LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL COHESION
MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, THAILAND

FINAL DESK REVIEW
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, 2013-2014 WORK PLAN, STRATEGIES

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28 January 2013
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I. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises, lists and discusses the reading, interviews and observations conducted since the commencement of the project on 1 December 2012 and contains the overall conceptualisation for the project and a work plan of future activities. The work plan involves a series of intervention measures for 2013 and suggestions for further research.

Attached to this report is the First Deliverable provided on 20 December 2012, which described the preliminary work done on the project, and incorporated into the body of the report is the 31 December 2012 Myanmar Concept Note.

As agreed in discussions with Dr Meyers, Regional Education Advisor, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) on 22 and 24 January, the report does not discuss issues related to language and peacebuilding in Solomon Islands, originally envisaged as part of this consultancy but since removed from the Terms of Reference of this consultancy at the suggestion of Dr Meyers. A more detailed academic analysis of peacebuilding and conflict literature and its connections with language and ethnicity will be prepared separately. Not all the references consulted in the preparation of this report, listed in section IX, are cited in the report itself. The notes and comments made on these and other material, including extended interview data and observations, will form the backbone of an academic critique of language policy in the three countries for publication and conference presentation.

As supplied by Dr Meyers the Terms of Reference for the consultancy are as follows:

a. Desk review – collecting and reviewing a wide range of documentation to include:
   - Critical literature pertaining to the role of education language policies and practices in addressing, or exacerbating, conflict and social cohesions with ethnic and linguistic minorities in different contexts;

b. Initial visits to one-two countries for stakeholder and key informant interviews, additional document compilation, and planning for follow up visits

c. Participation in small consultation in EAPRO Bangkok and in the Language Rights, Inclusion and the Prevention of Ethnic Conflicts conference in Chiang Mai

d. Prepare a Final Report, including a conceptual frame for analysis, as well as recommended next steps in terms of carrying out follow up national research.

This statement of the work to be done will need to be modified to take account of the more elaborated statement of work reported for each of the three countries and collectively in sections III, IV, V and VI below. Section VIII, entitled Incorporating LP Into Conflict Studies is recommended as an urgent activity for UN agencies to prepare a more accurate and helpful set of guidelines for conflict management personnel regarding the multiple ways in which language questions, including but not limited to education, impact on prospects for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

I would like to record my gratitude to staff at the EAPRO, the Thailand and Malaysia Country Offices for their assistance during the course of this consultancy, and to the many individuals who have sent me information and made time available for discussion, not all of which has been able to be processed in this short consultancy period, but all of it will be scrutinised and included in the work as it proceeds. A special thanks goes to Ms Tanaporn Perapate and Ms Natcha Wimutachayanan for their assistance in various ways.
II. BACKGROUND

This report covers a period of 30 paid-days between 1 December 2012 and 31 January 2013 devoted to the Language, Education and Social Cohesion (LESC) initiative. This is a component of the overall UNICEF (EAPRO) Education and Social Cohesion multi-country initiative. The source for these activities is provided under an international Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts Programme supported by UNICEF in 10 counties globally and funded by a grant from the Government of the Netherlands. The overall aims of LESC address questions of language policy and planning, citizenship and ethnicity concerns in educational contexts.

The overall programme has been funded by the Government of the Netherlands in response to a UNICEF Headquarters proposal, which defines Education for Peacebuilding to include both Social Cohesion and Resilience with direct links to the issues of Disaster Risk Reduction, natural disasters, language policies and building on the dividends of peace.

The report aims to establish the platform for the conceptualisation of the LESC within the wider UNICEF project and the research and action strategies for 2013 and beyond.

Four UNICEF Country Offices replied positively to the invitation to participate in LESC: Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Solomon Islands. In published material available to the consultant the LESC activity is associated with the following concepts: conflict and conflict resolution, social cohesion, integration of minorities, ‘peacebuilding’, ethnicity, citizenship, literacy, multilingualism-bilingualism and their consequences for education delivery, disadvantaged minority populations, indigenous and minority populations, stateless and refugee populations, human rights and justice, mother tongue education, policy and planning on languages and identity. These are of course broad and diverse and it became immediately apparent once consultations with national officials, academic experts, community organisations and non-government agencies had commenced that the administrative and policy settings for the project would require a flexible approach to constructing the overall project.

There are clear differences as to what particular problems individual countries wish to have addressed in the project and major differences of understanding and interpretation of evidence cited to account for the interest of the country concerned in participating in the project. In addition there are differences between the priorities and ‘framing’ of what should be addressed by civil service organisations compared to how public officials see and represent questions. As a result it was determined in consultation with Dr Meyers that each country would be able to describe and title the initiative differently – selecting descriptive terms and the focus for research according to local preferences and priorities. As an overarching expression the term Language, Education and Social Cohesion (LESC) although adopted as temporary convenience to allow the project to commence has attracted consensus and will continue to be used in the current report and immediate future activities.

The first report (Deliverable One) describes the Government of the Netherlands-UNICEF agreement, the relationship of LESC with the research activities being undertaken by two other consultants, Ms Melinda Smith and Ms Amanda Seel, and the preliminary work undertaken in LESC to 20 December 2012. The present report completes the process of accounting for the work undertaken to 31 January 2013 and incorporates the Concept Note Myanmar (provided to EAPRO on 31 December 2012).
III. COMMON THEMES: MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, THAILAND

Common to all three settings involved in LESC is the broad challenge of multilingualism and educational delivery and effectiveness. This in turn is often a question of well-designed, well-executed, i.e. effective, language planning. The challenge of multilingualism for educational outcomes and social prospects for minority populations is due to the close but complex relationship between language and literacy diversity and education with the opportunities for social, citizenship and economic advancement that societies make available. As a result language questions are often implicated in conflict, tension and struggle within societies, and so a cause of intra-national tension is often related to ethnicity differences when these are represented by language differences, exacerbated when such differences are not negotiated, discussed and planned in a systematic and skilled way.

Also common to the situation of Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand are language related issues of identity, both nationally for the country concerned and sub-nationally for individual communities.

The three counties share contiguous borders and a long history of both cooperation and conflict. All three countries formally acknowledge freedom of worship while favouring a specific form of religious adherence, so that the state is closely associated with Theravada Buddhism in the case of Myanmar and Thailand, and Islam in the case of Malaysia, and all are comprised of large religious minorities, both within the dominant ethnic formation and also among individual minority populations. Across the three there is immense linguistic diversity, both at the level of named individual languages, and recognised dialects, but also across language families (Appendix One and Appendix Two). All have a close relationship with extra-national languages, and especially with English, discussed in more detail below.

ASEAN

In 1961 the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand formed a collaborative geo-political organisation called the Association of Southeast Asia, originally devoted to security, protection against perceived Communist expansion in the region and post-colonial development. ASA was the precursor to an expanded Association formalised by the Foreign Ministers of the three ASA states plus Indonesia and Singapore on August 8th of 1967 in the Bangkok Declaration, creating the Association of South East Asian Nations. ASEAN has since steadily expanded in size and remit. It now encompass ten Member States (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar and Viet Nam) and to its original aims of fostering economic growth, regional security and peace, and providing a forum for amicable negotiation and resolution of conflicts between member states, issues of social and cultural development have been added to its agenda. Specialised institutions created to support many of these areas of interest have been established in different locations across the region.
The economic fortunes of the three countries that are the focus of this research and policy process, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand, differ dramatically. Malaysia has enjoyed steady technological, income and general macro-economic expansion, as have some mainly urban zones of Thailand, while Myanmar remains overwhelmingly poor.

The South East Asian Economic Outlook newly produced by the OECD-Development Centre (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development), in collaboration with ASEAN, was released on 18 November 2012. The ASEAN countries are grouped together with China and India as part of “Emerging Asia”. The Outlook provides the most detailed current assessment of the economic health of the ASEAN states, describing the overall economic scene as one of “resilience” and forecasts robust growth rates of 5.1% for both Malaysia and Thailand between 2013 and 2017 (OECD, 2012a) and an impressive 6.3% for Myanmar (though generated from a much lower base). Malaysia and Thailand are grouped together for economic analysis within the ASEAN-6, while Myanmar resides within the CLMV category (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam) which lags behind (OECD, 2012b) of countries that lag behind on most macro-economic, trade performance and health and education measures.

Medium term strategies are reported for Malaysia (2011-2015, Charting Development Towards a High-Income Nation) and Thailand (2012-2016, Philosophy of a Sufficiency Economy) which intended as the “new growth and development strategies” for the immediate future; in the case of Malaysia this involves investment in human capital, liberalisation of the labour market, and enhancing the productivity of small and medium enterprises, while for Thailand the medium term strategy prioritises improvements to the healthcare system, fostering a ‘green economy’ and measures to raise the quality of education and reduce disparities in outcomes (OECD, 2012a: p 18-19).

Political and personal freedoms lag behind established international and especially United Nations standards. ASEAN’s recent activities for greater integration have involved the promulgation of a Human Rights Charter, seriously criticised by Amnesty International for the limitations suggested in the draft charter, leading Amnesty to call for its postponement (Amnesty International, 2012) while the Freedom House assessments of democratic governance and press liberties is critical of all countries in SE Asia, particularly Myanmar whose recent small steps towards constitutional and political liberalisation come against a long history of authoritarian and repressive military rule (Larkin, 2010, 2011).
Writing in the Jakarta Post on 25 August 2012 under the title of “Standardizing human rights in ASEAN” Yuyun Wahyuningrum, senior advisor for Indonesia’s non-government Human Rights Working Group, (2012: p.7) argued that the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights should “provide a more open and meaningful space for civil society groups” arguing that “[p]articipation is a right, especially for drafting a declaration on human rights” and that any such declaration needs “political recognition from the people as well as heads of states”. Wahyuningrum points out that greatest point of contestation is the idea that human rights can be limited by state or national prerogatives, such as public order, health, safety, morality, national security or “general welfare of the people”, which she considers “vague and arbitrary limitations” that should be hedged by safeguards and “remedies against abuse”. “Public morality” is especially problematical because of the likely ways such a vague and wide remit could be used, especially to restrict social and personal rights of women.

The interdependence and cooperation across all three countries, and the setting of shared benchmarks and standards of performance in education, economic affairs and human rights, will grow larger with the emergence of the ASEAN Economic Community. The AEC is the biggest move towards economic integration across SE Asia ever attempted by ASEAN and aims to transform what is a loose alliance of autonomous nation states into a consolidated single market and production base.

The AEC commencement date is 2015 and it is clear from the precedent of the adoption of a single market in the European Union that such supra-national collaboration has inescapable domestic consequences including on the cultural sphere. This is implied in the name “Asean Community” because the notion of a ‘community’ suggests a density of interaction and interdependence greater than pertains to a voluntary association between autonomous entities. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that AEC accelerates what was long assumed within ASEAN, as we can see from studying its official website (http://www.asean.org/), the adoption of a common flag, anthem, motto, day, dances and other such ‘bonding’ activities have anticipated closer interaction from its very inception. However, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration, in recent years the Association has now committed itself to accelerating the pace of cooperation and moving towards some kind of economic integration. In the course of doing this, it has also adopted a language policy, and formalized the longstanding undeclared status of English as its official ‘working language’ (Kirkpatrick, 2008).

As part of the preparatory work of the project I attended the anniversary celebrations of Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University in Bangkok, on Saturday 19 January as a guest of its president Dr Ponlasit Noochoochai. The ceremony was notable for its strong themes of ASEAN regionalism and focus on the higher education consequences for student and academic mobility in light of AEC, with particular prominence for Malaysia and Myanmar.

The importance of the current phase of ASEAN integration is described in the Mahidol University College of Management website as follows:

“...The economic integration goals will include the elimination of tariffs, free professional movement, capital and a faster customs clearance procedure. Free Trade Area (FTAs) will be a key strategy for ASEAN to gain greater market access into trading partners and to attract foreign direct investments to ASEAN. AEC will increase regional economic prosperity and stability and reduce the development gaps among members. The guiding principles of establishing the AEC is that ASEAN shall act in accordance to the principles of
an open, outward-looking, inclusive and market-driven economy consistent with multilateral rules as well as adherence to rules-based systems for effective compliance and implementation of economic commitments.” Mahidol UCM: 2013).

Indigenous Languages
As ASEAN integrates, English becomes stronger within its operations, but space and organisational possibilities also emerge from the bottom up. An excellent example is the “Statement of Indigenous Peoples & Ethnic Minorities of ASEAN” (IP&EM, 2012). The alliance of independent organisations promoting the Statement is shaping its membership and advocacy around the future shape of ASEAN and the spaces for debate and advocacy these make available, so that indigenous peoples are cooperating across national borders, but within ASEAN, to promote and protect land rights, resources and ethnic cultures. In part this Statement reads:

“We, the Indigenous Peoples/Ethnic Minorities comprise more than 100 million representing distinct identities and diverse cultures in the ASEAN. We are referred to in different names such as ethnic minorities, hill tribes, indigenous communities, orang asli, orang asal, ethnic groups, ethnic nationalities, masyarakat adat, among others. However, we are facing common historical injustices of marginalization, exclusion, discrimination, forced assimilation. At the same time, we continue to assert our distinct identities, self-governance, traditional livelihoods and resource management systems as well as our socio-cultural institutions in the midst of mainstream national political, cultural and economic systems and legal framework.”

An IP&EM workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 15 November 2012, lamented many injustices including “development aggression” by “extractive industries, hydropower, mining, oil, gas, economic land concessions, plantation projects, etc. coupled with militarization in some countries resulting to the displacement of communities” a “profit and greed driven economic development model” whose impact on indigenous people is particularly serious. One of the main claims of this broad based coalition of traditional peoples is against the “[lack of support for indigenous educational institutions, particularly mother tongue education and traditional health-care systems and the lack of access and provision of adequate education, healthcare and other services” and they call for ASEAN level action for recognition of collective rights to “our own identity, language, culture and collective ways of life with our lands, territories and resources through the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that was supported by all member states of ASEAN and other international human rights instruments”.

We can see here how people-based activity of bottom up policy and state based measures are both linked to ASEAN 2015 and the likelihood that region-based action will become greater, more standardized and coordinated over time. The supra-national action supporting languages of wider communication, especially English, and sub-national action supporting languages of local communication interact with the central level of national communication. Classically in language policy analysis national languages serve functions of political and administrative unification with the boundaries of the polity and foster national level cultural identity. Each level interacts with all the others in an ‘ecological’ system of communication, sharing the load of communication needs for different purposes and different groups of people. Intervening through government policy or private action on only one level will have repercussions for other levels, whether this is intended or not.
For these reasons and because of the links between the three countries that are the focus of
the present work peace-building and conflict reduction language planning research and
interventions are proposed collectively as well as individually for Myanmar, Malaysia and
Thailand.

An ecological approach to language education planning
The term ‘ecology’ is used to underscore the interconnections across the communication
resources and needs of individuals and groups within a particular society. It is critical to
address all aspects of communication (spoken and written) within a community, rather than to
act on some in isolation and so attention is needed at the sub-national, national and extra-
national levels. Across the three countries inevitably this will involve attention to English
and other languages of extra-national origin which have some local importance, as Arabic, or
Chinese and Japanese; to the national languages of each context: Bahasa Malaysia or Bahasa
Melayu, Myanmar language (Burman), and Thai; and to the sub-national languages of ethnic
and regional populations. A fully comprehensive policy should also address the
communication needs of blind and deaf populations and of the non-literate, or those with low
levels of literacy. However, these are beyond the remit of the current research. Even if not
all are able to be addressed, a depiction of the full range of communication needs allows us to
identify what might be recommended for other bodies to address.

English
Whether as an inherited colonial language, or because it fulfils global lingua franca functions
today, English plays an important role in language education in all countries in Asia (Cha and
Ham, 2008), and has a central role within the overall ASEAN project (Kirkpatrick, 2012;
2012b; Rappa and Wee, 2006). Because it is part of the overall language ecology (Lo
Bianco, 2004, 2010a, 2010b) English can be productively looked at in conjunction with other
language and communication issues, instead what often tends to happen is that Ministries of
Education and social elites typically concentrate attention on their efforts to acquire prestige
forms of English, neglecting, distorting or exacerbating other communication needs in the
community. It is important to note that acquisition of English is highly stratified, this means
that the proficiency levels attained and the kinds of English learned are differentiated
according to place of residence and socio-economic opportunity, in effect poorer rural
children acquire English less well than urban and privileged children (Lo Bianco, 2011a;
Kirkpatrick 2010), if at all, and the kinds of English they do acquire can sometimes invoke
stigma and compound their social disadvantages. This is partly because the styles of
language (linguistic repertoire) that are acquired are shaped by the social domains and
opportunities in which we acquire them. Those who have available restricted and socially
selective opportunities are often precluded from gaining prestige forms of expression. If
English is to be granted central importance in education systems for all students it is
important ensure that English does not further compound the disadvantages already manifest
for the urban poor and rural, or other minority populations.

It is likely that ASEAN integration will also mean that Bahasa Malaysia/Melayu and-Bahasa
Indonesia, will become more attractive Chinese and Japanese are also likely to be in demand
as trade languages, Arabic for its associations with religious texts for Muslims, and other languages that support tourism, trade or other economic purposes.

This foreign language study linked to learning national languages often means that the space in curriculum for local indigenous languages becomes tenuous. These demands on curriculum time require innovation in methodology to deliver multiple language study, in ways that allows integration of subject content and language, and also planning for the overlapping literacy demands of these languages. Language education planning should therefore adopt an ecological and comprehensive approach to make the most of the opportunities and to diminish negative consequences.

One response is proposed by Kirkpatrick (2010 and 2012a) and in several of the chapters contained in Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012) on how English and local languages might be combined in language curricula. Some of these proposals go against the trend in many SE Asian contexts, such as Kirkpatrick’s idea (2012a) that English teaching be deferred to secondary or at least upper primary levels of schooling. Most of this and a large body of research across the world with many studies based in Asian settings support mother tongue based multilingual education (UNESCO, 1953, 1996, 2003, 2010; Skutnab-Kangas, Maffi and Harmon, 2003; Premsrirat, in press; Premsrirat and Bruthiaux, 2012). Kirkpatrick (2010, 2012b) extends this conceptualisation directly into English itself, shifting focus away from the classic method and approach of English as a foreign language (where the language is taught on the assumption that its contexts of communication are far removed from the learner’s world), to embrace the emerging English as a lingua franca (ELF) approach (Jenkins, 2007; Mauranen and Ranta, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2003). This shift is advocated in relation to what is considered correct and appropriate usage of English, also to how English is taught. Essentially what is being advocated is the formal acceptance of spoken, locally emerging varieties of English, so that the linguistic and pragmatic norms of communication on which an English curriculum are based should be sensitive to local varieties of the language and its local multilingual contexts of use.

While this will be criticised by some as supporting ‘sub-standard’ forms of English, Kirkpatrick is building a case from a strong multilingual sociolinguistics and the everyday reality that English is rarely the first or even the dominant language of most of its users in the region, and that practices of code-switching and transfer will characterise its use. In effect this means recognising that in its use English is a ‘multilingual language used by multilingual people’ as Kirkpatrick has described it, and an “Asian language” (McArthur, 2003) used locally for local interactions in which local references are made adapting the language to user needs. According to this line of reasoning the empirical reality of local English communication practices and norms should at least inform standards and targets for teaching. In addition these consolidating communication patterns should also influence the cultural information used in English teaching programs so that they feature contexts of reference that pertain in SE Asian settings to a much greater degree than America, Australian, British or other ‘native’ reference contexts.
Malaysia has been particularly active in experimentation around English teaching. One recent example was in 2002 when by Prime Ministerial decision science, technology and mathematics subjects were no longer taught in the national language but in English (Azirah, 2009; Gill, 2004). The justification was that different social groups acquired English at different rates affecting unequally University access (Gill, 2007) among Malaysia’s main ethnic groups. The move proved extremely controversial and was abandoned by 2009 after strong protests from defenders of the national language, however it shows that even foreign language teaching policy is a potential cause of social tension and conflict (see Lo Bianco, in press; and Bernama, 2009; Chapman, 2009; Chapman et al, 2011) and is evidence of the ecological basis of communication, where all the languages of a speech community are implicated by decisions directed at only one of them.

In Kirkpatrick and Sussex (2012) the 2009 ASEAN Charter which declares English its sole working language is a critical point of language policy making that will have repercussions into education policy in all ASEAN countries for many years. Because of the principles of language ecology this determination will have ripple effects into general education planning, so that efforts to support local and minority languages in education will have to be reconciled with the press for prestige foreign languages. All across the region, in settings such as China (Lo Bianco, Orton and Gao, 2009), the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Djite’, 2011) and throughout Asia (Tollefson and Tsui, 2004; Tsui and Tollefson, 2007) English as medium of instruction is being applied from early childhood settings to higher education, often against considerable reaction and stoking controversy because of the socially regressive patterns of its acquisition. As we have seen above the ASEAN Charter is reinforced further by the 2015 trade and mobility liberalisation moves, and in the Thai and Malaysian consultations for this project several interviewees indicated that both English and Malay will be advantaged by these regional developments.

The effect of this on the language education possibilities and needs in Southern Thailand with its press for more recognition of Patani Malay, and acquisition of standard forms of Malay alongside English, makes for a considerable addition to the educational needs of the region. Malaysia has been grappling with the post-colonial legacy of English since independence, and English is more controversial there also because of the relatively large size of the main minority groups, and the vernacular based organisation of schooling. Thailand has a single consolidated schooling system, with after-hours and weekend arrangements supporting ethnic and linguistic minorities, in most cases, and English has tended to be seen as a ‘foreign’ language of prestige and opportunity, rather than a legacy of former colonial times. However, this part of the equation is shared by Malaysia and Myanmar where differential access to and acquisition of English contribute to policy challenges that affect intercultural and inter-ethnic relations. It is notable in Larkin’s two accounts of life in Myanmar (2010; 2011) how frequently English, and the restrictions of the right to freely read English literature, are cited as indicators of general political repression and limitations on freedom of thought.

The growth of English can be seen against the waning power of metropolitan English centres, and the rise of China and India in trade and economic terms, and yet, even against this wider geo-political and strategic away from the West and towards Asian economic powerhouses, demand for English in the region is accelerating. This is evidence of the lingua franca
argument, that English has attained a level of institutional and social penetration that makes its place independent of the current power of any of its originating centres.

In this context English and its teaching will need to be included in the language, peacebuilding and social cohesion considerations for Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand, especially for minority populations. The adoption by ASEAN of English as its sole working language and more push for English within all three countries will increase pressure on local languages for the limited curriculum space available, after the teaching of obligatory national languages.

There are other similarities and commonalities across the three countries. The first is an increasingly shared international literature, and a growing body of common concepts on language policy, linguistic human rights, literacy and multilingual education. Much of the activity envisaged here is part of the discipline of language policy and planning (Spolsky, 2011; Lo Bianco, 2010b, 2012c). Language policy is a sub-set of language planning, and language education policy is a sub-set of language policy. Not all language education policy is explicitly declared, often it is assumed and the move to explicit language planning is often the chance to address important questions that otherwise are not systematically dealt with (Warotamasikkhadit and Person, 2011). Comprehensive language planning is a burgeoning field of research and practice all across the world, greatly expanding because of globalization, with language problems frequently an under-estimated component of social conflict and tension within societies.

Important recommendations guiding language in many parts of the world come from international collaboration under the aegis of UNESCO, such as its position paper Education in a Multilingual World (UNESCO, 2003). Its three guiding principles are: “mother tongue instruction” to improve the quality and outcomes of educational experiences by grounding schooling on the knowledge and experience of learners; “bilingual and or multilingual education” to promote social and gender equality in public education; and “intercultural education” to encourage understanding between various population groups. Somewhat neglected in this scheme however are two additional principles, that of multilingual and mother tongue based education as an effective means for mastering literate and spoken language for citizenship and economic mobility for minorities within national communities, and the acquisition of languages of wider communication to global citizenship and economic opportunities. This wider range of: MT based instruction + multilingual education + interculturalism + multiple literacies + languages of wider communication is the language repertoire adopted in the present report.

Because of these similarities, and conscious of the growing moves towards standardisation of education across ASEAN, some shared actions are proposed. It is intended during 2013 to assist in the conceptualisation of the field of comprehensive language education planning in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand, building on the strong existing foundations of language policy in Malaysia and Thailand, and stimulating these in the case of Myanmar. Common research and analysis methods will be explored through the deliberative democracy literature and sociolinguistic processes of language attitude and capability testing.
Training Workshop on Methods and Techniques of Participatory Language Planning

It is recommended that a specialist seminar be organised for indigenous and minority populations of the three countries, preferably to be held in a location accessible to participants from the states of Sabah and Sarawak, as well as the Orang Asli and other minority representatives of peninsular Malaysia; minority populations of Thailand and Myanmar. Collaboration with existing ‘on-the-ground’ minority language groups, interested and active non-government bodies, such as SIL International, bodies involved in the Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education Network, http://mlenetwork.org/og/asia-mle-wg and academic centres with specialist experience and talent, such as the Resource Center for Revitalization and Maintenance of Endangered Languages and Cultures, at Mahidol University Thailand is strongly encouraged.

The main aim of the workshop/seminar should be on skills transfer, information exchange on methods and techniques of corpus and status language planning, and on action research methods to support local and effective language planning.

Academic Presentations

During the latter phase of the 2013 project it is recommended to make public presentations on language education, conflict resolution and peace-building research and activity of LESC. This is in keeping with the initial UNICEF-Government of Netherlands agreement that knowledge production and new insights should be a key outcome of the overall project. Results, implications and findings from LESC will be offered as plenary and panel presentations at the following:

1. 'Multi-Lingual Education and its Contribution to Peace Building'. Education and Development, Reflecting, Reviewing, Re-visioning to be held on 10-12 September, 2013, at New College, Oxford University, England; and
2. 'Multi-Lingual Education and its Contribution to Peace Building' presentation at the Asia MLE Conference, 6-8 November, 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.

It is also intended ultimately to produce these as a consolidated academic volume as an extended treatment of the conflict-peacebuilding-language connections as originally envisaged in the Government of Netherlands-UNICEF November 2011 agreement.

The research phases of LESC in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand will address:

  a. Desk review – collecting and reviewing a wide range of documentation to include:
     • Critical literature and document review pertaining to education and language policies and practices, to education and peace building, social cohesions and resilience and to education for ethnic groups and linguistic minorities in different contexts;
  b. Initial visits to NPT and Yangon, as well as to 1-2 States/Regions for stakeholder and key informant interviews, additional document compilation, identification of additional key informants and issues, and planning for follow up visits
  c. Follow up visits for more in depth interviews and data collection, including with local leaders, Headmasters, etc etc
  d. Sharing of initial findings, analysis and recommendations and preparation of Report
  e. Preparation for and eventual implementation of facilitated deliberations around comprehensive language education planning and policy
IV. MALAYSIA

The approximately 26 million citizens of Malaysia are represented linguistically in three Ethnologue country reports, one dedicated to Peninsular Malaysia and one each for the states of Sabah and Sarawak. The entry for Malaysia also contains four, detailed language maps, reproduced at Appendix One, and an extensive list of SIL and other publications. Malaysia’s language complexity is impressive, in terms of individual languages and language families, as indicated on the following maps. 41 languages are noted for the peninsula, 52 for Sabah and 44 for Sarawak.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MYP
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MYK
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MYS
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country_bibl.asp?name=MY

In meetings conducted in December 2012 the clear preference of Ministry of Education officials was that the LESC project should operate in Malaysia as a subset of “national unity”, i.e. that the research and activities should be presented publicly under the rubric of fostering national unity. In meetings held with community based and human rights organisations, and representatives of various language and ethnic interests, a much wider approach was advocated and many questions were raised for attention, some are clearly beyond the scope and possibilities of this activity, while others impinge on the work to be undertaken, and still others will shape and influence the focus and emphasis of the research and interventions: racism and human rights violations; ethnic tensions; an integrated school system; English/Malay as joint media of instruction; streamed schooling for either vernacular school students, principally the Chinese and Indian systems; admission of stateless to education; human rights, independent examinations of human rights questions. These are reported below.

On 19 December 2012 at the UNICEF Malaysia offices in Kuala Lumpur an extended and very productive discussion with representatives of human rights groups, indigenous and ethnic/vernacular minority interests, stateless and undocumented children’s advocates, corporate responsibility agents from industry and business, government, aid, academic and other interests.

The following comments were recorded by the Malaysia Country Office, supplemented by my own notes and points made to me personally before and after the meeting, and in extensive email correspondence with several participants since the meeting. The points are listed without commentary and are modified only to remove individual attribution, some of the phrasing reflects the third person reference as listed by the note taker:

- “attention needs to be focused on the drop-out rates within the national schools; especially the indigenous groups and students from the Tamil schools”;
- “helpful if Professor Joseph could get access to Kampung Medan as it may provide Professor Joseph with a number of good case studies”;
- some of what is done in ‘civics education’ was seen as prejudicial to some communities, using “highly questionable methodologies” and provoking tension;
- “the Mother-Tongue issue... the single school system vs. multi school system”;
- “we need to know if having a single school system would be as bad for non-Malays as some people may claim”; “We need more research done on these areas”;

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Malaysian Education Blueprint: “...the Tamil and Chinese primary schools have grown in numbers – but the drop-out rates are high after students from vernacular schools make the transition to National schools (secondary level)”; “the remove classes – although this system will be abolished by 2017 - it is still a concern for the students from the vernacular schools as they struggle with the Malay language when they enter secondary level”; “a lot of work still needs to be done on the education system in the rural areas. Speaking from [my] experience and with research done by [my] organization; the studies show that there is a lack of teachers in the rural areas who can ‘connect’ with the students in their mother tongue. Most students from the rural areas are struggling with the national language and most drop-out half way through the school semester as they cannot cope with the language”; “it would be helpful if Professor Joseph could link poverty with drop-out rates amongst the Orang Asli and indigenous groups ‘; “the passing grades between the rural and urban students are getting wider now compared to ten years ago. ... pointed out that perhaps under certain circumstances such as to compensate for lack in quality of teaching of some teachers- parents from the urban areas are able to send their children to additional tuition classes; unlike the rural students whose parents are unable to afford the fees”; Millennium Development Goals, 2010 report: “the report has shown that the quality of education in Malaysia is dropping and this is an extreme concern”; “the lack of quality trained teachers could be one of the main contributors to the low standard of education in Malaysia”; “if Prof. Joseph could look into the areas of a) transition of students from vernacular primary schools to national secondary schools, and b) why is there a big number of drop-out rates in remove classes”; The acceptance of the Unified Examination Certificate (UEC) was raised ... “UEC is recognized as a qualification for entrance into may tertiary educational institutions around the world, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Singapore, Australia and many others. However, the UEC is not recognized by the Government of Malaysia for entry into public universities”; “drop-out rates are very bad for Orang Asli”; “issues faced by the Orang Asli children and indigenous groups in Sabah and Sarawak are very bad”; “the national school curriculum is difficult for them (Orang Asli children) to catch up as they are not accustomed to the National language. If the Government could provide support in this area by incorporating the usage of their own mother-tongue language – it would not only help the students with their school work but to make learning enjoyable again”; “based on [our] research, most Orang Asli students feel discriminated when they are unable to pick up or cope with the Malay language in school. This would inadvertently cause them to quit school out of frustration”; “issue of access to education – most Orang Asli students would travel for hours to reach their schools”; “. aside from students having to learn the Malay language – emphasis should also be placed for the students to learn the English language as most Malaysian youths who enter the labour market would find themselves struggling to compete with candidates who have a stronger command of English”;
• “Professor Joseph to do a study on the vast number of drop-out rates amongst the Chinese and Tamil students; especially in the secondary level”;
• “remove classes... actually a good system but ... it has failed over the years because of the lack of funding and bias policy and that these factors may have contributed to the drastic fall of the remove class system”.

A major theme in these discussions was the question of “national integration”, named in different ways by different individuals, and how closely tied the tense issues of who is seen to belong to the state, and notions of unity within the diverse framework of the nation, is linked to language. There appear to be four kinds of links to language: the status and learning of the national language and its relationship to the two main vernacular language groups, Chinese and Tamil; the learning of the national language by indigenous pupils and its relationship with their own languages; language rights for minority language speakers; and equitable access to English. There is a large literature on language planning in Malaysia and considerably more time is required to absorb this and develop the topics mentioned above to build a practical response to the expressed needs.

One issue raised by the corporate responsibility representatives and the UNICEF officers concerned the children of stateless families, most of whom live a highly precarious life in legal limbo, exacerbated by extreme poverty and occasionally by physical isolation. A recent study by Ratnavadiel, Yasin, Nagappan, Lebar and Somekh (2012) is focused on how to improve and stabilize an acceptable minimum education for such extremely disadvantaged children, particularly those living on oil plantations.

The proposals made by this UNICEF and UPSI study link the education of such children to the Education for All part of the Millennium Development Goals, and specifically the achievement of complete primary education by 2015. Compounding the already forbidding problems of often extreme poverty and long distance from schools the ‘non-citizen’ legal status problems of the children involved effectively and categorically denies most of them any serious prospect of proper basic schooling. Excluded from Malaysian schools the education of such children has fallen to somewhat ‘makeshift’ arrangements put together by non-government organisations, international aid agencies and others. While Ratnavadiel et al only addresses the plantations of Sabah, the problem is encountered all across Malaysia.

The cooperation of the major plantation companies, such as Genting Plantations, JC Chang, Sime Darby, IOI, Hap Seng and PPB Oil Palm among others augurs well for a cooperative response to the urgent needs of these children. Sime Darby were represented at my meetings in Kuala Lumpur and confirmed their interest and commitment to support initiatives to provide at least basic education to stateless children. The recommendations proposed by the study (pp 85-87) aim to establish improved provision, some kind of parity with Malaysian Government school standards, fair remuneration, employment and professional development for teachers, improved and safe physical structures for classroom activities and moves towards secondary provision. In the second phase of work of this project attention should be paid to supporting and extending these initiatives particularly regarding literacy and language acquisition.

Also on 19 December 2012 at the Ministry of Education offices in Putrajaya an extended and very productive discussion took place led by Dr. Faridah Binti Abu Hassan, Director of Educational Planning and Research Division (EPRD), of the Ministry of Education and 10 senior representatives of the Ministry. Dr. Faridah presented a detailed account of the
implementation strategy for curriculum areas and specific information about a range of current programs. Discussion focused on definitions and teaching of ideas and ‘feelings’ of ‘national unity’. Each curriculum area specialist leader from the Ministry supplied detailed information about how the theme of national unity is addressed within his/her specific field of responsibility, as part of the general aims of enhancing “unity within diversity”. It was agreed with them however that some improvements to some programs can be envisaged and time is required to explore in more detail with the Ministry, especially with curriculum officers in sports, arts, languages, and other domains on shared work, language use, language and identity, and related themes.

At the conclusion of the meeting Dr Faridah requested further work and collaboration and assistance on questions of method and content change for ‘national unity’ programs. Dr Faridah subsequently recommended that Dr Siti Zaleha of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, make contact with me for collaborative work on the questions raised.

It is proposed to make contact with and explore joint research on language and conflict with several individuals and organisations associated with the Malaysian scene:

1. Dr. Helen Ting, (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, who has just completed a PhD on ethnicity and university entrance and conditions;
3. Dato’ Dr Siti Zaleha binti Abdullah Sani, Senior Fellow, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, who has made contact with me following a recommendation from the Ministry, for shared research on how to improve the effectiveness of “national unity” programs.

Unlike Thailand the projected program of work in Malaysia, fruit of a single two day visit, will require follow-up, a visit to Sarawak and Sabah, consultations with SUHAKAM, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, and especially Ms. Jannie Lasimbang, Commissioner who has addressed minority education issues.

V. MYANMAR

The approximately 48 million citizens of the Union of Myanmar live in one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. The language diversity, according to the Ethnologue entry for the country, involves some 78% who speak Tibeto-Burman languages, 10% who speak Daic languages, 10%, Austro-Asiatic languages 7%, Hmong-Mien languages. Along with immigrant languages of diverse origins the total number of listed living languages for Myanmar is 111 (in some calculations the number is 110). No language map is supplied for Myanmar. The Burmese script is used to write Myanmar language, Karen languages and Mon, a member of the Mon-Khmer group of Austroasiatic languages spoken in Myanmar and Thailand.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MM
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country_bibl.asp?name=MM

LESC research and intervention activities will take place in the context of the Government of Myanmar initiative, supported by diverse Development Partners, to undertake a Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR), as part of a general national reform
agenda whose principal aim is to raise economic and social development. An overarching goal of this process and related reform agendas currently underway is to foster the development of a “modern developed nation through education” (Myanmar Ministry of Education, vision statement, 2004) and the wider 30 Year Long Term Basic Education Development Plan, 2001-2031. Critically relevant are the overarching constitutional provisions for the national language, for multilingualism and for the distribution and outcomes of education provision and employment/economic opportunity.

The Myanmar sociolinguistic profile is very complex, comprising more than 110 spoken languages (accompanied by an unknown number of sign languages), with seven main “ethnic” language clusters Chin, Kachin, Kayah (Karenni), Kayin (Karen), Mon, Rakhine and Shan, spoken by more than 23 million people and distributed within correspondingly-named State administrations (Lewis, 2009). Another group of about 11 languages can be identified with speaker populations exceeding 100,000 each. Within this great diversity there is a large number of nested dialects and many highly variable multi-literate realities, including many languages lacking orthographic standardisation (Burling, 2003). The national language, Myanmar, is represented across the national territory, claiming 32 million speakers but highly variable rates of knowledge of its standard forms, and of its literacy.

The nature of cross-language bilingualism/multilingualism, and knowledge of foreign languages, knowledge of and use of ‘proximal’ languages (Chinese and Indian languages), are distributed in a highly variable pattern of urban/rural and shaped by education levels, occupation and mobility (Bradley, 1997; Lewis, 2009).

A true sociolinguistic profile would need to be sensitive to levels and distribution of sign languages, communication systems for the language disabled and other communication questions that impact on access to education or training, and prospects of access to remunerated employment.

The CESR will provide a detailed account of all aspects of educational practice and policy, from which areas of needed reform and improvement can be identified. The achievement of Myanmar’s education and social goals, including the Myanmar application of the Millennium Development Goals, will be influenced by the quality, comprehensiveness and credibility of the CESR and the pointers it provides for productive policy development.

It is anticipated that the Rapid Assessment phase of the CESR which will be completed in early 2013 will inform LESC activity, which could conceivably be seen as a key element of CESR Phases II and III, intended to last through to December 2013 and mid-2014 respectively.

Specifically the LESC project integrates with existing DP-supported programmes, most directly the Quality Basic Education programme (QBE) of the Multi Donor Education Fund (MDEF), which will undertake research, generate monitoring and evaluation, and produce evidence for policy-making and pilot new approaches to addressing critical challenges in basic education delivery and standards. Of most direct relevance is the language and literacy strategy of the Quality Basic Education Programme, the just-commenced $60 million 4 year basic education programme funded by the multi-donor education fund (MDEF).

LESC will aim to take a comprehensive language planning approach, involving early childhood education, primary schooling and post-primary education. It will aim to offer
concrete methods of language planning to support multi-lingual education in ethnic minority languages, Myanmar (national language) and strategic foreign languages (English, primary grades, medium of instruction in grades 10 and 11) guided by the principles elaborated below. A comprehensive approach will be prepared in consultation with all relevant policy, community and research interests in the Myanmar context looking at:

- Integrated language and literacy education (medium of instruction, relation of first, second and additional languages, links between literacy and curriculum content, pedagogy, notions of bilingualism and conceptual development, identity and inter-culturalism, transition points and sequencing in curriculum, etc);
- The Myanmar reform priority, as I understand it presently, is to shift from English to bilingual (Myanmar/English) medium in mathematical and science subjects in upper secondary grades; this too and related questions of assessment, training and materials development should comprise part of the comprehensive approach;
- The beginning point will be to explore outcome proficiency skills desired by the community of interests (speaker groups, policy makers, researchers etc) in relation to the likely communicative outcomes from current provision with proposals for overcoming gaps and deficiencies identified;
- The work will be sensitive to questions of literacy, concept development and school participation; equity and access; drop out and discontinuation and re-entry possibilities; identity and citizenship; and economy and labour market questions;
- The approach will be guided by principles of effective language outcomes, language rights and opportunities, social cohesion and national unity in the context of the recognition of diversity and pluralism and the opportunity for all, mainstream and minority populations alike, to gain the spoken proficiency, literate and cultural knowledge and skills to support equal opportunity and full participation in national life;
- The overarching objective should be to foster an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive evidence-based policy on language education; with facilitated deliberations to gain stakeholder commitment to the aims and requirements of full and effective implementation.

VI. THAILAND

The Ethnologue entry for the Thailand’s approximately 63 million citizens shows that about 94% speak Daic languages and about 2% Austro-Asiatic languages, 2% Austronesian languages and 1% Tibeto-Burman languages and smaller proportions who use Hmong-Mien languages. Along with immigrant languages and proximal regional languages the total number of listed languages is 74. Because the national and official language has its own unique script questions of orthography and writing systems are more present in Thailand than in either Malaysia or Myanmar.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=TH
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country_bibl.asp?name=TH

The term Thai-ization recurs in writing related to the incorporation of minorities into Thai social, political and educational life, though it can have two quite distinct meanings. According to Kanchanawan (2011), the first of the meanings of Thai-ization is “broad”, essentially indistinguishable from cultural assimilation, the author citing instances of this
kind of Thai-ization from among the Chong of Rayong, Chanthaburi and Trat provinces and as applied to the Melayu Patani in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat provinces in the far south of the country. The narrow use of the term Thai-ization refers essentially to orthographic and script reform (these are not exactly the same thing) and in particular script reform for non-scripted languages or for languages changing script, so that they come to use the Thai script rather than existing or lapsed one, or as the preferred choice against alternatives available for selection. The narrow form of Thai-ization can be, according to the author, not assimilationist but can instead foster cultural pluralism, by permitting preservation of endangered languages and fostering improved academic learning for minority language children. She argues this because the new script, Thai, is shared with the ‘out-groups’ of the wider society, and so its use can foster intercultural dialogue as well.

This argument is extended by Premsrirat (2011) in a complementary discussion in The Journal of the Royal Institute of Thailand entitled Redefining “Thainess”: Embracing Diversity, Preserving Unity in which she traces language revival efforts from grassroots communities and indigenous rights movements focusing on education. A distinctive Mahidol University model is applied in ongoing revitalisation efforts in 22 languages, both in community and school settings across Thailand. The main focus of the present consultancy will be on the Patani Malay-Thai context in S. Thailand and hence the Mahidol research is of considerable importance. In that setting it has involved a step-by-step language learning and literacy process in 4 primary schools in 4 macro-language skills, in 4 southernmost provinces, with Kindergarten 1: oral PM (semester 1) oral Thai (semester 2); Kindergarten 2 Oral Thai + begin literacy in PM; Grade 1: Begin literacy in Thai; Grades 2-6; Continue Oral and Literacy in Thai, PM and Central Malay: (Jawi and Rumi) + English and has been responsible for a significant improvement in children’s learning.

Premsrirat (2011: p 72) moves from the narrow to the broad notion of Thainess ” a young Patani Malay speaking man from Pattani may be happy and proud to be a Thai at a nation level, but at the same time prefer to maintain his Melayu identity at a local level” and so applies the earlier and assimilationist ‘nation building’ Thai-isation to forge a more inclusive notion for contemporary Thailand. For the author the stress on Thainess in the past supported and sustained national unity, but contributed to loss of language diversity among the 15 most endangered languages in Thailand, and “focused attention on identity issue and cultural conflict among the large language groups in border regions such as the Patani Malay in Southern Thailand”, but, as the author argues, “[W]ith strife come solutions...”.

Discussions with the UNICEF Thai Country Office have confirmed that the overriding priority for the LESC activity is to move from ‘strife to solutions’. To this end a problem solving kind of language planning will be the main focus of the 2013-2014 work, specifically in the far south, addressing communication, identity and education questions associated with the conflict there. The aim and broad method undertaken must acknowledge current realities, expressed in a trenchant review of the curriculum in the far south, seen as complicit in the conflict and an extreme form of Thai-ization, what they call “Weapons of Mass Assimilation”, fostering the interests and culture of a “Bangkok elite” against those of the Patani Malay:

“The school curriculum ... included a disproportionate number of classroom hours in morals and religion. Students were and are still taught mostly about how to behave and what to believe in primary school. Only about thirty percent of classroom instruction at the elementary school level is devoted to substantive subjects such as writing and math. In
addition to that, that thirty percent contains a hidden curriculum in that the passages students are told to write deal with the moral values that they were taught in the other seventy percent of the day. Thus, the entire curriculum is devoted to teaching the values of obedience, respect for authority, a narrow version of Theravada Buddhism, and a distorted view of history” (von Feigenblatt, Suttichujit, Shuib, Keling and Ajis, 2010, p. 302).

Wan Dadir, speaking as a member of the Patani Malay language community, was reported in the Bangkok English language newspaper, The Nation, saying: “The basis for this struggle is the demand for respect for our past history, our identity and our specific cultural, political and economic needs” expressing views not always confirmed by analysis of the conflict. In this representation of the conflict, confirmed to me repeatedly during my visit on 21 January to Pattani, questions of identity, culture and ‘respect’, are as strong as ‘structural’ issues; thought of course ultimately these questions are probably inseparable, and in the above formulation they are linked together tightly.

In fact there is considerable variation in analysis searching for “root causes” or “underlying grievance” in the now decades old violent conflict (Nurakkate, 2012; Saxer, 2012; Storey, 2007; McCargo, 2008). Some stress historical grievance, others religion, some focus on political separatism or irredentism, all recognise that “language” is involved in some way, or that language grievances are a recurring point of contention. Such arguments were made directly to me on my visit to Pattani on 21 January 2013. At the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand debate I attended on 23 January, involving presentations from military, media, political and legal and conflict experts, a range of not-always reconcilable differences of interpretation were offered for the genesis of the conflict and for its continuation. It seems impossible to deny however that the appalling attacks on teachers and schools are a repudiation of role and ‘cultural messages’ that violent extremists and separatists see emanating from state education. Wan Dadir’s combination of questions of ‘respect’ and ‘identity’ with ‘political and economic needs’ addresses all fields.

The many meetings, visits, interviews, sources consulted and other methods used to gather information have confirmed that a series of language education activities directed at problem solving and public communication should be implemented. In 2013 and beyond the UNICEF Thai Country office will make available funding for cross-border programmes in 11 schools in the provinces of Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Kanchanaburi, Surin, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat, located along the northern, western, north-eastern and southern border zones, all proximal with neighbouring countries. These will focus on the needs of disadvantaged rural children and are guided by the Education for All principles of the Millennium Development Goals. A recurring problem in all these areas is the mismatch between the languages of teachers and curriculum provision and the languages spoken in children’s homes. Since many teachers do not remain in these areas for sufficiently long periods of time continual teacher change exacerbates the problem of education communication. Hiring teachers locally and fostering schemes for those from out of area to remain longer and integrate with the local community context are important objectives. In the far south the problem is made far worse by the continuing violence. Immediately prior to a meeting the consultant conducted with the Office of Basic Education Commission we were informed that a teacher had been assassinated in front of his students, the 158th killing of a teacher in the conflict.

Three main activities are recommended for Thailand: a public and credible language planning process, concentrating efforts in 2013 on the four southern provinces; design and trialling of a junior secondary school/upper primary school subject on Melayu/Muslim
culture and language for all pupils in the far south; and a series of KAP research studies to strengthen and support the above.

At an important meeting held with OBEC officers Mr. Thawat Saengsuwan, Mrs. Bussaba Prapasapong and Dr Watanaporn Ra-Ngubtook on 23 January a way forward was devised to focus the Thailand component of the UNICEF project. This followed my presentation of agreements reached in discussions in Pattani on Monday 21 January on three essential points, elaborated below, first a language policy dialogue, second a subject for all pupils, Chinese, Melayu and Thai background alike, focused on intercultural learning around the distinctive language and culture of the far south provinces, and third, a series of related action research studies under the KAP program. It was agreed to establish a working group led by the Ministry of Education's southern bureau and involving far south partners. While it was not determined at the time it seems critical to involve UNICEF in this body which will provide leadership and coordination for the work to be done.

A comprehensive dialogue on children’s language in the far south, involving attention to the four languages involved (Thai as national language, Patani Malay and other versions of Malay as mother tongue and language of identity, English and Arabic as foreign and religious languages); and the three scripts (Thai, Rumi and Jawi) is what is envisaged by the process described below as language planning.

It should be stressed that all language planning exercises proposed here should be integrated with the National Language Policy process currently under the auspices of the Royal Institute of Thailand (Warotamasikkhadit and Person, 2011). The Patani Malay-Thai bilingualism and bi-literacy efforts being proposed could comprise the following actions:

I: Bilingual and Bi-literate Language Policy (Phases One, Two and Three)  
II: Regional Working Language Bilingual Policy (Phases One, Two and Three)  
III: Public Endorsement and Public Education  
IV: Future work and issues unaddressed

I: Bilingual (and Bi-literate) Language Policy  
Comprising Phases One, Two and Three  
AIM: Foster community awareness and commitment to full implementation of Thai-Patani Malay bilingual and bi-literate education. The work to develop, implement and review a Thai-Patani Malay bilingual education policy is proposed in three integrated phases of activity along a continuum

PHASE ONE: Research, Attitude Testing  
The work here is intended to provide the knowledge base for a coherent, integrated and feasible language policy. Step one involves community and expert consultation and step two concentrates on accumulating critical implementation information.

Step One  
Two stakeholder deliberations  
i) Educators: teachers, principals, curriculum officers, academic experts;  
ii) Parents and community: including community schools, NGOs and CSOs.

Step Two  
Three commissioned (KAP) studies:
Parent survey: script, foreign languages, and sociolinguistic survey
Design of Intercultural Melayu course for all students
Component analysis for expansion planning of bilingual education (three phases to be costed: full infant year bilingual education, Grades 1-2, to 1300 schools)

PHASE TWO: Policy Determination
On the basis of the conclusions of the two stakeholder deliberations and the two commissioned papers, phase two comprises two steps

Step Three
Researcher/Consultant to prepare draft outline of policy

Step Four
Comprehensive community-educator-expert deliberation facilitated by researchers to discuss and modify policy draft and determine final policy position adopt express aim

PHASE THREE: Promulgation of policy, monitoring and evaluation
On the basis of the research and policy determination phases the efforts are now directed at the promulgation, explanation and implementation of the full bilingual education.

Step Four
Six month post implementation stakeholder deliberations, i) and ii) to discuss progress, problems and modify implementation and content of policy.

II: Regional Working Language Bilingual Policy
Comprising Phases One, Two and Three
AIM: The objective of this component of the work is to lay the groundwork and establish the principles to institutionalise regional working status for Patani Malay in the provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, in conjunction with Thai, for all public information functions of government. It is crucial to involve the Department of Provincial Administration in this process at all stages and to commence with an audit of district offices and government administration to document written, spoken and multimodal communication in Thai, PM and other languages. It is also important that this include legal, health, agriculture and fishing information and communication, and that the options afforded by various multilingual technologies be explored both for efficiency reasons and also to facilitate communication in non-written form for non-literate people or in contexts where script and literacy issues are problematical or contentious. A workshop on methods for including PM within regional contexts as a local working language should be conducted.

III: Public Endorsement and Public Education
AIM: Consolidate incipient moves towards bi and multi-lingualism in the southern provinces and provide public and positive endorsement that within the context of national unity, economic progress and wider regional aggregations, especially moves for greater mobility and free trade within ASEAN post 2015.

Actions: The Thai authorities should extend their endorsement of the draft Royal Institute of Thailand language policy by making a formal public declaration that Thailand is a multilingual country, with Thai as its common and official language, and aim to make more and more Thais bi and multilingual. Ultimately, it should launch a public education
campaign in the southern provinces providing accessible information about the benefits of bilingual education and of the new regional working status for Patani Malay.

VII. CONSULTATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

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Professor David Bradley, La Trobe University

Bangkok, Thailand
Royal Institute of Thailand
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Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand
Major General Nakrop Bunbuathong, Deputy Commander ISOC Operations Coordination Centre, 5
Coonel Songwit Noonpakdee, Officer in Command,11th Infantry Regiment and Former Deputy Commander Narathiwat Task Force
Benjamin Zawacki, Southeast Asian Regional Representative, International Development Law Organization
Mathew Wheeler, Southeast Asia Analyst, International Crisis Group
Senator Woramit Baru, Pattani
Nirmal Ghosh, Senior Correspondent Thailand, The Straits Times, President of FCCT
Daniel Ten Kate, Bloomberg News

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Conference on Language Rights, Inclusion and the Prevention of Ethnic Conflicts
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Sakda Saenmi, IMPECT Association
Joseph-G Turi, Secretary General, International Academy of Linguistic Law, Quebec Canada
Prof Dr Maya Khemlani David, University of Malaya
Mey Phalla, Program Coordinator, Save Vulnerable Cambodians
Paul Giacomini, Director US Support Office, SIL LEAD
Suraporn Suriyamonton, Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation
Jose Maria Arraiza, Human Rights Law and Policy Advisor, Madrid Spain
Sakda Saenmi, by telephone, IMPECT Association, Chiang Mai
4 Myanmar community educators who preferred to remain anonymous

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Deep South Watch
Muhamad-Ayub Pathan
Prince of Songkla University Faculty of Education
Assoc. Prof. Dr Ibrahim Narongraksakhet, College of Islamic Studies
Jeh Ubon Hussein, professor, College of Education
Majedan Masu, Bilingual education team
Saheh Abdula, Bilingual Education team
Ismael Ishaq Benjasmith, President, Centre for Conservation for Local Arts, Culture and Environment in Southern Border Provinces of Thailand

Network of Civic Women for Peace
Ajarn Soraye and 4 others
Panyakaddee Awe

Tadikah Teachers
Mastah Makul and three others

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Dr Victor Karunan, Deputy Representative, Malaysia
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Selvi Supramaniam, Child Protection Specialist,
Mr Terence Too, Research Officer
Chembas Raghavan, Education Specialist-Gender

Community Services Organisations
Lin Mui Kiang, Education Coordination Specialist
Professor NS Rajendran, Action for Future of Tamil Schools & Prime Minister’s Department
PH Wong, Child-line Malaysia
Lena Hendry, Non-Discrimination Programme Coordinator
Jenny Gryzekius, Senior Researcher, Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs
Izlin Ismail, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sime Darby Berhad
Tunku Munawirah Putra, Hon Sec, Parent Action Group for Education Malaysia
Akhdar Nur Zahhir Alwi, Human Rights Commission of Malaysia
Cheng Su Chean, VP, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall
Lee Shok Jing, KL and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall
Saira Shameem, United Nations Population Fund
Jemita Engi, Jaringan Orang Asal Se-Malaysia, Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia
Mr Ho, Department of National Unity, Prime Minister’s Department

Ministry of Education
Dr. Faridah Binti Abu Hassan, Director of Educational Planning and Research Division of the
Dr Nagalingam A/L Karuppiah, Institute of Teacher Education, Ministry of Education
Shamsuri Bin Sujak, Deputy Director Curriculum Division, Ministry of Education
10 representatives of Ministry
VIII. INCORPORATING LP INTO CONFLICT STUDIES

Despite the ongoing evidence for the importance of language questions within conflict situations a review of how questions of language education and language policy inform general conflict literature shows deficiencies and gaps.

Two of the most recent examples are the Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education issued by INEE (2012) and Kotite (2012). In work for UNESCO on education for conflict prevention and peacebuilding Kotite (2012) mostly deals with questions of ‘non-inflammatory’ talk, the need for ‘non-offensive language’ as part of dialogue and civilised discourse. Similarly, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), a global network of policy makers and practitioners “working together to ensure all persons the right to quality education and a safe learning environment in emergencies and post-crisis recovery” has issued a 2012 “Guidance Note on Conflict Sensitive Education” (INEE, 2012). In this important document language and language education issues appear only in relation to decisions that states need to take on language of instruction or the appropriate language of examination. All such references are collocated with expressions such as “barrier to access”, “complication”, “high stakes issue” or are seen as reflecting “group bias” or being “imposed” on a particular ethnic group by a nationally or locally dominant other group.

Both of these works are worthwhile, but expose a rather limited and inadequate perspective on the multiple and deep-rooted connections between language and conflict. The points raised in the INEE Guidance document, and indeed the need for ‘civilised dialogue’, are all important but do not address many questions of language education, language planning, and multilingualism and language rights that impinge on conflict/peacebuilding. It is crucially necessary for the wider conflict literature and conceptualisations of peacebuilding to incorporate a more robust and substantial view of the ways in which language and conflict are linked and what kinds of policy and educational interventions can mitigate, resolve and prevent conflict.

Language is a factor in conflict in several ways, some overt and evident, others camouflaged. This is because language is both a marker of ethnic identity and the mediator of cultural, symbolic and material resources. It is through academic language and literacy that children advance educationally, and it is through specialised language that adults enter trade, occupational or professional fields. It is in language that narratives of nation building are produced that include or exclude. Much more effort is required to develop this and to produce practical, clear and “user-friendly” guidance sheets, addressing the following three omitted areas of the links between language and conflict; culturally as symbol; economically as mediator of opportunity; educationally as instrument of curriculum and politically as citizenship enfranchisement.
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X. DELIVERABLE ONE

I. INTRODUCTION
This brief report details the work undertaken between 1 and 20 December 2012 to advance the ‘language and ethnicity’ component of the broader activity of the East Asia and Pacific Education and Social Cohesion multi-country initiative. This initiative is in turn part of the international Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts Programme - supported by UNICEF in 10 counties globally and now commencing in the Asia Pacific Region under the auspices of the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office.

This report concerns one component of the three which comprise the EAP Education and Social Cohesion initiative, the other two being:

a) Regional Strategic Framework for Education and Peacebuilding, involving a diverse range of countries, under the leadership of Ms. Melinda Smith.
b) Education Sector Plans, Processes and Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion involving Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Myanmar, Cambodia and Philippines, under the leadership of Ms Amanda Seel.

Government of Netherlands Initiative
Key documentation informing the global UNICEF project is encapsulated in the publication *Role of Education in Peacebuilding* (Mario Novelli and Allan Smith, Dec 2011) which synthesises findings from various sources about the often exacerbating effects of education on conflict. This publication considers questions of language and language education, history teaching and other domains of public life, specifically with reference to Lebanon, Nepal and Sierra Leone.

The overall initiative has been funded by the Government of the Netherlands in response to a UNICEF proposal which defines Education for Peacebuilding to include both Social Cohesion and Resilience with direct links to the issues of DRR, natural disasters, language policies and building on the dividends of peace. UNICEF formally lodged this Proposal on Peacebuilding and Education with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in New York in September 2011. In broadest terms the Netherlands Grants for Peacebuilding supports a range of activities such as conflict analysis and the preparation of intervention tools of various kinds.
The initiative is unusual in scale and scope, but the essential vision is to i) **strengthen resilience at both institutional, individual and societal levels** and ii) **to foster and strengthen social cohesion and human security in conflict-affected contexts**. The countries participating in the program include some which can be classified as being **at risk** of conflict, others currently **experiencing** conflict, some **recovering** from conflict and others which may be facing new challenges that **potentially produce conflict**. In light of this diverse range of circumstances the overall strategic aims of the activity are:

a) inclusion of education in peace-building & conflict reduction policies, analyses & implementation;

b) increase institutional capacities to supply conflict sensitive education;

c) increase capacity of children, parents, teachers and other duty-bearers to prevent, reduce and cope with conflict and promote peace;

d) increase access to quality, relevant conflict sensitive education that contributes to peace;

e) is cross-cutting and will contribute to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peace-building.

**Education, Ethnicity and Social Cohesion**

Four countries have replied to the UNICEF Country Office invitation to participate in the project specifying the present component of the research. These are Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Solomon Islands.

The terms of reference for the language and ethnicity component are as follows:

- **Desk review** – collecting and reviewing a wide range of documentation to include:
  - Critical literature pertaining to the role of education language policies and practices in addressing, or exacerbating, conflict and social cohesions with ethnic and linguistic minorities in different contexts;

- **Initial visits** to one-two countries for stakeholder and key informant interviews, additional document compilation, and planning for follow up visits

- **Participation in small consultation** in EAPRO Bangkok and in the Language Rights, Inclusion and the Prevention of Ethnic Conflicts conference in Chiang Mai

- **Prepare a Final Report**, including a conceptual frame for analysis, as well as recommended next steps in terms of carrying out follow up national research.

The present report constitutes Deliverable One: Reports on participation in small consultation in Bangkok and in Chiang Mai Conference. Outline for the Desk Review. Submission of draft conceptual framework = 13 days X 500 USD = 6,500 USD. Deliverable two is due on 31 January 2012 and specifically requires: Final desk review submitted. Final report with conceptual framework prepared and recommendations and draft protocols/questionnaires for future research = 20 days X 500 USD = 10,000 USD

**II Report of Activity**

**PHASE ONE**: December 1-9

Location: Melbourne Australia
Activities

- Initial sketch of information needs on education, language and sociolinguistic setting of the four case study countries.
- Interview with Professor David Bradley (Wed 5 December) Professor of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, La Trobe University Australia. Professor Bradley has conducted extensive research on endangered languages, sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, geolinguistics, language policy and phonetics/phonology with a specialised interest and focus on Southeast, East and South Asia, and is well known internationally for his work on Tibeto-Burman languages. The discussion with Professor Bradley concentrated on the Myanmar and Thailand contexts.
- Interview and several discussions with Professor Fazal Rizvi, Global Studies Coordinator, University of Melbourne. I have been preparing a proposal with Professor Rizvi that might potentially be attached to the current project to involve Global Studies and Asian Studies Masters Degree student research semesters to language/ethnicity support in the case study countries. This question has also been raised with the senior administration of the University of Melbourne and well received in all cases. On 20 December the proposal was suggested to and warmly received by the Ministry of Education in Malaysia.
- Commencement of outline of research domains to be covered in the course of the desk review.

PHASE TWO: December 10-13
Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Activities

- Participation in the EAPRO consultation. These three days of meetings were essential to refine the roles and relationships of the three component parts of the EAP Pacific Education and Social Cohesion activity, to share information with Ms Smith and Ms Seel, to meet with Dr Meyers, Dr Ovington, Dr Dutta and the professional and support staff of the EAPRO and Ms Carolin Waldchen from UNICEF HQ in New York. These discussions also served to sharpen our understanding of key notions such as ‘social cohesion’ and to distinguish between the settings involved in the project, the timelines and priorities of the three component parts, the March 2013 consultation and the role of language in the work of the other two component projects. I presented an outline of my initial thinking on the activity, (summarised below in the handout of the powerpoint version, as presented to the consultation in Kuala Lumpur on 20 December).
- Meeting with Prof. Dr. Udom Warotamasikkhadit and Dr Nitaya Kanchanawan of the Royal Institute of Thailand and Professor Panlasit Noochoochai, president of Ramkhamhaeng University. The discussion focused on the conflict in the south of Thailand, progress towards the preparation of the national language policy for Thailand (to which I had contributed in previous years), some problems being encountered in this process and future professional development and research needs in language education in Thailand to meet various needs. The possible contribution of Ramkhamhaeng University as an “open” university to specialised language delivery was discussed with an invitation received to address a meeting of the University faculty on a return visit to Bangkok.
PHASE THREE: December 13-17
Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand
Activities
- Participation in the *Language Rights, Inclusion and the Prevention of Ethnic Conflicts conference* under the auspices of the International Academy of Linguistic Law (IALL).
- Presentation of a plenary session talk on the project to a large audience of language policy, language law and language conflict specialists from many parts of the world, including local minority group activists, human rights scholars and Thai, Malaysian and Myanmar based public officials.
- Meetings with Professor Fernand de Varennes, Dr Kirk Person, SIL International, Dr Kimmo Kosonen, Payap International, Professor Dr Suwilai Premsrirat and many others active in all fields relevant to the brief.
- Meeting with Ms Jannie Lasimban, Human Rights Commissioner, Malaysia, (SUHAKAM) on the case of the Sabahan and Surawak Indigenous people’s cultural and linguistic rights.

PHASE FOUR: December 17
Location: Bangkok, Thailand
Activities
- Several meetings with fellow consultants, and Dr Meyers
- Meeting with Andrew Morris, Deputy Representative for UNICEF Thailand on the prospects, plans and issues regarding the ‘southern question’,
- Meeting with Natcha Wimutachayan, regarding operational and funding questions related to the southern provinces and UNICEF operations there.

PHASE FIVE: December 19-20
Location, Kuala Lumpur
Activities
- Meeting with UNICEF Malaysia personnel
- Public consultation with (28) representatives of human rights organisations, language bodies, private sector, Orang Asli representatives, Prime Minister’s department ‘integration unit’ representatives and other officials. Extensive and very productive exchange on problems of social cohesion, language and ethnicity and potential and actual cases of conflict, disadvantage and needed action. I gave a presentation and received a large amount of material, requests for further engagement and declarations of interest in and support for the research and other components of the project.
- Meeting with an extensive range of curriculum, teacher training, pre, primary and secondary school department heads at the Ministry of Education Malaysia convened by Dr Faridah Hassan. This was an extremely productive meeting, despite starting off with a feeling of tentativeness and even scepticism about the project, it transformed into a strong and positive exchange with many ideas for participation of the project. A key outcome was the focus on a pedagogy to promote social inclusion and cohesion.

The group conceded that despite considerable public investment by the government, and many undoubted successes in forging a sense of unity in multi-racial, multi-
lingual and multi-faith Malaysia that several areas, among them language education across the board (indigenous languages, the national language, English, literacy and others) appear impervious to policy intervention. Many specific proposals for action and research were received and will be studied in the course of preparing the Final Report (31 January 2013). A very important perspective from the Kuala Lumpur meetings was that we should not frame the project through the ‘conflict’ or ‘peace’ lens in Malaysia, but rather focus on social inclusion, social cohesion, national unity in diversity etc.

A strong theme for future action arose from my proposal that we consider including a pedagogy for intercultural cohesion across the curriculum, in language education, in the arts, sport and other activities. At present there is widespread awareness that schools remain segregated and are unlikely to be consolidated in the near future. There was strong interest in the further exploration of this idea from preschool to secondary school levels. Also important were the questions of immigrant, and non-documented workers, especially in East Malaysia.

III Countries
Country specific documentation will be gathered over the course of the project (to November 2013) to produce a comprehensive report and analysis of:

**Questions of context** (essentially socio-linguistic, but also economic, and political issues: script, literature, literacy, diglossia, who speaks what to whom, local status of language, wider status of language, national language, LWC, language ecology in proximal areas)

**Questions of feasibility** (essentially to be pragmatic, what is realistic? Consider issues of education and training systems pre, primary, secondary, post; technical and university; teachers, curriculum, program models, transition; what are some technological and new media possibilities);

**Questions of purpose** (exactly why are we pursuing bilingual education? what are the i) socio-cultural, ii) economic-political and iii) educational aims, desires, expectations, experiences. Each of those spheres, i) socio-cultural, ii) economic-political and iii) educational can be seen from insider and outsider perspectives) and in facilitated deliberations the aim will be to gain stakeholder commitment to an overarching and integrated national language education policy.

These three categories of ‘question’ will be informed in each setting by sampling of documentation related to the following to produce a credible research and evidence basis for informing public policy. In each setting will gather:

**Legal texts:**
constitution, education act, citizenship (to answer the question: what is the authorising remit for the activity);

**Central Jurisdiction:**
Ministries of Education (curriculum, textbooks, indigenous minorities), Ministry of Culture (indigenous affairs, internal affairs), Language Apex body (NL as L2)---Academic Centres, Ethnic Centres, Local Schools, headmasters and teachers; to answer the question: what is the sphere of administration and cultural authority for the activity);

**Civil Society:** Religious, Social, Business, Labour etc (as above);
Devolved Jurisdiction: District literacy and education support and delivery agencies, Ethnic organisations (to answer the question, what can be reliably delivered);

Supra-National: RELC, ASEAN, UN agencies, NGOs

Public Media: Press and other reporting

Academic Sources: PhD theses, published academic works

V Recommendations

Spheres of Action

It is anticipated that recommendations will be made for research and interventions at the national and sub-national levels, rather than regional or extra-national levels, though it is possible the latter might also be warranted. Recommendations will likely deal with both ‘whole of government’ and sector specific actions. At present what is envisaged below is a vast program of action, its feasibility will need to be checked and the program trimmed according to resource availability, duration of activity, CO ‘buy-in’ etc.

Remainder of December

a) Develop Section III actions into a research operational plan
b) Decide how much of this I can do directly, online or by telephone/Skype contact with informants
c) Decide how much of this EAPRO and CO Thailand/Malaysia can provide
d) Review all notes from meetings and observations in Thailand and Malaysia
e) Commence classification and organisation of
f) Database of personnel, interviewees, organisations and agencies/responsibilities
g) Meet again with Professors Bradley and Rizvi to extend discussions post-visit
h) Plan January dates and activities Thailand and Malaysia

January 2013, first two weeks

a) In conjunction with Dr Meyers decide on feasibility, timeline and plan for Myanmar and Solomon Islands
b) Collect material listed above re: Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Solomon Islands
c) Organise, classify, read and annotate as much of this material as possible
d) Prepare outline of talks to give in Bangkok and KL as requested
e) Prepare outline of conceptual plan for linkages between language, ethnicity, social cohesion

January 2013, second two weeks

a) Visit Bangkok (meetings Royal Institute, Mahidol University, SIL International, and possible visit to Southern Provinces)
b) Visit to Kuala Lumpur
c) Finalisation of Report, 31 January.

February/March 2013-December 2013

The types of actions envisaged are of three broad kinds:

a) research and documentation (resulting in academic publication and conference presentation, specifically the November 2013 Multilingual Education Bangkok conference);
b) policy informing and developing processes (deliberation conferences, seminars, language problem documentation and organisation processes);

c) public education activity.

Possible Specific Actions

a) Desk research on context, feasibility and purpose indicators, noted above
b) Conflict mitigation research in relation with bilingual education
c) Language attitude and practices
d) Feasibility (cost-benefit) assessment of extension of Mahidol program to all government schools
e) Language education and language policy research in Myanmar post CESR phase
f) Audit of language functions to permit scaled introduction of Patani Malay as ‘regional working language status’
g) Deliberation conferences
h) Professional development on language and intercultural pedagogies
i) Design of language education observatory for SE Asia
j) National Language Planning processes
APPENDIX ONE

ETHNOLOGUE LANGUAGE MAPS FOR MALAYSIA
Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak

MAP OF MALAYSIA

Language Families
Land Dayak
Malay
North Borneo
Areas with multiple language areas

MAP OF MALAYSIA SABAH

Language Families
Malay
North Borneo
Official Language

MAP OF BRUNEI AND MALAYSIA SARAWAK

Language Families
Malay
North Borneo
Areas with multiple language areas
APPENDIX TWO

ETHNOLOGUE LANGUAGE MAPS FOR THAILAND
Northern and Southern

[Image of a map of Thailand with language families marked on it]