

Language, Education and the Peace Process in Myanmar

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This article analyses the relationship between the politics of education and language, and armed conflict and ongoing peace process in Myanmar. It discusses the state education system, which since the military coup of 1962 has promoted the idea of the country based on the language and culture of the Bamar (Burman) majority community, and the school systems developed by ethnic armed groups which oppose the military government. Ethnic opposition education regimes have developed mother tongue-based school systems. In some cases, the Mon for example, these broadly follow the government curriculum, while being locally owned and delivered in ethnic languages; in others, such as the Karen, the local education system diverges significantly from the Myanmar government curriculum, making it difficult for students to transition between the two systems. This article explores the consequences of these developments, and how reforms in Myanmar since 2011 — including the peace process, which remains incomplete and contested — have opened the space for educational reform, and the possible “convergence” of state and non-state education regimes. Ethnic nationality communities remain determined to conserve and

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reproduce their own languages and cultures, adopting positions in relation to language and education which reflect broader state-society relations in Myanmar, and in particular ethnic politicians' demands for a federal political settlement to decades of armed conflict. The article concludes that sustainable resolution to Myanmar's protracted state-society conflict is unlikely to be achieved until elites can negotiate agreement on ethnic language and teaching policies.

Keywords: Myanmar/Burma, education, conflict, mother tongue-based education, language rights.

This article explores how language and education have featured in half a century of armed ethnic conflict in Burma/Myanmar, and how these issues feature in the ongoing peace process. The argument developed here is that different stakeholders' positions in relation to language policy and use in education are proxies for positions regarding the relationship between the central government and ethnic communities, in the context of widespread state-society conflict. Given the salience of ethno-linguistic diversity in Myanmar,¹ studies of the politics of language are surprisingly rare.² While the complex and fast-changing peace process in Myanmar, which began in late 2011, has yet to generate much scholarly analysis, commentary and policy literatures have largely bypassed the relationship between language, education, and state-society and armed conflicts, and their resolution.

Thus far, those engaged in the broader movement of political reform in Myanmar have largely addressed education and peace building as separate issues; likewise, state, international (donor) and other actors in the peace process have mostly ignored issues of language and education. This article explores the relationships between education and language policy and practice, and armed conflict and, more recently, the peace process in Myanmar. We focus on the state education system and education regimes under the authority of three major ethnic armed groups (EAGs): first, the New Mon State Party (NMSP), which has maintained a ceasefire with the government since 1995; second, the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), which saw its seventeen-year ceasefire collapse in 2011; and third, the Karen National Union (KNU), which in early 2012 agreed to a preliminary ceasefire, following more than half a century of armed conflict. Analysing these three contrasted case studies, and addressing the situation of other ethnic communities as necessary and in order to provide context, allows us to draw out questions regarding the relationship between ethnic nationality

communities and the state. The article concludes that a sustainable resolution to Myanmar's long-standing ethnic conflicts will be difficult to achieve without education reform which leads to the right language policies.

The article is based on data collected over a period of nine months of fieldwork in 2011.³ The results of this research were published,⁴ and as the peace process gathered pace and increased in complexity, the team decide to return to the field in 2015.⁵ Data was collected in Mon, Karen and Kachin States, and the team spoke to over 150 people and conducted thirty focus groups and larger meetings with stakeholders from EAG education departments, ethnic political parties and local civil society groups, including ethnic non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, teachers, parents and students at ethnic schools were either interviewed or took part in focus groups.⁶

The Conflict Nexus and the Peace Process: Language Rights and the Politics of Education

Myanmar, with a total population of 51 million, is home to more than 100 ethno-linguistic groups. Non-Burman communities make up at least 30 per cent of the population. In the lead-up to independence in 1948, ethnic nationality elites mobilized communities in order to gain access to political and economic resources, demanding justice and fair treatment for the groups they sought to represent. The KNU went underground in January 1949, initiating more than six decades of (mostly "low intensity") civil war. The ensuing armed conflict was marked by serious and widespread human rights abuses on the part of both the Myanmar armed forces (the Tatmadaw) and, less systematically, the EAGs. Myanmar's ethnic insurgents have been fighting to achieve political self-determination, which in recent years has been framed as a desire for federal autonomy within a multi-ethnic union;⁷ unsurprisingly, after half a century of armed conflict, there are also significant political-economic agendas at play in Myanmar's armed conflict and the on-going peace process.

Communist and dozens of groups of ethnic insurgents controlled large parts of the country for decades. Since the 1970s, however, armed opposition groups have lost control of their once extensive "liberated zones", precipitating humanitarian and political crises in the borderlands. A previous round of ceasefires in the 1990s brought respite to conflict-affected civilian populations and provided

the space for civil society networks to (re-)emerge within, and between, ethnic nationality communities. However, the then-military government proved unwilling to accept EAG demands for substantial political negotiations. Therefore, despite some positive developments, the ceasefires of the 1990s did not dispel distrust between ethnic nationality communities and the government.⁸

A new phase in the peace process began in late 2011, under the military-backed, semi-civilian government of President U Thein Sein. Preliminary ceasefires were agreed to with most (but not all) of Myanmar's EAGs, and some progress was made towards negotiating a comprehensive nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA). At the time of writing, however, progress seems to have stalled, with significant differences remaining between the EAGs and the government (particularly the Tatmadaw) on a range of issues, including security sector reform and how to decide the future political makeup of the country. The generalelection of November 2015 resulted in a landslide victory for the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Nobel Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Informed sources state that the NLD will promote a Burmese and English language-oriented education policy, rather than one based on mother tongue learning.⁹ Ethnic-based political parties did relatively well in the 2010 elections but had relatively few members of parliament elected in 2015. Therefore, while ethnic political parties remain important champions for mother tongue and ethnic education in Myanmar, EAGs and civil society actors will continue to be key actors in this field, despite the uncertain progress of the peace process.

A few weeks before the election, on 15 October 2015, eight EAGs agreed to an NCA.¹⁰ The significance of this agreement was somewhat reduced because several key EAGs did not sign the NCA, due to concerns over "inclusiveness" i.e. disagreements regarding which EAGs would be allowed to join the NCA. For those groups which did sign, two key structures have emerged: a joint ceasefire monitoring mechanism, and a political dialogue, framed by the Union Peace Conference (UPC), initiated in Naypyidaw in mid-January 2016. At the time of writing, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has appeared willing to support the outgoing government's peace process, by participating in the UPC. This may be against her inclinations, as NLD leaders regard political legitimacy as derived from success in parliamentary elections, rather than a product of armed struggle. Therefore, in the middle-to-long-term, EAGs may find themselves relatively marginalized in processes of "national

reconciliation” under an NLD government, compared to the privileged interlocutor position they experienced during the outgoing military-backed regime. Myanmar’s next government will have a packed agenda, and may not prioritize the peace process in the same way as its predecessor. The concerns and aspirations of ethnic nationality communities will not go away, but the opportunity to address these through a structured peace process may be diminishing.

Meanwhile on the ground, the peace process is seen by some stakeholders as a vehicle for the expansion of militarized state structures into conflict-affected areas, where the government is regarded by local communities as illegitimate, predatory and violent. This is the case also in the field of education.

Ethnic armed conflicts in Myanmar have persisted for many decades. The causal factors are multiform and complex, including both “grievance” and “greed”, private, political and economic factors.¹¹ The right to mother tongue language education has been one of the key demands of ethnic stakeholders in Myanmar’s prolonged state-society and armed ethnic conflicts. At a minimum, ethnic nationalists have demanded the teaching of minority languages in schools, including state schools; a stronger version of this position is to demand teaching of the curriculum in the mother tongue, at least through primary schooling. Positions in relation to language use, in schooling, and more broadly in public administration, can provide a mapping of the positions of ethnic nationalist elites — civil society actors, political parties and particularly EAGs — *vis-à-vis* conflicts in Myanmar more broadly. The stated positions, and practices, of key stakeholders, for example EAGs and affiliated and associated education actors, derive from and reflect, and to a degree inform, identities, interests and positions in the broader peace process. Different actors’ positions on the relationship between EAG education systems and those of the state (as discussed below), and demands regarding the use of ethnic nationality languages in, for example, the administration of government and justice, can be seen as proxies indicating how stakeholders consider that Myanmar’s ethnic communities should relate to the state — revealing a continuum of positions, from unitary state-led assimilation of minority communities, through varying types of federalism, towards outright secession and independence for ethnic polities.

Thus, language policies are not linked only to learning and cognition in schools. In many developing countries, especially nations made up of diverse ethnic groups and subject to state-society (including armed) conflict, there tends to be a concern

among state authorities that promotion of minority languages and ethnic identities will lead to greater divisiveness. Government and non-state educational regimes often use language policy to serve an instrumental purpose, such as building a national identity. This can discriminate against “others”, including vulnerable minority groups, and can lead to resentment, resistance and conflict. Education and language use in these cases underpins, and even causes conflict between, the majority and minority groups.

In Burma/Myanmar, military rule between 1962 and 2011 saw the consolidation of state power under a regime identified with the Bamar (Burman) ethnic majority, which makes up about 60 per cent of the country’s total population.¹² During this period, Burmese (the majority language) became the sole language of governance and education, with ethnic minority (or “ethnic nationality” as many groups prefer to be designated) languages suppressed and marginalized. The perceived Burmanization of state and society has constituted one of the prime grievances of ethnic nationality elites, who have mobilized minority communities to resist militarized central government authority, in the context of one of the world’s most protracted armed conflicts.¹³ A vigorous debate exists between those who argue for the relevance and authenticity of categories of ethnic national identity as being politically salient and those who advocate instead for a pan-Myanmar/Burmese form of open “civic patriotism” based on identification with a nation-state rather than with any particular, and supposedly divisive, ethnic subgroups.¹⁴ However, this article focuses primarily on language, education and the peace process rather than examining in depth the anthropological politics of ethnic identity.

Language, Education and Conflict Literatures in the Myanmar Context

Education is often projected as a panacea to conflict. However, a limited set of literature engages with how education is not only a (potential) part of the solution but often a part of the problem as well. Alan Smith and Tony Vaux develop Kenneth Bush and Diana Saltarelli’s analysis¹⁵ to reflect on the role of education in “political and social processes”, stressing the “active rather than passive role” that education plays in causing conflict.¹⁶ Smith and Vaux examine key aspects of education systems that can be implicated in the push towards, or pull from, conflict. These include, among other curriculum and textbook content, the role of religion in education,

as well as the choice of language. They argue that the choice of curriculum content is especially important with regard to the identity that children are expected to adopt. What is taught in the classroom will serve to inculcate culture — for example what form of “national identity” is presented through history and geography and if differing perspectives are represented or subordinated. To date neither history nor geography have been context specific in the government curriculum, and children in government schools in ethnic states only learn history as seen through a Bamar lens. The political/ideological messages that are being promoted through textbooks, which have for decades emphasized the martial traditions of nationalism and militarism, are essentially linked to a Bamar identity.¹⁷ Both curriculum and textbooks were deliberately targeted at the ethnic minorities as a form of attempted forced assimilation. This was supported by having mainly Bamar government teachers working in government schools in ethnic states. Since teachers are central to education systems, the transmission of the curriculum is affected by the way teachers teach and how they position themselves *vis-à-vis* the material that is used in class. This is likely to have contributed to the widespread sense of alienation felt among minority communities. However, no on-the-ground research has been done on this.

Despite decades of conflict across the country, there has been no formal, and little informal, peace education in Myanmar to date, with few programmes emphasizing community cohesion. Under decades of military rule, people living in government-controlled parts of the country were denied access to reliable news, or impartial assessments of conflict issues. Indeed, Bamar-majority communities often have little understanding of the realities experienced by their ethnic minority brethren, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Given their lack of information regarding ethnic aspirations and grievances, there is a risk of Bamar-majority communities being mobilized by unscrupulous politicians to oppose possible political changes in Myanmar (e.g., restructuring the state along more federalist lines), as a result of negotiations related to the peace process. Widespread anti-Muslim prejudice and violence has demonstrated the propensity of elements of the Buddhist-Bamar majority to being mobilized “in defence of race and religion”.¹⁸

In fact religion is another key issue that relates to what is taught in schools in Myanmar. Both the government and some EAG education departments have used the curriculum as a political tool to shape identities. In fact, many young *Bamar* think that in order

to be a citizen of Myanmar (Burmese), you have to be a Buddhist — a notion that is a result of that legacy.¹⁹ Beyond how religion is depicted in the curriculum, tensions can arise over state funding of religious schools, the unequal provision of resources to schools serving different faiths or denominations, or the reinforcement of a sense of difference or even antipathy. The Myanmar government has not supported religious schools as such, although more recently the Ministry for Religious Affairs has helped with teacher salaries at monastic schools. Monastic schools, however, accept children from other religions, in addition to the Theravada Buddhist faith of the majority population.²⁰ Historically, religion has not featured significantly in armed ethnic conflicts in Myanmar beyond the case of Kachin State, where insurgency broke out in the early 1960s in response to government sponsorship of Buddhism as the state religion.²¹ However, given the changing scenario with regard to the *sangha's* (Buddhist monkhood's) voice and positions on identity, and given the recent upsurge in popular Buddhist nationalism — and anti-Muslim violence — in Myanmar and the region, issues of religion and religious education seem increasingly to be implicated in conflicts in Myanmar.

Most importantly, by banning the use of ethnic languages in state schools in the 1960s, the government also set the scene for major grievances that fed into the conflict between the Tatmadaw and EAGs and the broader ethno-nationalist community. To this day, the status of ethnic nationality languages in state schools remains fiercely debated — the key element that is explored in detail in the rest of this article.

As a part of their analytical toolbox, and in order to remedy the negative effects of education on conflict, Smith and Vaux propose a sector-wide approach to educational reform that is based on a “comprehensive overview and conflict analysis of the whole education sector”.²² While an education review has taken place in Myanmar, and has started to lead to education reform, this process has not been inclusive of the ethnic minority education groups. There has been no engagement with the issue of conflict within this review.

UNESCO's 2011 *Global Monitoring Report* summarizes what has plagued Myanmar's education system for six decades: “Schools as a vehicle for social division”²³ through the imposition of a dominant language, the manipulation of textbooks to encourage intolerance, the championing of a culture of violence and segregation. However, schools are not the only vehicle through which conflict

has been fuelled. Graham Brown describes education's structural and socio-economic influence on conflict, whereby inequalities between groups are created and maintained, and the political effect whereby divisions are reinforced through segregation and political exclusion of particular groups.²⁴ Brown mentions the issue of education raising aspirations that may then lead to frustration when opportunities are unavailable.

Colin Brock recognizes the "potential for education to exacerbate the endemic cultural conflict that is inherent in the human species".²⁵ He differentiates between "conflict within education" and "education within conflict". Conflict within education refers to the struggle over political control of what happens in schools. Brock cites several ways in which education systems themselves become sites of conflict, including disputes over language of instruction. As discussed below, in the context of the peace process, education in Myanmar has become a site of contest, with state and non-state actors competing for authority over teaching institutions and curricula, especially in areas affected by armed conflict.

Education within conflict, on the other hand, in Brock's analysis, refers to the contribution that education makes towards creating and sustaining conflict, for example, through the manipulation of curricula to promote national chauvinism or ethnic hatred. Both state and non-state curricula in Myanmar have contributed towards the "othering" of enemy communities and structures, exacerbating and deepening identity conflicts. Brock also examines education and conflict in the broader sense of the term by exploring "education and socio-cultural violence", by which he refers to the symbolic violence imposed on women by patriarchal oppression; and "education and environmental conflict", namely the role that education has in creating or resolving conflict that human beings have with their environment.²⁶

The UNESCO *Global Monitoring Report* recognizes the role that education can have in contributing to conflict: "Education systems do not cause wars. But under certain conditions they can exacerbate the wider grievances, social tensions and inequalities that drive societies in the direction of violent conflict."²⁷ While acknowledging that education can and does contribute to conflict (Chapter 3), the report also acknowledges the role that education has in peace building (Chapter 5). It identifies a number of dimensions, including through mother tongue education and the acceptance and use of minority languages in schools,²⁸ reforming history and religion curricula to represent multiple perspectives,²⁹ developing

inclusive curricula for peace and citizenship education,³⁰ integrating children from different groups into multi-ethnic/multi-faith schools,³¹ devolving school governance,³² and ensuring that schools themselves are free from violence.³³ Clearly, while education has been part of the conflict scene, it now needs to be a part of peace building in Myanmar — a platform where government and EAGs can come together and build something new.

Language Rights and Education before 2011

For decades, the Myanmar state education system has insisted on *bama saga*³⁴ (Burmese) being used through a national school system, to create a Myanmar national identity based on Bamar culture, with Burmese as a “unifying” language.³⁵ Given the diversity of ethno-linguistic groups in Myanmar, there is a strong argument for the country having a “lingua franca” or Union language.³⁶ However, the promotion of Burmese as a national language under the previous military government has not led to an inclusive national identity, as ethnic groups were still discriminated against and the “national identity” that was promoted was strongly identified with the Bamar majority ethnic group.³⁷ Bush and Saltarelli examine both “the *constructive* and *destructive* impacts of education”: how it both can contribute to and/or mitigate violence and conflict.³⁸ Education contributes to conflict, not only through the unequal distribution of education among ethnic groups, but also through educational policies that undermine or even erase certain cultures, particularly through the imposition of a dominant language as the language of instruction. The perceived forced assimilation policy of “Burmanization” was greatly resented by most ethnic stakeholders, and drove waves of ethnic minority citizens into revolt against the government, further polarizing and propagating armed conflicts across the country.

In contrast to formal state-controlled schooling, ethnic nationality civil society actors in government-controlled areas — particularly faith-based networks, for example Karen and Kachin Christian churches; Mon and Shan Buddhist monasteries — have long struggled to provide ethnic-language teaching outside of school hours, often in informal settings under threat of state suppression.³⁹ Various ethnic literature and culture committees — some of which were established in the 1950s, although most of these were semi-dormant in subsequent decades — supported the expansion of ethnic language literacy programmes in the 1990s. Although these (Shan, Mon, Karen,

PaO, etc.) groups have done much to help keep ethnic culture alive, their efforts cannot substitute for regular formal schooling. In areas more directly affected by armed conflict, and particularly in EAG-controlled zones in the borderlands, non-state actors developed their own education regimes. Some were fairly closely modelled on the state school system curriculum, whereas others developed along separate — indeed, particularly from the 1960s through to the 1970s, separatist — lines, using mother tongue education to promote and reinforce ethno-nationalist identities as well as opposition to the militarized state. It is important to note that the various EAG education systems differ markedly from each other in terms of both the language they use and what curriculum they choose to teach.

Ceasefires in Mon and Kachin States: Parallel Mother Tongue Education with Links to the State System

The KIO and NMSP agreed to ceasefires with the military government in the mid-1990s. For a decade and a half, both groups maintained an uneasy truce with the centre, which allowed for the limited rehabilitation of conflict-affected communities and the (re-)emergence of rich civil society networks, within and between ethnic nationality communities in Myanmar. In the context of the previous round of ceasefires in the 1990s, the KIO and NMSP, as well as some other groups, expanded their already existing education networks to provide mother tongue teaching to children in their areas of control (ceasefire zones) and in adjacent government-controlled areas. The EAG-aligned education providers, like the Mon (the NMSP Education Department — the Mon National Education Committee) and the Kachin (the KIO Education Department), have used the government curriculum in translation, combined with additional elements teaching ethno-national history and the mother tongue. Their schools allow for children to learn Burmese as they grow older, so that they can join the government education system at either the middle or high school level; and then go on to state tertiary education institutes, if they so wish (and can afford to). While primary school education is conducted in the mother tongue, and older students continue to study their mother tongue and ethnic history alongside the Myanmar national curriculum, these groups generally perceive the value in an education system that does not separate and isolate their young people from the rest of the country. The Mon national schools represent a positive conceptualization of

the relationship between a locally owned and implemented education system that preserves and reproduces ethnic national identity and language, and linkages to the central government/Union education system. As such, the Mon national education system may be seen as an incipient approach to building federalism in Myanmar, “from below” — or from the bottom up.

Continued Conflict in Karen State: Parallel Mother Tongue Education with a Separatist Identity

The main Karen armed group, the KNU, did not agree a ceasefire in the 1990s. The Karen education system, which during and as a result of decades of armed conflict, evolved as a more-or-less separate regime, producing graduates, many of whom actually studied in refugee camp schools in neighbouring Thailand and who are being educated to become (virtual) citizens of a putative Karen free state (Kawthoolei), rather than of the Union of Myanmar. This means that they are unable to reintegrate into the Myanmar government education system. The KNU education system emphasizes a clearly articulated Karen identity, with regard to the Bamar-dominated society. Karen national school graduates tend to speak little Burmese, and while they may be exposed to high-quality teaching in at least some schools, this cohort receives qualifications that are not recognized in Myanmar or any other country. Although many Karen schools in conflict-affected, and especially in government-controlled, areas in practice adopt “mixed” curricula and teaching practices,⁴⁰ the Karen national school system nevertheless represents an alternative model of ethnic nationality education in Myanmar, quite distinct from the state system.

The New Government and the Reform Process

The election of a military-backed, semi-civilian government in November 2010 represented a clear break with the past.⁴¹ The new government initiated a multipronged reform process that included reconciliation with the NLD, economic and education reforms and a peace process with EAGs. In late 2011 and 2012, preliminary ceasefires were agreed to between the government and most EAGs. The peace process has seen the lives of conflict-affected civilians undergo profound transformations for the better. The Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI)⁴² conducted a “listening project” with conflict-affected communities in remote parts of Myanmar,

to listen to the experiences of Karen, Mon, and Karenni (Kayah) communities — particularly of women — both before and after the ceasefires. Initial findings indicate that many people have benefitted greatly from preliminary ceasefires between the government and the KNU, the New Mon State Party and the Karenni National Progressive Party. For example, before the KNU ceasefire, villagers often had to flee from fighting, and to avoid forced conscription and portering. Post-ceasefire, people report greatly decreased levels of fear. In some cases, displaced people are beginning to return to previous settlements and attempting to rebuild their lives. In many communities, livelihoods have improved as a result of villagers' better access to their farms, and a reduction in predatory taxation. Nevertheless, civilians fear a breakdown in the peace process and a resumption of armed conflict.⁴³

To date, questions of ethnic language and teaching regimes have not featured prominently in negotiations despite the fact that restriction on the use of the mother tongue in schools in ethnic areas is one of the original grievances that fuelled the conflict. One reason why language and education issues have not featured significantly in the Myanmar peace process thus far is because this has to date been a largely elite-driven exercise, involving the Myanmar government (more recently, with significant input from Tatmadaw) and EAGs — with little involvement from civil society groups or political parties beyond networking and advocacy activities. As the peace process moves into the next phase of widely anticipated political negotiations, discussions and demands regarding education and language use are likely to become more prominent within the peace process.

However, the government has already launched an education review and reform process that has been totally disconnected from the peace process. Ethnic educators have so far had very little input into the education reform processes. The government started by increasing spending on education to around 5 per cent of the 2013–14 Union budget, raising teacher salaries (especially for those working in remote, conflict-affected areas) and providing direct small grants to schools for repairs. A new education “mother law” was passed in Parliament, resulting in mass protests on the streets by students who believe that the government retains too much control over education matters.⁴⁴ Much of the education argument is around decentralization and local power, and, while there has been some discussion around this, it remains unclear whether this will mean a fiscal decentralization, and at what level (state/region

or township) policy decisions will be made.⁴⁵ The hope is that if education policy decisions are decentralized to state governments to at least a limited level in the future, state parliaments will be able to engender a debate on issues of language and culturally and context-adapted curricula. Already, state/region governments in a number of areas, for example Mon, Bago and Tanintharyi, have begun to introduce minority languages into government school curricula at the primary level. This has been as a result of pressure both at the Union level (from the executive, and particularly on the part of ethnic nationality parties in Parliament), and, due to activism on the part of civil society and political parties, at the state/region level. However, such initiatives remain under resourced, in terms of the availability of mother tongue-speaking teachers and funds to pay them, and with regard to the limited supply of quality teaching materials. In this context, there is a risk that state schools newly required to teach minority languages may “poach” teachers from EAG and other locally owned and delivered education systems — a development that would exacerbate conflict instead of addressing one of the key grievances of ethnic communities.

Language Rights and Education in the Reform Era

At the time of writing, ethnic educators have yet to develop a common position regarding mother tongue usage in education, although such a policy might be emerging.⁴⁶ Given the difficulty that EAGs — which are often internally fragmented along ideological, personality, clan-based and political-economic lines — have encountered in developing common positions and strategies to engage constructively with the government and the Tatmadaw in the peace process, it is not surprising that diverse, and sometimes fractious, ethnic elites have yet to develop a coherent and comprehensive set of policies in relation to education.

Most ethnic educators and political elites seem willing to acknowledge that Burmese is and should continue to be a Union (national) language, perhaps together with English. They are concerned, though, that ethnic languages should be given equal status, particularly in ethnic nationality-populated areas (and especially the country’s seven ethnic states) — both in schooling and in general administration. However, serious debates remain regarding the status of the languages, cultures, and, by proxy, political legitimacy of “minorities within minorities” — such as the PaO in Shan State, the Pwo (Ploung) and other Karen subgroups, and the Karen

communities in Mon State and elsewhere (e.g., the Bago and Irrawaddy regions). It seems unlikely that well-established ethnic minority communities, some of which have historically experienced conflictual relationships with neighbouring and sometimes larger ethnic nationality groups, would be willing to allow their ethnic brethren's language to become the dominant medium for schooling and/or governance at the state-level — potentially consigning smaller minorities' languages and cultures to further marginalization. The gap is also wide on positions regarding the role of the state. While some who teach the government curriculum would like to see some financial support from the state — without losing their autonomy — others do not want any association with the government education system at all.

The Role of Renewed Conflict in Kachin State: Disengaging the Education System from the State

In June 2011, the KIO ceasefire broke down, leading to a return of widespread armed conflict, with associated human rights and population displacement. In consequence, the KIO education system has been disengaged from the state system, with Kachin nationalist educators now pursuing a more avowedly separatist agenda, similar to that which has characterized the KNU education regime.

Direct results of the conflict include a disengagement from the state system and a rejection of using Burmese as a medium of instruction.⁴⁷ Different Kachin groups are now actively involved in developing a new curriculum in Jingpaw that they feel is more appropriate for Kachin children.⁴⁸ Content, language of instruction and teaching methods are being changed in a process that sees educators develop the new curriculum as children progress through schools. While there is an acknowledgement that the lack of accreditation will create a problem for students in that they will no longer be able to move back into the Myanmar state system, the majority of those involved in education across Kachin State maintain that the quality of the existing system is so low, no parents would want their children to study at a Myanmar university anyway. Many also promise that solutions to those problems will be found in time. A few interlocutors acknowledge that the education reforms in Myanmar might result in a better system that the Kachin children should have access to, but these voices are few, and generally many maintain that they do not trust that the reforms will be successful, or if they are, relevant for Kachin students.

The Role of Continued Ceasefire in Mon State: Rapprochement?

Despite political difficulties, the NMSP ceasefire has persisted and was renewed in February 2011. Although the current peace process in Myanmar remains problematic, the persistence of the NMSP ceasefire has provided a unique space for the Mon education system to flourish. However, disappointed by a lack of donor support for a system widely regarded as a model of best practice for ethnic education schooling in Myanmar, NMSP educators are faced with a dilemma: embrace a closer relationship with the (reforming) state education structure, or follow the Kachin model and retrench as separate education system. The Myanmar government (at the Union and Mon State levels) has recently passed legislation and made statements allowing for and indeed encouraging mother tongue education in ethnic nationality-populated areas, at the primary level. As state schools are not well equipped to deliver these services because they lack appropriate teaching materials or qualified teachers, an opportunity exists for Mon educators to “fill the gap” and receive state, and presumably donor/international, recognition and support for their work, ensuring the long-term viability of the Mon education system. The Mon nationalist community generally wants the Mon National Education Committee (MNEC — the education department of the NMSP) to remain independent of the state system during the transitional period of the peace process — only considering integration with the government school system a viable option after a comprehensive political settlement is reached. Although these issues and positions are contested, the majority of Mon nationalists and educators (including the MNEC) want to expand the use of Mon in government and “mixed” schools, and eventually see a structured interaction and convergence between state and non-state education systems. Unfortunately, most donors to the peace process have been reluctant to support this model of best practice, preferring instead to provide funding directly to government schools, for example through grants to the Ministry of Education. This is problematic in a context where nearby non-state (e.g. MNEC) schools, with which the local community often identify strongly, receive only limited international support. Such approaches risk exacerbating ethnic conflicts in Myanmar.

Like KIO school graduates until the resumption of armed conflict in 2011, Tenth Standard MNEC students can sit in government matriculation exams and join the Union’s higher education system, should they choose to do so. Thus, ethnic minority children receive

the benefits of mother tongue schooling but are still able to position themselves as citizens of a multi-ethnic Union, including through the possession of Burmese language skills. While the Mon school system has retained these characteristics — despite the MNEC's struggles to secure adequate funding — the breakdown of the KIO ceasefire in June 2011 has led to a disengagement between the Kachin and government school systems, in the context of significant alienation and anger on the part of the local community. Kachin education, including the KIO school system, seems to be diverging from the government system and adopting some of the “separatist” characteristics demonstrated by the Karen (KNU) system.

The Role of a New Ceasefire in Karen State: A Way Forward?

Meanwhile, the KNU and associated education actors are undergoing a profound review of their education experience and regimes. The KNU education system is a remarkable testimony to the resilience and commitment to education of Karen communities. Nevertheless, in order to be viable in the long term, this regime will need reform, including a particularly strategic reimagining of the relationship between the Karen and state education regimes in terms of both syllabus and administration. In the broader peace process, the KNU has been the most proactive and creative of the nearly twenty EAGs involved in peace talks with the government.

As the political realities change on the ground, a few families have tried to relocate back from the camps and the border to government-controlled areas. They have found it difficult to get their children into government schools due to a language barrier. Unsurprisingly, the Karen families interviewed in a microstudy said that it depended upon the goodwill of the local head teacher and the patience of the teachers.⁴⁹ The government-administered placement tests were perceived as unfair to children who have studied a very different curriculum. At the time of writing, a number of NGOs are trying to work with the government on a system that would allow children to transfer between systems and schools, although everyone is aware that there is a long way to go.

In a positive development, and one which contrasts with the Kachin experience, Karen educators have, in the context of the peace process, begun to reconceptualize and negotiate the relationship between their schools and those of the state. On the ground, implicit and explicit contests are playing out between a state school system perceived as pushing into previously inaccessible, armed

conflict-affected, and ethnic nationality-populated areas, and a resilient and locally legitimate KNU-oriented school system. Scope exists within formal political negotiations in the peace process for a negotiated “convergence” between the KNU and government school systems.⁵⁰ In order to be successful and comprehensive, such discussions should be explicitly included on the agenda of peace talks (perhaps in the forthcoming political dialogue phase), rather than remaining ad hoc and peripheral to the main peace process.

The Politics of Ethnic Education and Language in Myanmar: Policy and Practice

Based on a combination of primary research and literature review, we have shown how language and education policy and practice are deeply implicated in ethnic conflicts in Myanmar. Since at least the advent of military rule in 1962, the state has been perceived, with justification, as pursuing a more-or-less explicit and conscious project of forced assimilation *vis-à-vis* the ethnic nationality communities. Ethnic nationality elites (EAGs and civil society actors) have resisted “Burmanization” through a number of strategies, including armed conflict and the development of education regimes that preserve and reproduce their languages and cultures.

The existence of EAG ethnic education systems demonstrates the importance that ethnic communities and leaders place on mother tongue education — the persistence and resilience (“social capital”) of ethnic nationality stakeholders in Myanmar. These systems were developed during years of protracted armed conflict, prior to the ceasefires in Myanmar in the 1990s. In the context of their respective ceasefires in 1994 and 1995, the KIO and NMSP expanded their education systems, achieving what might be considered a form of “federalism from below” in Myanmar. Despite great difficulties in securing both financial and human resources, the KIO and NMSP school systems were locally owned and delivered and supported mother tongue teaching, particularly at the primary level. In the absence — until recently — of a Karen ceasefire, the KNU Education Department, with support from international NGOs, developed an impressive education system well suited to local needs, which diverged significantly from the government system, not least through the promotion of the Karen language and culture/identity, with only a limited focus on the Burmese language.

Through their promotion of local languages, these schools address one of the key demands of ethnic minority communities in Myanmar: the maintenance and teaching of ethnic languages, under conditions of local control and administration, i.e., self-determination in the field of education. These struggles have significance beyond the fields of education and schooling. Positions in relation to language and education policy — including especially the appropriate medium/s of instruction — indicate (or reflect) the identities and interests of different stakeholders, in terms of the kind of country they imagine Myanmar to be, and *vis-à-vis* the peace process. Debates over the status and future of ethnic education reveal positions on the appropriate relationships between the state and Union governments and ethnic nationality polities. Since at least 1962, the government has sought to bring ethnic nationalities under direct central control, denying autonomy to ethnic communities, including in the fields of education and language use. In this historic context, in which the military-dominated state has denied and suppressed demands for a federal settlement to Myanmar's state-society and ethnic conflicts, local efforts to promote self-determination in the field of education — using ethnic languages in schools and administering locally owned schools — have been perceived by the Bamar dominated government as acts of rebellion, tantamount to outright secession.⁵¹ However, the state's unwillingness to countenance the existence, let alone support the development, of locally owned education regimes may be changing. The Thein Sein government has been willing to envisage significant reforms in education, including elements of decentralization. Discussion and reforms in regard to education policy and decentralization have opened some space for mother tongue education in government schools — although not to the degree demanded by most ethnic and other education activists. What has not yet been considered in any depth, however, is the relationship between state and non-state basic education provision in conflict-affected areas, and how this relates to the ongoing peace process.

Ethnic nationalist (EAG, but also civil society and community-led) activities in the field of education are representative of broader struggles for self-determination. Ethnic responses to “Burmanization” and centralization may be plotted along a continuum — ranging from demands for outright independence (secession, or separatism) from a union for which many ethnic people feel little sympathy, through varying forms of autonomy and decentralization (varieties of federalism, including asymmetric federalism). At one end of this

spectrum would be the Union Karen⁵² and other ethnic groupings, which, while self-identifying with their ethnic community, nevertheless feel a degree of fairly strong association with the Union.

In relation to education, separatist agendas can be represented by schools featuring little or no Burmese language teaching, using a curriculum often radically different from that of the state, taught in local languages; a more federalist approach would be represented by the promotion of the mother tongue in schools that also teach Burmese and broadly follow the government curriculum but perhaps modified according to local contexts and conditions. In relation to school ownership and administration, the former positions demand locally owned schools, administered by ethnic political authorities (EAGs or otherwise); a more federalist approach could also imply non-state school ownership, but with a curriculum and regime linked to the government system — or it could mean greater focus on the mother tongue teaching, as well as instruction in appropriate local cultures and history, in schools that could nevertheless be part of the state system. In addition to the politics of these positions, important practical considerations remain regarding, for example, accreditation.

Thus, positions in relation to education can be taken as proxies of different actors' views regarding a broader range of state-society issues, and the distribution of power and resources, actual and symbolic/cultural capital, between the central government and ethnic polities (see Table 1). In this framing, the NMSP (MNEC) model can be seen as achieving a fairly high degree of local self-determination in education, while retaining strong links to the (hopefully future federal) Union. This was previously the case with the KIO system, which under pressure of the resumption of armed conflict seems to be moving towards a more separatist model, similar to that adopted historically by the KNU (which itself may nevertheless be undergoing significant changes).

Similar mapping may be applied to positions in relation to language use and policy, in schools and in governance functions more broadly. Most stakeholders seem to accept the necessity (or desirability) of teaching children Burmese. All but the most diehard separatists among Myanmar's ethnic nationalists seem willing to concede the status of Burmese as a national/Union language, or lingua franca, in some cases, together with English, due to its international status. The degree or manner in which Burmese and/or ethnic languages — with the emphasis on the plural, as explored below — should be used for public administration and

Table 1
Schooling, Language Policy and Political Positions

<i>Political Demand</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Language in Governance</i>
Independence for ethnic polities (secession, separatism)	Independently owned, administered, and financed schools (perhaps under EAG authority) Focus on ethnic languages (and English, Chinese?); less (but not necessarily zero) Burmese-language provision Curriculum significantly different from the government curriculum	Use of ethnic language/s in government administration (justice system, etc.). Limited use of Burmese; some use of English, Chinese?
“Strong federalism” (radical autonomy)	Independently administered and financed schools (perhaps with funds from Union government) Focus on ethnic languages (and English) and Burmese Curriculum related to Union government, but with significant local variations.	Use of Burmese (Union language, lingua franca) and ethnic language/s in government administration (justice system, etc.)
“Weak federalism” (decentralization): “Union Ethnic Nationalities”	Schools could be either government run (in context of nationwide education reform), or locally administered; significant financial support from state and/or Union government Burmese language, and ethnic languages (and English?), as subjects rather than medium of instruction Curriculum based on Union government’s curriculum, but with some local variations	Burmese as primary national language (lingua franca); some provision for ethnic language/s in government administration

government and legal processes is an indicator of how different actors view the distribution of power between the (Burman) centre and (ethnic) periphery in a reforming Myanmar — and might be taken as rough proxies for other sectors, for example in relation to natural resource management and revenue sharing and distribution between the Union government and ethnic states. For example, those who seek to use ethnic languages as a primary medium of governance and administration in ethnic states can be expected to adopt strong/maximalist positions regarding the degree of natural resource revenue and other financial and political goods that should be retained at, and/or redistributed to, the local/state level (federalism) — and in extreme cases may argue for complete separation of the ethnic polities from the (rump) Union. Moderates may adopt positions according to which ethnic languages are used together with Burmese, or in a supplementary manner, at the state level — corresponding to varying degrees of autonomy or decentralization, including various forms of federalism. While such arguments are rarely explicit among ethnic educators, political activists more generally, exploring different positions in relation to language and education, can help to reveal the kind of country people imagine Myanmar to be — and their hopes (and concerns) regarding the peace process and broader political transition.

Within this discussion, further reflection is required on the position of “minorities within minorities” — ethnic communities with different identities, usually reflected in different language uses, from those of the locally dominant minority, for example Kachin linguistic subgroups, various Karen ethno-linguistic communities, and their possible vulnerability in the context of a potentially totalizing dominant local ethnic/national identity. The authors hope to explore such issues in a future publication.

Conclusion

The positions of different stakeholders in relation to language policy and use, both in schools and in governance, indicate positions regarding state-society conflict and possible outcomes, more broadly. Schooling in ethnic mother tongues is valuable in a multi-ethnic country like Myanmar, for both pedagogic and political reasons. Furthermore, non-state (EAG) education regimes are concrete examples of self-determination for ethnic nationality communities (“federalism from below”), in a context where elite-level political

discussions around the peace process have yet to reach a sustainable conclusion.

Education regimes developed by, or under the authority of, EAGs are shaped by peace and conflict dynamics — tending to be more separatist in character when conflict is rife, and less separatist (more willing to engage, and perhaps integrate, with state systems) when ceasefires are in place. Therefore, conflict and peace are key variables in shaping education policy and practice in ethnic areas, and education is also a key variable in the peace process. However, while current education reforms in Myanmar do address issues of mother tongue education and ethnic schooling, to a degree, these are largely disconnected from the peace process; likewise, key peace process leaders (from EAGs and the central government) have thus far paid little attention to issues of education or language. The November 2015 elections in Myanmar presented an opportunity to discuss these issues on the national political stage and bring them onto the (crowded and contested) agenda of the future government. However, as noted above, education and language issues were largely absent from discussion around the elections. Despite their poor showing in the polls, ethnic political parties in Myanmar will continue to play important roles in this respect; EAGs and associated civil society actors will continue to be providers of ethnic education, and should be encouraged to address these issues at greater length in policy dialogue and in peace negotiations. Peace in Myanmar will only be sustainable if durable solutions are found to language policy debates, and if education is no longer used as a political tool.

NOTES

- ¹ Martin Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, 2nd ed. (London: Zed Books, 1999); and Ashley South, *Ethnic Politics in Burma: States of Conflict* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2008).
- ² Important exceptions include Mary P. Callahan, “Language Policy in Modern Burma”, in *Fighting Words, Language Policy, and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, edited by Michael E. Brown and Sumit Ganguly (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2003), pp. 143–75; Nicolas Salem-Gervais and Rosalie Metro, “A Textbook Case of Nation-Building: The Evolution of History Curricula in Myanmar”, *Journal of Burma Studies* 16, no. 1 (2012): 27–78; and Marie Lall and Ashley South, “Comparing Models of Non-State Ethnic Education in Myanmar: The Mon and Karen National Education Regimes”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 44, no. 2 (August 2013).

- ³ The 2011 research was funded by the Private Education Research Initiative fund of the Open Society Institute.
- ⁴ Lall and South, “Comparing Models”, op. cit.
- ⁵ The 2015–16 research was funded by Development Alternatives Inc. (USAID).
- ⁶ Given the sensitive nature of the research, and at the request of several interlocutors, the team cannot divulge the names of these individuals or organizations.
- ⁷ Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, op. cit.
- ⁸ South, *Ethnic Politics in Burma*, op. cit.
- ⁹ Confidential correspondence, February 2016.
- ¹⁰ It is important to recognize that almost three years of negotiations did result in an agreed text with all fifteen groups that were part of the process, as did the Tatmadaw, something unprecedented in Myanmar’s history.
- ¹¹ See for example *Myanmar’s Peace Process: A Nationwide Ceasefire Remains Elusive*, Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°75, Yangon/Brussels, 16 September 2015; *No Women, No Peace: Gender, Equality, Conflict and Peace in Myanmar*, Transnational Institute, Myanmar Policy Briefing N°18, Amsterdam, January 2016; and Marie Lall, *Understanding Reform in Myanmar, People and Society in the Wake of Military Rule* (London: Hurst, 2016).
- ¹² Gustaaf Houtman, “Mental Culture in Burmese Crisis Politics: Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy”, Monograph Series 33, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1999.
- ¹³ Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, op. cit.; and Ashley South, “Burma’s Longest War: Anatomy of the Karen Conflict”, Transnational Institute, Burma Centre Netherlands, Amsterdam, 2011.
- ¹⁴ Robert Taylor, *General Ne Win: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2015).
- ¹⁵ Alan Smith and Tony Vaux, “Education, Conflict and International Development”, Department of International Development, London, 2003, p. 2; and Kenneth D. Bush and Diana Saltarelli, “Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict”, Innocenti Insight, UNICEF, Florence, 2000.
- ¹⁶ Smith and Vaux, “Education, Conflict and International Development”, op. cit., p. 19.
- ¹⁷ Marie Lall and Hla Win, “Perceptions of the State and Citizenship in Light of the 2010 Myanmar Elections”, in *Myanmar’s Transition: Openings, Obstacles and Opportunities*, edited by Monique Skidmore and Trevor Wilson (Singapore: ISEAS, 2013).
- ¹⁸ Organisation for the Protection of National Races and Religion Centre, Second Anniversary Countrywide Plenary Conference Opinion Statement, 21 June 2015.
- ¹⁹ Marie Lall, Thei Su San, Nwe Nwe San, Yeh Tut Naing, Thein Thein Myat, Lwin Thet Thet Khaing, Swann Lynn Htet, and Yin Nyein Aye, *Citizenship in Myanmar: Contemporary Debates and Challenges in Light of the Reform Process* (Yangon: Myanmar Egress; Bangkok: FNS, 2014).
- ²⁰ This perceived Burmanization of minority children through monastic education can also be a source of resentment.

- ²¹ Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, op. cit.
- ²² Smith and Vaux, "Education, Conflict and International Development", op. cit.
- ²³ UNESCO, *EFA Global Monitoring Report: The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2011).
- ²⁴ G.K. Brown, "The Influence of Education on Violent Conflict and Peace: Inequality, Opportunity and the Management of Diversity", *Prospects* 41 (2011): 191–204.
- ²⁵ Colin Brock, "Education and Conflict: A Fundamental Relationship", in *Education, Conflict and Development*, edited by Julia Paulson (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2011), p. 29.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ UNESCO, *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, p. 131.
- ²⁸ Ibid., pp. 241–42.
- ²⁹ Ibid., pp. 242–45.
- ³⁰ Ibid., pp. 245–46.
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 246.
- ³² Ibid., pp. 246–48.
- ³³ Ibid., pp. 248–49.
- ³⁴ We use *Bama saga* instead of "Burmese" for reasons of accuracy. The English word "Burmese" refers both to the people of Myanmar as well as the dominant language spoken, but the word does not nuance the fact that this is actually the language of the Bamar ethnic group and that there are many other languages in Myanmar spoken by other ethnic groups.
- ³⁵ Callahan, "Language Policy in Modern Burma", op. cit.; and Justin Watkins, "Burma/Myanmar", in *Language and National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- ³⁶ This is not unusual in countries with different ethnic and linguistic groups, for example Pakistan and Indonesia.
- ³⁷ Houtman, "Mental Culture in Burmese Crisis Politics", op. cit.
- ³⁸ Bush and Saltarelli, "Two Faces of Education", op. cit., p. vii.
- ³⁹ South, *Ethnic Politics in Burma*, op. cit.; and Lall and South, "Comparing Models", op. cit.
- ⁴⁰ Lall and South, "Comparing Models", op. cit.
- ⁴¹ Opinions vary regarding the extent to which the U Thein Sein government represented a continuation of military domination by other means. Renaud Egeteau, Marco Buente and Bertil Lintner argue separately that the transitional government represented a continuation of military rule, or well-planned subterfuge to maintain the domination of established military-economic elites. See Egeteau, "The Continuing Political Salience of the Military in Post-SPDC Myanmar", in *Debating Democratization in Myanmar*, edited by Nick Cheesman, N. Farelly and T. Wilson (Singapore: ISEAS, 2014), pp. 259–84; Buente, "Burma's Transition to Quasi-Military Rule, From Rulers to Guardians?", *Armed Forces & Society* 40, no. 4 (October 2014): 742–64; and Bertil Lintner, "Myanmar — The Ex Pariah", *Politico Magazine* (March/April

2014), available at <<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/02/myanmar-the-ex-pariah-103887>>. However, others examine the significant changes that have occurred in the past five years in Myanmar; see Marie Lall, *Understanding Reform in Myanmar: People and Society in the Wake of Military Rule* (London: Hurst, 2016); and Richard Cockett, *Blood, Dreams and Gold: The Changing Face of Burma* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015). Cockett nevertheless remains critical of many elements of Myanmar's transition.

⁴² Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI), *Lessons Learned from MPSI's Work Supporting the Peace Process in Myanmar, March 2012 to March 2014* (Yangon: MPSI, March 2014), available at <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Report_Lessons-learned-supporting-the-peace-process_MPSI_Mar2014.pdf>.

⁴³ Findings from MPSI's "listening project" in Karen, Karenni and Mon ceasefire areas, conducted between 2013–14. *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Author interview with anonymous NNER leader, April 2015.

⁴⁵ The January 2013 Final Draft Framework for Economic and Social Reforms (FESR) indicates that the Government of Myanmar plans to work with a distributed (or deconcentrated) model of education management, however retaining budgetary control over health and education expenditure. "While GOM strengthens regulatory policies to streamline various private and community-run educational programs, it is also moving ahead with the decentralization of education management in line with the requirements of the Constitution by integrating locally designed teaching curriculum as well as non-formal programs in basic education system", FESR, January 2013, final draft point 8.4, 29.

⁴⁶ "It's MINE: Indigenous Groups Claim Their Rights through New Network for Education in Myanmar", Myanmar Indigenous Network for Education press release on International Mother Language Day, 21 February 2014.

⁴⁷ This happens to be a "mutual rejection", as the conflict has also resulted in a recent government decree refusing to let children from KIO-administered schools transfer to government schools, something they had previously been able to do.

⁴⁸ For a full discussion of Kachin linguistic history and politics, see Mandy Sadan, *Being and Becoming Kachin: Histories Beyond the State in the Borderworlds of Burma* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁴⁹ A study and presentation by Save the Children, Myanmar Conference, Chiang Mai, Thailand, July 2015.

⁵⁰ Kim Jolliffe, *Ethnic Armed Conflict and Territorial Administration in Myanmar* (Bangkok: Asia Foundation, 2015).

⁵¹ Taylor, *General Ne Win*, op. cit.

⁵² Ardeth Maung Thawngmung, *The Karen Revolution in Burma: Diverse Voices, Uncertain Ends*, East West Center Washington, Policy Studies No. 45, 2008; and, South, *Ethnic Politics in Burma*, op. cit.