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Bad Language: A Study of Structural Violence through Language Policies in Australia

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Figure 1 Each dot represents an Aboriginal language in Pre-colonial Australia

https://gambay.com.au/map

BAD LANGUAGE:

A Study of Structural Violence through Language
Policies in Australia

California State University of Monterey Bay:

Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Anthropology Concentration

By

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Acknowledgments

I would like to start off by thanking my father for inspiring and supporting my academic adventures.

I would also like to thank my advisor, Professor Juan Gutierrez for pushing me to take my studies to the next level.

Finally, I would like to thank the all of the faculty and students at the Institute for Koori Education at Deakin University, especially Mabel[1], for accepting me into their community despite my ignorance and constant confusion.

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[1] Mabel's name has been changed for her own safety and comfort.

For Indigenous peoples to participate in Australian society as equals requires that we be able to live our lives free from assumptions by others about what is best for us. It requires recognition of our values, culture and traditions so that they can co-exist with those of mainstream society. It requires respecting our difference and celebrating it within the diversity of the nation.

Dr. William Jonas, Australian Human Rights committee

Abstract

By situating the heart of Aboriginal culture in the ability to understand and speak Aboriginal languages, I intend to prove that language education policies have caused damage within Aboriginal communities. In order to find and record the damage done by these policies I will use Johan Galtung's theory of structural violence, which states that large social structures create indirect sources of violence by withholding resources and power from certain groups. Specifically, I will start by providing a brief history of Aboriginal culture and their languages. Then I will analyze language policies, policy analysis, and my own experiences in order to explain: (1) the integral importance of Aboriginal languages: (2) some of the best and worst language policies in Australia: (3) the ways in which these policies have damaged Aboriginal communities. I will then draw on my experiences within an Aboriginal community, as well as my time doing service learning at a bilingual school in Seaside.

Introduction

If human diversity is a value the very existence of the species depends on, one should show concern about the rate at which indigenous languages are fading away. As of 2013 we have lost 634 languages and another 3,054 languages are considered endangered (Campbell, et al. 2). However, there are no obvious signs of violence. There has been no (official) war on language. No one has burned, raped, or pillaged a specific language. Yet, we still find that languages are going extinct. Colonial countries such as the U.S, Canada, and Australia claim to understand the importance of maintaining Indigenous languages. These countries often point to their various policies regarding language and education and claim that they are in the process of helping

Indigenous languages thrive. Nevertheless, as more and more social scientists study the issue, the more we find that governmental policies are often, intentionally or otherwise, hurtful to the process of language maintenance.

In this research paper I will analyze some of Australia's language policies in order to determine whether these policies have been hurtful or helpful in regards to the maintenance of the Aboriginal languages. The data I will use for my analysis will come in part from an extensive review of literature, and I will also back up these findings with my own personal data. In preparation for my research I spent a year studying abroad. While I spent a majority of my time abroad studying at Melbourne's Deakin University, I will also pull data from my time in service learning among the classrooms at the Dual Language Academy of Monterey Peninsula (DLAMP). All of this data will be analyzed through the lens of Johan Galtung's theory of "structural violence." Galtung's theory scientifically describes the damage done indirectly by large structures such as government sectors or media groups. By looking at data, both my own and others, through the lens of structural violence, I hypothesize that the policies pertaining to Australian Aboriginal languages appear to be helpful, but when applied cause harm to the already endangered languages. Because the plight of Indigenous languages is rarely discussed outside of the academic realm it is critical that we first start with a discussion of Australia's colonial history and its interactions with Aboriginal peoples. This report is organized into five sections. In the first section I will discuss the historical context Aboriginal languages. In the second, I will provide a review of previous literature. From there I will discuss my research methods and data collections. Then I will provide an analysis of some of Australia's language policies. Finally, I will end with a conclusion and a list of recommendations and future studies.

Historical Context

Before Australia was colonized by Great Britain in 1788 the island continent contained a great wealth of language diversity. There were an estimated 500 different Aboriginal clans, each with their own unique way of speaking (Australia.gov "Our people"). During the peak of Aboriginal Australia there were over 250 languages with an estimated 600 dialects. However, due

to the growing demands of global westernization there are now only 30 Aboriginal languages that are commonly spoken and over 100 other Aboriginal languages that are on the brink of extinction (Allam "Talking Language").

During the early years of colonization Aboriginal people were thought of as less than humans. When dealing with Aboriginal people, the burdens of ethics did not apply to colonists, as shown by Hartwig, a well-established professor of Aboriginal studies, who says:

> The struggle for survival by black and white races, among other warring groups in society, ought not to be impeded by any misplaced sense of ethics, or other trappings of civilization. Rape, murder and expropriation of aboriginal land was all rendered legitimate by this form of ideology: '... killing Aborigines was no crime' (qtd. In Welsh 205).

The Aboriginal people were forced out of their ancestral homes. Their weapons were outlawed and confiscated, and their language was forbidden inside areas of 'civilization' (Byrne 2010 pg. 104). As more and more colonists started to arrive, the Aboriginal population became harder to deal with, and the rise of Darwinism would provide colonists the reasoning they would need to deal with the Indigenous population:

> The central assumption of the then hegemonic social Darwinism was that Aborigines were a 'doomed race', condemned by their inferiority to die out (McGregor, 1997). More than just a scientific prediction this idea, combined with more pragmatic considerations, served as a positive rationality for undertaking measures which would erase Aboriginal culture and selectively train Aboriginal people in the values and habits of European civilization. Such ambitious programs of social governance required enormous powers to be conferred on white officials to control the lives of Aboriginal people and communities… (Hogg 2001 pg. 362)

The colonists would eventually use these powers to break up families and place their children in boarding schools where they were taught to speak and act like 'proper Englishmen.' This era of forced assimilation was known as "the stolen generation" (Ellinghaus, 2006). This was a devastating blow to the Aboriginal language groups, because those who were not captured and

forced to learn English were figuratively forced to give up their native tongue in order to make a living after colonization had taken away their traditional means of living. However, as Australia moved into the 20th century the country began to change their views on the Indigenous peoples. It wasn't until the 1960's that Australia began to see bilingual education as valuable programs, and in 1987 Australia created its first official policy that addressed Aboriginal languages ("Our Land Our Languages," 2012, p.46). Since then, the Indigenous peoples right to educate their children in their languages has continually changed with the political mood of the country.

During the 1990's the Northern Territory threatened to cut the country's bilingual education programs, but this was during the era of "reconciliation," when public sympathy for Indigenous peoples was high and the threat was prevented by the biggest petition ever seen in the Northern Territory (Waller 2012). Indigenous languages were threatened again in 2008, when conservative figures demanded that all Indigenous children learn English first. The government came up with a "compromise" that stated that the first four hours of the five-hour school day had to be in English but the last hour could be devoted to other languages (2012). Recently, there has been a push to get Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander languages included in the Australian constitution; this could lead to the necessary recognition that Indigenous languages need to survive ("Our Land Our Languages" p.73). Seeing as though this motion put into place nearly 6 years ago has still not been denied or approved, the summary is best stopped here, as the future is still to be decided.

Now that the history of Indigenous languages has been laid out, the importance of this project should be apparent. Since the beginning of colonization, the Aboriginal way of life has been threatened. Everything from their ancestral lands and laws, down to their ways of hunting and cultivating have been outlawed throughout the nation. One of the few pieces of culture the Australian Aboriginal can hold on to is their language. Without the ability to speak and understand their ancestral tongue, the entirety of Aboriginal culture, over 500 different clans, risks extinction. By analyzing the damaging effects of Australia's language policies, I hope to add my voice to the already overwhelming amount of data proving that Australia's Indigenous language policies are in

dire need of reformation. The next part of this paper will expand on some of the critical publications related to structural violence and language policies.

Literature Review

In order to ensure that the reader is fully aware of both the issue at hand and what other, more qualified authors have said about the problem, I will start this review of literature by briefly discussing the idea of structural violence (a further, in-depth analysis can be found in the theory section). From there I will address the findings of those who have studied the importance of language. Then, I will elaborate on the scholars who have analyzed the same or similar language policies. Finally, the literature review will conclude with those authors who have studied the effect of said policies on Aboriginal communities.

Structural violence

There is little argument amongst scholars that Aboriginal languages are dying off quicker than they can be revived (Lowe, McKay, Campbell, et al.). However, the questions of how and why these Aboriginal languages are dying off is hotly debated. One of the most common arguments lays the blame of indigenous language decay at the feet of governmental language policies. Though these policies often appear to be in favor of indigenous language maintenance, scholars such as Truscott, Malcolm, Purdie, and Fuller would argue that these policies cause unspeakable damage to both Aboriginal communities and the languages within them. In order to understand how these policies, which show no outward implications of direct damage, are hurtful to languages and communities, one must first understand the theory of structural violence.

The conceptualization of structural violence is accredited to "the father of peace studies Johan Galtung" (Farmer 307). In his seminal essay "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" Galtung describes and defines three major types of violence: Direct, structural, and cultural violence (Peace Research 168). Galtung stresses that there is more to violence than physical damage. He believes that any individual or social structure that knowingly obstructs a group of people from meeting their basic human needs is guilty of acting violently (Peace Research 169). Because these acts of violence come from large structures who hide behind their massive size and careful wording, it can be difficult to see the violence in everyday life. In order to seek out and make clear the effects

of structural violence, Galtung and his associate Tord Hoivik wrote an entire article filled with complex mathematical equations to determine the exact amount of damage done by violent structures. While these equations revolve solely around death and life expectancies (Galtung and Hoivik 73), the important take away from this article is that in order to trace the effects of structural damage, Galtung and Hoivik suggest that scientists take a quantitative approach and look at avoidable deaths from things such as malnutrition or curable illnesses to show how these structures hurt certain communities through their laws or regulations (73). Though the theory of structural violence is one of Galtung's biggest contributions to the social sciences, he did not spend much time creating ethnographic accounts of structural violence. Instead, fellow anthropologist Paul Farmer became one of the most well-known anthropologists to create an ethnographic account of structural violence.

Paul Farmer, unlike Galtung who has studied everything from mathematics to political history, is purely an anthropologist. This focus on cultural studies is what led Farmer to adapt Galtung's theory of structural violence to ethnographies of disadvantaged people in Russia, Haiti, and Peru. In Farmer's book, *Pathologies of Power,* he describes how communities with serious diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis suffer greatly; not solely from the disease itself, but from governmental and health structures that create and disseminate stigma towards these afflicted peoples (*Pathologies of Power* 30). In a speech he gave about his book, Farmer states that "Structural violence is violence exerted systematically—that is, indirectly—by everyone who belongs to a certain social order: hence the discomfort these ideas provoke in a moral economy still geared to pinning praise or blame on individual actor" ("Anthropology of Structural Violence" 307). Farmer brings up the importance of blame because as a society we tend to push the blame of structural violence around so often that it becomes nearly impossible to fix the problem. Farmer's contribution to the theory of structural violence is massive, as it provides one of the first and most detailed ethnographic examples of structural violence in action. How does structural violence relate to the maintenance of Indigenous languages in Australia? In order to understand how Indigenous communities were and are affected by structural violence, it is critical to understand the importance of language, both within Indigenous communities and in general.

Importance of Language

Language, the ability to communicate complex ideas and symbols through speech, is one of the defining factors of humanity (Stout, et al. 1947). This ability to communicate has been critical to human development and the creation of cultures. Language is so important that theorists such as Fishman classify language as the root of culture (72). In his article, Fishman equates the loss of language with the loss of the culture itself. Fishman states that we have a very lackadaisical outlook on language loss because we tend to focus on the economic outcome; how will it affect the country of origin, can the people of the language still make money, and so on (71). But Fishman urges readers to look at the cultural impact of language loss. According to Fishman, it is language that dictates things like kinship and even a sense of sanctity (74). Fishman's claims are backed up by the theoretical framework of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. In his seminal essay "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language" Whorf uses a comparative analysis of Hopi and American English languages to show that the way a certain culture experiences the world around them is dictated by the language they speak (148). Whorf's major hypothesis centers around the idea that humans experience the world differently through their language. As an example, Whorf shows the reader that the Hopi language only applies plurality to items that can physically be placed in a group, so, whereas a Standard American English (SAE) speaker would say "ten days," a Hopi speaker would say "on the tenth day" (150). Whorf uses this example, among others, to claim that this aspect of the Hopi language allows Hopi speakers to conceptualize time as a continually flowing cycle as opposed to the SAE concept in which time continuously grows in a single line. Whorf's theory, though highly contested, is critical because it helped solidify the importance of language within the thinking of social sciences (Schirillo 180). While language undoubtedly plays a major role in every culture, there are some cultures, such as the Aboriginal people of Australia, who place a much stronger emphasis on language.

Before discussing the matter of Aboriginal language any further, it is critical to note that often times the entirety of all Indigenous Australians tend to get lumped together into one cultural

identity. This assumption is entirely incorrect. As stated earlier, there were once close to 500 different clans each with their own unique culture and language. With so many unique cultures spread out around the entire continent of Australia, it becomes almost impossible to create any kind of generalization about the Aboriginal peoples. There does, however, appear to be one exception to this train of thought. Language, through every Aboriginal culture, holds an extreme amount of cultural significance. A research paper written by Shane T. Williams touches on the idea of a universal importance of language to all Aboriginals by quoting the famous Aboriginal linguist and cultural advocate, Dr. Marika who said:

> ... the language of our old people is esoteric. It defines the land where they come from. It has boundaries. It has boundaries out in the sea also – the sea and the land; there is nothing different about that. I would like to tell you that the land has multilayers of literacy for Yolngu. It is text. It is what these old people sing and dance. It is what they educate our children about.

> ... land and language go hand in hand. It is all linked together, because without language we cannot define our land (qtd. In Williams 29).

Williams uses this quote to solidify the idea that Aboriginal languages are universally valued because they connect the various tribes to their ancestral land. The connection between language and land is not only universal among Aboriginal people but throughout the world. This can be seen anywhere in the world where a culture has been dispossessed from their ancestral land. Janet Fuller proves this point in her paper "*Language Choice as a Means of Shaping Identity*" by analyzing a Spanish-English bilingual classroom. In her study, Fuller finds that Miguel, the child who spends the most time in Mexico, prefers to speak in Spanish when learning because it reminds him of his home and his family (120), showing the connection between language, land, and culture. The work of Fuller, Williams, and other linguists proves that the importance of language is a universal trait, therefore it is generally acceptable to refer to the entire Aboriginal peoples as a whole when talking about language. This universal connection is indeed one of the reasons scholars argue that language is so important to Aboriginal communities. Yet, there are still so many levels of importance to the multitude of Aboriginal languages.

An Aboriginal Elder, Vicki Couzens, says it best in Ernie Dingo's documentary "Talking Language," "I think language is the most important thing for people to learn and relearn because culture is embodied in your language. It's the center of everything, it holds all that knowledge… and the cultural knowledge of names of place and country" (Allam 56:56- 57:25). In this six-part series Ernie Dingo meets with Aboriginal Elders from all over Australia and discusses the past, present, and future of Aboriginal languages. While each Elder has a unique story, they all come to the same conclusion: language is the key to Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal people now live in a time and place where their old ways of living have either been outlawed or made obsolete, so learning and speaking in their original Aboriginal tongue is one of the most important aspects of maintaining their Aboriginal identity. In the words of Tootsie Daniel, "Language is a part of us. It's like a skin color. Language is ours, ours to keep, ours to cherish" (Allam, 1:39:20-1:39:24). While Language is key to an individual's identity, the Aboriginal languages are just as important to the community as a whole.

While it is important for an individual to feel a connection to culture and the land, the connection to culture is only important if there is a community to share that connection with. In Kevin Lowe's introduction to language in communities, he emphasizes the importance of Indigenous language maintenance at the community level. Lowe starts by recognizing that language learning at the community level is no easy task, as local languages and knowledge has been stretched nearly to the breaking point by colonial forces such as "…Histories of massacres, dispersal, tribal relocations and inter-marriages…" (53). However, Lowe analyzes the work of other scholars to prove that maintaining Aboriginal languages within communities is both achievable and beneficial to the community. Lowe goes on to state that a community is weakened by the lack of a central language; without this central language, communities begin to lose their social unity and lack the necessary coordination to fix the issues surrounding unity (54). Lowe introduces the work of Geoff Anderson and Kunt J. Olawsky to show how Aboriginal Language maintenance provides both cultural connectedness and foundational strength to a community.

Another keystone author in the topic of Aboriginal languages is Ramahn Allam, a video journalist for the National Indigenous Television network (NITV). Allam, along with the host of

his T.V show, Ernie Dingo, set out on a journey through Australia to document the complex connections between Aboriginal languages and their connection to ancestral land in his award winning documentary series "Talking Language with Ernie Dingo." In this documentary, Dingo meets with Elders from six different communities to discuss the benefits and the difficulties facing the maintenance of Aboriginal languages. During his quest, Dingo comes to find that speaking their native languages "has a direct connection to how Aboriginal people listen, understand and speak to country. In return, country speaks to them" (Allam). By creating a space where Dingo could speak one on one with individual Elders, Allam and Dingo created a narrative where the keepers of Aboriginal languages could speak freely about their perceptions and experiences with language. The Elders all stressed that Aboriginal languages are more than just a way of speaking. The languages of Aboriginal Australia, as Whorf hypothesized, are systems of knowledge; each Elder describes language as a way of knowing; knowing their ancestors, their rituals, and their homelands (Allam 14:50-15:46). During an interview with Dingo an Elder, Banduk, from the Yolngu clan describes language as:

> It is about a few different layers of language spoken, you have a common language, you have a children's language and you have a religion language…the foundation of those languages which identifies you and with your country. So, that's the whole point of being an indigenous person in a country where language is still strong. Where the language is spoken daily…and strongly and participating in ceremony, all that, it's all part of the language.

Through the works of Allam, Whorf, Lowe, and Fishman, it is clear that language is paramount to the Aboriginal cultures of Australia. Even though language is of the utmost importance, the Aboriginal languages have been on the verge of extinction ever since the era of the stolen generation. In this next section I will gather the works of social scientists who have described and analyzed some of Australia's best and worst policies regarding Aboriginal languages.

Language policies

Due to a brutal history of colonial oppression, the languages of Aboriginal Australia are rapidly heading for extinction. In order to reconcile with their bloody past, the Australian government has begun to help the Indigenous peoples of Australia by creating policies that aid in the maintenance of Aboriginal languages. In this section, we will look at the works of Graham McKay, Joseph Lo Bianco, and Jane Simpson to figure out why language policies are created, how they function at the national, state, and territory level, and the effects of the policies on Aboriginal communities.

Since the colonization of Australia, the island nation has been governed by a monolingual people. This focus on a single language and culture led to violence and oppression towards the Aboriginal people of Australia. Aboriginal people were often forbidden by law to speak their language, and children were forced to attend boarding schools where they learned to reject their heritage and speak only English ("Our Languages" 46). It would not be until the late 1970s that Australia would begin to soften its views towards the native peoples. This shift in sympathy towards Aboriginal people became known as the "era of reconciliation." During this era Australia began to recognize the importance of maintaining Aboriginal languages. With this recognition came a flurry of organizations and policies designed to protect and promote Aboriginal culture. According to Lo Bianco, "The primary purpose of Australia's languages policy is to make the nation's choices about language issues in as rational, comprehensive, just and balanced a way as possible" (2). This meant that the government would have to create policies that would allow a fair and equal teaching of both Aboriginal languages and English at both national, state, and territory levels.

<h2 style="text-align:center">National Level Policies</h2>

At the National level the first language policy regarding Aboriginal languages was the "Australian Government's National Policy on Languages" of 1987 (NPL). To this day the NPL is regarded as one of the best and most comprehensive plans by many scholars (McKay 301, Jane Simpson et al. 18, Williams and Aboriginal Affairs 69). This policy was known for its comprehensive view of Aboriginal language groups and their use within the community. In his article, McKay states that:

This ground-breaking policy, adopted by the Hawke government, took a comprehensive view of language in the life of the community and covered three major areas:

• Status of languages

• Teaching and learning of languages

• Language services.

Each of these policy areas was addressed in terms of three language groupings:

• English (and Aboriginal English)

• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (including creoles)

• Other languages (including AUSLAN, the Australian sign language) (301)

By doing so, the NPL was able to create a set of standards that all language policies in the future would be held to. The NPL stated that all policies at the state and national level should: improve competence in English, maintain and develop languages other than English, provide services in languages other than English, and create opportunities for learning second languages (Lo Bianco 2). Though this policy "…marked the highpoint of language policy at the national level in Australia…" It would remain in place for only four years (McKay 301).

The next important national language policy would come on the international day of the world's indigenous people in 2009 (McKay 303). The National Indigenous Languages Policy (NILP) strove to bring national attention to the critical endangerment of Aboriginal languages, while promoting pride in identity and culture through the use of Aboriginal languages in schools. The NILP planned to achieve these goals by providing 56.4 million dollars to programs like the Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records (MILR), and through interpreting services via the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Though this policy appears to be focused on the inclusion of Aboriginal languages in schools, McKay warns readers that the NILP quickly diverts its focus to English literacy (305). While English literacy is undoubtedly important, the policy makers tend to "operate on the false understanding that Indigenous language development and English literacy skills are in competition with one another rather than being mutually supportive," meaning that English literacy tends to undermine the teaching of Indigenous languages (McKay 305).

Since 2009 there has not been another language policy at the national level. There has been a shift away from language policies and instead the nation has created "a series of 'plans', 'strategies', and 'programs' related to languages education" (Scarino 292). This lack of a coherent and singular policy has since been applied to the states and territories of Australia. While there have been plenty of plans, programs, and policies within every state and territory, for the purpose of time and clarity I will only focus on the Northern Territories history of language policies.

Northern Territory Policies

While there are certainly other states with their own language policies, the Northern Territory has the highest population of Aboriginal people and therefore the most policies and policy analysis regarding language.

The Northern Territory is home to the majority of Australia's Indigenous population; because of this the Northern Territory has created and implemented a great deal of language policies since the 1970s. One of the most difficult policies has been the implementation of bilingual education, and according to McKay, "The history of bilingual education in Northern Territory remote Aboriginal community schools is an example of the complex and ambivalent interplay between policy, politics and practice in relation to Indigenous languages" (312).

The first bilingual program was brought into the Northern Territory under the name "Two-way Learning" by the Commonwealth government in 1973 to help Aboriginal children learn English as a second language (McKay 312). In 1982 the Northern Territory government continued to endorse this policy, but changed the name to 'bilingual programs,' switching to a focus on English competency and a basic grasp on mathematics (Simpson, et al. 9). This shift was highly problematic because the policy, which was originally designed "to help each child to believe in himself and be proud of his heritage by the regular use of the Aboriginal language in school and by learning about Aboriginal culture," had now dropped all of this for a focus on the English language (Australian Department of Education 1975, qtd. in Simpson, et al. 9). The next large policy change would come in 1998, when the Northern Territory government attempted to move funding away from bilingual education to create more English Language learning programs

(McKay 312). The government claimed they were changing the bilingual programs due to the apparent concern of Aboriginal communities, and that students in bilingual programs were not scoring well on standardized tests. However, before the Northern Territory could pass this new policy, the people of the territory created a petition against this movement with over 3,000 signatures ("Chronology"). Instead, the Government issued a review of bilingual programs known as the Collins review. The Collins review proved that the government's assumptions were incorrect; most Aboriginal communities were in support of bilingual programs and the children in these programs were better and more involved than other students (Delvin 6, McKay 312). Though the Collins review made many recommendations to policy makers, such as improving the training of bilingual teachers and supporting studies of the Indigenous pedagogy, the Northern Territory chose only to change the name of bilingual programs to 'two-way learning' and ignored every other recommendation. By ignoring these recommendations, the 'two-way learning' programs began to suffer more and more until 2008, when the Minister for Education, Marion Scrymgour, announced that all schools within Aboriginal communities would have to speak English for the first four hours of every school day (Delvin 7, McKay 313, Simpson et al. 19).

After announcing this new policy focusing on English literacy, Scrymgour promised that maintenance of Aboriginal languages was still important, and that the Northern Territory government would "continue to fund and to support a structured language and culture program" (Browning 2008, qtd. In Delvin, 7). However, Delvin argues that "constant references to 'maintenance' and 'revitalization' do not disguise the fact that there is no longer any support for the premise of bilingual education (7). Indeed, this new policy would go on to be an unanimously hated as it was set in place without the consent, warning, or consultation of the communities affected (Delvin, McKay, Simpson et al., Scarino). On top of this split-second decision, when analyzed, the data used for Scrymgour's policy turned out to be incomplete and misleading (Delvin, 13). Scrymgour continually stated that bilingual education was not working and that children were not meeting the national standards. While it was true that Indigenous children were not meeting the national standards in education, there were studies done over multiple years (as

seen in FIG. 1), by the Australian Human Rights commission, which proved that children in bilingual schools did better than those in English-only schools.

Marion Scrymgour resigned from her position of Minister for Education a year later and her policy was ratified by the Federal Government in 2009 as well (Cadman and Brown 442).

Since Scrymgour's disastrous plan to help Aboriginal children learn English, the state of language education in the Northern Territory has been in shambles. Due to the recent and chaotic nature of any language education policy after 2010, I will end my review of literature here and instead briefly discuss what I hope to add to the existing literature with my studies.

Through this review of policies and policy analysis it is clear that many of the language policies, both at the national and territory level, have been unsuccessful to say the least. In a strange turn of events, Australia's golden era of language education came and went almost 3 decades ago with the Australian Government's National Policy on Languages in 1987. The policy has been unanimously regarded as the best and most comprehensive plan as it addressed all aspects of Aboriginal culture and language (Delvin 6, McKay 301, Scarino 291, Simpson et al. 10). However, since this policy there has been a shift, at both the national and territory levels, away from creating direct, physical policies. Instead there has been a trend of nebulous plans, programs, and strategies to help Aboriginal children learn English. While this focus on English literacy is not terrible and is indeed necessary, it does undermine the beneficial healing factor of the "two-way" learning method, where an Aboriginal child can learn and feel good about their cultural heritage while still learning English (McKay 305). Since this change in policy making there have been many policy analysts such as McKay, Delvin, Simpson et al, and Lo Bianco, who have touched upon the problems within the creation and implementation of Language Education methods. However, I have found a distinct lack of studies relative to the damage done by these policies, which is exactly what I intend to bring to the discussion of Language in Australia. Through Galtung's theory of structural Violence, I will pinpoint the damages done by these policies. In order to see and understand the negative effects of the policies stated, it is imperative to gain a better understanding of Galtung and his ideas on violence and structures
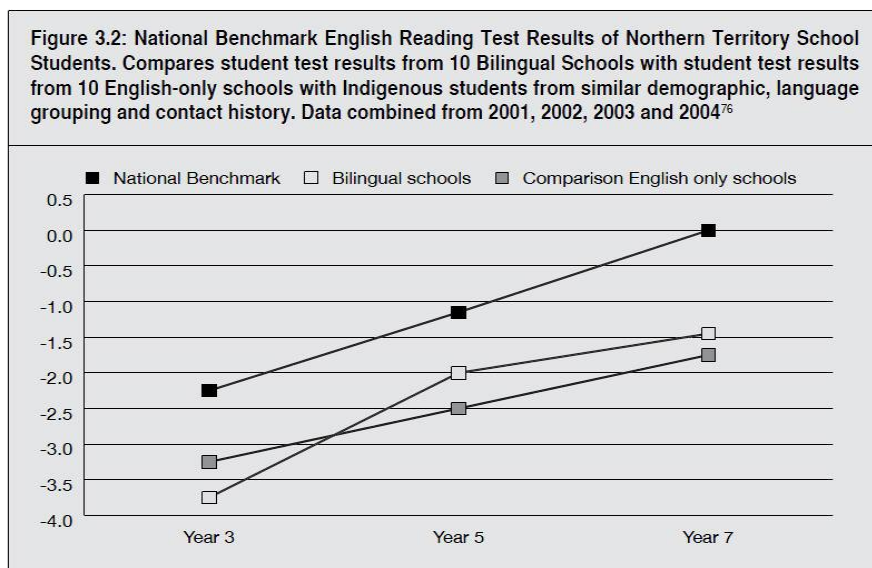
Figure 3.2: National Benchmark English Reading Test Results of Northern Territory School Students. Compares student test results from 10 Bilingual Schools with student test results from 10 English-only schools with Indigenous students from similar demographic, language grouping and contact history. Data combined from 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004[76]

Figure 1: https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/chapter-3-introduction-social-justice-report-2009:

Theory

Almost every Australian language policy, whether intentionally or otherwise, have caused harm amongst the already suffering Aboriginal communities. Because these policies are created in the depths of bureaucracy, the damage done by them can be hard to see or trace back to an individual. It is for this reason that I have chosen to analyze this issue through the lens of Johan Galtung's theory "structural violence." Galtung defines structural violence as a social structure that damages a group of people, either physically or mentally, through the unequal distribution of resources and power (Peach Research 171). Before I continue, in order to fully understand structural violence and its relevance to Australian language policies, it is crucial to understand the life that lead Galtung to reinvent the idea of violence.

To focus solely on his studies of violence does Galtung a great disservice. Johan Galtung, often called "the father of peace studies," grew up amongst the violence and turmoil of World War II, when Germany invaded his hometown of Oslo, Norway in 1940 (Ikeda). At the age of 12 he saw his father arrested by German soldiers and sent to a concentration camp; luckily Galtung would see his father return a month before the war ended. Until then he was raised by his mother,

Helga, a perpetually optimistic nurse, and his two sisters, Lellik the journalist and Dagny, Norway's first school psychologist. Both the loss of his father and growing up in the presence of such optimistic and caring individuals played a large part in Galtung's desire to help humanity (Breaking the Cycle 18). As Galtung grew he channeled his experiences of peace and war into a life of studying. Galtung devoted his life to studying peace and violence through as many epistemological lenses as possible. After he earned his first PhD in mathematics, Galtung began studying peace through the lenses of political science and international relations; in the 70s he began a deeper study of the conditions and forms of peace, and finally, in the 80s he used a historical perspective to theorize how particularly bloody events could have been peacefully mediated (Breaking the Cycle 20). These studies would eventually culminate into Galtung's seminal piece, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." It is in this essay that Galtung describes, defines, and conceptualizes the idea of structural violence. Note that the violence enacted by social structures is not new and has been studied before, instead Galtung strives to give this violence a name, thus solidifying its smoky nature. Because of the difficult nature of structural violence, Galtung stresses the importance of redefining violence first.

Though violence is nothing new, the means and motives of violence have evolved over the years. Galtung redefines violence as: "when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Peace Research 168). In this definition, violence transcends the common notion of physical violence and encompasses to include threats of damage to both the body and mind. Galtung recognizes that this definition is difficult, however, he believes the complication is crucial in that it broadens the horizons of violence. If the definition of violence is left purely to the physical deprivation of health, then "highly unacceptable social orders would still be compatible with peace" (Peace Research 168).

Galtung's broader definition also touches on the importance of intention and blame. Galtung claims that "violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual" (Peace Research 168). As an example, Galtung states that a person who dies of tuberculosis in the 1800's has not experienced violence, as the person's death was unavoidable. However, if that same person was to die today, despite all the medical resources we have, then the poor soul

would suffer violence by the hands of those who would withdraw or deny him aid. This definition of violence is difficult because it takes the violence out of the hand of a single individual and places it on the social structure. Galtung recognizes that the difficulty stems from the Judeo-Christian notion of intention and guilt. This notion places the blame of violence purely on intentions rather than consequences (Peace Research 171). This line of thinking is flawed as it allows structures such as hospitals, who rarely intend to do harm, to create policies that consequentially damage a population. For instance, raising the price of a vital medicine: it is rarely the outright intention of a drug company to hurt people through this action, yet the reality is, the increase in cost will hurt those who cannot afford the medicine. These notions of guilt and intention fit perfectly into the discussion of Australian language policies and their effects on the Aboriginal communities. These notions of guilt and intention fit perfectly into the discussion of Australian language policies and their effects on the Aboriginal communities.

For example, Australia is full of institutions and structures designed to help "bridge the gap" in living standards between Aboriginal and Non-Native Australians. From the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), Australia continues to focus on creating short term programs designed outside of Aboriginal communities with little to no input from Aboriginal people themselves (Short 502). Regardless of the intentions of these programs, the living standards of Aboriginal Australians are still far below the national average, and in some communities they continue to fall (Short 505). By using Johan Galtung's theory of structural violence the effects of cultural identity loss and the lack of proper education should make the damage done to the already suffering Indigenous communities apparent. Using the structural violence theory allows us to look past the issues of intentions and blame, and concentrate on the direct consequences of these policies. By looking at the consequences of Australia's language policies it should be evident that these policies, which clearly favor the English language, damage the Aboriginal communities by withholding the means to educate and speak their own languages.

Methods and Research Parameters

The methods for this paper is a mixture of policy and literature analysis combined with my own personal experience dealing with language. In order to fully understand how I developed this mixture of methods I will first provide a brief vignette of my experiences in Australia that led to my current methods of research.

Cultural Surprises

When I first set out for Australia, bright eyed and bushy tailed, I was beyond ecstatic! I was excited to interact with a new culture and tackle complex issues, such as race relations in a postcolonial country. However, in my excitement to meet these new and mysterious people, I had neglected to learn the most basic part of any culture, the language.

I could have chosen to learn even a few words in any of the 200+ Aboriginal languages (McKay 2011 p.297), instead I simply assumed that these people, who have lost almost their entire culture to English colonialism, would speak, understand, or even *want* to speak to me in English. Of course, I had no idea of this great mistake I was about to make, so I spent a good six months talking to friends, students, and teachers, until I had finally found someone who could introduce me to the Aboriginal community on campus. I had finally found my way into the community! I was beyond excited, but, as I was about to find out, there would still remain a great distance between this community and myself.

Once I found out that my medical Anthropology teacher, Prof. Long, had ties to the Aboriginal community on campus, I lost all sense of dignity and became a "teacher's pet," always showing up early and staying late, answering every question I could to prove that I was more knowledgeable than the average American on Australian issues. Eventually Prof. Long would invite me to lunch after class to discuss why it was I came to Australia to study Anthropology. I told her I came to Australia to interview and survey Aboriginal people for my capstone paper. She seemed shocked, and a bit skeptical. One of her first questions was "do you speak any Aboriginal languages?" I answered truthfully, "No, I assume most Aboriginal people speak English, and I never really cared for learning other languages anyway. Besides, the Aboriginal people I want to talk to are all college students, surely they speak English, right?" Prof. Long told me right then and there that I would never be able work with Aboriginal communities thinking that way. "Of course they all speak English" Prof. Long said, "But, if you come into *their* community and expect them to talk in *your* language about the oppression they have felt from *your* culture, then you've already shown them that you're incapable of seeing things from their perspective." She also warned me that my opinions about language and language learning came from a place of privilege.

She warned me that "English speakers are often seen as lazy and privileged because they can travel all over the world to learn about other cultures, yet they rarely take the time to learn another language, because they know that, no matter where they go, somebody, somewhere will speak, or at least understand English. So when people, especially so-called "anthropologists," travel all the way across the world to learn about a new culture, especially a culture whose language has nearly been lost to English domination, it is seen as especially rude and lazy to expect the people to speak to you in English.

I was so embarrassed that I was on the verge of tears. I could not believe it, I had spent so many years of my life preparing for this moment and I had already made a fool of myself before I had even made it into the community. I think Prof. Long must have seen the disbelief and disappointment on my face, because she agreed to invite one of her Aboriginal friends, Mable*, to have lunch with us next week.

This was it, I was finally going to meet with an Aboriginal person for the first time in my life. I would have been nervous had I not talked with Prof. Long beforehand, but after our conversation about language and privilege, I was downright terrified. Of course I had spent all week trying to learn some basic phrases, but information was scarce and I had no idea which language, if any, Mable spoke. Even if I had known what to say in which language, I was so nervous I could barely speak English! Luckily, Mabel turned out to be incredibly kind and understanding, plus she spoke perfect English. After speaking with Mabel for a few minutes and hastily apologizing for not learning the local language, she laughed and told me that our friend Prof. Long had been extra harsh with me and that most Aboriginals, at least the ones at Deakin University, spoke English and didn't mind speaking English either. However, she warned me, there are those who will question how invested I really am in my work, and further there will be some who refuse to talk to me at all. I told her I completely understood and I was simply glad she was willing to talk to me at all! That seemed to be the right thing to say, as she then invited me to eat dinner with the rest of the University's Aboriginal community while they watched "Black Comedy," a comedy sketch group made up entirely of Indigenous Australian Actors. This

television show deserves a brief mention in this methods section because it played a major role in shaping my methods and therefore, my entire capstone.

The T.V. show "Black Comedy" is a comedy sketch made for and by Aboriginal people. Being written and produced by Aboriginal people has allowed "Black Comedy" to go where most other comedy shows could not, touching on "everything from cultural appropriation and identity policing, to biblical stories and family politics" (Neill 2015 p.44).
While each skit was hilariously funny and brought forth incredibly important issues, I was not interested in what was being said; instead I began to look at how each issue was brought up. After my discussion about language and privilege, I began to note the various ways language and language issues were brought up within the show: there was the "white girl who talked black," an Aboriginal couple using exaggerated sign language, and people being accused of "not talking black enough." This T.V show would become instrumental in my understanding of the importance of language maintenance, and thus I will discuss it in greater detail in my analysis.

Unfortunately, this would be first and only encounter with the Aboriginal community at Deakin University, however, this event was more than enough for me to become hooked on the idea of language, power, and privilege. Although my story of Australia ends here, this vignette only describes

It is here that I will end the story of my first ethnography. I will now move on to describe how this experience led me to my current research

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Research Parameters

Due to my lack of (language) preparation I lost a great deal of rapport within the Aboriginal community, and thus was not able to complete all of the interviews and surveys I had set out to do while writing my proposal. Instead, I was forced to rethink my methods of data collection along with my entire reason for studying Aboriginal culture. After my talks with Mabel and watching "Black Comedy" with the Aboriginal community at Deakin University, I decided that instead of taking my initial proposal as a failure, I would change the focus of the paper to fit my experience in Australia. So, the focus switched from race relations and the Non-Indigenous perspectives to a focus on Language and privilege. But even within this topic the focus of this paper was tweaked in order to meet the needs of the community I was working with.

At first I wanted to study how perspectives change between languages, but this topic ended up being too grand in scale and it would have been difficult to collect data without interviewing Aboriginal people. But by starting my research in this vein I came across the topic of bilingual code switching which became the focus of my capstone for a brief moment. This is a term that has come to have my different homes amongst a multitude of social sciences disciplines, each having its own definition (Milroy and Muysken 1995 p.8). Once again, the angle was too broad as there was no distinct definition of code-switching, and there were very few articles related to both code-switching and Aboriginal languages. Finally, I realized that the best way to go about studying the negative effects of privilege on language would be to look at how Australia's language policies affect Aboriginal communities. This topic would give a concrete issue with solid boundaries instead of trying to tackle complex sociocultural issues like code-switching or race relations. Though the topic of language never changed, by tweaking the focus to something more concrete I was able to narrow down my research parameters to something more manageable for the short about of time available to me.

In the end I have chosen to combine my personal experiences from Australia and my time at DLAMP with an analysis of literature in order to prove that, within Australia, the language

policies created at the national level and at the Northern Territory level have been structurally violent towards the Aboriginal communities.

Data Collection

As my focus shifted, so too did my means of data collection. Because of my poor standing within the Aboriginal community at Deakin and my continual change of topics, I was not able to produce data directly from Aboriginal people as I had once planned. Instead I would rely heavily on digital means of data collection. This means that a majority of my data comes from online databases, such as JSTOR and EBSCOhost. I also had to navigate through the bureaucracy of Australia's governmental websites in order to find the actual policies I intended to analyze. This task would end up being much harder than I initially imagined, and I will touch more upon this topic in the analysis of my data. In addition to my digital mining, I also incorporate my time completing my service learning at the Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula (DLAMP).

For the service learning aspect of my capstone, I have spent over 30 hours working at DLAMP. Specifically, I spent seven and half hours every Monday with a kindergarten classroom where about half of the class were native Spanish speakers, and the other half were native English speakers. This was no normal class room. This program had the students learning and speaking only in English, and then, halfway through the day, the children would switch classrooms and teachers. In this new class room, the children would learn and speak only in Spanish for the remainder of the day. Of course, this private school where kids learned English and Spanish is in no way the same as the struggle of Aboriginal Australians trying to have their own languages taught in their home country, however, my time spent working at DLAMP has given me an excellent frame of reference as to how communities can compromise to create spaces of equal language learning.

Analysis

As I have discussed earlier, structural violence can be difficult to find, and even harder to trace. Wading through the bureaucracy of Australia's language policies made this task even more difficult. That is why I propose the idea of analyzing language policies in the same way one would

analyze a piece of art. In order to understand a painting, one must first take a very broad stance, or as a social scientist might say, a macro-level analysis. At this level, one would look at the creator of the painting, the social landscape in which the painting was created, and even the very frame in which the painting hangs. After gaining an understanding of the outside influences, one can then begin to look at the details within in the actual painting. At this micro-level analysis one would look at the brush strokes of the artist to figure out what style of painting the creator is using, and finally one would look at what is going on within the painting to figure out what the artist is trying to convey. This same style of ever-narrowing analysis will be used to pinpoint the violence created by the language policies in Australia.

As one begins to understand an art piece by looking at the artist, this analysis will start by looking at the people responsible for creating the policies dictating who speaks which language and where. As one might imagine, official language policies stem from various departments within the government. A majority of the language policies come from the department of education, however, they have been known to come from other governmental agencies, such as the Aboriginal languages policy that came from the New South Wales Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Water IN 2009 ("Policy Language is our culture" 1). Regardless of which department the policy comes from, it is extremely uncommon for an Aboriginal person to take part in the crafting of the policy (Williams 59, Simpson et al. 7). The exclusion of Aboriginal people from the decision-making process is the first and most dangerous aspect of structural violence. Though Galtung states that structural violence affects all aspects of life, he emphasizes that structural violence is "Above all the *power to decide over the distribution of resources…*" (Peace Research 171). As Aboriginal people often have unequal power in the process of creating policies, they often face unequal life chances, which in the case of language polices looks like a severe decline in native languages with the enforcement of strict English learning policies. So, we have identified the artists behind these policies, and the violence behind the lack of Aboriginal inclusion, but what kind of frame did they use to hang their portrait; what was the social framework that led to the creation of the far removed language policies?

Just as the frame of a painting may impact its meaning, the historical framework of Australian language policies says something about the policies we see today. The policies in place today stem from the early days of Australian colonization. Long before Australia signed the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and before the era of reconciliation, Aboriginal people were banned from practicing culture or speaking their language within civilized areas (Short 493). As Australia became a fully-fledged nation, the government had to find a slightly more humane way to incorporate the Indigenous peoples into their society, so they began to take Aboriginal people from their families and place them in boarding schools, where they learned how to be "proper citizens of the Queen." Eventually this method was viewed as unsavory, and the Aboriginal people were given their children back (Short 494). However, according to Toepfer, by this time the Aboriginal communities had been plunged into such a disarray that many of their original languages had been lost, yet very few Aboriginal people spoke Standard Australian English (203). This colonial desire to speak one singular language, coupled with the growing desire to become a multicultural nation, has led the nation's language policies into disarray. Even when policy makers aspire to make a truly beneficial policy, the plan is doomed from the start because the policy is born out of a colonial system that has continually worked against the interest of and without the collaboration of the Aboriginal people. Just as an artist would analyze the outside factors of a painting, I have analyzed who creates the policies, and the historical framework that has led to the policies in motion today. Now, it is time to analyze the details of the painting, or in this case, analyze the effects of language policies in Australia.

As we move deeper into the micro analysis of the policy, we begin to take notice of the style, the way in which the policy maker creates their policy. In the case of language policies, this translates into finding the form and structure that the policy takes. As Australia entered the 1980s, the nation was going through what is now called the Era of Reconciliation. As the general population was coming to terms with their nation's bloody past, the public began to soften their views towards the native people, and thus, the 1987 National Language Policy was created (Short 495). This would eventually be recognized as one of the best policies to date (Mckay, Simpson et al, Delvin, Scarino). The policy took into account a wide range of language factors, and came up

with clear and concise recommendations, as well as rationale for each recommendation (Lo Bianco 10). However, as more and more people began to take notice of Aboriginal living conditions, there arose a desire to 'close the gap' of the living conditions between Aboriginal and non-native communities (Williams 59). This meant that the Australian government was now being pushed to teach Aboriginal children English, while helping to maintain their native language and culture. But, instead of opening more bilingual schools, which have proven by Delvin to be much more effective, the national government decided to drop the use of direct language policies for a nebulous combination of plans, strategies, and recommendations (15). I will argue that this switch to a nearly untraceable combination of short term plans and programs is another sign of structural violence.

First off, by dissolving the national language policy, the states and territories have been thrown into disarray as they have no national plan to guide their treatment. While the chaos of constantly changing plans and programs may seem random, I argue that it is a highly tactical move on the part of the central and state governments. Though I am by no means a professional policy analyst, I have been privileged with a higher education and access to two online databases from Australia and the U.S, and I have found it nearly impossible to track down any sort of official government document detailing the exact actions or plans of a language policy. I refuse to consider a coincidence. Instead, I believe that this is the first step of structural violence. By hiding the official policies out of reach of the general public, it takes away the people's ability to learn more about the policies that affect them and thus the ability to change them. As a professor once told me, "If an enemy cannot be seen, the enemy cannot be attacked." Finally, we must take one more step forward and analyze the characters within the painting, or in this case, the individuals affected by the policies (or plans, or programs, or strategies).

Finally, as we have exhausted all outside factors, it is time to analyze the details of the painting, or in this case, the effects of these language policies on the Aboriginal communities. Before we discuss the impact of the government's policies, it is critical to reiterate the importance of Aboriginal language.

Language is undoubtedly important; authors such as Fishman and Stout et al. classify language as the linchpin of culture (72, 1947). However, language seems to hold an elevated role of importance among Aboriginal peoples. In fact, my time spent analyzing the television show, Black Comedy, solidified this idea, as almost every skit done on the show revolves around language. From it's the 'white girl who talks too black,' to the Aboriginal man who doesn't talk black enough, it is clear that language is more than a just a way of communicating for Aboriginal people, it is a means of social and cultural identity (Neill 44). With this in mind, one can begin to truly see the structurally violent nature of Australia's language policies.

As stated earlier, any sort of official statistic or government report related to the actual physical consequences of language policies can be difficult to track. However, one aspect that the government cannot cover up are the benefits of learning one's native tongue. There have been studies done all around the world, including Australia, proving that learning and speaking one's native language is paramount to the health of Indigenous peoples. In Biddle and Swee's article linking the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people to their ties to language, land and culture, they compiled a great deal of evidence that proves the beneficial factors of language learning:

> Being able to converse in one's own language helps produce a strong sense of self, and has been found to reduce rates of suicide amongst Indigenous youth (Hallett et al. 2007). Furthermore, Harrison (2004) showed the potential for the incorporation of Aboriginal English into the curriculum to positively impact on Indigenous self-confidence and health. Furthermore, a study by the ABS of the 2008 NATSISS showed that Indigenous youth (aged 15-24 years) who spoke an Indigenous language were less likely to consume alcohol at risky levels or to have used illicit substances in the previous 12 months (ABS 2011) (Qtd. In Biddle and Swee 226).

This compilation of data from scientists outside of the country, inside the country, and within the government itself should be enough to prove to that language policies need to focus on teaching and maintaining the Aboriginal languages. Still, Australia is plagued with vague plans like Marion Scrymgour's '4 hours' plan that forced all Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory to only speak English for the first four hours of the school day, with the last hour being devoted to

Aboriginal languages. This plan was set into motion without consulting or warning the affected communities and would end up destroying nearly every plan, policy, and program that came before it (Delvin 7). Knowing that the affected children may suffer both mental and physical harm, and still putting into motion a plan that restricts the amount of time a child may learn their native language, can only be seen as an act of violence. Of course, Scrymgour claimed to be truly invested in helping Aboriginal communities, but as the negative reviews of her policies continued to come in, Scrymgour resigned from her position as Education Minister and from the Labor Party before she could be blamed or further hassled for the poor state of education in the Northern Territory (Simpson et al. 38). Thus, the cycle of structural violence continues; some government sector creates a policy without consulting the affected group, the plan inevitably fails, those responsible for the failure disappear into bureaucracy, no one is blamed, and the cycle starts all over again. Now that the micro and macro level of analysis have been discussed, it is time to bring our analysis to a conclusion. I will employ the use of the painting analogy one last time, and say that we must now look at the painting as a whole: using everything from the painter, the frame, and the social environment, down to the style, colors, and minute brushstrokes, in order to understand the painting as a whole. By combining all of the injustices created through policies we will begin to understand the story behind Australia's language policies. Unfortunately, the story that Australia's language policies tell, is a sad tale of structural violence and language loss.

Through this analysis, it has become clear that many of Australia's policies regarding language have been steeped in structural violence. With no official account of many Aboriginal people having held high ranking officials within the government, Wikipedia puts the total at around 38 Aboriginal people throughout Australia's history (*List of Indigenous*). This lack of Indigenous representation in the policy making marks the first step in a quick decent into structural violence, as it marks a distinct shift of power away from Aboriginal people into the hands of uninvited politicians. Of course this comes as no surprise as one begins to understand that the nation's history was built on structural violence towards the native people (Short 507). This history of structurally violent policies may be difficult to track due to the constantly shifting and nebulous string of plans, policies, and programs, but the actual consequences of these policies can and have been discovered

by other social scientists such as Purdie et al. who's tests on Aboriginal students opinions towards AE and SAE[2] found that:

> Our results indicate that some Nyungar students are in a "no-win" situation with respect to the use of their two linguistic codes in the classroom. They do not feel positive about using AE, nor do they feel positive about using SAE. Furthermore, they believe that everyone else in their classroom (teachers, Nyungar friends, Wadjela students) holds similar negative attitudes to both AE and SAE. In other words, students could be described as feeling "silenced" in the classroom. The possible grave consequences of such a situation relate not only to academic achievement. Healthy personal and social development depends on feeling recognized, valued, and respected by those with whom we interact

Finally, the policies clearly act in a violent manner when they obstruct the Aboriginal people from learning and maintaining their languages in the face of undeniable data that showcases the mental and physical benefits of Aboriginal language learning (Biddle and Swee 226). When looking at the entire picture that these policies paint it is undeniable that Australia's language policies, regardless of their intentions, are steeped in structural violence.

Conclusion

The lack of coherent and consistent language policy, throughout the nation and within the Northern Territory, have caused pain and suffering in Aboriginal communities. This pain stems from the systematic degradation of Aboriginal culture at the hands of language policies which refuse to acknowledge the cultural rights of Aboriginal people to maintain their language. The constant shift between language maintenance and focusing on English, leaves children with a sub-par education in both languages and sends mixed messages to students about the importance of culture. One year a class may be focused on learning the local Aboriginal language then the next year all of the focus is placed into learning English. This indecisiveness within policies gives students just enough to let them realize their indigenous culture should be valued, then when a

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[2] AE stands for Aboriginal English which a creole of Aboriginal languages and English i.e.: Spanglish
SAE stands for Standard Australian English.

language program is completely abandoned, as was the case in the 2009 Northern Territory policy, students may begin to feel that their culture or language is worthless. Of course, the policies and politicians never say that directly, but the message is clearly implied when the policies mandate one language over the other (Idris 28). To make matters even worse, the policy makers continue to favor English teaching even in the face of evidence that proves the importance of Aboriginal languages. While it is important that the public learn to recognize these policies for the acts of violence that they are, it also critical that the public recognize that if they do nothing, then they are also part of the violence. When we see that the policies refuse to change, even in the face of unquestionable data, then we must take actions into our own hands. In order to combat the unseen enemy of structural violence I shall provide two recommendations and two areas of future study.

Recommendations and Future Studies

1. Take language learning into your homes
    a. Some authors, such as John Hobson, realize that while the government should play a role in revitalizing native languages, it is important that the communities work outside of government policies. Hobson suggests implementing language policies at home such as "no English during mealtimes" (4). These simple home policies could then be expanded to the communities as Hobson then suggests that "community organizations… could conduct voting in a local language without significant preparation or cost" (4).

2. Advocate for more bilingual education
    a. Through both my extensive review of literature and through my own experiences doing service learning at DLAMP, I have come to recognize the importance of early bilingual education. After spending nearly 50 hours with children in a bilingual program I witnessed first-hand just how quickly a child can learn a language. But even beyond actually learning a new language, the children are exposed to new cultures and are more sensitive to cultural differences.

      b. In order to fight against the structural violence of language policies we must first raise awareness of the malfunctioning policies we have today, while pushing for new policies that include bilingual education programs.

      c. The first step in the fight against structural violence is to raise awareness of the issue and put pressure on government officials to alter the current policies.

3. I would propose a study comparing and contrasting the schooling of Aboriginal children and Immigrant children to see whether or how Australia approaches each language differently.

4. I would propose a study comparing and contrasting the language education of all Indigenous peoples around the world to come with the best possible plan.

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