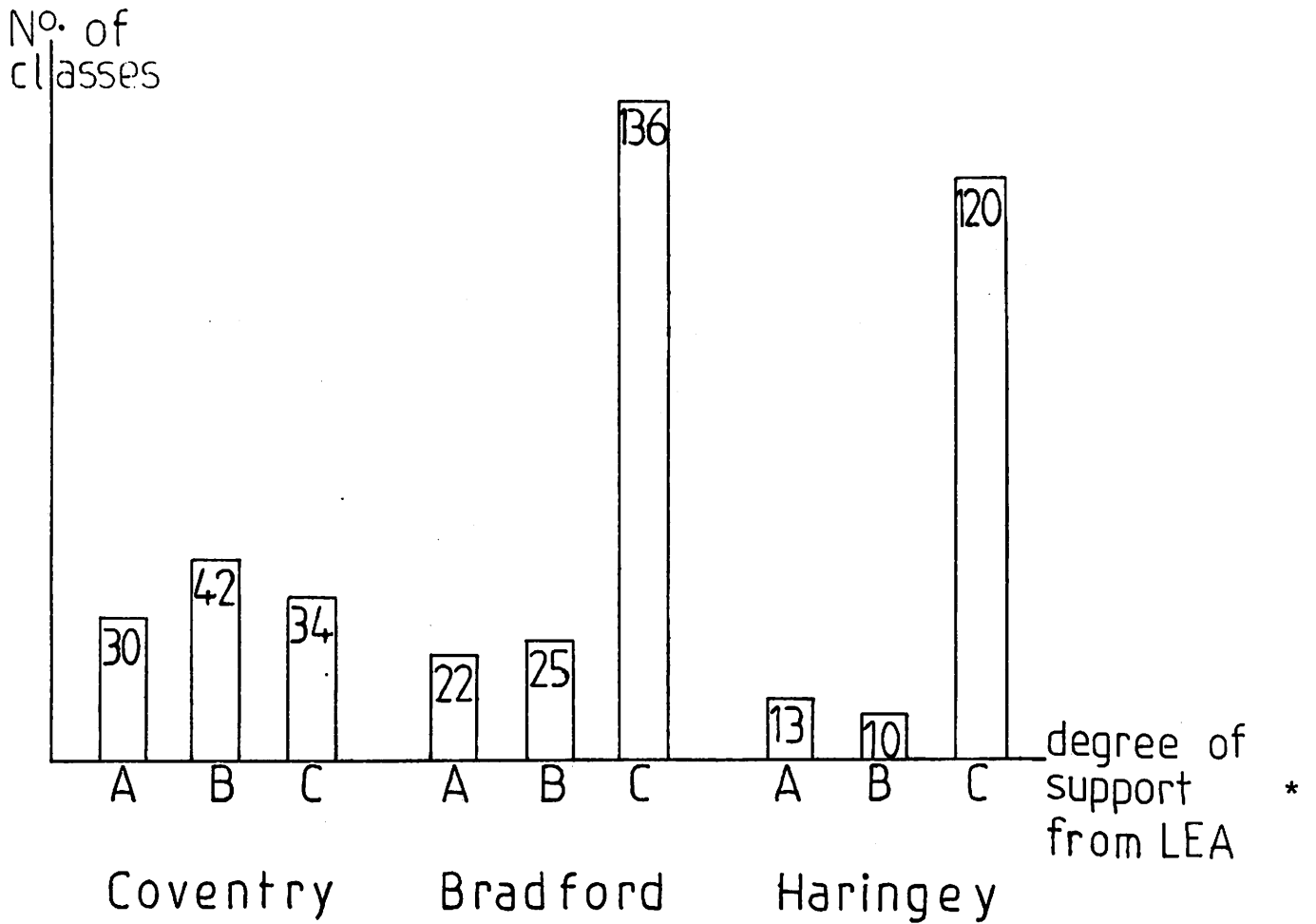


Figure Two: Material Support from LEAs for Mother-Tongue Classes - all languages

* For Key to A: B: C: - see Table Two opposite

Table Two: Material Support from LEAs for Mother-Tongue Classes: broken down by language

- A: Number of classes for which the LEA provides both teachers' salaries and accommodation.
 B: Number of classes for which the LEA provides either teachers' salaries or accommodation.
 C: Number of classes for which the LEA provides neither teachers' salaries nor accommodation.

Languages	Coventry 1981			Bradford 1981			Haringey 1982		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Arabic	-	-	-	1	1	10	0	0	1
Bengali	-	-	-	0	2	0	0	3	0
Chinese	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	11
Greek	0	3	0	0	0	3	12	4	74
Gujerati	4	14	2	1	0	8	0	0	1
Hebrew	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	7
Hindi	5	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	2
Irish Gaelic	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0
Italian	2	0	7	0	18	0	0	0	12
Latvian	-	-	-	0	0	2	-	-	-
Panjabi	13	11	6	6	0	23	-	-	-
Polish	0	10	0	1	0	9	-	-	-
Serbo-Croat	0	0	1	0	0	1	-	-	-
Spanish	0	0	1	-	-	-	0	0	6
Turkish	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	4
Ukrainian	0	2	0	0	0	15	-	-	-
Urdu	6	2	0	13	3	0	-	-	-
Urdu-Arabic	0	0	13	0	0	58	0	2	2

THE ADULT LANGUAGE USE SURVEY

The Adult Language Use Survey (ALUS) aimed to build up a comprehensive picture of patterns of language use and attitudes to mother-tongue maintenance among eleven linguistic minorities: speakers of Bengali, Cantonese, Greek, Gujerati, Italian, Panjabi, Panjabi-Urdu, Polish, Portuguese, Turkish and Ukrainian. In most cases, languages were investigated in more than one city (e.g. Cantonese in Coventry and London, Polish in Coventry and Bradford, Bengali in Coventry and London). Interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes by bilingual interviewers from the local populations. The questions covered oral language skills and learning history, literacy, language use in the household, at work, in the community and attitudes towards language teaching provision. The ALUS demanded particularly detailed and time-consuming preparation with reference to the sampling because of the lack of basic information available in England. This extensive groundwork and the development of eleven translations of the questionnaire, as well as the community based research strategies, gave us invaluable insights into the sociolinguistic situation of these local populations and the ethnic relations in the areas surveyed.

Our findings will provide a data base for future research, and have already raised some important questions not only about educational, but also about wider social policy issues. From the resulting mass of data, we mention only four points here:

- a) the multilingualism of a high proportion of respondents, not only among those of South Asian origin;
- b) the high proportions of those who had a real choice, in terms of their reported language skills, who used the minority language in domestic settings;
- c) the strong support evident in virtually all the local linguistic minorities for an increased contribution from the LEAs to mother-tongue provision.
- d) important differences between respondents of the same linguistic minority in different cities in terms of language skills and language use which suggest that it is essential to look in some detail at local historical, demographic, social and economic factors in order to understand the dynamics of bilingualism.

The Community Language and Education Project, which started in May 1983, is carrying out the second stage analysis to follow up some of these issues and other basic findings from the LMP.

CONCLUSION

The LMP is the first research project in England to focus on the importance of societal bilingualism in the development of education policies. It does so, of course, against a background of previous and current research and development in related fields.

The earlier DES-funded Mother Tongue and English Teaching Project has already shown the advantages of supporting individual bilingualism among young primary school pupils, and the current Schools Council Project is developing mother-tongue teaching materials in Bengali and Greek for primary school pupils, as well as looking at ways of supporting monolingual teachers in multilingual classrooms. The E.C.-funded LINC project attached to LMP in 1981 continues to develop strategies for active dissemination, after an assessment of the degrees of information, knowledge and interest that exist among the different potential users of our findings. The new Community Languages and Education Project at the University of London Institute of Education has been funded by the SSRC for two years from May 1983 to April 1985.

In spite of this useful series of projects, there remains a wide range of research issues and applications which need further attention. These include analyses of the existing exclusive practices, and the potentially supportive practices, which could affect the use of languages other than English in the media and arts generally. Besides the obvious questions that should be asked about the content and coverage available in minority languages in the media and arts, there is a more fundamental question. How do we help people to recognise the social contribution of bilingualism in everyday life in many parts of the country? There is also a need to evaluate the impact of LEA and individual school policies on mother-tongue teaching, and there is particular value in monitoring examples of good practice in both LEA and community-run classes.

The relationships between mother-tongue, modern language, English mother-tongue and English as a second language teaching are changing. The different ways they are interrelated may have very different effects on bilingual pupils according to the pupils' language skills and the social setting in which they use their languages. But the types of language education encouraged in schools and in society also affect the attitudes of monolingual pupils to, and their potential for, language learning. Developments in this area could give a boost to modern language learning in England. Researchers and policy makers also need to link their assessment of the impact of schooling on speakers of different varieties of English, with the social and educational constraints faced by bilingual pupils.

Further research on linguistic minorities would be greatly facilitated if there was a more comprehensive data base on patterns of bilingualism and language learning both in and out of school. The work begun by the Linguistic Minorities Project needs to be supplemented by in-depth observational studies in specific situations. An fuller appreciation of the symbolic as well as communicative role of minority languages for their speakers is dependent on the training of bilingual researchers, and the experience of such researchers is also important for the development of research in the social sciences generally, and in linguistic and closely-related fields in particular.

The Linguistic Minorities Project has been able to show how policy-related survey methods can be developed to have pedagogic value too. The LINC project has demonstrated the desirability and feasibility of active dissemination built into the design of an academic research project. The contribution of the Linguistic Minorities Project should be judged by its effect on practical developments in the field of education as well as its input to the academic debate. It is succeeded by two projects which share its basic values and objectives - LINC and CLE - and leaves behind Manuals of Use for two of its surveys, and a data base which provides a rich foundation for future work by teachers, minority associations and other researchers.

Please put this first question individually to *all* pupils in your class:--

Question 1. 'DO YOU YOURSELF EVER SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE AT HOME APART FROM ENGLISH?'

Do not enter on this form pupils who answer 'no' to this first question. But for each pupil who answers 'yes', ask, and record answers to the following questions. (Where even a modest skill is claimed, treat this as a positive answer.)

Question 2. 'WHAT IS THE NAME OF THAT LANGUAGE?'

Question 3 'CAN YOU READ THAT LANGUAGE?'

Question 4 'CAN YOU WRITE THAT LANGUAGE?'

TO RECORD ANSWERS, PLEASE PUT A CIRCLE AROUND FIGURE 1 or 2 AS APPROPRIATE

Pupils Answering 'yes' to Question 1		Question 2 Name of Language Spoken	Question 3 Can Pupil Read it?	Question 4 Can Pupil Write it?	Notes on Dialect, Language of Literacy, Country, etc.	LEAVE THIS COLUMN BLANK PLEASE					
28-29	30		31	32		X 33	A 34-36	B 37-39	C 40-42	D 43-45	E 46-48
01	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
02	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
03	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
04	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
05	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
06	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							
07	boy - 1 girl - 2		yes - 1 no - 2	yes - 1 no - 2							

Schools Language Survey Questions,
and the top of the grid for teachers to record answers

3 Talking to your family and friends



9 Which two languages do you mainly use now with your family and friends?

FINISH EACH OF THE SENTENCES BELOW BY PUTTING A TICK IN ONE OF THE BOXES.



I use... and...

IF, FOR ANY REASON, THE SENTENCE DOESN'T APPLY TO YOU, TICK THE FOURTH BOX IN THE ROW.

BOTH LANGUAGES EQUALLY DOESN'T APPLY

When I'm talking...

- 10 to my father I usually speak
- 11 to my mother I usually speak
- 12 to my brother(s) I usually speak
- 13 to my sister(s) I usually speak
- 14 to my grandfather(s) I usually speak
- 15 to my grandmother(s) I usually speak



When I'm spoken to...

- 16 my father usually speaks to me in
- 17 my mother usually speaks to me in
- 18 my grandfather(s) usually speak(s) to me in
- 19 my grandmother(s) usually speak(s) to me in





20 In school breaks, my friends and I usually speak in

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21 Please write in the names of any other languages spoken in your family.

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The Linguistic Minorities Project

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