

Smolicz's Theory of Core Values and
Language Maintenance and Shift in Dutch
Immigrants in Australia

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オーストラリアにおけるオランダ人移民者の言語維持と推移
－Smoliczの中心価値理論を用いた考察－

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1. Introduction

With the acknowledgement of multiculturalism in the mid-1970s, the various cultures, which ethnic groups have brought into Australia, are currently regarded as being the shared heritage of the country. As the awareness of ethnic groups in Australia increases, research on language contact in the multicultural context, including bilingualism, language maintenance and shift, and language transfer, have prevailed to date. From the perspective of Smolicz's (1981, 1992, 1999) theory of core values, which deals with ethnic identities of minorities and their ethnic language use, this paper reports on language maintenance and shift in Dutch immigrants in Australia. Although the Dutch are one of the largest immigrant groups in Australia, it is remarkable that they do not adhere to their native language and have a higher rate of language shift compared to other major ethnic cohorts. This paper illustrates Dutch immigrants' perceptions of their own ethnic language and attitudes towards its maintenance using three empirical studies undertaken by Pauwels (1985), Bennett (1992), and de Bot and Clyne (1994). Based on the findings, the relationship between core values and language maintenance and shift will

be discussed.

2. The Theory of Core Values

2.1 The definition of the core value system

Core values are defined as one of the most fundamental components of a group's culture and identifying values which are symbolic of the group and its membership (Smolicz, 1981: 76). The theory of core values stresses that core values enable identifying social groups as distinctive, ethnic, religious, scientific or cultural communities. Smolicz (1999) has claimed that whenever the element of their culture, which they regard as the most crucial and distinguishing aspect, is directly associated with their identity as a group, the element concerned becomes a core value for the group. Given that core values are fundamentally crucial for the group's continued viability and integrity, he has also indicated that core values serve as pivots around which the whole social and identificational system of the group is organised. Thus, he claims that removal of such pivots, through enforced modernisation or assimilation to the dominant group, would cause the entire structure of the group to collapse.

An ethnic group does not necessarily only have one core value. A relative hierarchy of importance among core values exists within a particular culture (Smolicz, 1981: 77). Smolicz (1999) states that Italians provide a good example where more than one core value may be involved. The Italian language comprises a core value in Italian culture, but the importance of family as a cultural value even surpasses that of language especially among rural Southern Italians (Smolicz, 1999). Smolicz maintains that the acceptance of this value priority may explain the apparent lack of concern among many Italian-Australians for the maintenance of Italian in the written form, as opposed to an oral language

for everyday communication within a restricted social group.

2.2 Ethnic languages and core values

Smolicz (1981: 76-81) describes the relationship between language and ethnicity with reference to three ethnic groups. Poles provide one of the best examples of a culture where the native language holds the status of a core value. Smolicz revealed that the attempt to exterminate the mother tongue during the nineteenth century led to the success in elevating that language to a symbol for the survival of the group as well as for the preservation of its cultural heritage. In a language-centred culture, the language is more than the medium of communication and self-expression but a symbol of ethnic identity and a defining value which acts as a prerequisite for 'authentic' group membership (Smolicz, 1981: 88; 1992: 280; Smolicz, Lee, Murugaian, & Secombe, 1990: 230).

In contrast to language-centred cultures, among the Jewish, the perpetuation of ethnicity has not needed one special language to act as its carrier and preserver (Smolicz, 1981). Smolicz has indicated that their core values are made up of three mutually-related fundamental components; religion, peoplehood, and historicity. As he states, Jewish people hold a unique principle that a person born of a Jewish mother is automatically Jewish. The special symbolic relationship between the Jewish religion and the concept of Jews as a distinct group with ties of common ancestry strengthens their core values (Smolicz, 1981). Smolicz has also insisted that their historical consciousness, such as their persecution and dispersion, has played a significant role in identifying their ethnicity partly because of the reinforced link with religion.

Furthermore, the core values of the Irish ethnic group are centred in the Catholic religion (Smolicz, 1981). Gaelic has almost disappeared as a means of everyday communication. Instead, English has become the

language that is almost universally spoken by the Irish and the main medium for their cultural activity. In Smolicz's previous research on catholic schools in Australia, the shift from Irish to the British or Anglo-Australian identity could be demonstrated in the fall of Irish identity among children. Interestingly, Smolicz suggests that recently people of Irish origin have lost their feeling of Irishness more readily than their Catholicism.

2.3 Core values of immigrants in a multicultural society

Smolicz (1981: 86-89) argued how core values had an influence on the construction of the ethnic personal system in a multicultural society. He has indicated that this type of personal system is related to the ethnic tenacity of the group in a particular cultural environment, which refers to a particular ethnic group's attitudes towards retaining its culture as distinct from that of the dominant majority. Smolicz (1999), for example, states that Dutch immigrants in Australia show low ethnic tenacity by regarding assimilation as the final outcome of interaction. Smolicz also claims that the ability of individuals to construct ethnic personal systems is dependent on how the core values of the ethnic culture are related to the value system of the host society. For example, he stresses that if the dominant group already has a tradition of religious pluralism, ethnic groups which place a cultural importance on their religion have a better chance of perpetuating their ethnicity. On the other hand, Smolicz indicates that when language provides the core of an ethnic culture in a society where the dominant majority's ideological system is based on linguistic monism, it might be problematic that individuals construct a viable personal ethnic linguistic system. In order to make the core values of different groups reconciled as much as possible, Smolicz suggests that a multicultural society should possess certain supra-ethnic core values which are acceptable to all the groups. According to him, such values transcend and complement the more particular values of each group, and enable the acceptance of cultural diversity by society as a whole.

In Australia, since ethnic groups are overwhelmingly of European cultural ancestry, they are regarded as belonging to one family of cultures, which share a basic common core (Smolicz, 1981). Smolicz points out three newly emergent shared values, including parliamentary democracy, freedom of the individual and economic pluralism. He has explained that the first two values are considered to be hallmarks of the European tradition, and the other value is the appreciation of a free enterprise economy under the recognition or acceptance of the government and states. He also states that the English language is seen as the only unique British contribution to the system of supra-ethnic values in Australia, because it is spoken by almost all members of society without excluding other mother tongues.

3. Language Maintenance and Shift in Dutch Immigrants

Considering the definition of core values, this paper discusses three empirical studies of Dutch immigrants' language maintenance and shift in Australia. Although the studies did not directly employ the theory of core values, the findings indicated various potential factors, which facilitate and interfere with Dutch immigrants placing a core value on their own native language. Pauwels (1985) investigated the effect of the marriage status of Dutch immigrants on the patterns the immigrants and their children use the Dutch language. On the basis of the marriage situation, she divided informants, who had migrated to Australia between 1950 and 1970, into three different groups: Dutch and Dutch (Group 1), Dutch and Anglo-Australian (Group 2), and Dutch and other-non-Anglo-Australian (Group 3). 20 informants (10 males and 10 females), who belonged to the 35-50-year-old age group, were selected in each group.

As potential bilingual domains, five domains were analysed such as family (nuclear family and extended family), friendship, (ethnic) church, work, and ethnic organisation. With regard to the nuclear family, Pauwels's study revealed that while language loyalty, cultural heritage, and an emotional attachment to the language were secondary factors encouraging Group 1 informants to use the Dutch language, the

presence of grandparents significantly contributed to their maintenance of the ethnic language. Group 2 and Group 3 showed very similar language use patterns. Most Dutch spouses did not actively introduce bilingualism because it would put too much pressure on family relations. In an extended family domain, the marriage patterns have little effect on their communication with either informants' parents or relatives in the Dutch language. Speaking to them in the Dutch language was usually motivated by feelings of respect for their language habits, as well as by the fact that the Dutch language provided them with easier access to the parents or relatives when they communicated with each other. In the church domain, the study showed that six informants in Group 1 and only two in Group 2 regularly attended services in the Reformed Church and used the Dutch language, whereas none of the Group 3 informants attended services. In the domain of ethnic organisations, Group 1 and Group 3 informants showed more interest in participating in the activities using the Dutch language than those in Group 2. Marriage patterns did not have a significant influence on language use in the domains of friendship and work.

Pauwels's study of the relationship between the marriage patterns and Dutch language use highlighted the distinction between intra-ethnic marriages and mixed marriages. The findings revealed that the existence of informants' parents and relatives as well as joining ethnic organisation or activities were crucial for the language maintenance. Pauwels concluded that Dutch people in Australia did not regard language as an indispensable part of their core value system. Although clear reasons of the highest language shift in Dutch immigrants were not provided in her study, she suggested three factors affecting the shift: (1) lack of interest in Dutch culture and language, (2) using two languages in the family would put too much pressure on family relations and would not be worth the effort, and (3) the personal rejection of the mother tongue caused by negative feelings towards her/his home country.

The second study this paper reports on is Bennett's (1992), which examined language maintenance in the second generation of Dutch immigrants in Australia. The research data were collected through detailed personal interviews conducted with 100

adult members of the second generation (aged 20-39), including a small number from 'generation 1b' who arrived in Australia under the age of five. The study analysed language maintenance attitudes, their current use of the Dutch language, and language maintenance activities. The informants were required to describe their current use of the Dutch language in the four skill areas of speaking, understanding spoken language, reading, and writing, and to compare their current language use with the one at the age of fifteen. The findings exhibited that the current level of use the informants reported was relatively low, and that the informants employed skills in understanding the spoken language most frequently and writing skills least. Although the informants regarded English as their dominant language and recognised the limited opportunities to use the Dutch language, few reported an overall decrease in the frequency of their Dutch language use or in the language ability since their mid-teens. Many of their comments implied that the Dutch language fulfilled certain functions for them, several of which could be deemed as symbolic. Furthermore, this study illustrated that language maintenance seemed to be influenced by their involvement in activities, such as visiting the Netherlands, association with Dutch organisations, and attendance at Dutch classes. Sixty-eight informants reported that they had visited the Netherlands, but only 16 of those had been there within the last two years. Only 23 people also reported involvement with a Dutch organisation at present, but overall 66 had been involved in the past. However, their attendance at Dutch classes was low. Fifty-five informants had never had any formal instructions in the language and only seven took a Dutch language class.

To sum up, Bennett's study demonstrated that the second generation of Dutch immigrants, particularly females, felt the symbolic value of knowledge of the Dutch language and a positive attitude towards the language in contrast to the first generation. It seems that the positive evaluation of Dutch culture and language constituted one of the core values of the second generation. The first generation of female immigrants made every effort to assimilate to the mainstream Anglo-Australian culture and to adjust to English, because they saw a lack of shift to English as causing their isolation

from the dominant culture. Nevertheless, the study showed that second generation women, who gained a good command of English as their L1, were eager to maintain and learn the Dutch language, because the ability to use two languages was seen as one way to improve their social standing. As the policy of multiculturalism was promoted in the 1980s, the second generation regarded Dutch language skills as a bonus rather than a barrier to success. The findings indicate that the awareness of language maintenance in Dutch immigrants is gradually increasing, although the rate of language maintenance is still low compared to other ethnic groups in Australia. As Bennett claims, it is significant that government language policies have recently regarded ethnic languages as the nation's linguistic resources, and encouraged the ethnic groups to maintain them. Bennett's study, thus, implies that government policies enable immigrants to reconsider their attitudes towards language maintenance and help an ethnic language to regain its core value status.

Furthermore, de Bot and Clyne (1994) examined language attrition in Dutch immigrants in Australia, which focuses on the loss of skills evident in individuals over time rather than the language shift between generations. This study was based on Clyne's previous linguistic research on Dutch-English bilinguals in Australia. In 1987 de Bot and his wife retested 40 informants out of 200, which Clyne previously investigated, using the same tests and procedures. All informants were interviewed in their homes, and the conversations were tape-recorded. In this interview, data was gathered about various issues, including age on arrival, education in the Netherlands and in Australia, language use in the last few years in different domains, and attitudes towards the maintenance of the Dutch language by the first and the second generations. A number of formal language tests were also administered and, at the end of the session, informants were asked to describe two pictures in Dutch and one in English. As a result, this study revealed that the lexical skills of the informants had not significantly changed, although the English adverbial order (place-time-manner) appeared to increasingly influence the sentence structure of their Dutch language. The study did not find clear attrition within generations, at any rate not in the first generation of

migrants. Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that immigrants' maintenance efforts in the first decade after migration play an important role in reducing language attrition. It seems that such consistent efforts at the initial stage of immigration also contributed to the informants constructing core values in their native language.

4. Concluding Discussion

The three studies revealed positive and negative factors of language maintenance by Dutch immigrants in Australia. It is obvious that the relationship between core values and language maintenance and shift is more complicated than the theory of core values suggests. Although core values can be deemed as one of the crucial criteria which assess ethnic groups' language maintenance rates, the theory needs to more comprehensively consider that different ethnic groups, which share the same ethnic language, adopt interethnically different perspectives of the language. For example, as Clyne (1988) states in his study of German immigrants in Australia, the German language in Europe has both a unifying and a dividing force since it is used as the national language of several countries, such as Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and Luxembourg. While the German language provides a common medium of communication for people in these countries, Clyne stresses that different national varieties of the language exist. The varieties enable people to identify themselves with their ethnic groups, and give each group psychological distance from one another (Clyne, 1988). Therefore, as his study indicates, language might not necessarily convey the same meaning or identification to different ethnic groups. Since such variation might be applicable to sub-cohorts of the same ethnic group, it seems that both inter- and intra-ethnically different approaches to maintaining an ethnic language should be investigated in core value studies.

The theory of core values also needs to be examined in relation to the positive and negative impacts of the symbolic function of an ethnic language on the language maintenance and shift. The findings of Clyne's (1991) study suggest that while the German language does not certainly exist as the core value of a unified and homogeneous ethnic German-speaking group, the symbolic nature of the language provides a sense of cultural unity for a heterogeneous collection of people. As shown in Bennett's study, such a symbolic function can also trigger a positive language-using behaviour in that it enables immigrants to resume maintenance efforts of their own ethnic languages on occasion. However, Clyne (1981) points out the interesting discrepancy between an ethnic language as a core value and language maintenance. As mentioned above, Polish is one of the language-centred cultures, but the maintenance rate of Polish is much lower than that of Italian, who place higher priority on family than their language, on the grounds that the symbolic function of the Polish language as a core value may outlive its use (Clyne, 1988: 70-71). Similarly, Clyne's study has indicated that Irish is one of the examples where people demonstrate a great discrepancy between identification and language use. Irish people are not required to speak Gaelic as long as it exists for them to identify with (Fasold, 1984: 285). Therefore, despite the positive role of the symbolic function played in an ethnic language, it is noticeable that the function itself does not suffice for an ethnic group maintaining its language in the multicultural community where the other majority language dominates social interactions.

Considering that Immigrants' attitudes toward their language maintenance can be changed between and within generations (cf. Bennett, 1992), the theory of core values also need to allow for ethnic revivals. Clyne (1991) pointed out Sorbian as the best example of ethnic revivals. He explained that bilingual Sorbs, who arrived in Australia as part of a

German migration from Silesia and Saxony in the 19th century, acquired German as their language and subsequently shifted to English. However, Clyne also states that during the heyday of multiculturalism in the 1970s, Sorbian revived, and some facilities and activities have been organised to maintain Sorbian culture and language. The fact that an increasing number of people in Australia have declared their use of Macedonian and Maltese also resulted from the ethnic revival (Clyne, 1991: 104-105). Clyne, furthermore, indicated that even the Greek language, which currently has a high maintenance rate, was not passed down to their children for a while after the Greeks came to Australia in the 1930s.

Given that immigrants have different degrees of ethnic identities depending on situations, core values serve as not a static but dynamic tool of evaluating ethnic identities of immigrants. The frequently-changing nature requires us to investigate situational differences in immigrants' placement of core values in their ethnic languages. These differences should be analysed at the micro level in relation to the above-shown sociocultural and cognitive factors of language maintenance and shift, including marriage patterns, the existence of parents and relatives, membership in ethnic organisations or activities, influence of mixed language use on family relations, perceptions of their own ethnic cultures and home countries, and maintenance efforts at the initial stage of immigration. It is also necessary to undertake an in-depth investigation into the role played by governmental language policy and planning in language maintenance and shift since such policy planning can officially strengthen the core value statuses of ethnic languages within ethnic groups and facilitate these groups consolidating a community membership using their bilingual ability. Such multilayered analyses would enable the elucidation of processes in which immigrants develop situated ethnic identities in various language-using contexts as well as of the ways such

identities lead to core values and ultimately affect their approaches to language maintenance and shift.

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—Smolicz の中心価値理論を用いた考察—

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要旨

様々な民族的背景持つ人種が共存するオーストラリアでは、1970年代半ばの多文化主義の発達を契機とし移民者がもたらした民族文化を国家共有の財産として重んじるようになってきた。このような民族の多様性に対する認識の高まりとともに、応用言語学の分野ではバイリンガリズム、言語維持と推移、言語転移などのオーストラリア国民を調査対象とした言語接触研究が盛んに行われてきている。現在、言語接触に関する様々な理論的枠組が存在する中、本稿では Smolicz (1981, 1992, 1999) の中心価値理論(theory of core values) に焦点を当て、オーストラリアにおけるオランダ人移民者の言語維持と推移を分析し、少数派民族のアイデンティティと言語使用に関する考察を行う。オーストラリア国内のオランダ人移民者の割合は移民者全体の中でも上位を占めるが、ほかの民族に比べ民族固有の言語にあまり固執しないという特異な性質を持つ。そのため、多文化国家における移民者の言語維持メカニズムを解明していく上でオランダ系オーストラリア人は重要な鍵を握る民族集団と考えられている。本稿では、Pauwels (1985), Bennett(1992), de Bot and Clyne (1994) によって行われた三つの異なる実証研究をもとに、オランダ人移民者が民族アイデンティティを形成する上で自らの民族言語をどのように位置づけ、どのような姿勢で言語維持に取り組んでいるかを再分析し、中心価値と言語維持の関連性を考察する。

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