

The Tampuan People's Need for Khmer "Oralcy" —Livelihood and Literacy Education in Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia—

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I. Introduction

The impetus for my research was a desire to learn about language education issues for groups that have education access disadvantages stemming from their status as linguistic minorities in Southeast Asia and Cambodia in particular. Sincere thanks must go to the staff of International Cooperation Cambodia and the COE Office at International Christian University for providing the funding for my field research without which this study would not have been possible.

As international aid agencies turn their attention toward achieving Education for All (EFA) goals with a universal primary enrollment goal set for the year 2015, it is crucial that we think of the most marginalized groups who will be the very last persons to gain access to education. In doing so, it is inevitable that ethnolinguistic minorities will usually come last in the planning and funding of education programs in developing countries strapped with budget constraints. A prominent expert on literacy in the Southeast Asian region, Dr. Kimmo Kosonen (2005), has written a very comprehensive study of the use of local languages in education in the region. According to Kosonen, ethnolinguistic minorities are "underprivileged in terms of educational access, retention and achievement" (Kosonen, 2005: 2). On a global scale this presents perhaps the most daunting task to the agencies worldwide attempting to promote EFA as about 20 percent of the world's population, approximately 1.3 billion people, speak a local language as their mother tongue (Walter, 2005 as cited in Kosonen, 2005). In meeting the needs of this population, the agencies face a number of perceived obstacles.

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Some of these include the lack of a written form for these languages, a paucity of learning and teaching materials, and insufficient numbers of teachers who speak the local languages (Kosonen, 2005: 3). However, there are a number of promising initiatives and projects in Southeast Asia.

While implementation and support for bilingual education programs in the “developed world” have often been contentious, there have been innovative projects in developing countries which seek to provide students with the benefits of mother tongue education despite the oft-cited obstacles outlined above. Kosonen lauds the bilingual education projects managed by NGOs such as International Cooperation Cambodia and the associated CARE project in Cambodia, stating that “an important reason for the apparent success of the NFE projects using local languages has been the major role played by the indigenous minority communities” and he points especially to the potential for transformation of non-formal education curricula into formal education programs and the importance of “community governance of the project schools” in CARE’s Highland Children’s Education Project (Kosonen, 2005: 4). Indeed, the government of Cambodia at both the national and provincial levels does seem to be lending some support to the legalization of minority language rights in the draft of a new education law in which Article 44 gives ethnic minorities “the right to instruction at public schools in their native language” (Kosonen, 2005: 5). In sum, the groundwork has been laid for the promotion of bilingual literacy education which may serve as a model for ethnolinguistic minorities in other countries and sub-regions throughout Southeast Asia.

1. The Current State of Life and Language Education in Ratanakiri Province

Ratanakiri Province, along with Mondulakiri Province, is noted for the fact that the population is predominantly composed of ethnic minority groups referred to as the hill tribes or indigenous highlanders. The most populous highlander groups are the Brao, Kavet, Krung, and Tampuan, the Tampuan being the focus of this study.

In the 1980s, there was little Khmer migration to Ratanakiri Province. However, with the opening up of Cambodia's economy in the 1990's in-migration has resulted from the "pursuit of logging concessions, industrial plantations, and hydroelectric projects" (McAndrew, 2000: 7). The UNTAC Population Census of 1992 listed the population of Ratanakiri at 66,764, whereas the General Population Census of Cambodia in 1998 gives the population as 94,243 indicating a 41% increase in population in just six years. This is compared to an overall 29% increase in the population of the country of Cambodia during the same time period. The district of Ban Leung, where the central provincial market of Ratanakiri is located, increased by 82% during this time (McAndrew, 2000: 7). From these statistics we can see clearly that Ratanakiri has experienced a large influx of Khmer settlers who come in search of economic opportunity in this province most distant from Phnom Penh. Although I will discuss the effects of this in-migration on two Tampuan villages in the following section, first, I must provide some picture of the education situation for the indigenous highlanders in Ratanakiri Province. The following table presents a view of literacy rates by ethnicity as reported from a study led by the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport.

Table 1
Ethnic Affiliation and Literacy Rates

Ethnic Affiliation	Rates (%)					
	Male			Female		
	Illiterate	Semi-literate	Literate	Illiterate	Semi-literate	Literate
Khmer	23.2	28.0	48.8	44.1	26.0	29.0
Highland Minorities	76.3	18.4	5.3	85.7	14.3	0.0
Others	53.8	23.1	23.1	65.0	19.4	15.0

Note: From Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport study (Nyirady, 2002: 6).

The drastic gap in literacy between the dominant Khmer ethnic group which makes up 90% of the Cambodian population and the indigenous highlanders who comprise about 4% of the population is striking. Particularly remarkable is the 0.0% literacy rate for female indigenous highlanders. In response to this dire need for literacy education a number of non-formal projects are active in Ratanakiri Province for the indigenous highlanders.

According to a mid-term evaluation report for ICC in 2002, there has been a very substantial number of non-formal language education classes. The evaluation report gives figures for all non-formal language education classes in Ratanakiri Province at a total of 200 Khmer literacy classes with 5,051 students in comparison to 52 bilingual literacy classes with 1,224 students (Nyirady et al, 2002: 2). ICC has been instrumental in providing materials and consulting for the other NGOs in Ratanakiri administering literacy education projects.

NTFP (Non-Timber Forest Products) has implemented their literacy classes in 16 Kavet villages and 10 Krung villages while incorporating their messages for sustainable use of natural resources. The Japan Center for Conflict Prevention also manages a literacy project in eight villages which focuses on Khmer literacy without a mother tongue component. In a similar vein, the Seila organization, a quasi-governmental NGO, is also managing a project for Khmer-only literacy in 64 villages. In contrast, CIDSE, *Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité*, while currently operating classes in 28 villages, has started a pilot project with 4 bilingual education classes in 4 villages. Furthermore, CARE has benefited most from their cooperation with ICC in that their bilingual literacy education pilot project is government-sponsored in six villages (3 Tampuan and 3 Krung). There are numerous projects and organizations which have benefited from their cooperation with each other and larger multilateral organizations such as UNESCO.

2. Focus of this Study

In this study, I will examine the creation and management of a bilingual literacy education project which seeks to meet the language education needs

of the Tampuan people, one of the indigenous minority groups in Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia who live closest to Ban Leung, the provincial capital. The staff of the Ratanakiri Integrated Development & Education (RIDE) Programme run by the NGO, International Cooperation Cambodia, rightfully recognized the lack of and need for an Oral Khmer language component in the literacy education curriculum. As a result, I undertook a needs assessment in visiting the six Tampuan villages in the project and interviewing the stakeholders to ascertain their need to speak Khmer with the intention of informing any efforts to design this Oral Khmer curriculum.

In this paper I will examine fundamental factors which should be at the root of any definition of "basic education" as a basic need for people in the developing world. As Limage qualifies, "basic education has usually been considered synonymous with literacy and numeracy, but...it is not enough" (Limage, 1999: 86). My intention is to emphasize that for a sizeable percentage of the world's population, represented here by the Tampuan people, "basic education" must include the concept of language education with a vision of language which includes the spoken use of second languages by linguistic minorities with direct implications for the livelihoods of those peoples. This I will term "oralcy" to designate the potential for a complementary role with "literacy" in language education curricula yet emphasizing that it must be recognized as an essential goal for language education policy in its own right.

II. Background

1. General Background of the Indigenous Highlanders in Ratanakiri Province

Ratanakiri Province is in the northeastern corner of the nation of Cambodia bordering Laos to the north and Vietnam to the east. In some ways the location of Ratanakiri worked in its favor through the years of war and internal turmoil. In ICC's proposal report written in 2003 the staff writes that, "historically, geographic isolation and poor infrastructure have permitted minority people

to maintain their dependence on the land without fear for the future. Yet this is no longer the case” (ICC, 2003: 4). The authors explain that now they are threatened by indiscriminate logging, mining, hunting, and plantation farming. This isolation has, of course, had negative effects as well in that education has not reached the people.

Less than 5% of highland children attended school at the time the proposal was written (ICC, 2003). Furthermore, the evaluation report indicated that there is only one high school in the province and only about six highland children have ever graduated from the high school (Nyrady et al, 2002). Geographical distribution within the communities presents a further challenge as highlander communities often live near their swidden fields for up to 5 months of the year making class meetings difficult (Nyrady et al, 2002). Students’ access to formal education is also hampered by linguistic and cultural factors. “Khmer primary school teacher assignees often stay at their rural posting only a few months before citing various cultural, linguistic, and economic reasons for leaving.” (Nyrady et al, 2002: 8). Consequently, even when school buildings are built and teachers are dispatched, the continuation of studies can not be guaranteed.

Economic and budgetary factors have hampered the spread of education in Ratanakiri, which is one of the poorest provinces in Cambodia. Bray (1999) shows in his study of private education costs that Ratanakiri has by far the lowest average private contribution for education at an average of 300 riels in comparison to the overall sample of nationwide schools for which the average contribution is 2,500 riels (49). Nevertheless, this is easily explained as Bray states, “Ratanakiri...had much lower levels of household and community financing than other parts of the country investigated in this study. In part, this reflected the lack of traditions of community financing associated with pagodas. It also reflected general poverty” (Bray, 1999: 73).

Compounding the problem of poverty is that in recent years the security of land ownership has been threatened by outside interests. Clay Wescott (2001) in his Asian Development Report on “Key Governance Issues in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam” rightly points to land reform as the most

pressing issue in governance in Cambodia stating, "Land is arguably the most critical development issue in Cambodia. Given its leading role in the land reform process thus far, ADB should be a partner in implementing a new land law...Another critical issue is the mapping and classification of Cambodia's land stock, which is crucial to secure good title to land occupied by the poor" (18).

A very informative study was done on the topic of land security by John P. McAndrew with special attention to the effects on Tampuan communities in the report "Indigenous Adaptation to a Rapidly Changing Economy, The Experience of Two Tampuan Villages in Northeast Cambodia," a report for the Cambodia Land Study Project commissioned by Oxfam. In this study, McAndrew (2000) compares the greater effects of land selling in the Kamang village because of its proximity to a national road in comparison to the relatively less affected Kahoal village in a more remote area of the province. In Kamang the village chief reported that 35 of the 67 households had sold land to outsiders. Some provincial officials and police officers had even taken part in "land grabbing" or claiming land which is legally a part of an indigenous village. One Kamang village elder bemoaned the loss of land saying, "People in Kamang will encounter difficulties if they continue to sell land, for the land is becoming smaller and smaller and the population is getting bigger and bigger. If the land sales continue, future generations will have no land to cultivate their crops. How will they survive?" (McAndrew, 2000: 18).

Because of their lack of language and literacy education the indigenous highlanders, some of the most disadvantaged people in the country, often fall prey to unscrupulous individuals from the dominant ethnic group. International Cooperation Cambodia initiated the literacy project to attempt to help the people escape such exploitation. In the following section, I will outline the origins and features of this project.

2. Background of ICC's RIDE Project

The history of International Cooperation Cambodia (ICC) goes back to

when it originated as a consortium of five international member agencies which has been active in Cambodia since 1991. It formerly operated under the name of one of those agencies: World Concern (ICC, 2003). My study focuses on the Ratanakiri Integrated Development & Education (RIDE) Programme which includes community health, food security, and education components (ICC, 2003). Within that project I have chosen to examine the language education needs of the Tampuan people as one of the four ethnic groups included in the project. First, I would like to examine the goals as outlined in the proposal report for the project.

When ICC began this bilingual non-formal education program in Ratanakiri Province, it was the first of its kind in not only Cambodia but the whole Mekong sub-region (ICC, 2003: 3). Thomas tells us that the Cambodian NFE (non-formal education) national curriculum was modelled on the Thai NFE national literacy campaign materials (Thomas, 2002: 6). This raises very interesting questions considering the politics involved in the “borrowing” of this educational model from a neighboring country (Steiner, Khamsi, 2004). First, I would like to present some statistics which provide a broad overview of the RIDE project and the local situation.

ICC attempted to do a baseline study of literacy rates from 1996 to 1999 in five of the more remote Tampuan, Brao, and Krung villages and found that only 6% of males and 1% of females could read to any degree at all. Furthermore, 70% of males and 90% of females could not make basic money calculations (Thomas, 2002). The RIDE project is expansive in enrolling a large number of students and training teachers. As of 2002, 313 students, including 90 women, had completed the mother tongue course and a further 206 had completed the Khmer course in the full curriculum, while 132 highlanders were trained as literacy teachers although only 6 of the teachers were females (Nyirady et al, 2002: 2). The teachers had 5-6 day pre-service and 2-6 day in-service teacher training workshops (Nyirady et al, 2002: 15). Possibly the most notable feature of the RIDE project is that the teachers are volunteers.

There is an informal arrangement for the students to work on the teacher’s

field for one or two days out of the year, and teachers do enjoy the privilege of traveling to the ICC Ratanakiri Office in the provincial capital of Ban Leung to attend teacher training workshops, but otherwise they enjoy no personal benefit from their work as literacy teachers. The only support which ICC provides for the literacy classes, other than training, comes in the form of the following supplies: roofing materials and nails for each classroom building, solar-powered batteries, lights, books, chalkboards, and chalk (Nyirady et al, 2002: 10). Of course, numerous activities which support the curriculum are carried out from the ICC Office such as textbook development and revision by the three curriculum development teams (one each for Brao, Krung, and Tampuan), textbook review meetings with villagers, and the teacher training sessions.

The RIDE project has literacy classes in fully 18 villages which are Brao, Krung, and Tampuan. The six Tampuan villages which I visited are Pa Chon, Orm, Pa'or, Kantey, Rach, and Rosey. All of the villages had two levels of literacy classes except Rosey, which just had one. Ari Vitikainen explained the structure of the bilingual literacy education curriculum. There are basically three phases which I have presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2
ICC's RIDE Bilingual Literacy Education Curriculum
(for Tampuan villages)

Curriculum	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Stage			
Language	Mother tongue	Mother tongue & Khmer	Khmer (Post-literacy)
Textbooks	4 Tampuan reading texts	3 Khmer reading texts	4 Khmer texts adapted from UNESCO series
Timeframe	Approx. 2.5 years	Approx. 2.5 years	Indefinite

As can be seen in Table 2, the RIDE project has been formulated to meet the standards of a proper transition from mother tongue to second language as

outlined in most of the research in support of bilingual education. In order to present an example, I will outline the enrollment in the RIDE literacy classes in the six Tampuan villages in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Student Enrollment in RIDE Literacy Classes in Tampuan Villages

Village	Classes	Teachers		Mother Tongue Students			Khmer Language Students			Khmer Post-Literacy Students		
		M	F	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Pa Chon	2	4	0	15	8	23	--	--	--	18	2	20
Orm	2	4	0	12	13	35*	--	--	--	13	8	21
Pa'or	2	4	0	--	--	--	--	--	--	9	26	35
Kantey	2	3	1	11	7	18	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rach	2	4	0	16	13	19*	--	--	--	9	0	9
Rosey	1	--	--	--	--	--	6	6	12	--	--	--

Note: asterisk denotes mistaken calculation as recorded during data collection

I should note that these enrollment figures would be based on the teacher trainers' visits to the villages and are highly approximate and fluid in nature. In the following section I will provide more contextual data on the classes listed in Table 3 as I was able to meet with and talk to the teachers and students in these classes.

III. Research Methods

1. Literature Review and Interviews with Education Development Experts

I analyzed the latest project proposal (2003) and the mid-term evaluation report (2002) as well as articles published about the project. Furthermore, I sought out relevant literature from multinational organizations, particularly UNESCO, on literacy education for linguistic minorities. While I was in

Ratanakiri, I had the good fortune to be able to interview Dr. Kimmo Kosonen, who is a foremost expert in the field as well as meeting with UNESCO Bangkok staff in the field of education.

2. Interviews with Students and Teachers

During my stay in Ratanakiri I visited the six Tampuan villages where ICC was supporting the bilingual literacy education curriculum. I developed a question roster for interviews in consultation with my research assistant, Mr. Bech Yech. We piloted the survey in Pa Chon Village and then after some minor changes we revised the survey and used it to interview the students and teachers in all six villages. The interview survey instrument included questions on what language abilities, skills, and situations are most relevant to students. We asked the students what they would like to learn in an oral Khmer curriculum and ended the survey with some basic questions to assess their numeracy skills using Khmer.

3. Interviews with Stakeholders in Literacy Education Projects

I interviewed the staff of NGOs and international organizations which are involved in these literacy projects such as UNESCO Bangkok staff and representatives of the other four NGOs in Ratanakiri (listed in Section C below). I acquired baseline data on the projects run by the different NGOs then asked them about the content of the curricula and their perceived need for an Oral Khmer component. I also conducted focus group interviews with the teachers, students, and parents to determine what their perceived need for Oral Khmer is. The interviews were recorded on tape, transcribed, and translated into English.

4. Survey of All Literacy and Language Non-Formal Education Classes in Ratanakiri Province

While I was in Ratanakiri Province, I worked with the staff at ICC to develop a survey which could be administered to all the classes in the various literacy education projects managed by the five NGOs active in the region.

That survey has been piloted with classes in the six Tampuan villages in the ICC RIDE project. In the next phase of the research, to be conducted in March of 2006, after piloting the survey in one village for each ethnic group, we will revise the survey and prepare it for administration to all of the classes in the other NGO's literacy education projects in Ratanakiri Province.

IV. Findings

1. Findings from Textual Resources

In discussing my findings I must first clarify that I am not examining whether students would prefer to learn to read their mother tongue or Khmer. The need for students' literacy in their own mother tongues for language and cultural preservation is unquestionable. Furthermore, I am neither recommending that spoken Khmer should be taught to the detriment of the Khmer literacy curriculum. The writers of the mid-term evaluation report acknowledged that "the fact that, given a choice, some minority language speakers would choose Khmer over MT literacy is not surprising, given the practical (economic) benefits of Khmer and perceived limited usefulness of MT literacy outside of the local community" (Nyirady et al, 2002: 14). My purpose is, rather, to ascertain to what degree stakeholders perceive a need for an oral Khmer curriculum. To do so, I would like to examine my textual resources as they refer to the need for oral Khmer in the curriculum first.

Over the course of the RIDE Project there have been numerous calls for more emphasis to be placed on teaching and learning spoken Khmer. The evaluation report of 2002 called for development of a spoken Khmer component of the curriculum as one of its central recommendations.

"The process by which learners bridge from their home or mother tongue (MT) language into Khmer needs to be extended to include a greater emphasis on learning oral Khmer before introducing reading and writing in that language" (Nyirady et al, 2002: 3).

It is somewhat surprising that this aspect of the curriculum has been called for on several occasions but not included. In fact, the proposal for the project written in 2003 states it in fairly straight terms in quoting Smith (2004), who states that "because people learn to read by making sense of what is on the page, it is easier to learn to read in a language we already speak" (as cited in ICC, 2003: 5). There are very clearly stated reasons for the students' desire to learn oral Khmer and those relate to their immediate basic needs related to food and health in that they want to be able to trade goods at the market without being cheated and communicate with doctors and other medical professionals (Nyirady et al, 2002: 26).

One challenge for the RIDE literacy project is meeting the needs of female students. Thomas pointed to factors such as teacher intimidation, a preference for female teachers, and household and childraising responsibilities which affected female class attendance (Thomas, 2002: 21). This could be improved by increasing the number of female teachers. Of the six female teachers trained only two were still teaching at the time of the 2002 evaluation report.

2. Findings from Student and Teacher Interviews and Observations

Based on my interviews with students and teachers in the villages I attempted to assess their need to learn oral Khmer language skills and vocabulary for a variety of situations and purposes. (Most of the Tampuan villages in the RIDE Project are similar distance from the market in Ban Leung. The four villages of similar distance are Pa'or (15km), Orm (16km), Rach (16.5km), and Kantey (17km). The closest and most accessible village from Ban Leung was Pa Chon (12km) and the farthest was Rosey (22.5km). These distances may not seem so great unless one takes into account that there were many villagers who made the trip to Ban Leung by foot and some on a daily basis.) My intention is to examine whether distance from the market and provincial capital, which would affect contact with Khmer people and culture, is a factor affecting Tampuans' need to speak the Khmer language. First, I would like to present students' and teachers' responses to questions about what kind of

curricula and curriculum materials are needed. In Table 4 and the following tables I have combined the responses of students in all classes under one column for “S” or students in each village. Likewise all teachers’ responses have been combined under the “T” column heading.

Table 4
Students’ and Teachers’ Perceived Need for Language and Math
Abilities and Materials

	Village (Students & Teachers)											
	Pa Chon		Pa’or		Rosey		Rach		Kantey		Orm	
Abilities	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
Reading/Writing	5	○	2		○		○	○	3		○	○
Listening/Speaking	2	○	1		◎			◎	2*			
Math	○	○	○		○	○			○		○	
Materials												
Song books		○										○
Tampuan folktales												○

Note: ○ = expressed need, ◎ = strongly expressed need, blank= no expressed need

The numbers in Table 4 represent student responses to the question, “What is more important for you to learn, reading and writing Khmer or listening and speaking Khmer?” In three of the villages students raised their hands which enabled us to obtain statistics. However, in the other three villages the students were reluctant to vote and chose to discuss the importance among themselves. In cases where both were given equal importance I have placed a circle in the box. In cases where the group seemed to agree that one was more important there is a double circle. In Kantey the asterisk refers to the fact that at the end of the interview the students indicated that they felt that listening and speaking were more important despite their vote to the contrary at the beginning of the interview. This might indicate that the interview was an awareness-raising

activity in and of itself and influenced their opinions to change.

Among the abilities listed here I have included "math" as it should be included in my proposal for a revised definition of basic education to include these three areas of learning: literacy, oralcy, and numeracy. The students' self-perception of weak proficiency in calculations to be used in market transactions was referred to by both teachers and students. These skills work in tandem with language skills for linguistic minorities, so they must be included in any language curriculum for indigenous highlanders.

Table 5
Students' and Teachers' Perceived Need for Oral Khmer
for specific situations and topics

Situation	Village (Students & Teachers)												
	Pa Chon		Pa'or		Rosey		Rach		Kantey		Orm		
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	
Market	○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○			○	
Khmers visit	○		○		○		○					○	
Khmer festival				○	○	○							○
Topic/Purpose													
Job	○		○	○			○						
Farm Skills				○									
Health	○	○	○	○		○	○						
Environment	○	○						○					
Law			○										
Khmer culture													○
Tampuan cult.		○											○

Note: ○ = expressed need, blank= no expressed need

In all of the villages they have some degree of contact with Khmer people who visit their villages to buy and sell goods. From Table 5, we can see that

in 5 of the 6 villages the students said that they need to learn to speak Khmer to speak to Khmer people who visit their villages. In fact, I witnessed trucks bringing Khmer merchants to Pa Chon Village and Rach Village to buy cashew nuts from the villagers. However, if we look at the need for speaking Khmer for certain topics and purposes, it seems that students and teachers in some of the villages have a much clearer idea of what issues they need to be able to speak about in Khmer. It is particularly interesting to note that these students who live in the villages closer to Ban Leung wish to learn Khmer to find jobs. This seems natural as these villagers had more opportunities to work for Khmers who owned neighboring plots of land either doing harvesting or other manual labor on the farms. Having discussed the situations where Tampuans need to use Khmer language, next I wish to discuss the specific language skills they stated that they would like to acquire.

In Table 6, “Register” refers to the ability to use the proper expressions to speak to people of different age and social status. The Khmer language necessitates that people use various honorific forms to speak to people of different status, so this would present a challenge to speakers of the Tampuan language which does not contain such status distinctions. The vocabulary categories represent the types of Khmer words that students and teachers thought they need to learn for oral communication.

Similar to Table 5, if we focus on the vocabulary section, it appears that students and teachers in villages closer to the provincial capital, such as Pa Chon and Rach, have a great need to learn certain kinds of vocabulary, as they are confronted with more situations in which they must be able to speak Khmer. Despite the perceived need to learn Khmer there are often obstacles to students attending classes and learning.

The post-literacy teacher in Orm Village blamed student absence as a problem for the continuation of literacy class studies. Both teachers in Pa Chon blamed students for watching Khmer videos and not coming to class. Students referred to several reasons for not being able to attend classes. Students in Rosey said that they were too tired from farm work and that it was scary to go to

Table 6
Students' and Teachers' Perceived Need for Oral Khmer Skills and
Vocabularies

	Village (Students & Teachers)											
	Pa Chon		Pa'or		Rosey		Rach		Kantey		Orm	
Skills	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
Pronunciation	○	○			○			○			○	
Register		○			○			○			○	
Vocabulary												
Vegetables	○	○					○	○				
Animals							○	○				
Farming equipment	○						○					
House utensils	○						○					

Note: ○ = expressed need, blank = no expressed need

the dilapidated school house which might collapse. In Rach Village, the classes were conducted outside without a roof using make-shift desks and benches, so the weather could easily lead to the cancellation of classes. A further aspect of student attendance was the attendance of girls and women who were shouldered with the burden of housework and childcare for both their own children and siblings.

In my observations of classes in Rach Village and Rosey Village, there were young women present at both classes, both holding babies in slings. In Rach the class was outside so the women stood behind the other students but seemed to concentrate intently on the lesson before leaving after about 30 minutes. In Rosey, the class was held in the rice bank building so the woman stood in the doorway and seemed reluctant to come into the room although she stayed for the entire class standing. It is apparent that women face greater obstacles to surmount in their attempt to gain education. Gender compounds the difficulty that all of the indigenous highlanders face as members of ethnolinguistic

minority groups. Their very status as linguistic minorities often leads to their own exploitation.

One of the most remarkable results from the interviews was the statement by students in 4 of the 6 villages that they had the same specific goal in learning the Khmer language. That goal was to avoid being cheated by Khmer merchants in the market. In our interviews with three female and one male highlander who sold their goods in the market, the women all referred to situations where Khmer customers yelled at them because they could not speak Khmer or tried to cheat them during sales. I witnessed firsthand an incident where an indigenous highlander was cheated in the market which I would like to relate below.

One morning when I was walking, through the market and observing activities, I came upon a highlander man in his 40's squatted just inside the entrance to the market building. He was attempting to buy a belt from a Khmer merchant. The highlander man was holding a wad of money in his hand and the Khmer merchant came up to him and ripped a couple of bills from the wad at which point the highlander held up a hand in protest asking the merchant to return his money. But, the merchant quickly draped the belt over the highlander's shoulder and walked away yelling something in an angry tone of voice. The highlander man remained in a squatting position during the entire exchange and remained so even after the Khmer merchant left. He looked forlorn as he took the belt from his shoulder and examined it. This incident expressed in microcosm the status of the highlander buyer in relation to the Khmer merchant and the power dynamic contained therein. The students' imperative to escape from such exploitation considering their own economic situations is easy to comprehend.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the planning and management of literacy education programs for linguistic minorities does not occur in a political vacuum. The manager of ICC told the staff of the NGO that NGOs in Ratanakiri had been warned not to undertake activities which might lead to conflict between Khmers and indigenous highlanders. The manager also instructed the staff to be careful in broaching the land security issue in their community development and

education projects as ICC does not have direct permission from the Ministry of Land to address the issue although they do have some leeway as it is related to food security and health which falls within ICC's mandate.

V. Conclusions

As Kosonen states, ethnolinguistic minorities are often the most "underprivileged" when it comes to gaining access to educational opportunity (Kosonen, 2005: 2). The Tampuan people as the minority group living in closest proximity to the provincial capital face the greatest challenges in attempting to participate in the market economy for their own economic betterment, while holding fast to land rights in the face of private and government-supported infringements on indigenous peoples' land rights.

In my interviews with the students and teachers in the Tampuan villages it became abundantly clear that their consciousness of the issues and their need to communicate about those issues demonstrates that Khmer in-migration to Ratanakiri has already had a very real impact on the lives of the Tampuan people and other indigenous highlanders in Cambodia. The students demonstrate a clear desire to be able to participate in the market economy in the provincial capital of Ban Leung with new found language skills to protect themselves from being cheated and exploited. This education should be provided to the Tampuan people on an equitable basis with consideration toward the particularly challenging plight of women and girls who were often denied the opportunity to take classes and significantly under-represented in the corps of literacy teachers.

There is hope in addressing these needs in that ICC has done an admirable job to gain government support for bilingual education programs in a country severely lacking funds for the education budget. With the cooperation of CARE Cambodia, there is the potential for the transference of non-formal education projects to the formal education sector. The enactment of the new education law with Article 44 guaranteeing education in minority languages would be a huge step in this direction toward the all important "community ownership of the education initiatives" (Kosonen, 2005, 2). Nevertheless, it is important to

reconceptualize “basic education,” as Limage states, to include the immediate need of minority language learners to acquire the crucial skill of being able to communicate orally in the dominant language and thus ensure their participation in the market economy. This skill I have termed “oralcy” and it should form the third leg of a new strain of inclusive basic education in developing countries. Education models should never be borrowed without full vision of the political context of the “lending” country of origin and the “borrowing” country as destination and a further consciousness of the need for adaptation of the model to local needs (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). Final consideration must rest with the beneficiaries and their needs and not with the exigencies of regional and global actors.

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タンブアン族にとってのクメール語「oralcy」の必要性 —カンボジアのラタナキリ県での識字教育と生計—

< 要 約 >

ウォルター・P・ドーソン

UNESCO および他の国際機関は、長年基礎教育の根本的構成要素として識字教育を促進して来たが、全世界の「万人のための教育」(EFA)を達成するにはいろいろな障害がある。この研究がその障害を問うことによって、言語少数民族の識字教育のチャレンジが明らかになる。ここでは、カンボジアのラタナキリ県のバンルンの近くに多数派民族と隣り合わせて住むタンブアン族を対象にして研究を行った。

三週間ほどタンブアン族の村でフィールドワークを行い、ICC という NGO の RIDE プロジェクトを観察して、この研究の結果を得た。村での観察と共に、学生や教師との個人インタビューやフォーカス・グループ・インタビューを実施した。さらにバンルンのマーケットで商売するタンブアン族数人にもインタビューを行った。このデータを元に、タンブアン族のクメール語話せる能力 (oralcy) の必要性を調べた。

このプロジェクト以外のプロポーザルや評価レポートによって、クメール語の学習に対する熱意を理解することが出来た。この熱意は、根本的に市場で商売をやりたいという意欲と、利益を上げるためにクメール語力と基礎的計算能力の欠如による搾取を減らそうという意志から生まれるものである。新しい教育基本法には、言語少数民族の母語で教育を受ける権利が盛り込まれた。この法律は可決されれば、バイリンガル・カリキュラムにより言語少数民族の教育機会も向上するだろうと言える。しかし、その前に「basic education」を言語少数民族に与えるには気をつけなければいけないところが沢山ある。

最後に 21 世紀の「basic education」は第二言語の会話力「oralcy」を含めた概念を言語少数民族のために構築する必要がある。読み書きが中心の「literacy」と「numeracy」の二つのスキルと並べて「oralcy」を加えれば、この世界の 20% まで達する言語少数民族の人々により良い教育概念を与えることができるのではないか。