Diversity as paradigm, analytical device, and policy goal

GRIN, François

Language Rights and Political Theory

Edited by
WILL KYMLICKA
and
ALAN PATTEN

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Acknowledgements

This volume grew out of a workshop on language rights held at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, in March 2001, where many of these chapters were first presented. We’d like to thank Idil Boran for helping to organize the workshop, John Edwards for his participation, Jacob Levy for his suggestions, Michael James for his excellent copy-editing, and Dominic Byatt for his enthusiastic support. Special thanks to Julie Bernier for her speedy and efficient work in providing background research, harmonizing the formatting of the various chapters, and compiling the references.

Funding for this project was received from the Faculty of Arts and Science at Queen’s University and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Two of the chapters have been published previously in slightly different forms: Thomas Pogge’s chapter was first published in Jorge Gracia and Pablo de Greiff (eds), Hispanics/Latinos in the United States: Ethnicity, Race, and Rights (New York: Routledge, 2000), 181–200; Philippe Van Parijs’ chapter was published in Policy, Philosophy, and Economics, 1 (2002), 59–74. We are grateful for permission to reprint these chapters.

Will Kymlicka, Kingston
Alan Patten, Montreal
November 2002
Contents

List of Figures ix
List of Tables ix
Notes on Contributors x

1. Introduction: Language Rights and Political Theory: Context, Issues, and Approaches
   Alan Patten and Will Kymlicka 1

2. Language Rights: Exploring the Competing Rationales
   Ruth Rubio-Marin 52

3. A Liberal Democratic Approach to Language Justice
   David D. Laitin and Rob Reich 80

4. Accommodation Rights for Hispanics in the United States
   Thomas W. Pogge 105

5. Misconceiving Minority Language Rights: Implications for Liberal Political Theory
   Stephen May 123

6. Linguistic Justice
   Philippe Van Parijs 153

7. Diversity as Paradigm, Analytical Device, and Policy Goal
   François Grin 169

   Idil Boran 189

9. Language Death and Liberal Politics
   Michael Blake 210

10. Language Rights, Literacy, and the Modern State
    Jacob T. Levy 230

11. The Antinomy of Language Policy
    Daniel M. Weinstock 250
Contents

   Denise G. Réaume

   Alan Patten

References 322
Index 340

List of Figures

7.1 The diversity clover 175
7.2 Diversity: benefits and costs 188
13.1 Perfect concentration 300
13.2 Imperfect concentration 303
13.3 Bilingual districts 303

List of Tables

6.1 Al, An, and Bo under four compensation regimes 159
6.2 Variable number of speakers of the dominant language 163
Diversity as Paradigm, Analytical Device, and Policy Goal

FRANÇOIS GRIN

1. Introduction

Recent years, most visibly since the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, have witnessed a marked increase in scholars' interest in minority issues, in particular minority rights and linguistic rights. One striking aspect of this interest is the fact that it has emerged, more or less simultaneously, in different quarters, and now finds expression in very different families of discourse. However, these families of discourse have remained, for the most part, quite insulated from one another, and this fragmentation, which is only just beginning to make way for a higher degree of interconnection, can seriously hamper not only analytical accuracy but also the relevance of policy proposals concerning language rights.

This chapter discusses the links between these families of discourse and argues that 'diversity' has a useful role to play as a federating concept. The function of such a federating concept is not only to combine these discourses into a consistent, more general discourse, but also to help account more accurately for the social and political reality that they all describe—albeit from different standpoints—and to clarify some of the more delicate policy choices that have to be made in this area.

The argument pursued in this paper attempts to tie together ideas proposed in earlier contributions (Grin 1994; 1996a; 2000a). It does not, however, attempt to make the case that 'diversity is good' (or bad), and largely sidesteps the normative debate which inspires many of the contributions in this volume. Instead, I explore some of the questions that arise under a twin set of related assumptions. The first assumption is that diversity is generally seen as an issue that requires...