

BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN A MULTILINGUAL NATION

Attitudes towards Tok Pisin and Tolai in Papua New Guinea Primary Schools

Kilala Devette-Chee

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Canberra,
Australia

14 February 2014

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the attitudes towards Tok Pisin (an English-lexifier pidgin) and vernacular languages with specific focus on Tolai (an Austronesian language) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) primary schools and how these languages impact on PNG children's learning during transition to English in the current bilingual education program. It explores the attitudes of curriculum officers, teachers, parents and students toward these languages. Based on participants' views, the study also investigates whether the current policy on bilingual education is being implemented in schools..

Using a mixed methods framework (Creswell, 2003), the study was conducted in six primary schools in the Kokopo District of East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea. The study involved 413 participants who completed questionnaires which were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics and 47 additional participants who engaged in in-depth interviews and whose responses were analysed using the grounded theory approach.

This study contributes to international scholarship in terms of providing evidence that there was a general feeling of appreciation and support for the use of Tok Pisin more than for vernacular languages like Tolai in the education system. Children in particular embraced Tok Pisin far more than teachers and parents as it helps them enhance their understanding of English. This confirms Siegel's (1997) finding on Tok Pisin (and vernaculars), namely that it is a help and not a hindrance to students' learning. The study also addresses the practicalities of bilingual education in general, supporting the notion that where bi/multilingual education exists, there remains a dichotomy between supporters of mother tongue-based education and pidgin/creole-based education compared to supporters of the English-only curriculum.

The major conclusions that emerged from this study are that, although the current bilingual education program using a modified transitional model (Ball, 2010) has been in existence for the last eighteen years, the ultimate goal of the program has not yet been achieved due to many deficiencies. The current education reform seems to be encouraging bilingual education only as a bridge to learning English, and this does not help with the development of Tok Pisin and/or vernacular languages and their cultures. Secondly, there are a number of mismatches between policy and practice which need attention. The evidence shows that, among the schools that participated in this study, none are bilingual schools as initially envisaged by the National Department of Education's (NDOE) language policy. Instead the schools have trilingual and/or multilingual classes.

The thesis concludes with five recommendations for practice, two recommendations for policy, and two implications for future research and directions.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated in loving memory to my beloved parents: The Late Ronald Devete and The Late Alice Vitau-Devete, were the source of my inspiration during my upbringing. Without their unfailing love, discipline and guidance, this thesis would not have existed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has been completed with the inspiration, support and encouragement of many individuals in Australia and Papua New Guinea. Firstly, I wish to express my gratitude to my two supervisors. I am especially indebted to my primary supervisor, Associate Professor Elke Stracke, for her continued guidance, constructive criticisms and patience. Her expert and invaluable advice throughout the study culminated in the formation of this thesis. I am also grateful to my secondary supervisor, Dr. Mandy Scott, for her insight, suggestions and continued guidance.

Secondly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the University of Canberra's statisticians, Julio Romero and Dr. Judith Ascione, for their expert knowledge and advice. I would also like to thank Dr Joëlle Vandermensbrugge for her continued support and as a mentor during my three minute thesis competition finals.

Thirdly, I would like to acknowledge all friends and colleagues who have assisted and supported me during various stages of the study, particularly Sri Wahyuni, Yoshihiko Yamamoto, and Robert Easterbrook who shared an academic life with me in our postgraduate office. I am also indebted to the following academics of the Australian National University who were the source of my inspiration in taking up this research study: Professor Malcolm Ross and Professor Andrew Pawley for their expertise in Papuan Linguistics, Dr. Jennifer Hendriks for her insight on pidgins and creole languages, and Dr. Johanna Rendle-Short and Dr. Louise Jansen for the advice and assistance in my transfer from the Australian National University to the University of Canberra.

I particularly wish to thank my sponsors: AusAID (especially Rozana Muir for her continued support), the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra and my employer, the University of Papua New Guinea for their financial support throughout the study. I also express my sincere appreciation to all participants in this study namely: curriculum officers in Port Moresby, and teachers, parents and students in the six participating schools in East New Britain Province. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance and hospitality of the Director of Kokopo-Open Campus, Mr Ronnie Ilam, and his staff during my fieldwork in Kokopo.

Finally, my heartfelt appreciation goes to my beloved children: Graham, Trish, Michaelyne and Lloyd. Without their sacrifice, encouragement and support, this thesis would not have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iii
Certificate of Authorship of Thesis.....	v
Dedication.....	vii
Acknowledgements.....	ix
Table of Contents.....	xi
List of Tables.....	xxi
List of Figures.....	xxiii
List of Abbreviations.....	xxv
CHAPTER ONE: An Introduction to the Study.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study.....	2
1.3 Aims of the Research.....	4
1.4 Research Questions and Design.....	5
1.5 Significance and Contribution of the Study.....	6
1.6 Organization of the Study.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: The Context of the Study.....	11
2. Introduction.....	11
2.1 Background Context of Papua New Guinea.....	11
2.1.1 Papua New Guinea’s Cultural Diversity.....	11
2.1.2 Papua New Guinea’s Linguistic Situation.....	12
2.2 A Historical Overview of Education in Papua New Guinea.....	14
2.2.1 Traditional Education in Papua New Guinea.....	14
2.2.2 Formal and Western Style Education in Papua New Guinea.....	14
2.3 The Current Education Reform.....	18

2.4 Conclusion.....	21
CHAPTER THREE: Literature Review.....	23
3. Introduction.....	23
3.1 Theories on Language Attitudes.....	23
3.1.1 Students' Attitudes.....	24
3.1.2 Parents' Attitudes.....	25
3.1.3 Teachers' Attitudes.....	26
3.1.4 Attitudes towards Languages in Papua New Guinea.....	27
3.2 Bilingual Education.....	29
3.2.1 Bilingual/Multilingual Program Models.....	31
3.2.2 Strong Models of Bilingual Education.....	32
3.2.3 Weak Models of Bilingual Education.....	33
3.2.4. Studies on the Shortcomings or Weak Bilingual Education Programs.....	36
3.3 The Use of Vernaculars in Bilingual Programs in Papua New Guinea.....	37
3.4 Pidgins and Creoles and their Use in Education.....	38
3.4.1 The Origins of Pidgins and Creoles.....	38
3.4.2 The Origin of Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea.....	39
3.4.3 Pidgins and Creoles in Education.....	40
3.4.4 The Use of Tok Pisin in Schools in Papua New Guinea.....	42
3.5 Conclusion.....	42
CHAPTER FOUR: Methodology.....	45
4. Introduction.....	45
4.1 Selection of Research Design and Research Methodology.....	45
4.1.1 A Mixed Methods Research Methodology.....	45
4.1.2 Triangulation.....	47

4.2 Reliability and Validity of the Study.....	48
4.3 Selection of Location of Fieldwork and Participants.....	49
4.3.1 Location of Participating Schools.....	49
4.3.2 Selection of Participants.....	52
4.4 Data Collection Methods.....	54
4.4.1 Questionnaires.....	54
4.4.2 In-depth Interviews.....	56
4.5 Data Collection Procedures.....	56
4.5.1 Questionnaires.....	58
4.5.2 In-depth Interviews.....	59
4.6 Data Management.....	60
4.6.1 Questionnaires.....	60
4.6.2 In-depth Interviews.....	61
4.7 Data Analysis.....	61
4.7.1 Questionnaires.....	62
4.7.2 In-depth Interviews.....	63
4.8 Conclusion.....	65
CHAPTER FIVE: Findings of Questionnaires.....	67
5. Introduction.....	67
5.1 Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis.....	67
5.1.1 Tok Pisin Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis.....	68
5.1.1.1 Tok Pisin Teachers' Background Information.....	69
5.1.1.2 Tok Pisin Teachers' Language Use.....	70
5.1.1.3 Tok Pisin Teachers' Language Attitudes.....	72
5.1.1.4 Tok Pisin Teachers' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	74
5.1.2 Tolai Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis.....	80

5.1.2.1 Tolai Teachers' Background Information.....	80
5.1.2.2 Tolai Teachers' Language Use.....	81
5.1.2.3 Tolai Teachers' Language Attitudes.....	84
5.1.2.4 Tolai Teachers' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	86
5.1.3 Comparison of Tok Pisin and Tolai Teachers' Findings.....	91
5.2 Parents' Questionnaire Analysis.....	92
5.2.1 Tok Pisin Parents' Questionnaire Analysis.....	92
5.2.1.1 Tok Pisin Parents' Background Information.....	92
5.2.1.2 Tok Pisin Parents' Language Use.....	95
5.2.1.3 Tok Pisin Parents' Language Attitudes.....	95
5.2.1.4 Tok Pisin Parents' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	97
5.2.2 Tolai Parents' Questionnaire Analysis.....	101
5.2.2.1 Tolai Parents' Background Information.....	102
5.2.2.2 Tolai Parents' Language Use.....	103
5.2.2.3 Tolai Parents' Language Attitudes.....	104
5.2.2.4 Tolai Parents' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	106
5.2.3 Comparative Analysis of Tok Pisin and Tolai Parents.....	111
5.2.3.1 Comparison between Tok Pisin and Tolai Parents.....	111
5.2.3.2 Comparison of Language Attitudes: Parents vs Teachers.....	113
5.3 Students' Questionnaire Analysis.....	114
5.3.1 Tok Pisin Students' Questionnaire Analysis.....	115
5.3.1.1 Tok Pisin Students' Background Information.....	116
5.3.1.2 Tok Pisin Students' Language Use.....	116
5.3.1.3 Tok Pisin Students' Language Attitudes.....	119
5.3.1.4 Tok Pisin Students' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	120
5.3.2 Tolai Students' Questionnaire Analysis.....	123
5.3.2.1 Tolai Students' Background Information.....	123

5.3.2.2 Tolai Students' Language Use.....	124
5.3.2.3 Tolai Students' Language Attitudes.....	126
5.3.2.4 Tolai Students' Responses to Open-ended Questions.....	127
5.3.3 Comparison of Tok Pisin and Tolai Students' Findings.....	130
5.4 Conclusion.....	132
CHAPTER SIX: Findings of Interviews.....	133
6. Introduction.....	133
6.1 Interviews with Curriculum Officers.....	133
6.1.1 Curriculum Officers' Views of Languages in Education.....	134
6.1.1.1 The Use of Tok Pisin.....	134
6.1.1.2 The Use of English.....	135
6.1.1.3 The Use of Vernaculars.....	137
6.1.2 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards the Reformed Education System.....	138
6.1.2.1 Education Reform.....	138
6.1.2.2 Multilingualism and Bilingualism.....	139
6.1.2.3 Vernacular/Tok Pisin Education.....	140
6.1.3 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Teachers and Teaching.....	141
6.1.3.1 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Teacher Training.....	142
6.1.3.2 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Teachers' Qualifications.....	144
6.1.3.3 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Monitoring & Evaluation.....	145
6.1.4 Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards the Curriculum and Resources.....	146
6.1.4.1 Curriculum Unit.....	147
6.1.4.2 Resources.....	147
6.1.4.3 Challenges for Teachers.....	148
6.2 Interviews with Teachers.....	149
6.2.1 Teachers' Attitudes towards Bilingual Education.....	150

6.2.1.1	Positive Attitudes towards Bilingual Education.....	150
6.2.1.2	Negative Attitudes towards Bilingual Education.....	151
6.2.2	Teachers' Attitudes towards Languages in Education.....	153
6.2.2.1	Teachers' Attitudes towards English.....	153
6.2.2.2	Teachers' Attitudes towards Tok Pisin.....	156
6.2.2.3	Teachers' Attitudes towards Vernaculars.....	157
6.2.3	Teaching and Learning Resources.....	159
6.2.3.1	Lack of Teaching and Learning Resources.....	160
6.2.3.2	Resource Funding Needed.....	163
6.2.4	Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Strategies.....	164
6.2.5	Educational Challenges for Teachers.....	166
6.2.5.1	Vernacular/Tok Pisin Materials.....	166
6.2.5.2	Monitoring and Assessment.....	167
6.2.5.3	Providing Remedial Classes for Students.....	168
6.3	Interviews with Parents.....	168
6.3.1	Bilingual Education.....	169
6.3.1.1	Positive Attitudes towards Bilingual Education.....	170
6.3.1.2	Negative Attitudes towards Bilingual Education.....	170
6.3.2	Parents' Attitudes towards Language Education.....	171
6.3.2.1	English in Education.....	171
6.3.2.2	Tok Pisin in Education.....	174
6.3.2.3	Vernacular Languages in Education.....	175
6.3.3	Challenges.....	177
6.3.3.1	Challenges for Teachers.....	177
6.3.3.2	Challenges for Parents.....	178
6.4	Interviews with Students.....	179
6.4.1	Students' Attitudes towards Languages in School.....	180

6.4.2 Students' Language Proficiency.....	182
6.4.3 Learning English.....	182
6.5 Conclusion.....	184
CHAPTER SEVEN: Discussion.....	187
7. Introduction.....	187
7.1 Key Findings of Research Question One.....	188
7.1.1 Sub-Question One.....	188
7.1.2 Sub-Question Two.....	191
7.1.3 Important Factors Influencing Attitudes towards the Bilingual Program.....	193
7.1.3.1 The Importance of English.....	193
7.1.3.2 Transition from Tok Pisin/Vernacular Languages to English.....	197
7.1.3.3 Awareness of the Provisions of Bilingual Education Programs.....	198
7.1.3.4 The Influence of Training on Attitudes.....	199
7.1.3.5 Lack of Resources and Resource Funding.....	200
7.2 Key Findings of Research Question Two.....	202
7.3 Unexpected Findings.....	205
7.4 Conclusion.....	206
CHAPTER EIGHT: Conclusions and Recommendations.....	209
8. Introduction.....	209
8.1 Revisiting the Purpose of this Study.....	209
8.2 Key Findings of the Study.....	210
8.3 Limitations of the Study.....	211
8.4 Contribution to Theory.....	213
8.5 Implications and Recommendations of Research Findings.....	213
8.5.1 Recommendations for Practice.....	213

8.5.2 Recommendations for Policy.....	215
8.5.3 Implications for Further Research and Future Direction.....	216
8.6 Epilogue.....	217
REFERENCES.....	219
APPENDICES.....	235
Appendix 1: Interview Participants.....	235
Appendix 2: Tok Pisin Teachers’ Questionnaire	236
Appendix 3: Tolai Teachers’ Questionnaire	238
Appendix 4: Tok Pisin Parents’ Questionnaire	240
Appendix 5: Tolai Parents’ Questionnaire	242
Appendix 6: Tok Pisin Students’ Questionnaire	244
Appendix 7: Tolai Students’ Questionnaire	246
Appendix 8: Interview Guide for Curriculum Officers	248
Appendix 9: Interview Guide for Teachers	249
Appendix 10: Interview Guide for Parents	250
Appendix 11: Interview Guide for Grade 3 Students	251
Appendix 12: Letter to the Provincial Education Advisor	252
Appendix 13: Standard Letter to School Principals	253
Appendix 14: Letter from the Head teacher of Kokopo Primary School	254
Appendix 15: Letter from the Head teacher of Kabaleo Primary School	255
Appendix 16: Letter from the Head teacher of Kalamanaganan School	256
Appendix 17: Letter from the Head teacher of Takabur Primary School	257
Appendix 18: Letter from the Head teacher of Kabagap Primary School	258
Appendix 19: Letter from the Head teacher of Raluana Primary School	259

Appendix 20: Participant Information for Teachers and Parents Cover Page.....	260
Appendix 21: Participant Information for Teachers and Parents	261
Appendix 22: Informed Consent Form for Teachers and Parents	263
Appendix 23: Parents Information Letter re-Children	264
Appendix 24: Parent Consent Form	266
Appendix 25: Participation Information for Students	267
Appendix 26: Ethics Committee Approval	268
Appendix 27: A Curriculum Officer’s Sample Interview Transcript Identifying Chunks.....	270
Appendix 28: A Curriculum Officer’s Sample, Stage One ‘Open Coding’	274
Appendix 29: A Curriculum Officer’s Sample, Stage Two ‘Focused Coding’	276
Appendix 30: A Teacher’s Sample Interview Transcript	277
Appendix 31: A Teacher’s Sample, Stage One ‘Open Coding’	280
Appendix 32: A Teacher’s Sample, Stage Two ‘Focused Coding’	282
Appendix 33: A Parent’s Sample Interview Transcript	283
Appendix 34: A Parent’s Sample, Stage One ‘Open Coding’	287
Appendix 35: A Parent’ Sample, Stage Two ‘Focused Coding’	288
Appendix 36: A Student’s Sample Interview Transcript	289
Appendix 37: A Student’s Sample, Stage One ‘Open Coding’	292
Appendix 38: A Student’s Sample, Stage Two ‘Focused Coding’	293
Appendix 39: Hypothesis Test Summaries for Teachers, Parents and Students	294

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Data Collection Timetable	57
Table 2: Demographic Variables for Tok Pisin Teachers	68
Table 3: Tok Pisin Teachers' Personal Background Information	69
Table 4: Attitudinal Statements (Tok Pisin Teachers)	73
Table 5: Demographic Variables for Tolai Teachers	80
Table 6: Tolai Teachers' Personal Background Information.....	81
Table 7: Attitudinal Statements (Tolai Teachers)	84
Table 8: Demographic Variables for Tok Pisin Parents	93
Table 9: Tok Pisin Parents' Personal Background Information	94
Table 10: Sample Distribution of Languages Spoken by Tok Pisin Parents	95
Table 11: Attitudinal Statements (Tok Pisin Parents)	96
Table 12: Demographic Variables for Tolai Parents	102
Table 13: Tolai Parents' Personal Background Information	103
Table 14: Sample Distribution of Languages Spoken by Tolai Parents	104
Table 15: Attitudinal Statements (Tolai Parents)	105
Table 16: Background Information of Tok Pisin Students	115
Table 17: Tok Pisin Students' Language Usage	117
Table 18: Attitudinal Statements (Tok Pisin Students)	120
Table 19: Background Information of Tolai Students	123
Table 20: Tolai Students' Language Usage	124
Table 21: Attitudinal statements (Tolai Students)	126
Table 22: Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Languages in Education and the Reformed Education.....	134
Table 23: Curriculum Officers' Attitudes towards Teachers and Teaching.....	142
Table 24: Findings of Cross Case Analysis of Teachers	149
Table 25: Findings of Cross Case Analysis of Parents	169

Table 26: Findings of Cross Case Analysis of Students180

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: The bilingual education model in PNG.....	20
Figure 2: Map, location of Kokopo	50
Figure 3: Kabagap primary school – a rural school.....	50
Figure 4: Kokopo primary school – and urban school.....	51
Figure 5: A Grade 3 language lesson in Tok Pisin at Kokopo primary school.....	53
Figure 6: An overview of the participants who took part in the study	67
Figure 7: Languages Tok Pisin teachers use with colleagues at work.....	70
Figure 8: Languages Tok Pisin teachers use with colleagues after work.....	71
Figure 9: Languages Tok Pisin teachers use with students in class.....	71
Figure 10: Languages Tok Pisin teachers use with students after school	72
Figure 11: The impact of teaching and learning in Tok Pisin.....	74
Figure 12: Tok Pisin teachers’ preferences on languages used in school	76
Figure 13: Tok Pisin teachers’ views on the current education reform	78
Figure 14: Languages Tolai teachers use with colleagues at work.....	81
Figure 15: Languages Tolai teachers use with colleagues after work.....	82
Figure 16: Languages Tolai teachers use with students in class.....	83
Figure 17: Languages Tolai teachers use with students after school.....	83
Figure 18: The impact of teaching and learning in Tolai.....	86
Figure 19: Tolai teachers’ preferences on languages used in school.....	88
Figure 20: Tolai teachers’ views on the current education reform	89
Figure 21: The impact of the teaching of Tok Pisin on students’ academic achievements.....	97
Figure 22: Tok Pisin parents’ preferences on languages used in school	99
Figure 23: Tok Pisin parents’ views on the current bilingual education reform.....	100
Figure 24: The impact of the teaching of Tolai on students.....	107

Figure 25: Tolai parents’ preferences on languages used in school	108
Figure 26: Tolai parents’ views on the current bilingual education reform	110
Figure 27: Languages Tok Pisin students use with their teachers in the classroom.....	118
Figure 28: Languages Tok Pisin students use with their friends during recess and lunch in school.....	119
Figure 29: Languages Tok Pisin students’ perceive as important.....	121
Figure 30: Tok Pisin students’ views on languages not important to them.....	122
Figure 31: Languages Tolai students’ use with their teachers in the classroom	125
Figure 32: Languages Tolai students use with their friends during recess and lunch in school.....	126
Figure 33: Languages Tolai students perceive as important.....	127
Figure 34: Tolai students’ views on languages not important to them.....	129
Figure 35: A sample of a ‘Big Book’	162

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
BOM	Board of Management
CALP	Cognitive Academic Learning Proficiency
CDD	Curriculum Development Division
CRIP	Curriculum Reform Implementation Project
CUP	Common Underlying Proficiency
ESL	English as a Second Language
IBM	International Business Machines
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LMS	London Missionary Society
MAL	Making a Living
MOMASE	Morobe, Madang, Sepik Region
MT	Mother Tongue
NDOE	National Department of Education

NGI	New Guinea Islands
OBE	Outcome Based Education
OESM	Our English Series for Melanesia
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGEI	Papua New Guinea Education Institute
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Unitech	University of Technology
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
VTPPS	Viles Tok Ples Priskuls (village vernacular pre schools)