

GERMAN-AMERICAN AND VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN

BILINGUAL EDUCATION:

FACTORS OF SUCCESS AND DECLINE

by

Paul H. Rohrbaugh Jr.

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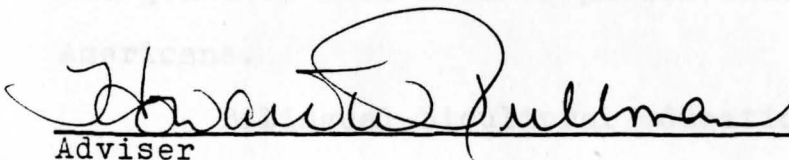
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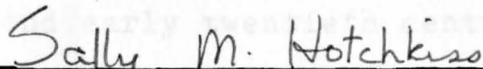
Program



Adviser

8/27/81

Date



Acting
Dean of the Graduate School

8/28/81

Date

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

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Paul H. Rohrbaugh Jr.

Master Teacher

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A current issue in education is bilingual-bicultural education. Controversy exists at all levels of schooling from the Department of Education to individual state boards of education and local school boards. Literature abounds with authors expounding the merits of bilingual-bicultural programs or debating what should be the goals of this area of public education for ethnic Americans.

Bilingual-bicultural education, however, is not new to America. German-Americans during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were able to establish in many public school systems throughout the United States their own bilingual-bicultural education programs. Indeed, as early as 1870 Ohio had on its books laws guaranteeing the instruction in German of any or all subjects taught in schools. The impact the German-Americans and their bilingual-bicultural programs had was important and left many contributions to the then developing American public education institution.

The German-Americans were aided in many ways in the founding of and maintenance of bilingual-bicultural programs. Factors influencing these programs include the nature, in terms of numbers and settlements, of German immigration, the time during which German immigration occurred, the American Civil War, the motives and goals the German-Americans had for public education and the dominant American culture's openness and/or tolerance of those motives and goals. War and intolerance ended the German-American achievements quickly and at times violently. By the end of World War I and the onset of the 1920s, very little remained of Deutschtum, the cultural-community conception, upon which were founded the German-American efforts. The effects of this would be, ten to twenty years later, the extreme difficulty of refugee immigrants fleeing Nazi Germany in settling and adjusting to American life. Indeed so much difficulty that some would choose to return to Germany.

The virtual disappearance of the German-American bilingual-bicultural experience today has bearing on one of the more recent immigrant groups, the Vietnamese-Americans. Like German immigrants of a hundred years previous, the Vietnamese-Americans bring with them traditionally held values toward education, community life and hopes for a new life in a new land. However, the factors which aided the German-Americans in their bilingual-bicultural efforts are much weaker or entirely absent

from the Vietnamese experience. On the other hand the factors which led to the decline of the German-American efforts are all too present for the Vietnamese-Americans.

The Vietnamese-American bilingual-bicultural experience in light of the German-American one raises the question of our commitment to bilingual-bicultural education and the goals and attitudes on the part of society toward the education of ethnic Americans. The fact that at least half of the Vietnamese-Americans are school age or under further complicates the matter. The acceptance of or at least tolerance on the part of the dominant culture toward bilingual-bicultural education, as exemplified by the nineteenth century German-American experiences, led to growth and harmony for both the ethnic group and the public schools. Later intolerance and lack of support led to frustration and at times hardships for German-Americans and lost opportunities for Americans overall. The decision we make and the factors we choose to replicate with the Vietnamese-Americans with respect to bilingual-bicultural education will affect the future of all.

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One other reason for the misunderstanding of and resistance to bilingual education is the equating of citizenship or loyalty to the United States with a knowledge of English. The idea that one cannot be a true American without a full working knowledge of English, to the extent that it should be the primary language of the individual, is both popular and old. This notion is also closely linked with the melting pot conceptualization of

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Bilingual education is a much debated and often misunderstood aspect of education. From local school boards and communities to the Department of Education and President Reagan himself, confusion and lack of consensus seem to prevail over fact and agreement. Part of this quandry stems from a lack of definition and concensus concerning a methodology for bilingual education. Which is better, a grammar translation or an audio-lingual approach? Is English as a second language enough or too little? A second aspect of the confusion is concern for the goal of bilingual education, complete fluency or something less. These two aspects have been prime elements in much of the controversy regarding bilingual education today.

One other reason for the misunderstanding of and resistance to bilingual education is the equating of citizenship or loyalty to the United States with a knowledge of English. The idea that one cannot be a true American without a full working knowledge of English, to the extent that it should be the primary language of the individual, is both popular and old. This notion is also closely linked with the melting pot conceptualization of

American society which became popular in the late nineteenth century. Here, racial and ethnic groups were to melt through intermarriage and cultural sharing into one, new American race with English as its sole tongue.

Current approaches to bilingual education center on two basic philosophies, maintenance and transition. Maintenance programs endeavor to preserve the native, primary language of the individual while improving his/her facility with another language, in this case English. Transition programs, on the other hand, aim at the substitution of the new language as the primary language of the individual. Parker in Bilingual Education Current Perspectives and Garcia in "The Multiethnic Dimension of Bilingual-Bicultural Education" have argued that these two philosophies are actually two distinctly different programs, not two aspects of bilingual education, each with its own advantages and disadvantages in the total education of ethnic groups.

The notion that since past generations did not have bilingual education in schools, it is therefore unnecessary to have it today is a popular one. However, bilingual education is not solely a modern day creation, a unique phenomena in recent American history. Many immigrant groups, such as the French in Louisiana and Quebec, had bilingual programs.¹ That extensive bilingual

¹See Lawrence Parker, Bilingual Education Current Perspectives (Arlington: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1978).

education programs did occur in many parts of the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with German-Americans is a well documented fact.²

This paper will compare and contrast the bilingual-bicultural education experiences of German-Americans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with those of one of the most recent immigrant groups to arrive in the United States, the Vietnamese-Americans. Although the groups differ in ethnicity as well as in geographic origin, the phenomenon which both assisted and inhibited the German-Americans' bilingual-bicultural movement will be seen in operation with the Vietnamese-Americans as well. In her work on Vietnam, Fire in the Lake, Francis Fitzgerald states that "Americans ignore history, for to them everything has always seemed new under the sun."³ In order to allay some of the controversy and to resolve some of the problems confronting bilingual-bicultural education, we should not tolerate this historical ignorance, but instead consult the lessons of history to see if they have bearing on the events of today.

²See Parker, 1978; Francisco Cordasco, "Bilingual Education in American Schools," Intellect, CVI (July, 1977), p. 4; Herbert A. Miller, The School and the Immigrant (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1970); and LaVerne Rippley, The German Americans (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976).

³Francis Fitzgerald, Fire in the Lake (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1972), pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much research is available to the investigator concerning bilingual education. Most of the literature to date can be divided into two categories, those of methodology and debate. Debate literature such as that appearing in Social Education, Intellect, Phi Delta Kappan and related journals argue for and against bilingual-bicultural education. The other body of literature concerns descriptions of different programs and approaches in bilingual-bicultural education, their merits and advantages for a given ethnic group and/or content area. Available texts can be grouped in the same manner as journal articles. Examples of such texts are Miller's The School and the Immigrant and Lambert and Tucker's Bilingual Education of Children. These were chosen on the basis of recommendations by advisors and professors as well as citations in the research. There is a dearth of cross-cultural surveys in the literature which discuss the efficacy or superiority of a given approach to bilingual education. This arises because of the large number of variables potentially relevant to cross-cultural studies as well as the relative newness of bilingual-bicultural education as a popular subject of debate. To date there has been no historical investigation of bilin-

gual programs, a sad oversight which this paper attempts to address.

Additional literature, aside from that dealing with bilingual-bicultural education, was chosen to obtain information concerning the ethnic group's cultural and educational backgrounds. This was done to gain insights into the impact and role in bilingual-bicultural education of each group in the United States. There are many works on the contributions of German-Americans to American history. Faust's work, German Element in the United States, is a classic and copious tome on German-American history. Other works consulted, such as Rippley's two works, The German Americans and Of German Ways, Hawgood's The Tragedy of German-America and Kent's Refugee Intellectual, were referred by professors and are cross-referenced and cited in numerous bibliographies. Due to the recent arrival of Vietnamese in America little literature, aside from that concerning the war, is available on Vietnamese education and Vietnamese-Americans. Francis Fitzgerald's work, Fire in the Lake, however, is an insightful and valuable look into Vietnam's history, culture and world view. Also recommended to me in my research were Sully's We the Vietnamese, Thuy's Getting to Know the Vietnamese and the only in-depth publication on the Indochinese refugees, Grant's The Boat People. Another source of information on Vietnamese-Americans is the Indochinese Refugee Guides put out by the United States

State Department and Health, Education and Welfare
Department.

German immigration began during the colonial era and occurred throughout the history of the United States. However, it was only during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that Germans became one of the most important ethnic groups to emigrate to America. Haggard identifies three major groups of Germans who migrated during this time, the grays, the greens, and the very greens as they were named by German-American historians and contemporaries.⁴ The grays were those who arrived first in the late eighteenth century and post-revolutionary war era, settling predominantly in the middle colonies. The greens began arriving following the turmoil in Germany in the 1830s and 1840s, many being also referred to as the 49'ers, after the abortive German revolutionary attempts of 1849. These immigrants settled in what has been traditionally termed a German Belt,⁵ extending from New York to Milwaukee; they tended to locate at or near where earlier German immigrants settled. The last, or very green, group arrived following the Civil

⁴ John Haggard, The Tragedy of German-American (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1947), p. 22.

⁵ Haggard, p. 51.

CHAPTER III

GERMAN-AMERICANS

German immigration began during the colonial era and occurred throughout the history of the United States. However, it was only during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that Germans became one of the most important ethnic groups to emigrate to America. Hawgood identifies three major groups of Germans who migrated during this time, the grays, the greens and the very greens as they were named by German-American historians and contemporaries.⁴ The grays were those who arrived first in the late eighteenth century and post-revolutionary war era, settling predominantly in the middle colonies. The greens began arriving following the turmoil in Germany in the 1830s and 1840s, many being also referred to as the 48'ers, after the abortive German revolutionary attempts of 1848. These immigrants settled in what has been traditionally termed a German Belt,⁵ stretching from New York to Milwaukee; they tended to locate at or near where earlier German immigrants settled. The last, or very green, group arrived following the Civil

⁴John Hawgood, The Tragedy of German-America (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), p. 22.

⁵Hawgood, p. 81.

War. Members of this group, the smallest of the three, also tended to settle with fellow German-Americans.

Hawgood sees as a reason for German immigration

the existence of two well developed countries in the same stage of civilization, with similar climatic conditions or in the same climate zone, the old and densely populated, the other new and thinly settled, and on at least peaceable terms with one another.

Albert Bernhardt Faust explains however, that German-Americans came in essentially two manners. One way was that of individuals and individual families who immigrated more or less haphazardly for varying reasons. The second manner consisted of blocs of people who arrived en masse, organized around common goals, motives or leaders. During the beginning period of American history, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, German immigrants belong primarily with the former category, with Germans coming along with the other colonial powers such as the Dutch in New York or the English at Jamestown. During the nineteenth century, the major period of German immigration, this process increased following crop failures, wars, natural disasters, and potato famines, the 1848 revolution and 1870 Franco-Prussian War setting off peak periods of refugee immigration. Blocs of German immigrants arrived during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During these times leaders and

⁶Hawgood, p. 61.

group motives were sometimes crucial in United States history. Examples include William Penn's settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania; Kocherthal's Palatines who opened up the Hudson valley; Jonathan Waldo, first to settle and claim Maine; and others such as the religious sects of Moravians and Mennonites in Georgia and Pennsylvania who helped to extend British, and later American, holdings quickly and efficiently. However, it is the later nineteenth century groups who played an even greater role in attracting and organizing larger numbers of German immigrants to America. These were founded on New Germanies movements on American soil. The goals of these groups ranged from the establishing of model German societies to colonies for the German empire following German unification. In Missouri private expeditions such as the Geissens and Hermanns were founded to provide models of government and community living which could then be applied in the old world to found a German nation. Another area of New Germanies movements was Texas. Here groups such as the Adelsverein and the New Orleans Germanic Society attempted to found colonies in the then nation of Texas through which German interests, culture and trade, not to mention imperialism, as Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfel's letter to Mr. Kennedy, British consul of Galveston, implies,⁷ could be promoted. These efforts came

⁷Hawgood, p. 174.

to nought following Texas' annexation in 1845. Another area of German communities was in Wisconsin. Here religious leaders and groups such as the Lutherans and the Catholics under Martin Henni attempted to found religious utopias in a new land.

Bilingual-Bicultural Education
of German-American Immigration

If one were to offer men to choose out of all the customs in the world such as seemed to them the best, they would examine the whole number, and end by preferring their own, so convinced are they that their own usages surpass those of all others.--Herodotus, The Persian Wars, Book III, Chapter 38.

The impact on the education system of the United States by these various groups of German-Americans, in the form of bilingual-bicultural education, was significant. Since German immigrants tended to form separate, sizable communities, in many cases at or near the growing nineteenth century industrial urban centers, German-Americans were able to acquire and wield a growing influence on the then developing American educational institution.

In Ohio the growing demands on the part of German-Americans for bilingual education are reflected by Ohio's law of 1870 guaranteeing the instruction in German of school subjects in school systems in which at least forty parents, representing at least seventy-five pupils, requested it.⁸ Other states, notably Minnesota,

⁸Ripley, Americans, p. 122.

Wisconsin and Missouri, as well as the city of Philadelphia had similar laws guaranteeing instruction in German of school subjects in public schools. Parallel to this is the inclusion of the study of the German language, which occurred in cities such as St. Louis in the 1850s, as an academic course of study open to any and all students who requested it.⁹ This is an extension of bilingual education to bicultural education in which cultural contact and sharing is encouraged in the public domain. This also set a precedent for foreign language instruction other than Latin as an academic course of study.

German cultural influences, however, were extensive in other areas as well. Faust recognizes German-American contributions to education in many areas, from the use of blackboards for classroom instruction by Christopher Doch¹⁰ to the idea of state and federal government sponsored schools which led to the Morrill Act of 1863. German schooling techniques pioneered many bicultural community based education practices as described by Faust and evidenced in the Chautauqua movement of 1878. Here summer school reading circles, evening classes and socials had over 250,000 members.¹¹ Comprehensive education from

⁹Ripley, Americans, p. 120.

¹⁰Albert Bernhardt Faust, German Element in the United States, Vol. II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909), p. 204.

¹¹Faust, Vol. II, pp. 435-436.

early childhood to adulthood was early recognized by such individuals as Horace Mann and Ben Franklin who urged that German-Prussian models be adopted for American schools. This policy was adopted for the first time in Ohio with the State Education Commission Report of 1830,¹² and a kindergarten to university system modeled after the German-Prussian schooling theories presented by Horace Mann was adopted for the state of Michigan in 1837.¹³ The graduate school education system as it exists today was first pioneered and successfully adopted by German-Americans at John Hopkins University in 1876, based on the maxim that diligent researchers are the best teachers.¹⁴ Bilingual-bicultural education, being concerned with the student's entire personhood, was also attempted in 1842 by German-Americans in the form of the Herbartian methods. Johan Herbart stressed pupils' understanding and applying concepts in the classroom in forms other than rote memorization through a process called mental assimilation.¹⁵ This included role playing, practical application of concepts and writing. Kindergarten, introduced by Friedrich Fröbel, a follower of Swiss educator Johann

¹²Faust, Vol. II, p. 219.

¹³Faust, Vol. II, pp. 219-220.

¹⁴LaVerne Rippley, Of German Ways (Minneapolis: Dillon Press Inc., 1970), p. 148.

¹⁵See Faust, Vol. II, p. 225; and Rippley, Ways, p. 157.

Pestalozzi, brought out the value of play and informal methods of instruction for curriculum. Physical fitness and its importance in education were advocated for public schools by German-Americans in the nationwide Turnverein movements begun by Carl Beck who campaigned in many cities for its inclusion in the school curriculum.

German-American involvement in education was much greater than simply using schools and education as a public source of the knowledge of English and a means of assimilation. Rather, in many cases, the schools became institutions in which both the community at large and the ethnic minority benefitted and grew. German-Americans brought to education, through these various bilingual-bicultural programs, their Weltanschauung and made an impression on American education which was decisive to both the schools' development as well as German-America's.

Factors of Success

Hawgood in his work The Tragedy of German-America labels the German-American conception on the part of immigrants as Deutschtum.¹⁶ This conception was developed primarily through the use of "the German press, the German language and the German song".¹⁷ Language was the key,

¹⁶Hawgood, p. 273.

¹⁷Hawgood, p. 276.

and its use in the home, church and, most importantly, the schools were three indices of Hawgood's assessment of the German-American communities' durability and success. Reasons for Deutschtum vary from protection of cultural values to German-Americans' pride of their heritage as a defense against prejudice. German-Americans, in some instances, formed community "stockades"¹⁸ in which news, traditions and friends could be found and maintained. Another reason was an increasing sense of Germanic pride on the part of German-American immigrants which more or less culminated with the German Unification in 1871. This ethnocentrism, as epitomized by Carl Heinzen's statement that "Germans cannot Americanize, genuine Americans we do not wish to become; the apes of Americanism we do not wish to become, and less than the Americans we could not become",¹⁹ was considered by many opponents of bilingual-bicultural education as exemplary of what was wrong with the movement, and at times this did lead to friction between native Americans and German-Americans. This is exemplified by a 1832 Niles Register report of a group of German-American immigrants saying that,

Most of the agitation against immigration as has been intimated, centered around the Irish, but there was also some feeling against the German. This was augmented by the decided clannishness of these people.²⁰

¹⁸Hawgood, p. 256.

¹⁹Hawgood, p. 270.

²⁰Hawgood, p. 237.

How much of Hawgood's stockading was a defense against American prejudice and how much was a German offense expressing their cultural uniqueness is parallel to the issue today in determining motivations for bilingual-bicultural education.

LaVerne Rippley in The German Americans identifies four basic factors which resulted in bilingual-bicultural education: parochialism, religion, chauvinism and emulation. In the factor of parochialism, bilingual education was used in the community private and/or public schools as a means of insuring German-American community insularity and security as articulated in the 1901 National German-American Alliance which states that "only through the preservation of the German language can our race in this land be preserved from entire disappearance."²¹ In the religious factor, German language instruction meant to insure the survivability and integrity of various religious beliefs of German-Americans, in particular in those communities/schools in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. Chauvinism as a factor for bilingual-bicultural programs arose out of what many German-Americans viewed as a disparity in American education in comparison to that left behind in Europe. The Turnverein movement of the 1850s described above was expounded with almost missionary zeal and eventually

²¹Rippley, Americans, p. 123.

encompassed many social movements such as antinativism, and opposition to prohibition and the promotion of speakers and lectures as well. Also, many German immigrants of the nineteenth century, some of whom came from Prussia which had a high literacy rate and a highly developed schooling system, wished to continue this educational tradition in America. The factor of emulation, on the other hand, was evidenced by the initiation and adoption of German bilingual-bicultural programs in American schools by Americans. Examples of this are reflected in the writings of Horace Mann following his visits to the Germanies in 1843 and Calvin E. Stowe who was sent to the Germanies by the Ohio legislature. Stowe's favorable report on German schools was popularly read by teachers and professors throughout the United States. This was stressed by the president of John Hopkins, who stated in 1904, "As Latin was the language of the scholar during the Middle Ages, so the knowledge of German is now indispensable for anyone who claims the name of a student and scholar."²² Also in that year the University of Chicago dedicated its fiftieth convocation to "The Recognition of the Indebtedness of American Universities to the ideals of German Scholarship."²³ These four factors

²²Ripley, Ways, p. 149.

²³Ripley, Ways, p. 149.

present a spectrum of bilingual-bicultural motivations. At the one end the needs and goals of the ethnic minority are paramount; at the other cultural contact is encouraged, and sharing takes place.

Faust states that these movements were aided by additional factors. The existence of a German Belt, which arose out of the preference of German-Americans to be settlers rather than pioneers, gave German-Americans the opportunities to organize politically as well as socially. This is exemplified by the 1855 German-American community in Buffalo which was the largest single ethnic group in that city comprising 39% of all families.²⁴ Here German-Americans were able to exercise their influence in school matters to good effect, founding tax supported schools, influencing hiring and promoting the instruction of German. Because the German Belt was located mostly in the north and midwest and because German-American organizations had in many cases helped raise levies for the union cause as did Lyon and Sigel in Missouri, following the Civil War German-Americans were able to reap the spoils of indebtedness from grateful state and city governments in enacting bilingual-bicultural education.

²⁴Maxine S. Seller, The Relationship Between the German Community and the Public Schools in Nineteenth Century Buffalo: Congruence, Conflict and a Happy Ending (Buffalo: State University of New York, 1980), p. 2.

Factors of Decline

Despite the successes of German-Americans in the nineteenth century, bilingual education did come to an end in America. Hawgood traces Deutschtum's decline to many factors. First, the steady decline of immigrants from Germany as the nineteenth century waned foreshadowed its demise and began the erosion of Rippley's language islands. Inter German-American generational rivalry between grays, greens and very greens also served to destroy Deutschtum from within. Affluent German immigrants tended to identify more with their American counterparts, depriving Deutschtum of its "upper strata".²⁵ Newer German immigrants, the very greens, tended to fit in more rapidly in industrial urban centers than their rural minded oldsters whose culture and background of pre-Civil War days were out of style.²⁶ Growing German imperialism and resistance to emigration in any manner except to Germany's colonies also dampened the growth of German-America. But the death blow came in the form of World War I. This was foreshadowed by the know-nothing movement of the 1870s which culminated in the passage of the Bennet Law in Wisconsin and similar laws in other states in 1873. Although successfully repealed by German-

²⁵Hawgood, p. 290.

²⁶Hawgood, p. 272.

American lobbies, this law demanded that only institutions which taught solely in English be considered schools.²⁷ Immigration and bilingual-bicultural education depend upon a friendly tolerant atmosphere. These laws, and World War I, destroyed the notion of Deutschtum as well as that friendly, tolerant atmosphere. With America's entry into World War I in 1917, German-Americans and future immigrants had to choose which side of the hyphen they were to live on. In 1917 new Bennett Laws were enacted, Ohio abolishing its 1870 law in that year. Immigration restrictions and anti-immigration associations such as the American coalition which lobbied extensively for immigrant quotas delivered the coup de grace. This ended potential waves of immigration similar to the three major ones of the nineteenth century and aided in the decline in numbers of German-American communities and organizations. Even the Stueben Society, founded in 1919, had as the first goal in its charter the "promotion of good citizenship"²⁸ in America.

Compounding the results of these developments is what Kent in his book The Refugee Intellectual terms a sort of intellectual failure for the then latest group of German-American immigrants. These refugees arrived from Germany following Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and

²⁷Ripley, Americans, p. 120.

²⁸Hawgood, p. 299.

before America's involvement in World War II in 1941. Although small, only slightly more than 100,000²⁹ individuals forming this immigrant group, the group does exemplify the results of the disappearance of Deutschtum. Kent shows that the greatest failure rate, those that encountered the most difficulty in adjusting and had the highest incidence of changes in vocations, was among those immigrants who depended upon language fluency. Examples of low success rates were those involved in education (39%), law (20%), journalism (40%), and engineering (0%).³⁰ Further, Kent views successes as those immigrants who best assimilated into American culture, the triumph of the melting pot ethic. He suggests that immigrants "start living with an American family, share their interests...understand the history and the cultural development of the country, drop European prejudice and inhibitions."³¹ He states that "as the refugees became more Americanized, prejudicial acts seemed to diminish."³² This is the antipode of the German-American state of fifty years previous and the opposite of conditions favorable to bilingual-bicultural education. This last group of

²⁹Donald Peterson Kent, The Refugee Intellectual (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), p. 12.

³⁰Kent, p. 300.

³¹Kent, p. 219.

³²Kent, p. 226.

refugee-immigrants was composed of an extremely large segment of highly trained, educated, and in some cases, exceedingly brilliant individuals. The Refugee Intellectual raises the question of how much brilliance was lost or frustrated due to the intolerance and ethnocentrism which ended Deutschtum as a living component in American life.

The balance sheet for German-Americans and American society as a whole for today in bilingual-bicultural education is mixed. Although no traces of German bilingual education exist today on anywhere near the scale as that prior to 1917, the contributions that German-Americans made to education, the products of bicultural sharing in schools and their communities, from kindergarten to blackboards and physical education to graduate schools, are still very much alive.

250,000 refugees had fled by July 1979. Most of those in the second wave, referred to popularly as the boat people, had fled by sampans, junk, trawler and small boats across the China Sea to Malaya, Singapore, Thailand, China and even in some cases to the Philippines and Australia. By July 1980, 150,000 Vietnamese refugees had settled in

²³David Winter, "Viet Refugees Start at Bottom of U.S. Job Ladder," Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 3, 1979, p. 9.

²⁴Bruce Frank, The Boat People, An Age Investigation (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979), p. 24.

CHAPTER IV

VIETNAMESE-AMERICANS

The Vietnamese began emigrating to the United States following the successful invasion of the Republic of South Vietnam by North Vietnam in April 1975. There have been basically two groups of Vietnamese to leave Vietnamese and settle in the United States. The first group, totaling some 139,000³³ came in the months immediately following the American evacuation of Saigon. Between 1975 to 1977 there was relatively little emigration from Vietnam but in 1977, when Vietnam began instating reeducation programs and invaded neighboring Cambodia, the numbers increased dramatically. From 27,276 in 1977 to 106,489 who left Vietnam by the end of 1978, more than 290,000 refugees had fled by July 1979.³⁴ Most of those in the second wave, referred to popularly as the boat people, had fled by sampan, junk, trawler and small boats across the China Sea to Malaya, Singapore, Thailand, China and even in some cases to the Phillipines and Australia. By July 1980, 388,800 Vietnamese refugees had settled in

³³David Winder, "Viet Refugees Start at Bottom of U.S. Job Ladder," Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 3, 1975, p. 9.

³⁴Bruce Grant, The Boat People, An Age Investigation (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books Ltd, 1979), p. 54.

the United States.³⁵

The Vietnamese who fled were relatively young. Age breakdowns were as follows: 52 percent school age and younger, 38.7 percent between **twenty-one** and fifty years of age and 9.3 percent fifty-one years and older. About half were women.³⁶ The refugees were settled through nine Refugee Reception Centers which were funded at \$350 for each individual by the State Department to cover expenses. The immigrants were then dispersed throughout the country to sponsors, either families or service groups who then took moral, however not legal, responsibility for settlement. A phenomenon which has developed in the last year has been extensive resettlement by individuals to certain areas of the country, particularly Texas, California and Louisiana, where local Vietnamese communities have been formed. Although the Vietnamese have done well as far as employment, 94.9% of the 1975 group are included in the work force, and approximately one third make \$200 or more per week,³⁷ the success is only superficial. According to an HEW study, 78.7% of the Vietnamese work force held white-

³⁵"Immigration Seems Out of Control," U.S. News and World Report, LXXXIX, Dec. 15, 1980, p. 6.

³⁶Grant, p. 54.

³⁷Grant, pp. 160-161.

collar jobs in Vietnam but are now underemployed in such menial tasks as dishwashing, domestic work, auto repair and the like.³⁸ Compounding this is the cultural attitude toward such work as being indecent, those who work with hands being of lower stature than head workers.³⁹ Due to the poor wage earning rates of most Vietnamese workers, many families have more than one wage earner. This too is contrary to the traditional family in which women and children do not work; only the father works, thereby fulfilling the titular role of head of household.

One of the results of this has been, according to a study conducted by the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Washington in Seattle, that the Vietnamese are experiencing extensive problems in coping in the United States. This is reflected by as many as 34% of the study's subjects exhibiting some form of mental health problems, such as psychomatic illnesses, anger, irritability, stress and nervous breakdowns.⁴⁰ The study concluded that,

although new arrivals such as 50,000 Indochinese "boat people" are given free English lessons, job training, access to welfare and to host sponsors

³⁸Winder, p. 9.

³⁹Young Gia Thuy, Getting to Know the Vietnamese and Their Culture (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1976), p. 36.

⁴⁰Bayard Webster, "Psychologists Focusing on Refugees," Cleveland Plain Dealer, Sept. 9, 1979, p. 7-C.

by a score of agencies...adaption probelms have roots so deep in the emotional structure of immigrants and in the nature of resettlement itself, that they are not easily reached by a handful of societal programs.⁴¹

Although there are no comparable statistics for other immigrant groups, it is indicative that the Vietnamese-Americans are experiencing problems in their transition to life in the United States.

Given the age composition of the Vietnamese-Americans, one of the societal programs which will affect the greatest number of them and perhaps have the most lasting effects will be the American educational system. As a basis of comparison and in order to know from which educational experiences the Vietnamese-Americans are coming, a look at Vietnamese education is necessary.

Education in Vietnam

Tzu-lu said:

"The ruler of Wei has been waiting for you in order with you to administer the government. What will you consider the first thing to be done?"

The Master replied:

"What is necessary is to rectify names. If names be not correct, language is not in accord with the truth of things. If language not be in accord with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success."--I Ching.

In Confucian society it is through language that one interprets the surrounding world. It is through fluency that one is judged to be intelligent and to

⁴¹Webster, p. 7-C.

properly understand the correct way. To be fully functional in society, the knowledge of language is of prominent importance. So it is too with bilingual-bicultural education.

Education in Vietnam is based upon two traditions, Confucian being the oldest and the most enduring. The second, the colonial, introduced by the French and founded on the Lycee model, was begun in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Fitzgerald,

The traditional Vietnamese child...grew up into a monolithic world composed of the family and its extensions in the state. For him there was no alternative to the authority of the father and no question of specialized knowledge. The education of a mandarin was greater, but hardly more diverse, than that of the rice farmer, for the Confucian tradition provided a personal philosophy, a religion, a technology and a method of managing the state. For the mandarin there was no such thing as pure science or knowledge for its own sake. There was (somewhere) a single correct answer to every question; the mandarin, therefore studied in order to learn how to act.⁴²

Unlike Western thought, with time as a line with future as an unknown but perhaps malleable void and education as a means of predicting or controlling one's destiny, Confucian thinking and education is predicated on the past and its perfection. "I for my part am not one of those who have innate knowledge" Confucias said, "I am simply one who loves the past and is diligent in investigating it."⁴³

⁴²Fitzgerald, p. 17.

⁴³Fitzgerald, p. 12.

The educational system in Vietnam was set up to fulfill two basic functions, to perpetuate the culture, and to create an intellectual class through which the vagaries of government and politics could be administered. Because of the former the educational system was inexorably bound up in the religion, philosophy and morality of the community. An individual advanced from level to level of education on the basis of examinations held at various times in the year. As one moved higher up the hierarchy, the difficulty of examinations increased. As a result, the class of mandarins, and even students, became to be respected and the institution of education highly regarded. Students would spend their full time studying and preparing for the highly competitive examinations, drawing upon the resources of the family, and perhaps the whole village, who would then profit with the student's successful passage and appointment to office. In such a manner the education of one involved many in the process. Although there was an Imperial College located in the capital of Hue, instruction was predominantly done in the homes of scholars and local mandarins. Pagodas or community buildings of some kind were also places of study. Thus, both in manner and spirit, the education system encouraged not change but tradition in Vietnamese society. The teacher was as important as parent and mandarin as equal as lord.

The advent of French rule in the 1880s and the subsequent incorporation of Vietnam into the French empire

changed the traditional educational experience into the modern day institution which existed in South Vietnam until 1975. The French school system, like the Confucian system which preceded it, was created to develop a local bureaucracy through which the colony would be administered. Thus, the French system did not supplant the Vietnamese system, but rather complemented it, both existing simultaneously with one another. The French system formalized in 1917 under national (Vietnam) direction, provided for uniform school syllabi and the setting up of regular examination schedules. All instruction was to be done in French. Elementary education, ages six to twelve, was divided into two three-year portions which led to certificates of completion of elementary (six to nine) and primary (nine to twelve) studies. Secondary schooling took place exclusively in the cities and was composed of a four-year portion, after which the student earned a diploma, followed by a two-year portion (three years after 1927), after which the student earned a baccalaureat. With a baccalaureat one could then go to the University of Hanoi, also established in 1917; the staff of the University of Hanoi was entirely French for the duration of the colonial period. Education, although compulsory, was not enforced; less than one in five in 1938 attended elementary school.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Henry H. Smith, et al, Area Handbook for South Vietnam (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 146.

However, local private schools and Roman Catholic mission schools fared better, having 650 schools and over 600,000 students in the 1930s.⁴⁵ The French colonial era's primary contribution, however, was that for the first time a national Vietnamese system of education was instituted, based upon western mass education democratic principles. It served as a transition from Confucian to European education and resulted in a blend of the two cultures that paved the way for the South Vietnamese educational system.

The educational system administered in South Vietnam was begun in 1955 following the evacuation of the French from Vietnam and the partition of the country into North and South by the Geneva Convention. It was nationally supervised and reorganized in 1964 with the five principal branches of Research, Higher Education, General Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Cultural Affairs. The concerns of the Ministry of Education then extended far beyond the K-12 setting of American schools. The Ministry of Education deferred to local schools and community autonomy by insisting on only three years of compulsory education and enforcing it only in areas where facilities existed. Also fundamental education courses which in 1963 enrolled 42,577 students were estab-

⁴⁵Smith, p. 146.

lished in village community halls and pagodas, thus institutionalizing the Confucian tradition of local education.⁴⁶ Instruction was in Vietnamese, but students who attended secondary school had to choose either French or English as a course of study.

Elementary schools had five grades beginning with grade five and ending with grade one. Secondary schools, whose enrollment was governed by the successful completion of oral and written examinations taken before entry, were divided into two cycles, the first of four years, the second of three years. Another examination separated the two cycles, successful completion of which earned the student the Tu Tai I certificate. The second cycle of studies was also ended by examinations and the awarding of the Tu Tai II.

Learning and teaching styles of students and teachers in Vietnam were a product of the Confucian and colonial cultures. Learning was by rote, and lecture was the preeminent instructional method. As Thuy points out,

Learning by (passive) observation, however, might also have something to do with the influence of Taosim, which discourages any disturbance of harmony between man and nature, and scientific experimentation or discovery may lead to this disturbance.⁴⁷

Experimentation, questioning, class discussion and debate were unheard of in the Vietnamese classroom. Copious note

⁴⁶Smith, p. 147.

⁴⁷Thuy, p. 71.

taking and memorization accompanied by long hours of lecture and drill were the mainstays of classroom methodology.

Problems in Bilingual Education
and Vietnamese-Americans

Fitzgerald, in her work Fire in the Lake, describes an amusing episode in which an American professor at Saigon University began teaching comparative government. He found

that several students had memorized large sections of their first reading assignment. Pleased but somewhat bewildered, he asked them to finish their work on Machiavelli and turn to Montesquieu. The next day after class the students came to him in open rebellion. "What do you mean?" they asked angrily. "What do you mean by teaching us one thing one day and one thing the next?"⁴⁸

As Fitzgerald illustrates, and the Confucian tradition has inculcated, education is not a matter of opinion. Whether it be a system of government, or law, or cooking or whatever, it either works and is to be studied or doesn't and should be discarded. Although literature and journal articles abound with suggestions on what to do for Vietnamese children in such educational matters as classroom seating arrangements and toilet and locker room practices, none deal with this difference in cognitive orientation to and goals of education for Vietnamese-Americans. Traditional bilingual education courses, such

⁴⁸Fitzgerald, p. 18.

as English as a second language used by many community agencies and school systems, are not enough. For example, there is a dichotomy between the methodology used in many English as a second language programs and that used in traditional Vietnamese schools. The former rely heavily on an audio-lingual approach in which conversation and informal communication, regardless of mistakes made, are encouraged as the approach to learning English. The Vietnamese-American learner, however, has a grammar-translation background in which the rules and vocabulary are memorized first, then applied through drill and rehearsal. As Thuy states, Vietnamese students are accustomed "to see(ing) the written form of the lesson even when they learned a foreign language."⁴⁹ The result has been in many cases high drop out rates, sessions marked with apprehension⁵⁰ and, for some, continued difficulty with English and little progress after as much as four years of work.

In the next chapter, factors of bilingual-bicultural education in the experiences of German-American and Vietnamese-Americans are compared to relate historical events to educational problems of today.

⁴⁹Thuy, p. 72.

⁵⁰John Koster, "Tutoring Vietnamese Refugees," Today's Education, LXVI (Nov.-Dec., 1977), 32-34.

CHAPTER V

HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS
GERMAN AND VIETNAMESE AMERICANS

Perhaps a reason why history repeats itself is that the first time around nobody listened.--
Toynbee.

Although separated in time, culture, geography, and tradition, there are many similarities between the experiences of German and Vietnamese refugee-immigrants. We have seen how motivation toward a variety of goals made the German-Americans able to exert their influence to enact bilingual-bicultural programs. These benefitted not only the settlement of their own immigrant groups but at the same time furthered the development of the American educational system as well. The Vietnamese also bring with them their own uniqueness in educational tradition, goals, and practices. And like some German-Americans, the Vietnamese have brought their educational traditions in a migration movement marked by tragedy, hardships and hope for a new life in a new land. But what does the comparison of these groups, the German-Americans and the Vietnamese-Americans, signify for bilingual-bicultural education of Vietnamese-Americans today?

Kent describes the failure rates of the 1930s group of German refugees, immigrants who were by and

large professional and highly literate. Only 16.8% were not in education, law, medicine, journalism, engineering, music, or art.⁵¹ Additionally, 64.3% came from, and chose to live in, highly developed urban centers of 100,000 people or more.⁵² Only 68% of those participating in Kent's survey were able to successfully transfer their skills; 46% were financially secure, and 45% reported that they had less status in the United States than in Europe.⁵³ Rippley in his work The German Americans states that of this 1930-40 group, repatriates, those who returned to Germany from America, reached 43% by 1941,⁵⁴ this despite the growing World War and excesses of the Nazi's. Vietnamese-Americans are not dissimilar. Approximately 79% held white collar jobs as did those in Kent's study. Underemployment is a serious problem facing Vietnamese-Americans which is compounded by a traditional disdain for manual labor.⁵⁵ One reason for the difficulty that white collar and professional immigrants have in adjusting is that,

practicing a profession...demands much more than mere skill or knowledge of the specific field. Language proficiency, knowledge of American

⁵¹Kent, p. 15.

⁵²Kent, p. 20.

⁵³Kent, p. 301.

⁵⁴Rippley, Americans, p. 219.

⁵⁵Thuy, p. 36.

professional ethics, a familiarity with the specialized techniques of this country, and even an acquaintance with some of the "brethern of the guild" are sometimes necessary.⁵⁶

Language acquisition, and with it familiarity of the new business culture, is then of paramount importance to immigrant intellectuals. But as exhibited by the German-Americans of yesterday, the failure rate in America of these individuals is high. The decline of bilingual-bicultural education for German-Americans in the 1930s contributed to the high failure rate of the refugee intellectuals Kent surveyed. The Vietnamese-Americans are also similar to Kent's group of German-Americans in so far as economic and educational backgrounds. The fulfillment of the need for bilingual-bicultural education for Vietnamese-Americans then is a decisive factor in their eventual settlement and adjustment in America.

There are several marked differences, however, in the experiences of German and Vietnamese Americans which have affected bilingual-bicultural education. Unlike the development of German-American settlements, which formed a German Belt of communities in which new arrivals could find support and subsequent generations of German-Americans could find a sense of community, there was no such development with Vietnamese immigrants. The government, to avoid the burdening of selected communities with the large numbers

⁵⁶Kent, pp. 77-78.

of refugee-immigrants, followed a policy of dispersing the Vietnamese throughout the United States. German immigrants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were not settled by government agencies, but rather by German-American relatives who arrived earlier, fellow Germans who organized the immigrants, or the immigrant him/herself whose individual finances and contacts determined where he/she settled. These means, all or in combination, ultimately decided where and how the individual German immigrant learned about and adjusted to the new land. Thus, the Germans formed a Deutschtum which in many cases was decisive to German-American life. The Vietnamese, who come from a tradition and history even more rooted in the institution of community and family are especially handicapped. So important in fact is the Vietnamese notion of community that there is no word in the Vietnamese language which corresponds to the personal pronoun "I". *Toi*, the Vietnamese counterpart, originally meant the king's subject and is most accurately translated as the impersonal pronoun "one".⁵⁷ The Vietnamese were not able to form their *dat-nouc*, the word for the concept of the community and spiritual basis of life. Since 1979 Vietnamese-Americans have been conducting a bewildering resettlement, mostly to California and Texas.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Fitzgerald, p. 23.

⁵⁸Grant, p. 161.

Given the support that German-Americans found in their community and the traditions of Vietnamese this new movement perhaps is not so bewildering as it is necessary for bilingual-bicultural education and even psychological survival.

Another difference between the German-American and Vietnamese-American immigration experiences has been the very nature of the immigration itself. In contrast to the German immigration which occurred in waves, each one preparing and improving the way for the next, the Vietnamese emigration has been short and sporadic. Before 1975 Vietnamese immigration was negligible, but by 1979 more than 380,000 had settled in America.⁵⁹ Therefore, the Vietnamese refugees did not have the source of support and identification that provided so much help to German-Americans in the nineteenth century. There were none of Rippley's language islands for Vietnamese immigrants to go to. However, like the German-American islands of the past, the newly formed Vietnamese communities are already facing the erosion with declining immigration rates.

Final sources of comparison for both Vietnamese and German Americans are the effects of war and intolerance. World War I and the accompanying waves of anti-immigration and anti-German feelings ended the efforts of bilingual

⁵⁹"Immigration Seems Out of Control," U.S. News and World Report, LXXXIX, Dec. 15, 1980, p. 6.

education for German-Americans in a manner which was many times as startling as it was violent. The feelings Americans have towards the latest development in America's most intolerable war, the arrival of the boat people, will have an effect on the acceptance of Vietnamese-Americans and their future. As Hawgood states, "friendly, peaceable terms must prevail for immigrants to prosper."⁶⁰

The effects of attitudes on Vietnamese bilingual-bicultural education are manifest. A tremendous need for such programs has been shown as exhibited by the importance Vietnamese-Americans place on education in the development of family and community and by the difficulties they are experiencing now in America. Further, the needs of the Vietnamese-Americans go beyond simply the learning of English. The differences in cultures, from classroom learning styles to the notion of competition and individuality, must be dealt with.⁶¹ The fact that 52% of the Vietnamese-Americans are of school age or younger further weights the dependency of this group of immigrants on bilingual-bicultural education. However, due to the one-shot nature of the boat people's immigration, the lack of community organization, and in some cases hostility to their presence, as evidenced by recent Ku Klux Klan activities and outbreaks of violence in Texas and

⁶⁰Hawgood, p. 61.

⁶¹Fitzgerald, p. 8.

Louisiana against Vietnamese shrimpers, the Vietnamese-Americans will be initially dependent upon bilingual-bicultural education program support from the communities and agencies with which they are now coming into contact. Unlike the German-Americans, who were able to exploit their community organization and gain political power and thus initiate education programs on their own behalf, the Vietnamese are dependent on the programs now in existence to initiate changes and allowances for them.

The comparison of the histories of German and Vietnamese-Americans does not bode well for the future of bilingual-bicultural education. The factors contributing to the success of German-Americans--strong and in some cases highly organized immigration movements; Deutschtum, the formation of German-American communities; initial openness on the part of native Americans to German-American ideas and goals--are not nearly as strong or may be totally lacking in the Vietnamese-American experience. In some cases we see that circumstances--deliberate, as in the case of the United States government dispersing the Vietnamese, and unintentional, as in the very nature of the Vietnamese emigration, a product of flight rather than of free choice--have mitigated against these success factors. Additionally the factors of decline for the German-Americans are all too present for the Vietnamese-Americans today. On the one hand we see the continued operation of the product of the German failure of bilingual

education, the high failure rate of intellectual white collar immigrants. From resettlement across the entire United States in an attempt to form their own communities of support to the intolerance which in 1917 and World War I ended the German-American prosperity in bilingual education we see that the Vietnamese-Americans must overcome even more obstacles when they try to replicate for themselves the conditions for success. Bilingual-bicultural education was not the epitome of the German-American contribution to America nor was its decline and virtual disappearance fatal to German-American history. However, the development and presence of bilingual education in German communities was most certainly a beneficial factor in that immigrant group's adjustment and success in America. Just as bilingual-bicultural education today is not a panacea for the Vietnamese-Americans' problems in America, its presence and development would aid their adjustment and settlement in the United States.

The history of the German-Americans and the present story of the Vietnamese-Americans today offer one thing to bilingual-bicultural education, a challenge. In the case of the German-Americans the challenge of dealing with and taking into account the uniqueness of a culture in an educational setting resulted in decisive and beneficial advances for the total American educational system. It set the precedent for bilingual-bicultural

public education and served as an example of what prejudice and intolerance could do to end such promise and development. Perhaps it was this ending which was part of what Hawgood refers to as The Tragedy of German America. The Vietnamese-Americans offer a new challenge to bilingual-bicultural education today in the sense that their treatment and their resulting success or failure will show just how committed America is to the notion of bilingual-bicultural education. The acceptance of this challenge could result in a greater development and growth of both the Vietnamese-Americans and the American schools; its denial could result in tragedy with yet another group of refugee-immigrants.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

The German-American communities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were the product of one of the largest and most important immigration movements both in numbers and time span. Whether individually or in organized blocs of peoples, fleeing natural or manmade disasters, or merely looking for a new life in a new land, these immigrants formed several sizable ethnic communities throughout the United States. Through various means and for varying motives these German-American communities began programs in their schools very similar to those used in bilingual-bicultural education today. These programs were begun out of what Rippley describes as four basic factors of German-American education: parochialism, religion, chauvinism and emulation. These factors represent a spectrum of reasons for having bilingual-bicultural education ranging from exclusively meeting the needs and goals of the ethnic minority to encouraging cultural contact and sharing of traditions and cultural traits with the total culture.

The German-Americans were fortuitous in the development of their bilingual-bicultural programs in many ways. First of all was the very extensiveness of the German immigration which was composed of basically

three large waves during the nineteenth century. Each wave prepared the way for the next. Also, the pattern of German settlement as Faust states was the formation of a German Belt. Here the large numbers of German immigrants were given organization through the tendency of these immigrants to settle near fellow German-Americans, usually close to growing nineteenth century urban centers. This led in many cases to growing political control as exemplified in the 1855 Buffalo community. Another reason for German-Americans' success was that they were drawn to the new land because of its similarities with the old; it was similar geographically, climatically, racially, culturally and economically. In addition, another factor of success was the time during which German immigration occurred. The Civil War and the strain under which it put the Union provided the opportunity for many German-American communities, which were primarily located in the northern section of the United States, to garner state and local governments' gratitude for these communities' organizational and political skills. Many communities turned out levies of soldiers for the Union cause and maintained pro-Union officials in office. Finally, the time was ripe for immigration in the United States, and German-American immigrants found in many cases a welcome arrival in the new land and encouragement for their ethnic traditions in the growing public schools.

The decline of German-American bilingual education came about first of all through the waning immigration rate. This decline was due as much to the unification of Germany in 1870 as it was to the growing intolerance of Americans toward immigrants in the later quarter of the nineteenth century. However, it was World War I and the accompanying bitter anti-German sentiment rampant at that time which to a large degree ended German-American bilingual education. Laws guaranteeing foreign language instruction in many states including Ohio were struck down during the war, and German-Americans were forced to choose which side of the hyphen they were to live on. The result of this was the erosion and eventual disappearance of Deutschtum as German-American communities split up, declined in population or ceased, due to public pressure, to exist as communities. So rapid was its collapse that scarcely twenty years later Kent would document the extreme difficulty of some 100,000 refugee German intellectuals in adjusting to American life as well as the lack of support in and means of learning American ways, which would lead almost half of the refugees to return to Nazi Germany.

Today a new group of refugee immigrants is attempting to live in their new homeland of America. The Vietnamese who fled after the collapse of South Vietnam in 1975, although different ethnically, culturally and geographically as well as in time from the German-American

immigrants of nearly 100 years previous, have many important similarities with German-Americans which relate to the probable decline or success in bilingual-bicultural education. In so far as which factors might predict success, the Vietnamese are seriously handicapped as they have arrived in small numbers compared to the immigration rates of the German-Americans. Nor are they arriving over a long period of time. Unlike the German-Americans, there were no established Vietnamese-American communities to which these new peoples could come. Indeed the federal government has followed a policy of dispersal for the Vietnamese-Americans so as to not overburden select communities with a large concentration of immigrants. This is compounded by the Vietnamese traditional value placed on community life and the reality that relocation, at times at great expense and over great distances, is necessary for the Vietnamese-American. Further, the Vietnamese-Americans must also overcome the same factors that led to the decline of German-American bilingual-bicultural education. Intolerance and prejudice which is further fueled in many instances by American resentment to the war in Vietnam is still present and inhibits Vietnamese-American adjustment. The same conditions which Kent describes with the refugee intellectuals of the 1930s are present in the Vietnamese-Americans of today in the form of underemployment, vocation changes and mental health problems.

Although bilingual-bicultural education has not been for the Vietnamese-Americans the answer to all the problems of relocation and adjustment attendant in immigration, it is important to individual immigrants and the existence of ethnic immigrants communities. The coincidence of the public censure of German bilingual education and the collapse of Deutschtum is a marked one. More than one of every two Vietnamese-Americans is of school age or younger. The Vietnamese-Americans however have not had fifty to one hundred years to prepare bilingual-bicultural programs as did the German-Americans. Nor does it seem likely that they will have the accompanying encouragement and historical benefits which the German-Americans had. Indeed, the Vietnamese-Americans offer to the United States, the individual states and the local schools the challenge of just how serious our commitment to bilingual-bicultural education is. If the challenge is accepted and dealt with as a genuine commitment the rewards may be as great as those which accompanied the German-American experiences of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The failure to accept this challenge will mean lost opportunities for Vietnamese-Americans and American education as a whole, a tragedy for all.

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